

**INTERSUBJECTIVITY AND THE SCHIZOPHRENIC EXPERIENCE:
A HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF BEING-IN-
RELATION**

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ABSTRACT

This research project has its origin and motivation in work done by Lysaker, Johannesen and Lysaker (2005), which explored the experience of being as a person with schizophrenia in relation to other individuals. The researchers examined the nature of the schizophrenic experience from within the framework of the dialogical model of self, and presented schizophrenic intersubjectivity as a potentially horrifying and disintegrating experience. Lysaker et al (2005) discuss the notion that the individual self unfolds as a composite structure of multiple selves, existing in dialogical interaction with one another. Their research aimed to show that the individual with schizophrenia experiences difficulty tolerating this dialogue on an intrapsychic level. Because interpersonal exchange requires that individuals adopt a variety of self-other modes of relatedness, suggest Lysaker et al, interpersonal engagement for the person with schizophrenia is disclosed as profoundly threatening (ibid.)

Moving from the above-mentioned research, this project aims through a hermeneutic phenomenological process to clarify and narrate the subtleties of the intersubjective experience, as that experience is disclosed in the lived world of a person with schizophrenia. How does such an individual experience self in relation to other? How does such an individual negotiate their sense of self in terms of their dialogicality? The phenomenological hermeneutic method, as shaped by such theorists as Gadamer (1976), Heidegger (1962) and Buber (1970), will emerge as the interpretive platform upon which these questions are approached.

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All my gratitude to my participant for being so frank and trusting in telling me your story

And to my parents, for your support

“The environment is that moving wave, which envelopes us from all sides and determines our milieu without which we could not live. Events emerge from it like little islands and touch the most intimate aspects of our person. The person reverberates like a taut string in unison with them; he penetrates the environment, and reacts with it in a personal way.”

- Bin Kimura, “The phenomenology of the between”

“Who are you?”

The caterpillar to Alice

“I – I hardly know, Sir, just at present – at least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have changed several times since then.”

Alice, in response to his question

“Man wishes to be confirmed, and wishes to have a presence in the being of the other. ... Sent forth from the natural domain of species into the hazard of the solitary category, surrounded by the air of a chaos which came into being with him, secretly and bashfully he watches for a Yes which allows him to be and which can come to him only from one human person to another. It is from one man to another that the heavenly bread of self-being is passed.”

- Martin Buber, “On intersubjectivity and cultural creativity”

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The inspiration for this work was drawn from research by Lysaker and Lysaker (2001, 2002, 2005) which explored the experience of schizophrenic intersubjectivity¹ in relation to the dialogical model of self and self-world relatedness. Although not specifically related, this research project does have intellectual and thematic origins in research which I conducted previously, which focused on the impact of diagnostic labelling, firstly on diagnosed individuals' experience of freedom, and secondly on their intersubjective experience (Bradfield, 2002; Knight & Bradfield, 2003). The significant difference between this former work and the current project lies in the fact that the earlier work was more specifically antipsychiatric in its agenda. Further to this, participants in the previous research had been diagnosed with a variety of mental illnesses including mood, personality, and psychotic disorders.

It has been observed that one of the defining characteristics of individuals suffering from a schizophrenic illness is the degree of impoverishment in interpersonal relationships (APA, 2000; Kaplan & Sadock, 2003). The schizophrenic experience has been described as characterised by a pervasive impoverishment in familial, social and occupational relationships. This difficulty in engaging in social relationships is given primary concern in social science research insofar as it has been noted as being a risk factor related to relapse and suicide (Goldberg, 2003).

Phenomenological investigations into schizophrenia have narrated a "basic relational deficit" (Rulf, 2003), which is described as an existential orientation towards being-in-the-world in the mode of isolation and difference. Blankenburg (1980), whose work emerged at the forefront of phenomenological inquiries into schizophrenia,

¹ Henceforth the term "schizophrenic intersubjectivity" will be used to denote the intersubjective experience of individuals with schizophrenia.

described being-with-schizophrenia in terms of an essential loss of natural common sense. By this Blankenburg intended to describe a mode of being-in-the-world defined by a difficulty in understanding disclosed phenomena, and a sense of newness, in which the world appears to the individual with schizophrenia as a place un-encountered and unfamiliar. This translates to the experience of interpersonal relationships, in which the individual with schizophrenia is said to find intersubjective co-existence confusing and disarming (ibid.).

In relation to this, Parnas, Jansen, Sass and Handest (1998) denote the central feature of schizophrenic intersubjectivity as being a sense of disengagement and self-alienation, which they claim is based not only on a sense of detachment from the other, but more crucially on a loss of contact with self. This is disclosed phenomenologically, suggest Parnas et al (1998), as a sense of being cut off from ones own experience as a being-in-the-world. In this sense it is suggested that schizophrenic intersubjectivity, as defined by disconnection from other, is coupled intrapsychically with the experience of being disconnected from ones own experience of self. In this research can be seen the formative influence of Laing's (1965) foundational work into the schizophrenic experience. Laing proposes schizophrenia as a state of ontological insecurity, which emerges existentially as a fragmentation of certainty with respect to the essential traits of self and world. Laing's ontological insecurity unfolds in three ways, that is, engulfment, implosion or petrification.

Engulfment is disclosed in schizophrenic intersubjectivity through the person with schizophrenia becoming overwhelmed-in-relation to the other. Engulfment emerges through the individual's experiencing a sense of immanent threat to the continuity of their identity. In this sense, when in a relationship with an other, the individual with schizophrenia fears profoundly the possibility of fusion with the other, and complete loss of self (Laing, 1965). Engulfment is thus grasped as the threat posed to the self through

that self's relatedness to an other. This notion shall be explored further in relation to the exploration of schizophrenic intersubjectivity from within the dialogical model of self. For Laing the ontologically insecure person is also threatened with petrification (Laing 1965, 1970). Petrification for Laing unfolds in the experience of the person with schizophrenia as a threat of becoming solidified into a unitary, hardened and immobile self. The petrified self experiences itself, intrasychically and interpersonally, as a dead weight, unable to imagine or enact itself with any sense of variety and spontaneity. In this sense the petrified self loses its variousness and its subjectivity. This notion will emerge once again as central to the exploration of schizophrenia from the dialogical model of self.

Japanese phenomenologist Bin Kimura proposes the notion of intersubjectivity as central to any phenomenologically informed inquiry into the schizophrenic experience (Kimura, 1982, 1984). Kimura posited schizophrenia as a fundamental disturbance of the situational betweenness that is intersubjective co-existence. For Kimura, self emerges as an identity which must establish itself in relation to constant fluctuations in space and time. Self, in its engagement with the world, must always return to itself reflectively, needing to maintain its sense of its identity, its sense of being an "I". It is precisely this finding of the continuous "I" in relation to an ever-fluctuating self-world relatedness, Kimura maintains, which threatens the person with schizophrenia. Defined broadly by Kimura as a pathology of intersubjectivity, schizophrenia is posited as a relational dysfunction of self in relation to self and in relation to other. Kierkegaard cited this pathology, and described the affliction of schizophrenic intersubjectivity as a disruption of the self's relation to itself as a relational existent (Kierkegaard 1980/1849, in Lysaker, 2005).

The notion of an intrapsychic self-self relationship will unfold in this work as foundational. Intersubjectivity, as grasped herein, unfolds both as a relationship between and within the individual. The dialogical model of self will be presented as a

way of conceptualising and narrating this intrapsychic relatedness. It shall be presented briefly here, and more completely in the review of literature. The dialogical theory of self emerges from an intellectual history beginning with the writings of Mikhail Bakhtin, whose interpretations of Dostoyevsky's work was the origin of dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981). In his analysis, Bakhtin makes the assertion that human beings are best understood as "polyphonic" beings; as a process of an intrapsychic dialogue between distinct "voices", which are understood as the various aspects of self. Bakhtin defined these voices as "functionally independent elements within persons" (In Lysaker et al, 2005). In developing an understanding of Bakhtin's work, I shall rely on the works of Hermans and Kempen, who emerge at the forefront of dialogical theory (Hermans & Kempen, 1993; Hermans, 2002). Hermans et al define the self as a multiplicity of I positions, and maintain that the self, as dialogical, is able to move between various aspects of itself, in relation to a fluctuating spatio-temporal context.

"The I fluctuates among different and even opposed positions, and has the capacity imaginatively to endow each position with a voice so that dialogical relations between positions can be established. The voices function like interacting characters in a story, involved in a process of question and answer, agreement and disagreement. ... As different voices these characters exchange information about their respective *Me's*, resulting in a complex, narratively structured self." (Hermans, 2002, p. 148)

This description articulates lucidly the image of self within dialogical theory as a composite of different self-positions, or different modes of being-in-the-world. Lysaker et al (2005) concretise the notion of self-positions by offering ways in which self can express itself variously, for example, self-as-brother, self-as-lover, self-as-student, self-as-creative, or self-as-anxious. In relation to the proposal of an internal dialogue as central to the self's experience of itself, Hermans et al (1993) suggest that this dialogue

is made possible by the hierarchical organisation of the various self-positions. In this sense dialogical theory proposes the existence at one point in time of a dominant self-position, which, when the individual moves into a different relational context, will retreat, and be replaced by a previously non-dominant self-position. This theory will be fleshed out more completely in the review of the literature. It is necessary to give it mention in the introduction insofar as the theory emerges in this project as central to the hermeneutic fore-structure.

It is now necessary to move away from the prime focus of this research, and touch briefly on the significance of an exploration into intersubjectivity. The notion of the intrapsychic as a self-contained, private, discrete and unified existent has pervaded psychological thinking. A growing body of literature in psychotherapeutic, psychiatric and sociological practice is challenging this notion, in an attempt to relocate the “I” as a purely relational being-in-the-world. Habermas (1981, 1988) articulated his conviction that to exist as an “I” is simultaneously to exist as an I-in-relation-to-a-You. He expressed a phenomenology of self, in which being is bound experientially to being-with. Martin Buber’s exploration of relatedness developed an “ontology of the between”, in which beings-in-the-world find themselves always in an interhuman space, and realise their being in the interpersonal dialogue which that space implies (Buber, 1970; Friedman, 1988). In relation to this, it is the aim of this work to inquire into the nature of the intersubjective experience of one person with schizophrenia. The primary goal of this research will be to examine how the individual with schizophrenia experiences their self in relation to others, in a full variety of relational contexts.² How is schizophrenic intersubjectivity disclosed phenomenologically in the lived experience of the individual with the disorder? To answer these questions a phenomenological hermeneutic

² Such contexts could include, amongst others, professional, familial, sexual, platonic and culturally based relationships.

methodology will be employed in an attempt to narrate a descriptively close understanding of being-with in the world of the individual with schizophrenia.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This exposition of the relevant literature will focus on clarifying firstly the essence of phenomenological ontology as a mode of engagement between researcher and narrative, which is grounded in a tradition of philosophical thought. It is necessary to elucidate phenomenological ontology so as to enable an understanding of the exploratory origins of this work. I shall then proceed with an exploration of the concept of intersubjectivity in psychotherapeutic, sociological and psychiatric thought. Various understandings of intersubjectivity will be presented in an effort to outline the importance of this concept in research into the human experience.

Following this, the schizophrenic experience will be explored, with specific reference to phenomenological inquiries into the nature of that experience. An overview of phenomenologically informed contributions to schizophrenia research will be presented, with the intention of revealing the validity of such explorations into the psychiatric domain. The notion of the dialogical self will emerge out of this exploration, and will be presented as a theory of self which narrates interpersonal and intrapsychic dialogue, and thereby implies the concept of an internal intersubjectivity. The theory of the dialogical self will be presented in relation to the intellectual history from which it emerged. Finally, a description of inquiries into the dialogical self and the schizophrenic experience will be presented.

PART 1

2.1.1 On the nature of phenomenological inquiry: Glancing towards the immanent

This description of the phenomenological psychological agenda is intended as an attempt to clarify the foundational issues upon which phenomenological thought rests.

Fundamental to phenomenological philosophy is its internal diversity as a school of thought. Embraced as a practice rather than a system (Moran, 2000), phenomenology emerges as an anti-traditional style of philosophising, aimed at the disclosure of a phenomenon through description, as that phenomenon appears in human consciousness. In service of this aspiration, pure phenomenology's aim is to bypass all presupposition which may impact on the human scientist's coming-to-know the lived world of the experiencing individual (ibid.). Phenomenology emerges as a philosophy aimed towards the revelation of human experience through a description of that experience that is grounded in being-in-the-world. The notion of being-in-the-world comes from a more specifically Heideggerian phenomenological discourse, and relates to the location of individual experience out there, beyond the self, and in immediate relation with the world (Heidegger, 1962). As a delving-into the lived world of the individual, phenomenology unfolds as focused on narrating the lebenswelt (McCall, 1983). For Heidegger the lebenswelt is understood as the immediate disclosure of the world of phenomena as apprehended by consciousness. Essential to Heidegger's conceptualisation of the lebenswelt is its definition as the disclosure of phenomena prior to conscious reflection. In this sense the lebenswelt is the world as immanently and pre-reflectively known by the experiencing individual (McCall, 1983).

Edmund Husserl shaped phenomenology as a project aimed towards uncovering the individual lived world through the mode of essential intuition. For Husserl essential intuition unfolds as a gazing-into the phenomenon of lived experience, aiming towards describing the individual's apprehension of that phenomenon (Husserl, 1931). Fundamental to Husserl's pure phenomenology was the notion of the phenomenological reduction. For Husserl this reduction was defined by a suspension of belief in the natural attitude as the source of informative veracity (ibid.). This reduction, known as the

eidetic reduction, emerged as a suspension of belief in all knowledges which could influence the scientist's knowing of the individual.

Phenomenology has developed historically in a variety of distinct forms, each with its own creative agenda. Emmanuel Levinas imagined the phenomenological reduction far less fundamentally, as a movement beyond the horizons of individual preoccupation. In this he encouraged in the researcher a motion towards engaging in a space external to self, directed towards inhabiting the horizons of the experiencing individual whose world is being described (Moran, 2000). Jean-Paul Sartre realised his existential phenomenological reduction differently. For Sartre the reduction was articulated as a way of coming to know the truth of an affective and imaginative world not through objectivist investigation, but rather through articulating the ways in which emotional states are immediately and pre-reflectively lived (Sartre, 1943, 1957). Martin Heidegger appropriated Husserl's reduction in his focus on negating the impact of all philosophies on the researcher's seeing of the individual. Heidegger aimed to cultivate a "pure naïvete" (Cited in Moran, 2000). Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology focused on articulating Dasein, or Being-There, which he described as the individual's situatedness in the lebenswelt. Dasein was conceived as the individual's "thrownness" in an immediately lived and concretely apprehended world (Dreyfus, 1991). For Heidegger, Dasein was grasped as an immediate situatedness, which is simultaneously disclosed in the world as a future-oriented, motional existent. Heidegger's approach to coming to know Dasein echoes Husserl's eidetic reduction, but envisages that reduction less fundamentally. Heidegger's prime focus was to come to know of the experience of being-in-the-world as that experience is felt concretely in a lived world.

2.1.2 A departure from pure phenomenology: Gadamer and the languaging of being

I would now like to proceed with an exploration of the re-directed phenomenological agenda that came with the introduction of phenomenological hermeneutics. The philosophical hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer will emerge as the ontological and methodological grounding of this work. Gadamer's hermeneutics grew out of a phenomenological tradition beginning with Heidegger's ontology. Gadamer's phenomenology moved away from the phenomenological reduction as an essential component of the process of delving-into the lebenswelt. For Gadamer language emerged as the medium of coming to understand human experience (Gadamer, 1976, 1989). As such, the linguistic horizons of both researcher and participant play a crucial role in the process of generating understanding. Through this integration of the researcher's horizons Gadamer's hermeneutic saw the return of the role of the researcher's system of knowledges to the motion towards understanding. Gadamer's project aimed towards "essence illumination", which he articulated as the making manifest of the "matters themselves". For Gadamer, the essential matters of "things themselves", that is, the phenomena as they are experienced in the lived world, are only revealed through language (Moran, 2000). Further to this, meaning for Gadamer is disclosed only through dialogue between individuals, whose knowledges are incorporated through their languaging or their experience (Gadamer, 1989). It can be seen quite clearly how this hermeneutic ontology differs from the eidetic reduction of pure phenomenology. Gadamer's phenomenology revolves around the process of understanding through the act of mutual human engagement. It will be seen in the exposition of intersubjectivity how this philosophical agenda contributes to the subject of exploration.

Gadamer's ontology places language at the helm. For Gadamer language instantiates being. In this, being-in-the-world comes into being through the act of languaging the lived world (Weinsheimer, 1985). Following Heidegger, Gadamer views language as the medium through which the life of a culture as well as the life of an individual is given expression. Language embodies and shapes existence, and creates the inhabited world (Moran, 2000). Central to the place of language in Gadamer's method is the notion that language can never be a neutral act. Language is in its essence traditional, and conveys in its descriptions a vast system of cultural and educational knowledges and expressive assumptions which voice the individual's being-in-the-world (Moran, 2000). Gadamer's ontology gives the traditional quality of language prime significance both in terms of the individual's voicing of their experience, as well as the researcher's narrative of that experience. The tradition embedded in the individual's languaging of experience was articulated by Gadamer as similar to Heidegger's notion of the thrownness of our being-in-the-world. In this sense language expresses a tradition that embodies the situatedness of an individual within his or her world of lived experience. Language manifests historicity, which is the incorporation of our past being-in-the-world with our current situatedness. This notion is essential to the epistemological foundation on which this project is laid, and must be born in mind when reading the outline of the methodology.

PART 2

In this section I intend to outline of the emergence of intersubjectivity in social science research. The theoretical contributions of psychoanalytic and phenomenological inquiries into the subject will be explored. This will be followed by a description of a sociological perspective, focusing mainly on the work of Martin Buber, and showing how this perspective echoes phenomenologically informed notions of intersubjectivity. A brief

account of intersubjectivity as it has emerged in psychiatric practice will then be provided, with specific reference to the work of Harry Stack Sullivan and R. D. Laing.

2.2.1 Perspectives on intersubjectivity: Psychoanalytical and phenomenological contributions

In the analytic space the notion of intersubjectivity has emerged from the dominance of the intrapsychic as relational psychoanalytic movements have come to the fore. The intention of relational theories has been to conceptualise the effects of human relationships on development, as seen in connection with internal and intrapsychic mechanisms (Benjamin, 1999). Historically, intersubjectivity found entry into psychoanalysis through philosophy, and unfolded as a statement of the notion that the analytic process must be understood as occurring between rather than within individuals. Stolorow and Atwood aimed to generate an understanding of the emergence of the intrapsychic within the “larger interactional system” within which it is disclosed (Stolorow, 1994, p. 3).

In terms of the emergence of intersubjectivity theory in psychoanalytic practice, it can be seen how this notion was moulded by a variety of theorists. Kohut for example spoke of the *self-selfobject relationship*, whilst Mitchell articulated the *relational matrix*, and Stolorow and Atwood spoke of the *intersubjective context* (Stolorow, 1994). In these conceptualisations was recognised an understanding of the intrapsychic as experientially and developmentally bound to the interpersonal. Emotional and psychological life is grasped as constituted by and mediated within the intersubjective surround. Interestingly, Stolorow and Atwood (1994) describe their psychoanalytic orientation as phenomenologically geared. These theorists identify in the relational context of psychoanalysis a hermeneutic phenomenological discourse. I refer the reader to section 2 of chapter 3, in which Hans-Georg Gadamer’s hermeneutic phenomenology is explicated. In hermeneutics we see the interpretation of the life-text of an individual.

In this interpretation, the hermeneuticist enters the process through an essential fusion of their horizon of experience with the horizon of the individual whose being-in-the-world is storied through the text. Hermeneutics is therefore envisioned as a dialogue between interpreter, or analyst, and narrator, or analysand.

The articulation of intersubjectivity in psychoanalytic theory and practice emerged as a response to what the relational theorist's termed the "myth of the isolated mind" (Stolorow & Atwood, 1992, p. 9). The authors suggest that the notion of mind as a separate entity, as expounded in classical psychoanalytical movements, implies a segregation of being from being-in-the-world. In this sense it is suggested that the isolated mind implies an alienation of individual being from the social context in which that being is disclosed. The authors note the primacy of intersubjective experience, and suggest that "the intrinsic embeddedness of self-experience in intersubjective fields means that our self-esteem, our sense of personal identity, even our experience of ourselves as having a distinct and enduring existence are contingent on sustaining relations to the human surround." (ibid, p. 10). Natterson and Friedman (1995) put this even more forcefully:

"Intersubjectivity entails reciprocal causal relationships of all parts of the human universe with all other parts. All human events are co-created by the participants. Everyone changes, and is changed by, everyone else." (Natterson & Friedman, 1995, p. xiii)

Significant to relational psychoanalysts' articulation of intersubjectivity within the analytic space is the notion of an interactive field, an essential space-between, which has been described variously by different theorists (Schwartz-Salant, 1995). The interactive space between analyst and analysand, known variously as the transitional or potential space (Winnicott), the analytic object (Greene), the intersubjective field (Stolorow & Atwood) and the analytic third (Ogden) is described essentially as the place

of intersection between two mutually engaging subjectivities (cited in Schwartz-Salant, 1995). Relational theorists came to focus on this space of reciprocal intersubjective engagement, turning this point of contact into the focus of the therapeutic endeavour. This emergence of intersubjectivity within the therapeutic space can be understood in relation to Scheff's (1973) definition of intersubjectivity as a full recognition of the emotional tone existing within and between self and other. Although more specifically phenomenologically narrated, Merleau-Ponty identified the notion of the intersubjective space in his work on the phenomenology of perception:

"In the experience of dialogue, there is constituted between the other person and myself a common ground; my thoughts and his are interwoven into a single fabric, my words and those of my interlocutor are called forth by the state of the discussion, and they are inserted into a shared operation of which neither of us is the creator." (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 354)

I would now like to proceed with a brief exposition of phenomenology's articulation of the intersubjective realm, commenting the contributions of Ludwig Binswanger. Natterson and Friedman (1995) identify intersubjectivity as an important aspect of phenomenological philosophy and psychology. Roger Frie (1997) explored intersubjectivity in his psychoanalytically oriented inquiry into the works of Sartre, Binswanger, Lacan and Habermas. In Frie's exploration of the role of language in the constitution of subjectivity and intersubjectivity, he proposed intersubjective relatedness as the condition through which selfhood can emerge. Reminiscent of Gadamer's phenomenological ontology, Frie suggests that subjectivity is structured through reciprocal dialogue between interacting beings. In this sense it is proposed that subject (self) and object (world) are co-constituted through the mutual engagement that is being in the world (Luijpen, 1969). Sartre too spoke of the "mutual gaze", a concept used to imply the co-constitution of self and world through the meeting and dialogue of self and

other (Sartre, 1943; Angus, Osborne & Koziy, 1991). Spinelli (1989) proposed an intersubjective conception of self in which he recognised that self emerges through sustained discourse with other beings-in-the-world, and that the individual's awareness of self comes about as a result of these interactions.

Central to phenomenological accounts of intersubjectivity is the work of existential psychoanalyst Ludwig Binswanger, who considers mutuality, or being-with, as fundamental to understandings of human existence (Koehler, 2004). Binswanger's definitions of intersubjectivity in relation to the experience of mental disorder contributed to the philosophical fuelling of the anti-psychiatry movement (Lanzoni, 1995). His therapeutic system sees a combination of Heidegger's thought with Martin Buber's dialogical philosophy, which shall be explicated further on in this chapter (Frie, 2000). Binswanger asserts the primacy of the intersubjective in his statement that subjectivity and intersubjectivity are ontologically coeval (Frie, 1997). Binswanger echoes the relational psychoanalysts in his proposition that development occurs in relation to dialogue with others in a shared world, and this dialogue is grasped as linguistic in essence.

"The human being is only "human" in speaking-with-one-another, in the communication of I and Thou as we, on the basis of a shared linguistic world or ... a shared linguistic world-design. Language is not a mere medium of exchange, but a being-with-one-another in a world that makes understanding possible." (Cited in Frie, 1997, p. 134)

It will be seen in the account of phenomenological hermeneutics in the methodology chapter, how Binswanger's proposition feeds directly into the ontological and methodological assumptions of this specifically hermeneutic phenomenological work.

Binswanger's phenomenological ontology unfolded out of the Heideggerian tradition, and this can be seen in the way in which he enlarged certain Heideggerian concepts in his therapeutic system. Binswanger identified three modes of being-in-the-world, which he declared exist simultaneously. These are the *umwelt*, which constitutes the environment in which an individual exists, the *eigenwelt*, which is the private, and specifically intrapsychic element of being-in-the-world, and the *mitwelt*, which is the world of social relations (Frie, 2000). The *mitwelt* is disclosed thematically as the with-world, and Binswanger articulates this mode of being as a space in which the individual and the social unfold in existential union. Binswanger argued that it is essential for all investigations into psychopathology that we attempt to form an understanding of the way in which the individual structures their existence in line with these three modes of being. And it is on this point that Binswanger's therapeutic enters the realm of explorations in psychopathology. Binswanger insisted that person and world exist relationally as one. In respect of this notion, Binswanger's phenomenological agenda can be seen as an intent to question and come to understand being-human through exploring the totality of existence, which includes our relations with others.

As noted, Binswanger's phenomenology was influenced by the work of Buber and Heidegger. As such his thesis moved towards a philosophy of dialogue, the chief proponent of which was Buber. It is now necessary to proceed with a brief articulation of Buber's dialogical theory, showing how this philosophy contributed significantly to the emergence of subjectivity as central to psychoanalytic work as well as research in the social sciences.

2.2.2 The "I-Thou" in clinical intersubjectivity

The philosophy of Martin Buber is pivotal in this theoretical explication of intersubjectivity, and unfolds as having contributed significantly to philosophical, sociological and psychological theorising on the subject. Buber's "ontology of the

between” (Friedman, 1999) echoes the notion of intersubjectivity as vital to the creation of self. Buber suggests that reciprocal relatedness with the other promotes the development of aspects of self, which development would be disabled were the individual to exist in isolation. Buber’s is a philosophy of dialogue, in which self is grasped as interacting both with itself, in an intrapsychic relatedness, as well as interacting in dialogical relation with other beings-in-the-world (Friedman, 1999).

Buber’s philosophy can again be seen in direct contradistinction to the notion of the separate and contained identity. He responded contrarily to the conceptualisation of individual identity as a “skin-encapsulated ego” (Goldberg, 2000), suggesting that the notion of the self-contained and private subjective self is fallacious (Knight & Bradfield, 2003). Buber asserts the primacy of intersubjectivity, and suggests that being-in-the-world is contingent upon the individual’s entry into a reciprocal dialogue with their world, which Buber calls the I-Thou (Buber, 1937/1970). The I-Thou is a relational mode of being which enables the coming-into-being of the individual. In Buber’s words: “I require a Thou to become; becoming I, I say Thou” (cited in Goldberg, 2000). For Buber, the I-Thou is the primary relationship (Goldberg, 2000), and entering the I-Thou allows for the full revelation of the being of the self.

George Herbert Mead, a contemporary of Buber’s, characterised the self within a lived social world as “an eddy in the social current” and spoke of the process of development of self as a dialogue between the self and the self’s image of being-human, as informed by that self’s engagement in a social world (Mead, 1934, cited in Friedman, 1999). In this sense the revelation of self is seen in direct relation to the individual’s grasping of the being-in-the-world of another self, whose existence-in-dialogue with the self enables the unfolding of self.

Buber’s focus on subjectivity as bound to the interhuman unfolds primarily as a statement about the importance of communication. He suggests that human life, as a

shared existence, comes into being through meetings between self and other (Buber, 1957, 1992). Central to Buber's articulation of the interhuman is the notion that the self requires confirmation of itself by the other.

“Man wishes to be confirmed, and wishes to have a presence in the being of the other. ... Sent forth from the natural domain of species into the hazard of the solitary category, surrounded by the air of a chaos which came into being with him, secretly and bashfully he watches for a Yes which allows him to be and which can come to him only from one human person to another. It is from one man to another that the heavenly bread of self-being is passed.” (Buber, 1992, p. 5)

Necessarily forgiving Mr. Buber for his sexist discourse, it can be seen in this passage how he cites the emergence of self as related to the self's finding its existence confirmed in a shared and reciprocal interhuman space.

In Buber's dialogical philosophy it is essential to the development of self that the self, apart from being confirmed by the other through dialogue, is initially set apart from the other in the mode of independence and distance-in-relation. In this sense, in order to emerge as a self in a relational context, it is important to first be established as an other (Friedman, 1988). For Buber, in order for the individual to recognise themselves as a self in relation to an other, it is necessary to become aware of themselves in terms of their opposition to the other. This, for Buber, is what allows for the mutual and coeval making-present of one individual self in relation to another (Buber, 1937/1970). In his more strictly psychoanalytic theorising on the subject, Binswanger is seen to echo this notion in his suggestion that reciprocity in the interhuman space is necessarily characterised by a dialogue between separateness and relatedness (Koehler, 2004). This expression of Buber's ontology of the between was presented as a foundational philosophy upon which my understanding of intersubjectivity was based.

2.2.3 The place of the interpersonal in psychiatry

It is now necessary to conclude this exploration of intersubjectivity with an account of psychiatric notions of the intersubjective. The work of Harry Stack Sullivan (1962, 1964) and Karen Horney is cited as having contributed significantly to exploring the interpersonal in psychiatry (Kruger, 1988). For Sullivan psychiatry was purely the study of the interpersonal (Nill & Halling, in Valle & Halling, 1989). Sullivan envisioned personality as emerging through interpersonal contact, and identified the exchange of emotional tone between mother and infant as the formative relational context in the development of subjectivity through intersubjectivity. This exchange of emotional tone, which is a reciprocal process, was what Sullivan called empathy. For Sullivan empathy emerged as the essential component of the between. Empathy was grasped by Sullivan as that point of intersection defined diversely as the self-selfobject relationship or the relational matrix.

Apart from Sullivan's work, explorations of intersubjectivity entered psychiatry through the work of the anti-psychiatrists, most notably R. D. Laing, whose psychiatric orientation was distinctly phenomenological (Laing, 1961, 1965, 1970). Laing wanted to describe psychopathological process as contextually bound in being-in-the-world (Potter, 2006). Laing's efforts were focused on an attempt to articulate psychopathology in a manner which revealed the intelligibility of behaviour defined within psychiatry as folly (Ingleby, 2005). Considerations of intersubjectivity entered Laing's work primarily through his notion of the complimentary identity (Laing, 1961). For Laing, the self requires the presence of an other, with whom that self can enter into dialogical engagement, in order for the self to emerge as a self. In this sense, suggested Laing, self-identity can only be actualised in relationship. Importantly in terms of the focus in this project on the self as dialogical, we can see traces of dialogicality in Laing's thinking. He suggested that the very fact of the self as constituted through interactions with an

other implies that the self is not continuous, but always fluctuating-in-relation (ibid.). Through this we see the emergence in Laing's interpersonal psychiatry of a multiply constituted and multiply disclosed self-identity, which could be shaped by contradictory and ambivalent versions of self.

The interpersonal enters Laing's account of the genesis of psychopathology, rendering his theory of pathological process intersubjective in its origin. Laing's thinking was impacted upon by Buber in his adoption of Buber's notion of confirmation by the other as essential to the emergence of self. Laing viewed confirmation by the other as a facilitative human experience (Laing, 1961). For Laing, as for Buber, the self cries out for confirmation. Following from this, Laing viewed disconfirmation as a destructive event, which enabled the genesis of psychosis. Specifically articulated in his research into schizophrenia and the family, Laing described disconfirmation as central to the emergence of schizophrenia through the family system (Laing & Esterson, 1970).

The work of R. D. Laing plays an important role in the understandings generated in this work, and will be fleshed out to a greater extent in the account of phenomenological explorations into schizophrenia, which is to follow.

PART 3

This section of the review of the literature will explore phenomenological contributions to understanding and describing the schizophrenic experience. A variety of perspectives will be focused on, with the aim of articulating understandings of schizophrenia informed by its disclosure in a shared world. I shall firstly present an outline of the place of phenomenological and hermeneutic phenomenological research in inquiries into schizophrenia. A phenomenologically informed account of schizophrenia from an intersubjective frame will then be provided, articulating the disclosure of schizophrenia as an affliction of the between. The works of Ludwig Binswanger (1963),

Wolfgang Blankenburg (1980), Bin Kimura (1982, 1984), and Larry Davidson (1992, 1994) will be noted as having contributed particularly to the validity of phenomenology as a mode of inquiry applicable to research into the schizophrenic experience. The nuances of the schizophrenic experience will then be explored further in Part 4 of the review of the literature, which will provide an account of the dialogical model of self.

2.3.1 Phenomenological and hermeneutic phenomenological narratives on schizophrenic process

Phenomenological interpretation has entered schizophrenia research through the works of a wide variety of authors. Davidson (1992, 1994) envisioned the phenomenological agenda within schizophrenia research as being focused on narrating the lebenswelt of the individual with schizophrenia in a manner which reveals the intelligibility of that experience. The phenomenological experience, suggest Corin and Lauzon (1994) is one of being situated in a given life-world relatedness from which being-in-the-world is inseparable. It is the work of the phenomenologist to describe the individual's mode of response and engagement with that life-world situatedness. Phenomenological psychiatry, in relation to this agenda, is aimed towards describing the nuance of experience, as characteristic of a psychiatric disorder. The project of phenomenological psychiatry is to narrate mentally ill individuals' projections of themselves on to their lived world, as that projection is constituted particularly through their being-mentally-ill (ibid.). In relation to this then, it can be seen how the phenomenological method, in its approach to schizophrenia, aims to narrate the individual's being-there, in the Heideggerian sense of the dasein, and his or her being-with, in the sense of the mitsein.

Importantly, the phenomenological approach moves away from exploring the schizophrenic experience as an isolated and encapsulated one, and projects itself instead towards evaluating that experience as lived and intervolved within being-in-the-

world (Kimura, 1984). This notion will be explored further in the consideration of phenomenological psychiatry's focus on intersubjectivity within schizophrenia research.

Kruger (1988), following Binswanger, asserts the primacy, within phenomenological psychiatry's focus on the individual's world-relatedness, of examining the betweenness which shapes and substantiates human experience.

"A radical phenomenology would see what is called psychopathology, e.g. schizophrenia, not as a sickness that somehow attacks a person, but rather as a state of being in which the person starts relating to the world and fellow men in ways that are not readily comprehensible." (Kruger, 1988, p. 170)

In this statement we see the phenomenological assertion that psychopathological process is disclosed primarily in the interhuman space, and in the intersection between person and world.

Basic to phenomenological exploration is the notion of returning to "the things themselves", that is, to return to and describe the emergence of phenomena as experienced in the lived world. Blankenburg (1980), quoting Binswanger, suggests that the aim of phenomenological psychiatry is to "retrieve man' out of the models, constructs, theories, and habits of thought of classical psycho(patho)logy and of various psychoanalytic, behaviouristic, sociological approaches." (Blankenburg, 1980, p. 52). Corin and Lauzon (1994) structure this motion towards eliciting the things themselves in a hermeneutically oriented phenomenology. For these authors the process of eliciting the lived world unfolds as a hermeneutic back-and-forth motion, in which the objective facts of the individual's lived world, that is, their facticity, are seen in relation to the individual's subjective experience of those facts. The circular movement from a focus on facticity to a focus on experience as located within that facticity shapes, for Corin and Lauzon (1994), the nature of hermeneutic phenomenological inquiry into the schizophrenic experience.

As noted, this work is based on a hermeneutic phenomenological method. As such, the focus herein will be on the revelation of experience from the text gleaned through the interview process. The decision to adopt a more hermeneutic orientation was based on the notion that language is primary to the manifestation, characterisation and interpretation of mental illness. Sullivan (1964) suggests that language emerges as an attempt by the individual to attain a sense of ontological security, in the Laingian sense. In this respect, suggests Sullivan, the languaging of the individual with schizophrenia is seen as unable to generate that sense of security. Blankenburg (1980) cites the primacy of language in terms of the function of language to indicate and solidify relationships between self and world. As seen in Buber's ontology, the languaging of being is at the same time the languaging of being-with. In relation to this, the agenda of hermeneutic phenomenology within investigations into psychopathology is to identify language as a statement of a shared lived world, and to render intelligible the mentally ill individual's languaging of their world.

The focus on rendering intelligible the communications of people with schizophrenia is seen as having primary significance in terms of the importance of intelligibility as the foundations of each individual's sense of their own being-in-the-world. Barham (1993) elucidates the importance of living out a shared and sharable narrative in terms of an individual's sense of their possessing a history. He suggests that the claim that an individual's narrative, or life-text - as the phenomenological hermeneuticists would have it - is unintelligible, is a claim which robs that individual of the situatedness and the historicity which their narrative is trying to express (Barham, 1993). In this sense phenomenological hermeneutics, in its application to schizophrenia research, can be seen as aiming towards salvaging the interpretability, intelligibility, and by extension, the world-relatedness of the mentally ill individual's languaging of experience. Hermeneutic phenomenology intends, in its approach to psychopathology, to elicit the

historical and traditionary embeddedness of the individual's narrative, as an expression of their being-in-the-world (Rulf, 2003).

In terms of the place of phenomenology as contributing to schizophrenia research, Kimura (1982) suggests that phenomenology finds its route into psychiatry primarily through its apprehension of psychopathology as emerging in the "between". For phenomenology, psychopathology is unequivocally communicated as a subjective-intersubjective mode of being. It is towards the disclosure of schizophrenia within the intersubjective space, as explored by phenomenology, that I now turn.

2.3.2 Narrating the space between: Phenomenological interpretations of schizophrenic intersubjectivity

"Human existence is intrinsically interpersonal. Each of us is as well as lives out an unfolding network of relationships with others; each of us comes to know himself as an individual only in relation to others. There is no "I" except in relation". (Fischer, 1986, p. 71)

In this statement we see the assertion of the primacy of the interpersonal as a constituting factor in the emergence of self. The aim of this section is to explicate the role of the interpersonal in the disclosure of schizophrenia. Pitfield (1991) proposes the notion of dialogical world-construction, through which she intends to imply the co-creation of being-in-the-world through self's encounter with world. In her work Pitfield articulates a sociologically informed conception of illness as an intersubjective experience. In light of this, we note Binswanger's description of schizophrenia as a process of becoming estranged from intersubjectivity, and estranged from being-with, in which the establishment of relationships with others becomes a difficulty (Watanabe & Kato, 2004). Van den Berg (1972) expressed the isolation that can come to shape psychopathological existence. In this work Van den Berg (1972) gave a phenomenologically informed account of the incommunicability that is potentially at the

core of being-in-the-world as a mentally ill person. Salmon (2004) describes an identified idiosyncrasy and impoverishment in the capacity of the individual with schizophrenia to engage reciprocally in the interpersonal realm. Appealing to Laingian notions, Salmon cites the inhibition of the emergence of self, through a suffocating family system - the so-called schizophrenogenic family - as contributing significantly to the unfolding difficulties in schizophrenic intersubjectivity.

A brief sketch of Laing's conception of schizophrenia and the family is necessary, so as to locate his work as a landmark in current understandings. Although Laing's work emerged as fundamentalist in terms of his convictions regarding the role of the interpersonal in the genesis of mental illness, his work does point to foundational considerations in the contemplation of schizophrenia. As the reader will recall, Laing's conception of ontological insecurity was given mention in the introductory chapter (p. 2). The concepts of engulfment and petrification were presented briefly, and were described as positions of ontological insecurity. For Laing, the unfolding of being in a state of ontological insecurity was related to parental disconfirmation of the developing child-self, resulting in a consequent inhibition of development, and a sense of self as fused with the parental object (Laing & Esterson, 1970). In this sense ontological insecurity was connected with the individual's being unable to develop a sense of self as separate and independent, and rather coming to experience self as fused with an inhibiting other. This experience of fusion was seen by Laing as connected with the individual's experiencing being-in-the-world as a state of being-threatened with their own non-existence, and hence the term ontological insecurity (Laing & Esterson, 1970). Sullivan describes something similar to Laing's ontological insecurity in his notion of the individual with schizophrenia as being terrified of the possibility of their own disintegration, a state which Sullivan calls nothingness (Frosch, 1983). Although this kind of psychodynamically oriented conceptualisation of the schizophrenic experience is not the

aim of this project, it is important to note Laing's theory as being foundational to critical psychiatry's exploration of the interpersonal in understanding schizophrenia.

Bin Kimura's phenomenologically oriented work on the schizophrenic experience introduces an important consideration in terms of the individual's interrelationship with their world with respect to time as a constituting factor. Kimura (1984) explores the concept of the individual's experience of self as fluctuating in relation to temporality. Kimura begins with the assumption that one's experience of selfhood is defined by a sense of "sameness". In this sense, in the individual's relationship with their world they are aware of an identity which extends across a temporal motion from past into future³. With this awareness of identity, Kimura suggests, the individual is simultaneously aware of how they fluctuate in resonance with factors external to the self, which penetrate and alter the self.

"The concept 'self' has two different but inseparably interpenetrating aspects. In the first instance it refers to sameness or identity ... Unharmd by never-ending inner and outer metamorphoses, I always remain the same I. Yet this continuous identical self is not something which is a completed given from the outset. Instead, it is something which I repeatedly have to maintain through an ever-new act of relating-to-the-self from time to time. Here the second aspect of being a self is announced: the ever to be repeated act of returning to the self which thus enables one becoming oneself." (Kimura, 1984, p. 193)

For Kimura, this process of returning to a continuous self across fluctuations in time and space is enabled through, and is what characterises, the "between". It is only through mutual encounter with an other that the self is able to establish itself as a self; that is, as

³ I refer the reader to the work of relational analyst, Frank Summers (1999), who provides a convincing exploration of the notion of self as multiple and continuous, and as shifting in configuration from one relational context to the next. Summers debates the self as continuous versus self as discontinuous, giving this topic more attention than fits within the scope of this project.

not-the-other. It is only through the self's presentation of itself to the between that it can become aware of itself and its own identity.

Kimura presents this consideration of temporality in relation to selfhood as a platform from which to propose his understanding of schizophrenia and intersubjectivity. The individual with schizophrenia, suggests Kimura (1984), experiences difficulty in perceiving within themselves this sense of trans-temporal sameness and continuity. Instead, being-in-relation-to-others, which is a fluctuating and unstable process, is experienced by the individual with schizophrenia as a possible antecedent to a feared disintegration of the self. Davidson and Roe (2005) express this notion somewhat differently in their exploration of schizophrenia in terms of the self's narrative of experience. For these authors the difficulty experienced by the individual with schizophrenia is a trouble with constructing a coherent and commonsensical narrative of their life, due to a pervasive sense of disruption and discontinuity in their experience of self through time (ibid.)

In Davidson and Roe's proposition we can see reflections of Kimura's notion of a difficulty, experienced by the individual with schizophrenia, in finding and experiencing an uninterrupted sense of selfhood and self-identity. This notion will be explored further in relation to the inquiry into the dialogical self, which disputes the notion of a unitary and singular self. For the moment it is important to acknowledge the proposition that the schizophrenic experience is constituted significantly by an experience of self as interrupted and discontinuous. The implications of this notion will be explored in terms of schizophrenic intersubjectivity, which, it is maintained, contributes to the individual's sense of a discontinuous and fragmented self. It will be seen in Part 4 of the review of the literature that a variety of theorists have identified intersubjectivity as potentially threatening and even terrifying for the individual with schizophrenia. This experience of

threat will be seen as related to a difficulty, for the person with schizophrenia, in sustaining a sense of selfhood and identity through encounter with the other.

PART 4

It is now necessary to describe the dialogical model of self, as this model partly constitutes the hermeneutic fore-structure of this research. Firstly, the notion of dialogicality will be presented in terms of its intellectual origins. This will be followed by a discussion of dialogicality in terms of its place in intersubjectivity theory. This section will serve simultaneously as an articulation of phenomenologically informed conceptions of internal multiplicity. Finally I shall present understandings derived from current research, relating to the notion of the dialogical self and the experience of schizophrenia.

2.4.1 From Bakhtin to Hermans: Narrating the multivoicedness of the self

The theory of the dialogical self envisages individual subjectivity as constituted variously by an ensemble of self-positions, each relating to both self and world in a different way. The history of this notion can be traced in the work of Kierkegaard, who defined individual subjectivity as the self's relation both to itself and to the world in which it exists (Lysaker, Johannesen & Lysaker, 2005). For the purposes of this work, Mikhail Bakhtin's interpretation of Dostoyevsky's novels emerges as the origin of dialogical theory. In his interpretations Bakhtin suggested that human subjectivity is "polyphonic", and proposed a conception of consciousness as a dialogue between diverse aspects of self. For Bakhtin the self is composed of multiple voices, each articulating a unique and independent perspective, and each contributing to the cultivation of a coherent narrative communicating the individual's being-in-the-world (Barresi, 2002).

Holquist (1990) identifies in Bakhtin's work the notion of an intrapersonal simultaneity, in which the self as dialogical finds itself in a constant and multiply realisable exchange of aspects of itself. Todorov (1984) envisaged Bakhtin's dialogism

through his introduction of the notion of intertextuality. For Todorov the dialogical self, as constituted by a multiplicity of voices, is further constituted by a variety of texts, which speak diversely of the individual's being-in-the-world. These texts exist in dialogical relation with one another, each text emerging in responsive exchange with other texts. In this sense we see the disclosure of a semantic relation between various aspects of self (ibid.)

Hermans and Kempen (1993) and Hermans (2002) feature at the forefront of current thinking around the dialogical self. Hermans, following Bakhtin, articulated the notion of self as a "heterogeneous society", by which he intended to imply the disclosure in individual consciousness of a multiplicity of self-positions, emerging in dialogue with one another (Hermans, 2002).

"Like a society, the self is involved in oppositions, agreements, disagreements, contradictions, negotiations and integrations. Self and society both function as a polyphony of consonant and dissonant voices." (Hermans, 2002, p. 148)

In relation to his conception of self as heterogeneous society Hermans identifies similarities between the intrapersonal and interpersonal self, which he uses as a point from which to move into theorising about intersubjectivity.

2.4.2 Exploring being-with: The disclosure of intra- and interpersonal relatedness through the dialogical self

Central to Hermans' (2002) argument is the notion that both self and society, being polyphonic and multiple, carry with them the opportunity for intersubjective exchange. The dialogical self maintains an internal relationship in which the varying self-positions, or I-positions (Valsiner, 2002), interact in communication with one another. Just as the self corresponds and communicates with other selves, so too does it engage with its own self on a relational level. Valsiner (2002) describes the dialogical self as entailing two domains of selfhood. The first, which he names *heterodialogue*, is

the dialogical process existing between one self, the subject, and another self, the object. For Valsiner the other self needn't necessarily be a real existent. It could, for example, be a hallucinatory figure with which the self relates. The second dialogical process is what Valsiner refers to as *autodialogue*, which is dialogue within oneself. Both hetero- and autodialogue are defined as intersubjective processes.

Lysaker et al (2005) describe this internal dialogue as a process of moving between the various self-positions in relation to a fluctuating interpersonal and temporal context. In Lysaker's conceptualisation we can see reflections of Kimura's expression of self as fluctuating in relation to temporality. Lysaker in fact defines the self as the activity of moving between those divergent aspects which constitute our being-in-the-world. Spinelli (1989) articulates a phenomenological conception of this notion in his notion of the multiple self, which he describes as the disclosure of being as a series of diverse expressions of self. This continual motion between the various self-position, suggests Lysaker, is instantiated through our being-in-relation-to-others. This can be understood clearly if we consider the concept of the self-position. It can be seen how each individual, in their correspondence with their world, is variously disclosed. As indicated earlier, self can emerge in the following ways: self-as-brother, self-as-lover, self-as-smoker, self-as-student, self-as-angry, self-as-musical, and so on. It is suggested that a specific self-position is called forth in relation to the relational context in which individuals find themselves. Luijpen (1969) noted this in his phenomenologically oriented assertion that "man makes man be" (p. 267). In this sense, suggests Luijpen, the individual self emerges as a self in relation to a social context, which enables and even possibly specifies the disclosure of that self. To suggest that a specific social context calls forth the emergence of a specific self-position is to identify the social character of individual subjectivity. It is to suggest, as was suggested by the relational psychoanalysts mentioned above, that self emerges in and through its relation to other. In this sense we

see the conceptualisation of psychological life as co-created through the process of self-other engagement (Becker, 1992).

Central to the notion of the dialogical self is the understanding of self as moving through a multiplicity of possible variations of itself (Hermans & Kempen, 1993; Haggard, 2005). For these authors, movement between self-positions unfolds in relation to a fluctuating intersubjective context. As has been noted, it is fundamental to the disclosure of the dialogical self that the individual is able to construct a coherent narrative throughout the continual transition from one self-position to the next. For Hermans and Kempen (1993) the construction of this narrative is made possible through the uncomplicated movement of diverse selves from the foreground of experience into the background. That is to say, at any one point a particular aspect of self will emerge as dominant in relation to other aspects of self. With a movement into a different relational context the previously dominant self-position will give way, allowing for the emergence into the foreground of a different self-position, which relates more specifically to the emerging interpersonal context. The individual's capacity to allow for and tolerate this shifting into different self-positions is what enables a continuous and coherent narrative of experience (ibid.). As will be seen in the discussion of schizophrenia and the dialogical self, it has been suggested that the schizophrenic experience is partly characterised by an inability to tolerate one's own dialogicality within the intersubjective context, and a sense of threat as accompanying shifts from one self-position to another.

2.4.3 (a) The interrupted self: Schizophrenia and the threat of the multiple "I"

This section will explore the notion that schizophrenic intersubjectivity is negatively impacted upon by the individual's difficulty with tolerating intrapsychic movement between self-positions, which is necessitated by fluctuations in the relational context (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). I refer the reader to the works of Lysaker, Johannesen and Lysaker (2005), and Lysaker and Lysaker (2001, 2002, 2005). These

works emerge at the foreground of my understanding of schizophrenia and the dialogical self.

Lysaker et al (2001) propose that the self is disclosed as an activity of dialogue between independently communicable and divergent aspects of self. In this regard they describe the “multiplicity of voices” which is disclosed as narrating the life-text of the individual (ibid, p. 25). These voices, or “self-positions”, are potentially dissonant in terms of their relation to one another. In this sense the self emerges within the system as multiply definable, multiply communicable, and multiply relatable in terms of its intrapsychic and interpersonal engagement. This multiplicity is furthermore constituted by synchronous and antithetical elements communicating within the union that is self.

Central to Lysaker et al’s (2002) inquiries into the dialogical self is their proposition of internal dialogue as constituting the individual’s narrative of experience. The notion of sustaining a narrative of experience is understood by Lysaker et al as allowing for the sustenance of self-regard, that is, the continuous sense of experiencing oneself as an “I” through the flux that is the dialogical motion between self-positions. And thus we see the assertion of the “I” trans-temporally: “I am angry”, “I am a chef”, “I am confused”, “I am a daughter”, “I am a student”. But always, throughout these fluctuating interpersonal and intrapsychic contexts there remains the assertion of the continuous “I”. For Lysaker and Lysaker (2005) the assertion of the “I” is a dialogical and historical assertion; that is to say, it is an assertion which conveys both the trans-temporal continuity of the self and the continuous fluctuation and dialogue of the self.

As mentioned above, it is crucial to the individual’s experience of a continuous self that they are able to construct a coherent narrative, which extends beyond dialogical fluctuations in self-positions. Lysaker et al (2005) suggest that the significance of being able to create a narrative of self relates specifically to the function of narrative in generating history. Appealing to the insights of Habermas, Lysaker et al suggest that

ones sense of ones own life history is a dialogical and intersubjective experience, and is a sense which is constituted by ones ability to appropriate the variousness of the dialogical self across fluctuations in time.

Now that a sufficient understanding of the dialogical self has been provided, it is necessary to consider this understanding in relation to the schizophrenic experience. Lysaker et al (2002) propose the notion that schizophrenia is at least partially defined by a “disruption in the sense of self” (ibid, p. 207), and suggest that the experience of narrative incoherence is definitive of the phenomenology of schizophrenia. This narrative incoherence has been otherwise described as a “fragmentation of self” (Lysaker & Lysaker, 2005, p. 11), in which certain aspects of self become disembedded in relation to other aspects, rendering them disconnected from the individual’s narration of their history. Lysaker et al propose that the fundamental “problem” experienced by individuals with schizophrenia is a difficulty with maintaining internal dialogue, resulting in a compromised sense of self (Lysaker, Johannesen & Lysaker, 2005; Lysaker & Lysaker, 2001, 2002, 2005). This difficulty is related to the impaired associative process which characterises schizophrenia. That is to say, for individuals with schizophrenia, the capacity to associate one self-position with another self-position, and to move from one to the next, is rendered impoverished.

As noted, it is here proposed that the self is multiple, and is constituted by a dialogue between distinct voices, which communicate various self-positions. These self-positions fluctuate in relation to one another, and in relation to the external environment. The individual’s capacity to respond to the interpersonal demands made by others is an indication of their capacity to tolerate and negotiate the internal movement between the various self-positions. What is being sketched here is an image of the internal constitution of self as being polyphonic (Lysaker & Lysaker, 2005), which is to suggest that the dialogue between aspects of self is largely characterised by a harmonic

interaction between diverse voices. Lysaker et al (2005) describe the schizophrenic experience as a vital disintegration of this harmony, and thus a disintegration of the dialogical self.

2.4.3 (b) Schizophrenia and the interpersonal: Polyphony, cacophony and monologue

Focusing now on schizophrenic intersubjectivity specifically, it has been noted that individuals with schizophrenia experience a tenuous sense of self, which is often disclosed as a condition of feeling “fused” with others (Fromm-Reichmann, 1959, in Lysaker, Johannesen & Lysaker, 2005). Parnas and Handest (2003) describe a person whose experience of the interpersonal was defined by a sense of confusion as to whose thoughts belonged to whom, and a feeling of invasion by the other. Stanghellini (in Lysaker, et al, 2005) documented the experience of individuals with schizophrenia avoiding social contact because of a fear of losing themselves in the interaction, accompanied by a fear of loss of ownership of their life and personal identity.

It is suggested that, given the understanding of the self as comprised of various self-positions emerging in dialogue with one another, and given the suggestion that individuals with schizophrenia experience difficulty in maintaining this internal dialogue, the demands placed on the dialogical self by the interpersonal domain pose the threat of disintegration to the individual with schizophrenia (ibid.). Let me clarify this statement. As has been suggested, the disclosure of the self as a self is primarily constituted by interactions with others. In relation to this proposition it is suggested that the emergence of the self, considered as a relational disclosure of the individual within a shared world, unfolds as an interpersonally propelled dialogue between internal self-positions, which relate to one another and to the interpersonal context. It is then suggested that individuals with schizophrenia have been shown to experience difficulty in maintaining this internal dialogue. This difficulty in maintaining internal dialogue is seen in relation to

the individual with schizophrenia manifesting impoverished associative processes, which in some way debilitate the individual's capacity to move from one aspect of self to another. The difficulty with moving from one self-position to the next, that is, the difficulty with maintaining internal dialogue, has been articulated differently as the central narrative incoherence which can be considered to shape the schizophrenic experience. Lysaker and Lysaker (2005) suggest that being present to an interpersonal context demands of individuals with schizophrenia that they sustain internal dialogue between self-positions. These demands are considered by the authors to present individuals with schizophrenia with the threat of disintegration and invasion by the other.

It is now necessary to consider exactly how this disintegration is disclosed experientially in the individual with schizophrenia. As has been noted, dialogue within the self is propelled through fluctuations in the interpersonal context. It is suggested that these fluctuations contribute to a dilapidation of internal polyphony in individuals with schizophrenia, which is experienced as a sense of disintegration (Lysaker, Johannesen & Lysaker, 2005). Polyphony in the context of the dialogical self is understood as coherence in the motioning of the various self-positions in uncomplicated relation to the interpersonal context. For individuals with schizophrenia it is suggested that through a disruption in the flow of dialogue this polyphony is disrupted, resulting either in a state of internal cacophony, or monologue (Lysaker & Lysaker, 2002).

For these authors this disruption, which amounts to a feeling of disintegration, could emerge in one of two ways. Firstly, internal dialogue could be disrupted if self-positions were ordered in such a way that the individual becomes unable to respond adequately to experience. In this sense, the structure of the dialogue could disintegrate through an incapacity to negotiate the shifting dominance of the various self-positions in relation to one another. Dialogue would cease if self-positions were unable to respond adequately to interpersonal demands, thus creating a sense of internal cacophony; a

profound intrapsychic confusion which brings with it the threat of disintegration (ibid.). The cacophonous experience can be grasped as the multiple voices of the self, screaming all at once, unable to emerge in any hierarchical structure. The multiple selves would remain alive, but without being ordered into patterns of shifting dominance that would characterise a coherent internal polyphony.

The second way in which a disruption of dialogue could emerge would be through the forced reduction of the multiple selves to a limited monological self. For Lysaker and Lysaker (2001) the individual with schizophrenia may respond to the threat posed by their own incapacity to sustain dialogue by condensing the various selves into a non-evolving and “non-interacting amalgam” (ibid, p. 28), thus eliminating the possibility of internal dialogue. In this sense a few, or possibly a single self-position would emerge concretely and pervasively as dominant, and the individual would unfold cross-contextually as manifesting a limited number of fairly entrenched self-positions (Lysaker & Lysaker, 2005). In this instance the emergence and dominance of a limited number of self-positions would render the individual’s opportunity for internal dialogue reduced. The authors suggest that the ascendance and dominance of few self-positions is connected with the reported experience of desolation and feeling-barren described by the individuals who partook in their research, and is as well connected with the flatness of affect commonly known as negative symptomatology (ibid.). The authors further suggest that the emergence of monologue can be understood as connected with the experience of self-destruction and disintegration that has been described by individuals with schizophrenia. In this sense the dominance of one or few self-positions is disclosed phenomenologically as the destruction, or annihilation, of the variety of other self-positions whose communications are thwarted through the emergence of the monological self.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This research process unfolded as a qualitative exploration into the lived experience of a single individual, aimed towards examining the essence of her being-in-the-world-amongst-other-people as a person with schizophrenia. Phenomenological hermeneutics was the methodological platform upon which this work was staged, and manifested as an attempt to allow for a description of lived experience, and a consequent analysis the tradition and history inscribed in the languaging of that experience.

3.1 Data collection: Holding the phenomenological interview

Data collection unfolded as a series of seven unstructured interviews, which occurred once-weekly, and lasted between 30 minutes to 1 hour in length. For the purpose of securing confidentiality, all interviews were tape recorded and transcribed by myself. Also for reasons of confidentiality, tapes and transcriptions remained secure in my office throughout the research process.

As a phenomenologically informed process, the interviewing was characterised as an attempt to elicit nuanced descriptions of the participant's lived experience through initially inviting responses to broad and open-ended questions (Giorgi, 1997). In the interviews I aimed to establish a dialogical dynamic in which both researcher and participant were enabled to engage from positions of equal power in the relationship. Habermas (1984), cited in Kelly (1999), proposes the absence of dominance in the dialogical participation as facilitating free communication within the dialogue. However it must be acknowledged that interviews did manifest a degree of power dynamic, which was clearly explicated as part of the process.

The interviews were conversational in nature, and were realised as a dyadic co-creation of the interview process, constructed by both researcher and participant. Much

of the interview process was characterised by a strong emotional charge in the participant's narrative. I attempted to contain this emotional charge whilst simultaneously sustaining the notion of the interview relationship as being other than a therapeutic relationship. Kvale (1996) proposes the notion of the research conversation as a mode of human interaction geared towards creating knowledge through the mutual engagement of subjectivities. Gadamer (1989) conceptualises the interview conversation as a co-presentation of one subjectivity in relation to another, with the mutual goal of understanding the meaning which one individual ascribes to their experience. The model of Socratic dialogue, as described in Kvale (1996), was employed. This model envisages movement in the conversation from a place of ignorance, through the medium of constantly refined questioning, towards a place of enlightenment. In this sense my questioning was guided by an attempt, through reflection with the participant, to establish successive approximations of the participant's intended meaning. With this in mind, I initiated the interviews by introducing in very broad terms the area of experience towards which I hoped to aim the interviews. I then invited the participant to take free reign in terms of the particular aspects of that experience, namely intersubjectivity, which she felt most salient to her. Throughout the interviews I asked questions relating specifically to the salient experiences which the participant herself was describing. An example of this is provided in the appendix, in which an interview transcription is provided.

With the aim in mind of allowing the observed phenomenon to express itself as it is lived in the individual's daily experience, the interviews were geared towards establishing a sense of the participant's experience of living with schizophrenia within the interpersonal context. Keen (1975) delineates a focus, within the phenomenological interview, on describing experience as embedded self-reflectively within a spatial, temporal and interpersonal context. In this sense it was important to establish the

participant's unique manner of locating her own experience in a spatial, temporal and dialogical lived world, such that the immediately lived nature of the experience could be narrated. In relation to this, the interviews were conceptualised in methodological alignment with Strasser's (1969) dialogical phenomenology. Strasser, cited in Polkinghorne (1989), proposes the notion of meaning as arising between rather than within individual subjectivities. In this sense I aimed the interview process towards eliciting a narration of the participant's sense of self as located interactionally and dialogically within her world. Individual subjectivity was explored in terms of its manifestation as a "we" rather than an "I", and as situated reciprocally within a world with which that subjectivity is in dialogue (ibid.). Significant to phenomenological hermeneutic research is a focus on the individual's experience of everyday-ness (Packer, 1985). In this sense the nature of the individual's practical engagement with her world on an immediate, embodied level, was explored in depth throughout the interview process.

A discussion of the interview process would be incomplete without a description of the interpersonal complexities which arose at times within the relationship. Primarily, the complexities emerged in relation to Sharon's expressed difficulty with articulating the meaning which she wished to convey. Her languaging of her experience was at times notably vague, diffuse, and even tangential, rendering her narrative difficult to interpret. Sharon seemed to find it difficult to answer certain questions, and seemed to drift in her responses. Such questions related most notably to Sharon's apprehension of herself in terms of her interpersonal engagements. In a sense she seemed to experience difficulty with articulating exactly what it is about engaging interpersonally that is so challenging for her. Another important difficulty which emerged in the interview process related to Sharon's tendency to tire quite quickly. The nature of the questioning, and the immediacy of the interpersonal engagement, seemed to exhaust her. It is important to

acknowledge here that the research process is one which unfolds on both an internal and interpersonal intersubjective level. With this in mind I held the complexities emerging in the interview process reflectively, allowing them to inform my understanding and interpretation of the nature of Sharon's interpersonal experience beyond the research process.

Apart from interview data, the participant further provided me with written narrations of her lived experience. The participant composed a series of pieces of writing in which she described an intrapersonal dialogue between two clearly identified and named aspects of her personality, which I have named Adrienne and Sharon. As with the interview data, written data were transcribed, remaining faithful to the contents of the descriptions. The original copy of the writing was returned to the participant, and, in service of maintaining confidentiality, transcriptions did not leave my office. An example of this writing has been attached in the appendix.

In terms of the validity and reliability of the data collection process, it must firstly be noted that transcription reliability was secured through my listening to the recordings three times before transcribing, so as to secure a correct hearing of the data. In terms of reliability as it pertained to the data collection process, I was aware of the possibility of inconsistencies emerging from one interview to the next. I attempted to accommodate this possibility by asking similar questions repeatedly, with the aim of establishing the degree of internal consistency, or narrative ambiguity, which emerged in the participant's account. It is important to note that hermeneutic interpretation engages with the plurality of meanings, potentially ambivalent and discontinuous, which could emerge in the individual's narrative (Kvale, 1996). Engaging with this plurality does imply an allowance of the notion that meaning can emerge variously, and this notion must be factored into considerations of reliability and the hermeneutic process. In terms of the validity of the data collection process, as noted previously, I aimed to establish a sense of equivalence

in terms of the power dynamic in the interviews. With this in mind, the notion of intersubjective agreement emerged as significant (ibid.). Throughout the interview process I engaged with the participant in an attempt to display my understandings of what she was saying. Through this I encouraged her to correct or refine my interpretations and understandings should they misshape her intended meaning in any way. The aim of this was to establish a degree of intersubjective agreement within the data collection and analysis process, which may contribute to the validity of that process.

3.2 Hermeneutic phenomenology: The revelation of experience as text and texture

This exposition of method will unfold as an expression of the methodology and epistemology of phenomenological hermeneutics, and a consideration of the hazy line which separates pure phenomenology from hermeneutic phenomenology. It is firstly necessary to present an understanding of phenomenology, as conceptualised from within the Husserlian, Heideggerian and Merleau-Pontian tradition.

Phenomenological research unfolds as an attendance to the “fidelity of the phenomenon as it is lived” (Giorgi, 1975). The phenomenological agenda is directed towards an elicitation of the lived world through descriptions of the individual's being-in-the-world. The notion of being-in-the-world is characterised in phenomenology as the motional location of individual subjectivity. Subjectivity is seen as immediately located in a lived context, whilst being simultaneously dynamically propelled towards an intended future (Sartre, 1943, 1970). This notion emerges as the theoretical pinnacle of pure phenomenology, which is Husserl's conception of intentionality (Husserl, 1927; Palmer, 1971). Intentionality is a feature of human consciousness characterised by the directedness of consciousness towards an object that is other than consciousness itself (Brooke, 1991). The concept of consciousness as intentional implies an outward-directedness, in which human subjectivity is seen in engagement with the world. And so we see a theory of being-in-the-world, which denotes existence as a dialogue between

self and world. This provides for the phenomenological researcher a position of attending to lived experience in a way which grasps that experience as shared and dialogical (Willis, 2001). Willis articulates phenomenology as a focus on “the things themselves”. In this sense phenomenology emerges as an attempt to “illuminate” the quality of a phenomenon, as that phenomenon is perceived by the experiencing individual. This mode of perception is delineated by Merleau-Ponty (1962) as an unclouded attunement to the life-world, as lived by individual subjectivity

Three phenomenological procedures will be presented here as definitive of what can be called pure phenomenology. Spinelli (1989) delineates these procedures as the rules of epoche, description and horizontalisation. Crucial to pure phenomenology, the epoche unfolds as a “bracketing” of those knowledges which may misshape the researcher’s apprehension of the phenomenon. Ashworth (1996) describes this suspension of assumption as an idealistic approach to coming to know the phenomenon, and suggests that a full bracketing of assumption is impossible, but must nonetheless unfold as a methodological aspiration. The epoche will emerge as less significant to this research process, which is hermeneutically informed. The epoche does remain important to this process, however, in that it inspires in the researcher an effort to be “transparent” in relation to his awareness and speculations (Moustakas, 1994). This transparency enables the researcher to grasp the dialogue between his knowledges, and the knowledges emerging through the process of analysis.

The next rule, intrinsic to both pure and hermeneutic phenomenology, is that of description. Phenomenological description manifests as free of explanation (Spinelli, 1989). In this sense the goal of phenomenological research is the revelation of lived experience through faithful, concrete descriptions aimed at disclosing the textural quality of experience (Moustakas, 1994).

The third and final rule of phenomenological praxis is that of horizontalisation (Spinelli, 1989), which emerges as an equalisation in the researcher's approach to data. All units of information in phenomenological data, referred to by Kruger (1988) as "natural meaning units", are approached as holding equal importance in relation to one another. The rule suggests that the researcher should initially avoid imposing hierarchies of meaning onto the data. It is suggested that through avoiding the imposition of their own assumptions of hierarchy onto the data, the researcher is better able to provide a faithful description of the observed phenomenon (Spinelli, 1989).

I would now like to pursue a description of hermeneutic phenomenology, which does manifest some core methodological and epistemological differences from pure phenomenology. The philosophical hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer will be articulated in this section. Gadamer's hermeneutic encourages that the researcher acknowledge their own system of knowledges, such that those knowledges can remain transparent (Gadamer, 1976). Hermeneutics is concerned primarily with understanding texts. This emerges in relation to hermeneutic ontology, which maintains that human experience is essentially semantic and textual in structure and expression (Packer, 1985; Hein & Austin, 2001). Von Eckartsberg (1986) conceptualised the hermeneutic exploration as an investigation of the *life-text*, commenting on the linguality of human experience. Gadamer's original assertion that "being that can be understood *is language*" (cited in Palmer, 1969, p. 42) emerges as the formative assertion of the linguistic character of being. For the hermeneuticist this facilitates an approach to human experience as a multi-layered text which enables thick and plurivocal descriptions (Kahn, 2000). This plurivocity of meaning as inherent to language was also noted by Schulte (2000), who identified the interrelatedness between the system of meanings expressed through the text, and the embeddedness of those meanings in a lived social world.

As noted, it is accepted that the researcher can never fully detach from those assumptions which may impact upon their reading of the text. These assumptions need to be held in the researcher's reflective approach to the subject. Gadamer (1975) developed the notion of the *horizon*, denoting this as the range of vision from a particular point of reference. He suggested that understanding unfolds in the research process through a "fusion of horizons", which emerges through both parties allowing for the entry and alignment of their knowledges (Sullivan & McCarthy, 2005). It can be seen how this manifests as unlike pure phenomenology, which locates the researcher as invisible within the process of meaning-making. Husserl's pure phenomenology can however be seen as pre-empting hermeneutic phenomenology's dialogical thread. Husserl, cited in Hunter (2004), denotes the world of fact and interpretation as a world co-constituted through interaction. The concept of dialogicality in phenomenology was expressed by Masek (1983), who envisaged the fusion of horizons as a dialogue between viewpoints.

Gadamer constructed the research process as a dialogical interpretive relationship in which researcher interacted with text as an "I" in relation to a "Thou" (Aylesworth, 1991). In this sense, for Gadamer text is experience, and experience unfolds as historically embodied, and existing contemporaneously with the researcher. Sardello (1975) articulated this notion in the following statement:

"We can approach a text as a human voice out of the past, a voice that asks to be heard, and that requests a response ... The text's suspension from the world can be removed, returning the text to a living communication." (Sardello, p. 275)

In this sense data gleaned through the interview process are grasped within the hermeneutic process as a living embodiment of the experiencing individual's bringing-into-being-through-language of their tradition and history (Moran, 2000). Fundamental to the emergence of meaning through hermeneutic dialogue is the notion of the hermeneutic circle. Packer (1985) articulated the hermeneutic method as a progressive

uncovering of experience, against the background of the narrator and the examiner of that experience. Hermeneutic analysis begins as parts of the text are grasped in relation to the whole text, and vice versa. This process sets up a dialectic within the analysis of data, in which the researcher's understandings of smaller units of the text are continually refined in relation to a dynamic understanding of the text as a whole (Kahn, 2000). Now that a sufficient theoretical grounding has been laid, I would like to proceed with a fusion of the more purely phenomenological method described, presenting this fusion as the analytic procedure of this research.

3.3 Data Analysis: Dialectics and the hermeneutic motion

The hermeneutic phenomenological analysis of a text involves a progressive motioning from raw data collected, towards a narrative of meaning. This process, Kahn (2000) suggests, involves a full immersion within the data through reading and re-reading the text in multiple ways, and in no set order. The aim of this repetitious reading is to facilitate in the researcher the development of an orienting interpretation of the text, which will allow for the emergence of significant themes from the text.

The next phase in the hermeneutic process is that of data reduction. This step necessitates that the researcher decide which parts of the text emerge as central, and which seem less relevant. The data is then subjected to a process of line-by-line coding, which facilitates the analysis of themes. Throughout the researcher must engage in the dialectic that is the hermeneutic circle. This dialectic must occur within the text, in the form of coming to know parts of the text variously in relation to the whole text, and coming to know the whole in relation to its parts (Reeder, 1998). Moran (2000) articulates the notion of a conversation between aspects of the text; between researcher and participant, as well as within each self engaged in the meaning-making process. The hermeneutic circle also emerges in relation to Gadamer's fusion of horizons, which sees a dynamic interaction between knowledges existing within researcher and

participant, both prior to the research process and emerging during the process (Lavery, 2003).

“Hermeneutics invites participants into an ongoing conversation, but does not provide a set methodology. Understanding occurs through a fusion of horizons, which is a dialectic between the pre-understandings of the research process, the interpretive framework, and the sources of information.” (Koch, 1995, in Lavery, 2003)

In relation to this statement I shall employ elements of Giorgi’s phenomenological praxis. Giorgi (1970) proposes the phenomenological attendance to the life-world as based in openness to future possibility and past facticity. Giorgi put forward a phenomenological research method constituted by four steps, each unfolding within the research process in dialogue with one another. Initially, the researcher must read through the full body of text gathered in an effort to get a sense of the text as a whole (Giorgi, 1985). Once this process of immersion in the life-text is complete, the researcher goes back to the beginning, rereading the text multiple times, this time with the more distantiated aim of identifying specific meaning units within the text, with particular reference to the phenomenon being observed. Kelly (1999) cites the interchange of empathy and distantiation as a further dialogue within the hermeneutic motion.

From this point the researcher must then work through the isolated meaning units, approaching each unit in terms of its relation to the life-text as constituted by various parts and as a whole (Knaack, 1984). It can be seen how this motion instantiates a hermeneutic trend in the research process, insofar as a dialogue is being created between units of meaning in relation to the entire text. This multiple rereading, it is suggested, allows for the phenomenon to reveal itself multifariously to the researcher.

“Stay with the phenomenon, let it be in its appearance, view it from different angles, persist to the point of exhausting what it offers during a particular time and place of perceiving and experiencing.” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 92)

For Giorgi, the final step in the process is to synthesize the units of meaning into a coherent statement, which should emerge as a narrative of the individual’s experience (Giorgi, 1970). This narrative must then engage in a dialogue of validation, in which the researcher must return both to the data protocols as well as to the research participant, in an effort to secure consensual validation of the phenomenological description generated.

Throughout this process the rules of horizontalisation and the epoche must be held in the researcher’s awareness. The epoche does not hold ground to the same extent in this more specifically hermeneutic research. However, it is important for the hermeneuticist to maintain a high degree of transparency, attempting throughout the research process to be aware of those knowledges which inform him or her. As noted, the generation of knowledge, as understood within phenomenological hermeneutics, is an intersubjective and dialogical process, and so the researcher’s own history, tradition, knowledge and personhood holds a space within the process. I would now like to proceed with an account of the process of participant selection, exploring case study research as it has unfolded in this project.

3.4.1 Case study methodology and phenomenological research

In terms of the decision to adopt a case study method of investigation, it was considered essential both to the methodology and the nature of the phenomenon being investigated that a data collection procedure which enables the emergence of rich, ideographic information be utilised. An exploration of the individual as individual, as facilitated by case study procedure, was seen to enable the disclosure of immediate, subjectively lived experience (Lindegger, 1999). Hermeneutic phenomenology’s

devotion to the significance of language in the revelation of experience inspired the decision to engage explicitly with the narrative of one individual, allowing that narrative to unfold multiply and longitudinally, thus providing thick information on the phenomenon being observed.

As a descriptive and interpretive methodology, phenomenology makes an important distinction between straightforward experience and reflective experience (Spinelli, 1989). Straightforward experience is delineated as the event as experienced in the moment of being in that event. Straightforward experience is considered partially incommunicable, as it is partially prior to reflection. Reflective experience is proposed as a processing of lived experience which renders that experience communicable, and therefore interpretable. Reflective experience is clarified further as the seat of the phenomenological "I"; that is, the self's experience of itself within a lived context. Case study research is proposed as enabling an immediate apprehension of the phenomenological "I", the experiencing self, as that self languages its own reflective experience.

In terms of the applicability of case study methodology, Kelly (1999) supports the notion that case study research can be considered highly applicable when incorporated within a qualitative research endeavour aimed at exploring and enriching existing research. This project, as noted, has its informative routes in phenomenological research relating to schizophrenia and the dialogical model of self. The use of case study methodology to explore the veracity of this research is therefore considered appropriate to the research design. Further to this, the long-term availability of the participant enabled a sustained interview process, which facilitated an unlimited and longitudinal data collection. The discontinuation of the data collection process, within the context of case study research, occurs when researcher and participant agree that a point of theoretical saturation has been reached (Kelly, 1999). For this reason I was

unable to determine the exact number of interviews which would be necessary to complete the study. Theoretical saturation occurs when there is mutual consensus that no new information is emerging, which could challenge or contribute to the emerging narrative account of the phenomenon being observed. As noted, the point of theoretical saturation was determined in the dialogue between researcher and participant.

Issue of validity and reliability is of prime concern within any research process. The data collection and analysis process embraced in this project was largely informed by its emergence as a case study research, and this has important implications in terms of the reader's understandings and expectations regarding what constitutes validity and reliability. Importantly, this project aims at a thick description of lived experience. It does not aim to suggest that the experience being described is universal. Rather, it aims to describe and validate individual experience, reveal the nuances of that experience, and articulate the possibility that others may share that experience. In this respect, the plurality of meaning, the richness of texture and the immediacy of reflective experience which a case study design is considered to facilitate, supports the validity of this work in terms of collection and analysis of data. Further to this, Spinelli (1989) proposes the notion of intersubjective validity, which he delineates as the emergence of validity through the reciprocal exchange between researcher and participant. In this sense, the researcher's estimations of meaning are confirmed or disconfirmed, clarified or altered, through dialogical exchange with the participant. This process, which is central to interviewing as it unfolds in case study research, is considered to enable and secure the researcher's understandings, with respect to the validity of those understandings (ibid.).

3.4.2 Participant selection: The Case of Adrienne and Sharon

The participant for the study was chosen according to a fairly uncomplicated set of criteria, which included the following: Most crucially, it was necessary that the

participant be informed of the fact that he or she has been diagnosed with a schizophrenic illness, as delineated in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (IV-TR). The subtype of the diagnosis was not considered relevant to the study, however the participant is diagnosed with Paranoid Schizophrenia, and so the findings from this study may be considered to be of particular relevance to individuals diagnosed with this particular type of schizophrenia. What was considered important as a criterion for selection was the duration of the period of illness. It was considered essential that the participant had been diagnosed more than one year prior to the data collection process. This was considered important because the individual would need to have had longitudinal experience of being-in-the-world as a person with schizophrenia in order to make extensive commentary on the nature of the experience.

In terms of the age of the participant, it was considered important that he or she be older than 21 and younger than 45. This limitation refines the focus of the study to the experiences of adults suffering from schizophrenia. Further to this, the possibility of age-related cognitive decline emerging comorbidly may complicate the presentation of an individual with schizophrenia, thus suggesting that an older participant's experience may be different to that of someone in early to middle adulthood. The participant's culture, race and gender were not considered relevant to the criteria for selection.

It was also considered essential that the participant not be diagnosed with a comorbid mood, anxiety, personality or cognitive disorder as such a presentation may complicate the focus on the schizophrenic experience.

Fundamental to the criteria for selection was the notion that the participant, throughout the course of the data collection process, not manifest any psychotic symptoms. This was considered important for a variety of reasons. Primarily the psychotic individual cannot give legal consent to participation in research, and so working with a psychotic individual would render the study ethically unsound. It was also

made clear to the participant that should she exhibit any symptoms during the research process which may indicate the emergence of psychosis, her participation would necessarily be discontinued.

The expression of experience through language reveals subtleties and colourations which shape human subjectivity and phenomenal experience. For the sake of grasping the subtleties of the participant's use of language, it was considered essential to participation in the study that the participant be able to speak English fluently.

Finally, it was considered essential that the participant be fully informed, prior to commencement with the study, of the nature of his or her diagnosis. Whether the participant concurs with the diagnosis or not was not considered relevant.

With these criteria in mind, the participant was sought through Fort England Psychiatric Hospital, Grahamstown. The hospital discharge ward houses individuals pre-discharge, and the participant was found in this ward. After I spent some time with the participant engaging in a brief therapeutic intervention, she was discharged from the ward. It was following her discharge that I approached the participant regarding the possibility of her participation in the study. The participant was informed of the details of the study, and of her rights in engagement with the study. These rights were delineated in a contractual agreement signed by the participant, myself, and the research supervisor. (The agreement is attached to in the appendix of this project.)

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter will be presented as a narrative of the experience of the participant who contributed to this study. It is important, in terms of my effort to maintain phenomenological integrity, that this narrative unfold as free of theoretical assumptions which may transform the essence of the experience. However it must be acknowledged that I do enter the research process with my own system of knowledges, which engage in a dialogue with the participant's expressions. In service of enabling transparency in terms of my own impact on the narrative it is important that brief mention is made of the kinds of theoretical, social and cultural assumptions which may have interacted with my apprehension of the participant's telling of her experience.

Firstly, this project has to a certain extent been informed by previous research into the intersubjective experience of people diagnosed with a mental illness (Knight & Bradfield, 2003). The work focused on the experience of three people diagnosed with a variety of illnesses, examining being-diagnosed in terms of the impact on the individual's intersubjective experience. The results gleaned from this previous research, although quite different to the current project, may have had an influence on my understandings. Secondly, as therapist, I am psychodynamically oriented, and this orientation may be seen as shaping, to an extent, my languaging of the participant's experience. Finally, as has been noted, prior to engaging with the participant in the research process, I was involved in a short-term therapy with her when she was an inpatient at Fort England Psychiatric Hospital. This process may have impacted on my current understandings insofar as my knowledge of the participant had been informed, prior to engagement in the research process, both by psychiatric staff in the hospital as well as by the participant's mother.

By way of introducing this narrative of experience, it is necessary to furnish the reader with some details regarding the participant. Sharon⁴ is a white woman in her mid-twenties. She works as a chef. She has been diagnosed with Schizophrenia, Paranoid Type, and her condition is commonly defined by mildly disorganised speech and thought content, with the emergence of delusions, mostly persecutory, when she experiences a psychotic episode. She has experienced two psychotic episodes, her most recent being five months prior to engaging in the research process. Sharon narrated herself as a religious woman, who has a strong love of people, and derives much satisfaction and meaning from being “creative”. Her sense of self as neglected, abandoned and persecuted in relation to her family speaks firmly through her reflections on her self. The first section (4.1) of this presentation of results will unfold as a comprehensive narrative of the participant’s experience, as she described it. In this section all themes which emerged from the data, central and peripheral, will be noted. This will be followed in section 4.2 by a more detailed delineation of the core themes, which emerged as most significant in terms of Sharon’s experience.

4.1 Reading the life-text: A narration of being-in-relation

From the series of interviews conducted, as well as the written data provided, it emerged that Sharon experiences a great deal of *isolation* in her existence as a social being. This isolation emerged primarily in relation to her feeling of being chronically *misunderstood*⁵, and her feeling that those who are not mentally ill could not possibly *empathise* with her, and could not understand “where she is coming from”. The feeling of being misunderstood was described in relation to an anxiety which Sharon

⁴ The participant described two aspects of herself, which have been named Sharon and Adrienne. Neither of these are real names. The name Sharon is a pseudonym for the name which the participant uses to refer to herself.

⁵ The italicised words represent the themes which emerged in the reading of the data.

experiences, relating to her feeling that she is *unable to communicate* her feelings and thoughts effectively to others.

“S⁶ – Um, if there is frustration and agitation, and if you don’t come across properly in the way that you’re trying to get across to that person.

R – If you don’t come across properly in the way that you’re trying to get across to that person.

S – Ja, like how you’re trying to voice your opinion. How you’re trying to get across the way that you feel. How you would relate that to a situation that you’re trying to work through.”

The perception of others being unable to empathise with her, apart from its attachment to her sense of being-isolated, was connected in Sharon’s description with feeling-abandoned, most particularly by her family, whom she feels are unable to “grasp her meaning”. Sharon’s sense of isolation was further described as an experience of being unsupported by others. Her sense of isolation is further seen as being related to her *self-doubt*, in which she constantly doubts the validity of her existence, and doubts the value of her contributions in social situations. This experience of doubt emerged variously as a *caution in interpersonal relationships*, as well as more existential doubt, in which Sharon came to question her own being-in-the-world.

“You feel very lonely, and you feel cut off from the rest of society. You feel abandoned, and you constantly keep doubting yourself. You question yourself. You keep asking yourself questions. Am I doing the right thing? Who am I in this time?”

The experience of feeling misunderstood, seen here as constituting Sharon’s experience of isolation, is further connected with her sense that she is *unheard* by those with whom she interacts. She experiences a sense of disconnection from others through

⁶ S = Sharon; R = Researcher

them not listening to what she is saying. Sharon articulated this feeling of isolation and disconnection most lucidly in the following statement:

“You’re like stranded on a desert island. And there’s nothing. There’s just like birds and trees. And you’ve just got to make do with that.”

In this description I also note the experience of existing “in a barren place” of which Sharon spoke. She suggested that her interpersonal experiences at times affect this feeling-barren, which is an experience Sharon attached to her sense of aloneness and detachment.

“I think you go into the barren place sometimes through people, or relationships that happen. At times you find it difficult so you’re kind of stranded and you land up there and you need to find your way out of there.”

Sharon’s experience of being-in-relation, as experienced after her being diagnosed with schizophrenia, has come to be defined by her sense of herself as *probed and invaded* by a *disrespectful* other. This experience is largely defined by Sharon’s experience of being constantly checked and questioned by others, who ask “120 questions” in order that they may assess her mental illness. The experience is connected with a sense that something is taken out of her. As Sharon herself articulated: “They’re taking my soul away.”

In terms of her experience of herself in close interpersonal relationships, Sharon suggested that her main concern relates to the *lack of reciprocity* which she experiences. In this sense Sharon described a feeling of being abused by others, whose contributions to the relationship are, as she experiences it, far less substantial than her contributions. She described a wish for others to “meet her half way”, and suggested that she does not often have this experience.

“I always felt that I had to give. And I was giving so much and never receiving. And I thought, ok, I’m going to do my own thing, and they must do their own thing. And they must meet me halfway. And they’ve never met me halfway.”

Central to Sharon’s experience of herself in relation to others, and central to the findings of this project, is her experience of difficulty in being-in-relation-to-the-other in a way which she feels they would like her to be. This difficulty emerged in a variety of ways. Firstly, it was disclosed as Sharon’s rejection of that part of herself which she called *Adrienne*⁷, and her feeling of being pressured into being-*Adrienne* by others, who rejected the emergence of *Sharon*⁸. This will be explored fully in the delineation of core themes to follow. Sharon’s experience of herself in relationships, as was described, seemed to be shaped largely by her need to resist being-for-the-other. In this sense she felt a tremendous amount of pressure, imposed on her by the other, to become *Adrienne*, and she raged against this pressure through asserting the *Sharon* aspect of her self. Sharon spoke often of not wanting to “put on a mask”, by which she intended, amongst other things, a need to resist being as others wanted her to be.

Another element of Sharon’s interpersonal experience which she described is her expression of a fairly *limited range of modes of interpersonal engagement*. In this sense Sharon articulated her expectation that certain people should interact in a certain way, should say certain things, and should ask certain questions. The failure of the other to engage in a manner fitting her expectations was connected with a feeling of being dominated and controlled by the other, a tendency to respond to the other with anger, as well as with the above-mentioned experience of having part of herself taken from her.

⁷ Adrienne is the participant’s original name, which she used to refer to herself until after her second psychotic break. Since then she has referred to herself as Sharon. Both names are pseudonyms.

⁸ The italicisation of the names *Sharon* and *Adrienne* indicates a reference to the aspect of the participant’s personality. When the name “Sharon” is not given in italics the author intends to refer to the participant herself.

Sharon spoke extensively of her need to be *cautious* in interpersonal relationships. This caution, which she described as having to “walk on eggshells”, unfolded as a need both for herself to be cautious, so as to avoid being hurt by the other, and a need for the other to be cautious, so as to avoid effecting emotional disruption in Sharon. Sharon described feeling anxious that she may be in some way “demoralised” through being in the presence of the other. This caution was tied to Sharon’s experience of herself as a schizophrenic person. She described being cautious around others who are not schizophrenic, and suggested that she feels anxious about “doing the wrong thing” and possibly upsetting others.

“You need to basically walk on eggshells the whole time. Hopping on ice from one block to the next, deciding what’s right and what’s wrong before you go ahead and do it. Because you don’t want to be shouted at or demoralised in your own space.”

A significant aspect of Sharon’s intersubjective experience related to her *intolerance of ambiguity* in terms of being-in-relation-to-others. As will emerge in the clarification of core themes, Sharon described a fairly inflexible self-perception, defined by a limited range of potential modes of self-expression. In relation to this fairly sparse portrayal of self was seen a difficulty with tolerating ambivalence in terms of her awareness of self and her being-in-relation. In this sense Sharon was seen to experience difficulty in negotiating interpersonal experiences which require that she engage in a manner which does not fit with her fairly concrete self-descriptive mould. Sharon’s words describe this experience most acutely:

“It’s very difficult, because you don’t know which side to stand on. And you can’t be in between. You’ve got to stand on one side or the other. It’s like you’re being pulled. It’s like a monkey that’s eating a jelly baby, and you’re stretching.”

Another aspect of Sharon's being-in-relation, which emerged on the periphery of the core themes, related to her understanding of what it means to know someone intimately. For Sharon, to know someone completely is to know the nuances of their facial expressions and physical presence, and to be able to predict their behaviour.

"It's almost like you spend so much time with that person that you get to know them intimately. You get to know their facial expressions, and their different ways of walking, and you become so close that you can know each other so well that you can know their next move, or what they're going to say. Or you can help them finish their sentence because you know what's going to come next."

Before proceeding with a detailed exploration of the central themes which emerged, it is important to comment on Sharon's experience of positive relationships. Sharon suggested that her positive relationships were generally relationships with other mentally ill people, mostly fellow inpatients. She described feeling-understood in these relationships, and suggested that through being understood she feels worthy of the person and the relationship. Feeling-worthy emerged as central to Sharon's experience of positive relationships, and was connected with what she described as a feeling of "rejuvenation".

R - Tell me about the experience of feeling understood by someone?

S - It's like rejuvenating. It's like a caring and loving environment.

R - Feeling understood is rejuvenating?

S - Ja

R - What does rejuvenating mean?

S - It means that you can have substance in a friendship where there are people who understand you as a person. They know your ins and outs. So when you're feeling down and you need upliftment they can bring that to you."

In Sharon's statement we can see her sense of feeling made-new in a relationship which affirms her through understanding her.

4.2.1 Adrienne and Sharon: An exposition of self-perception

Although this articulation of results is focused specifically on Sharon's intersubjective experience, it is necessary to describe her perception of herself, as this is seen as contributing to her experience of being-in-relation. As has been stated, *Sharon* is the name given to the aspect of the participant's personality which emerged after her second psychotic break. *Sharon* and *Adrienne*, as aspects of personality, were described by the participant as distinct and contrasting. Although she spoke rather ambiguously about this contrast, it seems that *Sharon* emerged out of *Adrienne* as a way of helping *Adrienne* cope with the difficulties she was experiencing in her family system. *Adrienne* was described as 'trapped', 'abused', 'confined', 'placid' and 'dominated'. *Adrienne* was further described as a "mask" which the participant put on. This putting on of the mask was disclosed as the participant's attempt to seek confirmation and recognition from an otherwise disconfirming family system. *Adrienne* was described as needing to "prove herself" to her family; needing to show them that she exists and is worthy. This need was coupled by a pervasive self-doubt which *Adrienne* experienced.

The emergence of *Sharon* unfolded in the participant's descriptions as an effort to negate the painful consequences of being pervasively disconfirmed and confined by others. *Sharon* is disclosed in the narrative as the participant's attempt to concretely disconnect from her history and awaken a new aspect of her self, which is seen as assuming a dominant position in terms of her experience of self.

"For the old *Adrienne* is dead, and passed and gone."

In this statement we see the powerful severance of *Adrienne*, as an aspect of personality, from the participant's perception of self. With the emergence of *Sharon* a "rejuvenated" self was described. Descriptions of *Sharon* were essentially sparse, concrete and undeviating. The following quotes, taken from the written data provided,

will give the reader a sense of the rigidly boundaried nature of Sharon's perception of herself:

"Sharon – Is a fighter and a go-getter. One happy content eccentric person.

Sharon – Loves to be happy, eccentric and jovial without putting on a front.

Sharon – Strength. Strong person who can face the world and all things.

Sharon – The strong survivor

Sharon – Has always been eccentric for this is my character trademark.

Sharon – Is a strong willed person who never gives up whatever the cost.

Adrienne is a person who perseveres and is a go-getter and enjoys life. She finds it hard when she's around family members because she loves to be *Sharon*, who is eccentric and jovial and happy and enjoys life."

In these statements we see an unbending perception of self, defined by determination and perseverance on the one hand, and eccentricity and joviality on the other.

4.2.2 They make me live as Adrienne: Resisting being-for-others

This section will emerge as a narrative exposition of the core theme which emerged through reading of the data. As has been described in the previous section, the participant's perception of self is defined by a pronounced descriptive singularity. In this sense we see the narration of *Sharon* as someone who is *eccentric* and *perseverant*. These two qualities were disclosed as dominant in terms of the participant's description of herself, and emerged repeatedly throughout the interview process and in the written data. Eccentricity and perseverance emerged somewhat ambiguously as qualities embodied specifically by *Sharon*, who is described as having emerged out of Adrienne. *Sharon's* emergence is seen as a way of helping *Adrienne* to cope with her disconfirming and at times punitive family system. As can be seen in the following statement, *Sharon* assumes a position of dominance in relation to *Adrienne*, who becomes essentially annihilated in the process.

“For the old Adrienne is dead and passed and gone and I have forgiven the family but that pain will still be like an open wound that needs healing.”

Importantly, this annihilation of *Adrienne*, spoken of metaphorically here, was enacted concretely when the participant, at thirteen years of age, attempted suicide.

The participant spoke with vigorous frustration of the difficulty which she endures as a result of people disallowing the emergence of *Sharon*. She expressed a profound difficulty tolerating the notion that others in her social environment want to reawaken *Adrienne* and disconfirm *Sharon*. She articulated this difficulty in the following statement, speaking with specific reference to her mother. In this quotation the participant spoke of the fact that her mother refuses to call her by her new name, Sharon, and insists on calling her Adrienne.

S – I feel hurt. Because she doesn't care, she doesn't understand that's who I am. And she's never really understood me, and my individuality and independence and perseverance. She would rather take it away from me than let me live my own life?

R – The life that Sharon is living?

S – Yes.

R – She wants to take that life away?

S – And make me live as Adrienne.”

In contrast to the experience of being denied her emergence as a rejuvenated *Sharon*, the participant spoke of her joy at having this new, eccentric and perseverant aspect of herself affirmed by others:

R – And what does it mean to you that they call you Sharon?

S – I feel happy. I feel like rejuvenated and very jovial.”

In this we can see the participant's experience of relationships which confirm her eccentric and perseverant *Sharon-ness* as being positive relationships, and those which attempt to reawaken *Adrienne* as negative relationships. This central element of

Sharon's intersubjective experience was reflected variously throughout her expressions in the data collection process, and is tied with a number of related themes. As has been noted, Sharon described a difficulty with tolerating ambiguity in interpersonal exchange. In this sense she is seen as presenting herself to the other as *Sharon*, and described feeling angered and frustrated by the other's insistence on her being-*Adrienne*. The assertion of *Sharon* in interpersonal relationships is also seen in relation to the participant's fairly rigid expectations regarding how others should relate to her. As has been noted, she described firm expectations regarding how others should be-in-relation, and described feeling angered and frustrated when others do not conform to these expectations. In this sense she is seen as having a defined conception of how people should relate to *Sharon*, and becomes angered when they relate to *Adrienne* instead, and make her "live as *Adrienne*". It can be seen that the participant is therefore acutely aware of her own being-for-others, and resists, sometimes aggressively, being-for-others in a way which does not conform with her expectations.

Sharon experiences being-for-the-other in a way which she feels they want her to be - being-as-*Adrienne* for example - as a fairly self-destructive experience. Importantly, in terms of the discussion to follow, this experience can be seen as disintegrative. As can be seen in the quotation to follow, Sharon experiences a sense of being broken down when pressured into being-as-*Adrienne*, and feels a need to rebuild herself as *Sharon* when such interactions come to an end.

"I've kind of got to step back and put on the mask and be who they want me to be.

It means that I have to delve down deep into myself, and when I'm with the past people that I was friends with I have to go back and I have to bring up everything that I did around them. And then I have to spend time with them in that moment

trying to be who they want me to be and not who I want to be. So when I leave spending time with them I've got to build myself back up again.

In this statement can be seen the profound discomfort which the participant experiences in having to be-in-relation-to-others in a way which does not concur with her definitive *Sharon-ness*.

4.2.3 It's kind of hard to get a conversation going

The final emergent theme, which needs to be commented on briefly, is Sharon's difficulty communicating with others. Sharon expressed a difficulty coming to know others, and suggested that she finds the process of starting a conversation very challenging. She related this difficulty firstly to her own need, when engaging with others, to maintain a degree of guardedness and defensiveness, which she described as "putting up walls". As can be seen in the following quote, the maintenance of a guarded mode of interaction was connected with the self-doubt which has been spoken of.

"When you've got those walls up on yourself, you keep questioning yourself. You keep having things going on in your mind. It's like 'Am I okay? Is there anything wrong with me? Have I said something wrong?'"

Sharon's difficulty with communicating was further related to a sense of awkwardness which she experiences when feeling that she does not know enough about a person in order to understand them, or to "know where they are coming from". This not-knowing emerged as an element of Sharon's experience which negatively impacted upon her capacity to interact with others. I became aware of Sharon's difficulty communicating through the interview process. Sharon's speech is fairly "woolly", possibly subtly reflecting a degree of disordered thought. This aspect may have made her experience of communicating her thoughts to me quite problematical.

This chapter has served to narrate the intersubjective experience of the participant in a phenomenologically rigorous manner. I shall now proceed with an

interpretation of the described experience, incorporating the insights drawn from the review of the literature.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This section will be presented as an interpretive fusion of the narrative of the participant's experience with the understandings drawn from the review of the literature. The discussion will be structured according to the themes which emerged in the previous chapter. All themes will be accounted for in section 5.1, with attention being focused on the core themes in section 5.2.

5.1 Schematising schizophrenic intersubjectivity

In her descriptions of her world Sharon narrated her private and interpersonal world in terms of a variety of anchoring experiences, which emerged as the themes outlined in the previous chapter. I would like to address each of these themes, exploring their connection with the literature review. I would firstly like to examine Sharon's experience of *isolation*, providing a phenomenological commentary on the disclosure of this experience. Binswanger described schizophrenia as defined by an estrangement from intersubjectivity, and a disconnection from ones own being-with. In Sharon's narrative this sense of intersubjective detachment was connected with a belief that others are unable to empathise with her, and cannot understand her. This experience can be seen in relation to three propositions stated in the literature. Firstly, the reader will recall the exposition of Van den Berg's account of schizophrenia as shaped largely by the individual's felt sense of their own incommunicability. Sharon spoke of her difficulty communicating with others, and her feeling that others are unable to "grasp her meaning". The experience of being unable to communicate, isolating in itself, is seen secondly in relation to the Barham's (1993) suggestion that the capacity to convey ones identity through a sharable narrative is largely constitutive of an individual's intersubjective experience. Sharon's difficulty communicating is seen as being isolating insofar as she experiences her self-narrative as inexpressible, and is thereby "stranded"

in incommunicability. Sharon's isolation can be seen thirdly in relation to Scheff's (1973) and Sullivan's (1989) recognition of the exchange of emotional tone between mother and infant as central to both the individual's experience of intersubjectivity as well as their sense of empathic responsiveness. Sharon's experience of abandonment in her formative relational matrix can be seen as impacting upon her sense of perennial estrangement from the other.

Sharon's experience of *doubt*, both as a subjective and intersubjective experience, was variously described in the previous chapter. As I understand it, Sharon's self-doubt can be seen as having emerged out of a disconfirming, non-reciprocal and disengaged relational matrix. Apart from Sharon's doubting herself interpersonally, she is also seen to manifest a degree of doubt in the veracity of her existence and her identity. "Who am I in this time?" she asks. An understanding of subjectivity as structured through interpersonal engagement was proposed in the literature review. Sartre (1943) spoke of the "mutual gaze", which implies the co-constitution of self and world through meeting. Buber (1970) posited the I-Thou relationship, in which he described mutual and reciprocal relatedness between self and other as being a condition which enabled the emergence of the self. Buber further spoke of the self's need to be recognised and confirmed by the other. Such confirmation, Buber suggested, allows for the self's constitution of itself as an identity. Further to this, we note Laing's (1961) suggestion that disconfirmation of the self is a destructive and inhibiting interpersonal process, and one which could effect psychotic disintegration. In light of these theorists' propositions, Sharon's narrative describes her experience of a perennial lack of reciprocity in relationships, a feeling of being ultimately unheard by the other, and a sense of being unseen, and even having her existence denied, throughout her life in her family. In this experience, it is suggested, we can see the birthplace of Sharon's experience of self-doubt. Further to this, Sharon's feeling of

being unable to communicate effectively with others is seen as contributing to her feeling of doubt. Sullivan (1964) described the primacy of language as an attempt by the individual to attain a sense of ontological security. In this sense language, as the conveyor of an individual's narrative of self, emerges as that which enables the self to constitute and present itself in the presence of the other. As such, language enables the emergence of self. Sharon's feeling of being unable to "language" her world in such a way that others will understand her is seen as further contributing to her feeling of self-doubt. Insofar as she feels unable to language herself effectively, it is suggested, Sharon may feel unable to constitute her identity through language, and this may be seen in relation to her self-doubt.

Sharon's experience of her interpersonal relationships as lacking reciprocity was one which came to the thematic foreground in my reading of the data. This experience is seen as tightly bound with Sharon's sense of self-doubt. Engaging in a reciprocal human space, as proposed in the review of the literature, emerges as an ontological imperative for the emergence of the self within a shared social world. Sharon's felt lack of reciprocation in engagements is posited as limiting her emergence as a self, as well as limiting her capacity to engage with others.

This section has served as a discussion of Sharon's experience of isolation, self-doubt, incommunicability and lack of reciprocity in relationships. These experiences are presented thematically as being significant but not central to Sharon's narrative. It is now necessary to proceed with an account of the central themes which were disclosed in the interpretation of data. As will be noted, certain peripheral themes, which have not yet been discussed, will emerge in the following section due to their being related to the central themes.

5.2 Sharon, Adrienne and dialogism

In this section I intend to explore and discuss the participant's narration of self in terms of the impact of that narration on her intersubjective experience. I shall approach this aspect of her experience firstly in terms of her self-perception, providing a theoretical understanding of the emergence of *Sharon* as a mode of being-in-the-world. I shall then proceed with a discussion, bound in the theory and results, of *Sharon's* disclosure as a being-with, commenting on her being-with-the-other as a person with schizophrenia.

5.2.1 Severance and rejuvenation: The disclosure of the monological self

As was seen in the narration of the participant's experience in the previous chapter, her perception of self has come to be markedly defined by the emergence of a way of being defined by being-strong, being-perseverant, being-jovial and being-eccentric. The participant expressed her *Sharon-ness* quite firmly in terms of these qualities. As was noted, *Sharon*, as a mode of being-in-the-world, emerged as a way of helping *Adrienne* cope with the difficulties she endured as a member of a confining and disconfirming family system. In this sense *Sharon* can be seen as a defensive self-structure, who emerged to protect *Adrienne* from the intersubjective experience of being-dominated, being-abused, being-placid and being-confined, which appeared central to the participant's experience of herself as *Adrienne*. The participant spoke of the emergence of *Sharon* as a rejuvenation of herself. This making-new was noted in relation to the participant's expression of the *Adrienne* mode of being-in-the-world as being "dead". In this we see the essential annihilation of *Adrienne*, the severance of *Sharon* from *Adrienne*, and the continuation of *Sharon* as the preferred mode of being. I intend to frame this severance and rejuvenation firstly in terms of the participant's communication of self-perception. In this sense it is the intention firstly to focus on how the participant narrates her being-in-the-world, understood in connection with the theoretical framework provided.

As has been suggested by the hermeneutic phenomenologists cited in the literature review, an individual's narrative emerges as a life-text which locates the individual historically, and provides a world-related embeddedness (Rulf, 2003). As seen in Gadamer's notion that language manifests historicity, and Heidegger's description of "thrownness", the individual's narration of self conveys that individual's past and present embeddedness in a shared world (Moran, 2000). Sharon's narrative, in relation to this, can be understood as a communication of her attempt to disembed herself historically. The annihilation of *Adrienne* is grasped thematically as a rejection of historicity, and therefore simultaneously a rejection of the interpersonal and intrapsychic narrative which that historicity makes manifest. Sharon's languaging of herself is therefore seen both as a disconnection from her history and a pronouncement of the emergence of a rejuvenated and dominant way of being, that is, being-in-the-mode-of *Sharon*. In this can be seen the communication of a life-text, to use Todorov's words, which is singular and predominant, as opposed to multiple and dialogical. *Sharon* can therefore be seen as the participant's expression of a monological self, which is tightly defined, and inflexibly expressed through her being-in-the-world. Further to this, the participant's monological self is seen phenomenologically as an assertion of her being-in-the-present, a severance of her historical self, and a consequent attempt, through her inflexible languaging of *Sharon*, to disenable dialogue between present and historical selves. In this can be seen the participant's narration of self as defined by a self-perception that is detached from the historical components self, and therefore a self-perception that negates the "intrapersonal simultaneity" posited by the dialogical model of self (Holquist, 1990).

Having said that the participant narrates an essentially uni-polar self-perception, I realise the inconsistency which has emerged in this discussion. Sharon did indeed narrate the disclosure of *Adrienne* in the written work which she provided. As can be

seen in the appendix, Sharon composed a dialogue between the two aspects of her self, *Sharon* and *Adrienne*. However, as can be seen in this dialogue, *Adrienne* is experienced as an unwanted and disconfirmed historical aspect of self, which *Sharon* essentially tries to rise above. This rising-above, which unfolds as an annihilation of *Adrienne*, does emerge as dialogical insofar as it is an exchange between the two elements of self. However the dialogue is limited to only one exchange, that of the annihilation of *Adrienne* through the rigid assertion and dominance of *Sharon*. The emergence of *Sharon* as an inflexible and possibly even immutable way of being reflects Laing's notion of the petrification of the schizophrenic self (Laing, 1965). As the reader will recall, Laing proposed the petrified self as being in a position of ontological insecurity. The concrete and unchanging disclosure of the petrified self can be seen in the dominance of *Sharon*, and the experience of ontological insecurity, it is suggested, can be seen in her pervasive self-doubt.

It is suggested that the participant's narration of herself is a uni-polar expression of *being-Sharon*, which emerges intrapsychically as a resistance to those aspects of her being which do not correspond with her *Sharon-ness*. It is now necessary to locate this experience in the theory of the dialogical self. As the reader will recall, the theory proposes that the self is posited as polyphonic and plurivocal, and as constituted by a dialogical engagement between the various I-positions, which are defined as the distinct aspects of self (Lysaker & Lysaker, 2005; Holquist, 1990; Hermans & Kempen, 1993; Valsiner, 2002). Further to this, Kimura (1982, 1984) described the self as engaged in a continual process of movement from one aspect of self to the next, in dialogical relationship with the changing intersubjective context. Kimura described a phenomenological betweenness defined by a temporal motioning between self-positions, in which the individual, ever-changing, is nonetheless aware of a trans-temporal identity

and sameness. In this sense, for Kimura, intersubjectivity instantiates the “I” as changing and yet always the same “I”.

In contrast to the proposition of self as inherently dialogical, we see the participant’s adamant narration and perception of herself as *Sharon*; unfluctuating, monological, and resistant to intrapsychic dialogue. It is now necessary to explore the participant’s intersubjective experience in relation to this. How does *Sharon* relate to the other, and what is the nature of the impact which her undeviating *Sharon-ness* has on her intersubjective experience?

5.2.2 Being-with in the mode of the monological self: A defence against disintegration

In the previous section it was suggested that the participant narrates a perception of self that is largely defined by a severance of the historical aspects of herself, a negation of the existence of that self, and a resistance to intrapsychic dialogue with that aspect of self. It is now necessary to shift the focus from the intrapsychic to the interpersonal. The question will be asked, how does the participant’s intrapsychic negation of *Adrienne*, her rigid assertion of *Sharon*, and her consequent uni-polar perception and narration of self, enter her intersubjective experience? In answering this question, certain themes which emerged in the analysis of the data will be discussed in relation to the theory of the dialogical self.

As was suggested in chapter 4, Sharon seems to emerge in interpersonal relationships in the mode of resisting-being-for-others. Sharon expressed anger, frustration and pain at the notion that others make her “live as *Adrienne*”. Wanting to assert the dominance of her *Sharon-ness*, that is, her perseverance, strength, eccentricity and joviality, Sharon feels that others try to depress this side of her, and instead call *Adrienne* forth. It is firstly important to reiterate the participant’s experience of being-for-the-other-in-the-mode-of-*Adrienne* as one which threatens her with a sense

of disintegration. As was described, Sharon expressed a sense of having to “build herself up” after being made to engage intersubjectively as *Adrienne*, for example in relation to her mother. This experience of feared disintegration can be understood in relation to Lysaker and Lysaker’s (2005) proposition that the schizophrenic experience is partially defined by a feared fragmentation of self. This fragmentation, suggest the authors, is disclosed as a disembedding of certain aspects of self from the individual’s historical narrative. In the participant’s narrative we see the disembedding of *Adrienne*, and the fear of fragmentation if *Adrienne* is called forth in interactions with others.

As was suggested in the previous chapter, the participant resists being-for-others-in the-mode-of-*Adrienne*. As was revealed in her descriptions, Sharon dislikes, considers unworthy, and avoids interpersonal relationships which make her be-as-*Adrienne*. In this we can see an attempt to avoid dialogue between *Adrienne* and the other, and to promote dialogue between *Sharon* and the other. The assertion of *Sharon* as the dominant mode of being and engaging can therefore be seen intrapsychically and intersubjectively. Monologue is seen to replace polyphony and multivoicedness on an internal and inter-relational level.

Certain themes emerged in the presentation of results, which can be more clearly understood in relation to the notion of monologue as characterising Sharon’s being and relating. Firstly, and perhaps most obviously, Sharon’s experience was seen as defined partially by an intolerance of ambiguity in terms of being and relating. As has been described, the participant revealed a desire to avoid being-in-relation-to-the-other-in-the-mode-of-*Adrienne*. This intolerance of ambiguity can be seen firstly in relation to Sharon’s rigid perception of self, which was disclosed through the sparse narration of her *Sharon-ness*. I refer the reader to Sharon’s evocative description of herself as a stretched jelly baby, feeling the too complicated demands of an intersubjective context, which tries to make her engage beyond the boundaries of her *Sharon-ness*. This

intolerance can be further seen in relation to the participant's apportioning of value to relationships. For Sharon worthy relationships, to which she feels drawn, are those which affirm her *Sharon-ness*, and unworthy relationships, which repel her, are those which affirm her *Adrienne-ness*. In this sense we can see how Sharon may avoid interpersonal contexts which require that she engage from an I-position that is contrary to her uni-polar *Sharon-ness*.

Lysaker and Lysaker (2005) suggest that being-with others necessitates internal dialogue between the various I-positions, which constitute the dialogical self. For individuals with schizophrenia, it is suggested, the sustenance of internal dialogue between I-positions is both interpersonally and intrapsychically threatening. The interpersonal threat, propose the authors, relates firstly to a subjective awareness of being-invaded by the other, and secondly to a fear of disintegration of the self (ibid.). Sharon spoke of this sense of being probed and invaded in her narrative. This sense of invasion was coupled with an experience of having something taken out of her by the invasive other. More solidly expressed was Sharon's sense of a feared fragmentation and disintegration, internally and intersubjectively. As the reader will recall, Sharon described quite extensively her experience of having to be cautious in relationships. She spoke variously of "walking on egg-shells" and "hopping on blocks of ice"; fearing always the breakage of the shell or the ice. This caution emerged variously as Sharon's need to be cautious in relation to the other so as not to hurt them, and the other's need to be cautious so as to avoid disruption in relation to Sharon. Sharon's caution is further conceptualised here in relation to her intolerance of ambiguity. The broken eggshell, it is posited, reflects partially a state of interpersonal ambiguity, which demands of Sharon that she engage dialogically. Dialogical engagement would require of Sharon that she reveal herself, interpersonally and intrapsychically, beyond the boundaries of her *Sharon-ness*, which as we have seen, is a painful and threatening experience for her. It

is suggested that this caution can be conceptualised as similar to Lysaker and Lysaker's (2005) notion of a feared fragmentation and disintegration of self as defining schizophrenic intersubjectivity.

It has been suggested by Parnas and Handest (2003) that the schizophrenic experience is partially characterised by a degree of narrative incoherence, a sense of confusion regarding one's identity, and a feared loss of ownership of self in interactions with the other. The notion of narrative incoherence has been explored in terms of Sharon's felt inability to communicate an interpretable narrative to the other, reflected in her feeling of being chronically misunderstood by the other. Narrative incoherence is further seen here in relation to the threatening experience of being-disintegrated, and is considered in connection with Lysaker and Lysaker's proposition that schizophrenic intersubjectivity is disclosed phenomenologically as being characterised by a feared fragmentation and breakage of the self.

It is suggested that Sharon's disintegration-anxiety, if we can call it that, is disclosed as the self-doubt which she narrated so powerfully in her question "Who am I in this time?" This question was asked when Sharon found herself in an *Adrienne*-affirming relationship, in which she experienced the disruption and breakage of her so rigidly asserted *Sharon-ness*. In this expression of doubt we can see the fear of loss of identity which Stanghellini (in Lysaker et al, 2005) notes as being characteristic of the schizophrenic experience. In this sense Sharon's self-doubt is posited as being grounded in her awareness of the demands which intersubjective engagement places on her to dialogue beyond the "walls" of her *Sharon-ness*. The unfolding of the monological self has been described in relation to dialogical theory as a defensive construction of the self in response to a feared disintegration. This disintegration is posited as a sense of loss of ownership of one's identity, and an awareness of incoherence and uninterpretability as defining the personal narrative of the individual with schizophrenia. It

is in this light then, that Sharon's experience of self-doubt, her intolerance of interpersonal ambiguity, her sense of incapacity to communicate herself to the other, and her need to be cautious in interpersonal relationships, are grasped as being related to a feared disintegration connected with the interruption of the monological self that is *Sharon*.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The aim of this research project was to narrate a phenomenologically informed description of the intersubjective experience of one individual with schizophrenia. Schizophrenic intersubjectivity was explored in terms of the individual's subjective experience of being-with, as that experience is impacted upon by being-in-the-world as an individual with schizophrenia. A case study methodology was employed so as to provide a longitudinal and descriptively rich account of the felt experience of schizophrenic intersubjectivity. Phenomenological research has devoted attention to exploring living with schizophrenia, however I felt that research into the intersubjective experience of individuals with schizophrenia had been given less attention, hence the motivation for this work. Interest in the theory of the dialogical model of self prompted me to explore the fusion of this model with phenomenological research into schizophrenic experience. I considered it vital to explore the nature of schizophrenic intersubjectivity, as this could enrich the understanding of mental health practitioners, as well as facilitate psychologists' and psychotherapists' approaches to working in the therapeutic relationship with an individual with schizophrenia.

6.1 A sketching of the results

The participant's experience of interpersonal relationships, as explored with specific reference to her experience after being diagnosed with schizophrenia, appears to be defined by the following core themes: Sharon experiences a need to be cautious in relationships, both so as to avoid hurting others, and so as to avoid her own intrapsychic disruption. She expressed a pervasive sense of self-doubt, which emerged firstly as her sense of confusion and insecurity as to whether she is relating to others in the right way. She experiences, perhaps more significantly, a degree of existential doubt, in which she questions the veracity of her own identity, and narrates a sense of confusion regarding

who she is within a specific relational context. Central to her experience of being-with-others was Sharon's difficulty with tolerating ambiguity. In this sense she expressed quite concretely defined notions regarding how she, as well as the other, should relate in interactions. When others do not relate to her in this manner she experiences a sense of being unable to tolerate the demands placed on her by the intersubjective context. One of the primary difficulties which Sharon described was her experience of being unable to communicate herself effectively to the other, and a sense of being chronically misunderstood and unheard by the other. This experience was connected with the experience of isolation and intersubjective detachment which arose in Sharon's narrative. Further to this, Sharon described her sense that others, specifically those who are not mentally ill, cannot possibly empathise with her, and cannot grasp the essence of her experience. Sharon's experience of close relationships was largely defined by a sense of a lack of reciprocity on the part of the other. She described feeling that she gave too much in relationships, and received little in return.

Central to the participant's intrapsychic and intersubjective experience was the emergence of an aspect of her self, *Sharon*, which she narrated as an attempt to strengthen and aid the historical aspect of her self, *Adrienne*. *Adrienne* was described as placid and victimised, and *Sharon* as perseverant, strong and jovial. *Sharon's* voice emerged in the participant's narrative of experience as being thoroughly dominating. *Sharon* emerged as the participant's preferred mode of being-in-the-world, and she was seen to resist powerfully being-in-the-world in the mode of *Adrienne*.

The emergence of *Sharon* both intrapsychically and intersubjectively was considered in this project in relation to the theory of dialogical self. This theory proposes self as being constituted variously by multiple voices, understood as independent and distinct. It is suggested that the schizophrenic experience is largely characterised by the individual's incapacity to tolerate the intrapsychic dialogue which the multiplicity of I-

positions implies. For individuals with schizophrenia the experience of the dialogical self threatens the individual with the possibility of their own disintegration. Dialogical theory proposes that this disintegration emerges in one of two ways. Either individuals with schizophrenia experience internal cacophony, in which the multiple selves are seen to speak in disordered simultaneity, with the effect that individuals experience themselves as fragmented. The other possibility put forward by dialogical theory is that of monologue. In this instance the individual with schizophrenia is seen to defensively resist disintegration through concretely asserting the dominance of one or a few self-positions. It is this monological being-in-the-world which can be seen in the participant's internal and interpersonal experience. Sharon is immutable, firm, and resistant to being-with-the-other in a way which does not fit within the boundaries of her *Sharon-ness*.

6.2 Methodological issues

In terms of the reliability and validity of this project, a few possible criticisms need to be addressed. Firstly, the adoption of a case study method may be considered as providing insufficiently for the data collection. It must be considered however, that the intention of this work was focused on describing the immediate lived experience of an individual in terms of that individual's intersubjective experience. The richness of the data gathered enabled a phenomenologically rigorous description of the experience being explored.

Another potential criticism may relate to the fact that the participant suffered from a particular subtype of schizophrenia, that is, Paranoid Schizophrenia. I acknowledge that this may render the findings of this study more applicable to individuals with paranoid schizophrenia. A comparative study may therefore be necessary, exploring the nature of the intersubjective experience of individuals diagnosed with the others schizophrenia subtypes.

As noted, I approached the participant to invite her to participate in the study following her discharge from a psychiatric hospital. It may be suggested that this is ethically insensitive insofar as the participant may have been in a somewhat weakened psychological state. However I was very careful in my approach to the participant. She had been out of hospital for two months before being approached. She had also been contained in a weekly therapy, and so her mental state was considered robust enough to engage actively with the research process.

In terms of phenomenological hermeneutic methodology, it may be suggested that the infusion of the researcher's horizons within the research process may infiltrate to too great an extent the participant's narrative, thus clouding the interpretation. However, it is noted that I acknowledged and made transparent the kinds of knowledges which may have impacted on my reading of the data. As a work which is not intended as purely phenomenological, it is suggested that this integration of the researcher's horizons does not weaken the phenomenological rigour of this work.

6.3 Recommendations for future research

As has been suggested, it may be necessary to engage in a phenomenologically informed exploration into the possible differences which may be realised in terms of the intersubjective experience of individuals diagnosed with different subtypes of schizophrenic illness. Further to this, the experience of children and older people diagnosed with psychotic disorders needs to be explored. Research into therapeutic strategies in the aid of individuals with schizophrenia could possibly consider this research as a prompt towards employing the dialogical model therapeutically. In this sense it may be necessary to focus on the individual's fear of disintegration, and consequent experience of cacophony or monologue. This experience could be worked with therapeutically by providing the individual with possibilities to develop rejuvenated narratives that move beyond the focus on disintegration.

The theory of the dialogical self, so central to this research, could also be applied to exploring others pathologies, most notably Dissociative Disorders. Dissociative Identity Disorder particularly seems to be characterised by a pathological fracturing of self, in which the various self-positions emerge in total disengagement from one another. A phenomenologically informed inquiry into the nature of this experience could be particularly informative. The Personality Disorders, as defined largely by relational difficulties, could also be researched in terms of such individual's being-with-others in relation to living as a dialogical self.

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Appendix A – Example of an interview transcript

The interview, which has been transcribed faithfully according to its contents, occurred in the researcher's office on the 2nd of June, and lasted for 50 minutes. The letter "B" refers to the researcher, and the letter "S" to the participant who has been given the name Sharon.

1) Interview 5

B – I suppose that now that you know what this is about ... you know what area of your world we are looking at, I'll just give it to you to go wild with.

S – Ok, um, the thing is I've had no contact with my mother for a short while, and I was getting really stressed and despondent because I feel it's important to keep that communication open. And I contacted her this week. I think it was on Monday just to chat to her, because I really want to go home. And I just feel it would be lovely to spend some time with her so that I could discuss a few issues with her. And so I'm going home tomorrow with her. Just for the day.

B – Tell me about the feeling of being distressed at having no contact with her.

S – You kind of feel like left out. You just feel you're not part of the picture. It's like she always paints this picture of hers that she feels is important and sometimes she leaves other people out that she feels aren't relevant to her life. And it's just really hard to try and cope with that.

B – Can you describe feeling left out. Feeling out of the picture.

S – You feel despondent. You feel like you're not really part of the family. You feel like there's nothing you can do to prove yourself, and even though you try it doesn't really help.

B – There's nothing you can do to prove yourself. Can you describe what that feels like for you?

S – Um, you feel very uncomfortable in a way that you don't know what to do or how to communicate with her. So she can carry on phoning you and chatting to you and it's like you've got to start from the beginning again. You've got to bring out those communicating mechanisms, so that it's easier to work with her.

B – I'm hearing how it's a difficult experience for you, there's kind of a wall between you two and you're not quite sure how to jump it. What makes it difficult for you, kind of bridging the gap between you and her?

S – Um, I think sometimes it's, she's a very kind of shallow person and I feel that she wants me to stoop down to her level, to be the kind of person that she would like me to be, and I don't feel like doing that because I'm a strong, courageous, independent person, and I think if I try and go down to meet her, then it will be ok but it will be hard for me because I'm not that type of person.

B – Ok, so what I'm hearing is two sides of the story. I'm hearing ambiguity. Which is important, we all have ambiguous experiences. What I'm hearing from you is, on the one hand "There's been no contact and I find that distressing. I find that I have needed the contact."

S – Ja

B – On the other hand, there's the feeling of "I won't bridge the gap because I won't stoop to her level because I'm courageous and independent." They're kind of different energies? Am I getting this?

S – Yes, they are

B – How does this feel for you? How do you understand this?

S – It's very like difficult. Because you don't know which side to stand on. And you can't be in between. You've got to stand on one side or the other. It's like you're being

pulled. It's like a monkey that's eating a jelly baby, and you're just stretching. You've just got to like keep on stretching.

B – In relation to your mother, you've got to stand on one side or the other. You have to stand on one side or the other. You can't be in between. What does that mean? How do you live that? Can you give me an experience?

S – It's just very like one-sided, and there's always been conflict, even since I've been inside the hospital. Since I got out she didn't want to discuss anything regarding me or why I was here, or any one of those things. So it was like very hard to even have a decent conversation, and it's difficult because I don't know where she stands in the situation. And as soon as I know where she stands then it will be easier to break that conflict.

B – Um, you experience in yourself a kind of two-sidedness in terms of how you relate to her. It's difficult to navigate that two-sidedness. It's difficult to go between it. And you don't know where she stands. What do you mean, "where she stands". How would you describe "where she stands", and your confusion about it?

S – It would be easier for me to understand her grasp and her meaning, and where she's coming from so I can relate to her a lot easier. Instead of having friction. And no communication or understanding.

B – What does it feel like that there is no understanding?

S – It's painful. Because it's like they don't understand so therefore they don't care and then they can't put themselves in my shoes and try and feel what it would be like just for a day or two. And not having anyone there just to talk to and communicate with and spend some time with. Because she's pushing me so far away, that's it's really difficult to at least try and communicate with her, and chat to her on a normal level.

B – What's a normal level?

S – Just like everyday level. Like life and friendship, how mother and daughters usually communicate. Just basic things you know. Ja.

B – I have a sense today that you're kind of feeling quite, I don't know if it's feeling of being at peace, or just feeling very tired. A sense of being quite restful.

S – I am. Cause I went through a really hard time on Tuesday, with a friend of mine in the house that I'm staying in. Um, he hasn't been working for a while so he's been borrowing money from me. And the money he borrows he takes and goes to drink. And on Tuesday at three o'clock we went into town and he bought something to drink and then I bought some food for myself and we came back. Started drinking. Then he went out again to go get some food, so he took some more money, and then he came back and I asked him to get me a chocolate and he didn't. And I went into his room and he was passed out on the bed. And he was in tears, he was so heart sore and he had a blade. And he was with this blade and he was sitting there cutting himself. He said no he can't live. He doesn't want to live anymore. He's just so painful and he doesn't know why he's painful. Now I had to sit there and console with him and chat to him, and talk to him. And it just took me so far back that I also felt like doing exactly the same. Not cutting myself, but just disappearing you know? Just like leaving this earth. Because it's just so hard, and there like, there are people that I can relate to. That I can talk to you know. And then at 11 o'clock he went out again, and he came back at half past three. And he started ringing the doorbell. And he woke everyone else in the house up. So that's just destroyed that. I just feel that I can't be there for him if I'm not strong enough myself. And the thing is I have to spend so much time talking to him and like bring him up, that I myself lose that strength that I've gained. And I just like feel so less, and so despondent and so unhappy and ... it's really hard.

B – So you feel brought down by his sadness.

S – Yes

B – How do you understand that? What does that feel like?

S – It feels uncomfortable, because you constantly have to think that there are many special things in life that are important to you, and there are reasons for all of us to be alive. And there are special gifts and things that we find in ourselves to keep going. And just persevere through each day no matter how hard it is. You just need to carry on.

B – How do you experience the demands he places on you? His needs.

S – They're very strong and overbearing. I try be there for him, and then I'm there for him and then the next day it's like it's never happened you know. I try not to be in his presence. And I try not spend as much time with him as I have, but it's just so hard. You're living in the same house with the same person, and you there the whole time. And you really would like someone to speak to, but he's there but you don't know if you want to converse with him because it's just so difficult.

B – What does that experience feel like? When you feel the need for someone but someone isn't there?

S – You feel very alone. You feel very stranded. Like it would be lovely to have someone to talk to, but the only person I can talk to at the moment is prayer and the bible because that's all I've got at the moment.

B – What do you mean stranded?

S – Like left alone. To fend for yourself. And there's just so many things that I could be doing. But it's just so difficult to have a conversation with someone who hasn't been in my situation. And I would just like to have some friends that I could discuss a few things with, that would help clear my conscience. Or help me be happy. Or help me be ... understand me and my situation. That they can give me some advice to help me.

B – You want some friends to help you be happy. Can you tell me about that?

S – Well, friends are always there for each other through hard times and through good times. And the thing is, is a friend is important because you support each other through everything. And through the friends that I had inside here ... they were very helpful and really strong. Because I could sit down and discuss anything with them and they'll be able to say like look here do this, or rather do that, or, maybe do it that way. And now the friends that I had before I came in. There's only one or two really good friends, but I hardly see them, because they're so busy working and doing all of those things. So I suppose you have to be your own friend, you know. You need to help yourself through those kind of situations. You have to answer your own questions.

B – Be your own friend. That implies a relationship with yourself, which we certainly all have. How would you describe your relationship with yourself?

S – It's ok at the moment. It's not as good as it was.

B – What was it like when it was good?

S – I was very happy, and I loved who I was, and I wouldn't let anyone shout me down. And now it's kind of a little bit less than what it was because I just feel that because of the no communication with my mother and sister and not have many friends that I can turn to, it's just really difficult to say "what am I worth?" Who am I? What is my weight in gold? Who am I as a person to keep questioning myself for not loving who I am? And only through understanding and loving who you are then you'll be fine.

B – You spoke of the difference in your relationships with the people who you've met in the hospital. And outside.

S – Yes

B – You've spoken about it quite often. You've sort of touched on it gently. Can you delve into it now? Kind of explore it.

S – Ja. Um, the people that you connect with in the hospital are really special people. And they're really caring and understanding, because you lived with each other so much, and you're in each other's space, and you go through the same sort of things and you're

always there for each other, and you chat to each other, and you discuss your difficult times, and you all went through the same abusive hard times. So one leans on the other, it's like dominoes. One follows off the other. And lift someone up if they're sad, and sing a song with someone if they're unhappy. But the other friends, the ones that I had before, can't understand what it feels like to have been in an institution where there have been so many doctors pushing needles in you and making you drink certain drugs and making sure you're sleeping and making sure that you're sane and not sane and asking 120 questions all the time. They just don't seem to understand that sometimes it's hard, but you need those friends to help you. But they have just dropped me, so I can't find a reason to continue a friendship with them if they don't care or even understand or grasp the concept of what it was like inside.

B – Can you describe what it was like to be dropped? You said they just dropped you.

S – Ja, you feel very worthless to them. Because you feel that you have been friends with them for like so long, and they have always been there when you've needed them. And now through the two months that I was away from them they just, they will come and visit me. But I was going through so many things. Issues which I needed to sort out myself, but then they came to visit me. I couldn't give as much of myself to them as I would have liked to because I was trying to deal with those issues at the time. And they, I think they found it just a bit uncomfortable coming to visit me, because they said that I wasn't the person they would have liked to have come and seen. I was always like shouting at them and unhappy towards them, and turning them away. But I was turning them away for a reason because I didn't want to see them because of how much they had hurt me and because of how unhappy I was sometimes in their presence.

It's like really hard, and I'm still finding it hard trying to get understanding through to like my mother and my sister. And just hoping that I can find some really good friends that are there for me.

B – What's a really good friend?

S – Someone who is there when I need to have someone to talk to just for some advice or some help. And someone to have coffee with and to go to the movies with and just sing songs to you know, and do jolly things together. And all of those things.

B – And at the moment, as you said, there's a sense of feeling stranded.

S – Yes

B – How do you understand the experience of being mentally ill? Of being called mentally ill. Not in the hospital but outside. What does that experience feel like to you?

S – You feel like no-one cares because they're just labelling you. And it's like we're not going to spend time with her or chat to her because she's schizophrenic or something shocking like that. (Sharon becomes tearful at this point)

.....

B – So you imagine people are having the thought “She's schizophrenic, I'm not going to hang around”

S – Ja.

B – How does that feel for you?

S – You feel hurt because there are people who are there for you, but now there's no-one.

B – How do people relate to a schizophrenic person?

S – They like constantly, with me, I feel that they constantly walking on egg-shells around me because they don't want to upset me in a way that I will react.

B – React how?

S – React in a way because I'm unhappy about what they've said, or react in a way...

B – They walk on eggshells around you. What does that feel like? To have people walking on eggshells around you?

S – You feel uncomfortable, because you can't just be who you want to be, and you just, you don't know what to say, because between two people you don't really want to upset each other.

B - What does it mean to walk on eggshells?

S – It means you've got to tread carefully. In a way that between two people you don't really want to upset each other. So you've got to keep walking on thin ice. And if it breaks then it breaks.

B - So in between you and one other person, some other person, you have to be careful on how you are with them, and part of the consciousness of having to be careful comes through, "they are aware that I am schizophrenic". And there's a sense of having to tread very lightly so as to not cause any kind of disturbance. What kind of thing would cause a disturbance, do you imagine? What would cause the eggshell to break?

S – I think it would be like delving deeper into the illness without asking me properly. Or speaking about it behind my back, instead of coming straight to me. Or gossiping about it with friends. Instead of talking to it with me personally.

B – So you see it as something that people might be gossiping about.

S – Well they did when I was in the hospital

B – What's that like for you? That experience, that people are debating your illness amongst themselves.

S – It's very hurtful. Because I was in the hospital and all my sister's friends knew about it, and the whole town knew about it, and like they would always come and visit me, but I knew when my sister came to visit me she didn't come to visit me to see how I was, she came to get information out of me. Like so that she could go back and discuss it with my mum, or some other friends.

B – Let's just take a little while to take the pressure off the moment. I can see this is difficult emotionally. So let's just chill for a bit ok.

S – Ok.

The presence of the following (.....) indicates a long silence in the interview process.

Appendix B – Examples of written data provided by the participant

The participant provided the researcher with written data of her own volition. Two of five examples of written data are given in the appendix. The two characters narrated in the role-play were described by the participant as two distinct aspects of her personality. Please refer to the analysis of data in Chapter 4 for clarification of the emergence of these characters.

1)

A role-play between my two names, of which one is my strongest, to begin with a new start

Sharon: Strength, strong person who can face the world at all things.

Adrienne: Very heart and the achieve, a child never allowed to be one.

Sharon: An adult who can be with a mixture of a child I was never allowed to be.

Adrienne: Always had to prove myself around my family. Could never cry around them.

Sharon: The strong survivor who can keep up with what it is good in my life.

Adrienne: Feel inferior around my family. Always talk badly of me, have no respect for me. No care of what I wanted in my life for me to enjoy to make me happy.

Sharon: Always made the most out of each opportunity and each situation that can help for the better. By volunteering and helping this has helped me become a whole person.

Adrienne: Always belittled by family, superior environment. Always had to prove myself to the world and to my family.

Sharon: Not have to live in anyone's shadow. Life to live my own life, not having to answer to my family, sister or anyone else, for this time it's for myself. To live a special life of love.

Adrienne: Never loved by my family. Thought they could cover it up with food, or always talking around the situation. Never accepted me for myself who I was, and never received love. Family love or motherly love.

Sharon: The lady who can face any situation. Life to live to the fullest maximum ultimate of all situations.

Adrienne: Voiced my opinion all the time of great times. Always voiced where I am happy or not. Never felt comfortable in my immediate family. Always felt I had to prove myself. Felt very uncomfortable around my father, because his beatings would scare me. I felt like my family would aggravate my just to cause a reaction so that my father would beat, hit me!

Sharon: Live in no-body's shadow. Live each day as a new day. Love each other and most of all love myself for I am special and important. Never given this love by my family, so I will give it to myself.

Adrienne: Has special friends who I can trust and rely on. For help and love. Will look to these people for love.

2)

Role-play between both names

Adrienne: Always Cinderella, clean, work, get paid and eat.

Sharon: More free and a special independent person like my life I can live as I never was able to live when I was a child.

Adrienne: Never have to live in my fear of being abused by my family anymore for my life is important right and I don't think they will understand who I am.

For the old Adrienne is dead and passed and gone and I have forgiven the family but that pain will still be like an open wound that needs healing.

Sharon: This is the happiest and most well I have ever been. I Abused alcohol and dagga just to keep the coping mechanisms going just to keep myself alive. Never knowing that I could leave these bad habits and become more pure.

Through working at group and the one and one with Bruce and all the groups have helped me through talking this has helped me get better.

Adrienne: I would always keep my emotions inside for myself for I felt like a pressure cooker about to explode so I would do things to help me cope like set a dozen alarms outside my family's room in England to say how much I hated them. They never trusted or loved me as a child should receive love. I always received it in other ways like food, clothes and soap.

Sharon: Through all the bad my mother was the one I spent most of my time with in the divorce. It was like I had to be her carbon copy.

Adrienne: I could not just live and be happy, the way I have always persevered for all of the mother nature's special things like the love of God's creations.

(The researcher has not edited the written work provided by the participant in any way.)

Appendix C – Example of themes emerging from raw data

Interview 5

Feeling left out and unimportant

B – Tell me about the feeling of being distressed at having no contact with her.

S – You kind of feel like left out. You just feel you're not part of the picture. It's like she always paints this picture of hers that she feels is important and sometimes she leaves other people out that she feels aren't relevant to her life. And it's just really hard to try and cope with that.

Having to prove self to other

B - Can you describe feeling left out? Feeling out of the picture.

S – You feel despondent. You feel like you're not really part of the family. You feel like there's nothing you can do to prove yourself, and even though you try it doesn't really help.

Resistant to changing self in such a way that self becomes like other – connected with an intolerance of ambiguity in terms of self-perception

Um, I think sometimes its, she's a very kind of shallow person and I feel that she wants me to stoop down to her level, to be the kind of person that she would like me to be, and I don't feel like doing that because I'm a strong, courageous, independent person, and I think if I try and go down to meet her, then it will be ok but it will be hard for me because I'm not that type of person

It's very like difficult. Because you don't know which side to stand on. And you can't be in between. You've got to stand on one side or the other. It's like you're being pulled. It's like a monkey that's eating a jelly baby, and you're just stretching. You've just got to like keep on stretching.

And he was with this blade and he was sitting there cutting himself. He said no he can't live. He doesn't want to live anymore. He's just so painful and he doesn't know why he's painful. Now I had to sit there and console with him and chat to him, and talk to him. and it just took me so far back that I also felt like doing exactly the same. Not cutting myself, but just disappearing you know. Just like leaving this earth. Because it's just so hard, and there like, there are people that I can relate to.

I couldn't give as much of myself to them as I would have liked to because I was trying to deal with those issues at the time. And they, I think they found it just a bit uncomfortable coming to visit me, because they said that I wasn't the person they would have liked to have come and seen

Caution in interpersonal relationships

B – How do people relate to a schizophrenic person?

S – They like constantly, with me, I feel that they constantly walking on egg-shells around me because they don't want to upset me in a way that I will react.

B – React how?

S – React in a way because I'm unhappy about what they've said, or react in a way...

B – They walk on eggshells around you. What does that feel like? To have people walking on eggshells around you.

S – You feel uncomfortable, because you can't just be who you want to be, and you just, you don't know what to say, because between two people you don't really want to upset each other.

B - What does it mean to walk on eggshells?

S – It means you've got to tread carefully. In a way that between two people you don't really want to upset each other. So you've got to keep walking on thin ice. And if it breaks then it breaks.

Feeling probed

But the other friends, the ones that I had before, can't understand what it feels like to have been in an institution where there have been so many doctors pushing needles in your and making you drink certain drugs and making sure you're sleeping and making sure that you're sane and not sane and asking 120 questions all the time.

Rigid self-perception – courageous and dependent – connected with not wanting to be other than that, and feeling forced to be other than that by an other

Um, I think sometimes it's, she's a very kind of shallow person and I feel that she wants me to stoop down to her level, to be the kind of person that she would like me to be, and I don't feel like doing that because I'm a strong, courageous, independent person, and I think if I try and go down to meet her, then it will be ok but it will be hard for me because I'm not that type of person.

Appendix D – Full list of emergent themes

- 1) Feeling isolated
- 2) Feeling unheard and misunderstood
- 3) Self-perception – Unified self-perception – eccentric and perseverant
- 4) Feeling probed and invaded – having a part of the self taken out of her
- 5) Firm and unified idea about how one should relate
- 6) Being-cautious in relationships
- 7) No reciprocity in relationships
- 8) Intolerance if ambiguity in terms of rigid self-perception
- 9) Doubting one's own worthiness in relationships – bordering on existential self-doubt
- 10) Having to prove something – Having to put on a mask
- 11) Knowing someone completely – What does this mean for Sharon/Adrienne?
- 12) Feeling that people are unable to empathize – People don't know where she is coming from – more specifically, people who are not mentally ill
- 13) Difficulty communicating with others
- 14) Feeling worthy and supported in positive relationships – mostly with other mentally ill people who can empathise