ESPOUSED THEORIES AND THEORIES-IN-USE: BRIDGING THE GAP

(Breaking Through Defensive Routines With Organisation Development Consultants)

Liane Anderson

ESPOUSED THEORIES AND THEORIES-IN-USE: BRIDGING THE GAP

(Breaking Through Defensive Routines With Organisation Development Consultants)

Liane Anderson

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Organisational Psychology degree at the University of Queensland.

December, 1992

Acknowledgements

Abstract

The aim of the present study was to examine the critical elements of a process for reducing the gap between the espoused theories and theories-in-use of organisational consultants. A body of literature has been devoted to the work of Argyris and Schön and their concept of differences between these theories of action (espoused and in-use) over the last two decades. Despite this long history, a study of the specific processes which may be employed in order to achieve a congruence between espoused theories and theories-in-use has yet to be dealt with adequately.

Previous research in the area has predominantly focused on three areas:

1. Providing evidence that the values people espouse (i.e. espoused theories) are consistently inconsistent with the values which drive their behaviour (i.e. theories-in-use)

2. Developing theories which further explain this phenomenon, what brings it about and what reinforces it

3. Describing *outcomes* of endeavours to facilitate participants' awareness of the inconsistency in their motives and to move them towards congruence

Little has been explicitly written concerning actual processes that may be used to achieve congruence in participants.

A large section of Argyris' work has been with organisational consultants. Evidence is provided of the inconsistency inherent in consultants behaviour and of their consequent ineffectiveness. The present study also looks at organisational consultants an their incongruence. A short structured process developed by Dick and Dalmau (1990) and based on Argyris and Schön's work, was used as the basis for designing and implementing a comprehensive 8 session programme to reduce the gap between espoused theories and theories-in-use of the consultants involved. An action research framework was employed. Through reflection on the programme, the researcher and participants identified factors critical to increasing congruence.

The critical factors were:

1. The researcher's congruent behaviour at the beginning of the project enabled non-defensive relationships to be established, and effective learning to take place.

2. The researcher's effective and congruent confrontation of incongruities in participants' behaviour enabled the group to become aware of their inconsistencies without becoming defensive.

3. The researcher's confrontation of her own behaviour modelled self-analysis and confrontation. This also enabled the group to see the researcher as a co-learner, thus facilitating participants taking responsibility for the process and consequently their own learning.

4. The opportunity for participants to be positively reinforced for confronting their own behaviour lead to more self-analysis and confrontation. In some cases, reinforcement lead to a change to a more positive attitude toward discovering inconsistencies in their own behaviour. This also lead to the lowering of defences.

5. Provision of a safe environment, enabled participants to take risks in disclosure of ineffective behaviour, and to try new behaviours.

6. The process developed by Dick and Dalmau (1990) was effective in facilitating participants in confronting each other's and their own behaviour, by providing a guideline for giving effective feedback.

7. Reflection about behaviour which incorporates others' opinions about apparent motives and the consequences of actions, is more effective than private reflection, and more likely to lead to more effective learning.

8. Encouraging discussion about attempts to change behaviour outside the group, seemed more likely to facilitate transfer of the learning to other situations.

9. The process itself by later stages seemed fairly robust, suggesting that the crucial learning and change took part in the initial sessions. This also meant that ineffective behaviour on the part of the researcher in these later stages was not so detrimental as it might have been initially.

Overall, effective public reflection within a safe environment and a structured process for giving feedback, facilitated with openness and honesty, seems to lead to awareness of, and reduction in, the gap between espoused theories and theories-in-use of organisational consultants.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It is suggested that we are currently living in a time of dramatic change, and that this change is taking place at many levels and at a rapidly increasing rate (Blake, Mouton, & McCanse, 1989; Carnall, 1990). Organisations and individuals are faced with the problem of how they can most effectively deal with this climate of change. The growing field of management consultancy has, to some extent, stepped in to help organisations and individuals through these changes. Blake, Mouton and McCanse (1989. p. ix) suggest that, "being able to produce change and point it in the desired direction may indeed be one of our most profound intellectual assets". A casual glance at the organisation development (OD) literature is enough to verify the preoccupation with the dynamics of change. For example Kilmann, Saxton & Serpa (1986), Lorsch (1986), Levy (1986), Woodward & Buchholz (1987), Fitzgerald (1988), Kilmann & Covin (1988), Aunglles & Parker (1989), Fossum (1989), Mathews (1989), and Carnall (1990).

One can only assume that a great deal of money and resources have been channelled into acquiring the services of OD consultants in order to secure their assistance with the change process. However, Argyris (1991) has suggested that Organisation Development consultants are often engaged in self-defeating processes which hinder their effectiveness in producing the changes they seek to enact, and also that they fail to learn effectively from their experience. He suggests that one major source of these difficulties lies in the gap which exists between what consciously and unconsciously drives the consultants' actions. He suggests most people are unaware that their consciously espoused reasons for their behaviour, may deviate substantially from what is driving their behaviour at a deeper less conscious level. They also suggest that others are more likely to be able to see the inconsistencies in our behaviour than we are ourselves. Much of the literature and work of Argyris and Schön has been devoted to looking at these inconsistencies inherent in behaviour and developing a complex set of theories to explain the intrapersonal, interpersonal and systemic causes and reinforcements for this inconsistency. Exploring this gap between what consciously drives us (espoused theories in Argyris' terms) and what are our mostly unconscious

motivations (theories-in-use in Argyris' terms) and looking at processes which might help reduce this gap in organisational consultants is the focus of the current paper. The study will draw on and add to the extensive work of Argyris and Schön. Exploring processes which may increase a consultants' congruence has ramifications for the practice of consulting and the training of consultants. For this reason it should be of extreme importance and practical use, which is the rationale for the current study.

I begin with the rationale for the current study and go on to look at an overview of Argyris and Schön's conceptual work as the dissertation is based heavily upon their theoretical framework and their language. Assumptions underlying the approach I use have also been made explicit, and this is followed by the particular methodological concerns of this approach.

1.1 RATIONALE - Why Look at Consultants' Congruence?

Exploring processes which may increase a consultants' congruence has ramifications for the practice of consulting and should be of extreme importance and practical use for a number of reasons. These will be looked at in turn.

1) Consultants by the nature of their profession are concerned with change or transition. They are involved in helping organisations, groups and individuals move from one state of being to another (French & Bell, 1984). This implies some manner of intervention within a system or individual. Therefore it seems relevant that consultants have an understanding of how their behaviour impacts upon the system they are 'helping'. Most consultants work with some kinds of models or theories of how they may best achieve an intervention (Tichy & Nisberg, 1976). If however, their theories-in-use (the theories implied by their behaviour) do not accord with their espoused theories (the theories they say guide their behaviour) then there is a gap in understanding on the part of the consultant. This may have a detrimental effect on the way they interact with the system. In fact in recent research, Argyris (1987) suggests

that OD professionals use defensive reasoning processes to design and implement their actions, while espousing and counselling their clients not to use such reasoning processes. This leads to the OD practitioners having decreasing credibility with their clients. If we assume that Argyris and Schön are correct, then there is also likely to be an unawareness of this gap between espoused theories and the theories which drive our action. being able to perceive this gap and move towards closing it then, should be highly beneficial, and greatly increase a consultant's effectiveness.

2) Effective consulting is said to rely to some extent on effective self-analysis (Carey & Varney, 1983). This is particularly true if we consider that consultants in their everyday activities, will encounter blocks or resistance to any change they are attempting to facilitate. Self-analysis which explicitly aims to deal with such blocks or 'defenses' on the part of the consultant, seems relevant, if we assume that being able to deal with their own resistance to change may better enable consultants to understand and manage others' resistance to change.

3) Much of what is able to be achieved in an intervention is implicitly related to the trust developed between the consultant and the client (Schein, 1969; French and Bell, 1984; Dalmau, Dick and Boas, 1987). This trust is built and based on a number of variables. For example, the consultant is perceived as helpful, rather than a salesperson (French & Bell, 1984). It has been suggested that one of these variables is the match between what consultants say and do, or their congruence (Schön, 1983 & Argyris, 1987). Therefore, developing more congruence may lead to greater trust being built between consultant and client.

4) It would seem from casual observation, and from some recent work by Argyris (1987, 1991) that consultants appear to have particularly strong and resistant defense

mechanisms in relation to their work skills. To lend credence to this statement a brief example may be useful.

Argyris (1991) cites work he had done with a management consultancy group. It centred around evaluation of the consultants' performance. In one meeting about a recently completed project the manager encouraged a discussion on how they may have improved their performance. The manager was careful to set the climate for a non-threatening, open discussion. He invited a trusted outside consultant to "keep me honest", and said no subject was off-limits including his own behaviour. A 3 hours discussion followed about his own behaviour and errors he had made to which he responded positively and non defensively. Eventually, the manager asked the team members if there were any errors they might have made. The team members repeated that it was really the client's and their own manager's fault. The more the team manager persisted in trying to facilitate the professionals to examine their own responsibility, the more they avoided his concerns. The team members made attributions (held beliefs) about the client which they never publicly tested but assumed were true and valid. For example, saying (ironically) that the client wasn't motivated to learn, without presenting any evidence to support the claim. When their lack of evidence was brought to their attention they simply became more vehement in their criticisms. When asked why they hadn't brought up these strong concerns during the project, they implied in this also the fault lay with others. "We didn't want to alienate the client," and "We didn't want to be seen as whining," were offered as the reasons. According to Argyris (1991, p102), the professionals were using criticism of others to protect themselves from the embarrassment of admitting their own part in a less-than-perfect performance. The fact that they kept repeating their defensive actions, despite their managers' efforts to switch the focus to their own role suggests their defensiveness may have become a reflexive routine, according to Argyris.

There is some theoretical grounding in the work of Argyris and Schön for why this might be so. Argyris (1991), suggests that highly educated, successful people often find they have the greatest difficulty in learning effectively. by learning, he is specifically referring to what he terms "double-loop" learning. That is:

1) an ability to look beyond the strategies used to achieve a particular outcome,

2) to critically examine the outcome itself,

3) to devise strategies appropriate to the new outcome, and

4) act on them.

This refers to the ability of individuals to be able to reflect critically on their own behaviour, to identify the ways in which they may be inadvertently contributing to the organisation's problems, and changing the way they act accordingly.

Argyris suggests consultants are frequently very good at "single-loop" learning. This refers to the ability to find effective strategies to achieve an outcome. These skills have been built up through years of acquiring academic credentials, and applying various concepts and models to solve organisational problems. He suggests this helps explain why they are so bad at double-loop learning. For the most part, consultants will have almost always been successful at what they do, and consequently rarely experience failure. Therefore they have not learned how to learn from failure. So, whenever their single-loop learning strategies go awry, they become defensive, ignore criticism, and blame anyone or anything except themselves.

These strong defensive mechanisms may have implications for any close scrutiny of consultants' work skills. These defences may be triggered even in situations where evaluation is explicitly discouraged (Argyris, 1985), for example, training events in which participants are asked to create a non-judgemental climate in which they can take risks and try out new skills. Consultants use communication skills as tools in their work (Carey & Varney, 1983). Therefore it seems reasonable that consultants place importance on these skills. In situations where it may be perceived that their communication is being looked at evaluatively, there may be a perceived threat to

their self esteem and their perceived competence. For example, in a situation such as a training event where they are participants with other consultants, they may feel as though their work skills, such as communicating or facilitating, are coming under public scrutiny.

Argyris (1980) suggests, as noted earlier, such threatening situations may trigger defensive routines and face saving. I suggest that, as consultants place such importance on skilled communication as a tool, we might conclude that they would feel even less comfortable admitting to their perceived difficulty or ineffectiveness in this area. This presumably may lead to an even tighter cover-up of their awareness of their defensive mechanisms, therefore leaving them unaware. This unawareness would also lead to ineffective reflective processes, as a heavily edited version of experience would be reflected upon. This is what Schön refers to as self-limiting reflection. He suggests that "when a practitioner does not reflect on his own inquiry, he keeps his intuitive understandings tacit and is inattentive to the limits of the scope of reflective attention," (Schön, 1983, p282). Effective reflection is seen as a cornerstone to effective consulting (Schön, 1983), and generally as a crucial part of effective learning. This skewed reflection would logically lead to inappropriate or misguided generalisations about the event and on to equally inappropriate plans for future action (Kolb, 1984). Presumably it also leads to an even greater gap in congruence. This implies single-loop learning because intentions and the values they imply (or governing values in Argyris's terms) are not being questioned or changed in the light of experience (Argyris and Schön, 1974).

A process which enables consultants to address this incongruence between their espoused values and their values-in-use, and reduce it, in a safe environment therefore seems particularly useful.

5) A final rationale for undertaking this study was to look at more specific processes which would achieve similar results to those achieved by Argyris and Schön in their

work. The processes they use seem to be highly dependent upon their intuitive skill in facilitation, and give little explicit guidance to participants as to how to achieve effective behaviour. Argyris and Schön's work seems to have a lot to recommend it. Any attempt which made their processes more accessible and easier to implement would appear to be valuable. Therefore a study which attempts to provide a more structured approach, and looks to pin-point some of the critical aspects of such a process, seems useful.

A process developed by Dick and Dalmau (1989, reproduced in Appendix B in the current study) provides a useful starting point. It outlines a step by step process (about 2 hours duration) which participants can largely facilitate themselves. It is designed to facilitate analysis of a case study, and outlines the roles of all involved and ineffective behaviours to watch for. The object of this study was to use Dick and Dalmau's detailed process as a starting point for attempting to facilitate double-loop learning in order to achieve similar outcomes to those obtained by Argyris and Schön.

Having looked at the rationale for the current study, the next section will deal with the underlying concepts of Argyris and Schön's work on which the current research is based.

1.2 ARGYRIS AND SCHÖN: Theoretical underpinning's

Argyris and Schön's work over the past twenty years has been concerned with examining conscious and unconscious reasoning processes (Dick & Dalmau, 1990). This has precedents in the work of Freud and Jung; in models such as the Johari Window (Luft & Ingham in Hanson, 1973 p. 114), and in Rulla, Imoda and Rideck's (1978) Ideal Self and Actual Self. It is based on the belief that people are designers of action. They design action in order to achieve intended consequences and monitor to learn if their actions are effective.

In other words, Argyris and Schön (1974) assert that people hold maps in their heads about how to plan, implement and review their actions. They further assert that *few people are aware that the maps they use to take action are not the theories they explicitly espouse.* Also, even fewer people are aware of the maps or theories they *do* use (Argyris, 1980).

To clarify, this is not merely the difference between what people say and do. Argyris and Schön suggest that there is a theory consistent with what people say and a theory consistent with what they do. Therefore the distinction is not between "theory and action but between two different *theories of action*" (Argyris, Putnam & McLain Smith, 1985, p.82). Hence the concepts Espoused theory and Theory-in-use:

Espoused Theory   The world view and values people believe their behaviour is based on.

Theory-in-use   The world view and values implied by their behaviour, or the maps they use to take action.

They assert that these theories of action determine all deliberate human behaviour. An example from Argyris' (1987,p93) research may serve to clarify this distinction. When asked about how he would deal with a disagreement with a client, a management consultant responded that he would first state his understanding of the disagreement, then negotiate what kind of data he and the client could agree would resolve it. This represents his espoused theory (or the theory behind what he says) which is of joint control of the problem. A tape recording of the consultant in such a situation however, revealed that he actually advocated his own point of view and dismissed the client's. This indicated his theory-in-use (or the theory behind what he did), which more closely approximates his unilateral control of the problem and a rejection of valid information exchange.

Argyris (1987, p93) suggests that one reason for insisting that what people *do* is consistent with a theory, is the contention that what people do is not accidental.

People design the action that they take and are therefore responsible for the design. His assertion is that although they design the action they are often unaware of the design and of its difference from their espoused design.

This raises the question, if people are unaware of the theories that drive their action (Theories-in-use), then how can they effectively manage their behaviour? Argyris (1980) suggests that effectiveness results from developing congruence between Theory-in-use and Espoused theory.

The models and conceptualisations developed by Argyris and Schön are for the purpose of helping people to be able to make more informed choices about the action they design and implement. To this end they have developed models which seek to explain the processes which create and maintain people's theory-in-use.

Models of theories-in-use

The construction Argyris and Schön developed in order to explain theories-in-use is shown in figure 1.

Figure 1. Model explaining the process of developing theories-in use.
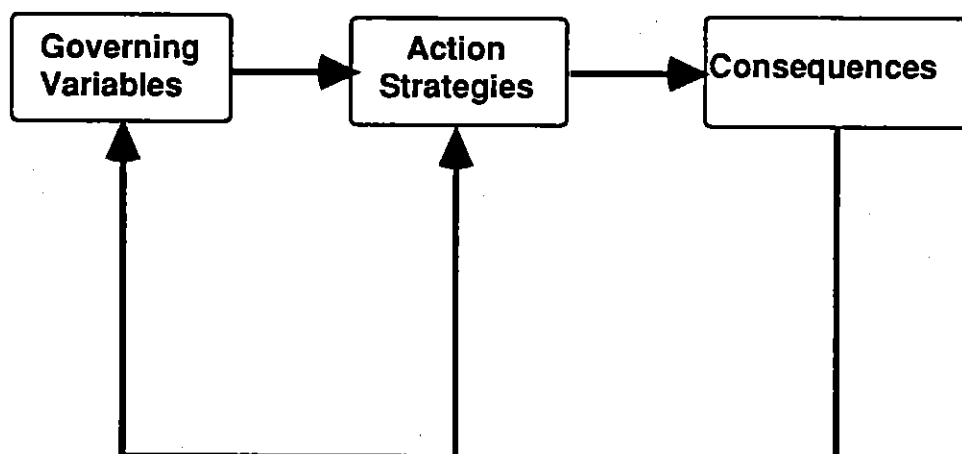
Governing variables are values which the person is trying to keep within some acceptable range. We have many governing variables. Any action will likely impact

upon a number of these variables. Therefore any situation may trigger a trade-off among governing variables.

Action strategies are strategies used by the person to keep their governing values within the acceptable range.

These strategies will have consequences which are both intended - those the actor believes will result - and unintended.

An example may help to illustrate this process. A person may have a *governing variable* of suppressing conflict, and one of being competent. In any given situation she will design *action strategies* to keep both these governing variables within acceptable limits. For instance, in a conflict situation she might avoid the discussion of the conflict situation and say as little as possible. This avoidance may (she hopes) suppress the conflict, yet allow her to appear competent because she at least hasn't said anything wrong. This strategy will have various *consequences* both for her and the others involved. An *intended consequence* might be that the other parties will eventually give up the discussion, thereby successfully suppressing the conflict. As she has said little, she may feel she has not left herself open to being seen as incompetent. An *unintended consequence* might be that the she thinks the situation has been left unresolved and therefore likely to recur, and feels dissatisfied.

To sum up, we can see that there are a number of elements to Argyris and Schön's model which help explain how we link our thoughts and actions. These elements are:

1. Governing Variables (or values)

2. Action Strategies

3. Intended and unintended Consequences for self

4. Intended and unintended Consequences for others

5. Action strategy effectiveness.

In this respect Argyris and Schön's work parallels, to some extent, the work of Dick and Dalmau (1990). They describe an 'information chain' to make sense of relationships and the information needed to resolve difficulties. This information chain was informed to some extent by the work of Argyris an Schön, and developed to explain and inform behaviour. The information chain is discussed here because the concepts are used in conjunction with Argyris and Schön's terminology throughout the dissertation. It was also used as a basis for explaining concepts to participants. The information chain and its relation to Argyris and Schön's concepts are outlined in Figure 2.

The boxed area in Figure 2 represents the part of the process which usually remains undiscussed or implicit. It is this information about our beliefs, feelings and intentions, that is often necessary to solve relationship problems effectively. Similarly, it is this information on beliefs, feelings and intentions which Argyris (1974) refers to as helpful in producing valid information on which to base decisions.

Figure 2. Argyris & Schön's concepts and their relation to Dick and Dalmau's information chain.

Argyris & Schön Terminology	Dick & Dalmau's Information Chain	
Action Strategy (of the other person)	**Actions**	(of the other group/person)
Consequences (for you)	**Outcomes**	(What you feel obliged to do or prevented from doing)
Governing values (in-use)	**beliefs**	(What you assume the other group is trying to achieve, as well as general beliefs)
" "	**Feelings**	(how you sometimes feel when this happens)
Governing values (espoused)	**Intentions**	(What you intend to do in response)
Action Strategy (your own)	**Reaction**	(What you actually do)
Consequences	**Outcomes**	(for you and others)

Adapted from Dick and Dalmau, (1990).

These conceptual frameworks have implications for our learning processes. As mentioned previously, the consequences of an action may be intended or unintended. When the consequences of the strategy employed are as the person intends, then there is a match between intention and outcome. Therefore the theory-in-use is confirmed. However, the consequences may be unintended, and more particularly they may be counterproductive to satisfying their governing values. In this case there is a mismatch between intention and outcome. Argyris and Schön suggest that there are two possible responses to this mismatch, and these are represented in the concept of single and double-loop learning.

Single-loop and Double-loop learning

It is suggested (Argyris, Putnam & McLain Smith, 1985) that the first response to this mismatch between intention and outcome is to search for another strategy which will satisfy the governing variables.

For example a new strategy in order to suppress conflict might be to reprimand the other people involved for wasting time, and suggest they get on with the task at hand. This may suppress the conflict and allow feelings of competence as the fault has been laid at the feet of the other party for wasting time. In such a case the new action strategy is used in order to satisfy the existing governing variable. The change is in the action only, not in the governing variable itself. Such a process is called *single-loop learning*. See Figure 3.

Another possible response would be to examine and change the governing values themselves. For example, the person might choose to critically examine the governing value of suppressing conflict. This may lead to discarding this value and substituting a new value such as open enquiry. The associated action strategy might be to discuss the issue openly. Therefore in this case both the governing variable and the action strategy have changed. This would constitute *double-loop learning*. See Figure 3.

Figure 3. Single and double-loop learning
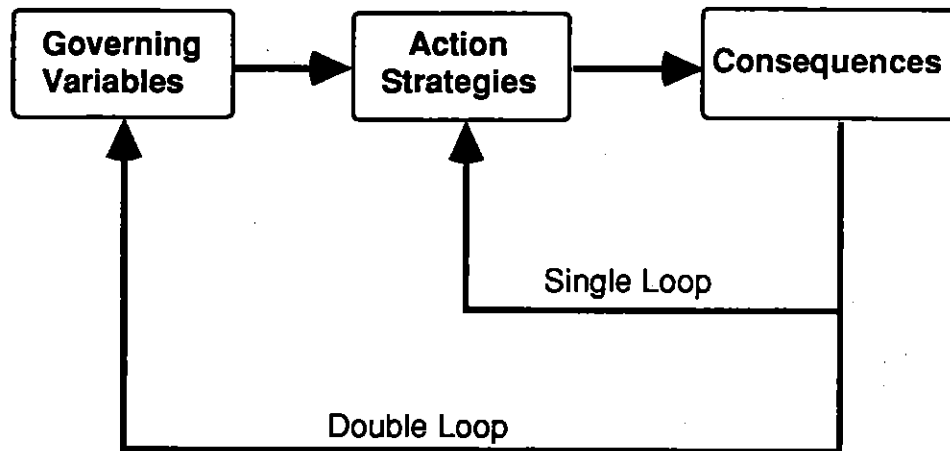
In this sense single and double-loop learning bear close resemblance to what Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch (1974) call First and Second Order Change. First Order Change exists when the norms of the system remain the same and changes are made within the existing norms. Second Order Change describes a situation where the norms of the system themselves are challenged and changed.

Double-loop learning is seen as the more effective way of making informed decisions about the way we design and implement action (Argyris, 1974).

Consequently, Argyris and Schön's approach is to focus on double-loop learning. To this end, they developed a model that describes features of theories-in-use which either inhibit or enhance double-loop learning. Interestingly, Argyris suggests that there is a large variability in Espoused theories and Action strategies, but almost no variability in Theories-in-use. He suggests people may espouse a large number and variety of theories or values which they suggest guide their action. However Argyris believes that the theories which can be deduced from peoples' action (theories-in-use) seem to fall into two categories which he labels Model I and Model II.

The governing values associated with theories-in-use can be grouped into those which inhibit double-loop learning (Model I) and those which enhance it (Model II).

Models I and II

Model I is the group which has been identified as inhibiting double-loop learning. It has been described as being predominantly competitive and defensive (Dick & Dalmau, 1990). The defining characteristics of Model I are summarised in Table 1.

Argyris claimed that virtually all individuals in his studies operated from theories-in-use or values consistent with Model I (Argyris et al. 1985, p. 89). Argyris also suggests most of our social systems are Model I. This assumption implies predictions about the kinds of strategies people will employ, and about the resulting consequences. These predictions have been tested repeatedly by Argyris and not been disconfirmed (Argyris, 1982, Chap. 3), though I am unaware of studies by anyone other than Argyris which have tested these predictions.

Table 1. Model I theory-in-use characteristics

The governing Values of Model I are:
- Achieve the purpose as the actor defines it
- Win, do not lose
- Suppress negative feelings
- Emphasise rationality

Primary Strategies are:
- Control environment and task unilaterally
- Protect self and others unilaterally

Usually operationalised by:
- Unillustrated attributions and evaluations *eg. "You seem unmotivated"*
- Advocating courses of action which discourage enquiry *eg. "Lets not talk about the past, that's over."*
- Treating ones' own views as obviously correct
- Making covert attributions and evaluations
- Face-saving moves such as leaving potentially embarrassing facts unstated

Consequences include:
- Defensive relationships
- Low freedom of choice
- Reduced production of valid information
- Little public testing of ideas

Taken from Argyris, Putnam & McLain Smith (1985, p. 89).

The Model I world view is a theory of single loop learning according to Argyris and Schön. Therefore Model I has the effect of restricting a person to single-loop learning. being unaware of what is driving one's behaviour may seriously inhibit the likelihood of increased effectiveness in the long-term.

Argyris (1980) suggests that (as mentioned previously) the primary action strategy of Model I is: Unilateral control of the environment and task, and unilateral protection of self and others. The underlying strategy is control over others. Such control inhibits communication and can produce defensiveness. Defensiveness is a mechanism used in order to protect the individual. Model I theory-in-use informs individuals how to design and use defenses unilaterally, whether to protect themselves or others, eg. "I couldn't tell him the truth, it would hurt him too much".

In order to protect themselves individuals must distort reality. Such distortion is usually coupled with defenses which are designed to keep themselves and others unaware of their defensive reaction (Argyris, 1980). The more people expose their thoughts and feelings the more vulnerable they become to the reactions of others. This is particularly true if these others are programmed with Model I theory-in-use and are seeking to maximise winning.

The assertion that Model I is predominantly defensive has another ramification. Acting defensively can be viewed as moving away from something, usually some truth about ourselves. If our actions are driven by moving away from something then our actions are controlled and defined by whatever it is we are moving away from, not by us and what we would like to be moving towards. Therefore our potential for growth and learning is seriously impaired. If my behaviour is driven by my not wanting to be seen as incompetent, this may lead me to hide things from myself and others, in order to avoid feelings of incompetence. For example, if my behaviour is driven by wanting to be competent, honest evaluation of my behaviour by myself and others would be welcome and useful.

In summary, Model I has been identified as a grouping of characteristics which inhibit double-loop learning. Model I is seen as being predominantly defensive and competitive, and therefore unlikely to allow an honest evaluation of the actor's motives and strategies, and less likely to lead to growth. Defensiveness protects individuals from discovering embarrassing truths about their incongruent or less-than-perfect behaviour and intentions. The actor further protects herself by reinforcing conditions such as ambiguity and inconsistency which help to further mask their incongruence from themselves and others. becoming aware of this incongruence is difficult, as is doing something about it. According to Argyris and Schön (1974) this is due to the strength of the socialisation to Model I, and the fact that the prevailing culture in most systems is Model I. An added complication is that

anyone trying to inform them of the incongruence is likely to use Model I behaviour to do so, and therefore trigger a defensive reaction (Dick and Dalmau, 1990).

Therefore, Model I theories-in-use are likely to inhibit double-loop learning for the following reasons. Model I is characterised by unilateral control and protection, and maximising winning. In order to maintain these, the actor is often involved in distortion of the facts, attributions and evaluations, and face-saving. Doing such things is not something we would readily admit we involve ourselves in. Therefore, in order to live with ourselves we put in place defences which hamper our discovery of the truth about ourselves. If we are unwilling to admit to our motives and intentions we are hardly in a position to evaluate them. As evaluating our governing values (which may be equated with intentions) is what characterises double-loop learning, Model I theories-in-use may be seen as inhibiting this process.

Despite all the evidence which suggests that peoples' theory-in-use is consistent with Model I, Argyris has found that most people hold espoused theories which are inconsistent with Model I. Most people in fact, espouse Model II, according to Argyris. The defining characteristics of Model II are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2. Model II Theory-in-use Characteristics

The governing values of Model II include:
    - "Valid information
    - Free and informed choice
    - Internal commitment
Strategies include:
    - Sharing control
    - Participation in design and implementation of action
Operationalised by:
    - Attribution and evaluation illustrated with relatively directly observable data
    - Surfacing conflicting views
    - encouraging public testing of evaluations
Consequences should include:
    - Minimally defensive relationships
    - high freedom of choice
    - increased likelihood of double-loop learning"

Taken from (Argyris et al. 1985, p. 98).

No reason is offered for why most people espouse Model II, however it seems reasonable to assume that this is because Model II values are the more palatable in terms of the way we like to see our (Western) society. Freedom of Information Acts, the Constitution, America's bill of Rights, all seem to be drawing heavily from Model II values. Dick and Dalmau (1990) suggest that people often show a mix of Model I and Model II espoused theories. This seems probable, as most people will readily admit to being driven to win at least in some situations. Some professions in fact, are based almost entirely around the concept of winning and not losing, such as Law, sport and sales.

The behaviour required to satisfy the governing values of Model II though, are not opposite to that of Model I. For instance, the opposite of being highly controlling would be to relinquish control altogether. This is not Model II behaviour because Model II suggest <u>bilateral</u> control. Relinquishing control is still unilateral, but in the other direction. Model II combines articulateness about one's goals and advocacy of one's own position, with an invitation to others to confront one's views. It therefore produces an outcome which is based on the most complete and valid information possible. Therefore,

> "Every significant Model II action is evaluated in terms of the degree to which it helps the individuals involved generate valid and useful information (including relevant feelings), solve the problem in a way that it remains solved, and do so without reducing the present level of problem solving effectiveness." (Argyris, 1976, p21-22)

If we go back to the information chain model put forward by Dick and Dalmau (Figure 2), valid information has to do with expressing our beliefs, feelings, and intentions (the boxed area in Figure 2).

Given the above considerations, the consequences for learning should be an emphasis on double-loop learning, in which the basic assumptions behind views are confronted,

hypotheses are tested publicly, and processes are disconfirmable, not self-sealing. The end result should be increased effectiveness.

1.3 Critique of Argyris & Schöns' work

As can be determined from the previous section, Argyris and Schön's concepts are quite complex and their research has been very extensive. The data they provide to back up their assertions about the way people operate is quite compelling. They have devoted, it seems, a couple of decades to the pursuit of their knowledge and practice in this area. Similarly their literature, such as Increasing Leadership Effectiveness, which details processes they have worked through with participants, indicates that their methods seem to produce the changes they predict. There are however some limitations to their literature. I will spend some time outlining what I see as the limitations.

Argyris and Schon have devoted a large part of their literature to their work with managers and consultants. There is nothing however, explicitly written about the initial contracting they carried out with participants. This initial contract can be vitally important in terms of the relationship which ensues between consultant and client or researcher and participant (Schein, 1969, Dalmau, Dick & boas, 1987). Due to this oversight in the literature we have no hint as to what the participants were expecting or what the researchers had promised, or indeed what the relationship was between the two parties. This has implications for research in a similar vein, such as the current research, as no explicit data is available as to how the research or consultancy was set in place.

Secondly, from what can be gleaned from their literature, Argyris and Schön seem to follow an extremely intuitive approach to bringing about change in their participants. They do not appear to have a set process, but rely more heavily on their ability to be able to facilitate the group with their timely interventions. The sessions seem to be

fairly unstructured for the most part and were based around a written exercise participants were asked to complete. This exercise centred around participants analysing a case study (Argyris, 1976). The Researchers intervene when appropriate, pointing out what the participants were doing, or answering questions. If there is any structure or plan to this exchange it is not outlined in their literature. Therefore the approach seems to rely heavily on the skills of Argyris and Schön as facilitators and as experts on achieving Model II and double-loop learning. This leaves very little scope for anyone who may not have their skill and expertise in this area. It also seemed to give the participants little guidance in how to achieve their aims.

Possibly related to the last point is the evidence which suggests that these processes seem to go on over a very long period. In the case of the group on which Increasing Leadership Effectiveness was based, a period of over 2 years was discussed. Progress seems to have been fairly slow. Of course, trying to bring about major changes in peoples' behaviour and attitudes is no easy thing. However, there seems to be a need for a more efficient way of achieving the same results.

So far, I have looked at the broad context within which the research is relevant, the theoretical models which informed the study, the aim of the study, and the rationale for the specific focus of the study. The next section will deal with the implicit assumptions made in the approach.

1.4 Assumptions underlying the approach

The first and most obvious assumption is that there exists a difference between peoples Espoused Theories and their Theories-in-Use. A similar idea was expressed by Rulla, Imoda & Rideck (1978) as the difference between an Ideal Self and an Actual Self. Many studies that have looked at the underlying assumptions and values that drive human behaviour have not made this distinction (Adler, 1956; Bales & Couch, 1969; Osgood, Suci & Tannenbaum, 1957; Rokeach, 1973; Smith, 1978). However there is considerable data to suggest that such a distinction does exist (Caird, 1986; Argyris, 1976; 1985).

Following on, the second assumption is that people would prefer to practice what they preach. In other words they would prefer that the gap did not exist between their Espoused and In-Use Theories (Dick and Dalmau, 1990). In fact some support is lent to this assumption by the fact that defense mechanisms come into play in order to mask this gap (Argyris, 1976).

The third and possibly more tenuous assumption, is that awareness and reduction of the gap between Espoused Theories and Theories-in-Use will lead to improved professional and personal effectiveness. This is certainly the basis of Argyris and Schöns' work, and they provide detailed arguments backed up by conceptual frameworks, anecdotal evidence, and practically oriented research evidence (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Argyris, 1976, 1980, 1985; Schön 1983; and Argyris, Putnam & Smith, 1978).

The fourth assumption is that a valid function of Social Science is to produce knowledge that enables people to affect specified events. In other words, theory that is inextricably linked to resulting action and not purely for understanding and prediction, is useful and valid. According to Lewin (Marrow, 1969, p235), trying to change a system can lead to increased understanding of it, as well. Therefore even for the purpose of understanding, such research seems valuable. Therefore we could

argue that research which produced change in an individual, may be a useful way of understanding people, and particularly useful for enabling that individual to effect change. In fact it is suggested that the "..... mutual exchange of information between investigator and respondents is critical to both increased understanding ("research") and constructive change ("action")," (brown, 1972, p697). Such research is particularly relevant if we consider social science knowledge as a way to provide maps of how to achieve a more effective way of interacting and an alternative way of life (Argyris, 1980).

Underlying this fourth assumption is a deeper assumption. Namely, that knowledge which is gained for the purpose of understanding only, can differ from knowledge gained for the purpose of affecting action. In other words people can give quite different responses depending on whether they have to talk about action, or talk about action as well as act. Support for this assumption is shown in Argyris (1974, 1976) and Argyris and Schön (1978) in which specific cases are cited where this difference was clearly demonstrated. In addition ineffective behaviour can take place despite understanding or intent (Argyris, 1976, Wolpe, 1958).

1.5 Methodological Concerns

There are a number of methodological concerns which arise out of the above assumptions and the approach taken for this research. These will now be addressed.

The first issue arises out of the assumption that a difference exists between Espoused and In-Use Theories. A number of techniques and instruments have been designed to capture the underlying values, theories or models which influence human behaviour. For example, Kelly's Repertory Grid Technique (Kelly, 1963), the Managers Values Inventory (MVI) (Howe, Howe & Mindell, 1982), analysis of most important diagnostic questions asked, based on a case study presentation (Tichy & Nisberg, 1976).

Such techniques and instruments can only manage to capture Espoused Values (Theories) or something which exists between Espoused Theories and Theories-in-Use. Theories-in-Use by definition, can only be reached by techniques which are linked directly to action. Unless the research is linked to action, it will not be revealing a Theory-in-Use. This is also linked to the fourth assumption which relates to differences between knowledge for understanding and knowledge for action. Therefore a methodology which takes this into consideration is necessary.

Another consideration is related to the nature of the project undertaken. Asking people to confront inconsistencies in their behaviour is inherently threatening, and as mentioned earlier, is likely to lead to a triggering of defense mechanisms. This is particularly true in the case of consultants, according to research conducted by Argyris (1987). Finding ways to minimise that threat in order to enable participants to feel comfortable analysing their weaknesses is an important consideration. Therefore the methodology of the current study needs to build in ways of providing and encouraging a safe environment.

A second and crucial consideration relates to the issue of the study being a learning process for the consultants, and more particularly a double-loop learning process. It is also a process which revolves around skills, (i.e. communication) and designing and taking action. This makes it substantially different from a study which has the purpose of describing the social universe. Argyris has argued that most people hold Model I Theories-in-use and are therefore ineffective in double-loop learning. They are also blind to their degree of ineffectiveness. He suggests that this blindness occurs because skills are tacit and others do not provide feedback about their impact. being tacit, they are also largely unconscious, and therefore automatic. Also model I learning systems (single loop learning) reinforce the blindness.

A study which looked at description would have little likelihood of interrupting the subjects' skills. Yet it is this interruption of the normally unconscious skills which is

necessary to facilitate the change inherent in double-loop learning. Therefore a methodology which enables the interruption of the participant's behavioural repertoire is vital.

A third methodological consideration is related to the previous point. Namely that the focus of the research is not on measuring Espoused theories and Theories-in-use, but on the processes for reducing the gap. Therefore the primary focus of the research is, if you like, process rather than content. To this end, an Action Research methodology has been employed because it is the most suited to, and the most congruent with, the aim of the study which is to produce double-loop learning.

A brief description of Action Research follows.

Action Research was conceptualised by Lewin (1952), and further developed by Kolb (1984) and others. It has been described as a spiral of cycles of action and research with four main stages (Zuber-Skerrit, 1990). These are Plan , Act, Review, Generalise (Dick, 1988). Different labels for the stages are often applied, however the meaning remains consistent.

According to Zuber-Skerrit (1990) the assumption behind Action Research is that people can learn and create knowledge through, (1) their concrete experience, (2) reflecting on that experience, (3) forming generalisations based on this reflection, and (4) planning to test the implications of these concepts in new situations. This will lead to a new concrete experience and hence the beginning of a new cycle.

The aim of Action Research is to improve practice and if necessary change variables which effect practice in order to improve and develop (Zuber-Skerrit, 1990). Or, according to Rapoport (1970, p.499) it "...aims to contribute to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science".

The action research methodology also has an underlying philosophy which is consistent with Model II. It encourages open inquiry, free and informed choice, and

bilateral control. The action research framework centres around the researcher jointly controlling the project with the participants. As there are no need for control groups or 'subjects' which are ignorant of the purpose of the study to be effective, action research allows and encourages a free and open exchange of information between participants and researcher. Therefore this framework is ultimately suitable for the facilitation of double-loop learning which is the aim of the current study.

Having introduced the study, its rationale, assumptions and methodological issues, we turn now to a brief description of the Method employed.

The research question

The current research is concerned with examining processes which may assist in improving consultant effectiveness. More precisely, the aim is to look at developing and refining processes which help consultants explore and reduce the gap between the theories they espouse and the theories which drive their behaviour. In Argyris and Schöns' terms, the gap which exists between Espoused Theory and Theory-in-Use. In other words I will be looking at developing effective processes to help increase consultants' congruence.

The research question then is, what are the critical aspects of a process which successfully reduces the gap between espoused theory and theory-in-use. Particular emphasis will be paid to looking at contracting and initial expectations, as this is an area which Argyris and Schön have paid little attention to in their writing. There are some secondary questions which are also of interest and follow from the main research question. The first is, what are some of the major defenses or faulty reasoning processes which become evident during the process? Secondly, what are the learning sequences which participants go through internally in moving toward congruence?

My hypotheses concerning these questions are as follows:

1. The gap in congruence <u>can</u> be reduced, at least partially.

2. Some of the critical aspects of a successful process will be:

   • Team building which enables participants to feel safe enough in the group to be able to take risks.

   • Participants having their behaviour & assumptions challenged within the group by the facilitator and by other participants.

   • Participants having access to strategies which are congruent with behaviours they are trying to emulate.

   • The facilitator being congruent, and opening their own behaviour up for scrutiny.

3. Defensive Routines such as those uncovered by Argyris will surface, that is:

   • Face-saving and blaming outside themselves, to cover up a perceived failure, or area of incompetence.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD SECTION

2.0 METHOD

2.1 Participants

Participants were 6 people currently working in the field of Organisation Development. Organisation Development is used here to mean anyone who is working with organisations (public, private or community) in order to help improve their effectiveness with regard to human resources and systems. For example, training, personnel related functions, strategic planning, conflict resolution, decision making, or facilitating change.

Participants were 2 males and 4 females, who have university degrees. Four of the six have, or were working on, post graduate studies in relevant areas. Experience in the field of organisation development ranged from 6 to 15 years. Participants had been both internal and external consultants. All participants were currently working privately either part-time or full-time.

2.2 Procedure

Participants were selected from a pool of consultants that were known personally to the researcher. Those who were interested and had the required time available self-selected.

A series of eight group sessions were held between April and September. The first session was 6 hours. This was followed by 7 sessions of between 3 and 4 hours. The procedure followed an action research framework and philosophy. To this end, an overall structure was loosely designed as follows:

The purpose of the first session was:
- Team building
- Outlining the process
- Contracting and looking at expectations

- Introducing some of the basic concepts and theory and going through an experiential exercise in order to illustrate the theory (See Appendix 2)

- To model a congruent model II approach to the research by making explicit my aims, role, my expectations of them, myself and of the project. To make public any dilemmas I was facing in terms of the approach and any difficulties I could perceive or was concerned about. To give them enough of the theories and concepts for them to be able to grasp the task ahead of us. In other words, to give them sufficient information to enable them to jointly manage or control the project.

The purpose of the following 6 sessions was:

- To begin a structured process, originally developed by bob Dick and Tim Dalmau (1989) (see Appendix A), which involved participants in helping each other explore the inconsistencies in their behaviour by: Each person bringing a real 'case' - a situation in which they felt they did not act as effectively as they might have; providing a brief scenario, which included some background information and an excerpt of their public and internal dialogue at the time; they and other group members, discussing the reasoning processes and consequences for themselves and others, which were implied by their behaviour.

- To look at participants behaviour in terms of it's congruence, during these sessions

- For participants to be able to change or influence the process in whatever way seemed most appropriate in terms of achieving the goals of the group.

- To evaluate how the group was progressing in achieving its stated aims.

- To model as much as possible in my approach, a willingness to learn, take risks and be open to feedback. This was done by explicitly asking for feedback

on sessions, and my role and reacting non defensively as much as possible and sharing any insights I had about my own behaviour and reactions.

The purpose of the concluding session was:

- To further evaluate participants interpretation of the experience

- To conclude the process.

Within this framework, however, processes were refined and changed depending on the outcome of previous sessions, and the decisions of the participants and researcher co-jointly.

Sessions were taped in order to better analyse participants and researchers behaviour. The researchers' and participants' observations and reflections, as well as material generated from the 'cases' which were discussed provided the basis for evaluating: a) whether participants had begun to bridge the gap between espoused and in-use theories, b) What were the necessary and sufficient conditions in the process which helped bring about these changes, c) What defenses or defensive reasoning were being used and, d) what internal learning processes were taking place.

As this project was undertaken as action research, the procedures and results are intertwined. The outcomes for one session, impacted on the process for the following session, as did considerations of the participants and their needs. This has implications for the way the results are communicated. Consequently, the following sections will take stages of the research project one at a time and look at: the overall strategy, the processes employed to achieve this strategy, and the outcomes achieved. This also, not coincidentally, follows the Argyris and Schön model of: governing values (intentions), action strategies, and consequences and implications.

CHAPTER 4

INITIAL CONTRACTING AND CLIMATE SETTING

3.0 INITIAL CONTRACTING AND CLIMATE SETTING

It has been suggested that, when consulting, the initial contracting carried out with clients is of paramount importance (Schein, 1969, Dalmau, Dick & boas, 198). The contract the consultant makes with their client will set the groundwork for the kind of relationship to follow. Equally with the current research project, which involves close contact over a number of months, contracting seems vitally important. Argyris spends no time in accounts of his work explaining the nature of the contracting done with his clients. His clients' expectations of the nature of the relationship, is therefore unknown. For this reason, I will look briefly at the psychological contract that was established with participants. I will then go on to describe the initial climate-setting and goal-setting with the group. This covered the period leading up to and including the first group session.

3.1 Initial contracting with participants

Intention

My intention was to communicate all the valid information I had in reference to the project, including my motives. Potential participants were not to be pushed or cajoled into accepting. The intent was to give them enough information to enable them to make an informed decision about whether to participate or not.

Strategy

Potential participants were approached individually. My strategy in order to communicate valid information was to address the following points with each potential participant :

- The purpose of the research, namely, to get a small group of 'consultants' together over a period of months, and to go through a process which would attempt to address the inconsistency between our espoused theories and our actual behaviour.
- That it was likely to be fairly challenging and possibly a little threatening.
- That it was research for a masters dissertation.

- The expected time commitment, and duration of the project.

- My reason for wanting to do the project, that is, I thought it would be very interesting and useful and help improve my own and other's effectiveness. My role was expressed as participant researcher.

- I communicated my belief that each person would be a worthwhile participant to have involved because of the skills they would bring to the group.

- The first session was to be all day Saturday (6 hours), in order to get to know one another, look at our goals and expectations and look at a little of the underlying concepts involved.

This was all done verbally. People were offered time to consider before answering.

<u>Outcomes</u>

Nine people were approached, of whom six accepted. All those approached expressed genuine interest as well as flattery at being asked. Three people accepted immediately, three took a few days to consider before accepting, and three declined immediately. Two of the three who declined, indicated that they did so due to lack of time. The third declined due to an unwillingness to be involved in something that could potentially be highly personally challenging.

The six who accepted were all present for the first session. The fact that all six who accepted were willing to give up their Saturday was some indication that they had made a free choice. All six individuals had some pre-existing relationship with someone else in the group prior to the beginning of the research.

3.2 The first group session

<u>Intention</u>

The intention of the first session was primarily to start to address issues such as: why people, including the researcher, were there (i.e. goals); team building within the group, and to introduce some of the concepts central to the project. I was not intending to begin working through any processes to improve effectiveness or challenge assumptions until the following session. The aim was to give participants valid information in order for them to be able to make informed choices and jointly control the task.

My intention was also to attempt to model the approach I was trying to work towards, that is to behave in a model II way, and facilitate double-loop learning. My intention however, was not to suggest that the group was to strive toward being Model II, or that Model II was necessarily the right way to behave. I only intended that we strive toward looking at the inconsistencies in our behaviour and look toward being more effective in a general sense.

<u>Strategy</u>

My strategy was to be as honest as possible about any assumptions and dilemmas I was aware of. I did this by outlining early in the session, my assumptions and views about the project and explaining what I wanted out of it. I suggested that I saw myself as a co-learner, as well as researcher and facilitator. I further outlined any of the dilemmas or conflicts I perceived. For example, the dilemma I had about how to begin the session and how much theory to give participants. Second, was the conflict between being a researcher, facilitator and participant/co-learner, and my being able to manage these roles successfully.

I provided a number of opportunities for participants to make suggestions or alter the process I had proposed. For example, I suggested a 'getting acquainted' activity, but invited participants to make any other suggestions about how to go about this. I made

explicit that the process was flexible and encouraged participants to make changes and take responsibility. I stated that the model I was using (Argyris & Schön's and Dick & Dalmau's) was just a guide, and that questioning of and deviating from the model was encouraged.

My intended process for the first session is included in Appendix A.

<u>Outcomes</u>

Participants' expectations were fairly general, mostly concerned with wanting to look at their behaviour more evaluatively. For example, Kath: "...to look at the inconsistencies in my behaviour and to be challenged". Fran expressed a desire for networking and interest in the process used as well. Ann: working with people who have similar interests and values.

After briefly looking at some of the concepts involved, there was a general discussion. At this stage, people began questioning the model, it's usefulness, and how it fitted with models or world views they held. Ann suggested it seemed a bit artificial. These comments suggested to me that people were beginning to question things, perhaps some minor indication that participants were beginning to take responsibility for the process.

At the end of the first session, there was a quick evaluation. The results of which are as follows: Fran said she felt quite relaxed in the group, and most other participants nodded or voiced agreement. Sam said he felt able to take the opportunity to change the direction or challenge what was going on in the group. Others in the group agreed with this statement. When asked the reason for this, my style of facilitation was suggested. That is, though I was giving the group direction, I was open and explicit about my aims and assumptions. They also felt that my being open about not having any outcomes which I was particularly attached to, enabled the group to feel that they could change things. One specific example was offered: Sam had suggested that part of the model, which was displayed on butchers paper, didn't seem to make sense, and

others agreed. Some discussion followed about what we thought it meant. I then changed the words to represent our understanding of it. Sam suggested that to him, this was evidence that things really were discussable and changeable.

Fran suggested that other people in the group had taken on leadership roles at various stages. Fran also indicated that this taking on of leadership probably would not have happened if it was perceived that I would not have been able to cope with it. In other words they perceived that I was confident and robust enough to be able to share control.

Ben suggested that I presented as posing some possibilities about a model or a way of looking at the world, rather than presenting an absolute reality. Hence, the model could be analysed and modified as was appropriate. It was suggested that this helped enable him to feel comfortable about questioning things and taking some control.

I suggested that we use Dick and Dalmau's (1990) personal effectiveness process (Appendix B) as a starting point for moving into the application of Argyris' concepts, and once we felt we understood the process better we could change or modify to suit ourselves. I suggested we begin this process at the next meeting. All agreed.

At the time, I thought Rachel seemed fairly quiet and less exuberant than normal during the day (though I didn't know her very well to be able to really judge). It didn't concern me a great deal and I made no comment. Part of the intention however may have been unilateral protection of Rachel and myself, as bringing this up may have been uncomfortable. I am now left to speculate whether my decision not to make explicit my observations, had any adverse effect on Rachel remaining in the group.

Implications

The above points suggested to me that I had been fairly successful in modelling the approach I had intended (model II). Modelling at this early stage may be seen as an important feature of setting up an appropriate environment in which to attempt

double-loop learning. As Argyris suggests, a model I environment inhibits double-loop learning, and model II facilitates it. Therefore effective modelling by the facilitator, may be regarded as an important factor in the process of reducing the gap between espoused and in-use theories.

Given that the group had only just formed, this feedback must be treated with some caution. Most group development models suggest that when a group forms, there is a "honeymoon period" which is characterised by politeness and a reluctance to cause disagreement and a tendency to reveal only what is appropriate (e.g. Tuckman, 1965; Schutz, 1966; Lacoursiere, 1980; Napier & Gershenfeld, 1987). Hence, there is the likelihood that criticism of the process and/or model would be attenuated for this reason. The group, mostly allowed me to maintain control of the direction in which we were going, and followed the processes I suggested. This also matches the stage of the group's development. According to Schutz (1966), in the initial stages of group development, participants are mostly concerned with issues of inclusion in the group (whether they belong or want to belong) and the goals of the group (whether these fit with their personal goals). Issues of control are unlikely to surface in the early stages of group development.

Having looked at the basis for the group's on-going interactions, the following chapter will look at the first session in which the group began to work through the process of looking at congruence.

CHAPTER 4

THE FIRST CASE STUDY

4.0 THE FIRST CASE STUDY

This section will look at the second meeting in which the group attempted for the first time the personal effectiveness process (see Appendix B) developed by Dick and Dalmau (1990).

Intention

My intention for this first meeting was to:

- orient people to being in the group again
- allow the group to make the decision on who's scenario or 'case' we would go through for that session
- be an observer in the personal effectiveness process, (in other words take on the researcher role predominantly)
- have the group work through the personal effectiveness process

Strategy

In order to re-orient people to the group, my strategy was to get each person to talk about what had been happening for them in the intervening period that was relevant to what we were doing.

In order to decide who's case to look at, I told the group I had no particular ideas about how to decide other than by random, and enquired whether they had any suggestions.

In terms of my role, I suggested that I felt it would be difficult for me to concurrently participate and pay attention to what was happening. I said I did not feel familiar enough with the process to do both well, and would prefer to observe for this session. I did not enquire whether this was acceptable for the group or what implications this might have. This was not a conscious decision.

Once we had decided whose case to examine, we proceeded with the process. I had sent a copy of the intended process to each participant beforehand. My strategy was as follows: I suggested that another person might also like to be observer, and that the

rest would act as 'consultants' to help the person look at their chosen scenario, as per the Dick and Dalmau (1990) process. The process is outlined step by step, so I suggested they work through it at their own rate, and at the end the observers would feedback their observations.

Outcomes

All participants were present at the beginning of the session, except Rachel. This session was not taped due to technical difficulties. (The batteries in the player exploded! Was this a sign of things to come?)

As described above, the session began with each person, myself included, outlining relevant events that had occurred since the last meeting. For example, Ben mentioned an interaction he had with his supervisor which could have been dealt with more effectively. Rachel said she "didn't want to get too heavily into this stuff just yet" as she had a lot of other pressing things happening for her at the moment, and as a consequence she didn't want to "deal with anything too hairy" in the group that night.

With regard to the choice of whose case to work on, the following transpired: Fran suggested an action method, which required the participants to stand up and put their hands on the shoulder of the person whose case they most wanted to work on. The group agreed to this. Fran then facilitated the group through this process.

The fact that Fran took up the opportunity, to facilitate the group through that decision-making process was some indication that she at least was feeling able to jointly control the task.

Following this decision the group moved on to embarking on the outlined process. As mentioned, I advocated my preference for my role in this process, as observer, however I did not negotiate this with the group. The outcome was that I took on the observer role without discussion, therefore 'forcing' the group to control the task. (This is a model I value - 'achieve the purpose as the actor defines it', and the strategy

was to control the task unilaterally, resulting in low freedom of choice. As mentioned, this was not done consciously)

Any ambivalence the group may have felt about this was not brought up. The implication was that the group was not given any choice concerning my role in this first attempt at the personal effectiveness process. As I had been the designated leader of the group up till this point, it left the group 'leaderless' for this exercise.

The outcomes of going through the personal effectiveness process were as follows: Generally the group displayed difficulty engaging with the process. I will give some examples to illustrate. There were lengthy pauses in the proceedings. Kath showed conflicted non-verbals when it came to publishing her comments. For example, starting to write something up on the wall, stopping, screwing her face up, starting again. "This is hard," comments from a number of people. Ann said she found making "judgements" about people difficult, that she didn't like doing it, and had given it up years ago. Sam hardly spoke during the process. Ben didn't get involved a great deal until toward the end, when a topic of personal relevance surfaced. Everyone seemed quite tentative. When people did make comments it was usually not owned or made as I statements. For example, "Do you think that you were doing ....?", rather than "It seemed to me... or "I thought..."

Useful information did surface re Fran's case, however. The case and the group's feedback is contained in Appendix C.

I fed back these observations at the end, and suggested I was unsure as to why this had occurred. One assumption I offered was that people may have been trying to protect Fran, and so felt uncomfortable and tentative. Participants agreed that may have been part of their reaction, but not a major part. They suggested that going through the exercise for the first time was difficult.

Implications

The group acted in a predominantly model I way in their approach to the personal effectiveness exercise, as illustrated above. They were experiencing obvious difficulty with the exercise. When specific observations were fed back to them to illustrate this, they offered explanations outside themselves (the process), for their difficulties. In not giving the group access to the decision about my role, I was also acting in a model I manner. This provides evidence that participants behaviour was predominantly model I at the outset of the research. Therefore, if Model II behaviour is exhibited in subsequent sessions, this will be evidence of a change of behaviour by the participants, and hence a closing of the gap between their espoused theory and their theories-in-use.

Having looked at the first attempt by the group to tackle the personal effectiveness exercise, the next chapter will deal with the groups' reflections on this process, and implications arising out of these reflections.

CHAPTER 5

SURFACING ASSUMPTIONS

5.0 Surfacing Assumptions

This section will deal with a crucial part of the research project in which some challenging assumptions about participants behaviour were surfaced, and as such the 'undiscussable' was first discussed. The undiscussable refers to our use of defensive routines in order to cover up our incongruities. This is what Argyris calls the cover-up of the cover-up. This chapter encompasses the third group session of the research project.

Intention

My intention in this meeting was to spend time reviewing the last session and to offer my assumptions, developed in the intervening time, about what had been happening. My aim was to do this in a model II manner. That is, be specific (directly observable data), 'own' the statements, offer them as discountable, and not engage in unilaterally-protective behaviour. Finally, my original intention was that we would spend the rest of the session on someone's case, however I intended to let the session progress naturally, and not unilaterally control the direction.

Strategy

This meeting was only attended by 3 participants: Ben, Kath and Sam.

My strategy was to suggest that we review the last session because I felt that it had been difficult. I enquired whether others would be prepared to do so. They all agreed. I allowed them to discuss their feelings and interpretations first, so that they were not influenced by my analysis of the situation. I then gave my assumptions or hypotheses. After this a lengthy discussion followed, which I did not attempt to facilitate, in order to allow the group more control of the direction of the session.

Outcomes

Once I had suggested we review the last meeting, and had given examples of what I interpreted as ineffective behaviour or discomfort (see last chapter), a spontaneous

discussion began concerning people's feelings about it. As an example, some extracts

of this conversation follow.

Ben: "...I really felt uncomfortable with that process..... Particularly when other people
started putting their stuff up, I was thinking *I've missed heaps here. I don't know what's
happening. I don't know what's happening* "   (Expressing feelings)

Sam: (Observer on the night) ....dilemma about how, how much and what feedback to
give. For instance like how much to be polite and how much to give actual observations
(Expressing intentions)

Liane: I thought it was a bit uncomfortable. (Expressing feelings)

Sam: Yeah.

Kath: I felt uncomfortable a bit....I found it difficult....working out the process and then, maybe
it's important to do the right thing by the process. Am I getting things right? Is this what's
expected.   (Expressing feelings and beliefs)

We had to get it right. We're not sure what we're doing, but we've got to do it right.
(expressing belief)

Later

Kath: ...overwhelming feeling of confusion... not sure exactly if I've got this right, also not
wanting to admit if I've got it wrong. because it's important that we get it right, and it's
very serious..and here I am with colleagues, ..and I have to show that I'm up there ..and
competent and.... (laughter)
(Expressing beliefs and feelings and intentions)

Kath: .... before you were our leader ...... and I think we were a little bit confused. I remember
at one stage I said something, and it felt like everyone grabbed onto me..to..to.. facilitate
here, and I'm sure that may have happened to other people at different times. A real sense
of *they're all looking to me to keep this going.* (Expressing beliefs)

..... We didn't have a facilitator at that stage ...No direction, or whatever. ..and we're
supposed to be competent to deal with this 'cause that's our job, but..who's going to be
the person? (Expressing beliefs)

Sam: A bit like a hot rock or something...and the idea was to toss it on when you could.

Ben: Except I wouldn't catch it. I deliberately wouldn't catch it. (Expressing intention)

Kath: That's right. If you said anything or if you tried to do something..suddenly you were it. I
don't want to be it, so I'll shut up.   (laughter)

Ben: There was a lot of *I don't know what I'm doing here* stuff going on. (Expressing belief)

(Nods)

Do I need to take control of this. Can I take control of this. I wish someone would take

control of this! What is the right thing to be doing? Is there a right thing to be doing? and

a lot of anxiety reduction activities taking place as a result. Things like *Let's be polite.*

Let's focus inwards. Let's....

Sam: When in doubt shut up.

As can be seen from these extracts, participants readily admitted to feelings of discomfort and confusion, which they dealt with, on the night, by staying quiet and trying not to become the focus of the group. Participants also discussed their beliefs about having to 'get it right' and to some extent their intentions, such as "not wanting to admit I've got it wrong" and purposely not becoming too involved, "I deliberately wouldn't catch it." No-one had specifically addressed these feelings at the time. Themes of right and wrong, came through strongly, with an associated need to be right. For the most part, participants spoke in the first person, rather than making generalisations when discussing these things. All of these behaviours are indicative of a more model II approach. Energy was high, evidenced by frequent laughter, people leaning forward, and infrequent pauses. This was markedly different from the behaviour of the group thus far.

At this point I was asked for and gave, my hypotheses about what may have been causing this behaviour. These were:

Based on Ann's comment about not liking to make judgements, I suggested as a profession we may tend to 'reserve judgement' and therefore find it difficult to make assumptions more concrete and explicit.

Additionally, because our competence is based around our 'impression management,' much or all of what we sell ourselves on, is our competence. Having to make explicit things like assumptions, which are by their nature open to debate and possibly 'incorrect', is threatening. This may be even more difficult when with our peers or colleagues.

Participants readily agreed with this and added that it probably became more difficult if you knew the people, and additionally if you respected them professionally, intellectually or personally. The revelation of this assumption seemed to have some profound effects on participants. For example:

Ben: "All of this stuff, I'm sitting back and thinking, *Shit yeah!* "

Kath: "Yes, yes."

Ben: "Particularly that stuff I was going through *have I got this right*. This has really struck a chord!"

Sam: Maybe the theory-in-use is something like: Whilst people say they don't judge much, maybe we couldn't be, have skills in facilitation, managing impressions unless we were very very happy to, in fact make lots of judgements. (Expressing belief) (much agreement)

Kath said she thought the aim was to not make judgements at all to be a good consultant.

Sam: ... sanitised, non-political roles. We do these sanitised things..that we're not judging, so therefore we're clean..and everyone else is dirty. (Expressing belief)

Ben: This has really caught onto some important things for me.

Kath: Yes, I think so. .... This has been really good.

Energy at this point was extremely high. People spoke quickly and enthusiastically. We had begun to discuss things which had been suppressed at the time of the previous session, things which were driving our behaviour and were probably unpleasant to admit to. However having admitted to them, it seemed to offer a release which people embraced enthusiastically. This suggests to me that although there are taboo's against discussing the undiscussable, once it has been legitimised to do so, people will take up the opportunity with alacrity. Perhaps this is because to keep up the facade requires effort, and therefore being able to drop some of the pretences offers people a welcome relief from tension.

One participant (Sam) even suggested an addition to the model which was very similar in many ways to Argyris' explanations. He suggested that perhaps, as we develop process skills to manage groups and facilitate, we also develop a second set of skills. The first have to do with trying to manage the congruence between the content we are dealing with and our behaviour which relates to the content. For example, if he were doing assertion training he would feel a pressure to be congruent between his espoused theories on assertion, and his actual behaviour in the session.

He suggested perhaps the second set of skills we develop, are skills to manage or cover-up our theory-in-use which isn't congruent. For instance, he could construct a session, or keep it within a boundary, where he didn't actually have to become assertive, or to situations he felt he would be able to competently model the theory. Therefore, if there are situations or scenarios in which he is unassertive, he would have a high level of skills in order to prevent that from going public. So we have two sets of skills: one that people see, and one to cover-up what we don't know, can't do, or feel uncomfortable with. **In other words, to appear competent we need skills to cover-up our lack of competence.** This corresponds to what Argyris, in broader terms, suggests with regard to our defensive mechanisms which come into play to hide our gap in congruence from ourselves and others.

Some theoretical support for this notion also comes from the literature on seeking feedback. Northcraft and Ashford (1990) note that an important motivator in self-presentation is the avoidance of ridicule or loss of esteem in the eyes of important others (Baumeister, 1982). They suggest for example that the primary cost of seeking feedback is that inquiry is inherently public and as such exposes the seeker's uncertainty and need for help or information (Gerger, 1974). Northcraft and Ashford further note that such exposure may be at odds with a need to maintain a self assured, confident self-presentation (see also Goffman, 1956). Similarly, Larson (1989) suggests that inquiry is often oriented toward self-verification. This refers to the tendency to search for information which confirms, or is consistent with, one's self-concept (Swann, 1983, 1985, 1987), which fits in with a general tendency to look for confirmatory evidence rather than disconfirmatory evidence. Most people like to see themselves as competent, and their work as good. However, situations at work may arise which cause individuals to question their favourable view of themselves. According to Larson, at such a point individuals become motivated to seek relevant feedback (Brickman, 1972). However, the individual in such a situation, is unlikely to go about this process of seeking informtion in a completely unbiased fashion.

Instead, the individual is likely to search for information which confirms his or her self image.

To relate this to the previous example of taking a session on assertion, an individual in order to maintain a favourable self-concept, will seek self-verifying 'feedback' by only engaging in activities in which they are assured of coming accross competently to the participants.

The other two participants agreed readily with such hypotheses, and Ben went on to provide an example of a personal experience which illustrated this.

Similarly, Sam corroborated this hypothesis with an example of his behaviour from the previous meeting. He arrived late, when the group was in the midst of an action method to decide whose issue to work on. He suggested that he must have gone into a kind of "survival" mode.

Sam: .... in a maintenance mode. *I'm going to figure out what's going on in here, and in the meantime I'm not going to attract a lot of attention.* Happens in sessions I'm running all the time. My self-talk is going *Fr*k, what do I do next. but I'm not gonna let 'em know.* It would be useful for me to know when I'm doing that, whether it's useful for me to do that, or whether I'm blowing it. (Expressing intention)

Liane & Kath: Or when it is and when it isn't.

Kath: Yes, because it must be useful sometimes, and at other times it's not.

As can be seen from these examples, participants were finding it easy not only to admit that these hypotheses may be true but to find examples from their own experience which illustrate them. It seems that participants were being non-defensive, open and honest about their behaviour and their motives. This provides some evidence that I had achieved my intention of communicating my assumptions in a non-threatening, Model II way. Certainly the group appeared to be willing, and even enthusiastic to discuss the issues. This contributed to the ease with which we were able to discuss such potentially difficult revelations about our behaviour. Also I had provided the group initially with the concrete behaviours around which my

assumptions were based. They had all agreed that the behaviours had occurred, and showed interest in trying to understand why.

Having achieved the point where participants had become aware of their behaviour, what was driving it, and how ineffective this was, we moved on to discussing what some alternatives might be. For instance a style of consulting in which you were more honest about how you were actually feeling, or what you were thinking. This raised issues around the assumptions we make about what is appropriate and what we assume other's will think is appropriate or effective. For example comments like:

Kath: Yeah I guess it's all that stuff about, you're getting paid to handle it, even though it's up to them to solve the problem... there's a sense - well I have to come in with something, I have to do something brilliant, pull something out of a hat, otherwise they won't want me back again. ...they won't want to talk to me again if they know that I don't know as much as I try and make out. (Expressing belief)

Ben: Perhaps that should be the next step. What you are going through is absolutely unbelievably awful, but the next step is, Well some of the options are ...

Liane: ....As long as at the end of the day you've come up with some strategies to look at it and maybe deal with it.

Kath: Sounds good, and I just wish that I could do that, and I wonder If I could go in with that approach and let go those defences...

Later

Kath: Yes, and that's how we set up unreal expectations of consultants by coming in and saying we can help you. So when there isn't an automatic solution, which there normally isn't, then they can say, "Well, your a consultant, and you came in to help us with our problems, and you haven't!" (Evaluating governing values or beliefs)

This illustrates that participants were beginning to grapple with a new set of governing values. That is, they were discussing different ways of thinking about consulting itself. Considering whether their current governing values of having to always appear, and be, in control is the important issue, rather than the strategy for achieving this state.

To sum up, participants began the session by admitting to feelings of confusion and discomfort in the previous session. This led to my confronting the group with my assumptions about what their intentions or governing values may have been, that is, to unilaterally protect themselves from looking incompetent in a threatening situation. Their action strategy took the form of saying as little as practicable and avoiding any active role where possible. The group agreed with this assessment and went on to provide personal examples. Having established the accuracy of this assessment the group then went on to look at a more effective way of viewing consulting. This represented an evaluation of their governing values and therefore illustrated that the group had achieved the beginnings of double-loop learning on this issue. Double-loop learning being the evaluation of the governing values themselves rather than just evaluating the strategies used to achieve the values.

However, effective double-loop learning isn't achieved without progressing from this awareness to appropriate action. The group also recognised this limitation:

Kath: I'm not very good at challenging.

Sam: I've been thinking about that. How could I go about challenging people when I'm not in the way of doing that. Need tactics.

We're not good enough, and we need to get to the good stuff.

This suggests that the group has recognised their inability to produce effective behaviour, and that they need new tactics in order to achieve a change in behaviour.

A suggestion was made by Ben that we have a coffee break and then try to implement some of the things we had only talked about thus far. This lead to some interesting dynamics after the break and some changes in behaviour. Some excerpts from the discussions will demonstrate this change.

The group began with some confusion over what it was we were supposed to be doing and so looked to Ben for clarification, as it was his suggestion.

Ben: I've lost the context in which I suggested it.

I'm finding this hard. I'm trying to think what are we going to talk about?

Later, I think we've lost something. I don't know what it is.

(making explicit his feelings of confusion)

Kath: I don't feel I've lost something. (sounding a little irritated)

Ben: I'm willing to catch up.

Discussion follows which does not seem to go anywhere in particular, at this point I decided to make a minor intervention in order to move the group forward:

Liane: How are people feeling about how this is going right now?

Pause

Sam: I think there's something quite substantial happening, but I'm not quite sure what it is.

Kath: Maybe the reason why I was getting a bit frustrated with the change, was maybe way-back when we put forward the two ideas and we agreed to those, maybe I agreed to it fairly quickly, and so I saw it as your suggestion (Ben) and I agreed to that and maybe I hadn't given myself any thought about what I'd really wanted to do.

but It's something for me about expressing my preferences for what I want to do, if that's in conflict with yours, and sometimes I just let it go and then I might get pissed off later when things change and I hadn't ever said what I wanted to do at the beginning. And I got a bit frustrated with that when you...

In this statement Kath had made fairly explicit the behaviour (of Ben), the consequences for her and how she felt, as well as why she thought she reacted that way. As such she had engaged in Model II behaviour. Further discussion about this situation followed, in which more specifics about people's feelings surfaced.

Kath, On being asked for clarification of what the frustration was directed at:

More probably directed at Ben, only because Ben made the suggestion. (making her information more specific)

...and that's a pattern that I often do, I think. I'm not assertive about my preference, I let things go and then later I might get a bit frustrated or angry, and normally I won't do anything about that. (Generalising intentions and feelings)

Sam talking about reactions to things not going the way you expect:

....and I wondered whether with Ben, you don't become confused?.... (Testing general attribution about Ben's behaviour)

Ben: Yes normally when that kind of thing happens I will become confused, and the way I will deal with that is to sort of sit back and, *'mmmm These people don't know what they're talking about '*, and you might, but I'm feeling terribly superior. (Expressing generalised intention and beliefs)

Sam: So you're both confused and intellectually superior.

Ben: Yes. I'm confused about what you're going on about, and thinking to myself you guys don't know what you're talking about. There's no clarity about what you're saying.

Kath: Are you saying that's what happened now? When you say 'you guys' are you meaning P and I before?   (testing specific attribution)

Ben: No, actually at that time I wasn't, because at that time I actually said I'm feeling confused. If I hadn't said that I would have been sitting back...

Kath: Right, so that's you're new strategy, or a way of dealing with it. Yes, yes.

From these excerpts we can see that participants had begun to make changes in their behaviour, such as making explicit and therefore discussable how they were feeling, testing attributions or assumptions they were making about others, or their motives. This is evidence of the group's moving toward Model II behaviour and was a marked departure from the kind of behaviour that had characterised the group to this point. One participant, though suggested that he was only going part of the way toward being honest, and used this as an entree to saying how he really felt. This enabled him to ease-in to giving feedback about how Ben's behaviour had really affected him.

Sam: ...I think what's happened for me is that, it seems as though I've moved from being able to give people feedback about what I think they're doing. What I heard you say is that I don't think it's been connected back with what the impact has been on me. For instance .... I didn't say 'and I began to get irritated when you said you were getting confused the third time.' You know what I mean? That's the bit that I didn't say.

As we can see he hasn't actually given the feedback directly to Ben, but talked about it in an objective manner. Not surprisingly, Ben reacts to the generalised message rather than the feedback, as this would be less threatening.

Ben: Yes, yes. And that's hard stuff ... We're scared to get onto that stuff.

Kath however, picks up this evasion, and asks Sam directly about his feelings:

Kath: I was just wondering, is that what you were feeling?

Sam admits hesitantly that these were his real feelings, yet still manages to talk about them objectively, and once again Kath picks up this point and feeds it back to Sam:

Sam: Well yes. And I could either water this all down at the moment or.... but I think the confusion was irritation. Yes the confusion, I was experiencing as irritation, and I think what I was doing was going into my head to work with that.

Kath: And how I noticed you just saying that, ...the way you did it was very much more 'in the head' even how you explained that then. Or that was my feeling. (Offering disconfirmable evidence on Sam's behaviour, though without direct data to back it up)

Sam: Yes, yes.

At this point Ben re-enters the discussion and seeks more concrete information about Sam's feelings.

Ben: I'm still wondering whether your irritation was at the confusion, or the irritation was at me saying I'm confused.

Sam: I'm not sure because at the moment, I have this .. my feelings have just gone down into my tummy, and so what that says to me is *ooh, Sam you're moving into new ground.* And that's really interesting you know, because I have an emotional..thing, and for me, I think for me ..normally what I do is pop it up (into my head), and so what I do is deal with it as intellectual energy. So I'm not sure whether I know... I mean no, it's not personal.

Sam begins by talking about how he is feeling currently and expresses confusion at how he was feeling about the previous situation. He ends however, with the comment that it wasn't personal which didn't directly answer Ben's question. Ben, perhaps picking up on Sam's discomfort at expressing these feelings, tries to encourage Sam to give valid information:

Ben: It's okay. The reason I'm asking this question is for my learning.

Sam: Yeah. Well if we're just working on this for a bit, then I experience it as irritation. It most probably was irritation at you to an extent. Pause. But I didn't say, 'Ben, you're irritating me, this is the third time you've said you're confused in the last ten minutes, and I'd really like to get unconfused.' And I think that's what happens for me. I want to get unconfused because now I'm feeling almost guilty because we don't know what we're doing.

In this exchange, Sam does admit directly to Ben, to feeling irritated with Ben to some extent. He also expresses why he had this reaction - Ben's behaviour triggered feelings of guilt in him because the group wasn't clear on what it was doing. This suggests that Sam feels responsible for the group and it's state of confusion, though he does not say this explicitly. Ben then reacts to this more direct message:

Ben: Really?

Sam: Yeah, I think so. I think there's a bit of that in there.

Ben: My initial reaction is 'Oh God, if he'd actually said that, where would I have hidden. (laughter) You know, but the bit that you said on top of that about part of the irritation is because you shunt it up, I'm thinking the other side of it is it's probably just as well that I did say that, because I was actually hooking into something. I was dealing with something that wasn't being addressed, and it's probably a good thing I got you irritated. So it's almost like you're saying 'thank-you for irritating me'.

Ben was able to deal with this feedback by looking on it as a positive. Though Sam was telling him he had been irritated with him, because he had said why, Ben was able to justify this as a positive thing because it had made explicit some interesting dynamics. Therefore I would suggest that, because Sam had added the information about the specific impact for him of Ben's behaviour, Ben was able to understand Sam's position more clearly and not take it as a personal attack. A personal attack would be seen as much more threatening and likely to result in defensiveness. Ben recognises this to some extent:

Ben: Yes. because I must admit I've got a real problem with people getting irritated with me, or getting angry with me. I do find that difficult to cope with.

        Yes, thank-you for that.

Sam and Kath go on to talk more about the situation and Sam's reaction to it.

Kath: It's pretty difficult isn't it.

Sam: Yeah, it felt quite heavy for me there. And I'm sure it's about my stuff, and I think it's because I feel guilty, like I feel there's something wrong when it's not clear. And I own that. (Expressing feelings and beliefs)

Kath: You feel bad. You think you're not making it clear. It's your responsibility to make it clear for everyone else? (seeking clarification)

Sam: Well, I think I start to assume some responsibility for that, by then trying to problem solve it. And maybe it would be better ... I don't know what would be better, but I've just tried to explain what was happening for me then, and I think the end result is that we have insights. (Expressing intentions and beliefs)

Ben: What that just did for me was that I felt very linked with you. ......

Sam: I felt for me... a pretty honest exchange went on, and that's nice.

From the complete exchange above we can see that Sam began with a fairly general and objective discussion of his reactions to Ben's behaviour. With challenging and prompting from Kath and Ben he was able to move toward a more specific declaration of his previous and current feelings and their origin. Ben was able to deal with this feedback by looking on it as a positive, while admitting that he has difficulty with people expressing negative feelings toward him. Throughout the entire exchange there is evidence of supplying more valid information in order to solve problems. Where information was unclear or general rather than specific, participants challenged or encouraged more specific information exchange. In this way participants theories-in-use became discussable, testable and disconfirmable. Participants expressed that this process had been difficult, yet worthwhile.

At the end of the session I asked for feedback on my role. The most significant information gained was that I hadn't been involved directly in the exchanges, but had played a more low key facilitation role. One participant suggested that though this wasn't a problem she felt if I continued in this role I may become alienated from the group because I wasn't sharing directly in the experiences. I agreed this was probably true and that I would like to play a more participative role in the future.

Implications

There are important implications for the current study from this session.

1. It provided abundant evidence of Model II behaviour and some evidence of double-loop learning. This was the first evidence that the aim of the study was being achieved.

2. Specific, disconfirmable information about participants behaviour in the prior session led to an honest discussion of theories-in-use (or people's feelings, beliefs and intentions). This provides some evidence that the environment and the approach used enabled a non-defensive discussion, and double-loop learning.

3. Once it was legitimised to discuss these feelings and beliefs, participants enthusiastically and energetically took part. This implies that although there are taboo's against discussing our true feelings, beliefs and motives, once this process is legitimised it becomes easier to do so.

4. Participants were encouraged by each other, and did not experience any punishment or negative consequences for engaging in this atypical behaviour. Therefore their initial experience with Model II behaviour within the group was a positive one. This would have implications for the likelihood of this behaviour being repeated. It also has implications for the process. It would seem valuable to try to ensure that participants experienced positive reinforcement for changes in behaviour.

5. There were only 3 participants present. This may have implications for the process and the group. Four people is a more intimate size group than seven people. This may have effected the ability of the group to be able to discuss their previous behaviour more honestly (the group discussed this possibility). A more serious implication perhaps, is that the other 3 participants had missed a vital stage of development of the group. The group tried to address this possibility by each member present contacting a missing member to see if they wanted to be up-

dated on what had happened. The tape of the session would also be made available on request.

6. In playing a more facilitative role in the group, I was starting to set up differences between myself and them as participants.

7. The final implication is that the group seem to have achieved a significant change in behaviour and attitude fairly quickly, this being only the third time the group has met. This seems to imply that:

a) The consultants already had the strategies within their repertoire but were not using them. This seems reasonably likely considering that consultants have been trained and often train others, in effective communication. Though they may not use these skills effectively much of the time, they still may be able to produce them when they wish. and/or

b) The process used thus far had provided some strategies for people to use as a guide. In other words the session on Dick and Dalmau's information chain and the structured process provided for people to work through the case study, had given participants some guidelines or tactics as to how to behave more effectively. This may also be possible. Though the concepts were by no means new, they may have served as a reminder of more effective ways of operating.

CHAPTER 6

REFREEZING THE CHANGE

6.0 Refreezing the change

This chapter will look at two sessions in the project, sessions 4 and 5. They encompass the two meetings which followed the first behaviour changes in a subsection of the group. The first meeting deals with another case study and Fran re-entering the group. The second deals with a re-evaluation of expectations, Ann re-entering the group, and with model I intentions and behaviour on my part.

6.1 The Second Case Study

This section will deal with the session which followed the group's first success at producing more effective behaviour, and achieving double-loop learning. This session, the fourth meeting of the group, is important in that it provides a test for whether the change which took place at the last meeting was robust or more transitory in nature. It also marked the start of a more participative role for myself within the group. However, as this session did not produce a lot of new or vital data it will not be dealt within any detail. I will also dispense with outlining explicitly my intentions and strategies, other than to say they were Model II. I will move directly on to looking at the relevant outcomes for this session.

Outcomes

This group meeting was attended by 4 participants. The 3 participants from the previous session (Ben, Kath, & Sam) plus Fran, who had provided the case study in session 2.

Upon my addressing Fran's absence and whether there was anything we needed to do for her to feel included, Fran stated that she felt comfortable and that Kath had told her about what had happened in the session she had missed. She indicated that she felt happy continuing on that basis. After this I initiated a discussion on reflections of the last session and anything relevant that had occurred between sessions. A number of statements about learnings which had occurred surfaced, for instance the awareness

that participants were previously engaging in unilateral protection and face saving, and that they had been able to produce new behaviours in the group.

Ben also gave an example of a situation outside the group in which he had consciously attempted new strategies which were more in line with his espoused values.

At one point Fran picked up a comment about giving feedback, and spoke about how she reacts when someone gives her feedback in a formularised way. An interesting scenario then developed in which I attempted to challenge Fran about her reaction. I began with what resembled more closely a Model I approach to this confrontation. For example:

Liane: What are the signals to you that they're doing that? (seeking more specific information about the others' behaviour, without giving my own beliefs or assumptions about her behaviour)

And,

Liane: What kind of assumptions are you making about them? (Seeking information about theories-in-use or beliefs, again without giving my own)

Eventually however I managed to find a more effective strategy which was giving more information about my own beliefs and intentions.

Liane: Your reaction....If I was the other person on the end of it, and you reacted to me the way you said you would react, then I would feel you weren't trying to enter into a relationship with me either. (Expressing beliefs about Fran's intentions)

Not long after the adoption of this new approach Fran became less defensive and less aggressive in her non-verbals.

This interaction represented the first time I had confronted an individual in the group about the effectiveness of their behaviour. As can be seen from the comments accompanying the dialogue, I had mixed success in managing to do this in a Model II way. However, the overall effect of the strategy was that Fran reacted non-defensively to the direct challenges, concurred that they were accurate, and designed an alternative action strategy:

Fran: Yep. So, I need to put the assumptions in first. Say "You're giving me a positive, a
        negative, a positive, a presume you've got some style of thing you're following through. I
        also assume you don't really want to engage with me, You want to be safe yourself. .... If
        you want to be safe with me, don't start this feedback in this way 'cause it sets me off.

Another discussion centred around a general change of attitude towards learning

about ourselves. For example, Fran began by expressing pleasure that she was

becoming able to recognise certain model I behaviour in herself:

Fran: ...I notice when I'm doing one-upmanship. one up, one down... Just getting delighted in
        the truth of the matter. Like wow I've worked this out too. You know, that sort of thing
        instead of thinking, God, what a terrible person. Wow next time I do that I'll be really with it.
        You know, stop. Suddenly more excitement.

This provides some evidence that Fran was beginning to not only change her

behaviour and attitudes but was discovering this as a very liberating learning

experience.

Further evidence of the group being willing and able to confront their own and other's

theories-in-use and ineffectiveness was shown when the group worked through the

second case study (Sam's). Details of the case study and participants' comments are

contained in Appendix D.

Sam was asked as to his key learning from his case. At that point he suggested it was

'why are things like putting a course together such hard work emotionally.' Fran

suggested that perhaps some of the seeming 'hard work' is a result of self doubt. This

lead into a very revealing discussion about the crux of what was driving Sam's

behaviour - his primary theories-in-use. Some excerpts may help to illustrate.

Fran: So this is what I've got: You get negative stuff which gets you into self doubt, and the payoff
        is you get you're antennae going real strong, so that you get it right, and you're need to get it
        right means you have to avoid getting negative stuff. Sort of like a very tight loop there isn't
        it really? (Summing up understanding of Sam's causal chain of events)

Sam: Yeah I think there's something in that. I think I'm into some really negative cycle stuff, that's what that's saying isn't it? (Affirming evaluation of ineffectiveness of cycle which develops theory-in-use.)

Later

Sam: I mean, dare I say it, but I think it's my fear that I'm not okay. I think it's real fundamental self esteem stuff. I think it's my fear that I'm actually a real f**king bastard.

Fran: But you are. Everybody is. So what are you fearful of?......What are you fearful of?

Another long pause

Sam: I don't know, but I know there's alot to be fearful of! (Laughter) My mum said so.

Discussion followed in which Sam suggested that although he doesn't reject others because they aren't perfect, he still experiences fear that other's will reject him for not being perfect.

Fran: So there's that link too isn't there, when you're not okay, the actual fear I think, is about fear of rejection. Total rejection in fact, in your case.
        So I'm not just going to reject you when you're a bastard, I'm going to reject you for all time.

Sam: Yeah.

Fran: It's big bickies isn't it?

S: (emphatically) Oh yeah, this is quite big bickies stuff. It's interesting because it has quite big implications for the way we work, as facilitators dosn't it?

The preceding discussion indicates that Sam was able to identify, with help, the underlying theory-in-use which had driven his behaviour in the context of the case study situation, as well as more generally. Participants were highly involved in the process and asked challenging questions and made explicit challenging attributions about Sam's behaviour.

Implications

The implications for the research from this session were:

1. The process used for going through case studies is useful for providing a framework for participants to work through. The group was more comfortable working through the process the second time.

2. Changes which had begun in the second session were again in evidence in this session, suggesting that they were fairly robust at least within the confines of the group.

3. My assumptions or concerns about participants having missed a crucial stage of the group's development and growth, seem to have been unfounded at least in Fran's case.

4. Participants were finding it easier to engage with fundamental truths about themselves, and about what drives their behaviour. This may have to do with a reframing of the situation such that participants began to feel positive about having been honest and accepting with regard to negative aspects of themselves. Therefore, an implication for the process would be that it would be Beneficial to emphasise this positive aspect of self-awareness.

5. Defences which were prominent in this session were to do with, needing to get it right, and so avoiding negative feelings or criticism, and concerns of not being okay and of rejection.

6.2 Re-entry problems

This section deals with the first meeting attended by Ann after having been absent for two sessions, and with the resulting impact on the group and Ann. I will begin with the lead-up to the session, which involved a telephone conversation with Ann, before going on to the outcomes.

Lead up

Having spoken to Ann before the meeting, I took up her suggestion that we spend some time evaluating how we were going, re-contracting what we wanted from the group. I had very strong concerns about Ann having missed the previous two sessions. These were based on my belief that the last session she had attended (session 2) had not been successful in terms of the group being able to work effectively through the process, and that she had not been involved in the evaluation of this session and the learnings which had resulted.

In my telephone conversation with Ann, however I did not express these strong concerns directly. My belief about why I evaded this, is that I was avoiding expressing negative feelings in an attempt to unilaterally protect both myself and Ann from what might have been a difficult discussion. As a result, I kept the conversation within a 'safe' boundary and spoke only of facts and thoughts. This did not encourage Ann to be able to discuss any feelings or concerns she may have had with regard to the group. In terms of the conceptual model, the characteristics I was displaying were distinctly Model I. The consequences were a more defensive relationship with Ann, a reduction of valid information, and little public testing of ideas. All of this was recognised retrospectively. I was not consciously aware of this at the time.

In the intervening period, I had also been contacted by Rachel who indicated she would be dropping out of the group. She suggested that this was due to personal reasons which lead her to believe she would not be able to cope with being involved in this group, as it was fairly involving and confronting. She was open and honest

about her feelings and beliefs, and expressed regret at not feeling able to continue. She asked that I pass on her thanks and apologies to the group.

Outcomes

My intentions at the outset of this session improved little from the intentions which could be implied from my previous discussion with Ann, that is they were predominantly Model I, upon reflection.

The group began by looking at what our expectations had been and to what extent they had been met. Generally speaking, for Kath, Sam, Fran, Ben, and myself, expectations had either been met or partially met. Future expectations were for more of the same, and about applying more new strategies both within the group and outside. Ann had a different experience and her evaluation, which is included in Appendix E (the transcript from session 5), suggested that many of her expectations hadn't been met.

A short exchange between Ann and myself followed in which I consciously revealed none of my feelings, but spoke on a more factual level. For example:

Liane: You're at a distinct disadvantage only having been to the first two.

Ann: Yes

Liane: because probably, had you been to the other two, some of those may have been met.

Ann: by now, yes, I would say so, because I would have certainly had a lot more contact with people by this time.

At this point I was expressing some of my beliefs, namely, Ann being at a disadvantage. However, I was not expressing my feelings. I was feeling threatened and defensive, possibly because I was taking responsibility for Ann not having her expectations met and, therefore, I felt personally blamed. I suppressed these feelings and assumptions, however, in order to unilaterally protect myself and protect Ann from my reaction, which I thought would be negative. I also did not acknowledge Ann's statements about not having her needs met.

A brief discussion followed until Kath picked up on an earlier comment of Ann's and sought clarification of it. This inquiry leads to a more honest exchange at a deeper level, and hence revealed more valid information.

Kath: I'd like to pick up on something you said before Ann. You said we were less polite than the time before and then you said, "A bit less". And I was wondering whether that's what you were noticing, or that's how you're feeling? (inquiry after more specific information)

Ann: I felt so uncomfortable the night we did Fran's, and part of it was I didn't feel I had enough of a relationship built with people and that we **were** being polite, because I didn't feel safe, we didn't feel safe. And so I think, I get the feeling now that people who have been here the whole time are feeling more safe. There's the familiar looks, "Oh, what about that story..." and can have a laugh about that, so I can see that happening a bit more. but there's still the respectful silences, and the constraint there. This is research. (Expressing beliefs and feelings regarding last meeting not currently; making untested attribution(?) - we didn't feel safe)

Liane: I think certainly for me, just picking up on that, part of that probably is because you're here. Not anything personal about you, but because you haven't been for a couple. Here's this kind of new person who hasn't gone through all of this, and (my) not quite knowing how to deal with it.

(Expressing feelings)

Ann: Well I feel a bit like a junior, an apprentice. That I should wait my turn. (Expressing feelings and beliefs - current)

And I was aware of all that as we were talking, those sorts of feelings, and I thought, "I'm just going to speak when I feel like speaking." because if we'd kept on being as polite as we were, I would feel so uptight about it, about not being able to say anything about how I feel. I just couldn't participate.

Fran: ... What strikes me is that you're more warmed up to your memory of how we were, than how we are now. (Challenging Ann's attributions about the group)

Ann: Yeah, I'd say that's about a 60% memory of how we were and 40% memory of how we are. So the two are beginning to meet. (Accepting challenge non-defensively)

From this exchange it can be seen that the inquiry made by Kath had a profound effect on the way the group was interacting, leading to much more expression of feelings and beliefs and thus a more valid exchange of information. One outcome was a more comfortable atmosphere and less defensive relationships. Evidence of this is that the

group's non verbals changed slightly to being more relaxed. Having been more open about my feeling uncomfortable, I felt that a weight had been lifted from me and I was now more able to interact with Ann on an equal basis rather than being unilaterally protective.

Therefore, despite my Model I intentions and strategies, the group was able to move past these into a more effective interaction.

Another exchange occurred towards the end of the session which I believe had some implications for the design of the process. It was a discussion which revolved around 'permission' within the group to be able to say or do things.

Ann: No. Well I left so frustrated after that meeting. I wanted to scream. That's just because I feel things strongly.

Fran: Why didn't you say something at the time?

Ann: Because I don't think there was permission in that group at all to say anything, except what was asked of us. And I felt I spoke as little as I could to get through the exercise. In retrospect I was profoundly uncomfortable about the content and the process, and I have to own my responsibility for that as well.

This, I believe, has certain implications for the running of this process as well as processes generally. At the beginning, I said to participants that one of my expectations was that people would be responsible for their learning and would share responsibility for the process the group engaged in. I had made an assumption that they would actually do this. The preceding discussion highlights that just because you ask people to be responsible, or because they have an intention or motivation to do so, does not mean this will actually happen. Surprise, surprise!

Implications

1. Despite my Model I motives and behaviour leading up to and at the beginning of the meeting, the group had progressed far enough that they were able to precipitate a Model II discussion. Therefore, it would seem that the learnings and changes which had occurred thus far in the group seem to have been quite robust. This suggests that the first few meetings were vitally important in the development and facilitation of change of attitude and behaviour within the group.

2. Being asked to, and possessing a willingness to, take responsibility, are not necessarily sufficient to produce such behaviour. The implications for the process is that it might be useful to include some more structured method of addressing this issue. For instance, not only saying one expects participants to take responsibility, but also facilitating a discussion on what this means and how it is operationalised. In other words, taking the discussion of responsibility from a governing values level through to action strategies and operationalised behaviour.

3. Missing early sessions may have a negative effect on participant's being able to interact with the group as effectively as they and other's would like. This may be effected by the role participants played early on, and by individual differences. Fran had a more central role in the second meeting(it being her case that was worked on), and this may have explained her easier re-integration into the group. Also individual differences between Ann and Fran may also have played a role in the effects of missing early sessions.

CHAPTER 7

FURTHER CASE STUDIES -
WINDING UP

7.0 Further Case studies - Winding up

This chapter will look briefly at the final two case study sessions. They will not be discussed in any detail as many of the points which could be drawn from these sessions have been covered previously. The sessions will be discussed in turn.

Session 6

One incident occurred at the end of session 6. The incident revolved around Kath talking about a meeting she had been to (facilitated by Ann), in which she had felt confused and frustrated because she was unclear about the purpose of the meeting. Eventually at the end of the meeting, when asked for feedback she indicated her feelings and beliefs. This was significant for three reasons.

First, it was evidence that Kath was changing her behaviour outside the group, as she said normally she wouldn't have said anything in that situation for fear of sounding silly or unprofessional.

Second, this indicates that Kath was much more aware of her behaviour and beginning to feel more inclined to want to deal with the inconsistencies she experienced. In other words, the dissonance she was experiencing due to her new awareness (brought about at least in part by being a member of the group) was beginning to impact on her behaviour.

Third, it once again surfaced the idea of having or not having permission to be able to express feelings and beliefs. Kath suggested that she only expressed her feelings when asked for feedback, thereby feeling that she now had permission to do so. This indicates perhaps, the strength of the inbuilt fear about breaking the taboo associated with discussing such 'undiscussables'. Therefore, permission is sought in order to feel safe in doing this.

In terms of Ann's case, the major things that seemed to be elicited were to do with: needing to get things clear before making them public, which has to do with 'getting it

right' and appearing competent. Also, suppressing negative emotion and competitiveness were in evidence. These were all themes which had featured previously, attesting to their prevalence.

Implications

1. An implication is that, within the process under investigation, feeling safe enough to take risks is important, as is receiving positive reinforcement for doing so. Having a success within the group is more likely to lead to experiments outside.

Session 7

Another incident which seemed critical in the group's life occurred at the beginning of the seventh session. It involved the group confronting me about my not making explicit my feelings of frustration on a certain issue. The issue was attempting to find a time which suited everyone for the final session of the group. My non-verbals were becoming increasingly agitated as my frustration grew, however, I did not address my feelings explicitly. This had various effects on the group. It was suggested by Sam that we actually look at what was happening currently in the group. A number of things surfaced.

I suggested I felt like I needed to mask my emotions (not very successfully) because I didn't want the group to feel I was blaming them for not being able to come up with a date. I was none-the-less feeling frustrated. It was suggested that part of my frustration may have been my feelings of helplessness at being dependent on the group for the decision. This lead to a number of reactions and enquiries by the group.

Sam suggested he was feeling empathy because he had experienced similar frustrations with his research.

Kath suggested she was feeling guilty and defensive:

Kath: I was beginning to feel defensive, because I'd made it all the other times. I felt there was something there that you weren't saying, feeling blamed.

Sam: Why is it you don't feel you can share with us your actual emotion?

Liane: I think it's because I don't think I can do it constructively when I'm in high emotion. So there's stuff about, I know I need to express this but I don't think I'm going to be able to express it constructively.... so maybe I should shut up and maybe down the track I'll be able to pick up the pieces.   Which doesn't work.

Sam: My response to that is, that it wouldn't matter how you expressed it or what you said, it wouldn't remove from me the opportunity to respond in a number of ways. So you're expressing where you're at could not make it unconstructive.

Liane: Yes.....It's certainly very unilaterally protective.

Sam: If you can never blame anyone for anything, is that actually an impediment to getting your feelings out It seems you have a rule - I'm never allowed to blame anybody.

Liane: It's not very constructive (having that rule).

Sam: Is the consequence, that it actually makes it hard for you to project your feelings out because they're not allowed to be at anybody, or be construed at being at anybody.

This exchange was important, I believe, for the following reason. It was the first time the group had challenged or confronted my behaviour. It was made even more significant by virtue of the fact that it wasn't as part of a case study or explicit aim of the group for that session. It was totally unplanned and unsolicited, suggesting there wasn't explicit 'permission'. This indicated to me, that the group, or at least some members, were feeling confident enough and safe enough to confront my behaviour without 'permission'. As I was the 'leader' of the group, this may have represented more of a risk than confronting each other's behaviour. It was direct evidence that the group was beginning to move towards enacting these new behaviours more spontaneously.

One other possible explanation of why the group felt more comfortable confronting my behaviour in this meeting, may be partially a result of a discussion I initiated at the end of the last meeting.   I had discussed some of the feelings and beliefs which I had been experiencing in the previous meeting but not surfaced. I spoke about my blaming Ann

for her not taking responsibility for her feelings and outcomes, and that I had felt negatively toward Ann about this. I also suggested that this had caused me distress because I knew there was something going on I wasn't letting myself in on. I eventually concluded that my distress came from my incongruence. I often did not take responsibility as a participant, and as a facilitator relieved myself of responsibility and guilt by blaming participants for not taking responsibility. This self-confronting of my behaviour may have had the effect of bringing my own behaviour into the arena for discussion and confrontation.

Implications

1. The implications for the research, are that as the facilitator, it was not important for me to be able to model effective behaviour all the time. Perhaps what was more important was my openness about this, and my willingness to *try* to be congruent, and to be confronted. In fact, one hypothesis would be that it may have been less threatening having a facilitator who is not seen as the expert, but rather a co-learner. Participants may have felt less evaluated, and felt less of the corresponding fear of being 'found wanting', than if I had been seen more as the ultimate in congruence.

2. A second implication is that as facilitator it may be Beneficial to provide the group with evidence that my own behaviour is ineffective and confrontable, and that I am learning about myself, just as they are learning about themselves.

3. Another implication which can be drawn from this and previous sessions is that the participant seems to discover much more about his/her behaviour, what drives it, and it's consequences, when they have feedback from others. This suggests that a public reflection process may be much more likely to lead to effective learning than private reflection. This may be because, as suggested in the introduction, our own reflections are likely to be heavily influenced by our own biases and distorted by our defense mechanisms.

CHAPTER 8

EVALUATION -
SUMMING SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE

8.0 Evaluation - Summing subjective experiences

This chapter encompasses the evaluation of the research by the participants. To this point, many of my conclusions had been drawn from my own inferences. As the data in this research is entirely qualitative, and therefore more subjective, it seems important to build a more comprehensive view of the proceedings. If I relied solely on my own estimations of what had been significant in the process, this would be a highly biased representation of subjective reality. By incorporating other participants views, I can move towards a more complete understanding of this subjective reality.

Therefore, if there is an ultimate reality (which is questionable), the greater the number of subjective experiences we have of it, the closer we may come to it. This was the purpose of collecting evaluation information from participants.

The concluding session was facilitated by someone from outside the group in an attempt to enable a more objective discussion of the process and my role. This person asked each person to create a metaphor which represented the group and it's development over time as well as facilitating the group through a 'history trip' of critical incidents. Additionally participats were asked for some written information concerning their personal learnings and evidence of any changes they percieved in themselves, as wellas comments on the process generally.

Outcomes

I will not outline all of the data produced by participants in the evaluation process as this would be too lengthy. However, more complete data are contained in Appendix G and H. In this section I will outline the overall results and what I see as the important implications from the evaluations. I will first discuss the metaphors which participants created, and the themes they indicate. I will go on to the implications of the critical incidents identified. Third, I will outline the critical aspects of my own

behaviour that participants identified. Finally, I will outline the significance of the data gained in the written evaluations.

Metaphors

Participants (Ben, Fran, Kath, & Sam) each developed a metaphor which for them encapsulated their experience in the group. Ann was not at this final session and did not supply a metaphor subsequently. The metaphors that participants created suggested some interesting themes. I will outline the relevant aspects of each metaphor.

The first (Sam's) was a boat journey in which there was some stormy weather (challenging), but was also a pleasant journey. The first part of the journey, there was a storm brewing, though he was not sure whether it was real or imaginary. It was hard work to begin with, and some things that were supposed to work, didn't. Some of the crew didn't make it. As we progressed we were building confidence, and the ocean wasn't as bad as we thought it would be (not everything was thrown at him that might have been). As with sailing, the real aim was conquering your own fear. At the beginning we thought we were going out to test the boat (Argyris and Schön's theories and concepts), however along the way the scenery and the journey (our own learning and relationships etc) became more important and rewarding than the boat. At the end, a feeling of arriving in a safe protected harbour. Feeling relaxed, and having "no fears of what might be raised," and a sense of achievement at the end.

The second (Ben's) metaphor was of a circus. The MC (researcher) was there saying, "Role up. Role up," and directing the show. We started with the animal acts (Performing. Not too sure about things: needed the whip), moved on to the Clowns (basically doing similar tricks but with more gusto. Didn't need the whip), and ended with the aerialists (Doing risky, difficult things with grace and ease). In this stage there wasn't safely nets - there didn't need to be. You knew the other person would catch you (high feelings of safety and trust). There wasn't a particularly noticeable M.C.

towards the end, just all part of the parade. As well as being a performer he was also a spectator observing his own and other's behaviour.

The third metaphor (Kath's) was the journey to Oz. Each person had there own need which they were on the journey to Oz to satisfy - courage and so on. We began with a typhoon - not sure we're we are going, but very polite. We all set out together hand in hand (feelings of comradeship and excitement) and followed the yellow brick road (not much questioning) feeling that all would be revealed. Along the way some people wandered off, rejoined, wandered off (participants who couldn't attend all meetings). There was a consistent core of us still on the journey together (Sam, Kath, Ben, & Liane). There was a wicked witch of the north, but she existed within us (our fears & defences). By the end we reached Oz and the wizard, and he wasn't who we thought he was, the answer lay within each of us. Towards the end, feeling comfortable but able to be confronting. Also the journey had been characterised by some anxiety but also by friendliness and support.

The last metaphor (Fran's) was travelling down a river, which had fairly defined banks. This gave a feeling of safety and assurance. Within the river there were eddies and some white water, which provided a challenge and some excitement. Other parts were very pleasant and enjoyable. Some people managed to avoid some of the eddies, while others were in the thick of them. Some people went off on side streams and pursued there own journey for a time and then rejoined with the river further down.

Some interesting themes which seem to run through most metaphors, are of safety and of challenge. This seems to indicate that participants felt confronted and challenged, yet at the same time felt safe and trusting. These are important aspects of a process such as this, and indicate that we had been able to create a safe environment in which people could and did take risks. Two of the metaphors (the boat journey and the journey to Oz) incorporated themes of conquering things within ourselves.

However, evidence that this wasn't a consistent theme for all the participants came from Ann, who suggested in a subsequent discussion, that she hadn't felt particularly safe, but that she wasn't sure why.

Participants also identified critical incidents in the process which had some meaning for them, these are also contained in Appendix G and H. These incidents seem to suggest that participants and myself found similar parts of the process critical. Session 3 was seen as particularly important in the learning process, which was similar to my estimation of this session. Other aspects were: people's own cases; concern over Ann having missed a critical part of the group's development; lack of time to review the process as we went along; complexity of the process for woking through a case; and simply working together on a issue being quite powerful. This at least suggests that in a general sense, my conclusions seem to be consistent with that of other's in the group.

Some members of the group were also able to give feedback on my role within the group, and it's impact. Critical aspects of the facilitation seemed to be the following: modelling the approach I espoused, being a learner/participant and questioning my own behaviour, being flexible, sharing control, being confronting, and trying to provide a safe environment. These also represent aspects of the process and facilitation I had identified as important.

What *participants* felt they learned

As mentioned particpants were asked to provide written thoughts on what they believe they had gained, in terms of their own learning, from being involved in the process. Not all participants were able to provide this, due to their time constraints. A full copy of participants responses are contained in Appendix H. A brief indication of these learnings is provided below.

Personal learnings encompassed a variety of areas. For instance:

Ben: "Probably the most significant has been the method of looking at what I do and what I say to myself, then hypothesising about what these things mean about my theories-in-use. I have found this useful in a number of situations, because it allows me to identify to some extent self defeating patterns and alter them.

One of the outcomes of this is that I find that often I can't even do this, look honestly at myself. I find this threatening, confronting, challenging......

The end result of this is that I feel ready to attempt to grow in a way unavailable to me before. ... now it seems that a challenge or threat is something to be welcomed somewhat more than before - it's a gateway to some learning.

I have learnt some things that make people feel it is difficult to approach me.

I have been able when procrastinating, to ask "what does this behaviour mean about me?" and attempt alternative options (like doing what I was avoiding or re-evaluating the goals). Generally speaking I feel more free to analyse myself and my circumstances in an open way.

This sounds probably more positive than it is meant to. Often I am diheartened by my ability to cover or to encourage others to cover. Even saying to myself "this stuff is hard" acts as a bit of a cop-out at times. Yet it seems that I have grown and learnt and increased my capacity for growing and learning.

What made me learn this? Just going through the process with others made me feel that if it worked with them it had to work in other situations as well. I just feel a bit more confident in exposing the soft underbelly bits to public considertion and comment and have had more opportunities to learn as a consequence."

Ann: "That I "blame outwards"; that I take an unhealthey responsibility for people/events/outcomes; that honesty in relationships is preferable to reserve, that I create something af a formiddable image which scares people away."

Kath: "Reinforced that what I say can be different from my thoughts/feelings and that my non-verbals will often indicate this incongruence.

Again learnt the importance of saying what I feel rather than sitting on it."

Kath also suggested the usefulness of feedback from others in the group regarding hypotheses about her behaviour.

Sam suggested his major change in behavior is a more pronounced ability to be able to publish his thoughts and to challenge people, and feel okay about it.

From the above learnings it can reasonably be suggested that being involved in the group had a positive and sometimes profound effect on the way participants thought about themselves and their environment and on their behaviour. Certainly for myself as the researcher and co-participant, it has been one of the most significant personal learning experiences of my life, and has given me a new way of looking at myself and the world. It has also given me the courage to continue to grow, develop, and take the risks inherent in becoming more congruent, because I have seen the enormous payoffs both in myself and in others. Being in this group seems ot have given us a glimpse of what could be, if we put in the time and effort to act as congruently as we are willing and able.

In terms of the research, these findings seem to indicate that participant's were able to identify significant learnings for themselves which were a direct or indirect consequence of being involved in the group. Further, some participants seem to have experienced changes in themselves which had, and continue to have, a profound effect on their lives.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

9 .0 Summary and conclusions.

The aim of this research was to find out what are the critical aspects of a process which successfully reduces the gap between espoused theory and theory-in-use in a group of organisational consultants.

The difficulty with doing research in which all of the data is qualitative, is that the process of reporting it back in some meaningful way to the reader is often voluminous to say the least. The previous six chapters have been an attempt to present and discuss the relevant results and data from the current project. Though each chapter has contained a summary of the findings and implications, it may be useful at this point to clearly summarise the major results and their relation to the research question, as well as look at the general implications of the research. These will be looked at in turn. This chapter will also outline suggested changes to the process of increasing consultants' congruence, the limitations of the study, and will end with a brief section on suggestions for further research.

Summary of findings

First, within the initial contracting and climate setting, there was evidence that my intentions and behaviour were consistently model II. This enabled me to begin to establish a non-defensive relationship with participants. It also marked a beginning to the modelling of effective behaviour.

Second, in session 3, in which I fed back my observations and initiated a discussion about these, there was a marked change in the behaviour of the group. This change represented the group behaving in a predominantly Model II way, and engaging in double-loop learning. The implication for the research question is that my using Model II strategies in order to surface incongruities in participants behaviour lead to participants lowering their defences and engaging in more effective behaviour. Therefore, creating a model II environment helps to facilitate model II behaviour and double-loop learning.

Third, the researchers' confrontation of her own behaviour modelled self analysis, confrontation and a willingness to risk exposing ineffectiveness. This enabled the group to view the researcher as a co-learner, and may have further facilitated participants in taking responsibility for the process and their own learning.

Fourth, participants were highly enthusiastic and energetic in the third session. This suggests that there is a willingness to discuss incongruence and ineffectiveness if it can be legitimised to do so, at least with regard to this group of people. It also suggests that participants had a positive first experience of confronting their own behaviour. This is more likely to lead to repetition of the behaviour. Therefore the opportunity for participants to be positively reinforced for confronting their own behaviour lead to more self-analysis and confrontation. In some cases, reinforcement lead to a change to a more positive attitude toward discovering inconsistencies in their own behaviour. This also lead to the lowering of defences.

Fifth, providing a safe environment, in which participants feel able to deal with the confrontation of their behaviour and to try new behaviours may be critical to the success of the project.

Sixth, the following session provided evidence that the change in participant's behaviour was robust, as they were involved predominantly in the production of Model II and double-loop learning. This suggests that the process developed by Dick and Dalmau (1990) can be effective in facilitating participants in confronting each other's and their own behaviour.

Seventh, participants were able to have greater insight about their behaviour and what was driving it through the discussion of their own and others cases. When we engage in private reflection about our behaviour we are more likely to be influenced by our defences which complicate our already biased view. This suggests that reflection about our behaviour which incorporates others opinions about what we

seemed to be trying to achieve and did achieve, is more effective than private reflection, and more likely to lead to double-loop learning.

Eighth, encouraging discussion about attempts to change behaviour outside the group seemed apt to add to the likelihood of transferring the learning to other situations.

Ninth, despite the ineffectiveness of my behaviour and motives at times, the group had changed enough to be able to operate effectively. This suggested that the process itself by later stages was fairly robust, and that the crucial learning and change took part in the initial sessions.

With regard to the secondary question about the defensive routines in which these consultants engage, the research indicated that the routines were in line with what would have been expected given Argyris' work. Participants mostly engaged in face saving, suppressing negative feelings, unilateral protection of themselves and others, and, to a lesser extent, maximising winning and minimising losing. These defensive routines were driven by fears of not being seen as competent and at a deeper level of not being 'okay' or liked, and a fear of rejection. The routines were operationalised by blaming things outside themselves, saying very little in order to avoid exposing their incompetence, and talking rationally in order to diffuse negative emotions. The consequences of this was more defensive relationships, reduction of valid information, and single-loop learning. Particularly, being seen as competent seemed to be a major driving force behind much of the group's behaviour, and hooked into things such as needing to "get it right".

Implications

The results of this study have some implications for the achievement of greater congruence within organisational consultants. This study has concentrated on the process of achieving more congruence and effectiveness within consultants. It has not been concerned with providing support for or disproving the theories put forward by Argyris and Schön. As such, it assumes that their work has validity. This is a major

weakness of the current approach. Assuming a theory is correct and thereby looking for better ways to achieve it's outcomes has some obvious downfalls, not the least of which is that it is easy to find what you are looking for. None-the-less, it is a theory about people which seems to make intuitive sense, and one that the participants found very useful in providing a way of looking at their behaviour. In this sense, perhaps it becomes less important how accurate the theory is, and more important how useful the theory is. To this end, the current research affirmed the usefulness of Argyris and Schöns theory as a way of describing and analysing our behaviour.

Argyris's theories and the processes he uses to bring about change are perhaps equally difficult to fathom, upon first inspection. Certainly, as mentioned earlier, the literature seems to imply that much of the success he has in creating change within participants is due to his skill as a facilitator, and his expertise in his own theories. This does not leave much room for the rest of us who, by no fault of our own, are not Chris Argyris! The aim of the current research was to document a more systematic, structured approach to the achievement of Argyris' aims. As a starting point, Dick and Dalmau's (1990) structured process based on their own and Argyris's work, was used. The overwhelming evidence seems to be that the process achieved similar outcomes to those described by Argyris in his literature. The implication of this is that by using a more structured approach, a less experienced facilitator may achieve the results of increased congruence, and double-loop learning, in a reasonable space of time.

A further implication of the current project was that, as a facilitator, you don't need to be a paragon of virtue yourself, in terms of congruence. What seems to be more important is initial modelling, by giving as much valid information about your beliefs, feelings and intentions as possible, as this sets the climate for the group. From this point on, modelling seems to be more important in terms of questioning your own behaviour and congruence, and willingness to take risks, rather than behaving congruently.

The process, as outlined within this document, produced the marked changes in participants' behaviour and attitudes, within a relatively short time frame (i.e. by meeting 3). Changes in participants behaviour outside the group was in evidence by the end of the project. This suggests that, at least with the organisational consultants involved, the proposed process is relatively time efficient in producing change. Producing more encompassing changes in participant's overall behaviour would take much longer, one would suspect, and was not the purpose of this research.

This study provided some evidence that discussing the undiscussable seems to be engaged in enthusiastically, when permission is perceived, and when there are no negative consequences for doing so. If others seem to be collaborating with you in your efforts to grapple with the previously undiscussed, then this can be a very liberating and reinforcing experience. One participant compared this to a negative experience in an encounter group many years previous. The difference he perceived was that in the encounter group he had felt attacked and negatively evaluated for what he exposed, whereas in this group he felt collaborated with and understood. This positive reinforcement leads to increased likelihood of production of the behaviour.

A related point, is that the consultants in no way came into this group as blank slates. They each had a core of self awareness, congruence and model II behaviour and values already in evidence. This became increasingly obvious as participants did not seem to struggle with the production of model II strategies, suggesting that they already used these strategies in some situations. The process seemed to be more valuable in increasing their **awareness** that they do not always produce these strategies when they think they do, and in helping give them the courage to use them when they need to.

Similarly, once the changes had begun to take place they were very robust within the group setting. Even the facilitator acting out of Model I values did not hinder the group for long in it's effectiveness.

Another important aspect which surfaced is that participants experienced the process as very confronting, which could be distressing and scary at times. This has important implications for relationship building and for creating an environment of trust and safety. This process of building an appropriate environment will take longer or be more work with some people than it will with others. The level to which people feel safe within the group may be one of the most important factors influencing what they are able to achieve in the group. For this reason, the initial stages of the group are vitally important and cannot be overlooked or trivialised. Most of the important groundwork and changes seemed to take place within the first four meetings. The rest of the process seemed to be more important in reinforcing or refreezing the changes, than in producing them.

The above points seem to be the most important aspects of the process that have implications for increasing congruence and professional effectiveness within organisational consultants. As a result of the above mentioned points and from feedback from participants, I would make a number of changes to the overall process.

Suggested changes to the process

First, I would spend more time initially on negotiating and discussing our respective roles and what these implied in terms of responsibility. I would particularly spend time on the group generating what the operationalised meaning of taking responsibility meant, and what participants could do if they felt their needs weren't being met. This would help to legitimise bringing up difficulties or negative feelings.

Second, I would extend the length of each session, but shorten the overall time span. The rationale being that the time for each session was consistently too short to achieve what needed to be achieved as effectively as it might. One day sessions may be more appropriate. Shortening the overall length of the project would help ensure people's enthusiasm did not wane.

Third, I would incorporate more diversity in the process. As it stands, the process is predominantly verbal, serial and rational, in that it involves some structured written components and fairly serial, rational discussion. It may be useful to incorporate some more creative processes which tap parts of the process which are difficult to verbalise or to approach rationally. Some possibilities would be to use action methods such as psychodrama and role playing, or story-telling, metaphors, and adjectives. As the process concentrates heavily on accessing the unconscious, such strategies may prove very useful.

Forth, I would ideally like to feed back my final reflections to participants and to get their feedback on my overall summing up of the project. This wasn't achieved due to time and other constraints, however this would have been a more rewarding and appropriate course of action.

Finally, I would spend more time on having participants report on what they were achieving outside the group at each meeting. This would encourage and reinforce the transfer of changes from within the group to outside. It would also keep people more engaged in each session, knowing that even if their case wasn't being looked at in detail in that session, they would have a chance to address relevant situations, successes, failures, or feelings.

Limitations of the current research

This research project has some major limitations particularly in its generalisability. To begin with it was only a very small group (5), and the participants were not chosen as being representative of their profession. Thus, one must treat these results as being somewhat idiosyncratic.

Second, the participants were self selecting, that is, participants had a high degree of interest in being involved in such a project. This also limits the generalisability of the findings. For instance, a more sceptical group may have had very different reactions. Argyris, for example, worked with a group purposefully chosen for the scepticism

about such theories. They were, though, still volunteers and keen to look at their own effectiveness.

Finally, this was a research project, and therefore participants did not pay for the series of workshops. In the training and consultancy area, there is some evidence to suggest that people value and behave differently in situations where they have paid for services versus situations where they haven't. This may have some implications for the generalisability of these findings to similar processes in which participants pay for their place.

Further research

The implications for future research in this area are numerous. The applicability of these concepts and processes seems very extensive and this project has only looked at a very small component with a small group. The area seems particularly suited to long term research as many of the effects may only be evident in the fullness of time. Longitudinal research which looked at the impact on individuals over a more substantial period of time may provide some interesting data. Similarly, having a larger sample of consultants would yield more reliable results.

Analysing differences between groups or professions might also be interesting. Do organisational consultants differ from managers or engineers, for instance? Are there differences in the way different personality types react to these processes?

A systematic attempt to test the validity of Argyris and Schön's concepts, particularly with an Australian sample would be an interesting endeavour.

Another potential area for study which has thus far been untapped to my knowledge, would be systematic examination of the effect of trying to produce similar changes within an organisation, that is, to produce a congruent organisation. The data this study has provided regarding processes for producing such change in individuals may provide some basis for developing a parallel process in organisations. This would certainly have some major implications for the types of organisations we inhabit and the types of organisations we would like to inhabit. Analysing an attempt to produce a Model II organisation which engaged in double-loop learning would be daunting, but ultimately very rewarding, one would think, particularly if we share Chris Argyris' (1980, p.19) belief that "the key purpose in life is to make it meaningful".

REFERENCES

Adler, F. (1956) The value concept in sociology. American Journal of Sociology, 62,272-279

Argyris, C. (1974) Behind the front page. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Argyris, C. (1976) Increasing leadership effectiveness. New York: Wiley-Interscience.

Argyris, C. (1980) Inner contradictions of rigorous research. New York: Academic Press.

Argyris, C. (1982) Reasoning, learning, and action: Individual and organisational. San Francisco: Jossey Bass

Argyris, C. (1985) Strategy, change & defensive routines. Boston: Pitman.

Argyris, C. (1987) Reasoning, action strategies, and defensive routines: The case of OD practitioners, in Woodman, R. A. & Pasmore, A.A. (Eds), Research in organisational change and development. Vol 1 p89-128. Greenwich: JAI Press.

Argyris, C. (1991) Teaching smart people how to learn. Harvard Business Review May-June.

Argyris, C., & Schön, D. (1974) Theory in practice: Increasing professional effectiveness. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Argyris, C., & Schön, D. (1978) Organisational learning: A theory of action perspective. Reading, Mass: Addison Wesley.

Argyris, C., Putnam, R., & McLain Smith, D. (1985) Action science: concepts, methods, and skills for research and intervention. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass.

Aungles, Sam.B., & Parker, S.R. (1989) Work organisations and change. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Bales, R.F., & Couch, A. (1969) The value profile: A factor-analytic study of value statements. Sociological Inquiry, 39, 3-17

Blake, R.R., Mouton, J.S., & McCanse, A.A. (1989) Change by design. Mass: Addison-Wesley.

Baumeister, R. (1982). A self-presentational view of social phenomena. Psychological Bulletin, 91, 3-26.

Brickman, P. (1972). Rational and nonratioanl elements in reactions to diconfirmation of performance expectancies. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 8, 112-123.

Caird, H.D. (1986) Measuring personal values: An approach to the study of Individuals. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Queensland.

Carey, A., & Varney, G.H. (1985) Which skills spell success in O.D.? Training and Development Journal, April.

Carnall, C.A. (1990) Managing change in organisations. New York: Prentice Hall.

Dalmau, T., Dick, B., & Boas, P. (1987) Getting to change: A handbook for organisations. Brisbane: Dalmau & Associates.

Dick, B. (1988) Design for learning. Brisbane: Interchange.

Dick, B., & Dalmau, T. (1990) Values in action: Applying the ideas of Argyris and Schön. Brisbane: Interchange.

Fitzgerald, T.H. (1988) Can change in organisations really be managed? Organisation Dynamics. 17(4), 5-15.

French, A.L., & Bell, C.H., (1984) Organisation development: Behavioural science interventions for organisation improvement, 3rd Ed. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Fossum, L. (1989) Understanding organisational change. Los Altos, Ca.: Addison-Wesley.

Gerger, K. (1974). Towards a psychology of receiving help. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 4, 184-193.

Goffman, E. (1956). Embarrassment and social organisation. American Journal of Sociology, 62, 264-271.

Howe, R.J., Howe, M., & Mindell, M. (1982) Management values inventory. San Diego: University Associates.

Kelly, G.A. (1963) A theory of personality: The psychology of personal constructs. New York: Norton.

Kilmann, R., Saxton, M., & Serpa, R. (1986) Issues in understanding and changing culture. California Management Review, 28(2), 87-94

Kilmann, R.H., & Covin, T.J. Eds. (1988) Corporate transformation. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass Inc.

Kolb, D. (1984) Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Lacoursiere, R. (1980). The life cycle of groups, New York: Human Sciences Press.

Larson, J.R. (1989). The dynamic interplay between employees' feedback-seeking strategies and supervisors' delivery of performance feedback. Academy of Management Review , 14 (3), 408-422.

Levy, A. (1986) Second order change: Definition and conceptualisation. Organisation Dynamics, Summer 5 - 20.

Lorsch, J. (1986) Managing culture: The invisible barrier to strategic change. California Management Review, 28(2), 95-109.

Mathews, J. (1989) Tools of change: New technology and the democratisation of work. Sydney: Pluto Press.

Napier, R.W. & Gershenfeld, M.K. (1987). Groups: Theory and experience (4th Ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Northcraft, G.B. & Ashford, S.J. (1990) The preservatio of self in everyday life: The effects of performance expectations and feedback context on feedback inquiry. Organisational Behaviour and Human Decisional Processes, 47, 42-64.

Osgood, C.E., Suci, G.J., & Tannenbaum, P.H. (1957) The measurement of meaning. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Rapoport, R.N. (1970) Three dilemmas in action research. Human Relations, 33(6), 499-513.

Rokeach, M. (1973) The nature of human values. New York: Free Press.

Rulla, L., Imoda, F., & Ridick, J. (1978) Psychological structure and vocation. Dublin: Villa Books.

Schein, E.H. (1969) Process consultation. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley.

Schön, D. (1983) The reflective practitioner. New York: Basic Books.

Schutz, W. (1966). The interpersonal underworld. California: Science and Behavior Books.

Smith, M.B. (1978) Psychology and values. Journal of Social Issues, 34(4), 181-199.

Swann, W.B., Jr. (1983). Self-verification: Bringing social reality into harmony with the self. In J. Suls & A.G. Greenwald (Eds.), Psychological perspectives on the self. New Jersey: Erlbaum.

Swann, W.B., Jr. (1985). The self as architect of social reality. In B.R. Schlenker (Ed.), The self and social life. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Swann, W.B., Jr. (1987). Identity negotiation: Where two roads meet. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 53, 1038-1051.

Tichy, N.M., & Nisberg J.N. (1976) Change agent bias: What they view determines what they do. Group and Organisation Studies 1(3), 286-301.

Tuckman, B.W. (1965). Developmental sequence in small groups. Psychological Bulletin, 6396, 384-399.

Watzlawick, P., Weakland, J., & Fisch, R. (1974) Change: principles, problem formulation and problem resolution. New York: Norton.

Wolpe, J. (1958) Psychotherapy by reciprocal inhibition. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Woodward, H., & Buchholz, S. (1987) After shock: Helping people through corporate change. New York: Wiley & Sons.

Zuber-Skerrit, O. (1990) Action research for change and development. Brisbane: C.A.L.T., Griffith University.

APPENDIX A

Process for session 1

Process for Workshop on 'Bridging the Gap'

1.0 Introduction/outline/getting going

Outline what I hope to achieve today and how I imagine we may proceed.

Today: - Look at and agree on our overall goals and some direction as to how we might proceed
- get to know one another a little better and start to establish an effective environment/climate within which to work.
- go through some experiential exercises which will help illustrate some of the models.
- Think about what we need to do to prepare for the next session
- evaluate the session

1.1 Introductions. Introduce yourself:- Who you are, your understanding of why we are here, why you came/what you want to get out of it.

1.2 My understanding of what we are here for and what I want out of it.
ie. Looking at the process of becoming more congruent by increasing awareness of the gap in what we think drives our behaviour (consciously) and what actually drives our behaviour (unconsciously).
This means becoming aware of and challenging our basic assumptions etc. through our own critical reflection, and constructive critical evaluation of our behaviour by others.

This is the basis of my dissertation which means I have various agendas. Some of which are 'measurement', and keeping to the overall objectives.

I see the way we proceed as being driven by me to begin with, to get as going. I see the group as taking more and more control over the process as the group procedes. I am hoping it will be an environment in which we can all learn from one another and guide the process to our mutual benefit. One way I see which may go toward this, is to review/evaluate at the end of each session. Discuss any implications.

1.3 Roles See my role as facilitator/researcher and participant or co-learner.
These may conflict at times.
How do you see your role and others roles. Discuss.

Confidentiality - what do we need to do to satisfy our needs for confidentiality?

1.4 Getting more aquainted.
Individually think about the critical incidents (people, events, etc) in your life which have contributed significantly to making you who you are today. Jot these down. Both there significance then and now.
Join with someone you don't know and share these. When you come back to group be prepared to introduce to the others your impression of who this person is.

Join with someone you don't know and share these. When you come back to group be prepared to introduce to the others your _impression_ of who this person is.

2.0 Argyris & Schön: The Model

Outline some of Argyris and Schön's basic model. See attached.
Before we go too much further it might be useful to look at the basics of Argyris and Schöns model and underlying assumptions.

Intoduce what we hope to do for rest of afternoon. Perhaps do a short exercise on what we are concerned about happening, and think might happen, etc ?????

2.1 Intergroup process exercise. Parent and teenager. See attached.
Re-look at model and see how fits in with exercise.

2.2 (Transition) Look at what this exercise has done in terms of bridging the gap. ie. One approach to this is to look at your own behaviour and it's underlying beliefs, feelings, intentions, etc. However there are some obvious drawbacks to this approach. If what drives our behaviour is unconscious or part of our 'blindspot', we are presumably going to be unable to access some part of it. Therefore others perceptions of our behaviour, and what it seems ot be implying, would be a usefull next step.

3.0 Alter Ego/ Bubble exercise. Parent and teenager cont....
Explain exercise

Choose 1 each of parent and parent 'bubble', teenager, and teenager 'bubble'. Also two Venusian anthropologists.

VA's to look for rules which seem to be guiding behaviour.
Feedback to group.

Discuss.
3.1 Input on Model I and Model II.

3.2 Look at rules which came out of last exercise in terms of MI & MII.
Discuss implications.

3.3 Some suggest that all human behaviour is protective. Certainly we could look at defensive routines in this light.
Evaluate what things they think they may have been doing to try to protect themselves in the last two exercises. (Becoming _aware_ is the first step.)

4.0 Look at rules that come out today in Bubble exercise, and governing values which emerged. Think about other relationships in your life and the rules or GV's which you can draw out that guide your behaviour.

Suggest that one thing we could do during the intervening time is to critically observe some of our relationships, and try to surmise what theories af action are operating. If possible, keep a diary of thoughts and observations.
Next time bring an example of an incident, which seems illustrative.

What we can do in further sessions is look at examples of our behaviour outside the group and examine these in terms of congruence. Use the group to help us learn about ourselves. Also look at our own behaviour in this groups in our attempts to go through the exercise.

5.0 Evaluate session. Walk talk pairs. What we did. What was helpful? Things we would like to do next time. Suggestions for improvement. How did we go?

Parent/Teenager exercise   ARGYRIS AND SCHöN

Intergroup Process - Exercise 1 (Parents and teenagers)

Aim: To introduce and make sense of Argyris and Schons model on 'theories of action' by relating it to Bob's information chain.

Clarify concepts: Theories of action
                      Espoused theory
                      Theory-in-use
                      Governing values
                      Action strategy
                      Consequences -self
                                    - others
                      Effectiveness of action strategy

Introduce exercise, aims and process. Why chose parent and teenager: Gets more easily at unconscious dynamics. Client/consultant relationship too easy to intellectualise. P/T dynamics more likely to underlie our other relationships anyway.

1. Choose sub-groups of parents and teenagers.
        List adjectives to describe other group. 6 - both favourable and unfavourable

2. Form subteams of like groups
        Identify common adjectives. Look at themes.

3. Identify assumed motives of the other group

4. Come up with typical scenario in which these things are illustrated.

5. Decide what your group is trying to achieve.   Come up with a typical strategy to try to achieve this outcome. Decide who in the group will represent and coach them on what to say etc.

6. Join other group and exchange/try out strategies.

7. Split into subgroups and evaluate strategy. Did it work?

8. Try out different strategy in form of Bob's model (????)

9. Prepare sentences. Rehearse and brief.

10. Exchange, clarify, respond, etc.

11. Review/debrief.

12. Input on Models. How they relate, what it all means.

APPENDIX B

Dick & Dalmau's "personal effectiveness" process

Application 7

Improving personal effectiveness

This is an application of Argyris and Schön's work which allows the individual to examine her own effectiveness. [1] It is structured along similar lines to Application 6 (Team building) and is best done in a group setting. Indeed, we have found that if this application is used with an intact work group, it is best preceded by Application 6 to develop the necessary trust and openness.

This application can also be used with stranger groups in a personal growth workshop (e.g. over a weekend), but should be done only with some forethought and caution. It generates fairly high levels of self-disclosure; it therefore requires high levels of commitment by the participants, substantial life experience (we have found it ineffective with many persons under the age of about 25) and good facilitation by the workshop leader.

The whole exercise should be preceded with an input based on Argyris and Schön's models, as should its debriefing.

Again, it is set out in workbook format.

---

[1] It is taken almost verbatim from Tim Dalmau and Alf Lizzio (1989), *Examining links between thoughts and action: an exercise for increasing personal effectiveness*, Edition Six. Kenmore: Dalmau & Associates Pty Ltd.

Individual Preparation

1   This process you are about to undertake involves some individual work: producing a record of an event (a critical episode) in your work or personal life around which you wish to examine the links between your own thoughts and actions. This stage will take between 20 and 40 minutes. It will be important in what follows that the notes you make are legible.

2   Find a place where you can concentrate, work by yourself and be relaxed.

3   Think back over the last month or so of your life. As you do, make some notes in the space at right about things that have happened with yourself and other key actors in your life . This is important, for it allows you to sharpen your memory for the tasks that follow—the idea is to jot down enough notes so that you can build up a picture of the main things that have happened.

4   Look over the notes you made in step 3 above, and just let your memory replay the film of the events; think back and listen to the things you and other people said at various stages. Play back the feelings and emotions that you experienced at various points through it all.´

5   Identify one event during the period that you found difficult or challenging in some significant way. It may be a time when you experienced yourself as...

   a   less effective than you believe you should have been,
   b   less than satisfied with what happened, or
   c   perhaps did something which you now view as unhelpful to
      yourself and the other people,

6   In the spaces below describe the interaction at the time you have identified.

7   Begin by writing a paragraph which describes the context and what happened:
   - the setting,
   - the other people involved,
   - your own behaviour at the time,
   - others' behaviour,
   - and any other general information.

. 8   Now write a few paragraphs about what you thought you were doing at the time: specifically...

     what were your objectives,
     how did you set about trying to achieve them, and
     why did you choose these objectives and strategies.

9   Now write down a few paragraphs of the dialogue which actually occurred at the time. On the left hand side of the page write down what was going on in your mind (your internal dialogue—thoughts, feelings, reactions, etc...) while each person (including yourself) in the dialogue was speaking. On the right hand side, write down what each person actually said or what you expected her to say. Continue writing the dialogue until you believe your major points are illustrated. (The dialogue should be at least two pages long.)

Internal dialogue	Public dialogue

10 Read everything you have just written and now write down the assumptions that you held at the time about what makes action effective. In other words, "stand back" and look at it all as if you were a disinterested bystander; ask yourself *"What does this all say about how this person reasons: i.e. links her thoughts to her behaviour?"*

11 Now make sure you have a photocopy of all that you have written in steps 7 to 9 only for each member of your small group and the facilitator. Do not copy your responses to step 10.

12 See if the other members of your small group have completed this stage of individual preparation. When all members have done so, the group begins the discussion.

Group Task

13 Before beginning any discussion, each member should take some time to silently, carefully and thoroughly read the notes below (steps 14 to 18).

14 This stage of the process involves using the small group to help each member make explicit her action strategies, consequences for herself and others, governing values and action strategy effectiveness... her theory-in-use. However, before beginning, a few very important words.,.

15 The quality of the group is crucial at this stage: you and the other members are here primarily to help each other learn. It may be that some of the theories-in-use you are about to examine make it difficult for learning to occur—of their very nature! These may, in turn, tend to generate group dynamics which will further inhibit learning. Some symptoms of group behaviour which may indicate this is happening are...

- people putting on their "best behaviour"
- over-politeness
- glib generalities
- some members "withdrawing"
- projective and/or closed questions from members
- cocktail-party atmosphere
- time wastage
- members "pushing their own barrows"
- over-talking
- one or more members dominating the air space
- people taking sides in argument
- discussion on irrelevant topics

16 If these (or any other symptoms of group fight-flight behaviour) occur it is more than likely that the group is "acting out" some aspect of the theories-in-use it is seeking to examine.

17 This inquiry which you are about to begin is best done in an atmosphere that allows each individual to reveal her behaviour to herself and others with the minimum of conscious distortion. This is unlikely to occur if a member feels defensive. Hence the ideal atmosphere is characterised by trust, openness, support and tentative open confrontation.

18 In order to help someone understand her theory-in-use, it is necessary to avoid all questions that could be answered by generalisations. Concentrate only on directly observable behaviour...

> *what people actually did (or failed to do)*
> *what people actually said (or failed to say).*

Pay very close attention to building and maintaining rapport throughout. Help the person describing the situation to be specific in what she describes.

19 We now move to the actual task: using the small group to help each member make explicit her action strategies, consequences for herself and others, governing values and action strategy effectiveness... her theory-in-use.

20 The group will take one case at a time to uncover action strategies, consequences for self and others, governing values and effectiveness.

21 The small group takes exactly 5 mins (and no more!) to agree on the following things...

a Are we clear what outcome we are seeking together?

b Are we clear about how we will organise ourselves in terms of timing, attention to making sure the task is completed, roles?

c How we will we ensure that we critically examine the processes and thinking involved in each member's event?

23 The group now decides on which person's event it is going to inquire into. For the sake of convenience this person will be called the inquirer.

24 All members of the group silently read the inquirer's notes for steps 7 to 9 above.

25 After this is complete, they may ask any questions FOR CLARIFICATION ONLY. It is important that group members seek from the inquirer sensory-specific and concrete information, about what she saw, heard and felt in regard to the critical incident under analysis. This clarifying will allow other group members to "round out" their own pictures of what was actually happening in the inquirer's "reality".

26 ·The group can also appoint one of its members to adopt the role of process monitor. During this analysis, this person will observe the group's behaviour and ensure that members do not "get sucked into content", that the inquirer does not engage in overlong or anecdotal explanations, that the group does not engage in debate or discussion, and that it adheres to the guidelines outlined in steps 15-18 above.

27 Each group member now silently writes out what she believes to be the person's theory-in-use according to the format...

- action strategy
- consequences for self
- consequences for others
- governing value/s
- action strategy effectiveness

In other words...

What seems to be the main element/s of her action strategy?
- What appeared to be the consequences for her?
- For others?
- What governing value/s does the inquirer seem to be seeking to achieve?
- How effective does this pattern seem to have been in achieving her governing value?

28 Each of these statements is then placed on a whiteboard, butchers paper, or blackboard for all in the small group to see without discussion. It helps if the board is drawn up with a column for each element of the theory-in-use and each person in the group writes down "content" in the appropriate column. The inquirer also does this task.

29 The group now engages in a supportive and confrontive dialogue with the inquirer to help her come to an understanding of her espoused theory and her theory-in-use. The goals of this step of the process are:

a to clarify information to help the inquirer learn

b to help her gain insight into the conditions under which her defenses and her theory-in-use inhibits her effectiveness and satisfaction and that of others

c to help her explore alternative forms of more effective behaviour. ¡

In other words, to help her generate directly observable data, to infer a theory-in-use, to alter it and to test a new theory of action.

30 Experience suggests that this is best done in the following manner....

a Each member of the group (in turn) explains to the inquirer what she has written, outlining her reasoning for the proposed theory-in-use.

b The inquirer seeks clarification of any parts of the explanation/s she doesn't understand.

c The inquirer then takes a pen and marks any elements (from anywhere on the board) that somehow seem "right" or appropriate for her with a tick.

d She also marks with a cross the one element which she found most disconcerting or uncomfortable.

e One other member of the group then scans the whole of the material and identifies any common messages/themes that the group seems to be "saying" to the inquirer.

f The group and the inquirer then engage in a discussion to explore the meaning for the inquirer of the material that has been identified in (c), (d) and (e) above.

g Included in (f), the group and the inquirer should also explore how this theory-in-use "takes care of the inquirer"....Is there a higher order or more fundamental governing value that the whole pattern seeks to maintain? What has prevented change in this pattern in the past? How has this pattern been useful to the inquirer in the past?

31 During this process, the inquirer will probably find it helpful to focus on the following issues. "Of what I am hearing said to me...

● Which parts fit with my experience of myself?
● Which information am I surprised by?
● Which information would I rather have not heard?
● What question or statement am I hoping a member of the group will not ask or state?

- How common or influential is this pattern in similar situations and/or other parts of my life?

32   REMEMBER: The group is dealing here with the INQUIRER'S REALITY, not that of other group members.

33   This process of supportive confrontational discussion continues until the inquirer tells the group that she has been able to meet the goals spelled out in Step 29 above.

34   The inquirer now takes 5 minutes to make some quick notes for future reference about what she will need to change to make her behaviour more effective and satisfying to herself and others. At the same time, the other group members make some notes for themselves about what they have learned about their own behaviour whilst engaged with the inquirer in the analysis.

35   It is important at this stage for the group to learn from the experience of its own process. After the group completes its processing of the inquirer's event, it takes another 3 minutes to review how it handled the whole process of inquiry and how it can improve the process for the next inquirer.

36   The group now decides who will next adopt the role of inquirer and repeats the process. This is repeated again until all members have adopted the role of inquirer.

37   At the end of the group discussion wherein all members have had an opportunity to adopt the role of inquirer work there will be a short time in the large group to share and debrief the learnings from this phase of process.

38   Each member of the group now reviews the notes she made above, her experience of the time in which she was the inquirer and the whole process.

In the space to the right of each question (below), she tries to answer the following questions....

- What new action strategies will I attempt to use, employ and express this new governing value? In answering this question, consider that there may be different foci for action strategies: intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, intergroup, and organisational.

- What do I anticipate will be the consequences for me of undertaking these new action strategies?

- What do I anticipate will be the consequences for others involved?

- What new governing value do I now wish to guide my behaviour?

- How will I evaluate the effectiveness of this new theory-in-use?

- How really, deeply, in my most subterranean existential parts do I feel about the angst issues of my life in the current zeitgeist?

- What do I now recognise as skill deficits and what do I need to do in the short term to acquire these skills?

Appendix C

Fran's case and feedback

This case involved Fran and one other person (P). It takes place on the flight deck at an airport when Fran is leaving after having "just had an excellent afternoon following a difficult few months together.

Fran's stated objectives were: "to express my internal experience with intimacy"

She set about trying to achieve them by: "(saying) what came to me as it happened."

Why she chose this objective: "Expression, and moving towards other"

Dialogue: Internal and public:

Internal	External
	P: Do you want to go travelling with me?
I'm not warmed up to this.	F: I don't know.
	P: Get to know.
I haven't planned this in my year.	F: What comes to me when you ask is (daughter's) baby, money, (etc).
	P: You'll have money, I'll repay you.
Yes I could overcome any obstacles if I want to go travelling.	F: When, Where?
	P: USA, August/October.
Shit I'd rather spend my money on Canada or on my house as planned.	F: Yes, I could get into that, yes.
	P: I only want you to come for a small part. I'd like to travell on my own.
I don't want to hang about waiting for guy to get together with me.	F: What, don't you even want us to get together?
	P: Not by then.
You're an asshole and I'm going crazy.	F: Well I reckon I'll be dead before you decide whether you want to be with me.
	P: I might die before you.
	F: Bullshit. I have to get on the plane. I'll phone you.
	P: I love you.
What does that mean??	

Action Strategy	Consequences self	Consequences other	Governing Value	Action strategy effectiveness
D: Say what's happening to me	Feel crazy	Feels okay	Intimacy is good	Yes and painful
Observing and checking. Look out for a fall.	Ready for a problem	Hard to recognise what's happening	Deal with issues Protect self	Iffy.
Don't say what's happening to me when he includes me	Maybe do something I don't want to	Get's what he wants	Loved at cost of expressing what's happening for me	Yes
Say what's happening for me when I'm pissed off.	Feel crazy	Feels pissed off	Honesty	Yes
I'm willing to help you. Adaptive coping. It's nice to be asked to come.	Feel vulnerable	Lead them to believe your willing to do what they want	Loving. Wanting to be helpful. Loyalties.	Okay
Not acting on inner dialogue.	Created distance in relationship/ separate	Feels good. Expressing caring at end.	I can give even when I'm not ready to.	Yes

APPENDIX D

Sam's case and feedback

Sam's Case   Argyris and Schön   5.6.91

Setting: In a course advisory committee
Others involved: 12 people there
Your own actions: Present course outline for critique
Others' actions: 1 person aregues vehemently

What wanted to   To 'survive'. Wanted others not to reject what was presented.
    achieve: Think I handled it okay politically, but it was <u>really</u> stressful,
                     and I needed to get 'acceptance' from others afterwards.

Dialogue:

Public dialogue	Internal dialogue
S: Here is the course outline	I'm really pleased at having got this ready in time. I hope it goes over okay.
W: I have a problem with the section on young men. I emphatically reject the assertion of violence with young men. Are you saying young men are violent? And why 2 weeks for young women, and only 1 for young men?	
S: In terms of work in the field, I think connection is reasonable. For eg. working with young men can bring up lot's of issues about aggression and in it's extreme form, violence.	OH shit! I was worried about giving the more time to young women's issues. Was I trying to please? I havn't thought this through enough. I really dislike how aggressive this guy is. He's bloody found a hole in this!!
W: Well I have real problems with this	

Others: listen while I get hauled over the coals but non verbals are sympathetic.

<u>How does this person reason?</u>
DO:
Close your eyes and hope.

When you feel hurt get other people to tell you you're okay, rather than affirm yourself.
Feel guilty first, but argue intellectually. Go one down. (Look wise) Accept change.
DON'T DO:
Don't tell the guy what you really think of his manner.
Don't dealy feedback to an appropriate time - get it immediately.

In a committee **situation, if you** tell someone that you find them aggressive, **then** it will result in rejection of the content and self.

Others in the groups' interpretations:

Person 1
Aspects of situation:
"Oh shit"   - assumption - not quite got it right.
Intellectualise   - diffuse aggressive behaviour
Diffuse and self doubt and compromise

Outcome wanted: Good program with committee support
Actual outcome: Compromise.
Payoffs: - Survival
                 - appearing to be open
                 - reinforcing "it's not quite right"

Person 2
Social rules: Need to be approved. Their thoughts are more important than my thoughts.

Outcomes wanted: To be seen as competent, and ideologically sound, and open.

Outcomes achieved: Insecure and defensive. Intellectual.

Payoff: Protection of others and reinforce view of self

Person 3
Critical incident: Rushed and there is a problem. No freely given support - after sought this and recieved it.

Social rules: You have to be 100% ready. It's got to be perfect. I have to be intellectually prepared. I have to have an answer. People should protect me, not attack me.

Outcomes persued: Maintain an image of nice guy, invincible, effectiveness and right thinking.

Outcomes achieved: High stress before and during. Whethered emotional storm. Provoked to doing more thinking. Pats on back afterwards.

Things that got confirmed: Got it in on time. Survived Got rewards. Punishment for not getting it ready on time. This is what happens when that happens.

Person 4
Critical incident: Rationality of response and emotional internal situation.

Intened short-term outcome: To diffuse. To feel okay. To get through in tact. Seeming in control.

Actual short term outcome: Felt Yukky. Did need to 'rebuild' (after). Other guy was reinforced for his behaviour (he won).

Intended long term outcomes: Maintain working relationship. Not make waves.

Actual long term outcome: uneven working relationship re power.

Payoffs: Can avoid perceived more negative outcomes.

Social Rule: React to threats with rationality.

APPENDIX E

SESSION 5 - Including participants expectations

<u>Notes on Session 5</u>　　　　　　<u>Argyris and Schön</u>　　　<u>27.6.91</u>

Present: Ben　　　　　Absent:　Rachel`
　　　　 Kath
　　　　 Sam
　　　　 Ann
　　　　 Fran

Recontract: Look at expectations we had at beginning. Had these been met yet. What expectations or things we would like to see happen from now on. Re-involve Vicki, who missed 2 sessions. Ann to give feedback on the tape of the first session she missed. Sam to tell us what has happened for him with the case he presented last time ie strategies etc.

<u>Expectations:</u>

Liane: 1. Engaging, interesting. Group would really be alive, real, dynamic.

　　　 Met - session 3 onwards.

　　　 2. Learn what if anything is particular to consultants re defences
　　　　 assumptions etc.

　　　 Beginning to eg. taking risks in training situations, appearing competent.

　　　 3. Being a participant, being challenged

　　　 Started but would like more.

　　　 4. More application actually doing things differently in outside.

　　　 Started.

Kath: 1. Look at inconsistencies in my behaviour and be challenged.

　　　 Have been challenged in terms of thinking about how I behave in certain
　　　 situations. Need to do a lot more in order to apply that. I have in some
　　　 areas and not in others. Like to see more challenging of my inconsistencies
　　　 and have an opportunity to have a case done.

　　　 Been doing some confronting of others and that's been confronting for me.

　　　 So expectations have largely been met but there's a little more to go, and
　　　 really the application - keep trying new behaviours. How to break the cycle -
　　　 realisation isn't enough need to be able to design new actions.

Sam: 1. Getting in touch with incongruities

　　　 2. Processes would be of interest.

　　　 Both met to a meaningful level.

3. Put more energy in between meetings ie writing.

Not happened. thought a lot but not writing.

4. Didn't have a clear idea of how long it was going to go for - now I have even less of an idea

(Fran: Yes, and anxious about it ending.)

5. Measured way it has been and getting increasingly interesting - looking forward to more things.

Ann: Don't think I was clear about my expectations in the first place. They became clear as we went along. In hindsight I think I had a lot of expectations. Firstly I was really enthusiastic.

1. High energy

For me hasn't been met so far. I've felt frustrated.

2. We could talk about or examine what drives us in social change. I guess that was a really important thing for me, and somehow I got that message before we started that the people that were meeting together have all had an interest in social change. So I thought that was going to be a focus.

Hasn't been met either.

These are different expectations from yours (J) and I'm not sure where I got them from.

3. Learn more about myself and my incongruities.

Begun to be met.

4. In terms of process, expectation that there would be a lot of personal sharing about what drives us, about why we do things, why we think we do things. I didn't have an expectation that there would be a set process - and I find that very constraining.

Hasn't been met and I find that really frustrating.

(Fran: "Interesting.")

Expectation that we would develop relationships and share things or information about what drives us in an unstructured way. But this has been more structured and I find that difficult.

6. Expectation that I may be able to apply it.

That has been met, sometimes very successfully. Other times unsuccessfully.

7. Don't know where came from- be meeting until July, on a monthly basis, and doing things in between.

Liane: 2-3 weeks was the interval suggested at the beginning.

Ann: Right, well there was obviously some things I didn't hear correctly in the first place.

Need for less structure, more relationship building a share why we have something to contribute to social change.

Liane: You're at a distinct disadvantage only having been to the first two.

Ann: Yes

Liane: Because probably, had you been to the other two, some of those may have been met.

Ann: By now, yes, I would say so, because I would have certainly had a lot more contact with people by this time.

Liane: Because that's something that we (after session 3?) were saying -how at the end we really felt quite strong relationships and we were trying to figure out how we could include other people in that.

Ben: One of the things you (Ann) said that struck a chord with me, something I'd forgotten about - an expectation I'd started off with ..... professionally, the sorts of things that drive us in social change or org change, professionally.

Some ways that has been met.

Another - Models , intellectually.

Getting that, not so much in the group but in the middle of conversations with you Liane on other occasions. .. Stuff like that article you gave us. I've been devouring that stuff.

Ben a little later:

I can remember you (Ann) saying very clearly, "I don't want this to be a T-group," something to that effect.

Ann: I didn't really say that but never mind. (laugh) (Ben nods) I've got a dreadful memory.

Ben: Well one of the reasons I remember it was because I had a couple of reactions right on the spot. One was, "I hoped to get into some personal stuff!" other was, "I want to achieve something as well, I don't want this to just frazzle along. I want to have some outcomes at the same time." Had both of those reactions - both agreeing with you strongly and being very frightened by what you just said. "I wanted that!" (Laughter)

I've actually felt both of those things coming through. The intellectual side of things, I suppose, haven't really specifically been associated with this group, It's been stuff that's been catalysed by this group and I've been reading and thinking how that applies at work, how that applies in my marriage, or how that applies to Meta, various things like that.

The nicest thing about it though, is not just the intellectual ability but the emotional involvement and.......I can think of quite a few instances that have happened over the last month that have been quite challenging for me. Not just in this group but say when we've been talking individually. That last meeting we had (Ben & Liane) I thought afterwards .. all these things that Liane just happened to drop in conversation, I thought "mmmmm these are things I'm really going to have to think through about me, as opposed to about other people." Yeah. in particular I don't have to protect other people, and I don't have to protect myself that much either. That's been really important.

Implications for future - I feel like there's some more of all that stuff to come. As for length of time, I've got mixed motivations on that. One is, I wouldn't like, because we've been having such a good time, to just keep on happening because we want to recapture what was. I would prefer , if there was nothing more to be gained, that this sort of thing died tonight. But on the other hand I feel like there's a lot more to be gained. So I've got those mixed motivations going.

Fran: (expectations) Ben bit fuzzy.

1. to get to understand the model, (had read a book) because I was excited by it. But it didn't fit with how I was reading the book, so I didn't feel I understood it. I still need more understanding. I know I can understand by doing things.

2. I certainly was wanting to be involved with a group where there was an interest in the conceptual stuff.

3. Getting to know people in Brisbane (networking)

4. Wanting to see how you lead the group, Liane. So I was attracted to how you would do that.

I like how you do it. And I didn't know how you'd do it, but there was a sense that I'd like it.

Future:Like to understand the model more profoundly, so I felt I didn't have to use the recipes.

Later.

Ann: I have an observation to make about the group so far tonight. I see more ownership of this process, just through the words that people are using, the suggestions that they're making, from the time that I was here last. And that's really good.

Liane: Can you think of an example?

Ann: Ahh... well I hear a lot more "we's" and referring to stories, so there's more shared understanding, which builds a community of enquiry. And suggestions like, "I think what might be good is if we use..this to , or if we use that process"

Sam: "How about we..."

Ann: Yeah. So people are actually beginning to offer. and there's less politeness now too - a little less.

Ben: I'd just like to say that's a very model II thing ..   'Would you like to'... How did you say it? (to Liane)

Liane: Do you want to give us an example.

Ben Yeah. I'm actually beginning to recognise things.

Sam: You can put a label on there! (laughter)

Ben: Give us some evidence!

Liane: One of the really big learnings for me is that, because when I first started to get into this stuff I found it so difficult.

Ann: (Agrees)

Discussion follows

Kath: I'd like to pick up on something you said before Vicki. You said we were less polite that the time before and then you said, "Ben bit less". And I was

wondering whether that's what you were noticing or that's how you're feeling?

Ann: I felt so uncomfortable the night we did Fran's, and part of it was I didn't feel I had enough of a relationship built with people and that we **were** being polite, because I didn't feel safe, we didn't feel safe. And so I think, I get the feeling now that people who have been here the whole time are feeling more safe. There's the familiar looks, "Oh, what about that story..." and can have a laugh about that, so I can see that happening a bit more. But there's still the respectful silences, and the constraint there. This is research.

Sam: We're not at, "Please explain that piece of shit you just said," yet. (Laughter)

Ann: Not that I'm asking for that.

Liane: I think certainly for me, just picking up on that, part of that probably is because you're here. Not anything personal about you, but because you haven't been for a couple. Here's this kind of new person who hasn't gone through all of this, and not quite knowing how to deal with it.

Ann: Well I feel a bit like a junior, an apprentice. That I should wait my turn.

Kath: Speak when you're spoken to kind of thing. (laughter)

Ann: As if I should almost wait till you've all talked about you're expectations, before I say mine. I should tip my cap.

Fran: Yes, you went to soon before. (laughter)

Ann: And I was aware of all that as we were talking, those sorts of feelings, and I thought, "I'm just going to speak when I feel like speaking." Because if we'd kept on being as polite as we were, I would feel so uptight about it, about not being able to say anything about how I feel. I just couldn't participate.

Fran: ... What strikes me is that you're more warmed up to you're memory of how we were than how we are now.

Ann: Yeah, I'd say that's about a 60% memory of how we were and 40% memory of how we are. So the two are beginning to meet.

Ann's feedback on tape of part of Session 3.

Felt funny about listening in, almost like eaves dropping.

Things that came through - wasn't much facilitation of that last meeting. People thinking, 'should I take over or should I go with the flow.' Liane

saying would anyone else like to take this on, and no-one..people being too polite. "I'd like to but I'd better not" sort of stuff. The issues were sensitive. I got that feeling too. I remember people commenting about, Ben, I think you said, 'cause I said I don't like to interpret what people say or pass judgement on it. And you discussed that at length, and I'm sitting there saying "I stand by what I said! I stand by what I said!" And I still do stand by it. I really still feel that distinct discomfort about judging people's actions. Not sure why. Love to be challenged on it. But, I do. Even though that's a natural talent that I have, for wondering why people are saying what they're saying, doing what they're doing. So I love wondering about them and solving mysteries, but when it comes to actual, in this group, not knowing you very well, passing.. it felt like judging. Passing judgement on people's actions. It was just terrifying for me, looking back on it.

Ben: Maybe you understand that differently to the way I do.

Ann: Yeah, I think that must be right.

Liane: Must be something about the word 'judgements,' that's what I'm picking up. Maybe there's various connotations about what that means

Ann: Yeah.

Liane And also the stuff about making them explicit. So it's alright to have them but you don't want to say them. Is that it? So it's alright to have hypotheses, but don't tell anybody that that's what you're doing.

Ann: Unless you're invited to I suppose, and I was invited to in that situation and I still felt bad about it. Still felt distinctly uncomfortable. I felt I was putting Fran on the spot. And I guess you accepted that Fran but I still felt I.. I kept thinking if I was in that situation, how would I think.

Fran: But that's the whole purpose of it.

Ann: Maybe it's got something to do with expectations.

Kath: So you don't like being judged yourself?

Ann: Yeah.

Liane: I find the whole term 'judgement' is very difficult because it's associated with negatives. Like judge and jury. "I know what's going on for you, and here it is, and just don't you try and deny it."

Ann: Yeah and I found the experience *was* negative for me. I think it was more to do with the fact that we hadn't developed enough of a relationship to feel safe about that kind of sharing. So it did feel as if we were.. I felt as though I were sitting in judgement of someone.

Ben: For me, I tend to think of judgements with a small j, and it's not like I'm being condemned. I appreciate it's arbitrary, but it's giving me something to hang onto about how this person's viewing the world, or how I'm viewing the world.

Fran: Ben loving judge is fine.

Ben: Yes. Or even an indifferent judge. Even with an indifferent judge you can learn at least.

Fran: No. I'd want the relationship.

Slightly later

Ann: (Relating conversation with someone some years ago, re being loving) .....No I'm not. When I see someone walking down the road in the dark out where I live, I think who's house are they going to break into tonight. So that's not loving. What I meant by that was, I judged that person, and I've condemned them. And so I guess I have tried to, this is old stuff now, since the realisation of that, actually take people as I find them, rather than putting any kind of construction on their behaviour. And I guess I have probably swung to the other side of the pendulum, as you've suggested. and maybe I am at that point of thinking I am going to make some major stuff ups if I don't correct this pendulum shift.

Little later

Agreed with stuff about having to expose what I don't know in this group. The appearing in-control stuff. That whole thing about defences was very valuable to me. Professional defences, I thought that's really valuable because I could identify with everything you said, about having to have this professional front, and trying to deal with that over the years.

Ben: Talks about reading the Argyris article on 'Teaching smart people how to learn,' and how it really hit home.

Reading that article today was a lot different than it would have been two months ago. If I'd read it two months ago, it wouldn't have caused me any distress at all. (laughter)

Kath: "That's them, not me," I know.

Ann: So, you're much more aware now.

Liane: That's like when I said to you Ben, that I now assume most of my behaviour is model I and I'm actually surprised when I do something that's model II.

Ben: That was so challenging for me when you said that. First of all I thought, "What the fuck's model I?" Then I started reading stuff and I thought, "I am too!"

Liane: Yeah, so I went from thinking, doing these kind of things is not how I like to see myself, so I'll assume that I don't act that way and be surprised when I find out that I do, to assuming that I do act that way most of the time, and getting fairly pleasantly surprised when I do something that isn't.

Fran: Relating experience had recently.   Thought she had gone from "I'm not okay and you are," to "We're both okay." What I actually discovered was I'd initially flipped out from "I'm not okay and you are," to "I'm okay and you're not." (Laughter) And people came up with chapter and verse that they'd seen me do the last few days. And then examples flooded through me, I keep doing it and doing it.

It was kind of like horrific enlightenment. The horror, but the delight in seeing it. and then it was lunch time and I went through all of lunchtime thinking I was the only person in the world who did this. And then after lunch we were back in the room and everyone was saying it. And I thought, "Ohh, it's not just me!" 'Cause I really had thought I was the only one left in the world. So when you talk about model I stuff, it's most people isn't it?

Liane: Oh yes!

Ben: It is, it is.

Liane: It's not only most people but it's ME.

Ben: Yes. That's what I was about to say. I'm very good at spotting it in other people, you bastards.

Kath: I'm more model II than them. (laughter)

Discussion on use of models generally.

Back to Ann's Feedback

Objectifying - that really hit home with me. Talking about 'one can, we can or they can'

Sam: That's one of _my_ insights.

Later talking about suggestion of Ann's to have people who weren't there give interpretations back , reflect on them etc

Sam: I rang you, see, I had the job of ringing you, but you sounded really ambivalent. Not knowing whether you wanted to be in, out, around. You were seeing Liane anyway.

Ann: You couldn't retell the story at that point because I wasn't giving you permission to do so.

Sam: No, I didn't think there was a big 'in' there.

Ann: No. Well I left so frustrated after that meeting. I wanted to scream. That's just because I feel things strongly.

Fran: Why didn't you say something at the time?

Ann: Because I don't think there was permission in that group at all to say anything, except what was asked of us. And I felt I spoke as little as I could to get through the exercise. In retrospect I was profoundly uncomfortable about the content and the process, and I have to own my responsibility for that as well. It was only on reflecting on it and hearing the tape as well, knowing that you'd moved and thought about that, and I'd moved and thought about that as well, that I actually felt able to share that stuff tonight.

Liane: And how often does that happen. You're in a group. Nobody feels comfortable. Nobody says anything about it. Nobody does anything about it. And you all go away and think 'errrr '

Ann: And everyone is probably thinking the same thing.

Kath: And yet, what struck me as you just said that is the permission. Do we need permission, and who gives what permission, and where do we get it from a group where there was or wasn't permission to say something?

Liane: If nobody has permission and nobodies giving permission, where do you start?

Discussion about things going wrong being an excellent way to learn.

APPENDIX F

SESSION 6 - Ann's Case.

Session 6 - Summary of Ann's case

Setting   At home talking to husband re a consultant (architecture Masters student)doing community consultation shere they live. Husband is going to meeting about it.

Others involved: Directly Husband, indirectly consultant.

Own actions: Ask to have interests represented in meeting. Afterwards rejecting offer made by husband in meeting, for her to drive consultannt around.

Others Action: Husband says okay he'll represent her interests and offers her to drive consultatn around. When she rejects offer he storms off.

Dialogue:

Public	Private
W: "Would you represent my interests"	I thought I'm behaving in a way I don't like here. I would normally say to him, 'have a nice meetining.'
H: "Sure."	
After the meeting	
H: "I've said that you will drive this woman around and show her around,"	I thought oooh I better think about this.
Acouple of days later, last night	
H: "I need to know soon if you're going to drive this woman around on Friday".	
and I sought of went er eh,eh,eh,eh (hesitant).	
H: "I need to know now."	I'm thinking I don't really want to do this
H: "I need to know now".	And I thought, 'I'm being pushed into this.'
W: "No, I don't want to do it", and (husband) looks at me all hostile	
W: "Well look, Friday I do the shopping."	I was thinking I've got to find a reason, but this is pretty lame though. (Husband) looks at me proabably thinking the same thing - this is pretty lame.
W: "Well I don't want to be this woman's taxi driver!"	I was thinking this is pretty mean and petty stuff, there are other reasons here.
H: "Well don't do it then," and stormed off.	I thought at the time there are a whole heap of reasons behind.this, why I don't want this project to go ahead.

Later	I don't want this project to go ahead. And anyway who is this woman from outside!! I don't know her!!!

Group's Feedback

K:

Critical incident:	not wanting to appear mean and petty
The social rules:	were I must appear to be supportive of consultation processes and other people who do this. I shouldn't be competitive with her, or see myself at better at doing that than her.
Intended outcome:	by following that,then I will be collaborative and supportive, and open and I'll be congruent and I'll demonstrate all those congruent values. Things like that, because that's what I believe, however...
The actual outcome:	is that feeling ingongruent and guilty about expressing my needs. I'm feeling bad about my needs. I shouldn't have them. They're really in obvious conflict to...

K   Her process wasn't going to be as good as yours anyway so that confirmed that it was okay to say that I gave it up because in some sense it wasn't going to be any good any way , so I'll step back from that, and I can maintain my value base of being supportive and open, because I would be if she was good, or she knew what she was doing.

Critical incident:	Not wanting to gate crash.
Social rules:	are You can't do that without an invitation because that wouldn't be polite.
Intended outcomes:	were to be acceptable I guess.
Actual outcome:	you were not able to express your views, or you rely on someone else to express those. So rather than you try and do it, give it to someone else. And he mucks it up. I don't know what my needs were in this situation but it certainly wasn't to drive a taxi! (laughter)
Payoffs:	It might confirm your beliefs about yourself, but maybe it's again you don't have to confront anyone, bring it out and look at it or anything. It would have brought it all out in the open, so it was easier not to.

S:

A critical incident: When you said 'look after my interests' and that wasn't accompantied by information, which might be quite logical at a personal level 'cause there's lot's of things we don't tell our partners, but we assume they know it ..they intuit it, that sort of thing.

The other possible scenario is when asked what was happening for you inside there and you said you weren't at all sure what you're interests were, but you had a worry, you know.

And when it came to negaotiating your involvement in it. The offer of involvement in it - being driver of this woman, the critical thing that occured to me, that wasn't done explicitly. Most of it was going on inside you, rather than out here.

Social rules: • Seem to be following the rule that 'all's well that ends well'. That you had all this stuff that happened to you inside but in the end you didn't become involved, and that was fine because you didn't want to in many respects.

and you didn't have any sort of barney with your partner either. So it hasn't ended up being a huge disater, and it's felt pretty funny along the way, but as long as it ends up being okay then that's fine.

• Another social rule I've got here is confusion is best kept private. and Even if I havce a stake I won't commit myself to what it is, I won't firm that up because maybe I'll become a player then.

• The other one I had here is engagement is not possible without relationship.

• Enagement without role acknowledgement is not what I like. Your a consultant too. You're not just a housewife who happens to be free on Friday, wth nothing better to do than the shopping. (laughter)

Outcomespersued: to not intrude where I don't really belong, so not wanting to appear like you were a busy body. Therefor you didn't gatecrash.

To delay commitment into that context as long as possible. Keep fishing until commitment is required.

To get your intersets protected

Outcomes achieved: • You must seem like a person who's hard to predict (to husband) I think I'm empathising with husband a bit here.

• And the other outcome I thought you were achieving was the maintenence of veto. I think you mainitained your capacity for veto which you exercised. And I think that puts you in a powerful position

L:

Critical incidents:	• asking (husband) to have you're interests represented, and
	• making the excuse why you couldn't do it - because you had to go shopping.

Strategy: not to say too much (to husband), otherwise you'll show something negative, like you're irrational or any other possible negative thing that you might let someone in on if you open you're mouth.

Social Rules: • One must excuse one's actions. so I have to come up with some excuse I can't just say no. Rational people, responsible adults make excuses. (laughter)

• Blame outwards, and I saw that as implicitly (husbands) misunderstanding of representing your interests. So (husband) having made that offer, you could somehow blame him for that.

And also you could blame her to some extent because she hadn't tried to make any contact with you, and she wasn't doing it (community consultation) properly anyway, so it was her fault.

Outcomes persued: was to somehow get accross that you did have something going on there, with the process, so at least that was flagged.

You gave some indication at least to (husband) and that was some way for you to have an out for all your frustration - some of the internal stuff. So rather than doing nothing at all at least you did something, but not be specific because there's something quite negative about that.

The stuff about not wanting to be a taxi driver and doing the shopping instead - to get out of this but also to relieve some tension (Blowing up at husband was some release of tension)

Outcomes achieved: as far as I could see was not very much. (laughter)

Other than demonstrating that there is some kind of problem here - I have a problem with this, I couldn't see that you were achieving anything particularly, in any of the spheres.

Consequences: for you are that you end up feeling bad, angry, confused. Husband probably ends up confused, and the consultant would probably be none the wiser about the affair.

APPENDIX G

Summary of evaluation results from participants

PARTCIPANTS EVALUATION

Critical Incidents identified

The critical incidents that people identified and why they were important were the following:

- Being invited to be in the group - felt excited at prospect, and being asked.
- Talking in pairs in the garden on the first day - enjoyable.
- Session 2, Fran's case - not feeling comfortable.
- Session 3 - the review of the previous week, dealing with some 'there and then' issues, feeling we had reached a core/made a quantum leap.

   Sam: If there was a hook in the whole lot, a point of 'this is genuinely interesting, and there's new learning here,' that would be the point I'd go back to saying. A corum of happeningness.

- Session 4, Sam's case -

   Sam: It hadn't occured tome that this stuff applied to sort of everything in your life. I remembered it ended up going quite alot of places, from schooling, family stuff, all sorts of things.

- Liane's confrontation of Fran. ·

   Kath: I remember that as being quite significant. .... That was something that impressed me was something difficult for you to do, but you did.

   Fran: I found it very useful.

- Session 5, Ann re-entering/looking at expectations -

   Ben: Remember having a vague sense, she's (Ann's) not happy with what's happening. Only vague and developed over time - with her not coming again basically. Did she come again?

   Kath: Yes that was the time you weren't there.

        Ann missed an important part, a lot had happened in the sessions missed.

   Sam wondered whether Ann felt able to really engage with the group as a result.

- Session 6, Ann's case - culinary extravaganza (everyone brought something to share), Important stuff about what is discussable. Started talking about permission.

Sam: That effected me quite abit that week (Ann's stuff about what was discussable), I was quite blown away by that stuff. I felt Ann was saying on the one hand this is the way it is, and on the other hand it was as if she would have liked it to be a bit different too. It was as if it was a bit painful...

Liane: I felt Ann had shared something that was very deep and important for her, and I thought it was a shame she she didn't come back again.

Kath: Maybe that's why?

Liane: yes we've said that this group, this core (Liane, Kath, Sam, & Ben), has a supportive sense, but that doesn't say whether people like Ann or Fran would have felt that.

Kath & Sam: Yeah

Sam: Which poses the question of how do we know, or is it our business to even bother to try and know, when people are pushing out there own boundaries, of what they think is discussable. Like what sort of processes or support mechanisms should there be if any, or is it just a case of people taking their own responsibility?

- Session 7, Kath's case. Looking at Liane's behaviour. Kath indicated she had important feedback about her behaviour (needing someone to say she was okay, either her or someone else, but not both together) from Sam, and feedback about the incongruence of her non-verbal and verbal messages from Liane.

My role in facilitating the group

Feedback on my role as facilitator produced the following points:

- Showed emotional courage for taking on the project.
  Kath: As a starting point, I can remember thinking, 'God you're game.' .... Courage I guess comes to mind, to do that.

- Percieved as being very uncontrolling, therefore participant felt very responsible, for his own learning.
  Sam: I've been quite stunned with how uncontrolling you've been. I've felt as if responsibility for my involvement in this has rested with me all the way through. What it has done is it's retained my investment, because what I did, and what I put in, and what I got out, was allowed to be overwhelmingly at my own discression. And that I think is quite courageous.

APPENDIX H

Participants' personal learnings and feedback re process (written)

INDIVIDUAL

1. SIGNIFICANT LEARNINGS.

* Reinforced that what I say can be different from my thoughts/feelings and that my N.V's will often indicate this congruence.

Liane's feedback re non verbals
Also phone call with Jenny R which I worked on as a situation but never actually presented in the group.

* Again learnt the importance of saying what I feel rather than sitting on it.

Day with A and F when I didn't say what I wanted to leave and subsequent discussion.
Community consultation meeting and subsequent discussion with Vicki.

* Deep down I do believe in myself.

Phil's comment re I need to have someone (me or other) saying I'm O.K. sometimes it might be a ted herring or a comfortable game to express self doubt as deep down there is a part of me that believes in me.

2. Anxiety in beginning new groups.
behaviour: I expressed this anxiety to a new group
Reasoning: Decrease anxiety
           Communicate honestly how I felt and not put on a front.
Outcomes: Me: did reduce anxiety a little, felt vulnerable.
           Others: empathised and knew it was O.K for trainers
                   to be nervous (group of trainee trainers)
                   Also became protective and saw me as
                   needing support (neg outcome)

Also I have been in some other group situations as a participant where I have expressed my feelings even when I was unclear of what they were exactly.

3. I am also more aware of incongruences and more likely to come back to a situation where I know I've been incongruent in expressing thoughts/feelings. I'm also getting better at confronting people and being more assertive although I find it depends on the person and the situation.

4. More able to express feelings at time rather than developing awareness after the fact.

PROCESS

1. Evaluating the 2nd week (as above) there are others indicated below.

2. Where we spent time evaluating how the group was operating
   Reflecting on an event in advance (even if it wasn't used) and going through the suggested steps.

   When we got to the point of discussing events, reactions etc without having to go through the specified process.
   Feedback from others re how they see me

3. More evaluation of previous meeting   reactions for all involved and process review

   More discussion on how I might be behaving diferently [or trying to] regardless whether it was my event that had been discussed the prior week

   If we had more time I would also hope that processes would encourage more confronting of how we behave in the group

Ann's feedback on her personal learnings and on the process.

1. <u>Significant personal learnings</u>

a) that even though I would have denied it my view of myself is limited to what I do professionally. eg. my trauma at someone else being the community consultant in my area.

b) that, to use Liane's words, I "blame outwards." I'm very picky (perfectionist) and nothing ever seems perfect, so I grizzle all the time.

c) that most of my conversations are in my head, and like the tip of an iceberg, only a little sticks up (goes on) up above the surface of the water.

d) that b & c combine to create something of a formidable image which scare people away.

e) that I see the world (and me) very complexly (intricate interconnections) and this often leads to confusion for me about my feelings, beliefs, role, etc. Too bloody phenomenological for my own good!!!

h) that Argyris and Schön (Dick and Dalmau's) method of communication can be useful: When you...I feel.....I believe.....

f) that I take on an unhealthy responsibility for people/events/outcomes.

g) that honesty in relationships is preferable to reserve (being true to yourself).

There are probably others that I will become aware of over time

<u>What brought them about</u>

Discussing "my scenario" ant through interpersonal interaction in this group and reflection on these and on the process. Also trying out (h) outside the group.

<u>Impact then and now</u>

Then: Instant relief - very nice feeling.
           Less confusion.
           A resolve to do something about them.

Now: Less blaming outward (constantly monitored) - has taken away a
           lot of my fire.

The Process

Critical incidents

- The beginning explanation - I sometimes lost my way.

- The getting to know you - I got to know some and not others and this hindered me.

- The formula for working on issues seemed very complex and constraining to me.

- The lack of time to review process as we went - our meetings sent over time and we didn't have the energy to review the process at the end.

- The working together on an issue - a powerful force - a synergy which excited me.

Most useful - the working together.

Do differently - the process

- I think I would spend some time setting up with people *individually* - setting the scene - warming up - clearing expectations = long lead-up time. Go through Argyris and Schön with participants individually so they are more familiar with the process before we begin. Underline the serious nature of the study, with the possibility of hard won outcomes and time commitments.

- Getting to know you in whole group and /or asking participants to write a bit about themselves for publication for whole group before group is to meet.

INDIVIDUAL. (CONTENT)

1. What have been the significant learnings for you as
    result of being in this group?
    What brought them about?
    What has been their impact, then and now?

Probably the most significant has been the method of looking
at what I do and what I say to myself, then hypothesising
about what these things mean about my theory in use. I have
found this useful in a number of situations, because it allows
me to identify to some extent self-defeating patterns and
alter them.

One of the outcomes of this is that I find that often I can't
even do this, look honestly at myself. I find this
threatening, confronting, challenging ...

The end result is that I feel ready to attempt to grow in a
way unavailable to me before. Without recognising the
separation of my espoused theory and my theory-in-use it seems
that I could more readily kid myself and kid myself about
kidding myself. Now it seems that a challenge or threat is
something to be welcomed somewhat more than before - it's a
gateway to some learning.

Consequently I have done some things that involved personal
challenges at work or in relationships. I've actually been
asking people to give me some genuine feedback about me, my
actions and my ideas. It's still passing hard but it does
happen.

Outcomes: I have learnt some things that make people feel it
is difficult to approach me. I have been able when
procrastinating to ask "What does this behaviour mean about
me?" and attempt alternative options (like doing what I was
avoiding or re-evaluating goals). Generally speaking I feel
more free to analyse myself and my circumstances in an open
way.

This sounds probably more positive than it is meant to. Often
I am disheartened by my ability to cover or to encourage
others to cover. Even saying to myself that this stuff is
hard acts as a bit of a cop-out at times. Yet it seems that I
have grown and learnt and increased my capacity for growth and
learning.

What made me learn this? Just going through the process with
others made me feel that if it worked with them it had to work
in other situations as well. I just feel a more confident
about exposing the soft-underbelly bits to public
consideration and comment and have had more opportunities to
learn as a consequence.

2. And/or
    a) If you have tried new behaviours:
    Give examples of new strategies (behaviours) you have

tried out since this group began, the reasoning behind it, and the outcomes for you and others. Include what you normally would have done, and the reasoning behind that.

or

b) If you haven't tried out new behaviours:
Think of a situation you would like to have done something differently bu didn't.
Go through the same process as above.

In summary:

New strategy   Reasoning behind it Outcome (you and others)

Old approach   Reasoning behind it   Outcome (you and others)

3.   What other changes are you aware of, if any, about the way you think, feel, behave, that are a result of being involved in this group?   If possible/determinable, suggest what brought these changes about.

4.   What do you still need to work on? How are you going to go about this?

I'm not as reflective as I would like to be and in particular have found myself to be particularly good at withdrawing, at least psychologically, when I am not happy with situations. I am much too good at being stoical about problems that I believe (at an espoused level at least) to be capable of resolution.

PROCESS

1.   What were the critical incidents in the process that produced some reaction or outcome for you? Explain both the part of the process and the effect it had, then and now.

The first case study with Diz was critical for me. I started by covering up what I actually thought of her case in order to protect her feelings and protect myself from being wrong publicly. Non-descript, non-committal stuff is safe.

As the session continued I recognised that Diz was quite robust enough not to need protection and that I had in effect cheated myself. I couldn't learn if I didn't take a risk, and if I didn't believe something enough to publicise it, it probably wasn't worth believing.

I then took a few risks, said what I actually thought, and

most of it was seen by Diz as being accurate. The stuff that wasn't seen as accurate was not dwelt upon and I ended up feeling that my surmises were correct ie. It is more effective to at least have a go.

The rest of the workshops seemed to be a logical progression from this insight.

2.   What parts of the process (in retrospect) did you find most useful?

The feedback and time spent interpreting what the theories-in-use might actually be. They allowed me to think about my own issues as well as learn about what was happening for others. They also made me feel that I was just as effective although at a different stage of development and that I needn't feel inadequate before a bunch of people whom I respected.

3.   Suppose you were running this process next week, what things would you do differently? Why?

I would hope to spend more time upon possible alternative actions and ways of establishing greater congruence between espoused and in use. On the whole though, the group was participant led and consequently it would be difficult to make major changes without directing the flow and possibly getting in the road of the needs of the participants.