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Author(s): Mark Thomas Harrison

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“Trust me... I’m a Counsellor...”

**A heuristic exploration of the therapist’s ability to trust themselves
to work effectively and ethically as a person-centred counsellor,
and not to fall in love with clients.**

Mark Thomas Harrison

Dissertation submitted to the University of Chester for the Degree of Master of Arts
(Counselling Studies) in part fulfilment of the Modular Programme in Counselling
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Abstract.

A person-centred counsellor's use of self may be seen to include offering a non-possessive, and certainly non-sexual, love. For any practitioner, the question arises as to what underpins conformance to professional codes of ethics, both theoretically and personally. Generally, counselling approaches align with professional prohibitions against sexual activity through some combination of predefined techniques and explicit theoretical exclusion. The person-centred approach avoids the systematic use of techniques and the theory might be considered less explicit, and so maybe demands careful consideration.

This research thus considers the underpinning which supports how a therapist can trust themselves not to fall in love with clients, and not to engage in any form of sexual exploitation.

The research addresses self-trust through a highly reflexive, heuristic exploration of a therapist's fundamental beliefs. These are discussed in relation to literature on ethics and to counselling theory. What emerges is a greater separation between falling in love and sexual exploitation, supporting a therapist's ability not to engage in unethical activity with clients and opening the way to greater discussion of such concerns within the person-centred arena.

Declaration.

This work is original and has not been submitted previously in support of any qualification or course.

Signed:

(Mark T. Harrison)

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Throughout this text, references to data items are of the form (A1, 222) and relate to a line number in an appendix, in this case, appendix 1, line 222. The line number may be a range, for example (A1, 222-224). Where it has been necessary to exclude sections of data for ethical reasons, hashes [###] are used and line numbering has been retained.

Appendices A1 (the Gödel paper, G), A2 (the Pyramid paper, P) and A3 (the Interview, I) form the raw data. In order to allow easier tracking through the data analysis, these are alternatively referenced in the form G222-224, P222-224 or I222-224 respectively.

The appendices offer extracts to give a sense of content, and offer access to all materials in their original form for examination purposes, through agreement with the author.

Freeform Prose #1.

Here, maybe
why
1 and 1 makes 2
and, maybe, why
I respond as I do
... and you?

Initial Quotes.

This emphasis on involvement, intimacy and emotional risk runs counter to much in the prevailing culture. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that for many in the helping professions the current climate, fostered by much recent legislation, encourages an attitude of caution and fearfulness which leads to a culpable under-involvement with those who are often in most need of assistance. The person-centred counsellor must somehow find the courage to oppose this tendency.

Mearns and Thorne (2007, p. 44).

[clients] *knew from the first* that they felt a special connection with their therapist: and at its extreme this decision to let go can almost be like a 'leap of faith'. For example, one participant stated that 'I just ... decided I was going to trust and ... love this guy sort of thing ... and go with the consequences'

McMillan and McLeod (2006, p. 284).

It is the experience of freedom to be one's self. ... the client moves from a distrust of the spontaneous and unconscious aspects of himself to a basic trust of his experiencing ... "The image I get is that / want to be one of the fish myself." The therapist says, "You want to be down there flowing along too." This desire to be one with the subterranean and primitive spontaneity within is a real part of the experience I am trying to describe. ... It is found that personal change is facilitated when the psychotherapist is what he *is* We have coined the term congruence to try to describe this condition. By this we mean that the feelings the therapist is experiencing are available to him, available to his awareness, and he is able to live those feelings, be them, and able to communicate them if appropriate.

Rogers (1963, p. 47-53).

"[Client:] I know I'm going to try and seduce you"

Barclay (2011, p. 47).

Chapter 1: Introduction.

A clear statement of intent is felt necessary here. This dissertation is intended to “support the active independent critical judgement and discernment that should be associated with true moral responsibility and, indeed, good professionalism” (Pattison, 1999, p. 48-49). This holds even if professional codes of ethics may “engender confusion, placidity, apathy and even immorality. ... Indeed, if conformity is uncritical it may actually be unethical.” (Pattison, 1999, p. 48-49). There is no intention to challenge such codes or any prohibitions regarding sexual activity. The intention is to explore fundamental beliefs underlying the ability of the therapist to act ethically, and thus the alignment between personal and professional ethics.

Unless otherwise stated, the terms ‘client-centred’ and ‘person-centred’ are used interchangeably here, as are the terms ‘counsellor’, ‘psychotherapist’ and ‘therapist’. Unless specifically stated, the terms ‘supervision’ and ‘supervisor’ relate to the supervision of counselling practice.

The structure of this dissertation captures what has been a highly emergent and rather chaotic process, as described in this introduction. This project has been high risk both in terms of the subject addressed and the form of the research. The Literature Review firstly covers the concept of self-trust in terms of free will and choice, then fundamental person-centred theory, and then aspects of personal and professional ethics. The chapter on Methodology offers an extensive insight into the why and how of the research method used. The Findings From the Raw Data are presented as tabulated themes, together with a summary explanation, then a form of “creative synthesis” (Moustakas, 1990) which is more aligned with the heuristic process undertaken. The Discussion and Conclusions relate the Findings to the

Literature Review and find focus in distinguishing between sexual predation and falling in love.

The Suggestions For Further Research offer recognition that engaging in heuristic research may develop greater competence in any practitioner. Two suggestions resulted from the emergent process of this project: one to consider how therapist's fundamental beliefs may affect their work; and another to address the seeming taboo in person-centred theory over sexual attraction in the therapy room and associated ethical issues.

The analysis of data (Appendices A1, A2, A3, A4) gave structure to the heuristic exploration of a therapist's deepest beliefs and how they may emerge into their practice. Intertwined and emergent with this was the more reflexive aspects of such a process involving extensive journaling of self-reflection (Appendices A5, A6, A8). Because of the deeply personal content of this study, the appendices offer access to all data either directly or via the author. As well as supporting validation, this addresses ethical concerns over information being accessed by my clients past and present.

The research found its form emerging throughout its duration. The original title did not question if a therapist might "fall in love with clients", and the literature review was far less concerned with working "ethically as a person-centred counsellor". The project was intended to be a wider consideration of therapist self-trust, the ability to work spontaneously, to rely on unconscious competence or congruence to unfold into effective practice. Such literature based explorations were to be compared with the results of a highly reflexive, heuristic exploration of the author's fundamental beliefs. Very quickly, a gap in the literature was found. There was little that considered any link between a person-centred therapist's practice and their fundamental beliefs (see

Appendix A10). Whilst this research addresses more immediate, but associated, concerns regarding ethics, it is suggested that this link is addressed through further research.

As the heuristic process gathered pace, huge amounts of reflexive data began to emerge. Careful focusing was necessary to hold to a size suitable for a Masters level study. The focus became, as the revised title reflects "... the therapist's ability ... not to fall in love with clients" (research title). It opens a questioning of such ability, and explores what maybe lies beneath common responses such as "because I won't", "because I'm married", "because the guidelines say so", or even "it's not possible, I just have to trust myself".

Another gap in the literature came in the guise of a possible taboo. Within person-centred literature, there is little theoretical discussion regarding the professional prohibition of sexual activity in the therapy room. This is approached here because of ethical concerns around the link between love and sex, but further research is also suggested. The ability to make ethical decisions is seen to underpin "... the therapist's ability ... not to fall in love with clients" (research title), nor to engage in sexual predation, and became the main focus of this presentation.

Codes of practice offered by professional counselling organisations such as the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy [BACP] (2010) require that supervision space exists to privately discuss personal and ethical concerns regarding practice. Space and ethical considerations restricted my sharing of short vignettes from my work which have been discussed both in supervision and with trusted peers. Each questioned my being: "We sit and laugh. Am I too visibly happy?"; "My client takes me on a guided meditation. Are our roles too confused?"; "We sit quietly crying. Am I too disclosing of myself?"; "We sit puzzled. Am I too restrained?"; "My client

throws the book at me. Am I so incompetent?"; "We hold hands, we hug as she cries on my shoulder. Am I too tactile?". Yet framing all of these was the one question I struggle with most: "*Does love flow too freely?*", or put another way, am I less in control, less able to maintain ethical practice, than I might be?

In spite of all similarities, every living situation has, like a newborn child, a new face that has never been before and will never come again. It demands of you a reaction which cannot be prepared beforehand. It demands nothing of what is past. It demands presence, responsibility; it demands you. (Buber, cited in Rogers and Stevens, 1967, p. 112).

Counselling training and ongoing professional development fosters a greater level of "unconscious competence" (Mearns, 1997, p. 27) in the therapist. Just as a concert pianist trusts his fingers to find their way, a person-centred therapist finds their self-trust, their ability to trust themselves to move almost without conscious thought in their "way of being" (Rogers, 1980).

Can a therapist trust themselves in a situation so "extraordinarily intimate" (Powell, cited in Thorne, 2009) not to act unethically, not to fall to some tempting transgression, or even to not fall in love with a client?

What is to stop a therapist from acting unprofessionally, particularly when aligned with a theoretical orientation that demands they do not hide behind the mask of being an expert? Rogers' (1957) sees therapist "congruence" as a necessary condition for therapy to occur, and as Gendlin (1963, p. 121) says, "'congruence' implies that the therapist attempts to drop any personal or professional artificiality, and maneuvers or postures, and that he be himself."

Dare a therapist trust themselves to offer immediate, spontaneous and idiosyncratic response without repeatedly deferring to supervision?

The full depth of personal expression in relation to this research and to my work is restricted to peers, research and practice supervision and those I hold most personally close. The Ethical Framework I choose to adopt (BACP, 2010) underlines my personal ethical stance of revealing everything to my practice supervisors, particularly when I find myself tempted to hide aspects of my working. It is through such support that I believe that the profession enables careful and thorough consideration regarding ethical boundaries and the identification of appropriate continuing professional development.

In the title I allude to the cliché 'Trust me... I'm a doctor'. My personal experience of doctors is strongly flavoured by incidents in my childhood, adolescence and adulthood where I felt abused, invaded and humiliated. In part, it is for this reason I follow the person-centred approach to counselling, because it stands so powerfully against the often inadvertent pain that expert power can bring. My own ability to function as a counsellor without hiding behind the persona of expert is under scrutiny here.

Freeform prose has become a cornerstone of my journaling (Clark, 2008; Harrison, 2008a). I feel it allows me to practice concise, heart-felt expression which I find to be an important resource when working with clients.

Freeform Prose #1 (above p. 1) offers the question of how anything stands as knowledge, and how any action then unfolds. To me, it reflects my belief that all knowledge sails on a raft of assumptions, which I feel is central to this research. Such a "grand theory" may be "anti-postmodernist" (Ellingham, 1999, p. 65), yet I find nothing more absolute. Such thoughts may also be seen to lack a phenomenological perspective, so one item of raw data is included in its entirety

(Appendix A1) to openly allow the reader a deeper insight into the underlying concepts if desired.

The initial quotes (above p. 2) aim to give a flavour of the intimacy recognised as a necessary part of person-centred counselling, and of the risks involved. In describing the congruence of the counsellor, Rogers (1963, p. 53) suggests “he is able to live those feelings, be them, and able to communicate them if appropriate.” It is here that the concept of self-trust arises. How might I trust myself to “live those feelings, be them” and not be overwhelmed by them in a way that may lead to inappropriate, anti-therapeutic, unprofessional or even unethical being? The questions particularly apply when, as the initial quote from Barclay (2011) offers, a client is maybe intent on seducing the therapist and, unlike Barclay, is less forthcoming in declaring their intent.

The title of this dissertation captures a personal dilemma I faced, the question of whether I could trust myself “not to fall in love with clients.” Having fallen in love over twenty years ago with the person I married and remain married to, I was surprised to find I had seemingly fallen in love again with someone else whilst engaging in extraordinarily intimate, although physically platonic, encounter group meetings. I became fearful of my unknown potential to maybe fall in love with clients. Given that there are recognised instances of such situations occurring between counsellors and clients (Haule, 1996; Szymanski & Palmer, 1997), and clearly concerns regarding sexual relations given the prohibitions seen in ethical guidelines (e.g. BACP, 2010), the experience seemed worthy of research.

Such thinking maybe relates to the counselling profession being somewhat “Ethically Challenged”, as the book title (Bates & House, 2003) offers. Regarding the efficacy of counselling, meta-research (Haugh & Paul, 2008, p. 13) offers that the therapeutic

relationship maybe holds twice the value of any applied technique. This raises the need to more thoroughly consider how ethical practice can be ensured other than through monitoring the conformance of practitioner activity to the expert application of defined techniques and procedures.

I feel this point is worth underlining. Professionalisation relies in part on quantitative research using randomised control trials (RCT). These are intended to refine techniques through comparative study, whilst eliminating any effect due to the client-practitioner relationship (Totton, 2008). Although this is maybe less the case in the psychological therapies and alternative research methods abound (Cooper, 2011), my sense is that the recognised high level of affect of the relationship in this arena offers a challenge to the comparatively high value sometimes placed on RCTs.

Prohibitions in professional codes rely on the therapist, as a “rational agent with free will” (Pattison, 1999, p. 47), choosing to conform. All professional organisations prohibit sexual activity with clients (e.g. BACP, 2010). I did not want to unduly fear my own human fallibility and so aimed to affirm my trust in myself, my self-trust, not to break such boundaries. My sense is that any therapist might similarly question themselves as part of developing their own congruent being. Pattison (1999) makes the point that uncritical conformance to codes is not only a questionable assumption, but possibly unethical.

Chapter 2: Literature Review.

An extensive overview to the initial literature searching can be found in Appendix A10, which details the main search terms used in online research databases available through the University. It also contains reflection according to Marshall and Rossman's (1999, p. 43) "four broad functions" for a literature review, including "the Identification of Gaps in Prior Research and How These Will Be Addressed." Gaps were identified in terms of the lack of research and even literature. The first sees little research into how an individual's fundamental beliefs relate to their actions as a therapist. The second sees little being found in the person-centred literature which explicitly offers theoretical alignment with professional prohibitions against sexual activity between therapists and clients. This is maybe indicative of a level of taboo against open discussion, even if implicit alignment with the taboo against actual sexual activity is considerable.

Whilst further research is suggested to address these gaps, this research saw development to address an aspect relating to both. Therapist self-trust is largely taken for granted and seen as a paradigmatic assumption for the basis of any system of knowledge and for any action. The assumption of "a rational agent with free will" (Pattison, 1999, p. 47) remains largely unquestioned in professional texts.

The emergent process allowed the literature review to find focus on ethical concerns. This is structured below by using phrases from the research title as sub-headings. The value to any practitioner of engaging in heuristic research is quickly acknowledged. Following this, the concept of free will is addressed and sees a conscious aspect to a largely unconscious organism, a person, assuming full responsibility. An overview of person-centred counselling theory is then given and sees the therapeutic concept of congruence related to unconscious competence. A

section on ethics relates to both free will and person-centred theory before focusing on professional definitions of both ethical and unethical activity. This raises the concern of sexual activity, which is addressed further in a final section on falling in love. The potential for self-deception in the counsellor is brought to light.

“A heuristic exploration...”: Methodology.

The research design is covered in the methodology chapter. I quickly link with associated literature here.

O'Hara (1986) draws a comparison between heuristic research and client-centred therapy, offering that “... when a person is engaged passionately and skilfully in the search for his or her own truth *the process itself is therapeutic*” [original emphasis] (p. 85). In a similar vein, Merry (2004) reflects on supervision as “heuristic research enquiry”, considering “heuristic research as a means of identifying and strengthening a counsellor’s own ‘internal supervisor’” (p. 194). Keys and Proctor (2007, p. 361) maybe link more directly to the concept of self-trust when they say that “For a reflective practitioner the emphasis is on growing self-awareness”.

My sense is that the literature considers that a person-centred therapist needs to “search for his or her own truth” and be “growing self-awareness”. Such can be equated with the person-centred concept of congruence, as is discussed below, and of gaining greater “unconscious competence” (Mearns, 1997, p. 27).

“... of the therapist’s ability to trust themselves...”: Free Will And Choice.

Given free will but within certain limitations
I cannot will myself to limitless mutations

Robert Wyatt/Kramer. 2003.
(song: Free Will and Testament, album: Shleep).

Most research, in any field, is focused on the deliberate, conscious, application of techniques, providing an evidence base for practitioners, even if skilled practitioners

maybe achieve unconscious competence. Classical person-centred (client-centred) counselling (Rogers, 1951, 1959) is revolutionary in the avoidance of such techniques, placing the focus almost exclusively on the relationship. Theoretical developments such as experiential working (Gendlin, 1974; Greenberg, Rice & Elliott, 1993), relational depth (Mearns and Cooper, 2005) and others (Sanders, 2004; Worsley, 2002) are seen as secondary to the relationship as defined by Rogers (1951, 1957, 1959). This is based on the therapist authentically (congruently) experiencing empathy and acceptance for the client, as detailed in the next section. Bozarth (1998, p. 100) maybe captures the revolutionary nature in offering that “Raskin [1988] clarified the concept of idiosyncratic empathy with his conceptualization of unsystematic therapist responses”. He cites Raskin (1988, p. 33) as offering that systematic approaches to therapy have:

... a preconceived notion of how they wish to change the client and work at it in systematic fashion, in contrast to the person-centered therapist who ... remains open to an emerging process orchestrated by the client.

Rogers (1959) reported research evidencing the value of this unsystematic way of working that is person-centred counselling, and meta-research has since maintained that there is no appreciable difference in the efficacy of different approaches (Cooper, 2008), a finding often referred to as the “Dodo bird verdict” ... “after the dodo bird in *Alice in Wonderland* who, after judging a race around a lake, declares that ‘everyone has won and so all must have prizes.’” (Cooper, 2008, p. 52)

However, the assumption of free will (Pattison, 1999) underlies research paradigms which effectively means that there is little research which directly addresses it, and thus the self-trust of practitioners in their less conscious, authentic, unsystematic, somewhat spontaneous being.

Given that counselling and psychotherapy are founded on the concept of personality change, that is, a change in decision making and thus in free will, then the concept of free will would seem a valid area for consideration. In philosophy (and theology, Holm & Bowker, 1994), more than in research, the discussion over free will and determinism rages on with a compromise recognised in terms of soft determinism: “Free will is thus an illusion reflecting a kind of ignorance of the controlling variables of our choices” (Ogletree & Oberle, 2008, p. 98). Thus, even philosophy struggles, and the philosophy of ethics still comes down to the rationalisation of decision making (Chomsky, 1972; Howard, 2000; Kant, 1948/2005; Pattison, 1999; Russell, 1946; Spinoza, 2001; Vardy & Grosch, 1999). The fundamental positioning of the concept of free will is highlighted when Kant (1948/2005, p. 33) offers:

We have shown by analytic argument that the principle of the autonomy of the will ... is a necessary condition of the validity of moral judgements. If, however, we wish to establish the validity of the principle of autonomy, we must pass beyond our judgements about moral actions to a critique of pure practical reason.

When he does so (Kant 1948/2005, p. 143), he recognises that “Reason would overstep all its limits if it took it upon itself to *explain how* pure reason can be practical. This would be identical, with the task of explaining *how freedom is possible.*” [original emphasis]. In other words, the very foundation determining how a free will operates is also the basis for determining ethical, and then moral, values.

Dawkins (2006, p. 405) offers the metaphor of “the mother of all Burkas” explaining that the gap through which part of reality is perceived is “derisively tiny” (p. 406) compared to the length of the veil hiding the fullness of reality. This maybe compares with Rogers (1980, p. 127) metaphor of consciousness “as a tiny peak of awareness, of symbolizing capacity, topping a vast pyramid of nonconscious organismic functioning.” With such metaphors offering comparative scale to the perceived

amount of conscious and nonconscious functioning, the concept of free will as an illusion, and of all ethical action being attributed to such, seems impossible to ignore. In other words, in taking conscious responsibility (and accepting possible accountability) for the entirety of our actions, we are placing the comparatively tiny level of conscious functioning at the helm of the vast depths of nonconscious or unconscious activity.

Given the free will to hold self-trust in one's unconscious *being*, then it would seem that the most that can be said is that the practitioner is accountable for all of their actions. Ogletree & Oberle (2008, p. 99, referring to Velmans, 2003 and Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1991) recognise the paradox that conscious decision making (which I consider to include such self-trust) arises from preconscious or intuitive processing. They offer that "Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1991) argue that at the highest level of ethical expertise one responds intuitively rather than deliberately".

It seems that self-trust is unavoidable, and that developing some sense of self-trustworthiness may be a route to greater ethicality. Conscious decision making not only includes the decision to offer self-trust to pre/non/semi/un-conscious functioning, but paradoxically emerges from it (Polanyi, 1958, 1966; Rogers, 1980; Wilkins, 2000).

Of the philosopher Spinoza, Russell (1946, p. 521) offers "Intellectually, some others have surpassed him, but ethically he is supreme." This said, Russell later says how he cannot accept Spinoza's concept that "all sin is due to ignorance" (p. 503), which links with the metaphors of both Rogers and Dawkins, above, and what might be seen as a misplaced self-trust. Spinoza (2001) addresses ethics in terms of free will paradoxically existing as part of a deterministic Wholeness to existence. The concept of separate substances existing is dismissed as each is encompassed by the whole.

Whilst Howard (2000) offers considerable scepticism over Spinoza's views, the concepts of a mystical Wholeness and of a foundation of an ethical sense in the actuality of such Wholeness are acknowledged. This resonates with the concepts of soft determinism mentioned above, and with the concepts of Wholeness and a sense of ethics which emerged in the research findings.

Wilks (2003, pp. 282-283) offers that "... no grand theory of counseling has solved the freewill-determinism problem, thereby solving issues of personal moral responsibility.... Only when practice is consistent with theory, and theory is consistent with experience, can counseling professionals be confident in their endeavours." My sense is that the counselling and psychology profession has carefully developed ethical frameworks and codes in recognising that foundations and assumptions regarding free will are questionable, even in philosophy. This is highlighted when Wilks & D'Ann Ratheal (2009, p. 140-141) offer:

...in relation to legal responsibility in *The Handbook of Forensic Psychology*, Hess and Weiner (1999) stated,

From a legal perspective, one cannot be held accountable for a cause beyond one's control. A biologically based failing or a social learning regimen that compromised the individual's ability to control his or her own decision making would be deterministic in the sense that free will could not be exercised and individual legal responsibility would be negated . . . Lawyers and the laity share the assumption that people exercise free will. (p. 39)

Professional ethical frameworks leave the practitioner with much room to move independently, to engage their free will. Reflecting such, a BACP presentation (BACP, n.d.), offers that the "Overall Effect" of ethical framework development is to "Change the professional culture and ethos from conformity to rules to ethical accountability and engagement". Whilst such is professionally desirable, prohibitions on engaging in sexual contact stand as an exception. An appendix in Hunter and Struve (1998) lists many of these prohibitive statements. Effectively, any conscious

engagement in a sexual act between clients and practitioners is deemed unethical, and practitioners are deemed consciously responsible for any less conscious act.

Olsen (2005) considers the role of schemas or self-narratives (akin to Rogers' (1951) self-concept) in determining behaviour. He offers (p. 268) that "Free will is essential to most religious understandings of personal change". Free will is seen as most present when such self-narratives are questioned, deconstructed and recognised as offering "possible courses of action [which] may be contradictory" (p. 270). Free will is maybe most evident when the self-concept, which in part determines behaviour, is being considered.

Such thinking seems to correlate with this present research effort, in deeply considering what makes this counsellor tick. The quest for a greater understanding of self may be seen as a quest for an increased capacity for holding ethical responsibility for actions, whether consciously or unconsciously driven, and thus increased free will. The act of undertaking this research is maybe itself an indicator of ethicality in that it shows intent to develop free will, the "capacity to override one's prepotent response to do something else" (Baumeister, Bauer & Lloyd, 2010, p. 69), and to develop self-trust regarding unconscious competence in the role of therapist. A theoretical overview of person-centred counselling now follows before relating to professional ethics.

"... to work effectively ... as a person-centered counsellor..."

Rogers (1957) offers a concise definition of what he considers to be "The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change". He offers more extensive consideration of these conditions in defining "Client-Centered Therapy" (Rogers, 1959). The six conditions are:

1. Contact.

This is also referred to as psychological contact, and is defined simply that “each makes a perceived or subceived difference in the experiential field of the other” (Rogers, 1959, p. 207).

2. Client Incongruence.

This sees the person in the role of client as having some anxiety, or in a state which is “one of tension and internal confusion” (Rogers, 1959, p. 203) leading to their choice to engage in therapy.

3. Therapist Congruence.

This is a contentious point in person-centred theory, so is further discussed after introducing the six conditions. Rogers (1959, p. 214) defines congruence by saying that “the therapist's symbolization of his own experience in the relationship must be accurate”. In considering the possibility of therapist expressing such feelings, Rogers (Rogers, 1959, p. 214) offers this may be required when the therapist “finds himself persistently focused on his own feelings rather than those of the client, thus greatly reducing or eliminating any experience of empathic understanding, or if he finds himself persistently experiencing some feeling other than unconditional positive regard”. He offers that “a part of the congruence of the therapist must be the experience of unconditional positive regard and the experience of empathic understanding” (Rogers, 1959, p. 215). It is clear that in this primary theoretical statement, in regard to therapy, congruence functions only to enable the following two conditions. It is not considered something to be directly expressed to the client, as is highlighted in the wording of the sixth condition, below.

4. *Therapist Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR).*

Rogers (1959, p. 208) sees UPR existing when “the self-experiences of another are perceived by me in such a way that no self-experience can be discriminated as more or less worthy of positive regard than any other”. In this, self-experience is “defined as being any event or entity in the phenomenal field discriminated by the individual which is also discriminated as "self," "me," "I," or related thereto” (Rogers, 1959, p. 200).

5. *Therapist Empathy.*

Rogers (1959, p. 210) defines empathy as being “to perceive the internal frame of reference of another with accuracy, and with the emotional components and meanings which pertain thereto, as if one were the other person, but without ever losing the ‘as if’ condition.”

6. *Client Perceives Therapist Empathy and UPR.*

Rogers (1959) is careful regarding this being perception, rather than any attempt at communication of such by the therapist. Of particular note is that the therapist's congruence is not immediately mentioned here.

The exclusion of therapist congruence from condition 6, combined with the question of whether the therapist conditions of congruence, UPR and empathy are *deliberately* communicated offer a point of controversy regarding the non-directive nature of Rogers' theory (Brodley 1997). The question of what may be considered as development or deviation of Rogers' theory remains open. Therapies which are considered by some as “tribes” (Sanders, 2004) of the person-centred approach, such as Gendlin's experiential therapy, are seen as directive and antithetical by some

(Brodley, 1997, Wyatt, 2001b). Wilders (2007, 2011) has expressed her considerations that attempting to achieve “Relational Depth” (Mearns and Cooper, 2005) sees the therapist maybe going directly against Rogers’ condition of UPR. Brodley (1996, p. 113) clearly states her position in saying that “... focusing effects stimulated by empathic behavior are and should remain serendipitous. The therapist does not deliberately attempt to focus clients on their experiencing processes [otherwise they are]... stepping outside of client-centered therapy.”

Relating Therapist Congruence to Unconscious Competence.

Rogers (1959, p. 215) specifies that “a part of the congruence of the therapist must be the experience of unconditional positive regard and the experience of empathic understanding.” Bozarth (2001, p. 185) captures this in offering that “congruence must be considered in relation to the central axiom of client-centered therapy; namely the therapist conditions of unconditional positive regard and empathic understanding (and necessarily the ensuing nondirective attitude)”. Similarly, Merry (2002, pp. 13-14) sees the development of the approach in terms of a move from the use of “skills” by the therapist and towards the holding of “attitudes”. Rogers (1951, 1980) considered that learning to be a person-centred therapist was not about learning skills, but of developing a “way of being” in terms of an attitudinal stance. Training too easily “involved an over-emphasis on technique, which was not good.” (Rogers, 1951, p. 431).

In other words, instead of deliberately applying systematic techniques, the therapist relies on their congruent being to emerge as the experiencing of empathy and UPR for the client. It is therefore reasonable to consider that therapist congruence equates more to “unconscious competence” than to a more deliberate “conscious competence” (Mearns, 1997, p. 27).

Sommerbeck (Personal communication, online discussion forum, 2011) reflected my seeming to “partly think of ‘spontaneous’ as an expression of ‘unconscious competence’ [Mearns, 1997, p. 27]”. She continued with “I think I agree with that, but I’d also contrast it with ‘impulsive’, which I think of as an expression of ‘unconscious incompetence’.” My sense here is of the learning process enabling impulsivity to develop into a more refined spontaneity, through an increase in congruence.

It is with this relating of increasing psychological adjustment as theorised by Rogers (1959) and the learning process considered by Mearns (1997, p. 27) that I move into considering professional and personal ethics.

“... and ethically...”: Personal And Professional Ethics.

The prior two sections have considered the individual’s ability to make a choice, and the core theoretical statement of the person-centred approach. Within those sections, the concepts of unconscious competence and incompetence are seen to cover any activities of the individual (the therapist) performed somewhat spontaneously, with something less than a fully conscious consideration.

The above section on Free Will and Choice (p. 11) reflected philosophical standpoints where ethical values and then legal and professional accountability rest on an assumption of free will. The concept of self-trust is seen to be the ability to trust one’s unconscious being to act in an ethical manner, thus standing as the basis of any personal ethics. Just as a practiced musician trusts their fingers to play the notes of a complex piece of music, so too must a therapist have the self-trust that their personal ethics are in alignment with professional definitions of what is or is not ethical.

The above section on Person-centred theory shows how eschewing the systematic doing of techniques, even where techniques are evidenced through research

(Brodley, 2003), is a key aspect of the approach. This is often referred to as non-directivity. Some in the person-centred literature (e.g. Brodley, 2006; Grant, 2004, 2005; Graziottin, 2009; Zimring, 2000) argue that to be ethical requires an offering of such non-directivity in order to respect and promote the client's right to self-determination. The person-centred approach sees the therapist's congruence at its centre, which I have compared to unconscious competence and thus to the concept of self-trust. The literature points to the question addressed in one of the raw data items (A1, 263), "how I might sense my own presence or congruence". An example of such sensing is maybe offered by Sommerbeck (2003, p. 129) in considering a client request, and offering that "...without clearly knowing why, and also sensing that I am making the wrong choice, I accommodate his request."

I feel it is worth dealing separately with the professional definition of what is ethical, and what is not ethical.

Professionally Defined Ethical Activity.

There has been a growing call for "evidence-based practice" (Cooper, 2011). Service providers such as the National Health Service (NHS) want to see research evidence to prove treatment validity and support the funding of services. Whilst some increasingly embrace the provision of such evidence as being a necessary "compromising and 'working with the system'" (Cooper, 2011, p. 16), others remain with long-held distrust of such moves. Brodley (2003, p. 67) highlights research showing that research results variability can be highly "attributable to researcher theoretical allegiance (Luborsky et al., 1999, 2002)". House (1997, p. 60) goes further, offering that "the 'anti-empiricist' position... views I have expressed ... do not seem to be receiving anything like the attention in our field that I believe they warrant."

For myself, I remain convinced that the benefits of counselling and psychotherapy have been recognised, regardless of approach as the “Dodo bird verdict” (Cooper, 2008) indicates. My sense is that “randomised control trials” (RCT) (Cooper, 2011) may improve the quality of evidence, yet do little to influence my person-centred practice. Bentall (2009), describes the “SoCRATES” RCT research, a “Reasonably sized” trial of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for “Early Schizophrenia”. He offers how such trials:

... seems to support the Dodo bird conjecture. In fact, one of the most surprising findings from the CBT literature is that patients receiving control therapies such as person-centred therapy and befriending do appear to fare better than patients who receive treatment as usual (that is, drugs without any kind of therapy). (p. 256).

Such reflections, including Bentall’s argument (citing McKenna, 2001) that “in many studies, CBT did not turn out to be superior to the less specific psychological treatments used as a comparison”, support the position Rogers (1957, p. 228) took in proposing “the conditions which I have come to regard as essential for psychotherapeutic change”. Rogers might be seen to have recognised the “Dodo bird verdict” when he offered:

...my aim in stating this theory is to state the conditions which apply to any situation in which constructive personality change occurs, whether we are thinking of classical psychoanalysis, or any of its modern offshoots, or Adlerian psychotherapy, or any other. It will be obvious then that in my judgment much of what is considered to be essential would not be found, empirically, to be essential. (Rogers, 1957, p. 230).

The definition of person-centred therapy may therefore be seen to be a definition of research evidenced, ethical professional activity aimed at facilitating constructive personality change. A possible problem arises where, as discussed above, there is seen to be a rejection of systematically applied therapeutic techniques and a reliance on more non-systematic, or idiosyncratic personal being (Bozarth, 1998, Keys, 2003).

Considerable disagreement and debate has continued over many years in the person-centred community in regard to such systematic being. Wyatt (2001a) offers various papers covering the differing perspectives which centre on the definition of congruence. Of particular note is Brodley (1998, p. 73). She considers that “Lack of attention to the theoretical definition of congruence... leads to distortions in client-centered therapy... the distortion shows up when therapists systematically state their own reactions to, or thoughts about, clients...”. Brodley saw the “nondirective attitude” (Raskin, 1947) as underpinning Rogers’ approach. In rejecting more systematic ways of working she was clear, even offering “that Gendlin’s ideas contradicted the nondirective essence of Rogers’ client-centered therapy... I have written articles... and taught many students, emphasizing the inherent nondirectiveness of client-centered therapy” (Brodley, 2006a, p. 7). Ellingham (2011) offers a powerful counter-argument to the positioning of nondirectivity as so essential, reflecting on the development of Rogers’ nondirective/client-centered/person-centred therapy or as he offers, “Rogerian relational therapy”.

What is clear is that there are strong arguments for eschewing the systematic application of techniques, be they “Gendlin’s” (Brodley 2006, p. 7) or something arising in any other therapeutic approach. At the same time, Brodley (1998, p. 81) may be seen to consider person-centred therapists as effectively systematic in their “*intentions* to relate to the client with acceptant empathic understanding” [original emphasis], underlining her citing Rogers (1959, p. 215) saying “... a part of the congruence of the therapist must be the experience of unconditional positive regard and the experience of empathic understanding.”

It seems that in my chosen approach, the only professionally defined ethical activity is to hold “*intentions* to relate to the client with acceptant empathic understanding”.

This point is maybe underlined in relation to my concerns over falling in love when Noel & DeChenne (1974, p. 254) offer that "...tendencies such as erotic attraction... can interfere with the empathic process...". Yet so long as such therapeutic processes remain active, there seems to be no theoretical (I stress, theoretical) limits on activity, which may emerge spontaneously and idiosyncratically from my less conscious being as an authentic, accepting, empathic response to a client. In online discussions, for example, Bozarth (Personal communication, online discussion forum, 2011) offered that:

Limits are permeable when empathy exists. Jeremy Rifkin [2009] contends, for example, that empathic extension is 'the only human expression that creates true equality between people.' He notes that the very act of identifying with another's struggle as if it were one's own is the ultimate expression of a sense of equality.

The development of the profession has seen ethical frameworks and codes (e.g. BACP, 2010) offering the therapist as much autonomy as possible, and the minimum prohibition of action:

As someone who has been involved in the production of codes for counsellors... This section builds on this experience by setting out a series of observations about how to get the best out of codes and guidelines by using them to inform your own capacity for ethical analysis and personal judgement. I have deliberately phrased the preceding sentence to emphasize the primacy of your ownership and control of the ethical decision-making. (Bond, 2000b, pp. 213-214).

In taking "ownership", a therapist's professional supervision is intended to offer a confidential space to allow personal consideration and reflection (Feltham & Dryden, 1994; Hawkins & Shohet, 2006; Tudor & Worrall, 2004; Shohet, 2008). My own experience is that whilst professional bodies lay down a minimum requirement (BACP, 2010) for supervision, my preference is to combine supervision and peer supervision with ongoing professional development and to question any requirement I feel for confidentiality in discussing my work. Within this, I find myself valuing space to "explore subtle grey areas. What, for example, distinguishes therapeutic touch and

hugging from titillation and the slippery slope towards sexual contact?” (Feltham & Dryden, 1994, p. 113).

Adding to how Bond highlights the personal ownership relating to ethical decision making, Keys & Proctor (2007, p. 361) offer that “To keep asking this question [‘How do I know I’m an ethical practitioner?'] is in itself an indication of ethical practice.” They consider that “Conformity to a code is not necessarily the same thing as acting ethically...” whilst Pattison (1999, p. 49) offers: “Indeed, if conformity is uncritical it may actually be unethical.”

It is at this point I move to considering what is maybe professionally defined as unethical activity.

Professionally Defined Unethical Activity.

“[F]inancial, sexual, emotional ... [and] ideological exploitation” (Bond, 2000a, p. 126) is deemed unethical, as is reflected in professional frameworks and codes such as BACP (2010). To this end, such professional organisations operate schemes of registration and accreditation, as well as professional conduct proceedings intended to reduce and address what is considered unethical activity. Aligning with my research title regarding “falling in love”, I focus on the sexual.

Such codes have been developed carefully, at times maybe reluctantly, in response to reports of extreme levels of unethical activity:

[A patient] was injected with Amytal, a barbiturate, and raped by... a past president of the American Psychiatric Association. ... rage was based in part on the perception that the psychiatric community protected Masserman by allowing him to relinquish quietly his licence to practice and by declining to expel him... (Pope, Sonne & Holroyd, 1993, p.ix-x).

Seemingly unethical activity continues, as repeatedly reported in organisational literature. For example: “[the practitioner] pleaded guilty to two charges that... being

in a position of trust in relation to two boys of 15... she intentionally touched them and that the touching was sexual.” (BACP, 2011 p. 51).

Pope, Sonne & Holroyd (1993) reflect on key research that has led to any sexual activity being deemed unethical from a professional perspective. I agree with such perspectives, although there are two points I feel worth reflecting. The first is how the profession recognises the need for practitioner autonomy.

A repeated theme of this book is that there are no clear, one-size-fits-all answers to what sexual feelings about patients mean or their implications for therapy... Each therapist must explore and achieve a working understanding of his or her own unfolding, evolving feelings and the ways in which they may provide a source of guidance about what to do or say next. (Pope et al., 1993, p. 179).

Whilst professional codes prohibit sexual activity (BACP, 2010; Hunter and Struve, 1998, pp. 259-261), the therapist is offered as much freedom as possible to make creative, ethical, use of their own feelings. Thorne (1991, 2001, 2002) has stood somewhat alone within the person-centred field in raising such topics, yet the literature in other counselling approaches has more extensively addressed this dilemma (Davies, 2003; 2004; Fonagy & Target, 2004; Grant, 1998; Mann, 1997; Pizer, 2003; Schaverien, 2006; Slavin, Davies, Oxenhadler, Seligman, & Stein, 2006). Edelwich & Brodsky (1991) maybe offer much to therapists in their extensive considerations of sexual dilemmas, regardless of theoretical orientation. Of particular note, I feel, is Haule’s (1996) “The Love Cure”. He offers how Eros maybe draws individuals into relationship where they can open themselves to the deep, personal exploration on which the whole professional endeavour maybe relies, yet the line separating this from sexual fusion is maybe one calling for the greatest respect. Pizer (2003) maybe captures this tension:

... the ‘crunch’ ... Inexplicably, the past is catapulted into the consulting room as a threat, a dare, a defiant plea that the therapist do something about that which the patient is certain nothing can be

done. It is now or never. And if not now, this charade called therapy is over. ... if the treatment process is to succeed, the therapist must find a way to extricate herself from involvement in the patient's repetition and thereby provide the potential for containment, a new experience, and new growth. (Pizer, 2003)

On the first point, I sense a well recognised respect and valuing for the autonomy and creativity of the practitioner.

The second point relates to the dynamics of organisational being and Professionalisation. Whilst the need for practitioner autonomy is recognised, the need for the profession to be seen as safe comes into play. Reports on professional conduct see a consideration of possible or actual "unfavourable media coverage" (BACP, 2011 p. 51).

Therapists may find themselves walking a thin line as to what might be considered sexual activity (Pizer, 2003, Feltham & Dryden, 1994, p. 113). Professional bodies require supervision to be in place in order that therapists have a confidential space in which to reflect on their practice and access alternative perspectives (BACP, 2010). Yet even here it seems that a taboo (Townsend, 2010) around discussing issues of sexual attraction exists, possibly driven by the dynamics of Professionalisation (Pattison, 1999). The words 'love' and 'sexual' receive no real mention in the contents or index of some of the literature on supervision (Hawkins & Shohet, 2006; Tudor & Worrall, 2004), even when contributing authors are maybe well aware of the issue (Shohet, 1997; Townsend, 2010).

"... and not to fall in love with clients...": Eros and Taboo.

The above sub-section has considered unethical sexual activity, where there is a clear intent by a practitioner to sexually exploit clients. I now move away from considerations of possible sexual predation, towards considerations of therapeutic value, and love.

In relation to the potential therapeutic value of sexual activity, Thorne (1991, p. 82-106) offered a challenging description of his work with a client where, in meeting her call to work with her sexual issues, they engaged in what some may consider sexual activity. Such situations are rare in the literature, and whilst currently outside of professional bounds, they may allow a client to address issues in their life. That all sexual activity is not perceived as predatory, abusive and harmful is maybe recognised when Russell (1993, p. 2) considers the terms

sexual abuse and sexual exploitation... to mean behaviour or experience where one person in a position of trust, or with a position of power over another, abuses this position, without the informed consent of the other party, for their own sexual gratification.

Whilst Thorne considers this piece of work to have been deeply therapeutic and carefully negotiated, the work of others seems to have been less so. Haule (1996, p. 38-54) reflects an incident described by Rutter (1989). A client “Barbara” intentfully seduces a psychiatrist which maybe questions the concept of informed consent. Whereas Thorne (1991) is very clear in regard to the constant maintenance of a therapeutic relationship, the character of “Dr Adams” seems quite willing to abandon such and be seduced when his client “succeeded in converting the relationship into a year-long affair” (Haule, 1996, p. 46-47). Then, “some kind of professional association was resumed for another nine years once an agreement had been reached to end the lovemaking” which apparently addressed issues that resulted from the affair.

Such writings offer that sexual activity may be experienced as either harmful or therapeutic by clients, and even as client mishaps. My sense is that the prohibitions in professional organisations (e.g. BACP, 2010) reflect considerable research as to the harm such activity may offer (Pope, 1990a, 1990b, 1994; Pope, Sonne & Greene, 2006; Pope, Sonne & Holroyd, 1993; Russell, 1993; Edelwich & Brodsky, 1991), and

that the therapist has a duty to recognise their role power (Proctor, 2002) and recognise the potential harm to be avoided, even if a client offers consent.

Moving more to the concept of “falling in love”, “Dr Adams” experience (Haule, 1996) maybe fits with Davies (2003, pp. 2-3) reflection that

Of course, as experienced analysts who have been burned, we learn to hope, and to hope fervently, that the patient falls only a little bit in love with her analyst, and does so only for what seems a respectable period of time, before moving on

Mainly from a Jungian/Kohutian perspective, Haule (1996) offers an extensive consideration of therapy as an erotic endeavour, without the actuality of what may be considered sexual activity. In his conclusion he offers that “The *structure of erotic interaction*, therefore, requires that the tension between dissolving and preserving be maintained. ... In therapy... a stance of distance-amid-union.” [original emphasis]. The extraordinarily intimate nature of therapy is clearly seen to hold not only therapeutic but also erotic, and sexually loving, potential.

Brodley (1975, p. 45) considers how both clients and therapists are “more fair-minded, more reflective, more understanding, tolerant and accepting, more accommodating and intelligent - in therapy than anywhere else.” Her perspective on a therapist might then as easily be relevant to a client when she says that “[he] can deceive himself into thinking he can be as accepting and understanding in his natural habitat as he is in the more limited therapy situation.” The idea of falling in love in therapy is thus challenged with recognition of a potential for self deception. The concept of self-trust then comes once more into focus. It seems that not only is there the self-trust not to fall in love with clients, but also the self-trust of any sensed reality to such if it does ever occur.

The literature review considered the concept of free will, highlighting how a practitioner holds responsibility for both their conscious and less conscious actions.

In introducing person-centred theory, the theoretical concept of congruence was related to unconscious competence and spontaneity. Professionally defined ethical activity was seen to mainly consist of consciously applied, systematic techniques, which can be seen as largely antithetical to the person-centred approach. Professionally defined unethical activity covers all forms of exploitation. In here focusing on the prohibition of sexual activity, the possibility of a taboo existing in the person-centred literature was identified. A final section considered the risk of a therapist falling in love with a client. A differentiation of loving sexual activity from sexual predation formed, although professionally all sexual activity is clearly prohibited.

The following chapter describes the research design used to explore the concept of self-trust, which has above been particularly related to the risk of falling in love.

Chapter 3: Methodology.

Philosophical Underpinnings to the Choice of Research Methodology.

Everyday I trust my life to quantitative research and reap the technological benefits it offers. If you ask me to put up a shelf, mix concrete, build an aeroplane, or perform many other practical tasks, then I will happily defer to quantitative research as a guide.

If you ask me to sit in a room with another individual and walk with them through the most personal aspects of their being, then I am more than a little reluctant to rely on research of a quantitative nature. In part I do, given that the quantitative meta-analyses offered by Cooper (2008) assure me of the benefits of counselling as an activity. They also assure me that it is “the therapeutic relationship” more than “technique and model factors” (Cooper, 2008, p. 56) that make for effective counselling. This activity is no ‘mix of concrete’ to me, it is far too individual to be tightly driven by generalised, positivistic, quantitative research. Freeth (2008, p. 9) makes the point well in reflecting the parable of the starfish:

As the old man walked the beach at dawn, he noticed a young man picking up starfish and slinging them into the sea.

Finally catching up with the youth, he asked him why he was doing this. The answer was that the starfish would die if left in the morning sun.

“But the beach goes on for miles and there are millions of starfish,” countered the other. “How can your effort make any difference?”

The young man looked at the starfish in his hand, then threw it to safety in the waves. “It makes a difference to this one,” he said.

In the parable we see the old questioning the new. Goethe (1774, p. 33) reflects similar in saying:

Oh, my friends! You ask why the torrent of genius so rarely pours forth, so rarely floods and thunders and overwhelms your astonished soul?—Because, dear friends, on either bank dwell the cool, respectable gentlemen, whose summer-houses, tulip beds and

cabbage patches would all be washed away, and who are therefore highly skilled in averting future dangers in good time, by damming and digging channels.

Here, I see the power base of the currently dominant positivist paradigm in science that Maykut & Morehouse (1994) and Proctor, Cooper, Sanders, & Malcolm (2006) highlight. Whilst the qualitative paradigm might better suit the humanities in general, professions and existing careers are currently built on more quantitative foundations. My sense is that quantitatively, counselling has been identified as a valid activity. To my mind, further refinement will come more from honing counsellors' abilities to relate to individual clients than from further developing generalised techniques that may inadvertently work against such. Totton (2008) offers that the quantitative gold standard of RCT's "specifically try to eliminate the effects of the relationship", although others (Cooper, 2011) consider adaptation to be possible.

The qualitative paradigm offers postulates more in line with my humanistic being (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 12). This paradigm steadily gains ground and Elliott, Fischer & Rennie (1999) "present a set of guidelines ... to contribute to the process of legitimizing qualitative research" (p. 217). Their considerations on quantitative methods reflect the risk that "the entity being researched is treated as an object that can be universalized."

Sanford (1993, p. 258) expresses that "... when turbulence or perturbations are introduced into a *self-organizing* organism in an open system, change will take place." [original emphasis]. My passion led me to risk personal change in putting my self forward as a "*self-organizing* organism" to be subject to the "turbulence or perturbations" of deeply reflexive, heuristic, qualitative research. Sanford (1993) discusses Carl Rogers' formative tendency and his relating to the concepts put forward by Ilya Prigogine regarding order emerging from chaos. I feel this is the

essential “anti-postmodernist” (Ellingham, 1999) quality of being a person, a “*self-organizing* organism”, existing as an “open system” interacting with their social environment.

As this project progressed, I realised the true depth of the personal journey I had embarked upon. O’Hara (1986, p. 85) notes that “Client-centred therapy is, itself, a heuristic investigation into the nature and meaning of human experience.” I had set myself up as both counsellor and client far more than I ever intended, and required further time in order to reach something of a “saturation point” (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994, p. 144).

In my choice to undergo this research, I maybe “share a concern with investigating *the essence of human experience*” [original emphasis] (Denscome, 2003, p. 104) with philosophers such as Husserl, Sartre and Heidegger (Howard, 2000; Stolorow, 2007; Russell, 1946; Spinelli, 1989). Such philosophical considerations underpin the phenomenological stance within qualitative research (Spinelli, 1989, 2005). Experience is momentary, fleeting, “The conditions change, the experience is past; and I am left free to doubt or deny that I ever had it” (Ayer, 1956, p. 56). Yet I believe qualitative research aims to draw on past experience in order to inform future being without overly relying on the assumption of a “rational agent” (Pattison, 1999, p. 47) consciously applying defined techniques. I say “overly relying” because it is the same rational agent that is capable of adapting and reworking techniques according to each individual client.

The Initial Design and Emergent Methodology.

Attempting a highly reflexive (Etherington, 2004) heuristic research process (Moustakas, 1990) would mean a somewhat emergent methodology. I therefore planned a bricolage (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 4) of this with an adaptation of the

constant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). This increased the level of structure to support some form of progress monitoring and overall validation.

Moustakas (1990) proposes a number of stages to heuristic research: *initial engagement; immersion; incubation; illumination; explication and creative synthesis*.

My problems started in the *initial engagement*. I found that my self-trust applies both as a counsellor and as a researcher, causing a degree of self-referential confusion.

My initial literature searching (Appendix A10) added confusion rather than clarity.

Rather than abandon the project, I trusted myself to find more tacit (Polanyi, 1966) direction.

The *Immersion* stage felt more fruitful as I immersed myself in both the raw data and

more completely in the literature. The metaphor of an accordion (Maykut &

Morehouse, 1994, p. 132) was reassuring, capturing a sense of being one squeeze

in and two pulls out as the literature search offered little of relevance to the raw data.

I realised that the searches were focused on therapist behaviours and their therapeutic affect. What they did not address was the attitudinal stance of the

therapist from which they emerged, which is where I believed self-trust comes into play.

The research had unfolded into a more “spontaneous methodology”, as my research

supervisor (R. Mintz, Personal communication, 2009) inadvertently termed it. This

was at a point where the emerging methodology seemed more like a disintegration of

the whole project. Whilst the initial literature review undermined my confidence in

continuing to offer little of relevance, examples of phenomenological research cited in

Moustakas (1994) restored it. I remained sure that his heuristic methodology held the

greatest relevance.

Immediately after the research supervision meeting, having gained a feeling that this project was salvageable, I reviewed Wardle (2004) and found myself again lost to my own spontaneity. Here was my ongoing problem. As soon as I attempted to research into what was effectively my spontaneity, then my spontaneity delivered more reflexive data. I immediately e-mailed these notes (Appendix A6) to my research supervisor to snapshot my process being as it is, and possibly offer further validity to this research.

It was not just in attempting to do the research that I found this problem. I found swathes of my personal and professional life entering my research journals. I felt highly exposed and vulnerable, particularly around aspects of deeply personal relationships and sexuality (Appendix A5), yet at the same time sensing that here was something of value to the counselling profession.

The *immersion* also drew in elements of the later stages, seemingly matching expectations of some level of overlapping and cycling. As the data analysis approached completion, I made attempts to write up the findings in order to maintain some structure to my working. In hindsight, what felt like a natural slide into *creative synthesis*, was more a form of active *incubation*, although still very much a part of *immersion*. In effect, I was allowing myself to absorb information (*immersion*), whilst drawing from tacit realms within me (*incubation*) by writing copious amounts in a journalistic (*illumination*) form or even draft dissertation chapter form (*creative synthesis*). I feel it worth saying a little more here to emphasise the self-referential and cyclical nature of my process, because I feel myself a little at odds when Moustakas (1990, p. 29) says how “Polanyi (1964) asserted that discovery does not ordinarily occur through deliberate mental operations and directed calculated efforts”. What others may see of me to be deliberate and directed calculated efforts is

something I experience as nothing of the sort. I experience an active chaos where the depths of my being find creative expression.

I feel Humphreys (2006) provides an insight into contemplative silence as a form of *incubation*, expressing an increased sense of personal spirituality bringing what I consider to be a *sense of Joy* (see Findings, p. 50). In working with peers I had come to believe that I was maybe coming to this same sense of Joy through my contemplations (*active incubation*) of mathematics, science and philosophy. I found something I considered to be *creative synthesis* filling page after page of my journals, would-be dissertation chapters, and email communications with peers.

At times, I could not continue. Literally, either physically or mentally. Such times are actually seen in the reflexive findings (A4, 265-313), and pointed the way towards moving from *active incubation* to a deliberately more tacit, unconscious *incubation*. In feeling that maybe I had hit the end of the road, I again worried that this research had become untenable. My focus moved easily onto other aspects of my life and I feared my head emptying itself of all I had absorbed during my *immersion*.

A deeper *illumination* then hit me like a steam-roller. I realised why the literature and the raw data were not finding any match. My research supervisor had offered the idea of a possible limit to self awareness. I now saw such a limit as a boundary between two realms.

One realm contains the bulk of the literature I had covered. Here, I perceived an assumption of Pattison's (1999, p. 47) "rational agent", the somewhat "constituted unitary subject" (Proctor, 2002, p. 54, citing Butler, 1992) of the researcher, a knower or observer offering an expression of understanding of the phenomenon under examination. This assumption or postulate maybe sits as part of both the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms. In most research, data on the phenomenon

comes from working with co-researchers and is maybe more external to the researcher than the heuristic methodology intends. As Sela-Smith (2002) notes:

I conducted a review of 28 research documents whose authors claimed to have followed Moustakas' (1990) heuristic research method. I found that of the 28 cases, only 3 were able to successfully fulfil the Moustakas method. Most inquiries presented no evidence of the type of free-fall surrender to the process that was described as a jumping into the river, a leap into the darkness. The majority did not report personal, subjective experience. Instead of having the process determine the phases, nearly all seemed to have been conducted by a time clock, a calendar, and by procedural rules. (p. 70)

When he describes the phases in his 1990 heuristic methods text, Moustakas emphasizes the need to surrender to them, not to formalize them and mechanically follow them. But in explaining the application of his method, he does not give direction for *letting go and falling into the river* or *swimming into the unknown current* that occurs when one leaps into the unknown self. (p. 77)

In my inexperience, I feel I spent a lot of time reviewing research sitting largely in this realm external to the core "constituted unitary subject" of the researcher. Moving to the other realm meant going deeper inside the "constituted unitary subject" of the researcher, as Sela-Smith (2002) implies.

Although the qualitative research paradigm addresses the realm of the phenomenon, I feel it remains somewhat orientated towards symbolisation and expression in objectively verifiable terms. Validating that 'all co-researchers reported experiencing green as a calming colour' is easier than validating that 'I experience green as a calming colour'.

Entering this realm maybe opened up a completely different direction in the literature searching, in terms of more spiritual and theological texts. My sense was that such might prove more fruitful than my initial searches, yet also prove to be off track. Discussions in research supervision saw professional ethics coming to the fore, and allowing the literature review to find form. Common ground with the heuristic aspect of the research came in terms of free will and the ability to make ethical decisions.

Sample.

Etherington (2004) offers much to consider in being a reflexive researcher, which can be seen to apply to heuristic research and to the sampling of ones self. Apart from concerns over researcher bias, she offers how there can be a “huge impact” (p. 204) on the researcher, and that “because it is personal we do get caught up and involved in it.” (Etherington, 2004). In reflecting her discussion with another researcher, she wonders if being so closely involved might better be contra-indicated.

Offering reflexive data is seen to add to validity (Etherington, 2004, p.48) and extensive journals reflecting the reflexive process were kept. There still remains the question of the trustworthiness of any reflexive researcher. The question arises as to “what sort of ‘raw data’ is this when I write for the resultant readership?” (A5, 97), when the act of journaling has the deliberate intention of displaying validity. On this point, the suggestions for further research highlight a need to reduce the level of self-research.

In initially browsing the literature and deciding on the focus of this research, I realised that self-trust seemed to have attracted little research effort. In talking with peers, I realised just how strongly the assumed rational agent resides in each person. The question posed in freeform prose #1 (see p. 1) often prompted blank, confused and dubious looks. In an internet forum, for example, a few respondents kindly offered a mathematical proof of “why 1 and 1 makes 2” without considering how such a proof itself offered validity to any individual, how it is that a person actually experiences such validity. Very quickly, I decided that this initial research project would gain from my undergoing such consideration myself, hence the decision to move to a highly heuristic and reflexive research design. I strongly felt that I personally needed greater clarity and understanding before attempting research sampling other therapists.

Data Collection and Introduction to the Data.

My intention was to have some ground whilst surrendering myself to the heuristic research process (Moustakas, 1990; Sela-Smith, 2002). Such ground might come from interviewing co-researchers and producing transcripts, but as explained in the prior section, I felt it valid to focus more specifically on my personal experience first.

Rather than transcripts reflecting the experience of others, I opted to use documents reflecting my own experience:

A1. G: The Gödel Paper. This unpublished attempted paper was an exploration of the mathematical and computational concepts that I had puzzled over for years, until a change in career allowed me some interdisciplinary insights. It includes Murdoch's (1970) sense of beauty "as a measure of the truth, or at least accuracy, of perception." (A1, 241). Within the paper this is related to Rogers' (1980, p. 129) thought that "...I am at my best...when I am somehow in touch with the unknown in me". In combination, there is a recognition that the essential aspect differentiating a person from a well-programmed computer is something maybe captured in Buber's (cited in Hycner, 1991, p. 19) concept of "abysmal lability", infinite changeability. This offers an "anti-postmodernist... 'grand' theory" (Ellingham, 1999, p. 65) arising from mathematical and philosophical thought. As such, I felt it worthy of being included in its entirety (Appendix A1) to offer some understanding of the depth of considerations in the past.

A2. P: The Pyramid Paper. Also referred to as the volcano paper. Another paper, unfinished and unpublished, addressing the same thoughts in a more metaphorical way. It explores the concept of the development of

consciousness within what is otherwise “void” (A2, 57-58), a term drawn from Weil (1952). The theme is effectively that of order emerging out of chaos (Prigogine & Stengers, 1984), although I now find greater resonance with terms offered by Bohm (1980, 1987). In effect, this paper sees me positioning Rogers’ (1980) formative tendency as being a driver towards some form of universal self-consciousness, and in so doing initiating a basis for any definition of what may be deemed ethical. Whilst religious metaphors may hover near, my intent was to maintain a more scientific, philosophical or mathematical line.

- A3. I: The Interview. A transcript of myself as the subject of an interview for a separate research project. In effect, this sees aspects of the above two papers being expressed more spontaneously and was selected for inclusion in order to offer greater validity to this research.

Adding to this is the vast array of reflexive data created as part of the research process, represented here by:

- A4. The Data Analysis. A record of the primary data analysis, colour coded to show development through time. Captured within this are reflexive thoughts which are then allowed to feed into the research findings. Note that in this analysis, the prior appendices, A1, A2, A3, are referred to as G, P, I, respectively.
- A5. The London Journal. An extract from my research journal aimed at showing the level of reflexivity of my research process. It is here that I feel I lay myself most bare in offering a deep insight into the chaos that sometimes fills my mind. Using an idea taken from Maykut and Morehouse (1994), I separated my immediate thoughts from what I

sensed as my immediate observation of myself from a research standpoint whilst on a trip to London. A further layer of reflexivity came when typing up the journal notes from paper and resulted in the right hand column. Within this is also another layer of 'researcher' observations.

- A6. The Wardle (2004) Review. A snapshot of my research process as it emerged whilst reviewing the literature (see above, p. 35).
- A7. The Data Analysis Theme Summary. A list of interlinked themes emerging from the data whilst attempting to find possible expression. With this are fleeting thoughts that were captured during the process, descending again into journalistic process. This stands as an accessible example of the more private materials referred to in Appendix 8.
- A8. Private Material. As well as the above, there is my remaining research journaling, reading notes and email conversations which I acknowledge although hold with greater confidentiality. I feel I have already laid much bare.

Data Analysis.

I experienced the process of data analysis as a rigorous exercise in self-exploration. I felt that it was me rather than the raw data itself that was under the spotlight. The papers and interview that formed the raw data had meant a lot to me when they were first conceived, and I found it greatly reassuring that considerable aspects of what I had written then continued to hold up now. Other aspects did not, and within the analysis I became aware of keeping a careful eye on what I might prefer to sweep under the carpet.

The data analysis procedure I used was as follows, and an extract is seen in Appendix A4. The colour coding seen there was actually a retrofit to combine the output files from each stage into something more compact for inclusion here.

The items of raw data were tagged for reference as G (Gödel paper, Appendix A1), P (Pyramid paper, Appendix A2) and I (Interview, Appendix A3). Each existed as a computer file, so I simply applied line numbering in order to allow referencing within the files.

Initially, I read through the raw data repeatedly in order to absorb it as much as possible. I then began to go through it more meticulously and draw out possible themes beginning with P, the pyramid paper. In the extract from the data analysis (Appendix A4), this initial stage is the black, non-italic text. I was looking for themes in terms of repeated “units of meaning” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), which appear in Appendix A4 as references into the raw data (Appendices A1, A2, A3). I was also using simple tricks in the word processing software to perform word frequency analysis when I felt something seemed to be repetitive. It was this that led to the disassembly of what started as a “Sense of Joy” into one of joy, beauty, awe, congruence etc.

With the themes from the pyramid paper noted, I then turned to the next data item. Each sensed unit of meaning either fell under an existing theme or added to the list. This process was repeated for the third data item to ensure that the themes identified covered all the data. I then cycled through again, checking if themes that had later emerged may have relevance to the earlier data. I expected to cycle three or four times, but when I found that nothing further emerged on revisiting the interview, I decided that there was little sense in any further repetition.

Whilst identifying themes, I was also reflexively recording thoughts and links that occurred. When working in industry, developing computer software, I feel I developed a form of intense concentration that allowed me to hold a sense of highly complex situations in order to find logical definition which may then unfold into the writing of the software. My work colleagues used to laugh at how I would do apparently nothing for days and then write highly complex code from start to end which proved to be of a high quality. I found the same process occurring here and felt it necessary given the complexity of what I was trying to achieve. As had sometimes happened back then, at one point I hit what may be perceived as a small burnout resulting in the need to walk and recover (A4, 50). On reflection, I feel this came about through so intensely trying to observe my own being in operation, and hitting a limit in terms of a self-referential knot. I believe that it is maybe such experience on which Moustakas' (1990) consideration of a need for *incubation* is grounded. This allows me to further trust the research methodology I had selected, and validated what I considered in the original research proposal as a potential "phase transition" (Kriz, 2007) or tipping point in this researcher's way of being.

In effect, the data analysis had produced more data of the reflexive variety, to be added to the journals and reading notes already accumulated. At the time I thought I would have to go through another analysis cycle based on the reflexive data. In a way, I felt this may reflect aspects of an "emergent design" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, pp. 44-5) where "the composition of the sample itself evolves over the course of the study". I realised that I was beginning to slide into an ongoing process that might take a lifetime. I was trying to grasp my being, yet as I did, my being was then moving on. I tried again... Given the space and time available, the reflexivity had to come to an end. I moved from active engagement with the data, to more deliberately writing up the findings from the time period now past.

Ethical Concerns.

An ethics committee ensures that any research proposal is ethically sound before the research begins. An emergent concern was the change of title which reflects how the research focus moved from the experience of self-trust in therapeutic practice towards relating self-trust to ethical concerns. This change was discussed with my research supervisor who liaised with the ethics committee. It was recognised that the change did not affect anyone involved, but the considerations led to an extended review of literature on ethics, professional codes and frameworks.

Research usually involves a number of research subjects or co-researchers, requiring careful ethical consideration regarding offering appropriate confidentiality whilst maintaining the accurate representation of any data (see the following section on Validity and the section discussing the Sample, above). In deciding on research where I stood alone as research subject, such concerns were replaced with considerations about how the research might impact on those around me in my personal life as well as clients past and present.

Ethical concerns have been addressed through reducing the level of personal disclosure, also enabling those close to me to be far less visible. They remained in control of the inclusion of any material relating to them, even if that may mean calling a halt to the entire process. I was not going to sacrifice either marriage or friendships to this endeavour! At some stage, written consent would need to cover any inclusion of emergent, reflexive data, so initial verbal agreements were obtained. This covered possible material in research journals, ongoing email conversations and elsewhere. I was continuing to check back with them regarding possible inclusions right through to the point where I recognised a critical ethical dilemma meant a significant reduction in the use of such materials.

In a research supervision interview I recognised that if any counselling client that I had worked with read my disclosures, there was the potential to shift the perspective they held of me (accurate or otherwise), undermine the work we had done together and possibly cause harm. It was at this point freeform prose #2 (Appendix A8) erupted to reflect my strong preference for openness .

At this point, I realised how the usual research structures regarding co-researchers enable appropriate confidentiality and thus minimise such ethical concerns. Effectively, the number of people who were identified or potentially identifiable was reduced to a minimum before formal consent was finalised (Appendix A11).

The same applied with the intended use of vignettes from my client work, requiring clients to know of the research and offer written consent accordingly. The decision was taken not to use the vignettes and thus avoid any impact on clients.

In the research proposal I contemplated how opening my being to considerable volatility might affect my personal relationships and my work. My research and practice supervisors were highly aware of my research process and extra time was used to carefully monitor what effect it might be having on my client work. It has been an unexpected finding to realise to what level I can engage in such personal explorations without my client work being affected.

The following points have thus dictated what formal consent is required in submitting this dissertation:

- All references are agreed or relate to literature in the public domain.
- The level of my self-disclosure has been agreed with those close to me (Appendices A9, A11), and is less than what was agreed in prior drafts.
- No material that might lead to the identification of a specific client is included.

- The ethical agreement relating to the interview of myself gives me ownership and the right to reuse the material as I choose (Appendix A7).

I feel this aligns with the professional ethical stance described by Bond (2004, p. 10):

The distinctive ethical dimension of counselling and psychotherapy practice is the trust placed by clients in practitioners. This trust is not only essential to achieving the client's aspirations but also for the practitioner to establish the quality of relationship and interaction that makes the work possible.

Validity.

... validity in heuristics is not a quantitative measurement that can be determined by correlations or statistics. The question of validity is one of meaning: Does the ultimate depiction of the experience derived from one's own rigorous, exhaustive self-searching and from the explications of others present comprehensively, vividly, and accurately the meanings and essences of the experience? This judgement is made by the primary researcher, who is the only person in the investigation who has undergone the heuristic enquiry ...

Moustakas (1990, p. 32)

Whilst Moustakas sees judgements over validity being "made by the primary researcher", I felt the need to include a broader perspective.

Validation becomes a major concern due to the highly personal research topic and individualised methodology. In such self-focused research, there are no interviewees to revisit for "testimonial validity" (McLeod, 1994, p. 100). To counter this, the appendices offer extensive access to reflexive data which displays the "Credibility of the researcher" (McLeod, 1994, p. 101), particularly for examination purposes. To add to this, a validation review was also undertaken (Appendix A9). Although of a minor scale, the validation review maybe reflects what Lee (1993, p. 90) offers regarding validation of self-reports through "collateral reports, for example, from family members, partners and so on". Lee also considers asking interviewees "about the same topic several times over" (Lee, 1993, citing Kinsey et al., 1948; 1953),

which in this project could be seen as the analysis of separate expressions from one person (Appendices A1, A2, A3).

Whilst some form of structured research process can be validated to some level, whether such an audit trail may offer validity to the reader is maybe difficult to judge, as Bridgman (1950, p. 50, cited in Moustakas, 1990, p. 33) says:

The process that I want to call scientific is a process that involves the continual apprehension of meaning, the constant appraisal of significance, accompanied by a running act of checking to be sure I am doing what I want to do, and of judging correctness or incorrectness. This checking and judging and accepting that together constitute understanding are done by me and can be done for me by no one else. They are as private as my toothache, and without them science is dead.

This maybe aligns with Spinelli (2005, p. 132) offering that:

While Natural Science derived psychological research typically focuses on 'the notes', phenomenological research seeks to disclose 'the melody', that is, more broadly speaking, the foundational structure of conscious experience. ... Husserl sought to create a truly scientific philosophy - not a philosophy of science, but, rather, a philosophy that would form the foundations of any scientific enquiry.

If I am to trust my self in later research activity, then I consider self-trust to be the logical focus for my initial research and the basis for any future research career. I touch on this briefly in a preamble to the Discussion Chapter (p. 62, below).

Silverman (2005) considers the "temptation to exclude contrary cases" (p. 210), yet (p. 211, citing Mehan, 1979) recognises that "Researchers seldom provide the criteria or grounds for including certain instances and not others." Whilst I have strived to respect all the raw data, and am prepared to make both it and my workings available to support any valid audit trail, I have been less rigorous in my reflections regarding the nature of research. In offering a self-research study on aspects of self "as private as my toothache" (Bridgman, 1950, p. 50, cited in Moustakas, 1990, p.

33), I find myself questioning “the foundations of any scientific enquiry” (Spinelli, 2005, p. 132), which is the assumption of a rational agent.

Silverman (2005, pp. 212-213) discusses the “refutability principle” where “we must subject this evidence to every possible test” and (citing Popper, 1959) “we must seek to refute assumed relations between phenomena.” I would then argue that making the data itself available for examination purposes adds validity, because the data presents such attempts at refutation of assumptions in arriving at the concepts of Wholeness and a Sense of Joy (see Findings and Appendix A1). Again, this study presents the contemplations of a single practitioner and suggests that the profession will benefit if others engage in similar contemplations, individually, in peer groups or as considered in the Suggestions For Further Research (p. 73).

Limitations and Possible Criticisms.

I remain deeply aware of the problem of personal researcher bias, yet this is maybe a key consideration here as already discussed above. Moustakas (1994, pp. 60-61) highlights:

My experience in working with the epoché process is that I can set aside many biases. ...[yet] my own rooted ways of perceiving and knowing still enter in. The value of the epoché principle is that it inspires one to examine biases and enhance one’s openness even if a perfect and pure state is not achieved.

I intended to offer a perspectival (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) insight into the deeply personal experience of self-trust and research the underlying reasons for the personal biases that I hold, by finding expression for my personal philosophical stance.

Time was expected to be the primary limitation, yet with academic deadlines falling away, the primary limitation came in terms of what might be contained in a

reasonably sized Masters dissertation. Other paths of investigation that were considered for inclusion are now Suggestions For Further Research (p. 73).

The wider applicability of self-research such as this might be considered to be limited. I would counter this with Rogers (1961) paradoxical statement that “*what is most personal is most general*”. In a recent article for example, Jovanov-Kaye (2009, p. 1) offers a personal insight into transferability across cultures, saying:

On reflection, my whole life’s experience makes me believe, and is witness to, PC [person-centred] philosophy and approach being transferable across borders, offering the grounds not for segregation, but for integration; the integration of a kind where the sense of identity of the integral parts does not have to be lost but may be enhanced.

I perceive an essential integrity within what I sense as the implicate order (Bohm, 1987) encompassing the entirety of existence, as the findings will show. Whilst this expression may be consigned by some to the ‘overly personal’ category, I hope it offers a reminder to any reader of our essential humanity, maybe necessarily through a deeply personal expression of my own essence.

One criticism might be that the three items of raw data are effectively a chronological progression of my own developing thoughts, thus to apply a data analysis method usually applied across a more varied range of sources is of limited value. My experience is that the data analysis process has fuelled a highly productive reflexive process, enabling a far clearer depiction of personal beliefs to emerge, as expressed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Findings From the Raw Data.

The themes and sub-themes which emerged in the data analysis are tabulated below. The reference given in the right hand column is part of the validation trail in referencing back into the detailed analysis (Appendix A4).

Theme	Sub Theme	Reference
Wholeness.	Non religious, Maths, Science, Self-Ref, etc.	A4:78-82
	Unknown, Otherness	A4:91-95
	Bridge Science to Unknown	A4:96-100
	Spirituality linked	A4:83-84
	Dissolving Boundaries, Gödel, Zeno	A4:48-57
	Everything as one - Wholeness, Enfolding	A4:46-47
	Chaos, No-thing-ness, Void, Absence of Awareness	A4:58
	Awareness Growing, Resonance in Void	A4:75-77
	Unfolded Explicate, Formative Tendency	A4:44-45
	Abysmal Lability, Infinite Depths, Enfolding	A4:59-61
	Sense of Everything	A4:43
Sensing The Wholeness.	A Sense of Beauty	A4:10-43
	Choice, Free Will, Determinism	A4:85-90
	Trust wow - late addition here!	A4:101-115
Near-Joy.	Attachments and Near-Joy	A4:62-74
	Synchronicity	A4:116
	Draw	A4:117-119
Philosophy.	Philosophy	A4:120-121

Moustakas' (1990) heuristic research method sees the creation of individual and composite depictions representing each item of raw data (usually each separate interview, and then an overall picture). Due to space limitations, only a brief composite depiction, a form of *creative synthesis* (Moustakas, 1990, p. 32), is

included here. Appendix A8 offers access to further material emerging in the *creative synthesis* stage.

Summary.

Each of us moves as we will. Somehow, consciously or unconsciously, we each make the decision on how to respond in the current moment. The basic question that has driven me to this research is how a therapist does this. What determines how 'free will' works? Within the raw data are reflections on how to build a decision making machine, an artificial intelligence that has the apparent capability of free will. What is it to know the 'fact' that "1 and 1 makes 2" (freeform prose #1, p. 1), and even to risk our lives in aeroplanes based on it?

How do I trust myself to immediately respond in any moment, to move with "unconscious competence" (Mearns, 1997, p. 27). Such trust means I can respond less consciously and more spontaneously, rather than having to carefully consider every move I make. Relating this to the terminology of the person-centred approach, I consider this as an immediate sense of my own congruence as possible response rises within me. Either it can freely emerge, or I immediately need an alternative response. It is therefore not only a sense of congruence, but of rightness and even ethicality, a sense that this response fits both with myself and others present, with the absolute Wholeness of the current moment.

Two main themes emerge from the data. Firstly is the concept of a Wholeness or oneness to the entirety of existence. This seems to emerge more from contemplations of scientific, mathematical and philosophical texts than from anything more religious, spiritual or mystical. Whilst the concept is personally held, it is of the absolute nature of our existence. Secondly is the concept that there is a possible sensing of such a oneness. This sense is conceived as offering a basis for decision

making. Effectively it serves as an ethical sense, a sense of what is right in that it is a sense of what is. Murdoch's (1970) sense of beauty seems to have offered much here, although the dominant label is a Sense of Joy. We move in ways that feel to be the best option, which in no way relates to the clichéd saying "If it feels good, do it".

The ethical sense carries into a third theme, 'Near-Joy' in terms of attachment and the loving of others. It appears as the driver for sexual desire and thus the possibility of unethical action in terms of possibly engaging sexually with others. The concept of Near-Joy is seen to be relatively new, yet as later discussion will show it maybe sits central to this research. 'Synchronicity' is a concept that has arisen in theoretical discussions regarding how "the depth of relationship should be experienced by both people" (Mearns, 2009). It was included in the third theme as it may be considered to be a potential driver towards deepening relationship or even attachment. 'Draw' relates to concepts of attachment and Near-Joy in being "... a Darwinian, evolution thing... a survivalist draw ... to fully understand the other." (I375-376).

The emergence of 'Philosophy' only as a minor theme was surprising, particularly given the depth of philosophical consideration in the Literature Review.

The main themes are now expressed in greater depth which stands as a form of "*creative synthesis*" (Moustakas, 1990).

Wholeness.

There are extensive passages in the raw data displaying considerations over concepts of reality, drawn from science, mathematics, computing and philosophy. Within these, Rogers (1980) concept of a formative tendency is acknowledged as "the beginnings of a bridge between modernistic scientific thinking and something more 'unknown' and even mystical or spiritual." (P113-114).

The concept of infinity is often mentioned, considering for example how “the development of artificial intelligence where attempts to avoid the problem of infinity have involved concepts of self definition and self reference, something maybe akin to self awareness.” (G25-27). From this follows “that, according to my understanding of Gödel, there is necessarily an unknown, there is part of ourselves that cannot be known” (G142-143). Such unknowingness is related to Buber’s (1937) concept of Otherness, and to Rogers saying “when I am somehow in touch with the unknown in me ...Then simply my presence is releasing and helpful to the other.’ (Rogers 1980, p. 129) ” (G14-19). A sense of sheer wonder is seen in comments like “Intelligent life is an echoing through infinity” (G178).

Although there are references to religious texts (Buber, 1937; Merton, 2004) and an acknowledgement both of mysticism and spirituality, consideration from more religious perspectives is limited: “Certainly, its root is not in any religion I hold even if the similarities are considerable.” (P26-27). There are emotive expressions where such similarities are addressed, although based more in philosophical and mathematical realms: “Mathematically and physically, there is an infinite potential for encoding and being. Somewhere in this small dimple is the vastness that is the ability to be aware and to hold understanding.” (P103-105).

With the boundaries between spatial positions, the Cartesian/Newtonian paradigm, challenged by concepts such as Zeno’s paradoxes and Gödel’s incompleteness theorem (Blackburn, 1994; Hofstadter, 1979), the concept develops of a oneness, Wholeness or unity to the entirety of existence, and a sensing of such: “For me, all positioning and categorisation in space and time fall aside “when I am somehow in touch with the unknown in me” [Rogers, 1980, p.129]” (G34-35).

The Wholeness is conceived as being all that exists, but without any conscious awareness to bring order, or to perceive any-thing. A metaphor of a two dimensional plane with the potential for an additional third dimension (conscious awareness) is used and introduces concepts from the quantum theorist, David Bohm (1980, 1987):

So, the black, flat ground is an infinite plane of non-awareness, a sort of void. Actually, I conceive that this void is seething with potential, but without awareness it is effectively nothing. Whilst the void takes on a two dimensional form here, in reality it is multi-dimensional and even infinitely dimensional (In Bohm's or Wyatt's terms, it is maybe the implicate order - I still have reading to do). (P57-61).

Within this void, or implicate order, the concept of increasing order, in terms of conscious awareness, is conceived as a growing resonance aligning with Rogers' (1980) concept of a formative tendency. A logical or mathematical mechanism is conceived as core to this, and aligned with Rogers' (1951) earlier concept of the actualising tendency: "The void of the implicate order enfolds into explicate order as shared awareness steadily develops" (P110-111). A seemingly mathematically and scientifically based sixth sense is found to align not only with Rogers' formative and actualising tendencies, but also with the core person-centred concepts of relationship, empathy, UPR and congruence (Rogers, 1957):

my life has unfolded in the way it's unfolded and, err, it's, and I'm sat within the oneness, enfolded (R: hmm, hmm) with the oneness enfolded in me...and so when I am...with the client, and we've got some sort of resonance, I, I can say it's the empathic resonance (R: mm) but it...aah...it's not necessarily just empathic in a feeling thing: it's a holistic (R: mm) y'know, ermm thing more... (I262-266).

The word "unfolding" (Bohm, 1980, Wyatt, 2004) is used to refer to the process where understanding emerges into consciousness in the form of metaphor or narrative. What is always present in the implicate order *unfolds* into explicate order, the implicit is perceived to become explicit through gaining the dimension of consciousness. Such unfolding is seen as an aspect of Rogers (1980) formative tendency at work across the Wholeness or unity: "There is a universal vibe, and we

are all humming along to the tune. When Rogers (1980) describes the formative tendency he is, to my mind, recognising that tune in play.” (G183-184).

Given the perceived Wholeness of the implicate order, Bohm’s (1980) concept of enfolding is seen as an essential aspect of human potential, of being a person, differentiating consciousness from any form of positivistic mechanism. Buber’s (1957, cited in Hycner, 1991, p. 19) phrase “abysmal lability” is found fitting: “actually a bottomless abyss in the sense I draw from Buber’s phrase. Mathematically and physically, there is an infinite potential for encoding and being. Somewhere in this small dimple is the vastness that is the ability to be aware and to hold understanding.” (P103-105).

Sensing The Wholeness.

The possibility of sensing the Wholeness described above, came with Murdoch’s (1970) concept of the experience of beauty. The data analysis shows this perceived sense of beauty coming in many guises, as a sense of: joy; awe; congruence; love; richness; accuracy of perception; UPR; everything; and with these further guises as a sense of ethics; enfoldment; taciticy; and self-trust. It may reasonably be considered as a sense of ethical being, through one’s alignment with the Wholeness. Based in considerations of science and mathematics, it is seen as a complete and immediate evaluation of the current moment, a sort of sixth sense, seemingly unfolding outside of consciousness and providing a holistic sense of a situation: “not to perceive objective reality... but to perceive or sense more of the unity as a whole” (G210-211).

It is believed to provide agentic decision. In the counselling arena this is valued and perceived as an enhanced ability to find a suitable response, even to silence and possibly to allow time to ‘re-centre’: “holding this sense spontaneously addresses the

question of ‘am I being congruent in this moment?’ and allows me to act.” (G265-267). A journal extract maybe shows the strength of value assigned to this sense:

The feeling of joy allows the extremity of altruism,
the surrender of ones own life. (A8, 13-14).

Yet such immediacy maybe cancels the requirement of free will, in the sense Rogers expresses when saying “I believe that the freest man freely chooses the behavior which is also determined, and thus at least in the ideal case the contradiction is reconciled.” (Rogers, nd, in Cissna & Anderson, 2002, p. 115).

The sense is deeply one of positivity, joy or rightness, of exaltation rather than sadness or wrongness: “how do I know when I’m being congruent ... I’m in the right place ... a sense of beauty and a sense of love” (I27-32). Such positivity spills into the choice of words and metaphors, and easily extends across a range of personal emotions. There seems to be a recognition that the depth of emotional awareness has developed in recent times for this author:

Training as a counsellor has bought *awareness* (simply greater symbolisation maybe) of the depths of love I feel for people, particularly for a few close friends and family members, for my partner of 20 years and for fellow counsellors with whom I have had the honour of sharing great connection. It’s not that the love wasn’t there all along, simply that my awareness of it has grown, hugely. (P85-90) [original emphasis].

Within the raw data can be seen consideration of person-centred counselling theory, particularly Rogers’ (1980) concepts of the formative tendency, process and presence, evolutionary theory and philosophy:

...an opening up to the infinities within ourselves and thus supportive of a non-directive attitude ... a level of mutuality ... to see the beauty (Murdoch, 1970) of the Other (Buber, 1937) and in so doing hold some level of non-possessive, non-judgemental, non-destructive, non-directional love. ... We have negotiated a relationship with a heightened openness to our experiencing of each Other (G273-279).

There is a sense that through concentrating on the positives then the negatives fall away. However, there is a clear struggle over risks due to certain aspects of positive emotions, and particularly the multifaceted meanings of the word love:

As I open myself to such loving, then I risk being changed. ... not through introjection but through some more positive process. If the falling in love is mutual, then we are both open to change, both engaged in powerful dialectical encounter (P97-99).

Everything is seen to merge into Wholeness:

... when I sink into the oneness, I can't have free will 'cos I don't have a separate: 'I'm, I'm the observer observing and controlling' (R: mm, hmm) so the whole free will thing just all becomes redundant, so it's like letting go at that level (R: mm) yeah, so it's letting go in that way.. (I120-123).

Paradoxically, Rogers (1957, p. 226) concept of experiencing empathy “without ever losing the ‘as if’ quality” is seen as the primary thread of self-trust when working as a counsellor:

There's a, y'know the as if thing of Rogers (R: yeah, as if, yeah) ... the as if quality is like, y'know, I've got, got a grounding...somewhere, erm, I almost feel like in...offering free connection, I'm offering to give up my own ground (R: hmm) but I trust that it's going to be there, ... I trust that that...that's my 'as-ifness' I suppose, but I feel it's a-a pretty thin thread ... do I dare to allow myself to be absorbed totally into the client's world. Dare I allow myself to do that?...and do I trust myself to come back out of that? (I637-650).

There is maybe also an echo of Rogers' (1980, p. 127) pyramid metaphor for awareness: “... a tiny peak of awareness, of symbolizing capacity, topping a vast pyramid of nonconscious organismic functioning.” The peak I perceive is that of self-trust, emerging not only from “nonconscious organismic functioning”, but from the “chaotic no-thing-ness” (A4, 58; 68-69; 114) that is the Wholeness without the order emerging explicitly into conscious awareness. The foundation of self-trust is seen as a belief in being congruent with the Wholeness as experienced through the sense of beauty: “To my mind, if there is any meaning to life, then it is to be congruent with the

formative tendency, to desire greater awareness. To try and go against this process is to invite trouble and hardship.” (P72-73).

Whilst there is sense of self-trust being linked to Rogers (1957, p. 226) “without ever losing the ‘as if’ quality” of empathy, there is recognition of trusting that even this thread may break, with the perceived loss of free will:

Yeah (R: yeah) yeah. Almost...that there's some persistent aspect of me...that will...survive...through that (R: mm) y'know? (R: hmm) and it's almost like...well, that's right anyway. Even if I get absorbed and never come out, that's right (R: mm) y'know?, the, in the oneness scheme...to avoid that deliberately is always a falsity (I656-659).

Near-Joy (A4, 62-74).

The prior sections have seen the emergence of concepts of Wholeness and the sensing of such. This sense is seen as a basis for ethical behaviour almost by definition, although it is clearly not equated to the cliché “If it feels good, do it”. Yet the same sense is seen to potentially drive actions that may transcend professional ethics, with the perceived loss of free will. The forces of love seemingly offer the risk of this or any other practitioner being unable to resist eloping with a client. An emergent ‘draw’ may result in the unfolding of an ‘attachment’ which equates to being ‘in love’.

Another risk comes with the concept of Near-Joy. This arose outside of the intended remit for this research which is seen when the items of data are viewed chronologically: The first item of raw data chronologically (Appendix A1) dealt only with the concepts of Wholeness and a sense of beauty, without recognising potentially negative aspects. Its focus is on the offering of a “non-possessive, non-judgemental, non-destructive, non-directional love” (G276-277).

The second item of raw data (Appendix A2) again focused largely on more positive aspects. The concept of attachment (Bowlby, 1980) is raised, emerging from the

sharing of “loving awareness” (P10). This extends towards a positively viewed mutual construct of being ‘in love’: “as I ‘fall in love’ then the awareness of the Other falls into me. The awareness of them infuses within me, warms me deeply, sometimes reaching right into the depths of my heart.” (P95-97).

The third raw data item (Appendix A3) shows considerable reflection on what Fromm (1957) terms erotic love, moving towards a possible desire to ‘be with’, with aspects not only of seeming possessiveness, but also physical, sexual, expression. Although my work remains safely within professional boundaries, I limit the level of self-disclosure I offer in citing from the raw data here:

...that full understanding comes with as deep a resonance as possible (R: yeah, okay) and so that unfolds as it will and, err...where there’s a potential sexual aspect, it’s almost, for me...and this is about professional boundaries and all that stuff again, ... and so I mean for me, one thing I spend a lot of time on in supervision is my sexuality (R: hmm) to make sure I know where it is all the time (R: yeah) because...it’s a professional nightmare... (I376-385)

It is here that the reflexivity of the research process proved valuable as this note from the data analysis captures:

I am again feeling something like rejection towards the whole attachment thing... did this come from incubation walk? - I am not wanting to ‘attach’ to another embodied being particularly, I am drawn more to ... the otherness beyond embodiment that they are - to having an added perspective on such otherness - I get sense here ... that as embodied beings we can mutually confirm our insight into chaotic no-thing-ness etc (A4, 62-69)

Without reflexivity within the research process, what may potentially be more negative aspects of relying on a sense of Wholeness would have been less visible.

The scale of this research project limited the inclusion of further raw data that might have been drawn from other pieces of writing, such as journals and email conversations. However, the reflexivity of the research process has been

considerable, so the concept of Near-Joy has been included here with minimal elaboration.

The Sense of Joy is here seen as an ethical sense, a sense of the absolute, Wholeness and actuality. In effect, accurate perception aligning with the Wholeness is considered to be rewarded with a 'feel good' feeling. It might be considered as an evolved sense, a sixth sense maybe assessing the coherence of information gathered through the usually recognised five senses, offering value in terms of an increased ability to survive. To base agency on a Sense of Joy is considered to be an ethical move.

The concept of Near-Joy formed when considering how unethical action might occur, how it might 'feel good', or right, to act in what may seem to others (and to oneself in a different moment) to be an unethical way. The main concern here was to avoid sexual activity with clients. Near-Joy erupted into consciousness in a moment of light-hearted banter with peers. The thought was that in order to ensure its own reproduction, the "selfish gene" (Dawkins, 2006) used the 'feel good' factor of Joy as a basis for sexual desire. As expressed in a prior piece or writing:

Basically, I am saying that I currently consider that when I am feeling passionate with a client, then I am maybe upholding Rogers (1957) core conditions most strongly (also see Rogers, initial quote). I consider that our genetic make-up has certainly jumped on the bandwagon here in the evolution of sexual joy. Our "selfish genes" (Dawkins, 2006) ensure their own continuance through wiring that reward system into our very being. I sometimes sense a joyfulness in my being with clients, and freely admit to sometimes experiencing with clients something akin to what Thorne (1991, p. 77) described as "... a physical vibrancy and this often has a sexual component and a stirring in the genitals." My supervisor is explicitly kept well aware of my sexual reaction to clients, even if my clients themselves are maybe left unaware. (Harrison, 2008b).

Whilst the novelty of this concept has maybe softened, it remains valid. In effect, sexual desire is now considered as a valid emergent property (Polanyi, 1966) for any

species. As such, it not to be unthinkingly dismissed as definitely non-therapeutic or non-growthful, even if it requires the greatest of professional consideration and management to ensure that the prohibitions on sexual activity are maintained.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions.

Before the discussion brings together the Literature Review and the Findings, an initial statement relating the concept of self-trust to the activity of research is offered. The problems of researcher bias and validity are considerable in such reflexive self-research, as addressed elsewhere in this dissertation.

Initial Statement On Research.

Whilst trusting that a greater connection between the literature review and research aim would emerge, I found myself repeatedly cycling through research activities and stages far more than I had expected, and questioning deeply if I could trust the research methodology I was using. I fell into the self-referential problem that I had come across many times over many years, the illusion of the closed system (A. Muir {Personal communication of an unpublished paper, Holism and Reductionism are Compatible, 2009}; Seeman, 2001; Kriz, 2007; 2008), the assumption of a self that stands as a “rational agent” (Pattison, 1999).

I felt that I was swimming in the post-modernist porridge that Ellingham (1998, 1999) considered, looking for the exit when faced with the paradox that “the statement that no large statements can be made is itself a large statement” (Howard, 2000, p. 356).

Then again, maybe this was unavoidable. Chown (2007, p. 132) highlights that even mathematics fails to escape this problem, saying “Gödel ... managed to embed in arithmetic - one of the most basic fields of mathematics - the self-referential declaration ‘this statement is unprovable’. ... Gödel had buried an atomic bomb in the very fabric of mathematics.” I felt myself to be falling through “the very fabric” of any research paradigm, questioning the assumptions on which any research paradigm or methodology rests. And further, who was doing the trusting when “The knower and

the known are interdependent”? (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 12). Could I even trust that “1 and 1 makes 2” (Freeform Prose #1, above p. 1)?

My trust in the research methodology used has come through experience. The focus of this research is not the activity of research in itself. Whilst the two are unavoidably linked, this discussion now lays aside that activity.

Wholeness, Joy and Near-Joy.

The findings saw the themes of Wholeness and a Sense of Joy, or congruence, emerge strongly as the underlying driver to the therapist’s ethical decision making process. These findings are here related to the literature review regarding ethics. Further research is suggested (see next chapter) on such linking of actions with stated beliefs, and appendix A10 reflects on the associated gap found in existing research. Regarding such further research, Appendix A1 offers a deeper discussion of Wholeness and Joy in linking to literature studied at the time.

The Findings see deeply considered and deeply held beliefs underpinning the ability to make ethical decisions. To move with a sense of the Wholeness of actuality is seen as the emergence of ethicality. The findings also see the concept of Near-Joy arising as a possible driver to unethical action. This concept remains rather raw, being based on a genetic need to reproduce. What is recognised is a resonance between the personal beliefs of the therapist (myself, here under the microscope), and Rogers’ (1951; 1980) concepts of a formative tendency, actualisation and self-actualisation. Wholeness can be seen as being aligned with the formative tendency. The Sense of Joy, and ethicality, can be seen to align with the concept of actualisation. As a sub-process of such, it can be considered that Near-Joy is to Joy what self-actualisation is to actualisation, or at least, in terms of potentially negative aspects of such. Also within person-centred theory, Mearns’ (Mearns & Thorne,

2000) concept of “‘Growthful’ and ‘not for growth’ configurations” offers resonance to Joy and Near-Joy. The resonance deepens when they offer (Mearns & Thorne, 2000, p. 181) that “the actualising tendency is not ‘good’, nor is it ‘bad’ - it is an amoral concept”, then (Mearns & Thorne, 2000, p.182) cite Brodley (1999) saying “The AT is *a tendency, it is not a guarantee* of ... good behavior” [original emphasis]. They move on to (Mearns & Thorne, 2000, p. 183) cite Rogers (1963, p. 19) offering that the self-actualising sub-process of the actualising tendency can be considered to include “a perverse channeling of some of the actualising tendency into behaviors which do not actualise.” A strong resonance between the therapist’s beliefs as presented in the Findings and person-centred theory is therefore considered to exist.

The Sense of Joy is considered to drive ethical behavior, including what might be considered to be a “fall in love”, and any associated sexual relations. Somewhat paradoxically ‘Near-Joy’ is close by, which may be seen as a driver for less ethical activity, including sexual predation. Definitions seem inherently unclear, but then such topics have clearly caused much consternation for the profession, resulting in a careful development of ethical frameworks as discussed in the Literature Review.

The literature review finds “unconscious competence” (Mearns, 1997) being highly valued in the field of person-centred counselling, and relates it to the core theoretical concept of therapist congruence. Rogers’ (1959) concept of congruence involved conscious symbolisation or the possibility of such without distortion or denial, hence a spanning of both conscious and unconscious competence.

Linking to this, the literature review reflects on the concept of “free will and choice”, and then aspects of personal and professional ethics. The Findings offer how the personal beliefs of a therapist can affect their ethical being, whilst this whole research endeavour stands as an example in the further development of such in one

practitioner. Wosket (1999, p. xi) maybe captures this in offering “It seems right to say that our knowing is *in* our action.” [original emphasis] (Citing Schön, 1983).

A Separation of Sexual Predation from Falling in Love.

Haule, (1996), Davies (2003), Mann (1997) and others clearly consider that to engage in therapy is to risk falling in love. Thorne (1991, 2001, 2002, 2010) has maybe been foremost in bringing such concerns into the person-centred arena. All consider a similar need to maintain boundaries accordingly, and “that therapists have a particular obligation to ensure that they prepare themselves for the task of creating a climate where both they and their clients can be fully open to the mysterious power in which they share” (Thorne, 1991, p. 106). It is this that I have been focused on in engaging in this heuristic research. My sense is that taboo (Ladany, Friedlander & Nelson 2005; Pope, Sonne & Greene, 2006; Townsend, 2010) has reduced the ability for associated professional development that would enable therapists to “prepare themselves”. I feel this was confirmed when I teamed up with Ian Townsend at the 2011 BAPCA Conference to offer a workshop on the subject (Harrison & Townsend, 2011). A chance request saw the workshop occurring twice, and both times the attendance was reasonably strong. The level of engagement, and attendee comments like ‘this feels like a breath of fresh air’, confirmed my sense that there was a level of taboo regarding discussion of this subject that needs to be eradicated.

Any taboo is fuelled in part by prohibition. Yet the level of prohibition that has come with the Professionalisation of counselling and psychotherapy is not altogether unreasonable. Far from it, I feel. Descriptions of sexual predation and abuse by therapists, supervisors and trainers abound (Peterson, 1992; Russell, 1993; Pope, Sonne & Holroyd, 1993; Haule, 1996; Edelwich & Brodsky, 1991; ‘Simpson’ 2003), not to mention professional conduct reports (BACP 2011). Whilst the accuracy of

such events may be somewhat questionable, I cannot deny that such abuse happens. At the same time, I have come to realise just how far removed from such abuse are my concerns over “falling in love”. The lack of Joy (see Findings) that repeatedly rises in me when reading some of these accounts comes as sheer revulsion, and leads me to believing that I have been somewhat overly concerned about my own personal ethics.

I am aware that throughout my training and beyond, I unthinkingly held the attitude that I would not cross ethical boundaries simply “*because I won’t*” (above, p. 5). It was entirely inconceivable to me. Whilst the structured aspect of this research process saw themes and a creative synthesis emerging from the data analysis, the unstructured, chaotic, reflexive element of the research (e.g. Appendix A5) saw me deeply considering my sexual being. I remain with the lack of Joy, the ‘sheer revulsion’ that repeatedly rises in me in reading accounts of sexual predation, and I am deeply reassured of my own trustworthiness in regard to remaining an ethical practitioner.

The findings saw a sense of “Joy” and of “Near-Joy” being closely related, with the former being perceived as an effective ethical sense whilst the latter as a possible perversion of such. Such findings maybe aligns with Kornfield’s (1993, p. 190) description of the Buddhist concept of “near-enemy”. He offers for example that “The near enemy of loving-kindness is attachment.” I feel this resonates with Thorne (2001, p.438) offering a definition of sexuality as “the life force or energy within the human being which serves the desire for relatedness, connectedness and personal meaning”.

My self-trust in holding such differentiation was questioned, as I will reflect on below, and through this research it has been solidly re-established. Has the structured

aspect of this research allowed me to do so by linking my emergent behaviour to my deeply held beliefs or personal religion? Not directly, but then this remains a key problem in philosophy (Vardy & Grosch, 1999), as addressed in the Literature Review. The structure enabled me to go through a total immersion (Moustakas, 1990) in chaotic reflexivity and realise the total lack of Joy, or “sheer revulsion” (above), I hold in regard to sexual predation.

I believe that my Sense of Joy means that I can put aside sexual predation, and even any vulnerability to the most subtle of sexual seduction. I have the deepest, and then greatest, self-trust with regard to such. What remains is the possibility of truly “falling in love” and thus a possible move towards loving sexual relations. It is the experience of falling in love which originally led me to questioning my self-trust.

Closure: Falling in Love.

Few therapists are unacquainted with couples who began their association in therapy. Those I know have been married for years, even decades, and by all appearances have established mature and satisfying alliances. Although I have never heard anyone argue that these marriages should not have been made, the couple live under a kind of cloud. The therapeutic origin of their marriage is never mentioned, and generally the only people who know of it are old friends who can be trusted to keep silent. ...

Both attitudes (*they think it's all right [as long as they marry them] and marriage based on transference [is bound to fail]*) are markedly pessimistic, even cynical, about therapy and marriage, stubbornly assuming the worst of both institutions. (Haule, 1996, p. 154-156)

Haule offers a strong argument that therapy is an activity with Eros at its heart, although emphasizing as Thorne (1991, p. 106) does “that therapists have a particular obligation to ensure that they prepare themselves for the task of creating a climate where both they and their clients can be fully open to the mysterious power in which they share”. Therapy continues whilst “Therapist and patient are still meeting in a therapeutic *temenos*, and their first physical gesture (as well as any other they decide to carry out) is part of the therapy.” [original emphasis] (Haule, 1996, p. 151).

Possibly engaging in actual sexual activity is ethically held as an open question: “To leave dangerous questions open, therefore, lies at the furthest extreme from irresponsible licence - regardless of what the public consensus may assume.” (Haule, 1996, p. 151). In his argument, as reflected in the Literature Review, I hear Keys and Proctor’s (2007, p. 361) assertion that to keep asking if I’m an ethical practitioner is “an indication of ethical practice”. I hear Pattison’s (1999, p. 49) assertion that “Conformity to a [professional ethics] code is not necessarily the same thing as acting ethically in the broadest philosophical sense.... Indeed, if conformity is uncritical it may actually be unethical.” And then there is Totton’s (2010, p. 14) sense that “Yes, a practitioner who cannot offer her clients boundaries is dangerous. But a practitioner who cannot offer her clients boundlessness is useless.”

This research leaves me very clear in regard to the requirement for professional ethics to ‘outlaw’ both sexual predation and incompetent therapist activity which may offer great harm to a client (see Literature Review, p. 28). What it also leaves me with is a deeply enhanced sense of what it is to fall in love, and how “the therapeutic situation is extraordinarily intimate” (Thorne, 2009, citing Powell), meaning that there is a useful rule of thumb in remaining seated a while longer in the therapist’s chair, “This does not mean that there will not be occasions when a spontaneous thought, feeling or gesture will not join the therapy, but that we commit to reflecting on it does.” (Ingham, 2010, p. 27). My commitment is to being an ethical practitioner, to remain reflective when any sense of “Eros rising” (Townsend, 2010) enters my workplace. This research has seen me further develop my self-trust to survive in extraordinarily intimate situations, where I recognise there is a risk of falling in love.

The structured aspect of the research has resulted in a creative synthesis of my deepest beliefs and being, and I feel it reasonable to say that I sense myself a being

of love. The unstructured aspect has taken me deeply into the shadows (Page, 1999) of my sexual being, and again, I find myself a being of love rather than one capable of sexual predation. The literature review has allowed me to reflect on the nature of free will, ethics and the associated Professionalisation, and to further distinguish between sexual predation, incompetent therapy and falling in love. Thorne (2002, p. 73) tenderly distinguishes so in response to a client questioning his love for her: “Yes I do - that is if love is measured by the depths of desire for someone’s good. ... [and yet] No, Emma, I’m not in love with you, but I do feel pretty passionate about you”.

Falling in love and being in love, to me, involve the unfettered passion of loving sexual relations that for me distinguishes being ‘in love’ from ‘loving’. I struggle when Grant (1998, p. 73) offers that “The Freudian position on love is that it is essentially inseparable from sexual desire” and offers much that positions love as a pathological state. For the sake of my own sanity and loving relationships, I prefer to think that there is true love beyond the acting out of past life events or disappointments. Falling in love (truly) is something that has happened to me a few times in life. In my teenage years was an in-loveness that proved unreciprocated and left me somewhat broken-hearted. Shortly after began the reciprocated in-loveness that has since sustained and nourished me in the life partnership I occupy. What opened up the question of my self-trust, as well as questioning so much in my life, has been the somewhat recent experience of finding myself to have fallen in love once again. Whilst this situation has occurred outside of the therapy room, and has maybe found a careful holding, it only took a little effort for me to extrapolate the risk into my workplace.

Yet, before this event, I have not fallen in love for a few decades. My sense is more that there was some habitual forsaking happening, rather than any lack of potential.

The strength of my forsaking was maybe found wanting in a considerably more extraordinarily intimate situation than I had rarely experienced before. I realise now that my forsaking has developed accordingly. In the therapy room, I “commit to reflecting on it” (Ingham, 2010), and I am aware of doing so to a far greater extent. Committing to such means a forsaking of other paths, even if there remains a risk of falling. In regard to working as a person-centered practitioner, my commitment is to offering what I most deeply believe to be the “The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change” (Rogers, 1957, see above, p. 16). In this, I feel it worth reflecting two quotes from Rogers offered by Brodley (1998) in her discussion of the therapist’s congruence: “Certainly, the aim is not for the therapist to express or talk out his feelings” (Rogers, 1957, p. 224); “... a part of the congruence of the therapist must be the experience of unconditional positive regard and the experience of empathic understanding” (Rogers, 1959, p. 215). My commitment as a person-centred therapist is to attend to the client, and separately reflect on my own personal feelings.

Falling in love might be seen to require a limitation on remaining open (experiencing UPR) to fully understanding (empathy) the other. It might be seen as the creation of a paradoxically limitless and definitive “we” (Haule, 1996) as a basis for ongoing further engagement of any form (including both therapeutically and sexually) throughout a life together. It is maybe a commitment as life-changing as marriage, which infuses throughout “a tiny peak of awareness, of symbolizing capacity, topping a vast pyramid of nonconscious organismic functioning.” (Rogers, 1980, p. 127). I have the self-trust that I will not engage in sexual predation. Beyond this, I have the self-trust that my forsaking of any falling in love with clients is phenomenal, maybe necessarily hugely so, given how Alexander (Alexander & Jacobs, 2006) highlights the strength of forces involved when she reflects:

The way I experienced [erotic transference] was that it began like normal sexual attraction (but raised to the power ten!). ... Could it be that these feelings are associated with pleasure centres in the brain, that there is a particular pleasure centre that is activated by sexual activity and also by the gratification of these other desires that are aroused in therapy? (Alexander & Jacobs, 2006, p.172).

Again, a resonance can be seen with the concept of Near-Joy from the Findings.

Through encounter, and through this research, I have maybe explored my own more unconscious intentions, my trustworthiness. Falling in love, therapeutic sexual activity (should it exist) and sexual predation may seem poles apart, yet in any potential professional complaints proceeding differentiating them is likely to be difficult.

Recently, I posted an article on a website discussion forum (Harrison, 2010b):

Maybe in such silence we could be setting ourselves up for a fall. Page (1999) cites research by Pope and others indicating that one in ten male counsellors had engaged in sexual activity with clients. Springer (2006, p.74) highlights that in similar research “Eighty per cent of these therapists could not remember the exact events which had led to sexual contact”. To me, it seems that by possibly avoiding talking about such issues then we might be setting ourselves up, and that some of us are maybe more vulnerable to falling as a result.

My sense is that through engaging in such research, this “enterprise that has as its only goal the progressive uncovering of the mysteries of human existence” (O’Hara, 1986, p. 90), any practitioner can gain deeper and greater self awareness in relation to the “emergence of Eros in the therapeutic relationship” (Townsend, 2010). It offers a deeply personal journey into greater self-trust, which can be equated to congruence, involving an increase in unconscious competence, although where required, an immediate fallback to more conscious competence. In this, I believe that the research title has been addressed, together with the intention stated in the introduction, to “support the active independent critical judgement and discernment that should be associated with true moral responsibility and, indeed, good professionalism” (Pattison, 1999, p. 48-49). In considering that any practitioner might

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

embark on a similar journey into greater congruence, I return to where I started with Freeform Prose #1 (p. 1)... “Here... maybe why... I respond as I do... and you?”

Chapter 6: Considerations For Further Research.

As seen in the Gödel paper (Appendix A1), existing literature including Rogers (1980), Ellingham (2000, 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2006), Wyatt (2004), Bohm (1980), Merton (2004), Nozick (1974), Hofstadter (1979) and Murdoch (1970), provided fuel for the exploration and expression of my personal beliefs. Personally, I find many intangible benefits from such contemplations, such as the wide range of associated metaphors that I find useful in my counselling work. To me, doing the research has been beneficial in terms of intangible outcomes alone. I therefore offer this research, a deeply personal journey, as an inspiration to other practitioners, particularly in person-centred counselling where there is maybe strong “taboo” regarding discussing the “emergence of Eros in the therapeutic relationship” (Townsend, 2010).

Whilst any practitioner may similarly find increased congruence through such a project, there are clearly questions of validity in such self-research. An alternative, less reflexive/self-orientated, but larger research project might sample others instead and deeply consider similarities in commonalities between the fundamental beliefs of each subject and links to person-centred counselling, or even other approaches. As a part of such a project, subjects would maybe need to be highly committed to engaging in their own self-development, possibly resulting in a process that is very much jointly owned by all involved.

A possible variant would be to consider how notable experiences of spontaneous or idiosyncratic responses emerged. Ideally, this might be linked to feedback from clients over how such responses were received and valued.

The concepts both of ‘falling’ and of being ‘in love’ are maybe the most written about, and yet the least researched in any direct way. A larger scale research project could apply a method similar to the constant comparison method (Maykut & Morehouse,

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1994) used here to analyse interview data obtained from a number of subjects, relating to the concepts of loving and personal beliefs. This may be of particular relevance to the field of person-centred counselling where the literature seems comparatively sparse in relation to other counselling approaches.

Similarly, research considering practitioner's (and/or client's) experiences of sexual attraction may offer insights into the strength of such feelings and how they might be managed. In particular, examples of "slippery slope" activities (such as increasing levels of physical contact) might be studied to consider the possible differentiation of reasoning as well as any hindsight regarding the acting out of more unconscious desires.

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Appendix A1: G: The Gödel Paper.

The paper is given in the format used for this research.

References in the main body of this research are of the form (A1, 5-7) relating to the line numbers as displayed here.

References in the data analysis (Appendix A4) are in the form (G5-7).

1 **Sensing the Formative Tendency as an Evolutionary Flow, and Sensing Beauty as Congruence.**

2 Rogers (1980) saw a formative tendency that can be “well observed at every level of the universe” (p.125).
3 He outlines how it acts at levels from the very small to the very large, acting against entropy to drive the
4 emergence of organisation and organism, saying “the trend towards complexity is always evident.” (p.126).
5 In relating it to the person-centred approach, he sees the function of consciousness as a self-review
6 mechanism: “With greater self-awareness, a more informed choice is possible, a choice more free from
7 introjects, a *conscious* choice that is even more in tune with the evolutionary flow.” (p.127). In short, I
8 perceive him valuing and trusting the formative tendency, and positioning the person-centred approach as a
9 route to greater congruence with it.

10 His explanation is largely positioned in the positivist “common sense” view of science (see later), describing
11 this tendency at work in the universe, over time, evolving complex organisation of particles of physical
12 matter. Yet in the same paper he resorts to language of a more mystical or spiritual nature to present what
13 science still struggles with, the unknown. It is here he makes the often quoted statement:

14 When I am at my best, as a group facilitator or as a therapist, I discover another
15 characteristic. I find that when I am closest to my inner, intuitive self, *when I am*
16 *somehow in touch with the unknown in me* [my emphasis], when perhaps I am in a
17 slightly altered state of consciousness, then whatever I do seems to be full of
18 healing. Then simply my *presence* is releasing and helpful to the other. (Rogers
19 1980, p.129).

20 I emphasise his use of the word “unknown” because it is this that science tries to convert into rationally
21 understood knowledge. In particular, what I am calling common sense science prefers the black and white,
22 even demands the duality of unknown and known in order to support a dream of relentless conversion.

23 My intention here is to stretch the boundaries common sense science, whilst remaining within the bounds of
24 some form of logic and mathematics. I intend to view the formative tendency from a perspective that
25 involves the concept of infinity. This draws from experience with computing and considering the
26 development of artificial intelligence where attempts to avoid the problem of infinity have involved concepts
27 of self definition and self reference, something maybe akin to self awareness. These advances are aimed at
28 building a self-contained system, something that requires no outside definition. However, such attempts
29 have raised other problems that are effectively infinity in another guise, the infinitesimal.

30 I will overview mathematical concepts that mean I see infinity as being a constancy throughout existence.
31 Although hardly mentioned, the temporal version of the infinite and the infinitesimal, the eternal and the
32 momentary, sit alongside. To my mind, such concepts, together with Rogers’ formative tendency operating
33 on particles of apparently physical matter add up to a unity across existence. Where common sense science
34 struggles when nearing these extremes, I find an all inclusive singularity. For me, all positioning and
35 categorisation in space and time fall aside “*when I am somehow in touch with the unknown in me*”, as
36 Ellingham (2006, p.81) puts it “a modality of experiencing that itself transcends the discursive categories of
37 ‘thought’ and ‘emotion’”.

38 Having given some sense of this singularity, I turn to the logical arguments of Murdoch (1970). Here, I find
39 moral arguments for striving for congruent perception and thus for the person-centred approach both in and
40 out of the therapy room. These concepts I relate back to the common sense science of evolution, suggesting
41 that being rewarded for accurate perception aids survival, thus there is an evolved ‘feel good’ factor “*when I*
42 *am somehow in touch with the unknown in me*”. In this I touch on the person-centred concepts of non-
43 directivity, presence and relational depth. To put it simply, I feel most present when in touch with the
44 infinite depths within me, and I then sense being actively present without any intended direction, open to any
45 of the infinite directions that may be taken.

46 Our imaginations are not yet tooled up to penetrate the neighbourhood of the
47 quantum. Nothing at that scale behaves in the way matter - as we are evolved to
48 think - ought to behave. Nor can we cope with the behaviour of objects that move
49 at some appreciable fraction of light. Common sense lets us down, because

50 common sense evolved in a world where nothing moves very fast and nothing is
51 very small or large. (Dawkins, 2006, pp. 407-8)

52 Dawkins comments on the “common sense” view of science that generally works reasonably well. So well,
53 in fact, that I am happy to trust my life to aeroplanes and even paragliders designed according to Newton’s
54 physics. Where science struggles is at the extremes, and it is here that science itself finds a need to address
55 its own structure, its “common sense” paradigm. Science knows that at the extremes, this paradigm of
56 definite, black and white style answers is not holding up, words like uncertainty and probability are edging
57 in.

58 I conceive that the extremes with which science struggles sit within each of us, “an *infinite depth*” as Merton
59 (2004) puts it. Whilst science offers rational explanation for many things, it struggles to offer a rational
60 explanation of the act of understanding in itself. Indeed, I consider that one of the foundations of science,
61 mathematics, actually recognises that an explanation of understanding is impossible. We cannot fully
62 understand the act of understanding, due to the problem of self reference. Our “presence” in part comes
63 through our inexplicability.

64 As the above quote from Dawkins highlights, the common sense perspective of time and space do not hold
65 up when it comes to the extremes. Those extremes involve the concepts of eternity and infinity. What
66 science is beginning to realise, is that those concepts actually permeate throughout our existence. Ellingham
67 (2000, 2002a) provides an effective insight into the problems of common sense science, addressing the
68 Cartesian-Newtonian paradigm to which it clings, and he considers different aspects of person-centred
69 theory accordingly (2001, 2002b, 2006). I thank him now for reviewing earlier drafts of this paper.

70 From what may initially seem an unrelated field, attempts to create a machine intelligence or artificial
71 intelligence continue to struggle onwards. The Loebner prize (<http://www.loebner.net/Prize/loebner-prize.html>)
72 is a contest based on the Turing Test, where a judge has to decide if the conversationalist on the
73 other side of a screen is a person or a machine. What I find wonderful here is how the warmth of humanity
74 shines through so easily, here’s the close of one transcript as an example:

75 [Judge]: i think you're real.

76 [person/machine]: Thanks. I think you're real too.

77 Developing a computer that can hold up it’s own in conversation has raised questions over how the process
78 of understanding within each of us actually works. A notable text comes from Douglas Hofstadter (1979) in
79 the guise of his book “Gödel, Escher, Bach”. This presents some highly complex concepts in a very playful
80 way, including that of infinite regression. Take language for example. The units of language are words.
81 These are used according to a framework of rules (grammar and word definitions) that effectively form a
82 meta-language. These rules are themselves written in some language, which again requires rules ... and so
83 on. For every language there are rules, and all rules need a language in which to be written.

84 Of course, one way out of this infinite regression is to use the initial language itself when writing the rules.
85 Apart from the familiar ‘chicken and egg’ situation here, there is another tricky concept creeping in which
86 Hofstadter also addresses, that of self reference. When a language, or any other system, attempts self
87 reference then it runs into problems. These are often seen as paradoxes of the form “This sentence is false.”,
88 or “The following sentence is true. The previous sentence is false.” Slightly trickier is ‘what is the meaning
89 of my search for meaning?’, a self referential thought that strikes me when reading Zohar and Marshall
90 (2000) reflecting on Frankl (2004).

91 Attempts to define systems where such problems are avoided have been intensive. Even in the apparently
92 precise world of logic and mathematics the problems seem unavoidable:

93 “One of the most important contributions that the mathematician and philosopher
94 Bertrand Russell made to mathematics was what is called Russell’s paradox, which in
95 mathematical terms goes: does the set that consists of those sets that are not part of
96 themselves include itself? Most of us find this hard to make sense of. At a social
97 gathering, when asked to explain it, Russell gave the following colloquial version.
98 Imagine a small village in which the local barber shaves every man except those men
99 who shave themselves. Does the barber shave himself? ‘Of course he does,’ is the
100 immediate answer, but then you realise he only shaves those who do not shave

101 themselves. So of course he does not shave himself, and then you realize he does shave
102 those who do not shave themselves: hence the paradox.” (West, 2000, p.3).

103 The bouncing from one side of the paradox to the other could go on forever, and for computers this often
104 literally does, resulting in an operational failure. Unlike people, computers (at present) cannot easily step
105 back and look at the situation on a different level. In stepping back, a person will review the meta-language
106 use and find a way around the problem that is acceptable. It is this ability that seems to be at the heart of
107 human understanding and intelligence, the constant ability to find an alternative perspective.

108 A person will step outside of the system and change the rules in order that the use of the system can then
109 continue. Such potentially infinite changeability is maybe recognised by Buber as “abysmal lability” (cited
110 in Hycner, 1991, p.19). A person is able to easily recognise the need for an abstract view, and to revise our
111 perception and memory accordingly. If not, then we would spend a lot more time stuck in infinite
112 regressions and infinite loops.

113 Computers always work within programs, within boundaries. They play what we
114 have called a finite game. But human beings can be infinite players. We can move
115 the goalposts - we can play with boundaries ... we create new [ways of being] with
116 this third kind [of thinking]. (Zohar & Marshall, 2000).

117 Computers can be set up to attempt abstraction, but effective rules of such operation are proving difficult to
118 define.

119 Our ability to handle abstraction and to revise ourselves accordingly is, to my mind, an aspect of
120 psychological growth. In Rogers’ (1980) view, our awareness or consciousness plays an important role in
121 such self review, and is deemed something of a pinnacle of evolutionary development: “perhaps the highest
122 of human functions” (p.127). However, this awareness can be viewed as a system whose internal mechanics
123 function somehow. I care little here for whether it has evolved or been created, somehow it functions.

124 Rogers’ sees “a tiny peak of awareness, of symbolizing capacity, topping a vast pyramid of nonconscious
125 organismic functioning.” (p.127). Although this may be interpreted in a purely physical, mechanistic way,
126 Rogers chose to relate aspects of his “presence” to more mystical or spiritual experiences. Whether the
127 underlying mechanics are purely physical or sat in some mystical realm I am not sure matters here.
128 Somehow, our consciousness functions. I sense Rogers recognising something that “common sense” science
129 would never explain away.

130 Hofstadter (1979) goes to great lengths to explain some tricky mathematics, Gödel’s Incompleteness
131 Theorem. Basically, the theorem says that no system can define itself completely, that there is always a
132 holding environment, an encompassing system, required. Alongside the earlier example of language, one
133 might draw a comparison with science here. The rules of science are referred to as a paradigm, and currently
134 science clings to a Cartesian-Newtonian paradigm as Ellingham (2001) explains. Science exists within it’s
135 paradigm, and they both exist as words on paper. However, such words are useless unless taken on board by
136 some agent able to act on them. The role of agent might be taken by a machine, or by a person. Quite simply,
137 any machine can only do what it is designed to do. As machine designers, we necessarily exist at a higher
138 level of complexity. Our abilities go beyond any machine we are ever likely to design, because we can
139 somehow deal with the problems of infinity and eternity, the extremes of space and time.

140 So here is the knot.

141 We are a self-aware, self-referencing, self-reviewing ‘system’ able to negotiate problems that machines
142 apparently cannot touch. Within that, according to my understanding of Gödel, there is *necessarily* an
143 unknown, there is part of ourselves that cannot be known because it has to sit outside of the person-as-
144 system and in the holding environment. This equates, as I see it, to Rogers’ (1980) pyramidal view as
145 mentioned above. The small light of consciousness is supported by something else, necessarily outside of
146 that consciousness. As the light of consciousness advances into the dark unknown, the shadows also deepen
147 ahead of its advance.

148 Rogers (1980, p.129) says “ I find that when I am closest to my inner, intuitive self, when I am somehow in
149 touch with the unknown in me ... Then, simply my *presence* is releasing and helpful to the other.” It may be
150 argued that such “presence” is achieved when the conditions Rogers (1957) described are somewhat in play.
151 However, I would argue that an overly mechanistic view misses explaining something that goes right to the

152 core of our being, our ability to deal with the infinities and eternities within us. Support for such a
153 perspective can be seen in quantum physics. Both Hofstadter (1979) and Deutch (1997) use Feynman
154 diagrams to try and explain what happens when you try and observe the infinitely small, when you are
155 looking for the difference between something and nothing. I do not claim to fully understand any of this, but
156 then “If you think you understand quantum theory ... you don’t understand quantum theory” is a quote
157 attributed to the physicist behind those diagrams, Richard Feynman (Dawkins, 2006, p. 409). Deutch (1997,
158 p.190) also offers an interpretation of quantum physics which sees multiple universes required to allow
159 “*knowledge-bearing matter*”, a concept that definitely falls into my personal realm of the unknowable at
160 present.

161 So far, I have proposed that a mechanistic view of the person is an impossibility, according to the very basis
162 of science, logic and mathematics. Although this idea is maybe nothing new to many people, I feel it worth
163 highlighting it as apparently mathematically verified. Effectively, I have offered a reasonable explanation of
164 why I see infinity and eternity within each of us. I now intend to broaden out this concept and move towards
165 a process view of congruence.

166 It is through contemplating the problems of infinity and eternity that I have come to believe in a certain unity
167 in everything. Roughly, this is based on the difficulty in establishing the boundary between something and
168 nothing, as described above. I am sure that at some level (for want of a better word), there is no boundary
169 between any two things, ergo, a unity or singularity that is everything. At this level, time and space do not
170 hold up in the Cartesian-Newtonian sense. The philosophical “Problem of Knowledge” (Ayer, 1956) sees
171 knowledge and belief as similarly inseparable. At the end of the day, none of us can prove absolutely that
172 one and one is two, because we have no exact definitions. The words are encompassed by our understanding
173 of them, and our understanding spirals off in infinite regression. We each have a very reliable subjective
174 understanding, reflecting into objective scientific knowledge. However, in any immediate moment, we can
175 only be ‘convinced’ of the truth of ‘one and one is two’. What sits in consciousness is supported by what
176 remains in shadow. Knowledge is simply belief that is objectively verifiable in our time/space frame, our
177 “common sense” reality. Even scientific, mathematical or logical ‘knowledge’ lies dead without an
178 interpreter, an understanding eye. Intelligent life is an echoing through infinity, and as I interpret it, this is
179 what Gödel’s Incompleteness Theorem is all about.

180 This concept of a singularity, riddled with infinities and eternities, seems to match somewhat with Rogers’
181 (1980) perspective drawn from various sources of a similar scientific nature. What I dare to highlight is that
182 each of us exists within that singularity or unity, as totally integrated as any self-respecting unity should be.
183 There is a universal vibe, and we are all humming along to the tune. When Rogers (1980) describes the
184 formative tendency he is, to my mind, recognising that tune in play. It strikes me that at the singular level
185 there is no fixity existing in anything like temporal or spatial dimensions, there is only process, or
186 changeability, or potential.

187 That unity integrates everything at some level, and it necessarily sits outside of our perceived space and time
188 in doing so. Here I will depart from the earlier quote from Dawkins. Whilst he suggests that “we are evolved
189 to think” according to the everyday scale of things, I believe we have some sensing ability beyond our
190 general perception. This may be some as yet unrecognised sense, but it is at least the potential for a more
191 congruent, unblinkered perception through our scientifically recognised sense organs. A recent documentary
192 (Tondorf, 2007) saw subjects apparently having the logic areas of their brain temporarily disabled. The
193 initial results see an increase in the level of detail perceived, as if learned objectification is reduced.
194 Hofstadter (1979) similarly talks in terms of ‘chunking’ in order to process experience in a timely manner by
195 ignoring all the details. This maybe equates to the ‘top-down’ processing theorised by cognitivists
196 (Coolican, 1996). It is the detailed workings of the formative tendency that fall outside of our common
197 sense.

198 What strikes me is that having some way of sensing Rogers’ formative tendency in action, seems an
199 evolutionary necessity. Before doing something, it’s maybe good to feel that it is the right thing to do, that it
200 is somewhat in alignment with reality.

201 Knowing what is the right thing to do is clearly an ethical question. Murdoch (1970) reviews behaviouristic
202 perspectives on ‘good’ and how ethical questions maybe only arise in relation to actions. Here, there are no
203 ethical thoughts, only ethical actions. She then moves swiftly to the idea that “Morality is a matter of
204 thinking clearly and then proceeding to outward dealings with other men.” (p.8). Here she notes how

205 perception provides the basis for action. If our actions are to be worthwhile, then a clear understanding of the
206 situation is called for.

207 As described above, my personal philosophy conceives of a unity or universal singularity. Quite simply, this
208 unity is the entirety of existence, containing absolutely everything. It spans all possible dimensions,
209 universes and multiverses (Deutch, 1997), realms of existence, spiritual planes, infinities and eternities. The
210 idea then, is not to perceive objective reality (with its subtle hint of subjectivity) but to perceive or *sense*
211 more of the unity as a whole.

212 What I am saying is that the unity is far more complex than common sense science gives it credit for. It
213 comes to us filtered through an objectivity maybe based on our physical make-up (Dawkins, 2006, pp. 407-
214 8, as quoted above). We see objects because we exist as a pattern within the unity that offers such a
215 perspective. Tied in with this is our subjective perception. This further ‘chunks’ (Hofstadter, 1979) together
216 our experience according to our past experience, to conceive something phenomenal that otherwise does not
217 exist.

218 So what I consider to be the unity is far too detailed and complex for us to handle in it’s entirety. Our
219 sensory systems (and I include any sensing, physical or spiritual in nature) are limited in what they can
220 receive. Our cognitive systems are further limited in what can be converted into understanding or retained.
221 Furthermore, our current scientific paradigm still somewhat holds to building rational understanding in a
222 somewhat modernistic sense (although advanced physics has somewhat undermined this with theories of
223 uncertainty and probability). It places emphasis on logic and empiricism, and maybe detracts us from relying
224 on the *currently* more unknown aspects of *sensing*.

225 Returning to Murdoch (1970), I find allegiance with her view of beauty (p.58):

226 What is truly beautiful is ‘inaccessible’ and cannot be possessed or destroyed. The
227 statue is broken, the flower fades, the experience ceases, but something has not
228 suffered from decay and mortality. ... In the case of beauty, whether in art or in
229 nature, the sense of separateness from the temporal process is connected perhaps
230 with concepts of perfection of form and ‘authority’ which are not easy to transfer
231 into the field of morals.

232 Her concept of beauty as I understand it, is that when I am awash with a sense of beauty or love, then I am at
233 my most open and receptive to the unity. I am perceiving it as accurately as I can. As Murdoch says of
234 beauty in art (p.83):

235 Both in its genesis and its enjoyment it is a thing totally opposed to selfish
236 obsession. It invigorates our best faculties and, to use Platonic language, inspires
237 love in the highest part of the soul. It is able to do this partly by virtue of
238 something which it shares with nature: a perfection of form which invites
239 unpossessive contemplation and resists absorption into the selfish dream life of the
240 conscious.

241 To my mind, Murdoch sees a sense of beauty as a measure of the truth, or at least accuracy, of perception.
242 Such is reflected by Ellingham (2006, p.81): “ ... a sense of certitude regarding the truth-value of one’s
243 apprehensions is infused with the aura of profound and blissful meaning, awe-full and wonder-full love.”
244 Beauty resists falling to the subjectivity of “the selfish dream life”. To my mind, a sense of beauty and love
245 equates to a *sense* of congruence with the unity. Within all the feedback and other mechanistic subsystems
246 that maybe make up a person (Seeman, 2001; Kriz, 2007), is something that offers this ‘feel-good’ factor in
247 being congruent. From an evolutionary perspective, I consider this as necessarily emerging - the property of
248 having the confidence to act on our perception. My point for now is more about the link with Murdoch’s
249 perspectives on beauty and good. Quite simply, I see her saying two things:

- 250 - A sense of *beauty* comes when *the unity* is perceived somewhat accurately.
- 251 - It is morally and ethically *good* to strive for *beauty*.

252 As I move towards closing here, I do not address the problem of differentiating actual, objective and
253 subjective beauty. However much I may conceive of something absolute, I still recognise myself as
254 unavoidably in a “phenomenal world” (Spinelli, 1989) and the inevitability of subjectivity.

255 I have outlined Rogers (1980) concept of a formative tendency and related it to mathematical concepts
256 including infinity, eternity, self definition and self reference. In doing so I recognise not only the
257 inescapability of the unknown, but also the necessity of it. We cannot fully understand the act of
258 understanding, according to my interpretation of Gödel's Incompleteness Theorem.

259 Rogers (1980) saw his presence available "*when I am somehow in touch with the unknown in me*". In
260 considering this I see an openness to the infinities within ones self and to the unity of ones self with all. As I
261 see it, to be present is to be somewhat congruent with the process of the formative tendency common
262 throughout existence.

263 In considering how I might sense my own presence or congruence, I related to Murdoch's (1970) sense of
264 beauty. I am suggesting that this *sense* is something of a connection with *the unity* minimally distorted by
265 perception. For me, holding this *sense* spontaneously addresses the question of 'am I being congruent in this
266 moment?' and allows me to act. Maybe comparable here is how Haugh (2001, p.127) considers congruence
267 as "... a person's ability, *learned and developed*, to be open to their experiential field".

268 Such a *sense* seems to me to be an evolutionary necessity. If we did not have any conviction in the result of
269 our actions, then we could not act. Even 'freeze, fight or flight' requires some form of decision making
270 process. Having this ability, to my mind, sees Rogers' (1951) actualising tendency in operation both at a
271 selfish and altruistic level.

272 Within Murdoch's perspective, I see striving for such sensing as morally justified. Although 'striving' might
273 be interpreted as doing rather than being, I suggest the opposite. It is actually an opening up to the infinities
274 within ourselves and thus supportive of a non-directive attitude. I consider that in a relationship with any
275 level of mutuality, the openness and connection allows us to see the beauty (Murdoch, 1970) of the Other
276 (Buber, 1937) and in so doing hold some level of non-possessive, non-judgemental, non-destructive, non-
277 directional love. In my currently limited experience of counselling, I find that when such feelings are active
278 for me I sense they are maybe also active for the client. We have negotiated a relationship with a heightened
279 openness to our experiencing of each Other. As I see it, this is a relationship reflecting what Rogers' (1957)
280 hypothesised in his integrative statement as the six "necessary and sufficient" conditions for therapeutic
281 growth, and maybe one involving "relational depth" (Mearns and Cooper, 2005).

282 If a therapist's attitude reflects the three core conditions (Rogers, 1957) of empathy, unconditional positive
283 regard and congruence, then the therapist's "*presence*" (Rogers, 1980; Mearns and Cooper, 2005, p.37)
284 stands as an example of infinite complexity in action, hopefully in a non-threatening way. In this
285 perspective, I consider person-centredness to provide an arena for identifying and connecting with this *sense*,
286 and thus for developing a more internal "locus of evaluation" (Rogers, 1951). "With greater self-awareness,
287 a more informed choice is possible, a choice more free from introjects, a *conscious* choice that is even more
288 in tune with the evolutionary flow." (Rogers, 1980, p.127).

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Appendix A2: P: The Pyramid Paper.

The following extract (lines 1-8, 37-90) is given in the format used for this research, and offered to allow a greater sense of the raw data. The complete paper is available by agreement with the author (email: mark.almost.unlimited@hotmail.co.uk), although not for open distribution. This path was decided for ethical reasons as discussed in the main body of the text.

References in the main body of this research are of the form (A2, 5-7) relating to the line numbers as displayed in this extract.

References in the data analysis (Appendix A4) are in the form (P5-7).

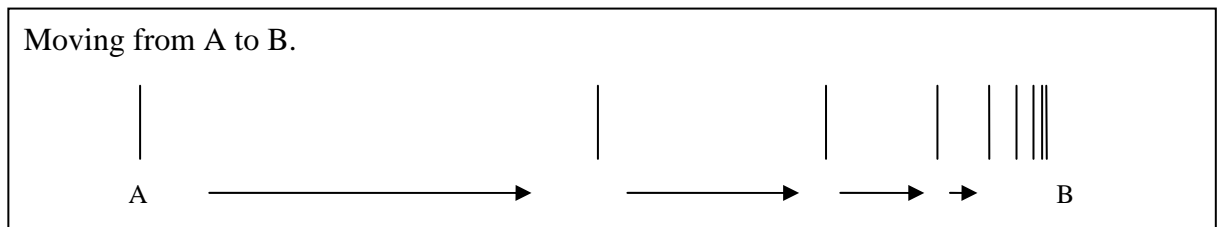
The complete paper was copied to each person offering validation review (Appendix A9).

1 **Falling in Love: The Heart in Rogers' Pyramid.**

2 What follows is aimed at opening up a discussion around Rogers' (1980) concept of a formative
3 tendency as a basis for being. It is a personal reworking of Rogers' metaphor of the self as a
4 pyramid. In developing the metaphor there is a considerable reshaping of the building into
5 something more organismic, a gently simmering, friendly volcano. Such shape shifting allows for
6 the infinite depths that I am convinced exist within each of us, as convinced as I am that one and
7 one make two. Although awareness remains focused at the volcano's softly erupting peak, I move
8 on to consider the idea of falling in love as spikes of awareness reaching deep within the self.

9 ...

37 So, I have a sense of self involving the vastness of infinities, a oneness with everything, and a little
38 mechanical trickery to achieve physical embodiment of such. This trickery comes from one of
39 Zeno's paradoxes which can be explained as follows. If you want to move from point A to point B,
40 you first have to move halfway. Then, you have to move halfway again. Then again, again and
41 again, endlessly. You have to move through an infinite number of ever decreasing distances. As an
42 infinite number of moves, however small, is thought to take infinite time, then you can never
43 actually get to point B.



44

45 Now, try putting point A and point B right next to each other. The same paradox still exists in
46 moving from point A to point B. I am not going to go into any tempting discussion of quantum
47 here, simply hold with the idea that there are infinities within even the smallest of physical points.
48 What is more, those infinities may be entwined and encoded in infinite ways. Such is something of
49 my sense of the vast infinities that make up a self, a person.

50 Back to the pyramid. With the straight sides of the pyramid, the base can never appear on any piece
51 of paper because it sits an infinite distance from the flickering tip at the top. For this reason, I
52 decided to replace the straight lines with curves as shown below (In truth, this image came from a
53 counselling course exercise, where I was trying to do a self-portrait with my non-dominant hand -
54 resulting in this somewhat spontaneous 'unfolding' in Gill Wyatt's terms, I think). The sides
55 become some form of curve that gets ever closer to the ground without ever actually getting there.



56

57 So, the black, flat ground is an infinite plane of non-awareness, a sort of void. Actually, I conceive
58 that this void is seething with potential, but without awareness it is effectively nothing. Whilst the
59 void takes on a two dimensional form here, in reality it is multi-dimensional and even infinitely

60 dimensional (In Bohm's or Wyatt's terms, it is maybe the implicate order - I still have reading to
61 do).

62 The orangey warmth of awareness has somehow emerged from the void and now spills back down
63 over it, trying to replace it with infinite awareness. This, to me, is the formative tendency in action.
64 Each person is an occurrence of awareness, and in developing their awareness contributes to an
65 overall conquering of the void. As the curved sides flow outward they reach further and further
66 across the infinite expanse of void.

67 So where does this awareness come from? My answer quite simply is, from the void. Effectively,
68 the process in action is one of drawing from the void in order to produce awareness. In my
69 understanding of Bohm and Wyatt's terms, the implicate order is being unfolded into explicate
70 order. Nothing has really changed, other than that there is now greater awareness. A perspective
71 involving such has been realised.

72 To my mind, if there is any meaning to life, then it is to be congruent with the formative tendency,
73 to desire greater awareness. To try and go against this process is to invite trouble and hardship. A
74 question that hung over me throughout my counselling training is 'how do I sense my own
75 congruence?' How do I know that I am going with the process and not somehow fighting against
76 it?

77 The answer came from reading Murdoch (). She speaks of awe-inspiring beauty as being an
78 indicator of accurate perception. Although I have some troubles with her argument, I am left with
79 the idea of trusting my heart. There is a sense I get when I am with clients, and with others, that is
80 awesome. It is a sense of the wonder of this exact moment, this being and being with. I also get it
81 when faced with nature, with landscapes, flora and fauna, if I allow myself to be so open to it. It is,
82 as far as I can see, a sense of loving appreciation. Again, in the discussion on a BAPCA 2004 cd
83 (Sheila Haugh on empathy), Gill Wyatt reflects on a comment by Richard Bryant-Jefferies, talking
84 of UPR as "heart-felt compassion and acceptance and warmth."

85 Training as a counsellor has bought *awareness* (simply greater symbolisation maybe) of the depths
86 of love I feel for people, particularly for a few close friends and family members, for my partner of
87 20 years and for fellow counsellors with whom I have had the honour of sharing great connection.
88 It's not that the love wasn't there all along, simply that my awareness of it has grown, hugely. I am
89 moved to write poetry for example, having never before got beyond the most basic of rhyming
90 couplets.

91 ...

Appendix A3: I: The Interview.

The following extract (lines 439-602) is given in the format used for this research, and offered to allow a greater sense of the raw data. The complete transcript is available by agreement with the author (email: mark.almost.unlimited@hotmail.co.uk), although not for open distribution. This path was decided for ethical reasons as discussed in the main body of the text.

Note that this interview was performed as part of separate research in which I was the interviewee. A signed agreement (see Appendix A7) gives me ownership and thus the right to use the transcript as I feel fit. A part of any agreement to access more of the transcript would include the agreement not to attempt to further identify the source research project.

References in the main body of this research are of the form (A3, 5-7) relating to the line numbers as displayed in this extract.

References in the data analysis (Appendix A4) are in the form (I5-7).

The complete transcript was copied to each person offering validation review (Appendix A9).

1 ...
439 y'know, I don't know if I want to confronting clients like that in initial contracting (R: hmm)
440 but, I can sort of see a sense of it (R: hmm) from my perspective now... 'cos I'm not sure I'd
441 want to, to engage in that relationship, where that resonance is, maybe, a bit strong for me,
442 and I'm sensing a resonance (R: hmm) y'know? And thinking, okay, we're going to uphold
443 this boundary (R: mm) and that adds a whole falseness to our relationship (R: hmm) and that
444 adds a whole falseness to our meeting (R: hmm) So it just maybe, just to me, just wipes out
445 (R: mm) I mean, maybe...y'know, so long as it, it's not, that it doesn't become the focus of
446 the meeting...maybe if the client is strongly motivated into wherever they need to go,
447 y'know, for their own therapy...fair enough (R: mm) it maybe be, becomes an irrelevance to
448 the meeting, but...I'm not sure, I mean that; that's the greyer area, that's the grey area.
449 (xiv)
450 So I'm saying about love, joy, whatever (R: yeah) is that...the whole sense of beauty and so
451 the whole...sense of attraction maybe? And everything just all knots together into one (R:
452 hmm, hmm) and so if, if I'm, if by best therapeutically I am...desiring as complete a
453 connection between the client and myself as possible (R: hmm) and, err...and if that's
454 unfolding, there's a sexual...unison that I, that I want to hold back from 'cos I've got enough
455 complications in my private life, then, y'know, that destroys the, for me, the, the resonance. It
456 destroys that open freedom (R: mm) with my client..
457
458 R33 It's really confusing for you, isn't it?...because it's kind of like: "how can I...most be
459 myself if that's there, because if that is there, I'm aware that I need to like pull back (D: yeah)
460 from that"
461
462 D33 ...and because I'm pulling back, I'm be...I'm deliberately being incongruent (R: yeah)
463 y'know. It's almost like clockwatching. I hate clockwatching (R: hmm) ermm, I hate being
464 bounded in time as, as we have to work (R: hmm) but, ermm, I'd love to be a lot, be able to be
465 a lot more free with the connection...mm..
466
467 R34 ...there's a sense I have of, of you searching, or looking for something...
468
469 D34 (*fifteen second pause*) ...mm...a certain perception there, maybe! Err....I don't
470 know.....ermm.....I could go with that quite easily (R: hmm, mm) ermm, I'll go with it for a
471 little bit (R: okay) ermm..
472
473 R35 We can always stop recording D--- if...
474
475 D35 I'm not, I'm okay: confidentiality's enough for me.....I've always run on openness...in
476 my life, ermm, [### censored ###] teenage years [### censored ###] sort of convinced me
477 that I don't want any secrets in my...primary partnership (R: hmm, hmm) and that generally, I
478 don't want any secrets y'know, which is why I'm quite...(deep sigh)
479
480 R36 ...that's a heavy sigh...
481 (xv)
482 D36 Yeah...I feel quite...open about where I am with regard to...what I think therapy
483 is...and having come out of IT in a very black and white and how things work...and diving; I
484 feel I'm almost diving headlong into some spiritual...non-scientific realm (R: mm, mm) and
485 whatever..
486
487 R37 ...falling into...falling into a...
488
489 D37 ...falling into...I don't know (R: diving into) the, the falling thing doesn't work for me.
490 It, I know the sense of it, but it doesn't work for me, 'cos it sounds a bit like a...well it is, is
491 that an aspect of it is uncontrolled...absorption into the oneness again (R: hmm, u-hu)...it's
492 that loss of the free will and the loss of control (R: mm) and all that sort of thing going on. So
493 it is a falling in a way, but I don't like...the falling thing sounds too, too negative a tint..

- 494
495 R38 Okay, so...actually the diving...’cos I’m, I’m, I’m sorry about, yeah? (D: hmm) the
496 choice of words. ‘Cos the diving feels like...you’re willingly...putting yourself there (D:
497 yeah) Falling feels like y-you can’t help..
498
499 D38 Yeah, yeah, that’s; there’s something there (R: yeah, okay)..There’s something there,
500 a..(5 second pause) If I’m falling it’s like I’m failing to maintain control (R: hmm, hmm)
501 whereas this for me is more of a...going with the desire to be absorbed (R: hmm) to be
502 enfolded (R: yeah) to be unified. So it’s, it’s more along those lines...so, so for me, as I sort
503 of...went through a fairly standard childhood...erm, driven by my parents...gently persuaded
504 into academic life (R: mm) and all that sort of thing. Building a career, which I dutifully did
505 quite happily and thoroughly enjoyed, y’know, thoroughly enjoyed most of my time in IT,
506 erm, and became very...erm, black and white in my thinking (R: yeah) very rational (R:
507 hmm) y’know. I mean erm, yeah, I-I don’t mind saying, I’ve got huge powers of logical
508 thinking when it comes to sort of programming computers (R: yeah) things like that...you live
509 and learn...I can’t play the piano or, which I would have preferred to do, but there you
510 go...(both laugh)
511
512 R39 So you, you’re...aware that that’s a real strength you have, but also that, as part of that
513 growing up was, the, the whole thing about...maybe secrecy...and, and, or possibly (D: yes)
514 things not spoken and, and (D: mm) yeah?
515 (xvi)
516 D39 Yeah, that, that was it, so...erm, in my primary relationship now I’ve been with my wife
517 twenty years...and, err...she knows everything...there is to know about me (R: hmm)...yeah,
518 so, erm...I’m just thinking there what she doesn’t know (10 second pause) No, I don’t think
519 there’s anything she doesn’t know (R: okay) y’know, erm...there’s that level of openness (R:
520 mm) There’s that level of ability to talk about...however, that’s, that’s all been done quite
521 deliberately...y’know, because I was, I’m in this black and white world (R: mm, hmm) I’ve
522 got this knowledge, I must impart it on another, y’know, she, she can sort of be with me as
523 close as possible..
524
525 R40 Yeah? It’s kind of like a really logical decision (D: yeah) in reaction to, y’know, some
526 very emotional, painful I imagine..
527
528 D40 Some very emotional...err, yeah, yeah, there was more pain there than I knew...and it’s
529 something about...at that rational level, it’s all nice little shapes (R: hmm) squares and all that
530 sort of stuff (R: hmm) y’know? And erm, but in reality there’s no clear boundaries between
531 anything (R: mm) and therefore...and that’s worked for me: the unknown and the process
532 aspects all in operation (R: yeah) yeah? And for me, erm (coughs) and that becomes sort of a
533 loving acceptance aspect; that I can’t entirely know this other person (R: mm) and I have to
534 accept that there’s an unknown element of them that adds up to something in them that’s I can
535 trust to be wonderful (R: yeah) and, err, and that comes with clients as well now, y’know (R:
536 hmm, u-hu) I, that’s the same idea now...but I mean that’s all sort of fairly recent
537 development in my thoughts. So I went through (sighs) up to, up to entering
538 counselling...there’s a, there’s a sort of career move five or six years ago...in a very sort of
539 black and white mode; having a, a wonderful relationship with my wife...we meet in so many
540 ways, at so many different levels (R: hmm)...and...we resonate very deeply
541 emotionally...although...(excuse me)...I was never a hugely emotional person. I was in
542 ways, but my, my overall perception of myself is of, of being quite emotionally closed back
543 then...err...in a strange sort of way. I was quite happy to cry, y’know, bullying at school and
544 all that sort of thing just broke me away from the football set (R: hmm) and all standard male
545 stereotypical ways and so I was never a sort of a big boys don’t cry person. So, I was quite
546 emotional in some ways, but...I saw myself generally as...having grasped, grasped it at a
547 more rational level throughout (R: yeah)
548 (xvii)

549 Reaching a level of academic ability (R: a-ha) a logical ability that I can control this; I can
550 hold this; I can control this (R: mm) So it was all propped up like that..
551
552 R41 Something about: “this is my adaptation to preserve myself” (D: yeah, that’s it) that fits
553 with the Darwinian thing maybe (D: yeah) for you...
554
555 D41 ...the whole lot (R: yeah) that, that’s the way I’ve unfolded, that’s exactly it (R: hmm)
556 and, err...yeah, so, so I started opening up in counselling...and err, I did hit a bit of a brick
557 wall initially...in opening up emotionally...and when I got through that...then (and I hear that
558 quite a few students have that...erm, challenge to their partnerships, marriage or whatever)
559 (R: mm, mm) and it was, it was a challenge because the, the level of change in me I feel...in
560 opening up...erm, but it was a good challenge and it was like, wow, we can open our eyes and
561 we can still meet (R: mm) and that’s wonderful..
562
563 R42 “..and I’m okay (D: yeah) I can preserve myself still”
564
565 D42 Yeah...yeah...and then I find myself in the position where, okay, I can do the controlled
566 thing with counselling as a career (R: hmm) So I go and meet clients and as much as possible
567 I want to be totally as freely connected to my clients as I can be...and I’m not particularly
568 worried about my sexuality being in the room: I’m not going to act on it, or I’m not going to
569 allow myself to act on it (*11 second pause*) I don’t think I could persistently act on it and
570 when I’m saying persistent, I’m talking of a period of a couple of seconds (R: hmm) y’know?
571 I-I would feel it would resonate with: hey, I don’t want this complexity in my life in someway
572 (R: hmm) over a period of seconds, so if I started to act on it, I don’t think I would get very
573 many moments along (R: hmm) before it felt uncomfy and I didn’t feel...to resonate as a
574 oneness there’s a, there’s a rightness with everything else (R: mm) you see, so everything’s
575 coming in. So all the influence on me of where I want to be in my life...is a congruent,
576 controlling factor.
577
578 R43 ...something about: “how close can I get to it...and keep safe myself and keep my
579 clients safe...two seconds over and then it would...that would be too much, acting on...”
580 (xviii)
581 D43 If I, yeah...I feel like I’m releasing myself to be with my client as much as I can be (R:
582 hmm) and I’m taking off all controls on myself (R: hmm, hmm) so...if there’s a sexual
583 attraction, a sexual resonance between us...then I could see myself...moving in that way (R:
584 mm)...however, there’s that place I’m in of this; connected as possible...is a connection with
585 the oneness of everything and that includes my past history and everything, not in an
586 incongruent or “thou shalt not have affairs” way, which is what I used to think [### censored
587 ###] and that sort of stuff (R: hmm, hmm) It’s a: I don’t want this complexity in my life a-and
588 a, and a, but it, that would form over a couple of seconds. I feel I trust that would form (R:
589 mm) That, just as someone might say: “no I don’t do that ‘cos it’s unethical, it’s in the BACP
590 codes” right. I’m saying I wouldn’t do it because...err, it’s not in my make up (R: hmm) be-
591 because it just...and, y’know, and to me (R: it would change everything) sticking to the codes
592 is as much an incongruent staying away from my client (R: hmm) as my trusting this
593 resonance that (*inaudible*) [*I suggest this could possibly be ‘unfolds as’ or ‘emerges as’ or*
594 *‘evolves as’, or simply ‘says’*] don’t go there (R: mm) y’know, and to feel some discomfort
595 that throws it and whatever (R: hmm) yeah...yeah...so that, for me, that sort of, that’s sort of
596 where I sit with like love of any form (R: hmm) erotic or not, sexual or not, in the counselling
597 room. I...I believe in loving awareness...I believe our whole unfolding is of awareness. It’s
598 almost like, erm, y’know, all this sort of thing (R: mm) erm...it’s all different dimensions and
599 dimensions within dimensions and even the dimensions are patterns (R: hmm) y’know, time
600 and space are all patterns anyway, and awareness is a pattern, erm...that idea came from
601 Deutsch, David Deutsch...fabric of reality. He talks about multiverses as a quantum physics
602 thing and maybe intelligence as being a pattern across multiverses (R: mm) and, erm...
603 ...

Appendix A4: The Data Analysis.

The following extract (lines 1-121, 210-222, 248-314) is given in the format used for this research, and offered to allow a greater sense of the method used in the data analysis. Lines 1-121 offer the key to text formatting and the main structure of the analysis. Line 122 onwards contains the reflexive process captured as it emerged. Lines 210-222, 248-314 give an insight into this reflexive process and the personal experience of heuristic research. The complete analysis record is available by agreement with the author (email: mark.almost.unlimited@hotmail.co.uk), although not for open distribution. This path was decided for ethical reasons as discussed in the main body of the text.

References in the main body of this research are of the form (A4, 5-7) relating to the line numbers as displayed in this extract.

The complete record was copied to each person offering validation review (Appendix A9).

- 1 **Stages in development:**
2 *(initial reading/absorption omitted)*
3 Black - themes 1 pyramid
4 *Black - themes 2 pyramid godel*
5 Purple - themes 3 pyramid godel interview renum (3 to 4)
6 *Purple - themes 5 pyramid godel interview renum pyramid*
7 Green - themes 6 pyramid godel interview renum pyramid godel colour coded
8
9
10 *initial senses listed here may overlap due to later breakout.*
11 *sense of joy (I336-344 link joy poem)*
12 sense of beauty(P77-78) (G38) *(revisit P77-84 link to UPR and ethics etc) (revisit P85 - rejecting*
13 *now - no not just verbal symbolisation (M&T2000) but sensory symbolisation - openness to*
14 *the swelling senses as they unfold from unconsciousness towards verbal symbolisation*
15 *(Turnbull on brain halves, SAM and VAM etc)) (revisit P87-90 - and clients eloquence, as*
16 *discussed with [####] last night - when suddenly there is great eloquence - have they made*
17 *internal connections with their sense of beauty - the guided walk, Glastonbury etc)*
18 sense of awe(P79-82)
19 sense of congruence(P74-76, I364-365 - self-trust) *(revisit P97-98 risk of being changed in my own*
20 *being, and trusting that such will be okay - that somehow in meeting the other lovingly, we*
21 *exchange congruence, openness to accurate perception, or something) (revisit G244-247,*
22 *G261-269)*
23 sense of love (P5 “gently simmering, friendly”, P8 love as spikes, P10, P13-15, P31-32, velvet,
24 P20-21 “cold” as -ve, P85-90)(I323-324, I329-333 near-joy?) *(revisit P91 I am thinking of*
25 *wanting to be with anyone I deeply love, right now (even physically), I am thinking of*
26 *Moustakas ‘how sweet the confirmation’) (revisit P91-101 why the shape-shift, I think now,*
27 *yet I see the resonance ‘dialectical encounter’(P99) between reaching for awareness of*
28 *outer and other, and absorption to inner and self - I write this here, yet clearly the link to*
29 *resonance below) (revisit P95-98 I think I’ve got it - other as clear portal!, see attachment*
30 *below) (revisit G61-63 on presence - the presence of ourselves as a clear portal - and the joy*
31 *of such meeting!, G126 Rogers and presence/UPR?, G235-237, G275-277 meeting of*
32 *portals, G282-283 presence, meeting of portals)*
33 sense of richness (P33)
34 any of above as a measure of accurate perception - congruence with what is (P72) (I91-95), *(revisit*
35 *G241-243, G246-248, G250, G251)*
36 any of above as maybe UPR (P84, [####]) *(G40-42, G43-45, G189-190, G198-200, G232-233,*
37 *G241-245, G261-262, ethics G201-206, G250-251, G265-267, G268, G272-279, G288)*
38 *(I26-32, I47-53, I57-58, I77-80, I141-151, I215-219, I223-231, I288-289) (revisit G8-9*
39 *ethics, G279-281)*
40 sense acting as a largely tacit/unconscious level - Rogers pyramid (P, P49), *(G189-190, G196-197)*
41 *(I274-284) (link to M&T 2000 p - Rogers and research focus on conscious/qualitative etc*
42 *Moustakas)*
43 sense of everything - metaphor of gravitational pull *(G207-211) (I57-58)*
44 unfolded explicate - eg of volcano (P3-5, P50-55), and poem on Wyatt cd, formative, (P2-3, P68
45 process, P63, P64-71, P72, P106-111), *(G2, G32-33, G183-186, G196-197, G255-256)*
46 everything as one - wholeness, enfolding, ditto (P49 metaphor of sheet and tensions) *(G66, G166-*
47 *170, G180-183, G187-190) (I38-42, I265-266) (revisit P37-38) (revisit G33-37)*
48 dissolving boundaries, Godel, Zeno (P39-43), closed system fallacy *(G66) (revisit P102-105 aware*
49 *of the Zenoic recession/regression (must get the words sorted!!) as I sink to blackness in my*
50 *well. Walk or stay - ‘Somewhere in this small dimple is the vastness that is the ability to be*

51 *aware and to hold understanding.* 'I stay and push myself a little further, yet there is such a
52 *sense of a rush - (mahogany rush) - I am approaching breaking here, and aware of the*
53 *desire to walk having already come through strong... I feel I am fightlin a (fighting, my*
54 *typing is going) ... I am getting to B, I am getting to 'I must wak (walk)', this is whooshly*
55 *scary, I break (I decide) (revisit P106-111 boundaries of individual being dissolve into*
56 *'shared awareness' - some discomfort here over moving towards maybe social machine or*
57 *psychosphere concepts) (revisit G64-69 Ivan on C/N etc, G221-224)*
58 chaos and no-thing-ness/void as the absence of awareness/consciousness (P57-71), (I135-137)
59 abysmal lability/infinite depths (P6, P103-104)/enfold (P32 *revisit velvet*, P38, P48) link to
60 wholeness, PDA (P27-30, P37) (G54-57, G58-59, G65, G104-118, G151-152) (*revisit G88-*
61 *89 self reference on meaning of meaning etc)*
62 attachments (P11,P95-101), near-joy? (presentn,P118-134) (I584-585) (*revisit P11, I am again*
63 *feeling something like rejection towards the whole attachment thing) (revisit P95-97 other*
64 *as clear portal - did this come from incubation walk? - I am not wanting to 'attach' to*
65 *another embodied being particularly, I am drawn more to the clear portal to the otherness*
66 *beyond embodiment that they are - to having an added perspective on such otherness - I get*
67 *sense here of 'third way' thinking and another layer of complexity - again 'how sweet the*
68 *confirmation' that as embodied beings we can mutually confirm our insight into chaotic no-*
69 *thing-ness etc) (revisit P100-105 - having just written the prior bracket with a sense of 'I've*
70 *been near here before...)* (*revisit P118-134 after the walk/last bracket etc, I feel I reject the*
71 *idea of attachment to embodied being now. This section has relevance, but lacked the*
72 *recognition of the clear portal within the other. I am starting to feel some warm pain as I*
73 *sense my desire for embodied meeting fearful of its future position) (revisit G276-277*
74 *negative)*
75 awareness growing, resonance in void (P23-24, P106-111), (G4,G20-22, G39, G183-184) (I91-95,
76 (patterns and PDA I182-202, I605-614), I207-215 link to ball of wool, I262-266 empathy,
77 I371-377 evolved draw to understand, I591-612, I615-620 CPD willing)
78 non religious, maths, science, self-ref etc (P26, P35-36, P39, P45-48,P103-104,P112-116), (G10-
79 13, G25-32, G70-76, G77-83, G84-90, (*self-ref etc comes in at this point, like bridge*), G93-
80 107, G132-139, G141, G152-153, G170-176, G212-217, G221-224, G245-248, G268-271)
81 (*revisit G27 Sanford quote offered to Warrington group - I bounce to Zebrowski p12-13 on*
82 *pi and ancient monuments - good for light relief here!)*
83 spirituality linked (MND, meeting EP) (P26-27), (P140-145 Godlike figure),(G10-19, G105-107)
84 (I11-12, I214-219) (*revisit G105-118 link SciSpirit*)
85 *choice/free will/determinism (G6-7, G286-288) (I105-108, I112-123, I139-141,I346-365 love +ve?,*
86 *I484-502 maintain control equates maybe to self-trust?, I543-547, (I565-576, I635-651*
87 *congruent controlling factor in cllg) (I645 Ivan) (I629-630 dimensions of possible*
88 *connection) (I653-664 illusion of free will) (revisit P17-24 , link to unknown and to*
89 *greyness etc. Also M&T2000 on PCT discipline as below) (revisit P45-49 see below, and*
90 *the 'decision' that 'yes, we are at B')*
91 *unknown (re-check P for darkness P23-24)/otherness (in indefinable sense) (G16-19, G62-63, G70-*
92 *76, tacit? G142-147, G155-156, G175-176, G191-196) (I19-20, I242-247, I533-537) (I624-*
93 *625 marriage as filler etc - and 'other' boxes on forms) (revisit, G148-149, G176-179*
94 *knowledge held in infinitesimal) (revisit G218-220 limits of our being - the need for*
95 *senses?, G225-231 beauty beyond physical, G252-260 phenomenal, noumenal)*
96 *bridge science to unknown (G20-25, G32-37, G40-42, G46-51, G54-57,G122-123, G126-129,*
97 *G161-165, G175-176, G255-258) (revisit P50-61, I sense a key introduction of the maths*
98 *etc here, reading on, I wonder of quoting this at the start? - mix of warmth and maths!!)*
99 (*revisit P112-116 science resistive? thoughts of Goethe quote here) (revisit G10-19, G58-59*
100 *Merton and more mystical/spiritual language?, G73-74 mix of warmth and maths)*

101 trust (wow - late addition here!) (I296-306 1+1=2, I364-365 self-trust, I448-456 trust in grey areas,
 102 I469-534 openness as check? I518-519) (I621-642, I629-630 marriage, [### censored ###
 103 #####]) (I656-680 ice and water with Rita, boundaries with clients
 104 meaning incongruence with deeper feeling - 'rational', conscious(?) choice to remain
 105 professional, ethics of switching the form of relationship etc - vulnerabilities... into chaos
 106 and re-unfolding (as I write, Bohm quote and my sense here is of the re-emergence of
 107 awareness in each moment - Edelman and reentrant brain functioning) (*revisit P72-76,*
 108 *ethics, congruence with the actuality and it's raw formative tendency - sadness now that*
 109 *even the formative tendency is maybe an emergent pattern, and could simply untangle (dis-*
 110 *unfold?)) (*revisit P138-145, I recognise a paradox in my grounding on the walk, with*
 111 *embodied others. Yet I sense a grounding in meeting the clear portals aspect etc. I sense a*
 112 *move towards greater acceptance of my own aloneness (Moustakas) when it comes to these*
 113 *depths/conceptual areas - others are grounding through their own clear portal-like*
 114 *otherness - the most ethical meeting is maybe in our shared chaotic no-thing-ness) (revisit*
 115 *G43-45 most present - most self-trusting?)**

116 synchronicity (aka RD) (I294-297)

117 draw (I367-385 link gravity?, I522-523) (I635-651 allow, resist, Ivan, journal below) (I684-726
 118 sexual draw or loving draw - cross-overs?) (*revisit P13-15 draw to shared love) (revisit*
 119 *G38-39, G251, G272-274 draw to developing ethical sense)*

120 philosophy (late addition - why at all? musings shown?) (G170-172 (maybe recheck for others in
 121 P/I)

122 ...

123 ...

[reflexive notes made whilst performing the analysis]

208 ...

209 ...

210 Yet (I658-715) - if the draw is of a strength that I break from professional being, then that is sort of
 211 okay (although requiring ethical management), and not. Tricky - there is a continuum and I cannot
 212 deny an extreme situation where I opt to elope with a client. I doubt it to the extreme. Why? Back
 213 to volcano and well - the depth I connect with Lynds (and others) is greater than with any client.
 214 Sure, there are 'spikes' and some are maybe difficult and very deep, but it's the couple of seconds
 215 thing - I would catch myself moving in such a direction and halt it - and if I don't then I will stop
 216 being a professional counsellor. This is 'I am ethical until I am not'. I will not deny the risk, nor
 217 will I limit my 'being with' clients to some professional form of cllg where such risk is strongly
 218 avoided. I think here of the BAPCA 2007 conference moment where someone was ready to call
 219 BACP complaints because someone else had (in my mind) only slightly alluded to what I am
 220 talking of here - they were judged as 'too risky to be a cllr'. Sorry, but I think that hiding our heads
 221 under stones and pretending this stuff isn't happening is asking for trouble. Lets talk, and make sure
 222 we are more able to know more exactly where we are with clients.

247 ...

248 (*revisit P11) rejecting of the attachment stuff - but social construction and co-creation etc? I am*
 249 *aware of the pain I feel in the attachments I hold to those I cannot now be with. I don't want the*
 250 *pain, so I am rejecting of the attachments... When I put myself in 'joyful' mode, this pain is gone*
 251 *(denied?) - I sense parts/configurations (M&T again, okay, okay) and dissociative processing. I*
 252 *refuse to 'deny' or 'destroy' or otherwise reject the attachments and so the pain... Here is the*
 253 *thoughts of late on hate being the antidote to love - that in allowing myself to hate I am rewiring my*
 254 *brain away from the pain of love that falls on stony ground etc. . INSIGHT - hate as a driver*
 255 *towards dissociation, and the troubles that abuse causes in splitting realities etc. Is hate an internal*
 256 *recognition of movement towards dissociation?? (thoughts of links to the idea of meta-feelings here*

257 (or is it just the 'five pure feelings' etc) - joy as a measure of getting it right, hate as a measure of
258 getting it wrong etc etc.

259 revisit P45-49: I am hit with the moving from A to B and quantum ideas, the idea of uncertainty of
260 position, so (kids in cars): 'have we got to B yet?' becomes 'are we more often at B yet?' - of
261 course, there is another Zenic problem of whether or not we have passed the 50% mark... No,
262 same problem, yet also not - a different perspective. How long a time do we continue to sample
263 before saying 'yes we are at B more' - we might be about to see a big swing back to A!! (overlays
264 of bell curves etc).

265 writing (revisit P50-61...) I find myself wanting to dive into other books (Sennet's The Uses of
266 Disorder gets my eye immediately, I resist) Why do I want the distraction.... I feel as if my mind is
267 about to blow (I have lost it now) - this is where I often slip into the sense of joy, where all the
268 rational thinking on this all falls away and I am left with the underlying warm, humming awareness
269 - hey, the non-verbal awareness. I feel like I'm firing on all cylinders here, yet typing is disturbing
270 the process I sense - how can I fully immerse and at the same time capture - maybe a tape
271 recorder.... too unfamiliar, the typing is less disruptive AND more revisitable...

272 Is this heavy rational contemplation a form of dragging myself to greater openness and congruence
273 in that it opens up philosophical depths etc (reaches into my well from reverb off the volcano)

274 Quick note on methodology - my head is full of interview as it is the last one on this run-through - I
275 now revisit P and G as quickly as possible to try and hold the wholeness of the three within me for
276 a while. (I have M&M constant comparative handout in front of me.... not sure I have read it often
277 enough...) ... An hour later maybe, and the sun comes out and I am desperate to continue here and
278 to go for a quick walk around the river meadows.

279 typing (revisit P91 ...) I think of the research result as being maybe a guided tour of this raw data -
280 as the above becomes more chaotic and loses/lacks chronology, can I offer another this 'trip' as a
281 chronological construct? again, the idea of cycling through and deeper etc.

282 At this point, I think I go for colour-coding rather than separate appendices on this inclusion.

283 Returning from walking - see above somewhere.

284 ... I am aware of a client pushing my boundaries, and a sense that if we do not move in a different
285 direction soon, then I think we can no longer work together.

286 I check BAPCA mails, and find a building encounter comes to an end, at which I am relieved. Now
287 I feel able to return to the research itself...

288 From the walk...

289 I walk past houses of friends and avoid the desire to call in. My desire is not to be
290 distracted, but I dearly wish I could connect with someone who could hold me here - no
291 such person is available right now (if ever....)

292 I feel alone in Moustakas' sense. No distracting other-unfoldment here. Even a counsellor,
293 unless extremely non-directive, would not work for me here, I don't think.

294 Something about safety and stability in this human unfolding - just like the walk decision,
295 the final escalation toward decision (as I type I now think of exponential curves etc - A to B
296 becomes a B from A situation as the attraction/repulsion shifts maybe.... new thoughts
297 maybe best left aside for now. (add: M&TiA - social mediation as eg)

298 I wonder of the spontaneous emergence of a period of Moustakian 'Incubation'.

299 I exchange a warm, friendly, smily hello with someone walking their dog - I have the sense
300 of this being the start of needed ground.

301 *I think I have hit a Zenoic limit - Rita's highlighting of a possible finding.*
302 *Couples talk as they are passing... I slowly ground.*
303 *A female curve attracts me - I start to consider the idea of grounding back into embodied*
304 *being.*
305 *Is this what happens in the counselling room? When approaching chaos, does sex come as a*
306 *grounding (distraction? fight of the embodied being to remain embodied - remind of such?)*
307 *No. No, this is not my sense of any experience*
308 *yet... 'stirring in the loins' now... as I maybe fall towards disembodied love, my embodied*
309 *being screams to be heard.*
310 *A quick brew and I'll continue with the analysis.*
311 *down to P117. Quick note on methodology. I will allow the raw data to provide a backbone which I*
312 *will then relate with the literature notes - I am holding aside to avoid total confusion (which I feel I*
313 *have just proved to myself as a good decision (self trust yo!!) given the need for the walk)*
314

Appendix A5: The London Journal.

The following extract (lines 1-55, 97-115, 238-259) is given in the format used for this research, and offered to give a greater sense of the experience of the heuristic research method. The complete London Journal is available by agreement with the author (email: mark.almost.unlimited@hotmail.co.uk), although not for open distribution. This path was decided for ethical reasons as discussed in the main body of the text.

The complete record was made available on request to each person offering validation review (appendix A9).

1 2 3	24/4/09 train trip to London, transcript from paper:	Comments added when typing.
4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21		<p>The left column was originally written on paper. Curved brackets were (and are here) used normally, square brackets indicated interpretation/meta-thoughts/etc.</p> <p>Square brackets remain as on paper then (left column), and are similarly used here in typing (right column).</p> <p>When this was initially typed, comments were added in further brackets. These have now been separated into this column to increase readability. Curly brackets are used to indicate the original insertion point. Some shorter additions which aid readability rather than break the flow are not moved into the second column but left in curly brackets.</p> <p>reading M&M (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994), I felt inspired to journal and maybe produce data for research, in contemplating the use of brackets to separate observer comments - observation and interpretation held apart. Typing now, the question of differentiating raw data from journaling through the process remains a question - I could maybe end up swamping myself with raw data. I think of finding a methodology here - how do I recognise progress, when I somewhat aim to give myself time to find expression of the experience of my self-trust. When does raw data collection stop and analysis begin [thought - not so linear a flow from collection to analysis, I think that is in M&M]</p>
22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33	<p>He reads M&M p72-5, disbelieves invisibility [should such interpretation be bracketed {1} - no, he sees inside his own mind.]</p> <p>He exchanges texts with an encounter partner (EP), taking care not to drown her voice as he has often feared doing. He transcribes to avoid distress to his wife {2}, who has read prior texts. The hiding is not deception, more a confidentiality to avoid misunderstanding, openly negotiated with his wife.</p> <p>He writes this now, hating the word 'wife' and finding no other.</p> <p>He sits up, distracted by nearby noise on a train.</p> <p>He contemplates what is worthy of being written here - the empty beer can, the closed book, the sense of being transported.</p>	<p>{1} aka M&M as he has just read</p> <p>{2} I really hate this word</p>
34 35 36 37 38	<p>Transported {is} a link to the EP, his gentle caring for her travelling these days...</p> <p>Is such care real, or part of some {3} game? A rush of thoughts involving real self/co-construction arguments.</p>	<p>{3} conscious or unconscious</p>

39 40 41 42	And the train pulls in. A female passenger passes, her jeaned buttocks eye catching [a judgement of he] part covered by jacket.	
43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55	Text msgs [written quickly as the train rolls into Euston], he feels much love here. [Surreal to walk the platform writing this [2 {4} joy, at catching hold of what is [3 congruence as coherence {5}]]] ... and much love with his wife, [awareness of the struggle to mutual awareness {6}, fears for the relationship] How might EP view this 'raw data' - {7} - what game does he play in hiding or revealing - release from free will/choice - no game, only being as he is, in this momentary joy. [he walks on/breaks] Now in the hotel, wondering what to capture here - no a decision made minutes ago in walking [Euston to Russell Square] "buttocks" - He [I {myself}] wishes another word had come - but no, keep this 'raw data' {unedited handwritten sheets}.	{4} Numbered sub-brackets identifying 2 nd level thought process caught (and further levels) {5} Gill Wyatt's keynote at BAPCA conference 2007 {6} between his wife and he {7} and there are ethical concerns in any revealment of this, to anyone
...		
97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106	[what sort of 'raw data' is this when I write for the resultant readership? {17}] Anyway, client. {back to that thread} Roughly, I say {to the client} of getting such support from her husband. {18} She responds that it always turns into 'something else'. I feel happily castrated.	{17} again, fear of this all being judged, and judged invalid in research terms - here is my 'self-trust' in operation, as I have no choice other than to do as I do - I cannot help how others view this, only hope they see integrity {18} this was driven by the concerns I expressed in supervision, being the first client where such physical contact has seemed 'right' [2 note the self-trust expressed here, the key point in this research effort - what happens is what is 'right' [3 something about Wyatt on congruence and coherence, and Rogers quote on free will/determinism " <i>I believe that the freest man freely chooses the behavior which is also determined, and thus at least in the ideal case the contradiction is reconciled. (Rogers, nd - about 1956, cited in Cissna and Anderson book)</i> "]]
107	Bottom line peeps, {19}	{19} readership people addressed affectionately - to draw favour and avert any complaint?
108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115	I feel very, very, aware of my sexual being, and willing to put it on the table (don't have nightmares, anyone) {20} {21}	{20} immediate flash of an image of this being a somewhat physical act, and wanting to catch that immediate (spontaneous?) thought occurring as it did [2 I could spiral off into experiences of medical examination here - I feel it irrelevant [3 I trust my self-trust on this one!!!] {21} as I write, I realise the entire research project is here - here is maybe a 'creative' expression of findings around the concept of self-trust - here is an overt display of self-trust "in action" [2 aka book series]. How does this sit alongside other research? - a task that will be addressed sometime in this project

...		
238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246 247 248 249 250	<p>[15 min]</p> <p>I read the preface to Loneliness (Moustakas)</p> <p>- I release into copious tears</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">‘beauty’ {quotes from the book here}</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">‘the experiencing of deep companionship’</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">‘to recognise the brevity of life and the necessity of making each moment count, to realize the ecstasy of human companionship’</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">‘... how sweet is the confirmation’</p> <p>[end of evening’s writing]</p>	
251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259	<p>25/4/09 8am</p> <p>I catch my near automated moments washing hands and reaching for a towel brushing my teeth</p> <p>There is no joy in this automated being tears come, that joyless moments pass ... and here is joy in the awareness of what is</p>	

Appendix A6: The Wardle (2004) Review.

The following extract (lines 1-80) is given in the format used for this research, and offered to give a greater sense of the personal experience of reviewing literature for this research. The complete review is available by agreement with the author (email: mark.almost.unlimited@hotmail.co.uk), although not for open distribution. This path was decided for ethical reasons as discussed in the main body of the text.

The complete record was made available on request to each person offering peer review (appendix A9).

1 From: < [email address censored] > 15/09/2009 14:14

2

3 Dear Rita,

4

5 I send the attached notes with a sense of validating my process of immersion or something (I need
6 library records to prove I have never read Wardle before - but then I allude to our conversation.
7 Here is my process of research in its spontaneity. I ask no confidences etc

8

9 (sorry, I rant).

10

11 Do I send... what is the relevance of sending...

12 I timestamp this snapshot of my being.

13

14 With love

15 Mark

16

17 Wardle, M. (2004). A Qualitative Study of Counsellors' Experience of Extrasensory Perception
18 Whilst Working With Their Clients. MA Dissertation. Liverpool: University of Liverpool.

19 84 pages without refs/appendices

20 Example – show my critique of this authors work.

21 /A/ photocopy definitions, 25, 78, 88 – heron online, p3 – “... if you have some ambiguous
22 experience you should explore it until the experience declares itself more fully.” (see photocopied
23 notes).

24 Interviews – appendix showing themes according to number of times mentioned.

25 P2 “In the process of moving towards ‘modernity’ some aspects of ‘pre-modernity’ have been
26 swept aside, namely faith, spirituality, mystery and diversity.” Yet post-modern denies an absolute
27 – Ivans porridge etc. So... the tacit etc

28 P3: “It is not my intention to try and convince others that ESP exists. It is rather to create a tension
29 of different viewpoints, thus providing the stimulation, which can be viewed as inviting further
30 progression in the counselling world.”

31 P3 “By offering a safe and confidential space to explore these experiences...” to co-researchers –
32 yet I do not feel safe, nor desire confidentiality.

33 p4 “Thorne (1997, p.14) said that “counsellors should stop being such cowards and allow the data
34 of our own experiencing to be openly acknowledged and explored.” Yet he is pushed into dropping
35 the Sally chapter. (citation is a lecture). – talk to Brian.

36 P5 “McLeod (2001) maintains that qualitative methods of research will encourage the spread of
37 postpsychological thinking in counsellors.”

38 P5 “As I type these words I sense some trepidation about ‘coming out’, like I am going to expose a
39 part of myself that I have kept hidden from my professional practice.” Margaret Law-Holmwood
40 and spiritual emergence/crisis (also see W. West on crisis?), being held at the conference by [###]
41 as I melt beyond rationality. – who would hold me and who would hold me back?

42 P9 McLeod on lit search methods – note the ‘quantitative’ feel, the framing in ‘objectivity’.
43 Bricoleur – scan in/full text and use computer search/word counts etc.

44 POINT: end up searching for a research methodology I can trust - must I fall into fluidity, into
45 apparent chaos – I trust my own formative aspect (Rita).

46 P11 “May (1992) links ESP to spiritual practice and says it arises from intentional imagination to
47 spontaneous vision that seem to arise from outside oneself. I am not sure ESP is about imagination.
48 After all I can imagine myself to be anything or anybody, but it’s not real!” – imagination as
49 solidification of perception/symbolisation AND as an ‘intentional’ or unintentional incongruence.

50 P12 “Hastings (1983) [journal of transpersonal psychology]critiques the difficulty in identifying
51 authentic ESP communications and a disowned part of the self.” Disowning being the Wholeness?

52 At this point I think I could do a dialogical analysis of this or something – I also feel resistive to
53 reading on as it is a close echo of my own experiencing and thus may block my self-experiencing if
54 I am not careful.

55 P13 (relate to p12 note) rogers (1951, p.484) saying “the complete freedom to explore every portion
56 of the perceptual field.” – explore it, or experience it whilst exploring? – holding a client, as just
57 shared with Rita. In physical holding, do I allow greater anxiety than is safe? Ivan on ‘as is’ and ‘as
58 if’. P13 immediate comment is “He suggests that this will move the client from the primary level,
59 that which is unbiddable to the realized level.” Chase this – are we talking fluid/fixed? Are we
60 talking implicate/explicate etc? Back to physical holding – is the clearer symbolisation we aim to
61 nurture necessarily linguistic? Does this set the social direction more? (and take us from the
62 sexual?) p14, more on Rogers (1961, p339) “unified congruence” ??

63 I feel Wardle is offering the linguistic conceptualisation – I don’t want to offer this, I want to offer
64 the actual experience as I have it!!!

65 I scan a little through the “linguistic conceptualisation”s to p20 “Gooch (1978) says that we are not
66 able to distinguish firmly between telepathy and clairvoyance. Both forms of communication
67 involve ‘mind’ to ‘mind’ channels.” So does conversation – its just that our 5 senses are objectively
68 recognised HOWEVER – even these are reliant on the uncertainty of sub-atomic particle/wave
69 interactions.etc

70 P20 “Alcock (1981) and Mintz (1983) both suggest that the greater the rapport, mutual warmth and
71 trust between client and therapist, the more likely that telepathic communication will occur.” Ok
72 Rita, what is this – are we saying telepathy or a meeting of fluidity as we’ve just discussed? Never
73 mind my researcher bias, what is your bias maybe, as my supervisor? (okay, okay – it’s E.E. Mintz
74 when I chase the ref, sorry!! Still the thought of supervisor bias stands...)

75 P24 Josselson’ threads and Winnicotts holding environment etc.

76 P24 (p/c 25) “ ‘Boundaries are illusions, products not of reality but of the way we map and edit
77 reality’ (Wilber, 1979, p.31).” ... if I am to be a valid cllr or even researcher, must I be bounded –
78 even when it is the boundlessness I am researching (hopefully)!!

79 P29/30 Moustakas’ dissatisfaction with existing research methods – I don’t chase because I feel I
80 need to contain my scope – not chase the perfect research method, as above.

81

Appendix A7: Interview Consent Form.

[### RESEARCHERS NAME ###]
MA [### COURSE TITLE ###]
(### UNIVERSITY NAME ###)

RESEARCH CONTRACT

In accordance with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy guidelines for researching counselling and psychotherapy, I confirm that:-

1. All personal material shared with myself will remain confidential and any data collected will remain under lock and key, whilst not in use during the research process. Exceptions to this are that, issues relating to the research may be discussed in research as well as personal supervision and the final written dissertation will be seen and marked by University of Manchester tutors and examiners. When these exceptions apply, co-researchers real names will not be used and the utmost discretion will be exercised in order to protect personally identifiable material.
2. As part of the validation process, co-researchers will be kept abreast of the progress of the study as well as be invited to comment and offer feedback on the accuracy of the final draft.
3. Co-researchers have the right, at any time, to withdraw from the study.
4. NO personally identifiable material belonging to co-researcher's clients or supervisees will be included in the final dissertation, unless it is beyond doubt that permission has been sought and given.
5. Upon completion of the written dissertation, tapes and any other relevant personal material, will be returned to co-researchers on the grounds that they are owned by them and loaned to me.
6. No post-completion dissemination of the study will take place without participant's written consent.
- 7.1 am a member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherap and abide by its ethical framework and am subject to its complaint procedures.

Signed

[### researchers name ###] (researcher)

I have read and understood the research proposal and contract and consent to being interviewed for the purposes of this study. I am a member of [### professional body ###] and will honour my ethical obligations to my clients and supervisees.

Signed Co-researcher

Appendix A8: Private Material.

All other records produced as a part of this research are considered private. They will be made available only in response to specific concerns raised with the author (email: mark.almost.unlimited@hotmail.co.uk). This path was decided both for ethical reasons as discussed in the main body of the text, and to allow some level of privacy to be maintained.

These records were only made available to each person involved in the validation review (Appendix A9) where a specific concern was raised.

Appendix A9: Validation Review and Offered Statements.

The earlier section on validity (p. 46) offers some indication of why this validation review process has been formed. Moustakas (1990, p. 32-35) highlights the centrality of the researcher in assessing validity. He suggests that “verification is enhanced by returning to the research participants, sharing with them the meanings and essences of the phenomenon as derived from reflection on and analysis of the verbatim transcribed interviews... and seeking their assessment for comprehensiveness and accuracy.”

The unique nature of this research, in using papers written by the researcher himself in place of transcribed interviews with co-researchers, raised concerns over validity when the original research proposal was submitted. For this reason extensive extracts of the raw data have been included to allow the audit trail between findings and data to be checked. All data is available, although only with the author’s agreement due to limitations arising from ethical concerns (p.44).

A further ‘validation review process’ has been formulated in line with Moustakas’ (1990) point (above). Given that the “participants” are the researcher, it was decided to approach people who were personally familiar with the researcher. The process was initiated as follows:

1. A number of reviewers were identified who are familiar with the author (friends, family and peers). Familiarity was required to allow the reviewer to assess whether they felt the dissertation offered any inaccurate expression with their own experiencing of the author.
2. Initial contact was made by telephone to see if they might be willing to be involved and to discuss any concerns over the content of the research and over confidentiality. I expressed that I believed they were already reasonably aware of the personal content included in the research.
3. Each reviewer was then e-mailed the following request (next page), with an attached copy of the otherwise finalised dissertation, together with the raw data and data analysis (appendices A1, A2, A3 and A4).

Appendix A9: Validation Review and Offered Statements

Dear #####,

Thank you for agreeing to review my research (attached) and offer a statement towards validation. As agreed in our conversation, the attachments are to be held in confidence, and as discussed it is intended that this collaboration does not affect our relationship in any way.

Further information regarding validation can be found in appendix A9, and in the section on Validity (p.46).

I hope you feel able to:

1. Communicate by e-mail where possible in order to provide a full record of the review. I will e-mail a summary of any telephone conversation or meeting to provide an accurate record. This record will be held privately and confidentially, only to be accessed with your agreement should any query be raised.
2. Please highlight any difficulties in following the referencing system used between the main body and the appendices.
3. If you have a specific query requiring access to the further data as described in the other appendices, please contact me and a relevant extract will be made available.
4. Read the dissertation and consider if you feel there is anything you feel does not truly reflect my character or is otherwise inaccurate given your personal knowledge and experience of me. Please feel free to ask any questions at all. It is thought that you will feel able to offer comment via e-mail to allow the research to be revised if necessary (see below), and a statement towards validation.
5. Write a short statement (under 500 words, although you may choose to make this statement very brief) towards validation which will be included without edit in appendix A9. Please indicate whether you want this to remain anonymous.

As mentioned in our conversation, if for any reason you feel you cannot continue then you are free to withdraw. Similarly, if you feel the research and its findings do not match with your personal experience and knowledge of me, and you do not feel able to express why, then your withdrawal will be respected. A note will be added to appendix A9 to say how many reviewers felt unable to offer a statement regarding validation.

The deadline for completion is Late October.

Warm regards

Mark

Appendix A9: Validation Review and Offered Statements

Validation Statements.

Responses not included here expressed no concerns.

I recognise him completely and as he requests can confirm the work most certainly matches with my personal experience and knowledge of him.

The themes running through the dissertation theology, philosophy and physics are most certainly him.

Aside from the themes his overall approach and structure is most certainly him. His continued refusal to just do an ordinary dissertation, jump through the hoop.

His experience of reality is more like mine than we have ever really discussed recently and as I family member I recognise his approach to many of his key themes. I wonder where it came from in the family?

I would have to spend far more time on it to actually understand what he's getting at but its him.

Reading the work evoked in me the same feelings as he does in real life. He could have been stood there.

He does write better than I thought he would and his referencing is really thorough.

I found it very difficult not to go into academic mode and begin marking the work. I am most relieved that the task does not fall to me.

I realise I should avoid the use of inappropriate humour in my statement but I can only offer my sympathies to his supervisor.

This is the work of the brother I know and love dearly.

I have had nearly 50 years of discussion with Mark and look forward to the next 50 years.

Kaeren van Vliet. (Sister).

I have known Mark, albeit from a distance, for about 10 years. Having had a number of conversations with him I believe Mark has spent some considerable time considering his own emotional condition as well as studying the philosophy and academic basis of counselling.

Mark's earlier education as an engineer is also apparent in his attempts to codify and rationalise his feelings, although I didn't understand what this really meant or establish whether it was a successful exercise.

Mark is an original thinker and dogged in his approach, at times appearing naïve to me. I found the essay hard to read, but look forward to talking to Mark about what it meant.

I can confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, Mark wrote this dissertation.

Andy van Vliet. (Brother in Law).

Appendix A9: Validation Review and Offered Statements

I have been in a deeply loving relationship with Mark for the past 25 years. My experience of Mark throughout this relationship is of someone who deeply questions and reflects on his thoughts and actions. I experience Mark to be extremely honest and open in discussion and dialogue, daring to explore and expose extremely personal emotions. He will also sensitively challenge others, risking potential conflict (and pain) in order to make sense of his / their position in the relationship.

Since undergoing a career change into counselling, I sense a move to deeper reflection and at times intense personal turmoil. Such exploration has brought many emotional challenges to our relationship; however I feel this has developed into a deeper loving and understanding of each other.

The research addresses very personal issues which can be difficult to position in an academic study. In light of this, Mark has continuously engaged in discussion with myself, work colleagues, regular supervision and many internet forums within the counselling community.

I have personal experience of reading excerpts of the forum dialogue and the feedback offered from therapists to Mark's honest and personal explorations. I sense a great respect from these therapists of Mark's courage to open up discussion for what must affect all therapists in relationship with clients.

I'm not sure I understand some of the concepts that have emerged through this heuristic process. I can also say this of many discussions I have had with Mark over the years. I appreciate that we all make sense of things in different ways.

By engaging so openly and deeply, I feel this can only contribute to Mark's trustworthiness when entering into relationship with clients.

Lyndsay Atkinson.

After meeting Mark as an applicant for a counsellor vacancy on St. Luke's (Cheshire) Hospice Counselling team end 2008, I am working with Mark as a team member, counselling colleague and co-teacher, co-organiser of group support for clients, supervisee and peer in philosophical and creative reflective practice.

I am pleased and relieved to say that I have experienced Mark's dissertation as a very accurate expression of how I have learned to know him over the last three years.

I feel that the way he has conducted his research, and the way he formulates his conclusions and presents his views, truly reflects his character.

The initial theoretical and personal building blocks of this dissertation I recognise as parts of earlier conversations. The latter stage of professional and theoretical integration of his personal experience and reflections has lifted this work from courageous to confident.

Kathleen Vandenberghe. (Practice Supervisor).

Appendix A9: Validation Review and Offered Statements

I have known Mark as a close friend for over 12 years. I can confirm that the dissertation is an open and sincere reflection of my experience of him.

It is consistent with the many conversations I've had with Mark as he has gone through a period of self-exploration from his career in IT. I can vouch too, that from my perspective his comments on the relationship he has with his wife are valid.

I've always admired Mark for his integrity and greatly respect the honesty with which he represents his thought processes and personal dilemmas in the discussion and appendices. Even when challenged on some points – particularly his notion of competence in behaving ethically – Mark convinced me that he has thought long and robustly on the issues.

I trust this meets the needs for assessment, but if not I would be happy to respond to any further requests.

Sam Marshall.

I have known Mark for a number of years and having read the Masters dissertation I believe it reflects the true nature of his character.

My personal experience and knowledge of Mark have been based upon numerous complex conversations regarding ethical, spiritual and personal matters. He is always passionate about counseling and ethical matters and I do not believe he would ever act beyond professional boundaries or behave in a non ethical manner.

I believe Mark has explained his unconscious and conscious self, as he views it, accurately within the document and can wholeheartedly state that it is a valid reflection of his personality.

I consent to this statement being accessible to all who read the document; it does not need to remain anonymous.

Anne Marie-Cahill.

I have been pondering your paper for some time and revisiting parts over the last two weeks or so. My comments are that I find much of it beyond my capacity to understand fully so I am not a reliable reviewer. Having said that I will offer my comments in case they are of use.

I have been moved by reading of the depth of your personal searching and the experience of reaching a previously undiscovered level of consciousness. You describe your emergence from this state with new insights about your ability to trust yourself. What I understand from your findings is that you believe that although you may have some sexual desires for your client you would automatically censure yourself after a few seconds. It feels important to you that you don't deny having the feelings in the first place but that you can trust yourself not to act on them. The paper examines your journey to realisation that you can indeed trust yourself.

I can confidently confirm that the paper accurately reflects your character given my personal knowledge and experience of you.

Tessa Yates.

Appendix A10: Finding Focus in the Literature Review.

The literature review used phrases from the research title as sub-headings, I here offer a more complete insight into the actual, overall process.

In looking for the initial form for this research, aspects such as **idiosyncratic responding** (Keys, 2003; Bozarth, 1984; Thorne, 1991), **counsellor self-disclosure** (Andersen & Anderson, 1989), **presence** (Rogers, 1980; Bridges, 2007; Schmid, 2002; West, 1998) and **congruence** (Grafanaki, 1996; Schmid, 2001) formed the basis for searching and reviewing the literature, largely using online database searches. This returned literature and research considering if such therapist *doing* or *being* (Bozarth, 1998) proved useful to clients, without really questioning from where it emerged in the therapist.

Further searching related to concepts such as a **felt sense** (Bassoff, 1984; Crane & Elias, 2006; Falkenström, 2007; Hinterkopf, 1994; Levin & Trevarthen, 1994; Schlauch, 2006; Sills & Lown, 2008), **meditation** (Crane & Elias, 2006; Ottens & Klein, 2005), **silence** (Bridges, 2007; Humphreys, 2006; Maitland, 2008; Mazzei, 2007), **mysticism** (Bridges, 2007; Schmid, 2001; Wood, 1997) and **spirituality** (Gillies, & Neimeyer, 2006; Marsh & Low, 2006; Peet, 2005; West, 1998) similarly missed the mark although offered indications that maybe I needed to step away from including the terms **counselling** and **psychotherapy**.

Terms such as **free will**, **experiencing**, **meaning construction**, **trust**, **confidence**, **self esteem**, **ethics**, **moral sense** initially delivered papers related to counselling or psychotherapy that had already been captured in the prior searches, or offered nothing of apparent relevance. The key came in reorientating slightly to cover terms such as **therapist abuse**, **love**, **sexual abuse** and **sexual attraction** (Coleman & Schaefer, 1986; Giovazolias & Davis, 2001; Hetherington, 2000; Pope, 1990b; Pope, Keith-Spiegel & Tabachnick 2006; Williams 1990). This reorientation was driven by experiences in client work of some relevance. A chain of events saw me reading Brazier (2009) and bouncing to Shlien (1987), together with responses as presented in Cain (2002). Events rolled as I looked further into psychodynamic literature (Davies, 2003; 2004; Fonagy & Target, 2004; Grant, 1998; Mann, 1997; Pizer, 2003; Schaverien, 2006; Slavin, Davies, Oxenhadler, Seligman, & Stein, 2006). A key event was being recommended Heyward's (1987) client perspective of the potential for harm "When Boundaries Betray Us". With this came Heyward's (1989) daring to "equate unalienated erotic power with the love of God" (as described on the book cover).

Within all of this I made the acquaintance of Ian Townsend through a conference on Relational Depth (Harrison, 2010a). His thesis (Townsend, 2010) offered an extensive insight into the level of taboo regarding sexual attraction in the therapy room, which helped me find greater focus in terms of philosophical questions regarding ethics, free will and accountability (Chomsky, 1972; Howard, 2000; Kant, 1948/2005; Pattison, 1999; Russell, 1946; Spinoza, 2001; Vardy & Grosch, 1999). Effectively, Townsend (2010) shows the paucity of discussion in existing texts (with the very notable exceptions offered by Shlien (1987) and Thorne (1991, 2002)), raising the question of self-trust in any therapist when "the search for intimacy is rich with possibility yet fraught with risk" (Townsend, 2010, p. 21). Such paucity is maybe also reflected in a recent article by Martin, Godfrey, Meekums & Madill (2010) where they pose many seemingly unaddressed questions in their introduction.

I now feel it worth turning from the vast array of avenues explored, and reflecting on the possible purpose of this literature review. Marshall and Rossman (1999) propose "four broad functions" (p. 43), which I address individually here:

Research Methodology.

The first function is to display the appropriate selection of research methods. This has already been addressed in the chapter on methodology, where the decision to attempt a highly reflexive, heuristic bricolage is validated through relating to texts on research methods. The discussion on research methods and paradigms was of particular importance here because the framework they offer for the research had to be trusted before I could get off the

Appendix A10: Finding Focus in the Literature Review

ground. I feel a little locked into a self referential rewrite of form “I trust therefore I trust” (with apologies to Descartes). Having gone into such depth already, no further space will be taken here.

Demonstrate Knowledge of Relevant Intellectual Traditions.

Following the methodology chapter, there was the data analysis and findings, a deeply personal exploration into personal beliefs in the hope that such might reveal a basis for the existence of self-trust. It seems to me that the bottom line reached is that due to paradoxes that mean no closure (Muir, nd.) actually exists, then there can be no definite cause effecting trustworthiness. From a different perspective, Sommerbeck (2011) considers that most aspects of a person’s life “are a nonlinear dynamic system, determined and unpredictable” (p. 208). I feel this resonates strongly with the ‘*Intellectual Traditions*’ covered in the methodology chapter. The cause and effect assumed from the positivistic, quantitative paradigm for research is seen to be somewhat carried through, although weakening, in the qualitative paradigm. It maybe comes closer to dispersing altogether in a more process orientated paradigm (Bohm, 1980, 1987; Kriz, 2007, 2008; Neville, 2007; Prigogine and Stengers, 1984; Rogers, 1980; Sommerbeck, 2011).

Part of the raw data (appendix A1) is empirical in its reflection of my personal beliefs and experience, whilst also at the time drawing heavily on existing literature. It therefore includes further demonstration of my personal “*Knowledge of Relevant Intellectual Traditions*”. Sections below relate directly to the research title in this regard.

Show the Identification of Gaps in Prior Research and How These Will Be Addressed.

Given the emergent nature of this research, the gap was identified or clarified as a result of the research rather than before-hand. I have described how literature searches offered little that offers any reasoning regarding self-trust, any causal links that effect ethical being. Townsend (2010) offers a supportive example in highlighting the seeming taboo nature within the person-centred field of “The Emergence of Eros in the Therapeutic Relationship”. Yet, generally, “reluctance to get at the truth has left both clients and professionals ill equipped to protect themselves” (Peterson, 1992, p. 2). I remain considering that, by and large, self-trust is taken for granted and seen as a paradigmic assumption for the basis of any system of knowledge and for any action. In effect, the assumption of a “constituted unified subject” (Proctor, 2002, p. 54, citing Butler, 1992) or “a rational agent with free will” (Pattison, 1999) remains largely unquestioned in the existing literature.

Refine and Redefine the Project By Embedding It in Larger Empirical Traditions.

At this point, I feel it worth turning to Oliver (2004, p. 107) where he offers that “The principal purpose of the literature review is to establish the academic and research areas which are of relevance to the subject of the research.” He then considers how the title of the research then leads the way, and so the structure of the main body of this review in part uses phrases from the research title as sub-headings.

Oliver (2004) also considers that the review “sets the thesis within a research context consisting of relevant research studies and other analyses of related ideas.” It is here that I realised just how much of a task I had embarked upon, and how far I had maybe tried to stride out.

The final literature review chapter consists of sections offering a more direct relation between the research heading and the literature.

Appendix A11: Informed Consent Form.

**M.A. Counselling Studies Research
Consent Form
Material Allowing Potential or Actual Identification**

Ihereby give consent for material relating to my relationship with the researcher,.....to be included as part of a research dissertation for the M.A. in Counselling Studies at University of Chester.

* I agree to being personally identifiable, and have agreed to the level of personal information being presented or held on record.

* I understand that my identity will remain anonymous, and that all personally identifiable information will remain confidentially held and separate from the research data accordingly.

I further understand that the material may be seen by Counselling Tutors and the External Examiner for the purpose of assessment and moderation. I also understand that all these people are bound by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy Ethical Framework for Good Practice and Psychotherapy.

I further understand that others may request to see information, and that the researcher will contact me and only offer what I specifically give permission to share in response to the specific request and on the understanding that others will maintain confidentiality.

I understand that I will have access to the material at any time before submission should I wish to and would be able to delete or amend any part of it. I also understand that I will see the final form in which the material will be submitted. I am aware that I can stop the use of the material at any point, or ultimately withdraw it before the publication of the dissertation.

Excerpts from the material will be included in the dissertation. Copies of the dissertation will be held in the University of Chester Library (potentially online) and the Department of Social and Communication Studies Resource Room.

Without my further consent the material included in the dissertation itself may be used for publication and/or presentations at conferences and seminars. Every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

Finally I believe I have been given sufficient information about the nature of this research, including any possible risks, to give my informed consent for the use of such materials.

Signed (Participant)

Date

Signed Researcher)

Date

* Delete as appropriate