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THE EFFECTS OF A PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME
ON SELF ESTEEM, LONELINESS AND
OTHER INDICATORS OF DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT
IN A GROUP OF DIVORCED WOMEN

THESIS

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by

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"We must first have chaos
in ourselves to give birth
to a dancing star."
Nietzsche

"If I am who I am, and not
what I have, nobody can
deprive me of or threaten
my sense of identity."
Fromm

"May He give you power
through His spirit for
your hidden self to
grow strong..."
Ephesians 3:16

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ABSTRACT

Divorce is a major personal and social phenomenon, having a profound effect on those involved both directly or indirectly. The social work profession is faced with a large and vulnerable population at risk, and needs to take cognizance of the effects of divorce as well as the process of divorce adjustment in order to make a contribution in this area.

Due to the significantly high divorce statistics, families and individuals are increasingly having to reorganise and adjust to the divorced status. This adjustment is a process which, if successfully negotiated, may ultimately lead to positive personal growth. Divorce, although extremely painful, may therefore paradoxically lead to growth and wholeness. It is during the stage of divorce adjustment that the social worker has a particular role to fulfil.

Divorce adjustment may be assessed in terms of the attainment of positive functioning, making use of specific indicators for divorce adjustment. These indicators include self esteem; autonomy vs attachment; loneliness; parenting; social skills; and resolution of feelings around the divorce. Not only is there a need for the development of a clear measure for these indicators and therefore for divorce adjustment, but also for the development of a treatment approach specifically suited to the needs of divorcees in the process of post-divorce adjustment.

The present researcher has aimed to address these issues by designing, implementing and then evaluating a personal growth programme and its effects on indicators of divorce adjustment. An extensive review of the literature was done. This covered the impact of divorce, the process of divorce adjustment, indicators of divorce adjustment, social work treatment approaches, and group work in divorce. An empirical study was then conducted whereby an experimental group was exposed to the group work treatment programme and a control group was not. A quasi-experimental design was used to measure the significance of changes in scores on various indicators of divorce adjustment.

Standardised measuring scales were used for the measurement of self esteem and loneliness, while a measure for indicators of divorce adjustment was especially designed for the purposes of this study. Both the experimental and control groups completed the measurements before and after the period of treatment.

The present researcher designed a group work programme related to the needs of divorcees generally, and the needs identified by the participants in the study specifically. It was conducted over a period of ten weeks, consisting of ten one-and-a-half hour sessions. Eight divorced women attended the group. All had children and all had custody of their children. The programme included sessions on self esteem and self awareness; social skills (assertiveness and conflict resolution); loneliness; depression; and parenting. The sessions were structured and learning was based on experiential learning principles with brief didactic inputs. An eclectic approach was used by the researcher, drawing on

theoretical models such as cognitive restructuring, gestalt techniques, psycho-drama, the client-centred approach and behaviourist techniques. An atmosphere of mutual support and feedback was encouraged and conscious use was made of self esteem/self-awareness building techniques.

The main findings of the study showed that the personal growth programme (using a structured, skills training, self esteem/self awareness building, and experiential learning approach) had a significantly positive effect on self esteem and other indicators of divorce adjustment, but not on loneliness. The programme may therefore successfully be implemented in work towards divorce adjustment among divorced clients.

Opinions expressed and conclusions made, unless otherwise stated, are those of the present writer.

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SECTION A : INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

1.1 NECESSITY OF THE STUDY

As divorce rates rise and the disintegration of the traditional nuclear family unit becomes more prevalent, it is essential that professionals become more involved in the rendering of appropriate services to the client system involved. Charnas states the following:

"...with the expectation that the divorce rate will continue to climb or at best to level off in the last part of this century, the social work profession is faced with a large and vulnerable population at risk. This population cannot be ignored by the profession since it permeates all areas of practice." (1983:546)

Divorce is a process which has a severe impact on the individual. It has been described as one of the most profound experiences a human being can undergo (Jacobson, 1983:1), and having a profound effect on both physical and mental health (Ambrose, et al, 1983: 88). When viewing the descriptions of various authors of the impact of divorce on people, it can be seen that many areas of functioning are seen to be affected: emotional, psychological, social, parental role, economic, spiritual, and legal (Bohannon, 1970; Krantzler, 1975; Kressel, 1980; Albrecht et al, 1983).

Divorce recovery is a slow process. Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:668) describes the customary way of dealing with trauma as being denial and then, if it does not disappear, to allow it into the consciousness slowly as it becomes more manageable - hence the various stages through which the individual may progress in the journey of divorce adjustment. Various indicators can be

identified when examining the characteristics of the successfully adjusted individual. These indicators are also the areas that require work if the process of divorce adjustment is to be completed. The areas of positive growth that appear to be commonly viewed as indicators of successful divorce adjustment by various authors include: feelings around the divorce; self esteem; social skills; loneliness; parenting; and autonomy (Beatrice, 1979; Goldmeier, 1980; Kaslow in Gurman, 1981; Hassal and Madar, 1980; Sutton, 1984; and Smith and Seelbach, 1987).

Of all the various indicators, self esteem in particular seems to receive much attention in the literature on divorce adjustment. The reason for this is that part of the psychological stress arising from divorce is the effect of the divorce on the self esteem. Kressel states:

"a central psychological stress for those undergoing divorce arises from the perception of oneself as 'unlovable' or wanting as a spouse." (1980:235)

According to Weiss (1979:24) the individual appears to be functioning well during the recovery phase of divorce, but that frail individual integration and self doubt predominates. The development and maintenance of the self' concept before and after divorce is therefore an important variable in divorce adjustment. Johnston (1984:15) refers to Bohannon's model of divorce, and states that the final stage of divorce i.e. psychic divorce, is that of regaining self esteem and the development of an autonomous individual.

Recent research in South Africa has also indicated the importance of the self concept and self esteem in marriage, and the vital

importance of programmes focusing on self esteem building in services related to marriage counselling (Van der Westhuizen, 1987:270). It is also maintained that social work has suitable intervention methods to improve the self concept of clients - but that the application thereof in practice has been neglected until now. As self esteem and self concept have been shown to be of great importance in marriage, and that the regaining of the self esteem is one of the final stages of divorce recovery, it is self evident that social work has a vital role to play in the area of building self esteem among divorced clients.

When considering the other indicators of divorce adjustment, it is clear also that services to divorced clients need to attend to the resolution of feelings around the divorce; loneliness; social skills; parenting and the development of autonomy and a new identity.

A useful model of social work intervention with divorced clients is that of social group work. One of the aims according to Van Staden (1987:165) of social group work in the context of divorce recovery, is for the person to develop as an individual person. Johnstone also maintains that:

"with the sense of belonging that a group provides, individuals can move more quickly into letting go of the past and develop a greater sense of autonomy and self esteem."
(1984:87)

These considerations, together with the fact that the present researcher worked at the Family and Marriage Society of South Africa (FAMSA), and has observed the debilitating effects of divorce on the self esteem of clients, led to the choice of this topic. A Personal Growth Group, using a group work approach, was

designed in the light of the specific value that this mode of intervention has. The Programme would also meet a need in the client system, as there had been numerous requests for a group of this nature among divorced clients.

1.2 AIMS OF THE STUDY

This research study aims to make a contribution to the field of divorce and divorce adjustment. It aims to establish the extent of change which can be brought about in divorced people if the group work intervention method of social work is used. More specifically, the objectives include:

To review the literature relating to the problem and process of divorce adjustment, treatment in divorce, and especially the group work approach to work with divorced clients.

To design, through the review of relevant literature and taking into account the needs identified in the participants in the study, a Personal Growth Programme using the social group work intervention approach.

To devise, through the review of relevant literature, a questionnaire which will measure indicators of divorce adjustment, to be used as a measuring tool for change among participants in the Personal Growth Group.

To establish whether the group work approach using in particular a time limited, structured personal growth programme, focusing on the facilitation of self esteem development, social skills training, cognitive restructuring, and experiential learning, is of value in the facilitation of divorce adjustment.

To establish whether any significant change can be brought about in the level of self esteem among divorced clients through the use of the personal growth programme.

To establish whether any change can be brought about in other indicators of divorce adjustment such as loneliness, autonomy, feelings, parenting, social skills, and personal growth through the use of the personal growth programme.

To present findings and make conclusions and recommendations which can be used for the understanding, planning and application of intervention strategies to facilitate divorce adjustment.

1.3 DURATION OF THE STUDY

This research spans the period from March 1988 to January 1990. The initial period from March until June 1988 was devoted to the literature study and preparation for the Personal Growth Group. Recruitment and selection of participants was completed during July 1988, and the Personal Growth Programme was conducted for ten weeks during August, September and October 1988. Further literature was reviewed and data was collated and analysed during the first part of 1989. Hereafter writing commenced, which spanned the period from July 1989 to January 1990.

1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research includes both a literature study and an empirical study. The literature study was conducted in order to examine past research findings related to the proposed investigation, to define the key variables to be studied and to support the conceptual framework. Literature covered includes available professional

literature such as books, journal articles, and unpublished research documents. Although an attempt was made to include South African literature, most of the literature used was published in the United States of America or Great Britain.

The empirical study takes the form of a quasi-experimental design, wherein an experimental and control group were exposed to the same pretest. The experimental group was exposed to the social work intervention in the form of a growth oriented group designed by the present researcher (the Personal Growth Programme) while the control group was not. Both groups were then exposed to the same post-test. Non-Probability sampling procedures were used, and variables were matched in the two groups as far as was practically possible (due to population and time constraints).

The Experimental and Control group both consisted of divorced women who were legally divorced, and who were not living with their ex-spouses, and were not remarried. They all had children, and all had custody of their children. They all lived in Grahamstown.

Various methods of data collection were used. A self report questionnaire was used during the initial selection phase. Two standardised measuring scales (measuring self esteem and loneliness) and a questionnaire on indicators of divorce adjustment were used. These were applied in the form of a pretest before the intervention, and a post-test after the intervention.

After the completion of the empirical study, the data was analysed. This included the categorising, ordering and summarising of the data in order to obtain answers to the research questions.

Tests were done to measure the statistical significance of various changes as a result of the intervention. In the process of data analysis, a statistician was consulted, in order to improve the quality and reliability of statistical analysis and inferences.

1.5 SCOPE OF RESEARCH

This research focusses on the problem of divorce adjustment, and more specifically on the use of group work as an intervention approach. An intervention programme was designed, with the aim of positively affecting self esteem and other indicators of divorce adjustment. The measurement of the extent to which this programme has a positive effect on self esteem and divorce adjustment indicators forms the focus of the research.

Participants in the research were all divorced women resident in Grahamstown. They all had children, and all had custody of their children. Participants in the experimental group were all motivated and committed to participate in the ten week intervention programme. Participants in the control group, although they were interested, were prepared only to invest limited time and energy in the research study. The scope of the research is therefore limited to this specific population of participants.

Although the title refers to group work as a treatment modality, the findings are limited to a specific form of group work, namely the time limited, structured group, focusing on the facilitation of self esteem development, social skills training, personal growth, cognitive restructuring, and experiential learning.

1.6 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Unless otherwise specified, the meaning of the following terms or concepts is as follows:

Cognitive Restructuring is a systematic intervention which assists clients to gain awareness of dysfunctional and self-defeating thoughts and misconceptions that impair personal functioning, and to replace them with beliefs and behaviours that are aligned with reality and lead to enhanced functioning.

Divorce refers to the process whereby a marriage is dissolved, including, but not only, the legal divorce.

Experiential Learning refers to the process whereby clients' learning is achieved through the facilitation of the learning cycle of experience, reflection, analysis and generalisation, as opposed to the didactic, directive provision of facts.

FAMSA is the Family and Marriage Society of South Africa, which renders services to clients in the field of relationships generally, and marriage and family relationships more specifically.

Group Work refers to the method of social work whereby groups of individuals are given the opportunity to improve their functioning according to their needs and potentialities, by the scientific management of group processes and relationships.

Psychic Divorce refers to the final phase of divorce adjustment whereby the individual attains complete adjustment and has successfully resolved all the tasks of separation from their former spouse.

Self esteem is the value judgement/rating by the individual of his/her self image. It refers to the extent to which he/she values him/herself.

The quasi-experimental design is a form of nonequivalent comparison group research design whereby two groups, assumed to be comparable, are selected. They are administered the premeasurements on the dependent variables. One group is administered the dependent variable (intervention), and the other group not. After a specified period of time, postmeasurements of the dependent variable are taken for both groups.

The Wilcoxon Test is a statistical tool for the measurement of significance of differences. It is considered to be the non-parametric alternative to the t-test for related groups.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The general aim of this study is to examine the extent of change which can be brought about in divorced people through the group work intervention method. It is not possible to make conclusive generalisations for all divorcees for the following reasons:

The sample is not representative of the total population of divorced people. A random sample was not drawn, and non-probability sampling was used, due to the limited size of available population, and only people interested in participation in the study were included. Those divorced people who were not prepared to invest time or energy in the study for whichever reason, were not included. The sample included only women, and this factor also limits confident generalisation to both sexes.

The lack of availability of a measure specifically related to divorce adjustment led to the development of a questionnaire to measure this area. Due to time constraints however, the questionnaire could not be pretested for reliability or validity. This limitation was however not of such a nature that it had a serious effect on the findings of the study.

The fluctuations in personal circumstances of individual participants in the study could not be controlled. An example of this is the fact that one of the participants in the experimental group suffered a major personal crisis during the course of the intervention programme. Her general functioning, also in the area of divorce adjustment, was thus negatively affected. This trend negatively affected the general trend of group changes.

1.8 LAYOUT OF THE REPORT

In this chapter, the **Introduction**, the study is introduced by describing the necessity, the aims, and the duration of the study. The Research design and methodology is only briefly described, as this aspect is covered more fully in a later chapter. The scope of the research is described, and some terms are defined. Finally, the limitations of the study are described.

Chapters II - VI form the literature review, where relevant issues around divorce and treatment modalities are explored as follows: **Chapter II** examines the Impact and Experience of Divorce; **Chapter III** covers the Stages of Divorce as a Process; **Chapter IV** examines Indicators of Divorce Adjustment; **Chapter V** explores Treatment Approaches in Divorce; and **Chapter VI** examines Group Work in Divorce Adjustment. These chapters provide the background for the empirical study which follows this section.

Chapters VII and VIII deals with the Empirical Study. The Research Design and Methodology are first described in greater detail than in the Introduction. The Intervention programme is then described in terms of the identifying particulars of the group and the participants, theoretical concepts and approaches used, objectives of the programme, a brief description of the content (a full outline of the programme content is provided in an Appendix), and an evaluation of the intervention programme.

The Findings of the Study are presented in **Chapter VIII**. These are presented in the form of graphs, tables, statistical analyses and comments and interpretations based on the findings. The concern here is primarily with the effects of the Intervention Programme

on the Group of Divorced clients. Finally, the Conclusions and Recommendations, based upon the findings in the previous chapter, are presented in **ChapterIX**.

SECTION B : THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

CHAPTER II : THE IMPACT AND EXPERIENCE OF DIVORCE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Divorce is a phenomenon which is complex both socially and personally. Even in its definition, divorce can be viewed in contrasting ways - either as a problem, or as a solution to a problem. Divorce as a phenomenon clearly affects a very great proportion of people directly or indirectly at some stage of their lives. The dissolution of a marriage affects not only the partners in the dissolving marriage, but also their children, their families and the wider system within which they find themselves. It is clear therefore that divorce is a phenomenon requiring considerable attention, especially by people in the helping professions.

Fisher (1973:236) maintains that the way that people cope with divorce depends in a large part on where they are on a continuum between mental health and pathology. She describes extremes on this continuum as being those people with enough ego strength and emotional lability to cope with ordinary life circumstances, to those whose pathology is such as not to permit them ever to assume creative and responsible adult roles as demanded in marriage. It is also true then to say that the nature of reaction or coping ability of anyone indirectly affected by divorce would also be related to their position on this continuum of mental health.

It is important therefore, when speculating or generalising about the impact or experience of divorce, to take the above mentioned

consideration into account, as the experience and impact of divorce will vary from person to person. The different ways in which the impact makes itself felt, will now be discussed.

2.2 EMOTIONAL IMPACT

According to Krantzler (1974:33), divorce is an emotional crisis triggered by a sudden and unexpected loss. The same author refers to the symptoms of separation shock. He states that the longer and more involving the marriage, the greater the severity of the symptoms. When a major portion of time and energies have been invested in a relationship, its ending can produce waves of depression, hostility, self-pity, remorse, anxiety and fear. He also states:

"The degree to which a separation or divorce can produce these reactions is in direct proportion to the part the marriage played in shaping our identities."

Kaslow and Hyatt (1982:116) quote Holmes and Rahe, who in their 1967 Social Readjustment Rating Scale, placed divorce second only to death of a spouse as a stressful life event. They then go on to say:

"Our observation is that sometimes divorce is more overwhelming since the rejection and perceived abandonment are more deliberate and perhaps more analogous to death when the spouse has committed suicide."

Various other authors refer to the emotional impact of divorce. Kressel (1980:234) refers to the fact that there is empirical evidence that for most people divorce produces a serious, if temporary, decrement in functioning and sense of general well-being. Price-Bonham and Balswick (1980:962) maintains that divorce, being both a public and private event, is painful and

crisis producing for most persons experiencing it.

Many different feelings are mentioned to describe the emotional impact of divorce. Many of these can be grouped and described in terms of a process, and the nature of this process will be discussed in a later section. Numerous feelings mentioned include: Abandonment, ambivalence, anger (at self and/or ex-spouse), anxiety, apprehension, betrayal of trust, chaos, confusion, challenge of identity, depression, disillusionment, dissatisfaction, dread, detachment, distress, emptiness, euphoria and relief, failure, fury, guilt, hopelessness, insecurity, incompetence, loneliness, loss of intimacy, loss of security, pining, regret, rejection, resentment, self pity, self doubt, and sadness. Positive feelings are also mentioned as being hope, euphoria, excitement, exhilaration, optimism and relief.

Persons in the process of a divorce are also said to face a total identity crisis, where they feel that the entire structure of their lives has fallen apart, leaving them empty, worthless, and with nothing to offer (Fisher, 1974:117; Chiancola, 1978:496; Beatrice, 1979:157; Bonkowski and Wanner-Westley, 1979:552; Kaslow in Gurman 1981:676; Hunt and Weiss in Jacobson, 1983:69).

Divorce is however also sometimes seen as a positive experience, although this seems to be the case in the longer term, when feelings of happiness, relief and hope can be identified (Brown in Jacobson, 1983:67). Fisher (1974:116) proposes a continuum of feelings in divorce, where on the one hand a couple was locked into each other by intensive dependency needs and divorce was then seen to be a psychic death, to the other end of

the continuum, where the couple was not involved with feelings of commitment in their marriage, and the divorce meant nothing, as the marriage meant nothing.

It can be seen therefore that divorce has a great emotional impact on the individual, similar to that of death of a spouse, but perhaps more overwhelming due to the nature of the termination of the relationship.

2.3 SOCIAL IMPACT

Divorce has far reaching social consequences for the individual concerned. Due to the change in role and status of the divorcee, society often has a concomitant (albeit sometimes prejudiced or misguided) change in perception and attitude towards the divorced person. To illustrate this often harsh and condemnatory attitude, Krantzler quotes from a pamphlet prepared and distributed during that time by the Conciliation Court of Sonoma County's Superior Court, State of California:

"Failure is not a popular American word, and yet every divorce statistic means two people have failed in life's most noble and important relationship - failed themselves, failed their children, failed their Creator, and failed society." (!) (1975:40)

He goes on to say that this kind of statement is indicative of how deep-seated these sentiments are, and how slowly society's moral code changes to encompass new patterns of living. It is partly due to attitudes and prejudices such as these that the divorced person may feel socially unacceptable, isolated and/or lonely. Prior to divorce, the pair lived in a social world of couples, and the single, divorced person then feels that they are no longer acceptable there. The divorced

person has to develop a new social support system, often composed of other single people. Work therefore needs to occur in the area of the establishment of new relationships - which may be difficult for the newly divorced person. According to Beatrice (1979:159), the areas of dating and sexuality are areas where new singles may experience problems. A resurgence of unresolved adolescent conflicts may occur, and this self-perceived regression may be demoralising.

Feelings of failure to comply with the accepted norm of remaining married, exacerbate the problems of an already lowered self esteem. This reduced self esteem may then lead to a self fulfilling prophecy whereby an expectation of unacceptability leads to less acceptability - through for example a reduction in meaningful and positive interpersonal outreach due to the lowered level of self acceptance. Hunt, in Morris and Prescott, states:

"The newly divorced person is partly alienated and estranged from the culture around him or her."
(1975:325)

It is not only society's perception and attitude however that brings about tension and difficulty for the divorced person, but also the reality of the change with which they are faced.

Albrecht et al state that:

"Not only are intimate ties with others, such as a former spouse and children, broken or modified, but friendship patterns and social interaction networks are often changed significantly."
(1983:129)

The fact that there are few rituals to help people terminate their marriages exacerbates the social problems around the redefinition and reorientation of divorced people. Society has

not devised or provided ritualised, socially recognised behaviours which indicate societal acceptance and support for the newly divorced. This leaves the divorced individual with the task of adjusting to the divorce in isolation and without support. Socially, divorce has an impact that is not readily apparent, other than to the individual or family experiencing it.

2.4 FAMILIAL IMPACT

Ahrons describes divorce as a process of family transition and change. She states:

"How the divorced family defines itself, both to itself and to community and friends, is critical to the family's struggles with identity, boundaries and individuation."
(1980:537)

This process of family redefinition implies that children are involved, and it is this dynamic, i.e. parenting, that seems to introduce the complexity of the bi-nuclear family functioning. Structural changes in the parenting roles need to be executed, and the successful restructuring depends upon the relationship between the parents. Ahrons states the following regarding the nature of this continued relationship:

"One major component of the redefinitional process appears to be the parents' ability to maintain a child-centered relationship. For some this includes a personal continuing friendship, but for most it is less intimate and more instrumental." (1980:538)

While it is true that spouses divorce one another, they do not divorce from their roles as parents (the co-parental divorce as described by Bohannan 1970:52). In the same way, Lyon et al state:

"Divorcing parents have issues to address that nonparents do not confront, and they normally maintain at least a minimal relationship with one another that is centered around the children."
(1985:260)

Part of the impact of the divorce on the parent role is therefore related to complications which may arise through the continued relationship with the other parent. Lyon et al (1985:260) go on to state that the family routines for nurturing, disciplining and educating children are usually disrupted and need revision. The custodial parent, facing the emotional upheavals surrounding the divorce, may not have the time or energy to rebuild these routines.

A further consideration is that the traditional mother-child or father-child role within a nuclear family may be very different from a mother-child or father-child role in a bi-nuclear family. Because of the disequilibrium created when one parent leaves the household, the remaining parent child/ren unit needs to reorganise to fill roles enacted by the physically absent parent. If they do not reorganise, and they deal with the physically absent parent as if psychologically present, they perpetuate the disequilibrium and distress.

Custody issues become important when considering this reorganisation and stabilisation of parental roles. Ahrons states the following:

"Each parent must establish an independent relationship with the child to pass this transition successfully, but the continuation of each parent-child relationship unit requires the continued interdependence of the former spouses. This paradoxical and complex process requires the clarification of roles and boundaries between parental and spousal subsystems." (1980:537)

Ahrons goes on to contest the notion that a healthy readjustment to divorce implies a termination of relationships between former spouses. She maintains that the term single parent families

implies that one parent leaves the system, and that the more the noncustodial parent is 'closed out', the more dysfunctional stress occurs. She postulates therefore that a healthy readjustment is one where both parents are involved with their children, and two nuclei of maternal and paternal households are created, forming one family system - a bi-nuclear family system.

2.5 ECONOMIC IMPACT

The dissolution of a marriage is not only a sociological but also an economic event. The stresses of divorce in the economic sphere are likely to be severe, regardless of economic status or distribution of assets between husband and wife. The reality is that after the divorce two households need to be maintained rather than one. Studies seem however to refer more often to the negative change in economic circumstances of the woman (and more specifically the divorced mother) than the man - as seen in writings by Price-Bonham and Balswick (1980:964); Buehler and Hogan (1980:525); and Beatrice (1979:157). Peterson in Dissertation Abstracts International (1985:268), found that divorced women who work, improve their position in the labour market, especially after a long period, but all divorced women, including those who work, experience a drop in economic well-being.

Some reasons for the downward economic mobility of female headed single parent families are given by Buehler and Hogan as economic discrimination against women, conflicts between labour market and home responsibilities, and a reluctance of ex-husbands and outside agencies to help the female head (1980:526). Kressel (1980:234) states that some of the reasons for the precipitous

decline in the economic fortunes of divorced women include economic discrimination among women and the generally poor compliance of husbands with alimony and child support payments. Beatrice (1979:157) maintains that vocational identity may be a problem for the homemaker, whose 'marketability' may be blocked by inexperience, low self esteem, and reality issues such as child care. This then would contribute to the general trend of downward economic mobility.

It can not be said however that the divorced mother is the only party to be affected negatively in an economic sense by divorce. As stated before, two households are to be maintained after a divorce, and this is costly to the whole family on a per capita basis, and implies a reduction in economic well-being of all concerned.

2.6 CONCLUSION

It can be seen therefore, in the light of the above, that divorce is a complex social and personal experience from the vantage point of the individuals concerned as well as those involved in their lives. It is therefore not only the individual concerned who is affected by the divorce, but their family, friends, and community in which they find themselves, which feel the impact of divorce.

In the individual, the impact is felt in virtually all areas of functioning in that individual's life, namely the emotional, social, familial and economic functioning. The severity of impact and way in which people cope with the experience, depends (among others) to a large extent on where they are on the continuum of

mental health.

It is important for the social worker to take cognizance of the extent of impact of divorce, as this will determine the nature and extent of services rendered to those concerned. The social worker would also need to adopt an holistic view of the person concerned, and attend to all the areas in the individual's life affected by the divorce.

CHAPTER III : THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE DIVORCE PROCESS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Although those experiencing divorce may perceive it in terms of a legal event whereby the former marriage is dissolved, it is important to recognise that it is a process or series of transitions. The process begins with the initial stages of marital disintegration, and ends with the final resolution or re-equilibration in the individuals concerned. Howard and Johnson state regarding the nature of divorce:

"It is essential to recognise that divorce is not a time-limited crisis event, but rather a transitional process that involves ongoing stressors and adaptive tasks."
(1985:483)

Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:675) in her description of divorce as a process, stresses that although stages may be delineated for analytical purposes, it is not invariant. She describes a roller coaster like process with highs and lows and periodically a regressive pull-back. She describes how some people may vacillate and return to an earlier phase in the process, and remain fixated there. The 'healthier' divorced individuals, she maintains, seem to require approximately two years from the time the separation first occurs, until the psychic divorce is complete. She states:

"The grief work and the adjustment to a new way of life progress slowly. Each person can only proceed at his/her own rhythm according to the music of his/her internal drumbeat."
(Kaslow in Gurman, 1981:675)

Due to the fact that divorce brings about a reorganisation of the family system however, it continually provides a framework within

which the lives of the individuals concerned are affected. The family system is altered by divorce from a nuclear to a bi-nuclear family system, dictating a new set of family norms and boundaries.

The experience of divorce for the partners concerned tends to be characterised by various phases or stages as mentioned above. Each stage is then characterised by concomitant tasks to be accomplished. It is important to note what these may be in order to plan appropriate intervention. Various authors have made attempts to describe the process of divorce and/or divorce adjustment. Some of the authors well noted for their contribution in the area of divorce, and which will be discussed in this section, include the following: Bohannon (1970); Wiseman (1975); Froiland and Hozman (1977); Kessler (1977); Callahan (1979); Kaslow (1981); and Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989). These authors use slightly different perspectives, but for the purposes of the present study, a new framework has been formulated. The approaches of the various authors mentioned are fitted into this framework for analytical purposes. The various stages mentioned are described in terms of tasks and feelings that the individual may experience.

It is important to note that not all individuals go through all the stages, nor do they go through the stages in a fixed order (See Table One : Stages of the Divorce Process). This chapter deals with the following stages of divorce: **Before Separation; Separation and Deliberation; Litigation Period; Post Divorce; and Final Adjustment.**

3.2 BEFORE SEPARATION

As the marriage deteriorates and the process of divorce begins (albeit unconsciously), partners find themselves in a stage characterised by dissilusionment, erosion, detachment, and/or denial. The former balance of the relationship becomes unable to cope with life stresses, and the negative factors in the relationship are more manifest. For the purposes of analysis, this first stage, defined as **Before Separation** by the present researcher, is described in terms of stages identified by various authors: **Emotional Divorce** (Bohannan, 1970:34); **Denial and Loss and Depression** (Wiseman, 1975:206); **Denial** (Froiland and Hozman, 1977:525); **Dissilusionment, Erosion and Detachment** (Kessler in Gurman, 1981:672); and **Former Balance** (Callahan, 1979:14).

According to Bohannan (1970:34) the first visible stage of a deteriorating marriage occurs as the spouses begin to experience emotional distancing from one another. He describes this stage as **Emotional Divorce**. He stresses that although he describes the emotional divorce as a stage, it is one of six overlapping experiences that form the "stations" of divorce. The emotional divorce, according to Bohannan, is that period when spouses begin to withhold emotion from one another and from the relationship. The social unit of the marriage continues, but trust and affection for one another have disappeared. It is interesting that Bohannan talks of self esteem at this early stage when he states:

"The self regard of each is no longer reinforced
by love for the other." (1970:34)

He goes on to state that the emotional divorce is experienced as an unsavoury choice between giving in and hating oneself or domineering and hating oneself. He distinguishes between "healthy

growing apart" of married couples as marriages mature and partners grow in new directions and establish bonds of greater independence, and the "growing apart" of a couple in emotional divorce where they become mutually antagonistic toward one another.

Wiseman (1975:206) and Froiland and Hozman (1977:525) describe this stage as being that of **Denial**, used as a coping mechanism. Denial is used in order to keep the relationship going and an external rationale such as finances or the children, is used to prevent the consideration of divorce. Kessler, as described by Kaslow (Gurman 1981: 673) maintains that the couple may remain in this stage for a long time, remaining together for reasons such as fear of divorce, obligation to children, fear of loneliness, religious convictions, financial reasons and sense of failure signified by divorce. According to Froiland and Hozman (1977:526), the thought of an existence other than dyadic is unthinkable, and the client is neither ready or able to admit that the relationship in which they have invested so much is beginning to disintegrate. According to Callahan (1979:14), part of this fear of leaving the marriage is caused by a myth which propagates the notion that emotional security will be attained only when someone marries and 'settles down', and chooses the correct partner. This 'Maturity Myth' dictates that marital success is an expectation for this emotional security, and ignores the fact that emotional security has more to do with an individual's inner self and self worth.

Kessler is quoted by Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:637) as describing the initial stage of divorce as that of **Dissilusionment**, which begins

as the couple begins to doubt their love for one another, and whether they want to continue living together. Annoyance at the disappointment in the partner begins to surface, but is suppressed during this period. It is critical for the survival of the marriage that the festering discontent be aired and resolved. If this does not occur, then the couple moves into the following stage as described by Kessler to be that of **Erosion**. During the stage of erosion dissatisfaction becomes overtly expressed, partners become critical of one another, and/or they may withdraw from one another.

Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:676) lists feelings that may occur, and requisite tasks that need to be performed during the initial stage (referred to by Kaslow as the **Pre-divorce: Deliberation Period**) These include: disillusionment; dissatisfaction, and alienation. The requisite tasks mentioned by Kaslow are: confronting the partner; quarreling; seeking therapy; and denial.

Kaslow describes Kessler's view (Gurman, 1981:673) by stating that one of the partners may feel increasing **Detachment** and boredom. It is extremely difficult during this stage for the couple to rekindle any positive feelings, and sustain the belief that the union is happy. He maintains that during this stage triangulation occurs in an effort to re-equilibrate a problematic dyadic relationship. This mechanism is described as being the process whereby the partner engages with a third person or area outside of the marriage such as work, sport, another relationship or a child. Other patterns which may occur according to Kessler are the somatization into functional ailments, withdrawal of libidinal cathexes, or involvement in an extramarital

relationship.

Bohannan (1970:40) also discusses the loss of sexual rapport. He maintains that this is one of the first indicators of strain in the relationship and part of the stage of emotional divorce. He maintains that reservations or ambivalence in the emotions are likely to show up in the quality of the sexual relationship. There is no clear rule in this regard however, as there are varying responses from that of the sexual relationship being the first to show signs of breakdown, to that of the sexual relationship being the only strong bond left between the spouses.

The initial stage of divorce is also characterised by a period of **Loss and Depression** as described by Wiseman (1975: 206). As the partners realise they cannot cope and that it is impossible to continue denying that something is wrong, they experience a reaction of loss. This is accompanied by feelings of grief, depression and isolation. Not only is a partner being lost, but also a marriage and future hopes and dreams. It is important that as the couple begins to acknowledge the disintegration of the marriage, that these feelings are faced and worked through. Bohannan (1970:43) as many other writers, equates the loss of a loved one by divorce to loss by death, and states that divorce is difficult because it involves a purposeful and active rejection by another person. He also maintains that divorce can be more threatening than death to some people, because they may have thought about it and desired it more consciously - as well as the fact that there is no recognised way to mourn a divorce - the grief has to be worked through alone, without the benefit of traditional rites. Bohannan states the following regarding the

emotional working through of the divorce:

"When grief gets tangled with all the other emotions that are evoked in a divorce, the emotional working through becomes complicated - in a divorce one is very much on his own."
(Bohannon, 1970:43)

It is evident from the above that even before the couple has separated, the process of divorce has begun. Divorce is clearly therefore not only the legal event, but a complex process beginning already with marital disintegration. The period before separation constitutes a time when the partners have to acknowledge that their marriage has disintegrated and that ahead of them lies separation and divorce. When considering the stages of the mourning/grieving process as described by Kubler-Ross in Davenport (1981:333) as being denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance, it is interesting to note the similarity with the first stage of the divorce process.

3.3 SEPARATION AND DELIBERATION

The separation stage as described in this analysis, does not include the legal divorce, but refers to the period prior to that of litigation. According to Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:673) the physical separation is one of the most decisive steps in formalising the breakdown of the marriage - provided it is not merely a threat in an attempt to manipulate the spouse into change. In this stage of separation and deliberation, the following have been included for analytical purposes: **Anger and Ambivalence** (Wiseman, 1975:208); **Anger and Bargaining** (Froiland and Hozman, 1977:526); **Physical Separation** (Kessler in Gurman, 1981:673); **Change and Crisis Period** (Callahan, 1979:14); **Pre-divorce Deliberation Period** (Kaslow in Gurman, 1981:676); and

Ending the Marriage (Wallerstein and Blakeslee, 1989:292).

Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989:294) who describe the process of divorce in terms of tasks that need to be completed, describe the first task as being the **Ending of the Marriage**. They maintain that the way in which a marriage ends is of great importance in determining the nature of the post divorce years for everyone involved. They feel that the first task of divorce is to bring the marriage to an end in as civilised a manner as possible. Although it is difficult, it is during this time that the arrangements must be negotiated with reality, morality, emotional stability and self-interest. They maintain that if this task is well completed, it has the potential to ease future years.

In contrast with the approach of Wallerstein and Blakeslee above, Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:676) focusses on the problematic feelings and accompanying activities. In her analysis, the period of Separation and Deliberation forms part of the first stage, namely, the **Pre-divorce Deliberation Period**. She lists the feelings and requisite tasks as follows (some of the feelings and tasks were listed by the present researcher in the previous section for purposes of this analysis): dread; anguish; ambivalence; shock; emptiness; chaos; inadequacy; and low self esteem. Requisite tasks, according to Kaslow include: withdrawal (physical and emotional); pretending all is okay; and attempting to win back affection (in the case where some denial is still operative).

Callahan describes the stage after that of the former balance, as being one of **Change and Crisis**. She describes the change in terms of an emotional crisis due to the loss experienced.

She states the following:

"Divorce is an emotional crisis triggered by a sudden and unexpected loss. The ending of a marriage may jolt you out of the self-defeating 'maturity myth' and force you to look at yourself and analyse where you were and how you got there." (1979:15)

Callahan goes on to state that this stage is characterised by ambivalence and hope, and brings about unresolved feelings of earlier experiences of loss and abandonment. During this time there are many confusing feelings such as attraction and repulsion towards the former spouse; emotional 'ups' and 'downs'; high levels of anxiety; guilt and anger; sense of failure; and blaming.

Wiseman (1975:207) maintains that the feelings of depression of the previous stage, may become a factor itself contributing to the real separation. These feelings then give way to the true underlying feelings of **Anger** together with **Ambivalence** (the third stage according to Wiseman). Anger may be intensified during this stage of separation, as negotiations may begin. When the partners are in different stages of the divorce process, problems may arise as they respond to the situation in differing ways e.g. one may behave like a rebellious teenager, while the other may behave like the indignant parent. She goes on to state however, that the feelings of overt anger toward the spouse may often alternate with feelings of intense ambivalence about the idea of ending the marriage. During this time attempts may be made to rescue the marriage, and counselling may be sought, although it may become clear that neither spouse has any real interest in continuing the marriage. These attempts do however help the partners to feel that they have done all they could. Wiseman describes the role of

anger and states:

"It is extremely difficult for a couple who have shared for many years a home, a life, children and friends, to end a relationship, however painful, without some major focus of anger to facilitate the break."

(1975:208)

Froiland and Hozman (1977:526) also maintain that the second stage of divorce through which individuals move, is that of **Anger**. They state that it is paradoxical that when anger is expressed in temper tantrum behaviour (which may have been learned previously when parents gave in to the individual because it was less painful than coping with the tantrum behaviour), it may have the reverse effect, and tends to reinforce the decision of the separating mate. They maintain that anger is often an indication that the desired state of homeostasis cannot be found, and the anger may be directed at all who did not protect the state of balance. They state:

"Anger is commonly recognised as an emotional reaction that often results when one is interfered with, injured, or threatened... in a divorce situation, these hostile reactions are focused toward someone or something, frequently outside the individual concerned."

(Froiland and Hozman, 1977:526)

The following stage according to Froiland and Hozman (1977:527) is that of **Bargaining**, during which one or both partners attempt to negotiate over the disintegrating marriage. The writers maintain that previously learned behaviour comes into operation here too e.g. "If my mother does not respond to my anger, I'll be good and get what I want - If my wife/husband does not respond to my anger, I'll become the ideal mate so that he/she will come back to me." This phase of negotiation may include appeals with moral or social overtones or sexual bargaining, and is characterised by

much manipulation. They state too, as writers mentioned above, that reconciliation is often attempted at this stage.

As can be seen from the above, this stage, namely Separation and Deliberation, is characterised by feelings of anger and ambivalence, and attempts at bargaining. It is interesting to note that this stage also corresponds to that stage in the mourning/grieving process of Kubler-Ross (Davenport 1981:333) of bargaining and anger. It should also be said that although the focus or method of analysis of some of the above mentioned writers may be slightly different, it is interesting to note the extent of agreement among them regarding the various stages.

3.4 LITIGATION PERIOD

The litigation period consists of the events leading up to, as well as the actual legal divorce. It is the role of the court to formalise the dissolution of the marriage, and in essence, it is establishing the right to remarry. It is during this stage that the final breakdown of the marriage has to be acknowledged, even more so than in the case of the previous stage. A description of this stage, for analytical purposes, includes a combination of the following: **Legal divorce**, **Economic divorce**, **Coparental divorce** (Bohannan, 1970:43-58); **Depression** (Froiland and Hozman, 1977:528); **Mourning** (Kessler in Gurman, 1981:676); **During-divorce: Litigation Period** (Kaslow in Gurman, 1981:676); and **Mourning the Loss** (Wallerstein and Blakeslee, 1989:293).

As part of his discussion of the **Legal Divorce**, Bohannan (1970:48) mentions the problem of lack of socially accepted opportunities for discharge of emotion. He describes the

problem as follows:

"One of the reasons that the divorce institution is so hard on people is that the legal processes do not provide an orderly and socially approved discharge of emotions that are elicited during the emotional divorce and during the early parts of preparation for the legal divorce."
(Bohannan, 1970:48)

The court procedure for the actual event of divorce takes only a few minutes, and this may contribute to the divorcing person's sense of absence of a significant public event proclaiming the end of the marriage. In the same way however, the court experience does serve the purpose of making a public statement about 'the death of the marriage', and for this reason is an important part of the process of divorce.

The law governing divorce may also contribute to the level of trauma surrounding the divorce. In South Africa, the divorce laws changed in 1979 with the promulgation of the Divorce Act, Act 70 of 1979. According to Appelo (1982:34), the old divorce law was based on the premise that all divorce actions must involve both a guilty and an innocent spouse. The plaintiff had to persuade the court that he/she was innocent and the defendant guilty or that the defendant was more at fault. The consequences of the divorce were also governed by the 'guilt principle' in terms of maintenance and benefits. It is obvious then that the legal process of divorce was conducive to blaming, resentment, bitterness and defensiveness. The new divorce law however provides that a marriage may be dissolved by a court by a decree of divorce and the only grounds on which such a decree may be granted are (a) the irretrievable break-down of the marriage and (b) the mental illness or the continuous unconsciousness of a party to the marriage. Appelo (1982:34) states that it is obvious that the

word 'may' provides the court with discretion in interpreting these grounds. The fact then that there is no guilt principle in operation implies that legal divorce, although still traumatic, will no longer be characterised by the battle of 'proving' the guilt of the other.

Depression is a characteristic of the litigation period. According to Froiland and Hozman (1977:528) who describe depression as the fourth stage of the divorce process, depression is a response to a condition of loss or disappointment. In divorce it is related to the loss of the relationship. It mostly consists of an exaggerated lowered mood accompanied by a decrease in feelings of self worth. According to them, although relief is often experienced after the final decision to divorce has been made, despondency often occurs after the initial relief has been experienced.

Froiland and Hozman state:

"A further complication occurs when an individual's concept of personal worth has become dependent upon the maintenance of the relationship." (1977:528)

Another characteristic of this kind of depression, according to the authors, is an attempt to overgeneralise the negative experience and predict the future in a stereotypic negative manner. They also maintain that the client reacts in a manner similar to the responses that were found to be effective during earlier life experiences, and that the loss of a mate may be viewed in much the same manner as loss of favour or assistance from parents - as a result, the development or continuance of a negative self concept is likely to come about.

Kessler (Gurman, 1981:674), who described **Mourning** as the fifth

stage of divorce, equates the loss experienced in divorce to the loss experienced by the death of a spouse. This brings about a grieving process which is complicated by the continued contact with the ex-partner. The fantasy of the past remains alive and the pain is continually reactivated. The sense of loss can be overwhelming as any or all of the following are lost: a spouse, a sex partner, a helpmate, a friend, possibly children, in-laws, shared friends, a home, possessions and a way of life. When viewed in this way, the mourning which the individuals concerned have to go through is immensely painful.

Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:676) also describes the **During divorce: Litigation Period** as characterised by feelings of depression, detachment, anger, hopelessness and self pity. Other feelings during this stage according to her include confusion, fury, sadness, loneliness and relief. She goes on to describe the requisite tasks during this period as possibly including bargaining, screaming, threatening, mourning, separating physically, filing for legal divorce, considering economic arrangements, considering custody arrangements, grieving and mourning and telling relatives and friends. Kaslow states the following about the mourning and loss by divorce, compared with mourning of loss by death:

"The death of a spouse is, in many ways,
easier to mourn, particularly if the
living partner is not plagued with
guilt about having been a causative
factor." (Gurman, 1981:674)

Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989:924) describe the second stage in their formulation of the stages of divorce as being that of **Mourning the Loss**. They maintain that the mourning phase begins as the marriage comes apart and lasts well into the post-divorce

period. They describe the need for mourning over the lost dreams and hopes for the future - even if no tears are shed for the lost partner. They state that an unmourned marriage continues psychologically, and retains the painful feelings involved with the separation.

During litigation the **Economic divorce** and the **Co-parental divorce** also occur, described by Bohannan (1970:48-58) in his formulation as being the third and fourth stages of divorce. Although the consequences of divorce are also felt in the economic sphere, this area is also a process which needs to be negotiated. Bohannan (1970) maintains that a couple is seen as an economic unit, and that when they divorce, this economic unit has to be split. This is an important phase of the divorce process. Regardless of the nature of the partnership in economic or property terms, it is never a clear-cut issue as to how the property of the couple should be divided. Issues that form part of the economic divorce (during the Litigation Period) include division of assets, maintenance and alimony. Bohannan (1970:49) maintains that partners may use the issue of the economic divorce as a revenge, punishment, or as a self-abnegation, and that much pain can therefore occur around the economic divorce.

The **Coparental divorce** is also a phase which is negotiated during the litigation period, but which continues to manifest and work itself out as the divorced individuals redefine the family into its new bi-nuclear form. Bohannan states:

"The most enduring pain of divorce is likely to come from the coparental divorce."
(1970:52)

He explains that the word 'coparental' is used to indicate that

the parents are divorced from each other, but not from the child. This implies a re-arrangement of roles and involvement of parents with their children, and also therefore an understanding of their position of maintained parental role towards their children. The question of custody of the children is not always an easy one to resolve, as even in cases of joint custody the child still tends to live at one of the homes. The working out of the coparental divorce requires emotional energy of the parent who may already be struggling with their own painful tasks related to other areas of the divorce process.

It is clear from the above that during the litigation period in divorce, much emotion is experienced, as partners are faced with the reality that the marriage has ended. It is a stage during which the partners are faced with emotional pain of the loss, as well as the practical tasks of litigation. If unresolved, it will not be possible for the subsequent stages of readjustment after the divorce to be successfully worked through.

3.5 POST DIVORCE

The period immediately after the divorce is one in which the individuals and those involved in their lives begin the long process of readjustment. Change and crisis has occurred, and a time of redefinition of status and functioning must occur. For analytical purposes, the following have been included in this stage termed 'Post Divorce': **Community divorce** (Bohannan, 1970:59); **Reorientation of Life-Style and Identity** (Wiseman, 1975:209); **Second Adolescence** (Kessler in Gurman, 1981:674); **Constructive or Destructive Coping** (Callahan, 1979:39); **Post-divorce: Re-equilibration** (Kaslow in Gurman, 1981:676); **Reclaim-**

ing Oneself, Resolving or Containing Passions; and Venturing Forth Again (Wallerstein and Blakeslee, 1989:295).

As part of the initial post divorce stage, and the redefinition of status that needs to occur, the individual needs to find new communities (in the same way as newly married people do).

Bohannan (1970:59) maintains that friendships that existed while people were married tend to change, as the roles of husband/wife change to that of single person. It is during this stage, namely **Community Divorce**, that the social impact, as discussed earlier, is felt most extremely by the individual concerned.

Wiseman (1975:209) goes further than the previous author, and describes the need for the individual to rework their identity in all areas touched upon by marriage: personal; vocational; sexual; and social. She states that during this time the personality is open to the development of new ways of coping. Often there is also an opening of previous unresolved identity issues that may have been tabled during the marriage. Wiseman states:

"The development of an identity that
supersedes changes in status and role
becomes a major internal issue."
(1975:209)

It is during this period, according to her, that there may be a real need to explore further interpersonal and sexual potentials. There is a need to rebuild a damaged self concept by being sexually desirable again. During these relationships, serious emotional commitment may be avoided, as the divorced person is not ready for intimacy while in the process of reworking identity conflicts. Divorced friends become vital during this time, both emotionally and functionally, due to their deeper empathy for the situation. The sub-culture of the formerly married is a vital

force in promoting stability throughout the divorce process.

Kessler (Gurman, 1981:674), in her formulation of the stages of divorce, describes **Second Adolescence** as the time during which the individual becomes 'alive again', and is ready to face the world. It is a time for new relationships and exploration of friendships. Kaslow describes Kessler's sixth stage by stating:

"Many recently divorced people frantically immerse themselves in the 'swinging singles scene' as they seek to prove to themselves that they are attractive and worthwhile."
(Gurman, 1981:674)

On the one hand individuals may initiate many new relationships, validating their sexuality and experimenting sexually with various partners, and on the other hand they may miss the closeness of marriage and seek to replace the lost partner as soon as possible. This phase however passes, and as self esteem improves, greater selectivity and stabilisation occurs.

Callahan (1979:16) describes the importance of **Attempts to Regain Balance** and the choice between constructive and destructive coping as being crucial. The way in which the person handles the crisis of the previous stage is crucial in determining how they will cope during this stage. The feelings from the previous stage are important assets now for the process of mourning. These feelings can provide the fuel necessary to overcome resistance to change. If the person was able to get in touch with his/her feelings of anxiety, guilt and anger, the stage is set for re-evaluating every part of his/her life. Feelings about the loss of the old identity also need to be examined, and growth can be promoted in this way. It is important according to Callahan therefore to discover how the marriage ended and how it began in

the first place so that new insights can be developed.

Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:676) describes possible feelings during this stage of **Post-divorce: Re-Equilibration** as being those of optimism, resignation, excitement, curiosity and regret. Requisite tasks during this post-divorce period are the finalisation of the divorce, beginning to reach out to new friends, undertaking new activities, stabilising a new life and daily routine for the children.

Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989:295) discuss the third, fourth and fifth stages of their formulation of the stages/tasks of divorce as being that of **Reclaiming Oneself, Resolving or Containing Passions** and **Venturing Forth again**. They state that in the step of reclaiming oneself, detachment from the marriage is signified. Especially in long term marriages, the partners' sense of identity becomes tied to that of their spouse and their marriage. Even in the carrying of the same name, a sense of 'we' identity is maintained. They suggest that the new sense of self needs to be built to replace the old identity - possibly by reaching back into his/her early experience to find other images and roots for independence.

Wallerstein and Blakeslee state about the stage of **Resolving or Containing Passions**:

"Unlike any other crisis, divorce engenders feelings that can engulf people for years, coming as unbidden flashbacks and bitter memories of exploitation and betrayal."
(1989:296)

They go on to emphasise the importance of resolving these feelings, as they have the potential to destroy the person who feels wronged. They suggest that the feelings may be refuelled over the

years by subsequent events and life-crises. The aim of resolving the feelings/passions is to prevent the domination of the individual by the trauma of divorce.

In discussing **Venturing Forth Again**, Wallerstein and Blakeslee state the following:

"To restore a lost sense of competence and self esteem, a divorced man or woman has to find the courage to try new relationships, new roles and new solutions to old problems."
(1989:298)

They maintain that divorced people lose confidence in their own judgement, and therefore need to reach a stage where they venture forth in order to regain self confidence. This also implies being prepared to take risks.

The authors mentioned above all refer to a stage wherein a reorientation, reaching out, building new relationships, redefining and constructive coping needs to occur. Feelings are still very much focused upon (as the case in the whole process of divorce), and point to the need for awareness on the part of the person experiencing them. The period immediately after the divorce could be described in terms of tentative reaching out and risking, in order to achieve the final stage, that of final adjustment to the divorce.

3.6 FINAL ADJUSTMENT

The stage of final adjustment to divorce implies that a process has been completed, and that there is a newness of life and a restoration of balance in the various individuals affected by the divorce. The completion of this phase is characterised by the acknowledgement of personal growth and the attainment of whole-

ness, autonomy, independence and resynthesis of identity. This stage is described by the present researcher in terms of the following: **Psychic Divorce** (Bohannan, 1970:60); **Acceptance and New Level of Functioning** (Wiseman, 1975:212); **Acceptance** (Froiland and Hozman, 1977:529); **Hard Work** (Kaslow in Gurman, 1981:674); and **New Life:Balance Restored** (Callahan, 1979:39).

The final stage of divorce adjustment is aptly described by Bohannan (1970:60) as the **Psychic Divorce**. This, according to him is the phase during which the self is separated from the personality and influence of the ex-partner. Bohannan states that this is the most difficult of the phases, but that it can also be the most constructive phase in a personal sense. The psychic divorce involves becoming a whole, complete and autonomous individual again - learning to live without somebody to lean on, but also without somebody to support. There is nobody on whom to blame one's difficulties, nobody to shortstop one's growth, nobody to grow with.

An important comment is made by Bohannan (1970:61) when he says that each must regain - **if he ever had it**- the dependence on self and faith in one's own capacity to cope with the environment, with people, with thoughts and emotions. This implies that the level of adjustment after a divorce will also depend upon the individual's level of ego strength before the marriage - and how much the individual has come to depend upon the marriage partner and marriage as a form of definition of self i.e. defining the self only in terms of the roles fulfilled in the marriage and not as a separate individual. Part of the stage of final adjustment is the attainment of

Acceptance and New Level of Functioning as described by Wiseman (1975:212). As the person begins to feel more adequate socially, sexually and vocationally, acceptance comes about. Wiseman maintains that there is a move towards deeper and longer term relationships, as the feelings of anxiety and depression abate. This acceptance frees the divorced person to establish new forms of relationships with ex-partners and in-laws, and to accept it if this is not possible. Both partners are freed to go their separate ways, and even to see the marriage and divorce as something that contributed to their own growth. She maintains that accepting the divorce frees the person to identify him/herself as a divorced person, and the constant search for a new spouse diminishes. Wiseman concludes:

"The result is a new social and personal identity, often a more mature and satisfying one than that which existed before the divorce." (1975:212)

In their discussion of the stage of **Acceptance**, Froiland and Hozman (1977:529) state in a similar manner as Wiseman above, that this is the true desired goal for the loss of a marriage. By facing and accepting the inevitable reality, the client comes to accept the divorced style of life. The client realises that it is legitimate to have love/hate/neutral feelings towards the former mate.

During this time the client begins to function as an autonomous, growing and developing person, who strives to eliminate behaviours that are not productive. During this time new social skills and emotional reactions to everyday life situations are learned, and the client accepts a new 'single image' with friends

and acquaintances. Froiland and Hozman also go on to state:

"The realisation that the previous relationship is no longer worth the expenditure of the psychological energy required to maintain the depression stage is the first step." (1977:529)

Froiland and Hozman (1977:529), also stress however that a relapse in the phase of acceptance is possible, with a move to former attitudes of the self concept and a self-doubting in their ability to function fully. They also state that not all people go through all the stages of the model, and that not all individuals go through all the stages at the same rate. They feel however that conceptualising the divorce process in this way equips the counsellor to render effective services.

Kessler (Gurman 1981:672) maintains that the final stage of divorce is that of **Hard Work**. During this phase the individual integrates all that has happened to him/her, and takes full responsibility for his/her life. Recovery from the psychic trauma is complete, and the individual likes him/herself - possibly even better than before. It is during this time that a new, lasting relationship with some form of commitment is possible.

Callahan (1979:39) also refers to the final stage in positive terms when she describes the stage of **New Life: Balance Restored**, in terms of enjoyment, newness, freedom and independence. During this stage the old and the new is incorporated into a dynamic life strategy. She maintains that it differs from the 'maturity myth' because it involves planned change based on own needs. If the crisis is resolved, emotional divorce (or psychic divorce) occurs, wherein a new single identity is established and new freedom and openness to relationships is

possible. Self confidence, wholeness and autonomy results. If emotional divorce does not occur, and the crisis is resolved by re-establishing marital bonds, then there is a mutual obligation to building respect and trust, as well as a commitment to working through the problems that led to separation. If the crisis remains unresolved, then imbalance remains, and the person remains in a fantasy world where growth is blocked.

Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:676) refers to the final stage as being: **Post-Divorce: Re-Equilibrium**. She describes feelings during this stage as including acceptance; self confidence; energy; self worth; wholeness; exhilaration; independence; and autonomy. Requisite Tasks and Actions during this stage may include the resynthesis of identity; completing the psychic divorce; seeking a new love object and making a commitment to some permanency; becoming comfortable with a new life-style and friends; and helping the children accept the finality of parent's divorce and their continuing relationship with both parents. Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:672) also states that the final resolution occurs after the individual has come to a reasonable understanding of why he/she married, what factors led to the choice of the specific mate, what unresolved intrapsychic difficulties contributed to the marital strife, and what combination of factors led to the divorce.

Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989:297) maintain that a central psychological task of divorce is that of **Rebuilding**. This stage or task as described by them involves all the forgoing tasks as building blocks. The goal of this task is to create a new, sus-

tained adult relationship that will be better than the one left behind, or to establish a gratifying life outside of marriage. They go on to state that in finding post divorce stability, a person must allow the obligations, the memories and lessons of the past to coexist peacefully with experiences in the present.

A final task according to the same authors, is that of **Helping the Children**. Besides the tasks mentioned above, the authors stress the importance of helping the children through the breakup of the marriage and the post-divorce years. They motivate by stating that children of divorce have learned that relationships can be broken, and they are afraid of being abandoned. This task involves parents making long lasting commitments to the needs of the children, for as long as the children need them. It also involves being able psychologically to separate the child's needs from their own adult needs. The task of helping the children also implies providing both financial and emotional support to balance the anxiety felt by the child.

The authors above all refer to the final stage of divorce as that of final adjustment, and this stage is described largely in positive terms. It is the attainment and completion of this stage therefore that becomes the concern of social workers working with divorced clients, and it is after the attainment of this stage that true personal growth may be recognised as such by the client.

3.7 CONCLUSION

The present researcher has constructed a table of the various approaches (Table 1) as described above.

TABLE 1 : MODELS OF THE DIVORCE PROCESS

Bohannon (1970)	Wiseman (1975)	Froland and Hozman (1977)	Kessler (1977)	Callahan (1979)	Kaslow (1981) (Feelings)	(Tasks)	Wallerstein & Blakeslee (1989)
BEFORE SEPARATION							
Emotional Divorce	Denial Loss & Depression	Denial	Disillusion= ment Erosion Detachment	Former balance	Disillusioned Dissatis= faction Alienation	Confront Quarrel Seek therapy Denial	
SEPARATION AND DELIBERATION							
	Loss and depression Anger and ambivalence	Anger Bargaining	Physical separation	Change Crisis: Ambiva= lence	Alienation Dread Anguish Shock Emptiness Chaos Inadequacy Low	Denial Withdrawal Attempt to win back affection self	Ending the marriage esteem
LITIGATION PERIOD							
Legal divorce		Depression	Mourning		Depressed Detached Angry Hopelessness Self pity	Bargain Scream Threaten Mourn Separate Economic & custody arrangements	Mourning the loss
Economic divorce					Confusion Fury Sadness Loneliness Relief		
Co-parental divorce							
POST DIVORCE							
Community divorce	Reorientation of life-style and identity		Second Adolescence	Attempts to regain balance	Optimism Resignation Excitement Curiosity Regret	Finalise divorce New friends Stabilise children's life-style	Reclaiming oneself Resolving or containing passions Venturing forth
FINAL ADJUSTMENT							
Psychic divorce	Acceptance and new level of functioning	Acceptance	Hard work	Balance restored	Acceptance Self esteem Energy Self Worth Wholeness Exhilaration Independence Autonomy	Resynthesis of identity Complete psychic divorce Commitment to permanence Comfortable with life-style	Rebuilding Helping the children

It can be seen from the preceding discussion and table that the various approaches to the divorce process have many similarities as well as differences in terms of the approach used. Some authors describe the process in terms of affective experiences (Wiseman, 1975; Froiland and Hozman, 1977); others use a description of the nature of the events that need to be negotiated (Bohannon, 1972); Crisis theory is used (Callahan, 1979); Requisite tasks and actions are used (Wallerstein and Blakeslee, 1989) and a combination of both feelings and requisite tasks and actions are used (Kessler, 1977 and Kaslow, 1981). When all of these approaches are combined in table form, comparisons can be made and a clearer understanding of the various stages in the process can be attained.

It is important to note that the various authors all stress the fluctuation and invariance of the stages, implying that people cannot be categorised and stereotyped into any fixed position in any of the stages. The movement and progression through the various stages seem to depend upon various factors such as relative psychological 'health' of the individual; whether the person was the initiator of the divorce or not; and the extent to which the person defined his/her identity in terms of the marriage relationship.

Although the similarity between the mourning process over the death of a loved one has been raised as similar to the divorce process, it can be seen that there are many additional characteristic responses involved in the divorce process. The divorce process should not be over simplified in an attempt to explain its nature, and the additional dynamics such as decision making,

responsibility and contribution towards the final outcome, should be kept in mind when analysing the process.

By studying the feelings, events, behaviours and requisite tasks in each stage of the process of divorce, it becomes possible for the counsellor to develop empathy and intervention strategies for clients as they proceed through the various stages, at whatever pace they may do this. It is in the final resolution phase particularly, that most of the authors attain unanimity regarding the characteristic feelings, behaviours and tasks the individual needs to accomplish. The following chapter focuses of the positive potential inherent in divorce situations and indicators of divorce adjustment

CHAPTER IV : INDICATORS OF SUCCESSFUL DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

It is clear that the final resolution of divorce has various correlates. All the authors mentioned in the previous section (i.e. Bohannon, 1972; Wiseman, 1975; Froiland and Hozman, 1977; Kessler, 1977; Callahan, 1979; Kaslow, 1981; and Wallerstein and Blakeslee, 1989) allude to the significance of an emerging new identity and accompanied positive self esteem as the final stage of successful divorce adjustment. Affirming the views regarding the characteristics or indicators of the final stage of divorce adjustment, is the view of Taylor who sees divorce as a life crisis. He mentions five crises that occur with divorce, and the positive resolution of these are also the indicators of successful divorce adjustment:

"Divorce is an identity crisis; a self-image and self-worth crisis; a financial and life-style crisis; a child rearing crisis; and a life goal crisis." (1980:433)

Sutton (1984:3827A) identifies ten related aspects of divorce adjustment as being: 1) acceptance of the end of the marriage; 2) functional post-divorce relationship with the ex-spouse; 3) emotional adjustment; 4) cognitive adjustment; 5) social support and adjustment; 6) parental adjustment; 7) children's adjustment; 8) using opportunities for learning and personal growth; 9) process and outcome of the settlement; 10) general life adjustment and physical well being.

When viewing the literature and the above comments, it is possible to identify some common themes or indicators of divorce adjustment. These may be identified as follows:

- 1) Self esteem, Personal Growth and New Identity
- 2) Autonomy and resolution of Attachment
- 3) Resolution of Feelings
- 4) Social Skills Competence
- 5) Parenting Skills Competence

The following section will discuss divorce as a potentially growthful experience, and describe the indicators of successful divorce adjustment.

4.2 DIVORCE AS A GROWTHFUL EXPERIENCE

When considering the feelings, attainment of tasks and indicators of the final stage of divorce adjustment, divorce may be viewed as a potentially growthful experience. Successful divorce adjustment may include many positive developments. Along with the new identity and renewed sense of self esteem, there comes a renewed sense of autonomy, confidence and acceptance of the new status as a single person. Feelings around the divorce are no longer as painful, and a new sense of confidence in social skills develops. As children are helped to cope with the divorce situation, parenting issues are resolved and the divorced parent regains confidence in this area too. The divorce is then no longer seen as a devastation to children's lives, as parents are able to see the positive growth in themselves carried over onto the lives of their children. There is a knowledge in the individual that the divorce has led to the emergence of a stronger, more mature person. Kaslow and Hyatt describe the process as follows:

"Therapists and other astute observers, including many divorcees, indicate that ultimately divorce may revive feelings of self esteem, a knowledge of one's ability to cope and survive, and can contribute to a sense of inner peace and harmony."
(1982:117)

Kaslow describes two extremes the literature on divorce seems to

cover - and stating that reality covers the entire spectrum

"..with some people finding everything associated with divorce traumatic and horrendous and others turning it into a liberating growth experience."

(Gurman, 1981:678)

Although divorce is generally considered painful, destructive and negative, it can be turned into a positive and growthful experience for the persons involved. Kaslow and Hyatt state:

"Despite the agonising crush to one's self esteem in divorce, in the aftermath there can be a rebirth of the 'real self' and a redefinition of one's world."

(1982:118)

Divorce, viewed in this way, may be part of a movement in the individual who may have come from a destructive and painful marriage, towards self actualisation and wholeness.

De Burger (1977) is quoted by Kaslow and Hyatt as stating:

"In an optimistic view we could speculate that the turbulence and change associated with termination of an established relationship may be a prelude to personal growth - growth which may improve the potential for meaningful interpersonal relations."

(1982:118)

Kressel (1980:239) however cautions that a conservative point of view about the possible benefits of divorce should be adopted, as the evidence more than justifies this. It is sufficient to state therefore that although divorce is a painful experience, personal growth and renewed self esteem can be attained if the process is successfully negotiated.

It is important to realise however, that in order for a divorce to be a growthful and potentially positive process, it is seen as a process - a process which will inevitably include pain and

struggle. Krantzler (1975:212) maintains that a creative divorce is essentially the beginning of a journey of self-discovery and development, triggered by the crisis of separation.

4.3 SELF ESTEEM, PERSONAL GROWTH AND NEW IDENTITY

When viewing the literature on the divorce adjustment process, the stage of final resolution is repeatedly characterised by words and concepts related to growth, wholeness and adjustment. The way in which the final adjustment phase is described includes concepts such as acceptance; new level of functioning; restored balance; energy; self worth; wholeness; independence; resynthesis of identity; venturing forth again; comfortable with life-style; and complete psychic divorce. Beatrice describes the search for a new identity as follows:

"Suddenly finding oneself alone in the search for identity can be a frightening and lonely experience, but it also offers tremendous potential for growth." (1979:161)

As the individual becomes autonomous and develops his/her self esteem, the need for and attachment to the ex-spouse fades. Self esteem should not be confused with the terms 'self' or 'self concept'. Hamachek states:

"The 'self' is that part of each of us of which we are consciously aware. 'Self Concept' refers to that particular cluster of ideas and attitudes we have about our awareness...our self esteem refers to the extent to which we admire or value the self." (1978:3)

Briggs says the following about self esteem:

"It is how a person feels about himself. It is a quiet sense of self respect, a feeling of self worth...the more he likes his self image, the higher his self esteem." (1975:3)

When the destruction that may occur with divorce is considered, it becomes clear that the self esteem will be affected - especially when the self has been defined in terms of the relationship and in terms of the personality of the ex-partner. Self esteem therefore seems to be a good indicator of the success of divorce adjustment. Beatrice states:

"Successful divorce work involves developing a sense of autonomy and new self identity as a whole - in divorcing persons, the ability to see themselves as growing human beings in their own right. This can be most difficult for people who married before developing their own identity in the first place, perhaps having sought to find themselves through their spouse or their marriage."
(1979:161)

Various authors measure the success of their treatment or intervention in term of the increase in the individuals's self esteem or self concept (Salts and Zongker, 1983; Fisher, 1976; Kessler, 1977; Thiessen et al, 1980). Other authors (Blair, 1970; Kaslow, 1981; Bohannan, 1972; Callahan, 1977; Wallerstein and Blakeslee, 1989) refer to the measurement of self esteem as an indication of divorce adjustment. This indicates the importance of self esteem as an indicator of divorce adjustment.

It can be seen therefore, that although divorce is commonly associated with pain, loss, destruction, severe stress, and damage to the self esteem, the final stage of adjustment may bring about increased and renewed self esteem and personal growth.

4.4 AUTONOMY VERSUS ATTACHMENT

Closely related to the process of divorce and separation, is the

relinquishment of attachment to the ex-partner that necessarily needs to occur. Smith and Seelbach describe the ongoing or 'persistent attachment' which often exists in various phases of the divorce process. They go on to state:

"...it is likely that many, if not most divorced persons do not fully succeed in detaching themselves at each station especially at the psychic and emotional stations."
(1987:616)

The final resolution of the divorce process is that of psychic divorce, wherein the individual is finally freed from the personality influences of the ex partner. This implies a movement towards autonomy. The attainment of autonomy is directly related to the successful movement through the grieving or mourning process. Robinson and Parkinson (1985:357) state that Parkes (1975) describes the process of mourning as a series of stages which individual adults need to work their way through in their own way and time, in order to regain their personal autonomy and the capacity to make new attachments.

Autonomy is not only desirable in the culmination of divorce adjustment, but a goal for all individuals. Bohannan states:

"Nobody is independent in the sense that he does not depend on people. Life is with people. But if you wither and die without specific people doing specific things for you, then you have lost your autonomy."
(1972:62)

The attainment of autonomy in divorce adjustment also implies that the individual is in charge much more completely, of their own behaviours and thoughts, and must take full responsibility for what occurs.

Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:672) describes the view of Johnson (1977)

that individuals move through the states and experience all the turmoil which accompanies separation, until they reach the realisation that being a single adult can be exciting, interesting and challenging and can become a worthwhile life-style. He depicts the post-divorce period as a time of freedom to be oneself, to choose one's activities and friends, and to create a world of one's own design. He calls this time "autonomous adulthood" wherein the individual becomes a self-actualising single-again adult. The attainment of autonomy in this way is a clear indicator of successful divorce adjustment.

4.5 LONELINESS

In contrast with the positive indicators of divorce adjustment described above, namely autonomy, loneliness is described by Russel et al (1980:472) as being related to a number of personal characteristics, including low self esteem, shyness, feelings of alienation, external locus of control, and belief that the world is not a just place. An overcoming of feelings of loneliness would clearly therefore be part of the final resolution of the divorce process.

When loneliness is seen as an unwanted individuation it becomes clear that there is a relationship between attachment to the former partner and loneliness. Goldmeier states:

" Numerous studies have suggested that only a minority of those who are newly separated fail to be affected by loneliness, and that even those who clearly looked forward to the end of their marriage found the initial loneliness of separation excruciating." (1980:46)

According to Weiss (1979:194), loneliness consists of components of inner inadequacy and emptiness on the one hand, and on the

other hand feelings of anxiety where the individual sees the world as threatening and the resources to reduce the threat as inadequate. Especially when the individual needed the marriage and the partner to define his/her identity, the loss of the marriage would be seen as the loss of a resource to deal with the threat and anxiety of inner emptiness. When viewing the need for a support system in the divorced individual to help cope with the inner sense of emptiness as described by Weiss, it is clear that such support systems need to be established. According to Beatrice however, it is more important that self-support is developed:

"This often seems nearly unattainable to the person emerging from the marriage with crushed self esteem, yet it can be developed. The self supporting individual will convert loneliness into solitude, taking pleasure in a certain amount of loneliness."

(1979:161)

According to Freeman (1983, 268) a distinction between loneliness and aloneness needs to be made. According to him, aloneness involves being with oneself, and is a neutral or potentially positive experience and is therefore not a negative experience. Loneliness on the other hand focuses on the discrepancy between the relationships that one has, and those that one believes one should or must have. In this way then, the divorced person who has relinquished attachment to the ex-partner, will have resolved the discrepancy that Freeman refers to - the marriage relationship no longer then is seen as something that the individual must or should have. The individual then is able to find self support and is able to distinguish between aloneness and loneliness. Polanski also distinguishes between aloneness and loneliness as

follows:

"To be alone is certainly not the same as being lonesome. The former is a state of affairs; the latter, a state of feeling. Many forms of solitude, especially temporary ones, are not experienced as lonely by most people...Neither is loneliness pathological. Loneliness is a near universal human emotion." (1986:8)

He goes on to state that loneliness becomes a concern when it is chronic and severe, as it then gives rise to symptoms such as disorganisation, apathy, inactivity and lack of direction.

It is clear therefore that the final stage of divorce adjustment precludes the extreme symptoms of loneliness, and that severe loneliness and attachment to the former partner may therefore be a sign that the divorce adjustment process has not been successfully negotiated and completed.

4.6 OTHER INDICATORS OF DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT

Feelings

When the various changes in affect are described by various authors, it is clear that the feeling component of the final stage of divorce adjustment is one whereby feelings of loss and grief have been resolved. The individual is able to function without the often debilitating emotions experienced during the process of divorce. The final adjustment is characterised by acceptance of the situation, and an absence of the emotional pain of the earlier stages (Bohannan, 1972; Wiseman, 1975; Froiland and Hozman, 1977; Kaslow, 1981; Kraus, 1979; Chiriboga, 1978; Kaslow, 1982). The resolution of painful feelings as an indicator of final divorce adjustment, has been discussed in the previous chapter of the present research.

Social Skills

As part of the renewed self confidence and venturing forth again comes new relationships and the development of relationship skills. Illustrating the importance of the development of social skills, Johnson states:

"...they help us to grow and develop socially and cognitively, to build a positive and coherent personal identity, to feel firmly in touch with reality, and to gain and maintain psychological and physical health." (1982:13)

Hassal and Madar (1980, 591) maintain that the change in marital status usually brings about a change in social relationships, since many of the separated person's previous relationships have been associated with the marital union. In many situations the separated person, experiencing self doubt and questioning his/her own judgement, tends to withdraw from social intimacy, into isolation. At the same time, former friends also withdraw, thus compounding the problem. Thiessen et al state that several researchers indicate that many recently divorced individuals either lack the necessary communication skills or are unable to use their existing skills successfully.

They quote Raschke (1975) and state:

"The stronger the divorcee's social support system, and the more social interaction with others, the more quickly that person will achieve satisfactory adjustment to divorce."
(1980:36)

This is in keeping with Johnson who states:

"Interpersonal skills are vital for interpersonal effectiveness and self actualisation." (1981:285)

The importance of interpersonal skills is further borne out

by a statement by Froiland and Hozman:

"The main goal for most individuals in the acceptance (i.e. final adjustment) stage, is to learn new social skills and forms of social behaviour." (1977:529)

These views highlight the importance of interpersonal skills in divorce adjustment, and points to the need for counsellors to attend to skills training and development in the divorced. The final resolution stage of the divorce process indicates self actualisation and full adjustment, and this also implies that there would be a renewed confidence and successful use of social and relationship skills.

Parenting

As mentioned earlier, Bohannan (1972:52) states that the most enduring pain of divorce is likely to come from the coparental divorce (i.e. that stage of the divorce process during which the couple works out their parental roles as they continue to be parents but not married). As the parents divorce from one another but not from their children, and the new roles and patterns are established, so this pain diminishes and the new parenting skills emerge.

The parent experiencing divorce has the dual set of pressures of dealing with their own divorce related issues, and helping their children to cope with their struggles. According to Charnas (1983:548) a successful parent is one who responds positively to the child's emotional, physical and cognitive needs. It is clear that the parent will best be able to do this when his/her own divorce related issues have been resolved and the parent has personal resources to respond to the child in this way. Successful

divorce adjustment would therefore be correlated with increased available emotional resources in the parent towards the child, regarding divorce related parenting issues.

The divorced person in the final stage of divorce adjustment, has resolved this stage, and renewed parenting confidence and skill in coping with divorce related parenting issues has developed. Kressel states about the parenting relationship of ex-spouses during the final stage of divorce adjustment:

"The coparenting relationship will be handled smoothly and tactfully on both sides."
(1980:238)

Research does not seem to indicate however, that in post divorce situations, even where individual adjustment has occurred successfully, that the coparental relationship will proceed without problems and conflict (Lyon et al, 1985; Kressel, 1980; Bohannan, 1970; Beatrice, 1979; Ahrons, 1980).

Ahrons (1980:537) highlights the view of some researchers that final divorce adjustment is the exclusion and 'freezing out' of the other parent. She mentions clinical research that cites a healthy adjustment to divorce as associated with the termination of relationships between former spouses. This is unhealthy, and not true adjustment however, as the coparental relationship does and must continue (Bohannan, 1970). Ahrons (1980:537) highlights the need for continued involvement between former spouses insofar their parental roles are concerned. This view corresponds with the view that healthy divorce adjustment, and psychic divorce, would enable the individual to relate to the former spouse without stress and persisted attachment.

Ahrons states the following about the parent-child relationship:

"Each parent must establish an independant relationship with the child to pass this transition successfully, but the continuation of each parent-child relationship unit requires the continued interdependance of the former spouses." (1980:537)

This continued interdependence is only possible in a problem free manner if the former spouses have successfully negotiated the various stages of the divorce adjustment process.

As the parent progresses on the continuum of divorce adjustment, and is able to establish a meaningful coparental relationship with the former spouse, he/she is less likely to view his/her role in the divorce as a devastating blow to the adjustment and life of his/her child, and is able to see the positive growth potential of the divorce for the child too.

As the divorced person is able to reach new maturity and whole-ness, so the resources required for parenting are developed.

McPhee confirms this correlation between the quality of the parent child relationship and divorce adjustment when he states:

"As the quality of the parent child relationship increases, divorce related stress decreases." (1984:8)

The quality of the parenting relationship is able to develop and strengthen as the individual moves on the continuum of divorce adjustment.

4.7 CONCLUSION

The final stage of divorce adjustment is characterised by whole-ness, a new identity, autonomy and even a sense of exhilaration. Out of the painful loss process experienced by the divorced

person, growth and wholeness can occur, if the adjustment process is successfully negotiated.

The above description of the role of self esteem, attainment of autonomy, loneliness (as it relates to loss of attachment to the ex partner), feelings, social skills and parenting in divorce adjustment has clearly shown that these factors specifically are heavily involved in the final resolution of the divorce adjustment process. It seems that they are interrelated, and that all these elements require work for the individual in order to make a complete adjustment to the divorce. Indicators of the successful completion of the adjustment process would therefore be healthy self esteem, freedom from attachment to the ex-spouse and freedom from loneliness, absence of painful feelings around the divorce, well developed social skills, positive management of the coparental relationship and increased parental skills. The value of recognising and acknowledging these correlates of divorce adjustment enables the practitioner to consciously set goals and plan for treatment or intervention, regardless of the treatment modality chosen.

CHAPTER V : TREATMENT APPROACHES IN DIVORCE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Various treatment approaches dealing with problems directly or indirectly related to divorce can be identified. In such approaches, the focus could be on the individual, the family, the group or the community.

Kaslow (1981:682) states:

" Somewhere in the voluminous literature on divorce which has mushroomed in the last decade, every known therapeutic approach has been adapted to working with individuals and couples in every stage of the divorce process."

It is important however for the practitioner faced with the phenomenon of divorce, to do precisely that - i.e. to adapt known therapeutic approaches, in order to facilitate optimum service rendered to the divorcing and divorced client. The following discussion identifies selected approaches to work with divorced clients, within the conventional categories of service provision i.e. to the individual, the family, the group or the community.

5.2 DIVORCE COUNSELLING

Divorce counselling is seen to have various phases, as does divorce i.e. pre-divorce counselling, divorce counselling and post-divorce counselling. **Pre-Divorce Counselling** centres around the imminent decision to divorce or not; **Divorce Counselling** during the litigation period centres around the movement through this stage in the least emotionally damaging way possible; and **Post-Divorce Counselling** centres around helping the individual to appropriately mourn the loss of the relationship.

According to Fischer the general goal of divorce counselling is:

"...for divorcing and divorced spouses to gain insight into and understanding of their personal and marital conflicts and difficulties, together with enough emotional strength to make decisions and deal more adequately and responsibly with the problems consequent to the dissolution of their marital relationship." (1973:237)

The nature of divorce counselling depends to a large degree on where the couple is in the process of divorce. It should also be noted that the different types of divorce counselling (i.e. pre-divorce, divorce and post-divorce) refer more to the goals of counselling during that particular stage than to a particular intervention or practice theory.

According to Fischer (1973:237), **Pre-Divorce counselling** centres around the imminent decision whether to divorce or not, and this decision may only come after considerable marriage or other counselling. Kaslow refers to Whitaker and Miller (Gurman, 1981:683) and states that they caution against seeing one spouse alone originally and aligning with that partner, as the other spouse immediately feels outnumbered and threatened by the coalition. On the other hand, if working or siding with the unwanted mate, the therapist may be caught in the trap of filling in as a substitute for the departing spouse for a long period of time. Whitaker and Miller are quoted by Kaslow as follows:

" When the marital tie is weak and divorce threatens, intervention with one of the pair seems routinely to be disruptive. We are impressed that moving unilaterally into a marriage relationship, taking one of the two as the patient and referring or ignoring the mate, is very often a tactical blunder."
(Gurman, 1981:683)

Fischer (1973:238) states that due to the fact that the impending

breakup of the marriage can be seen as a crisis, the role of the counsellor needs to become somewhat more directive and intense. She goes on to state that there is often an urgency at this time of decision making that cannot await the slow tide of personal growth and emotional development. The counsellor needs to be reality orientated, be more directive and use more dynamic techniques than are usually considered appropriate in counselling. Fischer states that the marriage and divorce counsellor is not a protagonist for or against the marriage, or for or against the divorce, any more than he/she is for one spouse against the other. His/her role during this time is to be a catalyst whose purpose is to help the couple explore and come to grips with their problems. She states:

"Both husband and wife need quiet, insightful, non-adversary objective guidance and help that does not allow for the expression of ugly recriminations and clamours of revenge."

(1973:238)

By working in this way the couple is enabled to be more calm and rational about whether or not to remain married or to divorce, and to take responsibility for their decision without feelings of revenge and fighting.

The second phase of divorce counselling occurs **during the divorce period** itself, i.e. after the spouses have decided to divorce. It is during this period that litigation occurs, and the counsellor would therefore need to assist the partners to move through this period in the least emotionally damaging way possible. When considering the many common feelings experienced during this period, it is clear that the therapist will need to assist the client to ventilate the very real feelings associated with the loss he/she is experiencing. The counsellor therefore needs to be tuned into

the clients feelings and offer support and empathy during this period.

According to Fischer the goal of divorce counselling during the divorce litigation period is:

"...to reduce these negative patterns and minimise the feelings of guilt and revenge. The goal is thereby to prevent senseless, harmful, and wasteful litigation caused by battling spouses. The goal is to induce a background for sensible, reasonable, and viable settlement agreement." (1973:239)

Due to the difficulty and levels of conflict especially during the litigation period, the counsellor also needs to attempt to help the partners operate according to the best interests of the child/ren involved. According to Fischer (1973:240), a special goal of divorce counselling is to prevent much emotional injury to the child and exacerbation of the already disturbed parent-child relationship. Kressel and Deutsch reiterate this concern of divorce counselling when they state that the "primary criteria" for a successful divorce are:

"the successful completion of the process of psychic separation and the protection of the welfare of minor children".
(1977:412)

Fischer (1973:240) goes on to say that divorce counselling during this time should also help the spouses accept the limitations of their life situation, and what they should/could expect from themselves and their partners as ex-wives and ex-husbands.

During this period, the counsellor also needs knowledge of the law and attorneys, as referrals may need to be made, and interdisciplinary work may need to occur. The counsellor is not equipped, neither is it his/her role to give legal advice or assume the role of the attorney, but a sound knowledge of legal

procedures and resources is required. According to Kressel (1980:239) the counsellor should help the client make intelligent use of the lawyer's services. He suggests that because of the dependence that divorce often produces and the ignorance about the law, there is often a temptation for the client to adopt a very passive stance vis-a-vis the lawyer. The counsellor should point out that the client needs to take on an active, problem solving stance.

It is also during this time that divorce mediation becomes an appropriate form of counselling, whereby spouses are enabled to co-operatively resolve the conflict around the divorce settlement.

Kressel and Deutsch (1977:413) found that the criteria for a constructive divorce (and therefore successful divorce counselling) were: 1) civility and co-operation in attitude and behaviour to one another when contact is necessary around coparenting, but with minimal continued involvement in other ways so that psychological closure can occur; 2) arrangements which minimise psychic injury to the children; and 3) absence of strong, persistent feelings of failure and self-disparagement.

Post Divorce Counselling begins after the litigation phase is complete. Fischer (1973:241) distinguishes between healthy and maladjusted individuals when deciding upon the focus of treatment. In emotionally fairly healthy individuals, the aim of the post divorce counselling would be emotional, intellectual and spiritual growth, and more effectiveness in their various roles. In disturbed, basically maladjusted clients, the aim of post divorce counselling may also be personal growth, but these

individuals first need to rid themselves of unhealthy attitudes, habits and feelings that hinder their potential for personal growth. It is useful here to look briefly at those individuals who may be considered healthy versus those who may be considered unhealthy. According to Counts and Sacks (1985:148) the degree of healthiness displayed in an individual centres around their ability to appropriately mourn the loss of their relationship. They state that mourning is adaptational, and in its absence, or when it is insufficient or inappropriate, the individual is very much at risk. They describe two types of disordered variants of mourning, namely chronic mourning and prolonged absence of conscious grieving. They describe three types of personalities that are especially vulnerable to disordered mourning: 1) personalities who exhibit anxious and ambivalent attachments; 2) personalities who are prone to compulsive caregiving; and 3) personalities who insist on their independence of all affectional ties. Inability to grieve appropriately may prolong the recovery process, and it is here in the post divorce period that the counsellor needs to be on the alert for problems that may arise in this regard. Fischer defines post divorce counselling as follows:

"...the divorced person is helped to evaluate objectively the sort of person his ex-spouse is, why he married that person in the first place; the expectations and disappointments of the marriage; who emotionally left whom; and when and what part each played in the departure."
(1973:241)

She goes on to state that the client is also helped to awareness of remaining feelings towards the ex-spouse and what it would mean should either remarry; and what it would mean to continue to be parents to their children. Post divorce counselling does not only centre around the relationship between the ex-spouses, but

all the relationships that the individual may be involved in and all the various roles that may be affected by their new status as a divorced person.

In line with the general aim of divorce counselling to assist the individual in attaining complete psychic divorce and autonomy from the ex-spouse, counselling in the post divorce period focuses on personal growth and the development of a new life style for the individual. Fischer distinguishes between inner and outer security. She concludes that the task of the divorce counsellor is:

"To help the divorced client define his role, increase his 'problem-solving abilities', become in part his own judge of good and bad, achieve self awareness, self-acceptance, an awareness and acceptance of others, arriving at competence in establishing and achieving personal goals." (1973:242)

Goldmeier (1980:43) further describes a categorisation of interventions developed by Kressel and Deutsch (1977) according to strategy rather than the phase of divorce in which the family or individual finds him/herself. These are reflexive, contextual and substantive interventions. Reflexive interventions include 1) building trust and confidence through supportive statements and questions; 2) conveying impartiality but also sharing observations; 3) piecing together vague cues and observations. Reflexive interventions therefore point towards the period in which the counsellor orientates him/herself and builds a relationship with the client. Contextual interventions include 1) reduction of emotional tension by clarifying the impact of feelings; 2) shifting the focus from the other to the self and from accusation to reflection; 3) structuring the session so that members of the

family can be seen separately or together, weekly or at intervals. Contextual interventions therefore point to the promotion of a climate conducive to decision making. Substantive interventions focus on the development of practical skills and include 1) activities designed to enhance the client's skill in communicating; 2) helping clients recognise and deal with patterns of behaviour that may be counterproductive; 3) helping client to develop skills in step-parenting and 4) helping clients use support systems.

5.3 DIVORCE MEDIATION

Mediation, according to Weingarten, is:

"...a process by which an impartial third person (sometimes more than one person) helps parties to resolve disputes through mutual concessions and face to face bargaining." (1986:194)

Mediation in divorce has as its primary aim to arrive at a just settlement between the two partners. Grebe states:

"Mediation, in contrast to the adversarial approach, is a co-operative, win-win approach to conflict resolution. It is a system based on the needs of the parties and their abilities to support themselves. There are no penalties for past conduct or awards to one at the expense of the other. People use it to get on with the business of living and to let go of the past." (1986:380)

Coogler (1978) is referred to by Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:684) as being the first person to explore mediation in separation and divorce. He began to develop the structured mediation model in the early 1970's, and was founder of the Family Mediation Association in 1975. Since then mediation has become a popular choice when involved in settlement disputes. Mediation is an approach particularly suited to the litigation period of divorce, and therefore may coincide with divorce counselling as discussed

above. Mediation is not however focused on the emotional work of the divorce, but rather on the negotiation and legal consequences of the divorce.

It seems that a similar process as described above is mentioned by some authors as being conciliation counselling. According to Robinson and Parkinson (1985:360) the family as a system undergoes transition, and family members need to be assisted to cope with these changes of role and organisation - not for the purpose of reuniting the family, but to help it adjust and cope with the new structure and organisation of roles within the family. An approach mentioned by various authors during this time is that of Conciliation Counselling. Robinson and Parkinson distinguish between Reconciliation which is defined as reuniting the spouses and Conciliation which is described as follows:

"assisting the parties to deal with the established breakdown of the marriage, whether resulting in divorce or separation, by reaching agreement or giving consents or reducing the area of conflict upon custody, support, access to and education of children, financial provision, the disposition of the matrimonial home...and every other matter call for a decision on future arrangements."

(1985:360)

Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:685) maintains that there needs to be a move away from the legal-adversary model in divorce situations, and a move towards the structured mediation model. She states that the more the spouses can resolve their conflicts and arrive at a mutually acceptable settlement through negotiation and compromise in a calm and just atmosphere, the better chance they have of achieving a psychic divorce and handling their children well, with ongoing respect for each other's input as parents. Issues that are involved in mediated divorce settlements

according to Kaslow in Gurman (1981:684) include property division; terminating the dependency on the relationship; and continuing the ongoing business initiated by the partnership such as responsibility for the children. Advantages of structured mediation are seen to be the following: 1) the issues to be decided are clearly defined; 2) the issues are limited to those whose resolution is needed for reaching settlement; 3) procedural methods are established for collecting and examining factual information; 4) all options for settlement of each issue are systematically examined; 5) options are selected within socially acceptable guidelines; 6) consequences likely to follow selection of each option are examined; 7) uninterrupted time for working towards resolution is regularly allocated; and 8) impasses are promptly resolved by arbitration.

Mediation aims to assist partners to resolve conflict and engage in co-operative behaviour with one another. They are encouraged to resolve their own divorce disputes rather than enter into long litigatory struggles, and to arrive at an agreement that will endure. The mediator provides the ground rules and sees that they are enforced. Barsky states:

"A low key atmosphere is maintained in mediation to help the parties place emphasis on logical, rational thought as opposed to the emotional, impulsive outbursts which so often accompany long standing conflict." (1984:105)

According to Barsky (1984:102) macro techniques (i.e. overall strategies) include use of the physical environment (e.g. arrangement of furniture to indicate equality); awareness of self (e.g. mediator being careful not to form alliances); teaching the mediation process (e.g. conflict resolution

techniques); identification of patterns, relationships, issues; and management of the process (e.g. tone setting and organisation). Micro techniques (i.e. specific interventions employed to facilitate movement) include conflict reduction techniques; communication improvement techniques and clarifying fields of agreement.

According to Pruhs et al (1984:533) there are various reasons for choosing mediation as an approach. These include: 1) the court system is not an efficient forum for the resolution of the emotional stresses of divorce; 2) family disputes, especially custody determinations are extremely complex pieces of litigation and therefore extremely expensive; 3) the "facts" upon which child custody determinations are based are nonempirical and complex, and therefore difficult to present in a courtroom; 4) transferring this responsibility to an "expert" (for example a child custody evaluator) does not resolve the complexity issues; 5) the process, the final decision, and especially the evidence of an expert child custody evaluator may damage the family; 6) the courts are generally given only "win lose" alternatives to apply to situations requiring vastly more sophisticated options; 7) the imposition of the judge's values upon a family system creates disequilibrium and 8) support and custody judgements too frequently return to the courts.

According to Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:685), Kressel et al (1977) did an in depth analysis of mediated divorce cases, and identified various obstacles to successful mediation. These included 1) high levels of internal conflict in one or both parties (emotional ambivalence and volatility) in which case the recommended engage-

ment in outside counselling simultaneously or prior to mediation; 2) scarcity of divisible resources or when there is a history of debt and financial strain; 3) inexperience of the parties with negotiation; and 4) a wide discrepancy in the parties' power relative to each other.

Mediation services are therefore not the answer to all divorce difficulties, but when seen in the context of the process of divorce adjustment, can have an important role to play in assisting the partners to successfully negotiate the important litigation phase.

5.4 FAMILY THERAPY

Divorce involves not only the marital partners, but the family system as a whole. It is a process of transformation for the family, from a nuclear to a bi-nuclear system. Robinson and Parkinson (1985:359) maintain that the loss of the family system as an established and recognisable unit also needs to be mourned. The changes which the family undergoes transform its structures and functioning.

Leader (1973:12) states that it is essential to include the separated member and thereby move beyond the symbol of finality, trauma and the old wounds to an examination of the present ties. It is suggested that due to the fact that this approach may be frightening to all concerned, there may be resistance. Although this is advisable (i.e. having all the partners involved present) Leader does not insist that this should be so - in order to allow the client to exercise the right to self determination. Leader (1973:14) states that it is important also to focus on the father

(assuming that it is the mother that has retained custody) and his continuing role with his children albeit not as husband. By including all the family members, the present roles can be played out in front of the counsellor without distortion. The counsellor is then in a position to facilitate more open communication, positive behaviour and concrete arrangements.

Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:687) refers to work done by Goldman and Coane (1977), who devised a model for working with families in a post divorce situation. They see the first task as that of redefining the family as existentially including all the members, even those no longer living together. Secondly, generational boundaries are firmed up in order to reduce the parentification process. Thirdly, they hold that the family needs to replay the history of the marriage in order to correct distortions and offer a chance to mourn the loss of the intact family. Fourthly, the counsellor helps facilitate the psychic divorce.

Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:688) cautions that the sessions with the family as a whole should not continue for too long lest the fantasy of the children about their parents reuniting be reactivated, or the ex-spouses' ending of their relationship be hampered by too frequent contact.

Ahrons states:

"The dramatic role transitions and systemic reorganisation necessitated by divorce puts stress on the whole family ...rather than dissolving the family, divorce creates the need to develop a new equilibrium over time, with specific structural and behavioural rules for a bi-nuclear family system." (1980:538)

It is clear then from the above, that if the divorced family

is to be seen in this way, that an appropriate form of intervention in the family transition would be that of family therapy.

5.5 SOCIAL GROUP WORK

Konopka defines Social Group Work as follows:

"...is a method of social work which helps persons to enhance their social functioning through purposeful group experiences and to cope more effectively with their personal, group, or community problems." (1982:27)

She goes on to state that Group Work practise also is based on a concept of individuals as constantly developing in necessary and significant interaction with others. People are shaped by others, and shape others, hence the powerful nature of group experiences, especially in individuals in divorce.

Social Group Work is often favoured as a method when individuals may benefit from the support and common experience a group of people in similar situations may experience. In divorce this is particularly so. Given the fact that individuals experiencing divorce are in a mourning process, and consequences of divorce often involves issues of lowered self esteem; reduced confidence in own interpersonal skills; loneliness and attachment to former spouse; and specific divorce related issues, the group modality seems to lend itself particularly to treatment in divorce.

Hassal and Madar state:

"Because many clients suffer rejection, loneliness and social isolation, an important variable in the helping process is the opportunity to become part of a network of social relationships and the experience of a sense of belonging to a group of peers."
(1980:592)

Debate exists as to whether the approach of the group should

be structured or unstructured. Kessler (1978:210) undertook a study to determine which form is most appropriate, and concluded that the structured group is definitely more favourable in divorce adjustment, although she maintains that more research is required before generalisations can be made. Many authors favour the structured group approach however, as this particular approach versus the unstructured approach seemed to be more successful in attaining goals of improved self esteem and emotional autonomy (Granvold and Welch, 1977; Carter, 1977; Kessler, 1978; Bonkowski and Wanner-Westly, 1979; Thiessen et al, 1980; and Faust, 1987).

Due to the fact that the present research deals specifically with group work as an approach to divorce adjustment, the following chapter (i.e. Chapter 6) will deal with this treatment modality more specifically and in greater detail.

5.6 CEREMONIES AND RITUALS

Laird has the following thought provoking comment to make about rituals:

"Ritual has existed in all cultures, in all ages, and for all time. Yet it remains a notion insufficiently understood, elusive, underutilised - but potentially extremely important for mental health professionals."
(1984:123)

Although some rituals are practised by western society today (e.g. funeral ceremonies focusing on separation; marriages focusing on joining), society has generally become under-ritualised. The value and function of rituals as symbolic re-enactments, are to convey metaphorically and analogically social prescriptions, morals, or world views. And yet divorce is unmarked by a ritual, never giving metaphoric form to the process

of separation and reorganisation of the family, and the transition for the individual from one status to another. Laird goes on to state:

"As analogic and metaphoric enactments, rituals speak to the non-verbal part of the self and may provide a new way of organising and integrating family relationships...**If such transitions are insufficiently marked and integrated, they may continue to be sources of pain, stress and dysfunction.**" (1984,125)

Marriage is marked and symbolised by ceremonies and celebrations, and yet divorce is usually a lonely time for the individuals concerned. Even the court proceedings are brief and hardly provide the individual with a ritual or marker event to which to refer back.

Kaslow states:

"It is recommended that this marker event and the transition and readjustment that accompany it be eased by some form of ceremony and that it be attended by close friends and relatives who comprise the person's support network." (Gurman, 1981:688)

Lewis states about divorce rituals:

"Ceremoniously manifesting closure to the marital relationship and giving permission and form for a new way of relating, provides continuity to temper the loss, and at the same time, establishes a new kind of affiliation between the pair. Children witnessing an 'unwedding' might find relief from anger and guilt surrounding the family split." (1983:75)

Although rituals and ceremonies cannot be regarded as a treatment approach per se in divorce work, it is an area deserving mention, as the therapist needs to acquaint him/herself with the possible resources and choices available to the client. The therapist needs to play an active role, in fact, in helping the client utilise this resource towards successful divorce adjustment.

Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:689) speaks of the Jewish tradition whereby people had to have a religious divorce. In Judaism, divorce is not frowned upon as in other religions, but is still viewed as a serious step. In Judaism, divorce is a recognition of the 'failure' of one's love and represents a potential opportunity for a second chance. The Jewish person obtains a 'Get' or divorce decree, which is a statement of freedom and release from the marriage - and a bona fide consent of the Jewish community through the Rabbi. This serves a more extensive purpose than a divorce order, granted by the court, as it can be argued that the court does not represent the intimate, immediate community in which the individual finds him/herself as is the case with the Rabbi.

Part of the role of the therapist therefore could be to encourage the client to think about, or help design a ceremony or ritual to be performed as a marker for the end of their marriage, the transition it implies, and the altered family system brought into being. The following religious ceremonies are examples of creative ways in which the Church, and thereby society, can acknowledge and symbolise the transition and changed status of divorced people. It may not be possible to have both spouses present, but even then it may be used for one of them. Kaslow (Gurman, 1981:689) suggests the following ceremony for one person:

DISSOLUTION OF A MARRIAGE

Priest: Dearly Beloved, we have gathered together here in the presence of God and before this company to acknowledge the dissolution of the bond of matrimony between A and B. The bond of marriage was established by God at Creation and is therefore not to be

entered into, or not to be dissolved unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately and in the Love of God.

A, having been married in the Church, and having received the statement of divorce from the state, comes asking God and this company to recognise the dissolution of the bond of holy matrimony and asking God's forgiveness that she may live under God's grace and with honour in the eyes of people. We, her friends, gather in love to support her.

Have you reverently concluded, that in the best interests of B and you, that this bond of marriage be dissolved?

A: I have

Priest: Have you acted toward B with love and understanding, to the best of your ability?

A: I have

Priest: After having considered the solemnity of your vows, do you wish to ask God to recognise the dissolution of the bond of holy matrimony between you and B?

A: I do

Priest: Prayer for A and B, for forgiveness, for future

Priest: To congregation: Will you do all in your power to support and uphold her in this new way of life?

Congregation: We will

Priest: Will you, A, do all in your power to live with love for God and for all people so that you can be free to make a new beginning in your life, with hope and confidence?

A: I will, with God's help.

The ceremony is then concluded with the Lord's Prayer and a blessing by the priest.

Lewis (1983:73) suggests the following ceremony for a divorced couple:

Officiant: Dearly beloved, we have gathered here to solemnise the end of one time in Mathew's and Anne's lives, and the beginning of another...As it is written (here read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8,11-14). Thirteen years ago, the time was right for Mathew and Anne to be joined in holy matrimony; then, they needed for their growth in grace and truth the visible bond of marriage. Now the time has come when that bond is hampering both their growth as individual persons, and their common life. They have resolved, therefore, to sever the ties of their marriage, though not of their mutual love and honour, and have asked us, their friends, to witness that affirmation of their new lives, and to uphold them in their new undertakings.

Mathew Surrey, do you now relinquish your status as husband of Anne, freeing her from all claims upon and responsibilities to you except those that you willingly give to all other children of God?

Mathew: I do

Officiant: Do you forgive her any sins she has committed against you, and do you accept her forgiveness, thus freeing her from the burdens of guilt and sterile remorse?

Mathew: I do

Officiant: Do you release her with your love and blessing, in gratitude for the part she has played in your life, in knowledge that her part in you will never be forgotten or despised, and in faith that in separation as in union, you are both held in the grace and unity of God?

The same questions were asked of Anne, who replied in the same way. As a token of forgiveness and release, each transferred their partner's wedding ring to that person's right hand, ending the ceremony.

This ceremony incorporates the important aspect of forgiveness and release which are crucial for grief work. Grief and mourning which attend loss and change, involve the psychological task of breaking the emotional tie to that which has been lost, and eventually reinvesting one's attachments to other people and things. It is an important psycho-social transition to achieve.

In conclusion then, it is important for the therapist working with divorce, to be aware of the potential value of the use of rituals and ceremonies in the process of helping the individual attain readjustment.

5.7 CONCLUSION

As can be seen, there are many various approaches to treatment in divorce. Individual and joint divorce counselling, divorce mediation, family therapy, group work, and the use of rituals and ceremonies, are all possible treatment modalities. As Kaslow states however:

"There are no simple prescriptions for ensuring a happy and lasting marriage; neither are there simple formulas for easing the anguish and bewilderment which accompanies divorce."
(Gurman, 1981:694)

Froiland and Hozman also state:

"...the counsellor cannot be tied to a single methodology when applying the loss model to divorce. Various clients may need various approaches in each or all of the stages and the model cannot be effective if approached myopically."
(1977:529)

As can be seen from the process of divorce adjustment, there are clear stages that need to be negotiated in the process. Various treatment modalities seem to be appropriate in various stages.

Storm and Sprenkle (1983:95) illustrate their view with a comparison of treatment modality and stage of divorce, comparing family, conjoint and individual treatment in the following table (Table 2):

TABLE 2 : CHOICE OF TREATMENT UNIT (STORM AND SPRENKLE, 1983)

STAGES OF DIVORCE	UNIT OF TREATMENT		
	FAMILY	CONJOINT	INDIVIDUAL
DECISION MAKING	Low	High	Low
RESTRUCTURING	Moderate	High	Low
RECOVERY	Low	low	High

They conclude that each stage of divorce is particularly suited to various treatment units using family, conjoint and individual treatment.

The present researcher would like to conclude this chapter with a similar comparison of preferred treatment modalities at various stages of the divorce process. The comparison resulting from the discussion on treatment approaches, will show clearly the various stages at which the various treatment modalities are appropriate (Table 3).

TABLE 3 : PREFERRED TREATMENT MODALITY

<u>STAGE OF DIVORCE</u>	<u>TREATMENT MODALITY</u>					
	INDIVIDUAL	CONJOINT	FAMILY THERAPY	MEDIATION	GROUP WORK	CEREMONIES
Before Separation	High	High	High	Low	Low	None
Separation & deliberation (Decision making)	Low	High	Low	High	Low	None
Litigation	Low	High	Low	High	Low	None
Post Divorce	High	Low	Moderate	Low	High	High
Final Adjustæment	High	Low	Low	Low	High	High

The method of treatment needs to be chosen according to the specific needs of the client, the skills of the therapist, the resources available, the goals of treatment, and the timing of the intervention.

CHAPTER VI : GROUP WORK IN POST DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The nature of group work as a method in social work makes it particularly suitable for the facilitation of divorce adjustment. When the experience of divorce is considered, and account taken of the immense loss, lowered self esteem, isolation, grief, rejection and loneliness, the group modality assumes particular importance for the person adjusting to the possibly debilitating effects of divorce. The group experience provides individuals the opportunity to be part of a network of relationships and experience a sense of belonging to a group of people whom have similar experiences. According to Hassal and Madar (1980:592) the advantage of group work over individual work is that individuals have the opportunity to share their experiences and have immediate mutual feedback, and that this is a particular advantage over individual work with divorced individuals.

In this chapter, various kinds of groups will be examined for their usefulness and effectiveness for divorce adjustment. These include: transition groups; women's groups; divorce adjustment groups; educational seminars and therapy groups; structured versus unstructured groups; and skills training groups. Prior to a description of these various kinds of groups, general aims of divorce adjustment groups will be described, as well as various theoretical perspectives which can be used in group work in divorce adjustment.

6.2 GOALS OF DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT GROUPS

When the goals of group work as a method of social work are

considered, it becomes clear that the goals of divorce adjustment in particular can be pursued by the same process. Anstey in describing a rationale for the use of groups in social work states:

"In short, groups allow for feelings of belonging, commonality and support, they provide powerful means of attitude and behaviour change, and supply important perspectives, resources and support systems for individuals." (1982:169)

Although there are some clear broad goals of social group work, and these will be discussed as they pertain to divorce groups, it is important for individual members to decide for themselves what their individual goals are. According to Corey (1982:108) some of the broad goals of therapeutic groups are as follows (present researcher has extracted a few from the list that apply most specifically to divorce):

- * To grow in self acceptance
- * To increase self awareness
- * To become more open and honest with selected others
- * To learn how to trust oneself and others
- * To become freer and less bound by external 'shoulds' 'oughts' and 'musts'
- * To learn how to confront others
- * To clarify values one has
- * To find ways of resolving personal problems
- * To explore hidden potentials and creativity
- * To become more sensitive to the needs and feelings of others

Trecker says about objectives or goals in group work:

"It is extremely important that everyone concerned with group work should devote a substantial amount of time to the working out of carefully formulated objectives." (1972:93)

Various authors describe group work with divorced individuals, and begin by describing the goals of divorce groups in particular. Many authors refer to the goal of the **development of a support system** and the sense of belonging that the group

provides for the members (Shelton and Nix, 1979:310; Bonkowski and Wanner-Westly, 1979:552; and Beatrice, 1979:160). Members experience universality in discovering that they share the same feelings, concerns and fears as others in similar situations. This environment enables members' self-disclosure and openness.

Dealing with unresolved grief (Hassal and Madar, 1980:592; Morris and Prescott, 1975:326; Bonkowski and Wanner-Westly, 1979:553; Shelton and Nix, 1979:310) is cited as another important goal of group work with divorced individuals. The group provides the emotional support and environment for the individual to examine his/her feelings, and be contained. The value of contact with others with similar experiences becomes clear when dealing with unresolved feelings.

The **development of new coping skills** is a second goal mentioned by various authors (Shelton and Nix, 1979:310; Thiessen et al, 1980:36; Beatrice, 1979:162). By developing social skills the divorced individual is able to increase support networks and satisfying interpersonal relationships. This will also enable the individual to cope with the reality demands of their situation. The **development of autonomy and new identity** is another goal of group work with divorced individuals (Beatrice, 1979:164; Shelton and Nix, 1979:312; Carter, 1977:538; Kessler, 1978:214). The group provides individuals with an awareness raising experience of other members in the same position as they, and an opportunity to re-establish and discover themselves as independent individuals.

The **enhancement of self esteem and personal growth** is also viewed as a goal of group work by many authors (Thiessen, et al 1980:36;

Beatrice 1979:164; Bonkowski and Wanner-Westley, 1979:552). The group environment is especially conducive to the development of self esteem as members experience acceptance, support and affirmation - as well as their experience of being able to help others. Thiessen et al believe very strongly that self esteem and perceived social support are the most important goals to work towards in divorce adjustment in the group setting:

"The two variables which lend themselves most satisfactorily to change and provide the most significant potential for intervention are the divorcee's **perceived social support system and self-esteem.**" (1980:36)

They describe the other four variables which affect the process of divorce adjustment as being the divorcee's age, income, previous marital relationship, and relation to the initiation of the divorce - and states that these are relatively fixed. Beatrice also states regarding self esteem:

"Self esteem increases with support, validation and acceptance, but is also aided by the discovery of the capacity to help others through their pain. Many found the emotional replenishment lacking in their lives coming from the group."
(1979:164)

Other goals mentioned include **discussion of problems unique to the divorce experience and the provision of additional resources and information** (Shelton and Nix, 1979:310); **countering loneliness** (Carter, 1977:539; Beatrice, 1979:164); and **development of understanding of dynamics of the former relationship** (Morris and Prescott, 1975:326; Bonkowski and Wanner-Westly, 1979:553). It can be seen that all these goals refer directly or indirectly to the indicators of divorce adjustment as described in chapter four. It is axiomatic that any group attending to the problem of divorce adjustment needs to attend to the specific

goals mentioned above.

6.3 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Various approaches may be used in work with groups, and more specifically, in groups with divorced clients. It is important that group workers are freed from dogmatically following one theoretical approach however, but that they respond in their leadership approaches to circumstances and needs of the group rather than in terms of their ideologies.

Corey (1985) describes various theoretical perspectives in working with groups, and also advocates an eclectic approach (i.e. a combination of various approaches as the group worker deems necessary with a particular group). The following section describes these various approaches briefly.

The **Psychoanalytic Approach** (Corey, 1985:136) seeks to restructure the client's character and personality system, by examining intrapsychic material and gaining insight into themselves.

This leads to the conscientising of unconscious conflict of past experiences which are affecting current behaviour. In this approach there is a minimum of structure, and the group is heterogeneous, representing various segments of everyday life, therefore making the group a microcosm of society. The focus is on the individual however, and the aim is not to focus exclusively upon the here-and-now processes of the group.

This approach would be particularly useful in divorce work, where members would be encouraged to face past conflicts and relationships in order to develop insight.

The **Adlerian Approach** (Corey, 1985:175) in group work emphasises

the social determinants rather than the biological aspects of behaviour. This approach requires the group worker to establish and maintain a therapeutic relationship with members, based on empathy, respect, and positive regard. The problems and dynamics of member's behaviours are explored in terms of their social context, and members are assisted in exploring their early childhood experiences. Members are also then redirected towards more effective life-styles. In application of this approach to work with divorced clients, members own role in maintaining life-styles and ineffective behaviours would be explored and therefore assist them in developing insight into how they themselves are perpetuating their difficulties.

Psychodrama (Corey, 1985:193) in group work focuses on the here-and-now; on the universality of human struggles; and on early experiences and family relationships. Members are encouraged to explore their feelings and attitudes, and ventilate, through the use of spontaneous and dramatic methods such as role plays. This assists members to develop insights regarding themselves and their behaviours, as well as the group leader to diagnose and evaluate members. This can also be used as a method of experiential learning. In the divorce situation, this approach may be particularly useful in as far as development of new interpersonal skills in the divorce situation such as assertiveness, conflict resolution and communication.

In the **Existential Group Approach** (Corey, 1985:219) very little structure is imposed by the group worker. Goals and structure are determined by the members themselves. Emphasis is on the the need to face the realities of life, on the importance of finding mean-

ing and purpose in one's existence, on accepting personal responsibility in seeking alternatives and making new choices, and on striving for mastery and self-actualisation. The primary focus is on the relationships between group members. In the divorce context, as members struggle with the very issues mentioned above as the emphasis of the existential approach, group work using the existential approach may be particularly useful.

The **Person-centred or Client-centred Approach** (Corey, 1985:247) encourages members to find their own direction in an atmosphere of warmth, genuineness and empathy from the group worker. The group worker does not fulfill the role of expert, but rather becomes involved in an encounter type experience with group members. This approach carries an holistic view of behaviour, focuses on growth, and believes that humans are always in the process of becoming. The concepts of the Person-centered approach are essential in the group worker in the divorce context, as the growth required from the divorced individual in order to attain successful divorce adjustment, needs to occur within this framework.

The **Gestalt Approach** (Corey, 1985:274) focuses on the here-and-now experience, non-verbal communication, on learning to take risks to live fully, and on dealing with the impasses. This approach assists members to integrate fragmented aspects of themselves. Members are encouraged to develop insight into their behaviours and experiences, and to become self supportive as opposed to environmentally supported. In the divorce context, the sides of members that may be hidden to themselves and related to their feelings or behaviours in the divorce situation may be

explored in this way. This approach is particularly suited to the group setting, and may be used fruitfully with divorced clients in attaining awareness of their personal impasses (i.e. situations in which progress is blocked), and attempting new styles of behaviour.

Transactional Analysis (Corey, 1985: 311) attempts to make people aware, cognitively, of their three ego states namely child, parent and adult, and enables the analysis of their own behaviour in terms of these ego states. The group worker fulfils the role of teacher and enabler in assisting members to relearn new responses and behaviour patterns. In work with divorced clients in the group work context, the way in which members relate, especially to significant others, and their former spouses in particular may be analysed in this way, thus leading to new understanding and hence new styles of relating.

In the **Behaviourist Approach** (Corey, 1985:337) the emphasis is on encouragement and positive reinforcement. It provides the members with an environment to explore and practise alternative behavioural styles. The focus is on the present, and the group worker functions to eliminate maladaptive behaviours and enable members to develop more satisfactory coping or adaptive skills and behaviours. This approach is also particularly suited to group work in the divorce context, as members need to relearn maladaptive styles of relating and learn new social skills as part of their adjustment to the divorce.

In **Rational-Emotive Group Work** (Corey, 1985:375) attention is focused upon the mistaken attitudes and faulty beliefs that a person might hold. The focus is also on the fact that unpleasant

emotions are a result of these cognitive processes. Members are encouraged to replace these irrational ideas with more rational ones, thus leading to a healthier repertoire of responses. In the divorce context, the effects of the divorce experience on members subjective view of themselves in particular can be addressed in this way, thus leading to improved self esteem and self confidence.

The **Reality Therapy Approach** (Corey, 1985:398) in Group Work stresses the individual member's responsibility and his/her strengths. It assists them to face reality without defensive rationalisations. The focus is on the present as opposed to the past. Members are assisted in devising a plan for change, based on reality. This approach would be particularly useful in the divorce context, where members would be confronted with the reality of their situation, and therefore move through the various stages of the divorce situation with greater ease and without denial or defensiveness. They would also learn skills for coping with their particular situation, based on personal responsibility and focusing on strengths. This would enable them to move beyond the possibly debilitating effects of the divorce, towards a new orientation and life-style.

Within an **eclectic framework**, the practitioner responds according to the goals of the group, the needs of the members and his/her particular style, rather than the dictates of the ideology. In this way the group worker can assume various intervention roles as the needs arise, described by Compton and Galaway (1979:337) as broker, enabler/facilitator, teacher, mediator and advocate. In order to respond according to the various needs and goals of

the group however, the group worker needs to be aware and have skill in the utilisation of the various theoretical approaches.

6.4 DURATION, COMPOSITION AND SIZE OF DIVORCE GROUPS

The **Duration of the Group** may vary according to the needs of members, the goals of the programme and resource constraints. Most groups are time limited, thus giving members the message that divorce adjustment is transitory, and possible to be positively influenced over a relatively short period of time. Authors recommend various durations for groups ranging from five to sixteen weeks: twelve to sixteen weeks (Beatrice, 1979:163); eight to ten weeks (Bonkowski and Wanner-Westly, 1979:553); five weeks (Thiessen et al, 1980:36); and twelve weeks (Goche and Goldman, 1979:154). Corey states about the duration of groups:

"In general, the duration varies from group to group, depending on the type of group and the population. The group should be long enough to allow for cohesion and productive work, yet not so long that the group seems to drag on interminable."

(1985:70)

The **Composition** of the groups examined also vary to some extent. Some authors advocate a mixed sex group either due to lack of specific criteria, or due to a conviction that a mixed sex group helps members to avoid sexual stereotypes (Morris and Prescott, 1975:327; Kessler, 1978:210; Faust, 1987:79), while others advocate a single sex group (Carter, 1977:538; Thiessen et al, 1980:37; Goghe and Goldman, 1979:159). In their discussion about the relevance of a women's group, Goghe and Goldman state:

"...all were able to identify with being trained in the traditional women's role, a far different one from that which they were forced into by virtue of marital separation." (1979:159)

Ages seem to vary greatly, and do not seem to be a selection criteria. Ages of members in the groups reviewed range from 21 - 61 years, and the number of participants vary between five and fifteen members (Morris and Prescott, 1975:327; Carter, 1977:539; Shelton and Nix, 1979:311; Kessler, 1978:210; Bonkowski and Wanner-Westley, 1979:554; and Thiessen et al, 1980:37). Due to the fact that members were homogeneous in important areas such as being divorced, the age of members does not seem to be one of the criteria for entry to the group.

Most approaches do favour some form of selection criteria. These centre primarily around the ability of the individuals to participate meaningfully in a group context, rather than demographic concerns such as age, sex, socio-economic status or length of divorce. Morris and Prescott (1975:326) describe members as being ready to talk and to work on their problems, and needing to have realistic expectations of what the group could offer. Shelton and Nix (1979:311) mention that no selection criteria were used other than assessing a prospective member's emotional adjustment and ability to participate in the group. Prospective members with symptoms of psychopathy were referred to other helping resources. Bonkowski and Wanner-Westly (1979:554) describe their selection criteria as being that members must share a need for help with a realistic crisis. Faust has clear selection criteria:

"evidence of ego-strength; at least one meaningful relationship in the past; ability to interact with the therapist; capacity for insight; ability to experience feelings" (1987:79)

It is evident therefore, that most of the authors advocating the use of group work as a treatment modality in divorce

adjustment, do offer the proviso that members show a certain amount of ego strength.

Size of the group, according to Lifton (1972:193), is an important determinant of participation and interaction among members. He suggests that the popular upper limits of group size are between eight and fifteen members. This is confirmed by various authors (Morris and Prescott, 1975:327; Carter, 1977:539; Shelton and Nix, 1979:311; Kessler, 1978:211; Bonkowski and Wanner-Westley, 1979:554; Thiessen et al, 1980:37; and Faust, 1987:79).

6.5 APPROACH AND CONTENT

The **Approach and Content** of the authors show some similarity. Structure is an issue that receives attention by most, and is generally considered to be more desirable than lack of structure in groups (Shelton and Nix, 1979; Kessler, 1978; Bonkowski and Wanner-Westley, 1979; Thiessen et al, 1980; Faust, 1987; Warren and Amara, 1984). According to Corey and Corey, structure in group work is very important:

"The proper question is not whether a group leader should provide structure, but rather to what degree structure should exist."
(1982:112)

They go on to say that although structure is necessary, and the degree of structure depends on the needs of the members, there should not be so much structure that members are 'robbed' of the responsibility for providing their own structure.

Morris and Prescott (1979:328) describe the process of their **Transition Groups** as being characterised by a change in the time perspective of group members. The focus of the group shifted

from the pasts of the individuals concerned, to their present situations, then to the plans they were making for the future. Members were given the opportunity during the life of the group to give and receive feedback. During the initial phase, members needs were related to support, sharing of feelings, and a better perspective to their own reactions to their partnership breakdown. The early stages of the group were described as the mourning period. Themes that emerged during this first phase included:

- 1) recognition of unexpressed expectations;
- 2) denial of problems in the marriage;
- 3) lack of commitment to the marriage;
- 4) failure to communicate needs

These discussions assisted members to interpret what had happened in their particular situation. The second phase came when members were more concerned with the here-and-now. Here the group assisted members to clarify values, set goals, and restructure their life-style. The third phase focused on the future and was more broadly based. Self confidence had developed, and members could plan for their future more specifically. New behaviours that had emerged during the previous phases were affirmed and supported. From here they could terminate with the group and move forward with new confidence and self esteem. It can be seen therefore that initially the focus was on therapeutic self understanding, and this changed towards the end to encouragement of behavioural change.

Carter (1977:538) in her description of her **Women's Groups** stresses that fact that she has a feminist approach, thus expounding the importance of viewing men as people, neither overvaluing them or nourishing feelings of bitterness. She also

describes her approach as follows:

"The most important element in treatment is not skilful intervention by a counsellor, it is the sharing that occurs among women." (1977:538)

She uses the processing of emotions as part of the treatment, wherein roleplays, gestalt techniques and creative fantasy are used (e.g. imagining the desired outcome to fears or desires that cannot be expressed). The personal growth phase of the group treatment occurs after emotions have been dealt with, wherein members are encouraged to express what they want or need for themselves. Contracts then follow, which is seen as the problem solving phase, wherein realistic, achievable goals are set. Cognitive restructuring is seen to be the last phase of the treatment group, wherein the women are helped to counter self defeating and irrational ideas.

Shelton and Nix (1979:309), in their description of their **Divorce Adjustment Group Programme** describe the importance of crisis intervention techniques initially, as the anxieties of group members needed to be dealt with and the grief process had to be worked through. Members experienced skills training, new methods of problem solving, values clarification and rational emotive therapy. They received additional hand-outs such as resource lists and a bibliography of readings related to their issues. They also received short hand-outs on the content related to their discussions, to be read as homework assignments, as well as behavioural assignments to be carried out between sessions. Issues raised by the members in the group included communicating with the ex-spouse; effects of divorce on children; dealing with family members; handling financial difficulties; coping with unfulfilled sexual needs; and dealing with rejection.

Kessler (1977:210) in discussion of her group called **Beyond Divorce: Coping Skills for Adults**, shows through a well controlled experiment, that a structured group is far more advantageous than an unstructured one. The group meetings would begin with an unstructured time in order to help members deal with their feelings, and then the session would take on a more structured form. Vignettes were used to stimulate discussion and skills building exercises. The group also focused on assertiveness training, and values clarification exercises. The group (i.e. the control group) showed significant improvements in Fitts' (1964) Tennessee Self Concept scale, The self Description Inventory, and the Self Report Questionnaire.

The **Divorce Groups** described by Bonkowski and Wanner-Westley (1979:553) with their emphasis on healthy functioning, covered elements of educational input, Group Support, and Psychotherapeutic concerns. The educational element is considered important, the group leader acts as disseminator of information, and catalyst for members to share information. A reading list is also given. Through the group support element, group members are provided with an opportunity to share with other people in the same situation that divorce is experienced as a difficult, painful trauma. Members are encouraged to experiment with new behaviours through learning to take risks. The psychotherapeutic and intrapsychic concerns are dealt with by the encouragement of members to complete interactions with one another. They are also encouraged to deal with any unfinished business from their former marriage. Useful connections are made that may prevent future destructive intimate relationships. Divorce issues are also dealt with in the group, such as the

decision to divorce; dealing with the feelings; coping with numerous simultaneous changes; children of divorce; religious and social repercussions; and reconstructing a single life.

Thiessen et al (1980:41) found that their **Post-Divorce Adjustment Groups** showed significant improvement on the Fisher Divorce adjustment Scale and specifically on the subsections related to self esteem. They showed that training in social skills provides the individual with greater self confidence and self esteem. The format of the groups was a structured educational approach, and used communication skills training programmes and seminars. Both didactic and experiential training methods were used. The brief talks at the beginning of the sessions included topics such as:

- 1) emotional impact of separation and divorce;
- 2) continued relationships with the former spouse;
- 3) impact of divorce on friends and family;
- 4) problems of dating and sexual expression;
- 5) effects of divorce on self esteem;
- 6) the effects of future relationship terminations

They conclude that although the programme had a positive effect on post-divorce adjustment, the research showed no significant effect on the subjects' perceived level of social support. They explain this as among other reasons, being due possibly to the structured nature of the programme preventing members developing a strong social support system among themselves, as there was a lack of sufficient spontaneous interaction.

Faust (1987:78) describes a **Combined Model** of Educational Seminars and Therapy Groups. The group experience begins with four educational seminars in a structured learning process, wherein the participants gain information and education about the emotional process of divorce; sex and dating; divorce and children; and life planning. After the educational segment,

members who need deeper work, move on to the therapy segment. This group does not follow definite structure, and the focus is primarily on process and learning new ways of relating. Situations in the here-and-now as well as past experiences are used to explore members' interaction with one another. The agent of change in this setting is the group itself and the intermember network. Role-Playing, 'freezing the frame', and examining alternate responses are methods employed to assist members to identify problems and to change maladaptive behaviours.

6.6 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the present researcher has constructed a table (Table 4) in order to compare the various approaches mentioned above.

TABLE 4 : APPROACHES TO GROUP WORK IN DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT

Morris and Prescott (1975)	Carter (1977)	Shelton and Nix (1979)	Kessler (1978)	Bonkowski & Wanner-Westly (1979)	Thiessen et al (1980)	Faust (1987)
NAME						
Transition Groups	Women's Groups	Divorce Adjustment Group Program	Beyond Divorce Coping Skills for Adults	Divorce Group	Post-Divorce Adjustment Group	Educational seminar and therapy group
DURATION						
8 - 9 weekly sessions; 2 hours each	6-8 weekly sessions &	6 weekly sessions; 2 hours each	1x8hr Session; then 8 weekly 1 hr sessions	8-10 weekly sessions	5 weekly sessions 3hr sessions	12 weekly sessions
COMPOSITION						
Male/Female 10 members 22 - 50 yrs Most first separation Separated 1 - 25 yrs	Female 5-9 members 25-45 yrs Divorced	More Female 10 members 22 - 60 yrs Educational level varied Divorced	Male/Female 10 members 21 - 61 yrs Divorced	More Female 6-15 members Heterogeneous Divorced, in process of divorce, or deciding whether or not to divorce.	Female 13 members 23-49 yrs Separated at least 16 months	Male/female 13-15 members Selection re evidence of ego strength
LEADERSHIP						
Male/Female Co-facilitator	Female	Co-facilitators of both sexes	Male/Female	Trained, skilled professional	Male/female Co-Leaders	Male/female Co-Leaders
APPROACH						
Developmental transition from Past to Present to Future; Giving and Receiving Feedback in Supportive Environment	Processing emotions; contracts; cognitive restructuring	Crisis intervention; Skills training; Values clarification; Rational Emotive Therapy (RET); Hand-Outs; Behavioural Assignments	Structured exercises; Skills Vignettes designed to stimulate discussion	Educational Input; Group Support; Psychotherapeutic concerns Divorce issues; Reading material Emphasis healthy Functioning	Structured educational approach; Seminars; Experiential and didactic skill training	Combined model educational seminars and group therapy; Structured learning and later focus on process and relating
GOALS						
To increase Self understanding; To encourage behaviour change; To develop understanding of past relationship; To develop coping skills for future	To achieve autonomy; To achieve financial independence	To provide a support system To develop new coping skills; To gain new identity as single adult; To provide opportunity for discussion of unique problems; additional resources	To help persons regain their sense of confidence and autonomy; To learn self-mastery To improve self esteem	To facilitate resolution of divorce related issues To provide emotional support; To provide a growth opportunity	To teach communication skills; To enhance self esteem; To strengthen supports; To ease the distress of post-divorce adjustment	To develop understanding of stress; esteem for self and others; Problem solving skills; Maximise potential; (through educational segment)/ To change maladaptive patterns of behaviour; To improve self esteem (therapy segment)

It can be seen that there is much consistency of opinion among the various authors. Most preferred a time limited, short term (between five and twelve sessions) intervention. Various criteria for composition were described, although the only definite criteria were those related to members being divorced. The sizes of the groups also varied from five to fifteen members. Composition, duration and size would therefore also need to depend upon the needs of the members, practical considerations, and the nature of the group.

Although a variety of approaches and formats for divorce adjustment groups were identified, most authors made use of a combination of these. All pursued the attainment of greater adjustment to the divorce, and the improvement of members' autonomy and self esteem. Most groups used a somewhat more structured format, but allowed also for some unstructured time. Little use was made of the didactic approach, most of the authors favouring an experiential, development approach. Most groups focused on the supportive environment that the group could offer.

The goals of the various groups relate specifically to the facilitation of complete adjustment to the divorce, and these centre around dealing with unresolved grief; development of new coping skills; the attainment of autonomy; enhancement of self esteem; developing insight into the dynamics of the previous relationship; dealing with problems unique to the divorce experience; and countering loneliness. All the groups reviewed attained success in terms of their proposed goals, and thus indicated that a variety of approaches and formats could be successful.

It is evident from this chapter that group work in divorce is particularly suitable, given the treatment goals and opportunities which the group provides. The theoretical perspective of the group worker is important in determining the format which the group will take. An eclectic approach, whereby neither one nor another particular approach is rigidly adhered to, has been shown to be most suitable, in accordance with the principle of working according to the needs of the group. In this way, the group worker may draw on the appropriate theoretical considerations of approaches such as the psychoanalytic approach, the Adlerian approach, psychodrama, existential group work, the person centered approach, the gestalt approach, transactional analysis, the behaviourist approach, rational-emotive group work and the reality therapy approach. The stage of divorce in which the group work approach is particularly suitable, is in the post divorce adjustment period (i.e. the recovery or final adjustment stage). Given the goals of social group work in general, and the goals of divorce adjustment in particular, the divorce group is clearly a natural and logical approach to therapy and counselling in divorce adjustment.

SECTION C : RESEARCH DESIGN AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

CHAPTER VII : RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

7.1 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

7.1.1 Classification of Design

The research undertaken forms part of the broad design in research of experimental designs. Due to the fact however that the research population available for study was limited in size, a quasi-experimental design was used. According to Tripodi in Grinnel:

"The strategy in quasi-experimental designs, which do not use random assignment procedures, is to control as many internal validity factors as possible." (1986:256)

The non-equivalent comparison group design was chosen, as an option

in the quasi-experimental design format. The design is as follows:

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP : PRE-TEST / INDEPENDANT VARIABLE (TREATMENT) / POST-TEST

CONTROL GROUP : PRE-TEST / NO TREATMENT / POST-TEST

In the case of the present research the same design format can be described as follows:

TREATMENT GROUP : PRE-TEST / PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME / POST-TEST

CONTROL GROUP : PRE-TEST / NO TREATMENT / POST-TEST

In this case, the pre-test as well as post-test in both groups consisted of three questionnaires and scales, measuring self esteem, loneliness and indicators of divorce adjustment. The

treatment phase consisted of a social group work programme (personal growth programme) of ten weeks duration.

According to Tripodi in Grinnel (1985:257) the major problem of control in the nonequivalent comparison group is that of selection biases and their potential interactions with other variables. To approximate control of selection biases three major strategies can be used: control by definition, control by individual matching, and frequency distribution control. The present researcher chose to control the selection biases by the first of these strategies, namely that of control by definition. This form of control involves an increase in the homogeneity of the comparison group. In this way, both the experimental and comparison/control groups were selected as being female, divorced legally, with children, and with custody of their own children.

7.1.2 Measuring Instruments

Three measuring instruments were used. These included two standardised measuring scales namely the Index of Self Esteem (ISE) and the UCLA Loneliness Scale (UCLA LS). A third questionnaire was developed by the present researcher, namely the Indicators of Divorce Adjustment Questionnaire, based on theoretical indicators of divorce adjustment ascertained during the literature review. The reason for the development of this third questionnaire was the lack of available scales or questionnaires specifically related to the divorce adjustment process. This section describes the three instruments.

7.1.2.1 Index of Self Esteem (ISE) (APPENDIX 2)

The Index of Self Esteem forms part of a group of measuring scales

collectively referred to as the Clinical Measurement package or CMP Scales developed by Walter W. Hudson. He (1982:3) describes the Index of Self Esteem as having been designed to measure the degree, severity or magnitude of a problem the client has with self esteem. A high score on the ISE indicates the client has a self esteem problem - i.e. a low sense of self esteem. He qualifies self esteem in this case as being the evaluative component of the self concept. The client may therefore have a very accurate self concept, but the self esteem would fluctuate depending upon how he/she values the characteristics that form part of this self concept.

According to Bloom and Fischer (1982:149), they recommend the Clinical Measurement package (of which the ISE is part) because the scales have stability (i.e. test-retest reliabilities and internal consistency reliabilities). The scales also have high face, concurrent and construct validity, as well as discriminant validity.

Description

Each of the CMP scales is structured as a 25 item summated category partition scale wherein each item is scored according to the following five categories:

- 1 = rarely or none of the time
- 2 = a little of the time
- 3 = some of the time
- 4 = a good part of the time
- 5 = most or all of the time

In the self esteem scale, as with the other scales, statements are worded positively or negatively at random, thus controlling response biases.

Scoring

In scoring the scale, the positively worded statements need to be

reverse scored (these items are denoted at the bottom of the scale) so that an item score of five becomes one; four becomes two; three remains three; two becomes four and one becomes five. The total score (S) is given as the total of the item scores (X) and reverse scores (Y), minus 25.

$$S = (X+Y) - 25$$

In the CMP, the score where clients can be assessed as having a significant problem is at any point above 30 i.e. the clinical cutting score.

Reliability

Hudson (1982:91) cites various research projects which tested the reliability of the scales. For the ISE, Alpha = .93. Alpha is an internal consistency measure of reliability that is based on all the interim correlations for a particular scale. An Alpha coefficient of .90 or greater provides direct evidence that a scale is a unidimensional measurement tool. For the ISE, the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) = 3.7. If a measurement tool has a small SEM, it is judged to be a sound measurement device in terms of its measurement error characteristics. In the case of the ISE, any change in score greater than 3.7 is seen to be significant, as this change can then be ascribed to factors other than possible error in measurement. Hudson therefore concludes that the CMP scales are highly reliable as measurement devices.

Validity

Hudson (1982:95) states that the CMP and therefore the ISE has good construct and discriminant validity. He explains construct validity as referring to the ability of a measurement tool to measure the specific construct it was designed to measure, i.e.

the performance of the device with respect to theoretical expectations. Discriminant validity on the other hand refers to the ability of the tool to discriminate between groups that are known to have different 'amounts' of the problem to be examined.

Conclusion

For the reasons mentioned above, the ISE was regarded a suitable choice for the purposes of this study.

7.1.2.2 UCLA Loneliness Scale (UCLA LS) (APPENDIX 3)

The UCLA Loneliness scale was devised in 1978 by Russel, Peplau and Ferguson. In 1980 they revised the Loneliness scale by reducing response bias and increasing discriminant validity. According to Russel et al (1980:472) the Loneliness Scale aims to detect variations in loneliness that occur in everyday life.

Description

This scale consists of a twenty item self report measure, with half of the statements reflecting satisfaction with social relationships, and the other half reflecting dissatisfaction. The items are randomly intermixed. Respondants are asked to rate statements by circling a number indicating how often they feel the way described in each as follows:

- 1 = Never
- 2 = Rarely
- 3 = Sometimes
- 4 = Often

Scoring

The scoring is relatively simple. The numbers are totalled by adding them together, after having reverse scored the negatively worded items, as indicated at the bottom of the questionnaire. In

order to reverse score, the response one becomes four; two becomes three; three becomes two; and four becomes one. The lower the score, the less the individual has a problem in the area of loneliness.

Reliability

Both the UCLA Loneliness scale, and the Revised UCLA Loneliness scale show a high measure of reliability and internal consistency (Russel et al, 1978; Russel et al 1980). The original scale showed an Alpha Coefficient of 0.96, and the revised scale showed an Alpha Coefficient of 0.94. Both these Alpha Coefficients are at a level which exceeds the criterion for a measure to be used in an applied clinical setting. The test-retest reliability was also proven to be high, and suggested that there was some stability in the measure over time, despite changes in the individuals's level of loneliness that might be expected to occur in a two month period.

Validity

The concurrent validity of the UCLA Loneliness scale was shown to be high. This was indicated by demonstrating that lonely people report experiencing emotions theoretically linked to loneliness, and do not report experiencing emotions theoretically unrelated to loneliness.

The Discriminant Validity was also shown as the scores were found to correlate highly with other measures of loneliness, and were not confounded by social desirability. Scores on the scale were also found to correlate more highly with other measures of loneliness than with the measures of mood and personality variables that were measured (Russel et al, 1980).

The Revised UCLA Loneliness scale is thus regarded by the researcher as a suitable tool for measuring the desired variable, namely loneliness.

7.1.2.3 Indicators of Divorce Adjustment Questionnaire (APPENDIX 4)

The present researcher felt that it was important to devise a self anchored rating scale to indicate change in individuals members' divorce adjustment. Bloom states:

"Essentially, the procedure consists of actually developing your own scale to measure whatever it is you and your client/system have identified as an important problem on which to work." (1982:167)

In this instance, the questionnaire was devised by the present researcher, after reviewing the literature as well as consulting with the participants on problems relating to divorce adjustment. Bloom (1982:168) continues by motivating why the use of self anchored rating scales may be useful and mentions that these scales may get at problems that no other measure specifically can, that they can evaluate internal feelings and thoughts, and that these scales have high face validity - i.e. that they may be measuring things which only the client can report on.

Problems with self anchored rating scales include the lack of reliability data, the high possibility of reactivity, and the high potential for the client to distort or change his/her ratings.

In designing the rating scale, the present researcher used the indicators as referred to in the literature and questions were devised that would indicate change in these areas. The indicators used were those of Feelings; Self Esteem; Autonomy; Loneliness; interpersonal skills; Parenting; Assessment of Personal Growth.

Description

The aim of this questionnaire was not to establish one score for each participant, but to provide an indication of change in position as related to each indicator. The indicators were each divided into statements related to that area, giving a total of 25 response possibilities. Each response was presented on a continuum from negative to positive statement, with seven choices of weighting between the two extremes. Participants were therefore asked to circle the number appropriately close to the negative or positive extreme of the continuum. The aim of the questionnaire was therefore to indicate on an individual basis, the participants' position on the various continuums of negative versus positive statements in the areas identified as indicators of divorce adjustment.

Validity and Reliability

Neither reliability or validity was established prior to the study. This was not deemed necessary for the present purposes of research, although this would be required before it could be applied generally in any clinical setting. A pre-test using the questionnaire was used in order to check for accuracy of meaning and clarity of understanding between the researcher and respondent. Hereafter some minor changes were made in order to make the questionnaire more clear.

7.2 SAMPLING

7.2.1 Sampling Method

The present researcher had to make use of non-probability sampling, and more specifically the 'Availability' and 'Snowball' sampling

procedures. Availability sampling implies the use of the first available appropriate sampling units. Snowball sampling is used according to Seaberg in Grinnel as follows:

"The procedure is simply to gather data from the known persons and to request information from them as to other appropriate persons. This cycle is repeated until the social worker has exhausted the potential respondents or has a sample of the desired size."
(1985:145)

Due to the limited available population to be studied in the Grahamstown area, availability sampling was used. The snowball sampling method was effectively utilised, as divorced women were able to provide names and contacts, for the researcher, of other divorced women. This was done until the sample was of a satisfactory size (i.e. twenty participants, of which two later dropped out).

The limitation in the present study as it relates to the size of the sample and the lack of random or proportional sampling, is due to the limited availability of participants as well as the choice participants could exercise to participate in the study or not. No random sampling could thus occur. Due to the selection of participants on the basis of definition and control of important variables however, the sample enables the researcher to generalise within the population that the sample represents, i.e. divorced women with custody of their children.

7.2.2 Recruitment of Subjects

Approximately two months prior to the commencement of the programme, an article was placed in 'Grocotts', the local Grahamstown newspaper. The article called for any divorced people that were interested in participating in a Personal Growth

Programme to contact the local FAMSA office. Local churches were also contacted, and the same announcement made from the pulpits. The Local Parents Without Partners group, initiated by the present researcher during the previous year, were also approached to participate. Individual contacts were made by the researcher, with divorced people who might have been interested in participating. When individuals indicated an interest in the group, their names were listed for later follow up. Of the total, only ten participants were able to join the Personal Growth group, which constituted the experimental group. An equal number of control group members were then recruited from the remaining interested individuals, all who were not able to actually attend the Personal Growth group for practical reasons, although they had been interested in attending the programme. All in all there were twenty participants in the research programme.

7.2.3 Screening

Participants were screened only insofar they met the requirement that they were **female, divorced, all had children, and all had custody of their children**. The issue of whether the participants should be female or sexually heterogeneous was related to the fact that it had been established early on in the recruitment phase that there were insufficient numbers of males to constitute an equally balanced group in terms of sex. On the basis of literature findings previously mentioned, a females only group was then considered to have its own particular strengths in terms of empowerment and intimacy. The fifth variable to be controlled was that of other treatment that may interfere with the experiment. Participants were all screened **not to be involved in any other form**

of intervention or treatment related to divorce or personal growth at the time of or the duration of the study.

All participants in both the experimental and control groups, had to be able to identify areas related to their own divorce situation which they regarded necessary for work in a group counselling context. Members had to be interested in working on issues in the group, in accordance with the selection criteria related to capacity for insight and being ready to work on their problems. This also assisted the researcher to develop a Personal Growth Programme designed to meet the specific needs of the participants, as well as to develop the questionnaire on indicators of divorce adjustment. As part of the screening process, questionnaires with identifying particulars had to be completed. These questionnaires assisted the researcher in the screening as well as the pre-group phase of the social group work programme, by establishing not only identifying particulars, but also demographic particulars and issues that required attention.

The questionnaire served as the guide to the pre-group assessment interview with both the experimental group and control group members (APPENDIX 1).

7.2.4 Research Subjects

Eighteen divorced women participated in the research. The participants in the study were all legally divorced women who had been divorced for various lengths of time. They were mostly drawn from the local University, which itself attracts to its staff single women, as it provides financial security due to its semi-state nature (i.e. in the form of housing subsidies). They all had

children, and all had custody of their children. A more detailed description of the subjects will be given in a later chapter.

7.3 INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL VALIDITY

According to Tripodi in Grinnel (1985:240) internal validity indicates the extent to which the observed changes in a dependant variable are not traceable to variables other than the independant variable. There has been an attempt in this research to control variables which are generally seen to be a threat to internal validity. **History** has been controlled by the establishment of the control group. In this way events in addition to the independant variable which occur between measurements have been accounted for. Due to the short term nature (i.e. ten weeks) of the study, **Maturation** i.e. physical changes of development, has also been controlled. **Instrumentation** as a variable has been controlled by the choice of standardised procedures for measurement. **Statistical regression** has been eliminated by the fact that participants were not selected on the basis of extreme measurements. They were merely selected by definition and not by the measurement of the dependant variables. **Selection biases** have been partially eliminated by the selection of participants by definition. **Experimental mortality** has been controlled by ensuring sufficient participants in both the control and experimental groups. Small numbers of dropouts would therefore not negatively affect the results and findings. Although two experimental group members dropped out of the group early on in the research process, this would have had a conservative effect of results, as the control group then became larger by two compared with the experimental group. Unfortunately, **initial measurement effects** has not been controlled, as the nature of the design was

that of a pre- and post -test. Responses may therefore have been affected by repeated response. The present researcher is however satisfied that sufficient controls were executed to ensure the internal validity of the study.

According to Tripodi in Grinnel (1985:241) there are four external validity factors which may affect the generalizability of the findings. In the present study, **interaction between the initial measurement and the independant variable** has not been controlled, except that both the experimental and control groups received the same initial measurement tests. **Interaction between selection biases and the independant variable** has been controlled by selecting participants by definition and controlling some key variables. The **reactive effects** of the experiment, e.g. the belief in the experimental group that they would change due to the independant variable (i.e. the Personal Growth Programme) has been reduced by informing the experimental group that they would form part of research towards divorce adjustment, but not specifically as to the variables in which change was anticipated. They did not therefore have preconceived ideas about areas in which they should change, or in which change was expected. **Multiple treatment interference** has been controlled by ensuring that participants were not participating in any other form of counselling or treatment programme during the time of the research study.

7.4 DATA COLLECTION

7.4.1 Introduction

Data collection was mainly done with the use of questionnaires. These have been described in detail in the section dealing with

measuring instruments above. A self report questionnaire (APPENDIX 1) was used to obtain demographic particulars of participants, for purposes of screening. This method of data collection was particularly suited to the nature of information required, as it was simple and therefore easy to understand. The questions were all closed ended, so as to facilitate the analysis of the data. A second method used was the standardised measuring scale The Index of Self Esteem (ISE) (APPENDIX 2) and the Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale (UCLA LS) (APPENDIX 3) were used to measure the self esteem and loneliness in the study. They were chosen due to the fact that they were standardised and therefore reliable and valid, and therefore could facilitate the making of generalisations. A third method was used, namely a questionnaire developed by the researcher herself, measuring the Indicators of Divorce Adjustment in the participants (APPENDIX 4).

These methods of data collection all served to provide the researcher with the relevant data for the study.

7.4.2 Pre-Treatment Assessment Phase

The pre-treatment assessment phase consisted of both experimental and control group participants each completing a set of three questionnaires. These included the 'Indicator of Divorce Adjustment Questionnaire'; the 'Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale'; and the 'Index of Self Esteem'. The experimental group completed these at the first session of the Personal Growth Programme, while the control group members completed them individually during the week of the first session of the programme.

7.4.3 Treatment Phase

The treatment programme was implemented over a period of ten weeks. During this time the experimental group participated in a Personal Growth Programme, consisting of ten weekly sessions of between two and two-and-a-half hours each (See Programme and Resources, APPENDIX 6). The group work programme centred around issues around divorce that had been identified by participants themselves. The control group did not participate in any organised group work programme, and were not exposed to any form of treatment related to divorce.

7.4.4 Post-Treatment Assessment Phase

At the end of the intervention period, the experimental group as well as the control group completed the same three sets of questionnaires and measuring scales. The experimental group completed these at the end of their final session of the personal growth programme, while the control group completed these individually during the same week as the final group session.

7.5 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

In this study, data is presented in tabular form, in order to summarise and make observations about the data. The results from the three measuring instruments are analysed and interpreted in terms of individual and group score averages. The results of the experimental group are then compared with the results of the control group. From the tables summarising the data, statistical calculations are made which lead to interpretations about their statistical significance. In order to analyse the data and make statistical inferences, use is made of a one sided statistical test for

significance of differences, namely the Wilcoxon t-test. This test is applied to measure the significance of change in pre- and post-test scores for both the experimental and the control group. Data is also presented in graphic form to visually illustrate various trends and findings.

CHAPTER VIII : ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In this section, a description of the group work programme designed by the present researcher as well as the group itself will be given. The findings of the research will be presented in the form of tables, figures, comments and interpretations. The three areas which formed the body of the scientific research design, will be presented separately, in order to facilitate presentation. It will be shown that the intervention programme caused significant changes in self esteem and indicators of divorce adjustment, but not in the area of loneliness.

8.2 THE PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME

Description

A description of the programme itself is of vital importance in experimental study. The assessment of the usefulness of a particular programme has little value if the programme itself is not clearly described and articulated. The Personal Growth Programme itself is described in detail in appendix 5.

The Group Leader (present researcher) used the Social Group Work approach of Social Work as the intervention modality. The theoretical approach used was that of systematic eclecticism. Hepworth and Larson state the following:

"A systematic eclectic practitioner carefully selects from models and techniques those that best match the problems situation of the given client, according to highest priority to techniques that have been empirically demonstrated to be effective." (1982:10)

As part of this systematic eclecticism, the group leader chose

to use various theoretical models and techniques. A combination of the approaches of Carter (1977), Kessler (1978), Shelton and Nix (1979), Bonkowski and Wanner-Westley (1979), Thiessen et al (1980) and Faust (1987) was used. The design was that of a structured approach using: the giving and receiving of feedback among members; supportive environment; structured exercises; contracts; cognitive restructuring and rational emotive therapy; structured exercises; discussion of divorce related issues; skills training; behavioural assignments; handouts and reading material; vignettes to stimulate discussion and skills practise; the experiential learning approach; and brief didactic input.

Evaluation of Group

The very aim of the present research study is to evaluate the outcome of the intervention. The measurement of outcome is therefore pursued in this instance by the design of the research and specifically through the use of the three measuring scales i.e. Index of Self Esteem (ISE); Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale; and Indicators of Divorce Adjustment Questionnaire.

A final evaluation of the group was also done by members themselves during the last session in written form (APPENDIX 5: PROGRAMME RESOURCE 36). It was designed to give members the opportunity to give feedback on both useful and detrimental aspects.

When perusing the individual evaluations of members, the questions most likely to give an indication of how useful or how detrimental various aspects were, can be summarised for reporting purposes. Comments by group members that were mentioned by more than one person will not be repeated, in order to limit the extent of the summary.

Comments on Gains and Usefulness

- * "Learnt a lot about my self"
- * "Role Plays especially for Active Listening stands out"
- * "Have learnt to value myself more"
- * "I'm not the only one who thinks/feels/reacts the way I do"
- * "She brought things out of people and helped them towards finding their own solutions without trying to force anything"
- * "She does not bully you into doing or saying something you're not happy about. Supportive"
- * "Comes accross effectively without being harsh"
- * "Well prepared and easy to understand"
- * "It made me aware of the different areas in which I had to work on in my life"
- * "There are others in the same position"
- * "I wanted to gain more self confidence and self esteem. I have very definitely reached my goals and more"
- * "This group situation is very powerful. Sharing amongst others in the same situation as you enables you to speak your mind and be honest and open"
- * "I have come to value the ability I've developed to speak out in a crowded room. I have gradually applied this in other situations and I've come away feeling good"
- * "The togetherness and sense of belonging stands out most"
- * "Others have given me the confidence to strive forwards as they've been there"
- * "As a loner, I have learnt that I am not a freak, and that my enjoyment of being alone is not unusual"
- * "Knowing the difference between being alone and loneliness stands out the most, as well as self esteem and assertiveness"
- * "Parenting, the Rosebush exercise and fellowship stands out the most"
- * "Being made to discuss certain aspects helped bring them into perspective, even though I didn't want to face some of them"
- * "I have come to value being able to discuss divorce from a positive and not a negative angle"
- * "Number of sessions enough to want more and not too many to get bored or tired"
- * "Number of members just right"
- * "Handouts and literature most helpful, informative and well researched"
- * "I came doubtfully and became intrigued. Thank You"

Comments about Detrimental Factors

- * "Too much was fitted in, in some cases people wanted to discuss more or work together in pairs more"
- * "Sessions sometimes too short"
- * "Pace of sessions sometimes too fast"
- * "I wouldn't have minded two hours as opposed to one and a half"
- * "Maybe more detail about each subject"
- * "I wasn't so keen in pairing off in twos. I felt we knew each other well enough and the group was small enough to keep it a 'round table' discussion"
- * "Could have spent more time on some topics"
- * "Get rid of all those evaluations"

The comments overwhelmingly indicate that the group was a positive experience for members. The content and theoretical approach was not much commented upon, but members seemed to assess the methods positively in general. Comments about detrimental factors were mostly related to practical issues such as time and pace of sessions, and this is significant to note when interpreting the findings.

8.3 IDENTIFYING PARTICULARS : THE GROUP AND MEMBERS

8.3.1 The Group

The group was conducted over a period of ten weeks. Sessions of approximately one and a half to two hours were held once a week. A suitable venue was chosen at the local university, as it was geographically easily reached, and physically comfortable. Ten members were initially recruited for the group, but two members dropped out due to other commitments. The eight members remaining maintained an attendance of 88% over the ten weeks (i.e. four members missed between one and three sessions each). The sessions were conducted on Thursday evenings, between 19H30 and 21H30. This particular time was decided upon by group members themselves, as it suited most of them as working single parents.

Members each paid a fee of R20,00 for the programme, to cover basic expenses such as printing matter, refreshments and stationary. This fee was however negotiable according to income of members, and consequently reduced in some cases. The group was conducted under the auspices of the local Grahamstown FAMSA branch (Family and Marriage Society of South Africa), as the present researcher was employed by this organisation at the time of the study, and the objectives were related to the overall objectives

of FAMSA itself. The fact that it was linked to FAMSA also gave the study and the Personal Growth Programme itself professional credibility in the community, and thus may have encouraged more participation than may otherwise have been the case.

8.3.2 The Members

In this section, data is presented based on the self report questionnaire used during the initial stage of screening in the research process. The indentifying particulars presented include: age; education; occupation; financial position; age when married; length of marriage; length of divorce; reasons for divorce; support systems; and concerns/issues identified by participants for attention in the group.

Age

Participants in the study varied in age from 20 to 50 years of age. Most of the participants (61%) were between 40 and 49 years old.

Education

Participants had various educational qualifications. Some had a Standard Eight Certificate (22%); Some had completed Matric (22%); Others had completed a University degree (44%) and some had other tertiary training (11%)

Occupation

Participants varied greatly here too. None were unemployed; most were secretarial (38%); some were professional (27%); some were commercial (16%); and some were employed in other fields (11%). All but one of the participants were employed on a full time basis.

Financial Position

Participants had incomes ranging from R500,00 per month to over R2000,00 per month. Some of them received no maintenance from their former spouses (33%), while others received under R250,00 per month to R999,00 per month. Half of the participants were satisfied with the maintenance arrangement, while the other half were dissatisfied.

Age when Married

Most participants were between 20 and 24 years when they married their partners (66%).

Length of Marriage

The length of participants' marriages varied from one to over twenty years.

Length of divorce

The length of participants' divorce varied from six months to fifteen years. Most participants were divorced between two and seven years.

Reasons for Divorce

Reasons given by participants for the breakdown of their marriage were as follows:

Alcohol Abuse in spouse	: 5%
Communication	: 22%
Emotional difficulties self	: 5%
Emotional difficulties spouse	: 16%
Incompatibility	: 5%
Infidelity Spouse	: 44%

It is interesting to note that the highest scores for reasons for divorce were communication and infidelity in the spouse.

Children

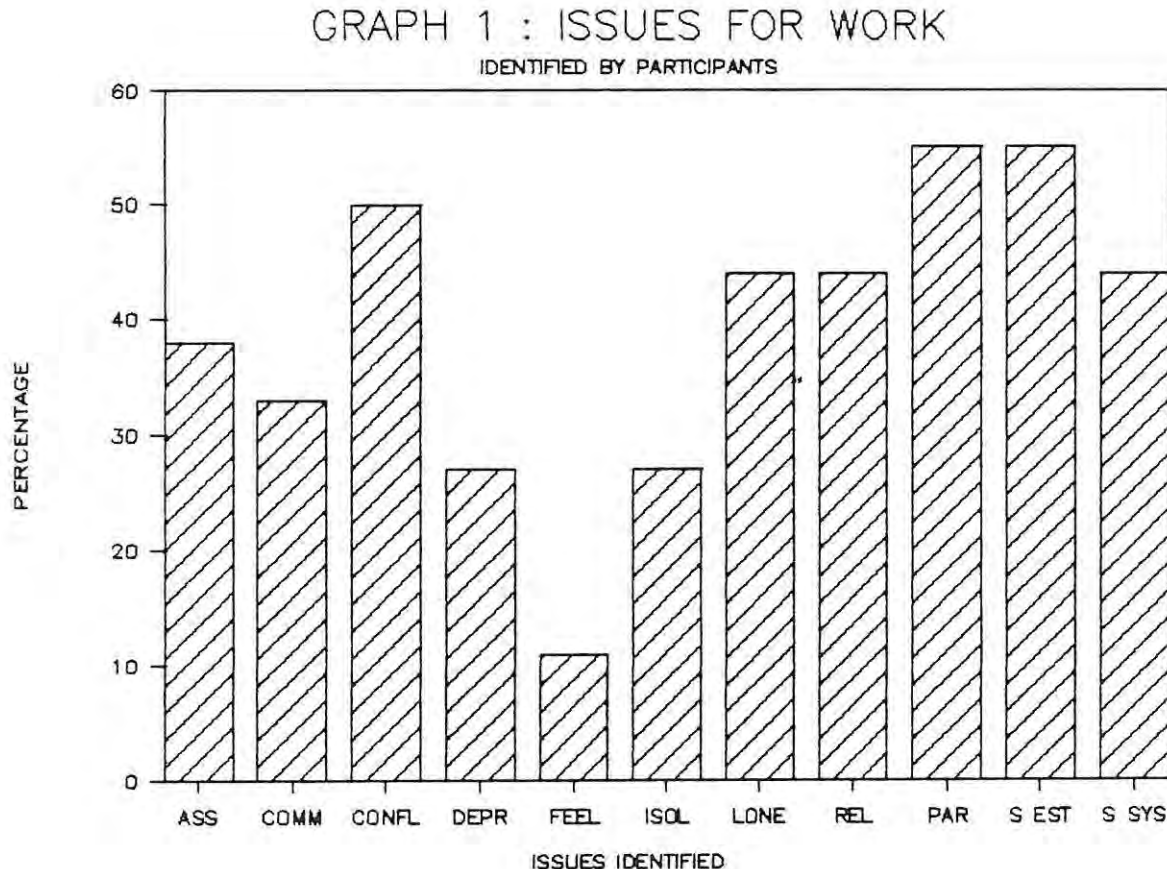
All the participants had children and all but one (who had joint custody) had custody of their children. All participants described their feelings about custody as being satisfactory or positive.

Support Systems

Most of the participants identified friends as being useful support systems (83%); Other support systems were Family (66%); Other Divorced People (44%); Church (27%); Colleagues (22%); Employer (16%); Counsellor (11%).

Concerns/Issues for Attention in Group

The following graph (Graph 1) illustrates the issues participants identified as needing attention, and that they would like to work on in a Group.



The areas presented to participants by the present researcher were as follows: Assertiveness; Communication; Conflict resolution; Depression; Feelings around divorce; Isolation; Loneliness; Relationships; Single parenting; Self Esteem; and Support Systems. The areas most favoured by the participants were conflict resolution; Loneliness; Relationships; Parenting; Self Esteem and Support Systems. The programme for the group was devised by taking the above issues identified by participants into account.

8.4 SELF ESTEEM

The following table shows the relevant information on the data for Self Esteem.

TABLE 5 : DATA ON SELF ESTEEM

SUBJECTS	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP			CONTROL GROUP		
	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	CHANGE	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	CHANGE
1	50	53	-3*	34	47	-13
2	52	36	+16	15	15	0
3	39	35	+4	27	23	+4
4	58	47	+11	25	36	-11
5	51	32	+19	31	24	+7
6	55	30	+25	41	36	+5
7	36	24	+12	30	30	0
8	37	48	-11	20	17	+3
9				10	15	-5
10				14	12	+2
AVERAGE	47,2	38,1	+ 9,1	24,7	25,5	- 0,8
STANDARD DEVIATION = 3,7 (as calculated by Hudson, 1982:91)						

* higher score indicates a negative change

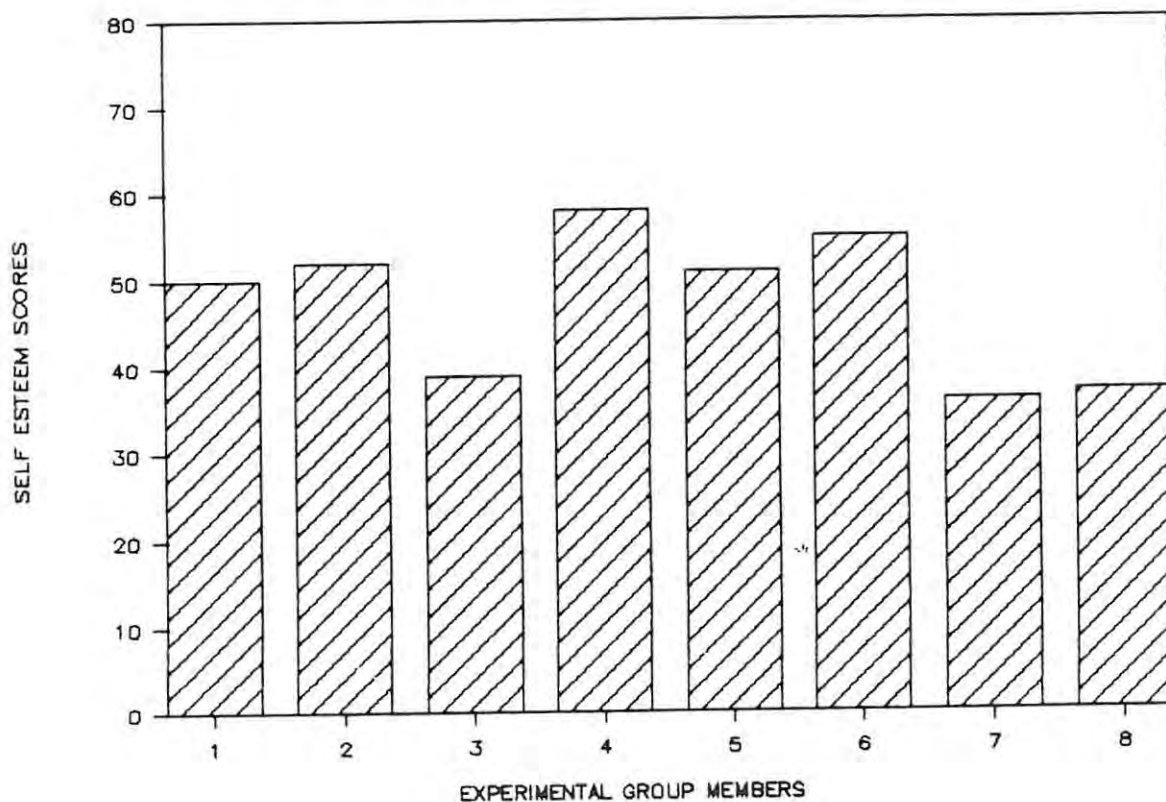
It is evident from the above table that there is a difference in mean gains between the pretests and posttests of the two groups. Relevant interpretations about this self esteem data will be

made in the following section.

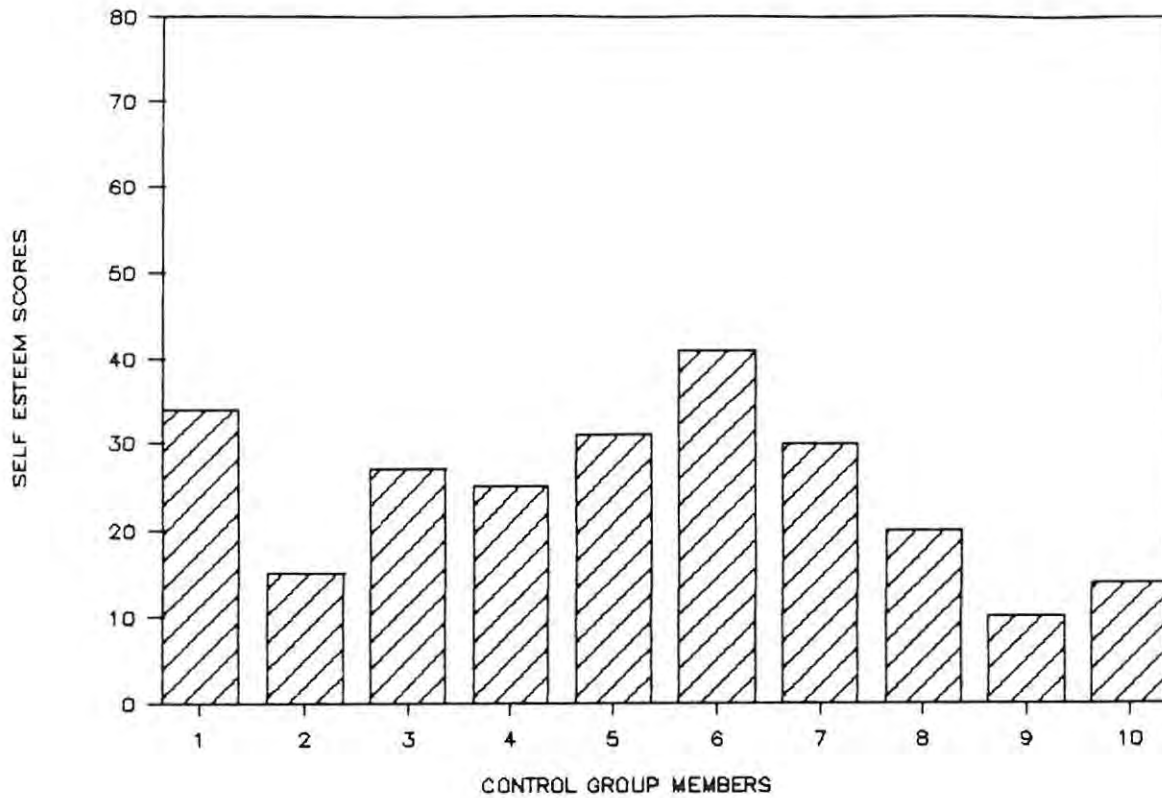
DIFFERENCE IN PRETEST SCORES IN EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Graphs 2 and 3 below show the scores for the pretest in the experimental and control groups. It should be kept in mind that **the higher the scores, the greater the problem with self esteem**. A score greater than 3,7 higher than the clinical cut off point, indicates a significant problem with self esteem.

GRAPH 2: EXP GROUP PRETEST SELF ESTEEM



GRAPH 3: CON GROUP PRETEST SELF ESTEEM

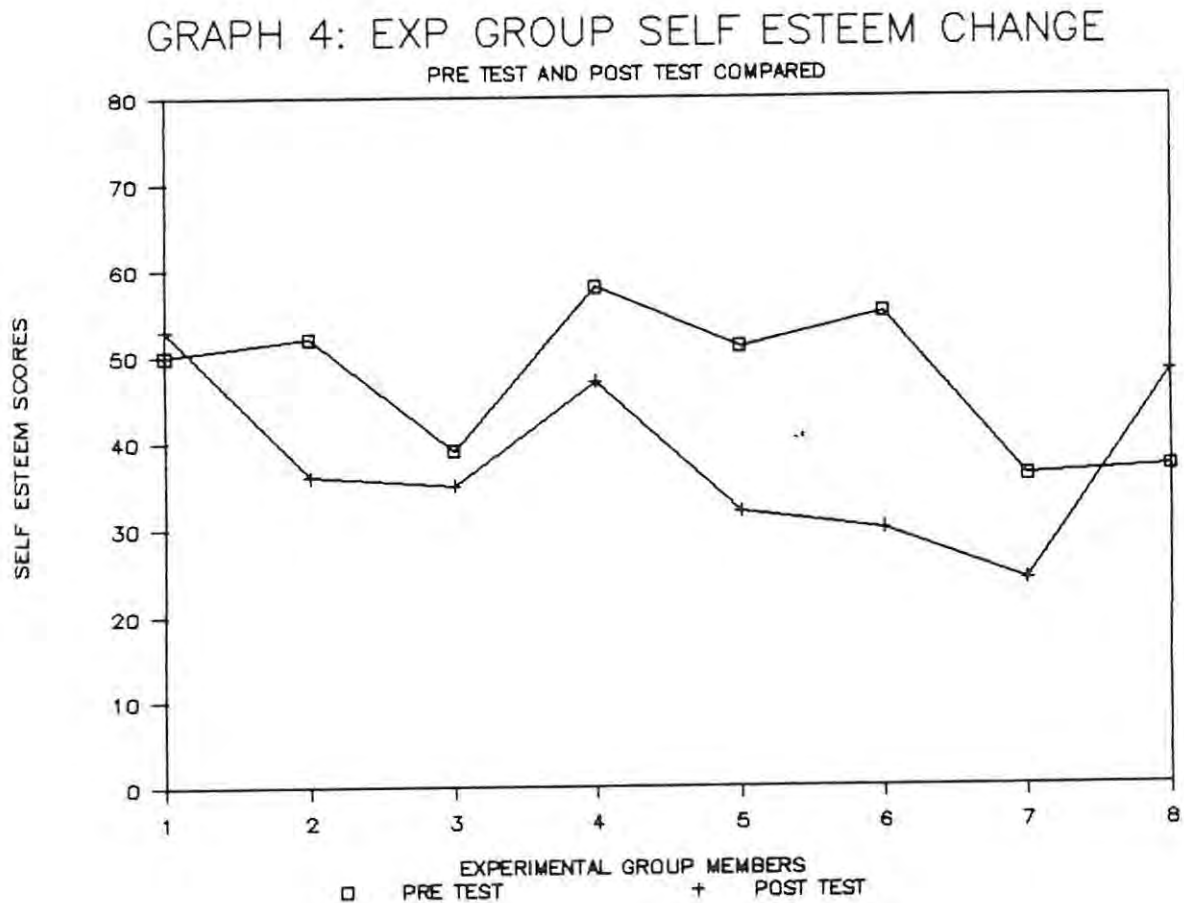


It is clear from these graphs that there was a difference in the pretest scores between the two groups. This difference indicates that the instrument used picked up a difference in levels of self esteem between those who chose to attend the Personal Growth Programme, and those who did not. Due to the fact that the groups were considered however to be non-equivalent, the means were not expected to be the same. It can be seen from **Graph 2** above, that the self esteem scores for the Experimental group were all above the clinical cut off point of 30. The scores ranged from 36 to 58. This implies that a problem in self esteem could be identified with all the members in the experimental group. The control group members on the other hand showed generally healthy self esteem, with only 30% of the members having scores above the clinical cut off point.

It is interesting to note that the control group members were all people who indicated interest in the intervention group, but were either not sufficiently motivated to attend, or were not able to due to practical reasons. It is possible therefore, that the absence of need for work on self esteem may have contributed to the decision not to attend the intervention programme. Motivation to attend a Personal Growth Programme thus seems to be related to a lower self esteem in this particular group.

CHANGE IN SELF ESTEEM IN EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Graph 4 shows the change in pretest and posttest scores for members in the experimental group. The graph shows the individual scores for the eight members in the form of a pretest and posttest range.



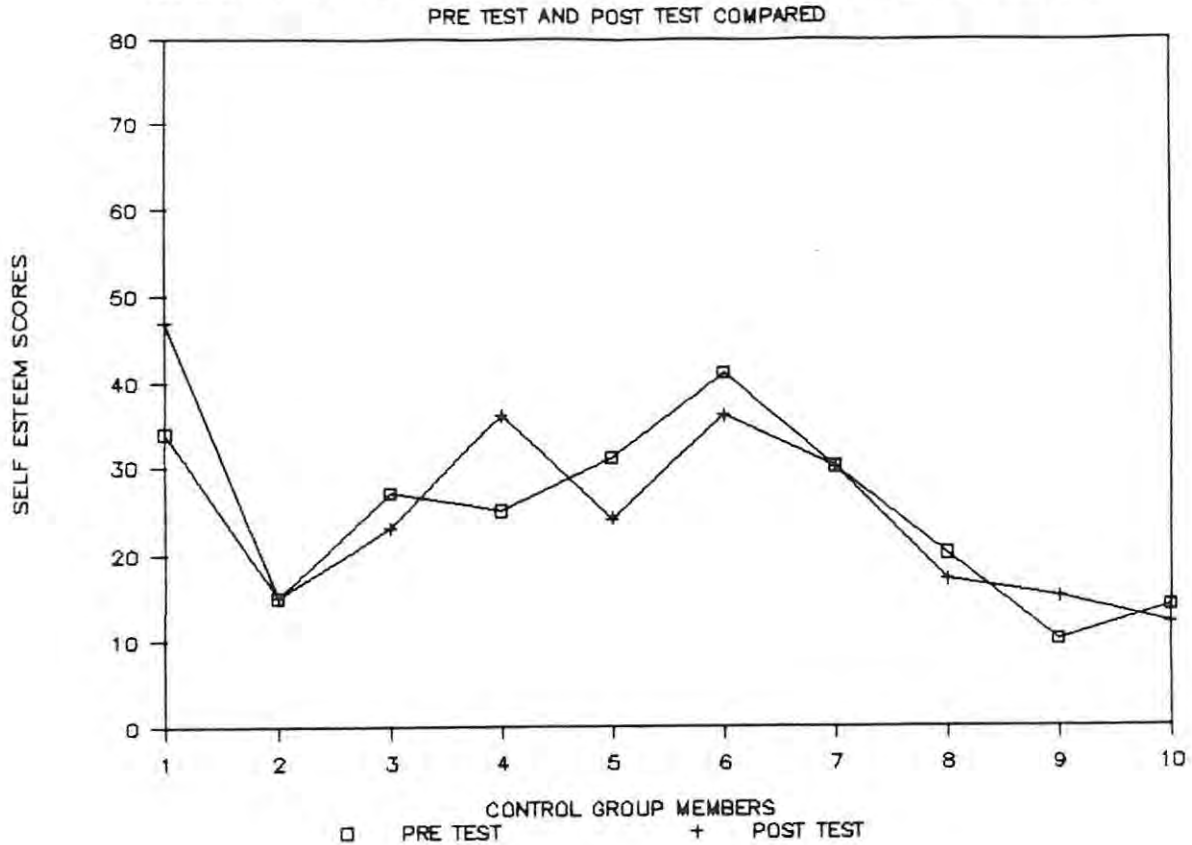
It is interesting to note from **Graph 4** that six of the eight members showed great improvements in their self esteem. The last member showed a great deterioration in her self esteem score, with eleven points change. It should be mentioned here that this particular member experienced a crisis during the duration of the group, as her ex husband returned to her and once again deserted her during that period, thus understandably negatively affecting her self esteem. When this member is not included in the calculation of the experimental group mean change in scores, the figure rises to from 9,1 to 12, a figure indicating an even greater significant difference compared with the pretest.

Although the experimental group showed great change in scores, their mean self esteem score of 38 is still slightly above Hudson's clinical cutoff point of 30, thus indicating that even more work is still required on their self esteem.

CHANGE IN SELF ESTEEM SCORES IN CONTROL GROUP

Graph 5 on the following page shows the change in Self Esteem Score for the control group. Here too the graph shows the individual scores for the ten members as a pretest and a posttest range.

GRAPH 5: CON GROUP SELF ESTEEM CHANGE



It can be seen from **Graph 5** that there appears to be no pattern of improvement in the pre and post test scores in self esteem in the Control group. Both the pretest and posttest scores of the control group indicated healthy self esteem scores. The mean change in score in fact indicates a negative change, although this change will later be seen to be non-significant. The control group did however have positive self esteem scores, as both the mean pretest and posttest scores of the control group (24,7 and 25,5) indicated healthy self esteem, being less than the clinical cut off point of 30 for the Index of self esteem.

TEST FOR SIGNIFICANCE OF PRE POST CHANGES

The important area for investigation is whether or not the difference in pre-post scores are significantly greater in the experimental group compared with the control group.

The Null Hypothesis for the the experimental group and the control group is as follows:

The difference between the pre scores and post scores for self esteem are not significant, in both the experimental and the control group.

Experimental group	$H_0 : U_2 - U_1 = 0$
Control group	$H_0 : U_2 - U_1 = 0$

The alternative Hypothesis for the experimental group and control group is as follows:

The difference between the pre scores and post scores for self esteem are significant, in both the experimental group and the control group.

Experimental group	$H_1 : U_2 - U_1 \neq 0$
Control Group	$H_1 : U_2 - U_1 < 0$

Due to the fact that the populations are not considered to be large enough, it is necessary to use a non-parametric test for significance of change. According to Huysamen:

"The Wilcoxon test can be regarded as the non-parametric alternative to the t test for related groups." (1976:258)

In this instance, one group is used and the two scores i.e. the pre test (X_1) and the post test (X_2) of the experimental group are therefore taken as the related group scores. The procedure recommended by the same author was followed to calculate the t-test Statistic for the Wilcoxon Test.

**TABLE 6 : EXPERIMENTAL GROUP SELF ESTEEM DATA FOR WILCOXON
T-TEST**

X_1	X_2	difference	Rank
50	53	- 3*	-1
52	36	+16	+6
39	35	+ 4	+2
58	47	+11	+3,5**
51	32	+19	+7
55	30	+25	+8
36	24	+12	+5
37	48	-11	-3,5

*higher score indicates a negative change

**Differences of the same value are both assigned the mean of the two ranks they would have received had they been different

$T^* = 31,5$

$$T_- = \frac{N(N+1)}{2} - T_+$$

$= 4,5$

According to this method, $T =$ the smaller of T_- and T_+ . In the above calculation, $4,5 < 31,5$ and therefore $T = 4,5$. Due to the fact that there are no zero differences, N is equal to 8 (i.e. not reduced by any quantity). According to the table (APPENDIX 6), T should be equal to or less than 6 for $N = 8$ and $\alpha = 0,05$ in order to be significant. This is the case, and therefore the null hypothesis can be rejected. The change in the scores in the experimental group is therefore significant, and the alternate hypothesis can therefore be accepted, i.e. that the changes in the self esteem of the experimental group are significant. This indicates that the Intervention Programme was successful in this regard.

The same procedures are required to test whether the difference

in pretest and posttest scores in the control group are significant.

TABLE 7 : CONTROL GROUP SELF ESTEEM DATA FOR WILCOXON T-TEST

X_1	X_2	difference	Rank
34	47	-13	-8
15	15	0 *	-
27	23	+4	+3
25	36	-11	-7
31	24	+7	+6
41	36	+5	+4,5**
30	30	0	-
20	17	+3	+2
10	15	-5	-4,5
14	12	+2	+1

*Nil difference is assigned no rank
 **Differences of the same value are each assigned the mean of the two ranks they would have received had they been different

$$T_+ = 16,5$$

$$T_- = \frac{N(N+1)}{2} - T_+$$

$$= 19,5$$

In the above instance, $T = 16,5$ as $16,5 < 19,5$. Due to the fact that there are two zero differences, $N = 8$, and according to the tables, T should be less than or equal to 6 when $N = 8$ and $\alpha = 0,05$ in order to be significant. This is not the case, so the nul hypothesis can not be rejected. In the control group therefore, the change in pre test and post test scores is not significant.

It can be concluded therefore that the intervention programme was successful in terms of the aim of improving self esteem and therefore making a contribution to divorce adjustment, as significant

changes occurred in the experimental group's scores in self esteem, while significant changes in the self esteem of the control group did not occur. The effects of outside influences on self esteem, which both the experimental and control group members would have experienced, were therefore not sufficient to cause a significant change on the self esteem scores. This implies that it was purely the intervention which caused the change in experimental group members' self esteem.

The Personal Growth programme did attend sufficiently therefore to the needs of members regarding self esteem, shown by the significant improvement, although there still remains some room for further growth in this area. This substantiates the argument that the Personal Growth Programme successfully improved members' self esteem, and that one of the major objectives of this aims of the research have been fulfilled.

8.5 LONELINESS

The following table shows the relevant information on the data for loneliness.

TABLE 8 : DATA ON LONELINESS

SUBJECTS	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP			CONTROL GROUP		
	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	CHANGE	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	CHANGE
1	51	48	+3	24	35	-11*
2	35	30	+5	29	24	+5
3	48	51	-3	32	29	+3
4	53	53	0	42	42	0
5	41	38	+3	31	34	-3
6	31	35	-4	37	46	-9
7	43	44	-1	40	49	-9
8	36	42	-6	29	28	+1
9				26	28	-2
10				25	26	-1
AVERAGE	42,2	42,6	-0,4	31,5	34,1	-2,6

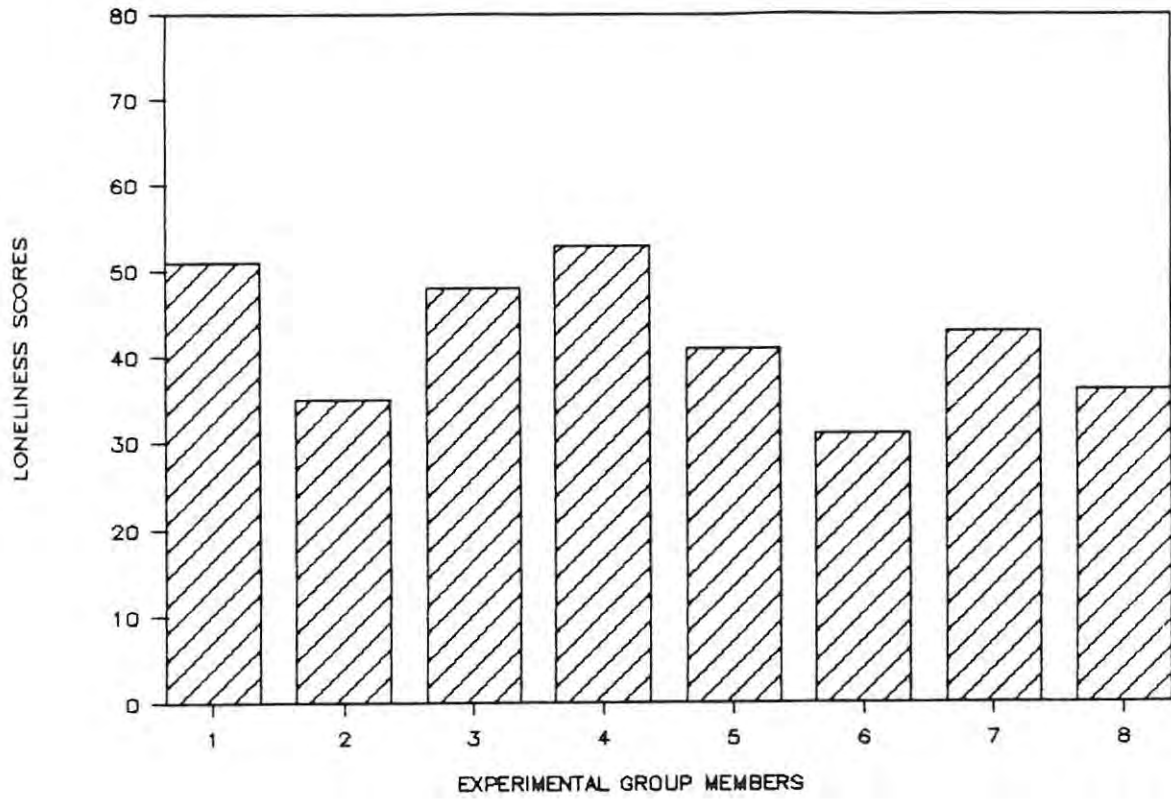
*higher score denotes negative change

It is evident from the **Table 7** that there was a very small negative change in the loneliness score for the experimental group, and a small negative change in the loneliness score for the control group. Other relevant interpretations and comments about the loneliness data will be made in the following sections.

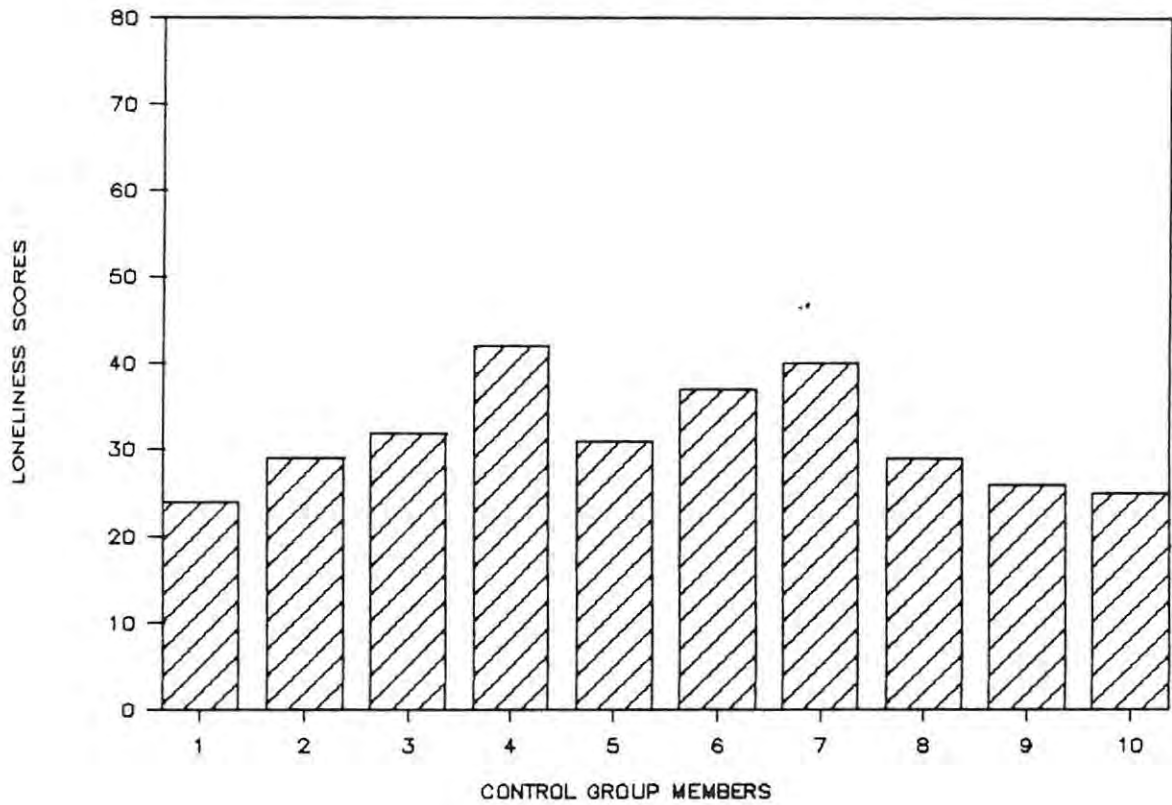
DIFFERENCE OF PRETEST SCORES IN EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Graphs 6 and 7 below show graphically the pretest scores of the experimental and control groups. **The higher the scores, the greater the problem with loneliness.**

GRAPH 6: EXP GROUP PRETEST LONELINESS



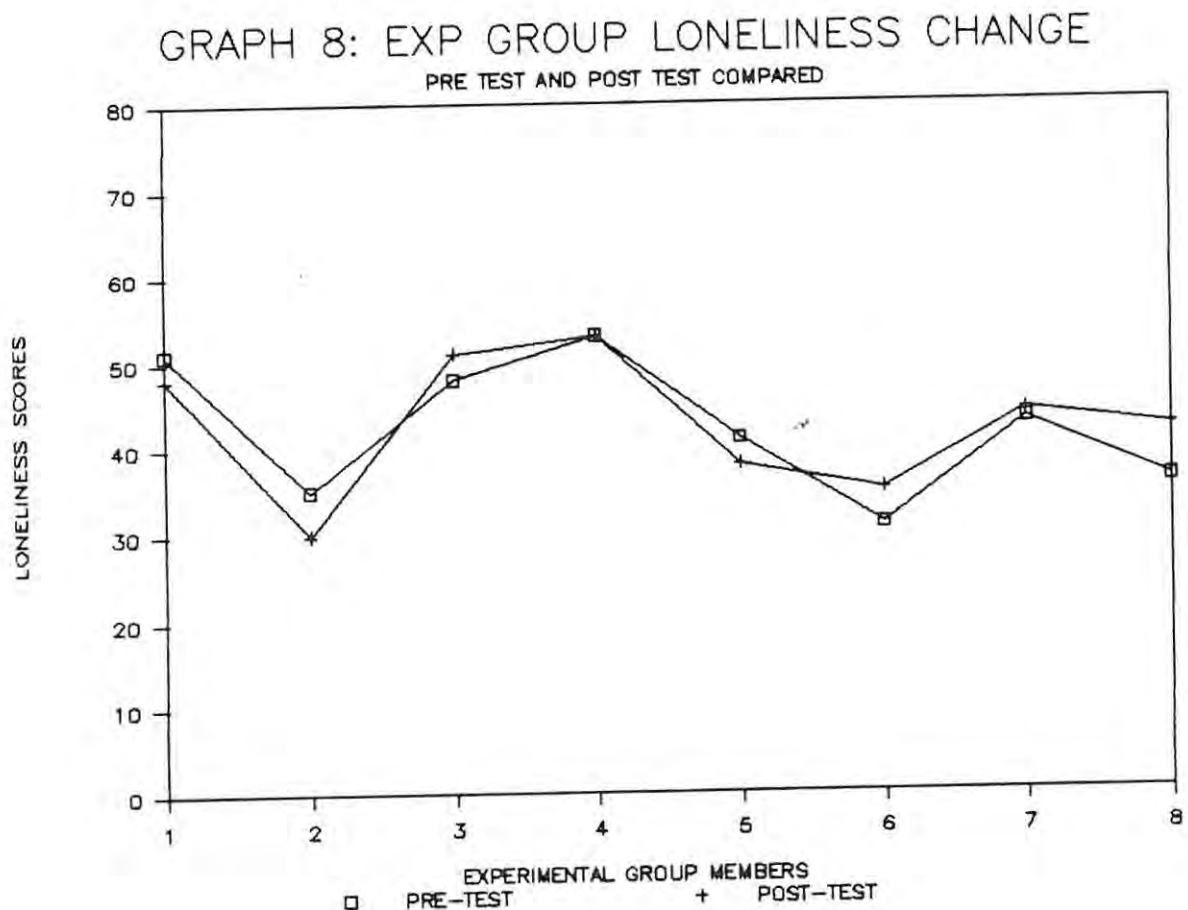
GRAPH 7 : CON GROUP PRETEST LONELINESS



As with the case of self esteem scores, it is interesting to note that the experimental group had a higher (i.e. more negative) mean loneliness score than the control group in the pretest. The experimental group members were more lonely therefore than the control group members, hence a possible motivation to join the Personal Growth programme. The experimental group members all had scores above (i.e. problematic) Hudson's clinical cutoff point of 30, while only 40% of the control group members had a score above the clinical cutoff point in the control group.

CHANGE IN LONELINESS IN EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Graph 8 shows the change in pretest and posttest scores for loneliness for members in the experimental group.



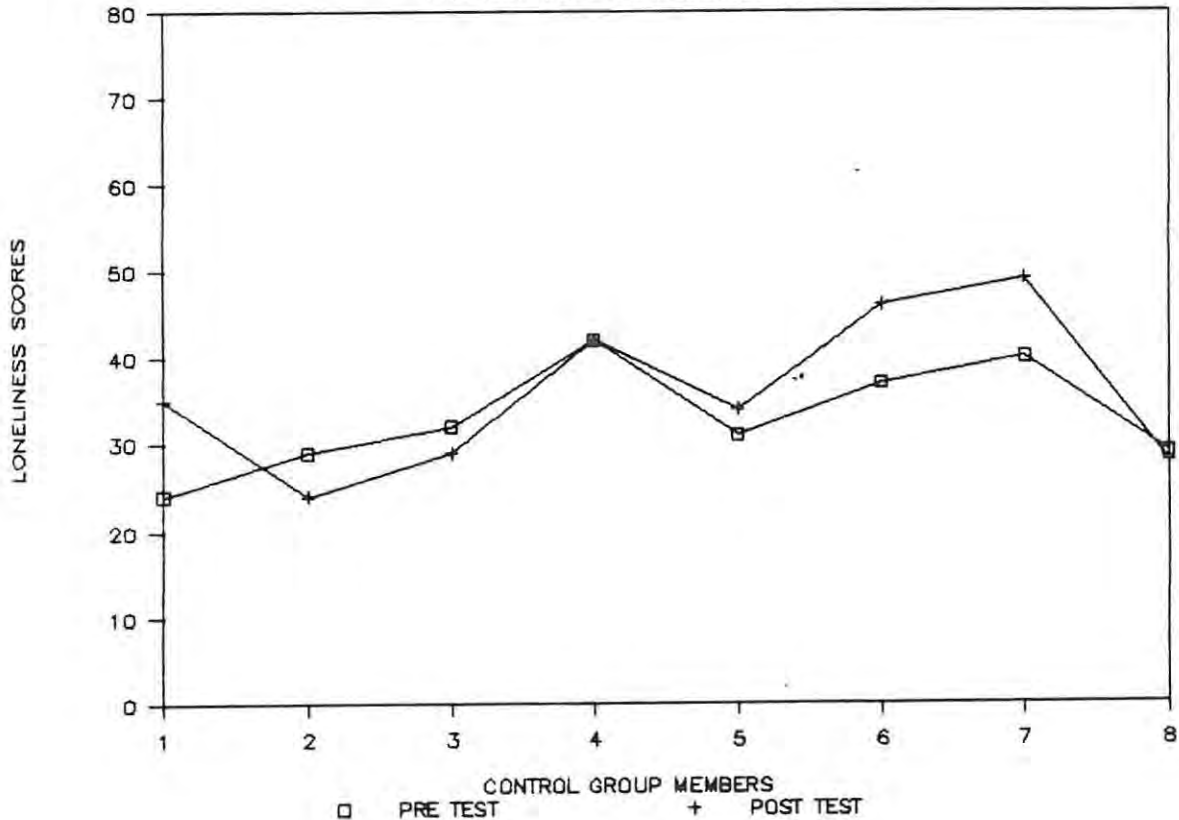
Graph 8 above shows that there does not seem to be a pattern in the changes in scores. Only three members showed a slight improvement in their loneliness scores after the intervention programme. Four members showed a negative change in loneliness, while one member had the same score before and after the intervention. All the members except one attained a posttest score above the clinical cut off point of thirty, thus indicating a remaining problem in loneliness.

CHANGE IN LONELINESS SCORES IN CONTROL GROUP

Graph 9 shows the change in Loneliness Scores for the control group, expressed in members scores in the pretest and posttest.

GRAPH 9: CON GROUP LONELINESS CHANGE

PRE TEST AND POST TEST COMPARED



Graph 9 does not seem to show any pattern of change in the pretest and posttest scores of the control group. This is a similar observation as that in the experimental group. Only three members showed a slight positive change in their scores, while six members showed a negative change. One member showed no change in score. Both the pretest and posttest in the control group show a generally negative scoring, i.e. a problem with loneliness among members, although overall they seem to have less of a problem with loneliness than the experimental group.

TEST FOR SIGNIFICANCE OF PRE AND POST CHANGES

It is important to establish whether or not any significance may be attached to the changes in the pretest and posttest scores for the experimental and control groups, in order to make a conclusion about the success of the Intervention programme on this particular variable.

The Null Hypothesis for both the experimental and control group is as follows:

The difference between the pre scores and post scores for loneliness are not significant, in neither the experimental nor control groups.

$$\begin{array}{ll} \text{Experimental group} & H_0 : U_2 - U_1 = 0 \\ \text{Control Group} & H_0 : U_2 - U_1 = 0 \end{array}$$

The alternative hypothesis for the experimental group and control group is as follows:

The difference between the pre scores and post scores for loneliness are significant, in both the experimental and the control groups.

$$\begin{array}{ll} \text{Experimental Group} & H_1 : U_2 - U_1 < 0 \\ \text{Control Group} & H_1 : U_2 - U_1 < 0 \end{array}$$

Once again, the Wilcoxon test for non-parametric related groups will be used. The pre test (X_2) and the post test (X_1) of the experimental group are therefore taken as the related group scores. The procedure recommended by Huysamen (1976, 258) was followed.

TABLE 9 : EXPERIMENTAL GROUP LONELINESS DATA FOR WILCOXON T-TEST

X_1	X_2	difference	Rank
51	48	+3	+3***
35	30	+5	+6
48	51	-3*	-3
53	53	0	- **
41	38	+3	+3
31	35	-4	-5
43	44	-1	-1
36	42	-6	-7

* Higher score denotes negative change
 ** Differences of the same value are all assigned the mean of the ranks they would have received had they been different
 *** A nil value receives no rank

$T^+ = 12$

$T^- = \frac{N(N+1)}{2} - T^+$

$= 16$

According to this method, $T =$ the smaller of T_- and T_+ . In the above calculation, $12 < 16$, and therefore $T = 12$. In this instance $N = 7$, as there is one zero difference. According to the Table (APPENDIX 6), T should be equal to or less than 4 for $N = 7$ and $\alpha = 0,05$ in order to be significant. This is not the case, and therefore the Null Hypothesis can not be rejected and the change in scores in the experimental group for loneliness is not significant.

The same procedures are required to test whether the difference in pretest and posttest scores in the control group are significant

TABLE 10 : CONTROL GROUP LONELINESS DATA FOR WILCOXON T TEST

X_1	X_2	difference	Rank
24	35	-11*	-9
29	24	+5	+6
32	29	+3	+4,5
42	42	0	-**
31	34	+3	+4,5
37	46	-9	-7,5
40	49	-9	-7,5
29	28	+1	+1,5***
26	28	-2	-3
25	26	-1	-1,5

* Higher score denotes negative change
 ** Nil difference is assigned no rank
 *** Differences of the same value receive the mean of the ranks they would have received had they been different

$$T_+ = 16,5$$

$$T_- = \frac{N(N+1)}{2} - T_+$$

$$= 28,5$$

In the above instance, $T = 16,5$, as $16,5 < 28,5$. $N = 9$, due to the fact that there is one zero difference. According to the tables (APPENDIX 6), T should be less or equal to 8 when $N = 9$ and $\alpha = 0,05$ in order to be significant. This is not the case, showing that there is no significant difference in the pre and post test scores for loneliness in the control group. The null hypothesis cannot therefore be rejected.

In the light of the above, it cannot be said that the Intervention programme had any significant effect on the loneliness of participants, as neither the experimental group nor the control

group showed any change in this area. The Intervention Programme did not therefore achieve the objective of reducing loneliness.

There may be various explanations for this phenomena. Firstly, the timing of the post test may have affected the loneliness scores negatively, as it occurred at the conclusion of the programme, and would therefore find the members at a time where they were conscious of withdrawing from the support and social contact with other group members. Their loneliness levels would in this instance most certainly not reduce, and would even be expected to increase. The second explanation may be that the intervention programme did not actually address sufficiently the issue of loneliness, and that members could therefore not work through the problems sufficiently. In the light of this argument, it is not sufficient to devote only one session to the area of loneliness, as the needs of members are greater than that which can

be met by one session. This conclusion also corresponds with the feedback from the group members that the pace of sessions was too fast thus implying that not sufficient time was allowed for a thorough addressing of relevant issues.

8.6 INDICATORS OF DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT

The following table shows the relevant information on the data for divorce adjustment indicators. The items have been grouped according to the indicator which they refer to. The data is presented in terms of the average scores of all the members for each item of the questionnaire. In this way the various areas can be viewed separately and interpretations made not only about the significance of changes, but also about changes in specific

areas investigated. The table also shows the relevant information for the Wilcoxon T Test, i.e. the difference in score (changes) and the ranks of each difference.

TABLE 11 : AVERAGE ITEM SCORES FOR DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT INDICATORS

ITEMS	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP				CONTROL GROUP				
	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	CHANGE	RANK	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	CHANGE	RANK	
FEELINGS									
1	5,75	4,75	-1,00	-20	6,00	5,90	- ,10	-4,5	
2	5,88	5,75	- ,13	-3,5	5,50	5,10	- ,40	-17,5	
3	6,00	5,50	- ,50	-12	5,90	6,50	+ ,60	+20	
4	5,25	3,50	-1,75	-23	5,90	6,00	+ ,10	+4,5	
SELF ESTEEM									
5	5,38	5,50	+ ,12	+1,5	6,60	6,60	0	-	
6	5,38	5,75	+ ,37	+8	6,80	6,60	- ,20	-10,5	
7	6,38	5,88	- ,50	-12	6,30	6,30	0	-	
8	4,38	4,75	+ ,37	+8	5,60	5,80	+ ,20	+10,5	
9	5,13	5,38	+ ,20	+5	6,80	6,90	+ ,10	+ 4,5	
10	4,38	5,00	+ ,62	+15,5	6,10	6,50	+ ,40	+17,5	
AUTONOMY									
11	6,63	6,63	0	-	6,90	7,00	+ ,10	+4,5	
12	6,25	6,75	+ ,50	+12	6,90	6,90	0	-	
LONELINESS									
13	4,50	5,50	+1,00	+20	4,70	5,40	+ ,70	+21	
14	4,63	5,88	+1,17	+22	5,60	5,90	+ ,30	+14	
SOCIAL SKILLS									
15	4,63	4,50	- ,13	-3,5	4,10	5,00	+ ,90	+22	
16	4,63	5,25	+ ,62	+15,5	5,80	5,60	- ,20	-10,5	
17	4,88	5,63	+ ,75	+18	6,00	6,20	+ ,20	+10,5	
18	4,50	4,88	+ ,38	+10	6,10	5,70	- ,40	-17,5	
19	4,75	5,75	+1,00	+20	6,30	5,90	- ,40	-17,5	
PARENTING									
20	4,00	6,50	+2,50	+24	5,90	5,60	- ,30	-14	
21	5,38	5,50	+ ,12	+1,5	6,10	6,20	+ ,10	+4,5	
22	5,13	5,75	+ ,62	+15,5	6,20	6,10	- ,10	-4,5	
PERSONAL GROWTH									
23	5,50	5,13	- ,37	-8	5,80	6,10	+ ,30	+14	
24	6,25	6,00	- ,25	-6	6,60	6,50	- ,10	-4,5	
25	5,88	6,50	+ ,62	+15,5	6,50	6,40	- ,10	-4,5	
Experimental T ₊ =			212	Control T ₊ =			147,5		
Experimental T ₋ =			88	Control T ₋ =			105,5		

TEST FOR SIGNIFICANCE OF PRE AND POST TEST CHANGES

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

For the experimental group, $T = 88$, ($88 < 213$) and according to the table for Wilcoxon's T Test, T should be equal or less than 92 for $N = 24$ and $\alpha = 0,05$ in order to be significant. This is the case, and it can therefore be said that there is a significant change in pretest and posttest mean item scores in the experimental group in Divorce Adjustment Indicators.

CONTROL GROUP

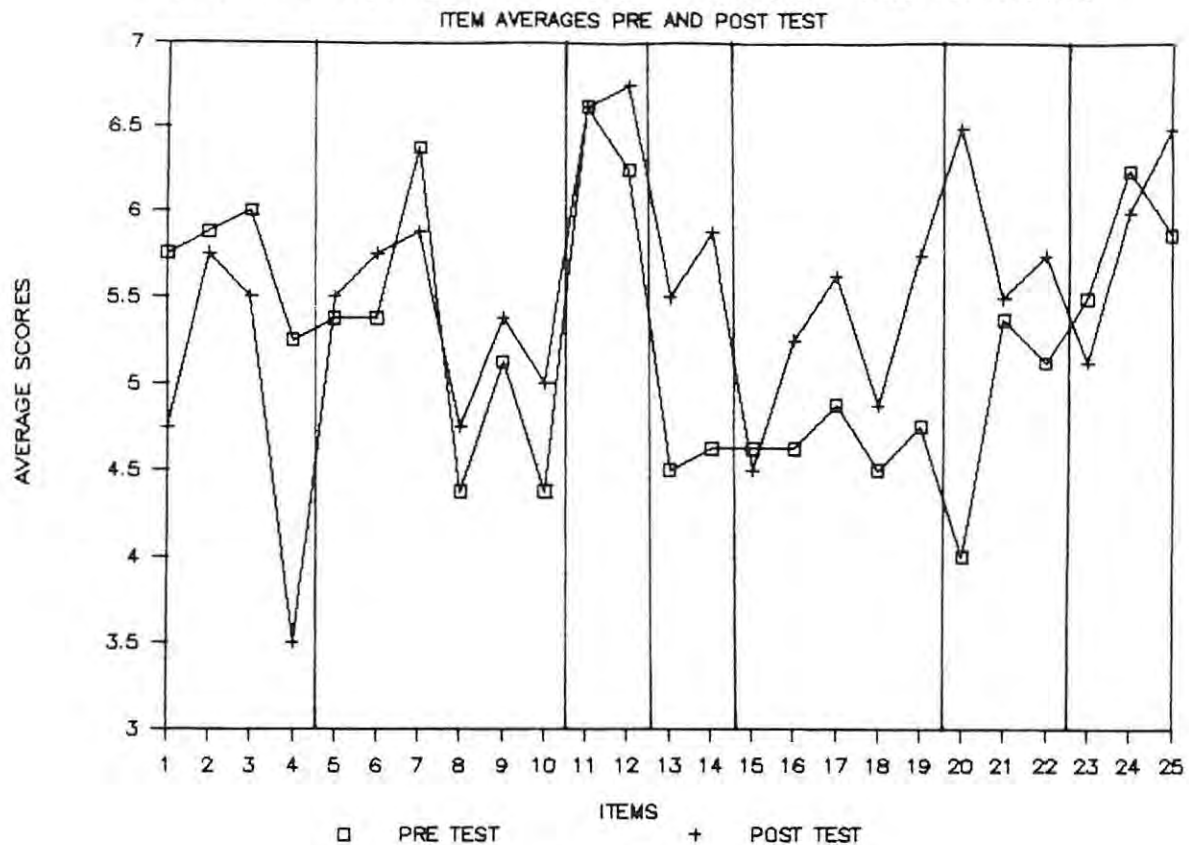
For the control group, $T = 105,5$, ($105,5 < 127,5$) and according to the table for Wilcoxon's T Test, T should be equal or less than 75 for $N = 22$ and $\alpha = 0,05$ in order to be significant. This is not the case, and it can therefore not be said that the change in pretest and posttest mean item scores for the Control group in Divorce Adjustment Indicators is significant.

In conclusion then, this implies that the Intervention programme has had a significant effect on indicators of divorce adjustment, and can thus be viewed as having achieved its objectives in terms of divorce adjustment.

CHANGES IN EXPERIMENTAL GROUP DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT INDICATORS

Graph 10 illustrates graphically the changes in pretest and post-test individual item scores for the experimental group.

GRAPH 10: EXP GROUP ADJUST INDICATORS



It is interesting to note from the above graph that some divorce adjustment indicators showed greater change than others. The first area of change is that of **feelings**. It shows an overall negative change, whereby members indicated greater intensity of feelings in the posttest than in the pretest. An explanation for this may be that the group experience enabled members to be more in touch with their feelings, and thus more able to identify them. The group may however also allowed members to display more honesty in the disclosure of their feelings, thus acknowledging greater intensity of feelings than during the pretest.

The second area of **self esteem** shows a slight positive increase in five of the six items. This observation substantiates the earlier finding regarding self esteem.

The third area, that of **autonomy** shows one positive change, and one item where no change occurred. There was thus a positive overall change in this area too.

The fourth indicator, **loneliness** shows an interesting positive change on all the items. This finding is contradictory to the previous finding regarding loneliness on the UCLA Loneliness scale. A reason for this may be the fact that the questions in the Divorce Adjustment Indicators questionnaire were specifically related to the divorce situation, as opposed to the general questions in the UCLA loneliness scale.

The fifth indicator, **social skills**, shows the greatest improvement in scores (four of the five items improved considerably) of the questionnaire when viewed as a whole. This would be appropriate in view of the fact that the Intervention programme focussed largely on the development of social skills.

The sixth indicator, feelings around **parenting**, also shows considerable improvement. Part of the improvement here may be related to the overall improvement of members' self esteem, and their consequent improved rating of themselves in all spheres of their lives, including that of parenting.

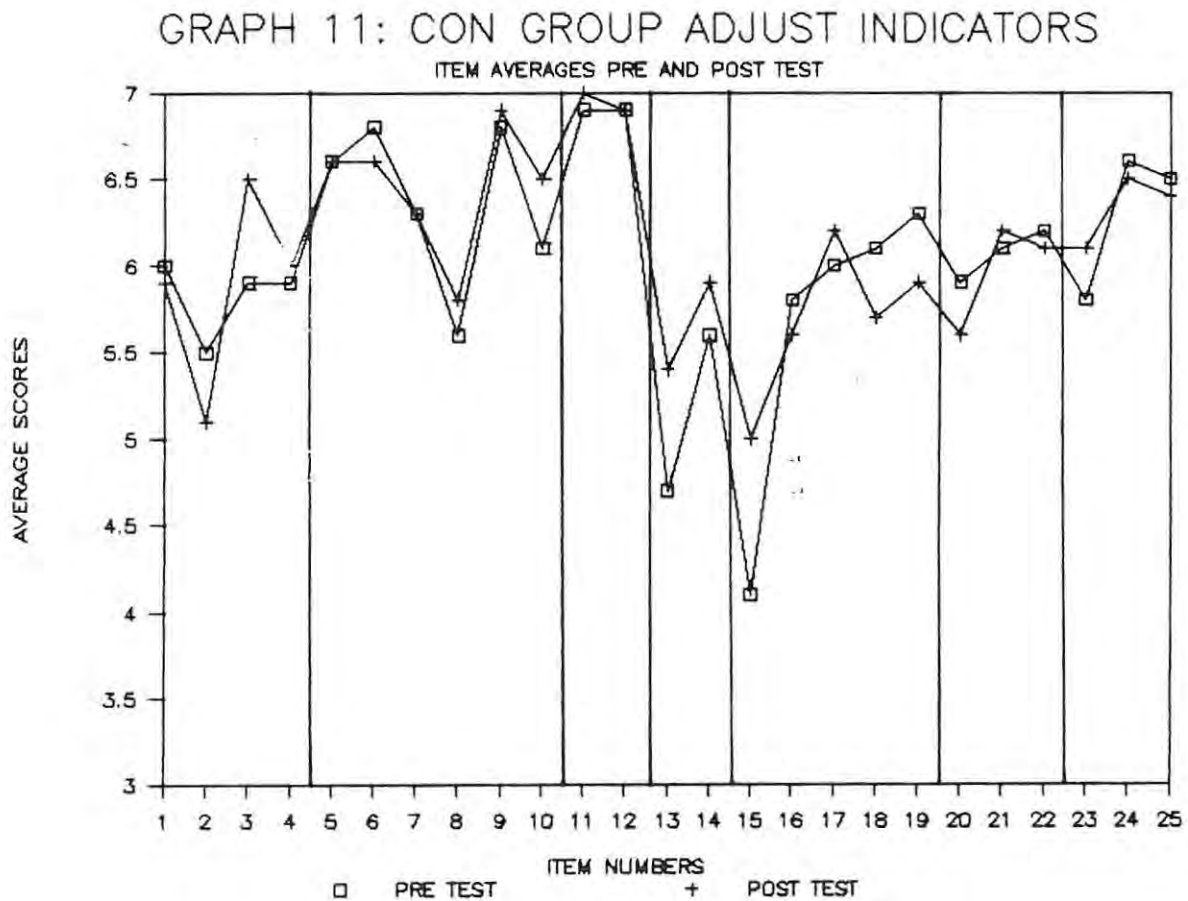
The last indicator, **personal growth** shows an improvement in scores of only one of the three items. The slightly negative change in favour of the items "Getting divorced was a mistake" and "I feel pain in accepting that my marriage is over" is appropriate in terms of the slightly negative change in scores on items related to feelings. Here too, there may have been a greater awareness and honesty about disclosure of true feelings than during the pre test. The final item "I have become

stronger/matured as a person through dealing with the break-up of my marriage" showed considerable positive change.

In view of the fact that the statistical test has indicated a significant positive change in item scores, and when considering the above changes in specific indicators, it is clear that the intervention programme succeeded in achieving the objectives which it set out to achieve, namely to improve the divorce adjustment of members.

CHANGES IN CONTROL GROUP DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT INDICATORS

Graph 11 illustrates graphically the changes in individual item scores in the pretest and posttest for Divorce Adjustment Indicators in the control group.



It is evident from the above graph that there are no systematic differences in pretest and posttest scores. Only isolated gains can be identified in the divorce adjustment indicators for the control group. The only pattern of change is seen in the indicator of loneliness, where both items showed a positive change, but when viewing the graph as a whole, this change may be ascribed to coincidence, as it is not supported by the earlier findings regarding loneliness, (although in the experimental group a possible reason for this same change was ascribed to the nature of the questions being related specifically to divorce) and also that there is no pattern elsewhere of change in correlates.

The findings regarding the control group substantiates the fact that the Intervention Programme had a positive effect and achieved the objectives it set out to achieve.

8.7 CONCLUSION

Suffice to state that the findings overwhelmingly support the initial hypotheses and research questions, in that the two of the three dependant variables (self esteem and Correlates of Divorce adjustment) showed significant change as a result of the intervention programme. The Intervention programme can in the light of this be considered a success.

CHAPTER IX : CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

The following section is a presentation of conclusions reached and recommendations made by the current researcher, based on the findings of the current research. Generalisations are limited to divorced women, as the group of participants were all women. This does not imply however that the findings do not suggest the possibility that they may apply to all divorced clients.

9.2 CONCLUSIONS

Motivation for Participation and Self Esteem

Divorced women that presented themselves willing to participate in a Personal Growth Programme showed a significantly greater problem with self esteem than divorced women who were interested, but not prepared/able to participate in the group. It is difficult however to come to any clear conclusions in this regard.

Self Esteem

The Index of Self Esteem (ISE) results indicated that the Personal Growth Programme had a significantly positive effect on self esteem of participants in the programme. The format used for the Personal Growth Programme can therefore be viewed as being effective in work to facilitate self esteem development in divorced women.

Loneliness

The UCLA Loneliness Scale (UCLA LS) results indicated that the Personal Growth Programme had no significant effect on the

loneliness of the participants in the programme. The format used for the Personal Growth Programme cannot therefore be considered effective for work with loneliness among divorced women.

The content of the Personal Growth Programme did attend to the issue of loneliness, but not to the development of support systems. The short term nature of the group also prevented the perception of groupmembers that the group would serve the purpose of countering loneliness. The present content and short term nature of the Personal Growth Programme is therefore inadequate in meeting the loneliness needs of divorced women.

There was a discrepancy in the results of the UCLA Loneliness scale and the loneliness section of the questionnaire on indicators of divorce adjustment. It is difficult to explain this, but it is quite possible that the questionnaire for indicators of divorce adjustment needs to be further refined.

Indicators of Divorce Adjustment

Some specific indicators of divorce adjustment showed positive change after the intervention programme. The indicators of self esteem, autonomy, social skills, and parenting among divorced clients are therefore positively affected by a structured social group work intervention programme.

The Personal Growth Programme

The format of the Personal Growth Programme, as a structured intervention programme, focusing on skills training, self esteem development, self awareness and cognitive restructuring, successfully impacted on indicators of divorce adjustment. The nature of

the Programme designed for the purposes of this study is therefore appropriate for work towards the facilitation of divorce adjustment among divorced women.

Pace and Content of Programme

The participants in the Personal Growth Programme evaluated that the pace of the sessions was too fast, and that more time could have been spent on various topics. This means that a slower pace should be maintained with the expectation that better results will be achieved.

Composition of Group

Regardless of the fact that the composition of the group was heterogenous in terms of age, education, socio-economic status, length of marriage and length of divorce, the objectives of the members and of the intervention programme were met.

The participants evaluated the number of members participating as positive. A small group of eight to ten members is appropriate for the purposes of working with divorced women. This is in line with findings in the literature.

Measuring Scales

The Index of Self Esteem, and the Questionnaire on Indicators for Divorce Adjustment were useful tools in establishing changes in those respective constructs. The measurement of loneliness was however a problem, as the UCLA Loneliness scale may have measured too general a construct not closely enough related to loneliness in the divorce situation.

General

The overall results showed that this particular Personal Growth

Programme can be used with positive results with groups with the purpose of promoting healthy adjustment to divorce.

9.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Need for Group Work Intervention

The use of the medium of the group in post divorce counselling is strongly recommended, and more specifically, programmes focussed on the personal growth of members in areas where problems are experienced.

Use of the Personal Growth Programme

The Personal Growth Programme as designed by the present researcher (using a structured, skills training, self esteem building, experiential and cognitive restructuring approach) is recommended for groups consisting of people in a post divorce adjustment phase.

Measuring Instruments

The use of the Index of Self Esteem of Walter Hudson, the UCLA Loneliness Scale and the Questionnaire Measuring Indicators of Divorce Adjustment is recommended to determine the needs of people in the post divorce phase. The use of the same instruments to measure the impact of the Personal Growth Programme in the group setting is also recommended.

Composition of Group

The success of the group does not seem dependant upon the homogeneity of the groupmembers in terms of age, length of marriage, length of divorce, socio-economic status, education or employment. It is recommended however that the criteria for participation that should be considered be those of being divorced,

having children, and being of the same sex (although mixed sex groups may also achieve positive results). It is also important that the members are personally motivated to attend the group, and have expressed the need for this kind of intervention.

Indicators of Divorce Adjustment

In order to achieve the objective of facilitating divorce adjustment, it is important to attend to the areas of self esteem, self awareness, social skills such as conflict resolution and assertiveness, feelings such as depression, parenting, and loneliness - as these have been identified as indicators of divorce adjustment.

Loneliness

There is a need for social workers to develop skills and techniques for working with the problem of loneliness. Loneliness among divorced people and the utilisation of social support systems is an area that requires further examination.

Further Research Questions

Questions which have remained unanswered, as well as questions which have arisen through the course of the current study are as follows:

- * Does the benefit of this particular Personal Growth Programme exceed the benefit of other intervention approaches such as individual counselling or family therapy? **An experimental design examining the changes in divorce adjustment indicators between clients participating in this Personal Growth Programme compared with those receiving others forms of**

treatment would successfully investigate this question.

- * Is the benefit of the Personal Growth Programme long term, or do the positive changes in divorce adjustment indicators become attenuated? **A Single System Design, with repeated measures for change, over an extended period, into the positive changes induced by the Personal Growth Programme, would investigate this problem.**

- * What changes need to be made to the format of Personal Growth Programme in order to achieve maximum results? **An in depth study examining the effects of modified forms of the present Personal Growth Programme would refine and improve the present programme.**

- * **Is Divorce Adjustment and attainment of Psychic Divorce measureable by a single measurement scale?**
An exploratory design to develop a measurement instrument for Divorce Adjustment **is potentially very valuable for work with divorced clients.**

Responsibility of Specialist Marriage Counselling Organisations

With the increase of divorce and the consequence that a great proportion of families are affected by change in their basic traditional nuclear structure, it is the responsibility of Specialist Marriage Counselling Organisations to develop programmes which attend to the positive restructuring and adjustment of the individuals concerned. This is essential if the suc-

cessful social functioning of people is to be ensured. The use of social group work has been shown to be one of the valuable strategies for intervention in this area of divorce, and should therefore be implemented as part of a total initiative for the facilitation of divorce adjustment.

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APPENDIX 1

INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

CONFIDENTIAL

1. DATE _____ 2. NAME _____

3. ADDRESS _____

4. TELEPHONE _____ (WORK) _____ (HOME)

5. AGE

-20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-49	50+
-----	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-----

6. EDUCATION

St 8	St 10	POST MATRIC	GRADUATE
------	-------	-------------	----------

7. OCCUPATION

HOMEMAKER	<input type="checkbox"/>
SECRETARIAL	<input type="checkbox"/>
PROFESSIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/>
COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/>
UNEMPLOYED	<input type="checkbox"/>
OTHER (SPECIFY)	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. NATURE

FULL TIME	<input type="checkbox"/>
PART TIME	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. FINANCIAL POSITION (TOTAL INCOME)

UNDER R500	<input type="checkbox"/>
R500 - R999	<input type="checkbox"/>
R1000 - R1499	<input type="checkbox"/>
R1500 - R1999	<input type="checkbox"/>
OVER R2000	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. MAINTENANCE (PER MONTH)

NIL	<input type="checkbox"/>
UNDER R250	<input type="checkbox"/>
R250 - R499	<input type="checkbox"/>
R500 - R749	<input type="checkbox"/>
R750 - R999	<input type="checkbox"/>
OVER R1000	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. FEELINGS ABOUT MAINTENANCE

SATISFIED WITH ARRANGEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>
DISSATISFIED WITH ARRANGEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. CHURCH AFFILIATION

CATHOLIC
PROTESTANT
PENTECOSTAL
JEWISH
OTHER (SPECIFY)

13. LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

PRACTISING
NON-PRACTISING

14. AGE WHEN MARRIED

-20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39
-----	-------	-------	-------	-------

15. LENGTH OF MARRIAGE

UNDER SIX MONTHS
HALF TO ONE YEAR
TWO TO THREE YEARS
FOUR TO FIVE YEARS
SIX TO SEVEN YEARS
EIGHT TO NINE YEARS
TEN TO ELEVEN YEARS
TWELVE TO FIFTEEN YEARS
SIXTEEN TO TWENTY YEARS
OVER TWENTY YEARS

16. LENGTH OF DIVORCE

UNDER SIX MONTHS
HALF TO ONE YEAR
TWO TO THREE YEARS
FOUR TO FIVE YEARS
SIX TO SEVEN YEARS
EIGHT TO NINE YEARS
TEN TO ELEVEN YEARS
TWELVE TO FIFTEEN YEARS
SIXTEEN TO TWENTY YEARS
OVER TWENTY YEARS

17. PERIOD OF SEPARATION BEFORE DIVORCE

NOT SEPARATED PRIOR TO DIVORCE
UNDER THREE MONTHS
THREE TO SIX MONTHS
SEVEN TO NINE MONTHS
TEN TO TWELVE MONTHS
THIRTEEN TO EIGHTEEN MONTHS
NINETEEN TO TWENTY FOUR MONTHS
OVER TWENTY FOUR MONTHS

18. NUMBER OF MARRIAGES: SELF

1	2	3

19. NUMBER OF MARRIAGES: EX-SPOUSE

1	2	3

20. INITIATOR OF DIVORCE

SELF	
SPOUSE	
BOTH	

21. MAIN REASON FOR DIVORCE

ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE IN SELF	
ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE IN SPOUSE	
COMMUNICATION	
CONFLICT	
DESERTION BY SELF	
DESERTION BY SPOUSE	
EMOTIONAL DIFFICULTIES SELF	
EMOTIONAL DIFFICULTIES SPOUSE	
FINANCES	
INCOMPATIBILITY	
INFIDELITY SELF	
INFIDELITY SPOUSE	
ILL HEALTH SELF	
ILL HEALTH SPOUSE	
JEALOUSY	
ROLE CONFLICT	
SEX	
VIOLENCE	
OTHER (SPECIFY) _____	

22. PARTICULARS OF CHILDREN

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>SEX</u>

23. CUSTODY

SELF	
EX-SPOUSE	
BOTH	

24. FEELINGS ABOUT CUSTODY AND ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

GOOD	
SATISFACTORY	
UNSATISFACTORY	
BAD	

25. FAMILY STRUCTURE

LIVING ALONE
EXTENDED (LIVING WITH FAMILY)
LIVING WITH FRIENDS

26. FREQUENCY OF CONTACT WITH EX-SPOUSE

MORE OFTEN THAN WEEKLY
WEEKLY
FORTNIGHTLY
MONTHLY
2 MONTHLY
6 MONTHLY
LESS FREQUENTLY THAN 6 MONTHLY
NEVER
IRREGULAR

27. QUALITY OF CONTACT

HOW IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOURSELF AND YOUR EX-SPOUSE WHEN YOU MEET ONE ANOTHER?

POSITIVE, CONFLICT RESOLVED POSITIVELY
ONLY POLITE/CIVIL, BUT CONFLICT RESOLVED
COOL, CONFLICT UNRESOLVED
TENSE, CONFLICT UNRESOLVED
NEGATIVE, EXTREME CONFLICT
NO CONTACT

28. COUNSELLING OR THERAPY RELATED TO DIVORCE

INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING DURING MARRIAGE
JOINT MARRIAGE COUNSELLING
JOINT DIVORCE COUNSELLING
INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING DURING DIVORCE
INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING AFTER DIVORCE
NONE

29. WHO WAS THE COUNSELLOR/THERAPIST

SOCIAL WORKER
PSYCHOLOGIST
PSYCHIATRIST
OTHER (SPECIFY)
NONE

30. ASSESSMENT OF COUNSELLING EXPERIENCE

POSITIVE
NEGATIVE
NEUTRAL
NOT APPLICABLE

31. ISSUES/AREAS YOU WOULD CHOOSE TO WORK ON IN GROUP

ASSERTIVENESS	
COMMUNICATION SKILLS	
CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS	
DEPRESSION	
FEELINGS AROUND DIVORCE	
ISOLATION	
LONELINESS	
RELATIONSHIPS	
SINGLE PARENTHOOD	
SELF ESTEEM	
SUPPORT SYSTEMS	
OTHER (SPECIFY) _____	

32. WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN USEFUL SUPPORT SYSTEMS

FAMILY	
FRIENDS	
CHURCH	
EMPLOYER	
COLLEAGUES	
COUNSELLOR/THERAPIST	
OTHER DIVORCED PEOPLE	
OTHER (SPECIFY) _____	

33. ARE YOU INVOLVED IN A SERIOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEONE OF THE OPPOSITE SEX

YES	
NO	

34. ARE YOU ON ANY MEDICATION

YES	
NO	
IF YES, SPECIFY _____	

35. ANY CURRENT SERIOUS ILLNESS (PHYSICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL)

YES	
NO	
IF YES, SPECIFY _____	

APPENDIX 2

INDEX OF SELF ESTEEM (ISE)

NAME _____ TODAY'S DATE _____

This questionnaire is designed to measure how you see yourself. It is not a test, so there are no correct or incorrect answers. Please answer each item as carefully as you can by placing a number next to each statement as follows:

- 1 Rarely or none of the time
- 2 A little of the time
- 3 Some of the time
- 4 A good part of the time
- 5 Most or all of the time

PLEASE BEGIN

- 1. I feel that people would not like me if they really knew me well..... _____
- 2. I feel that others get along much better than I do... _____
- 3. I feel that I am a beautiful person..... _____
- 4. When I am with other people I feel they are glad I am with them..... _____
- 5. I feel that people really like to talk with me..... _____
- 6. I feel that I am a very competent person..... _____
- 7. I think I make a good impression on others..... _____
- 8. I feel that I need more self confidence..... _____
- 9. When I am with strangers I am very nervous..... _____
- 10. I think I am a dull person..... _____
- 11. I feel ugly..... _____
- 12. I feel that others have more fun than I do..... _____
- 13. I feel that I bore people..... _____
- 14. I think my friends find me interesting..... _____
- 15. I think I have a good sense of humour..... _____
- 16. I feel very self conscious when I am with strangers.. _____
- 17. I feel that if I could be more like other people I would have it made..... _____
- 18. I feel that people have a good time when they are with me..... _____
- 19. I feel like a wallflower when I go out..... _____
- 20. I feel I get pushed around more than others..... _____
- 21. I feel I am a rather nice person..... _____
- 22. I feel that people really like me very much..... _____
- 23. I feel that I am a likeable person..... _____
- 24. I am afraid that I will appear foolish to others..... _____
- 25. My friends think very highly of me..... _____

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3;4;5;6;7;14;15;18;22;23;25 (Items for Inverse Scoring)

APPENDIX 3

UCLA LONELINESS SCALE (UCLA LS)

NAME _____

TODAY'S DATE _____

This is a questionnaire and not a test. There are thus no correct or incorrect answers. Please answer the questions as honestly as possible. Consider each question independently and answer it according to your immediate reaction. Please answer the questions by indicating each of the statements describing you, and circling the appropriate number as follows:

- 1 Never
- 2 Rarely
- 3 Sometimes
- 4 Often

PLEASE BEGIN

- 1. I feel in tune with the people around me.....1 2 3 4
- 2. I lack companionship.....1 2 3 4
- 3. There is no-one I can turn to.....1 2 3 4
- 4. I do not feel alone.....1 2 3 4
- 5. I feel part of a group of friends.....1 2 3 4
- 6. I have a lot in common with the people around me.....1 2 3 4
- 7. I am no longer close to anyone.....1 2 3 4
- 8. My interests and ideas are not shared by those
around me.....1 2 3 4
- 9. I am an outgoing person.....1 2 3 4
- 10. There are people I feel close to.....1 2 3 4
- 11. I feel left out.....1 2 3 4
- 12. My social relationships are superficial.....1 2 3 4
- 13. No-one really knows me well.....1 2 3 4
- 14. I feel isolated from others.....1 2 3 4
- 15. I can find companionship when I want it.....1 2 3 4
- 16. There are people who really understand me.....1 2 3 4
- 17. I am so unhappy being so withdrawn.....1 2 3 4
- 18. People are around me but not with me.....1 2 3 4
- 19. There are people I can talk to.....1 2 3 4
- 20. There are people I can turn to.....1 2 3 4

1;4;5;6;9;10;15;16;19;20 (Items for Inverse scoring)

APPENDIX 4

INDICATORS OF DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Please indicate how characteristic or descriptive each of the following statements is of you by circling the number which is appropriately close to the applicable statement on the scale. The position '4' is neutral.

FEELINGS

- | | | |
|---|---------------|---|
| 1. I have very painful feelings around my divorce | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | I no longer feel any pain around my divorce |
| 2. I feel predominantly anger rather than indifference towards my ex-spouse | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | I feel no anger, only indifference towards my ex-spouse |
| 3. I feel extremely guilty about my divorce | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | I feel no guilt about my divorce |
| 4. I feel ambivalent (i.e. both sure and unsure) that divorce was the right thing to do | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | I am sure divorce was the right step to take |

SELF ESTEEM

- | | | |
|---|---------------|--|
| 5. I feel a failure because I am divorced | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | I do not feel a failure because of being divorced |
| 6. I feel incompetent as a human being because my marriage failed | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | The failure of my marriage is not at all related to my competence as a human being |
| 7. My family and friends judge me critically for being divorced | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | My family and friends do not judge me critically for being divorced |
| 8. I feel rejected by society for being divorced | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | Society does not reject me at all for being divorced |
| 9. I have let myself down by being divorced | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | I have not let myself down by being divorced |
| 10. I have let my family down by being divorced | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | I have not let my family down by being divorced |

AUTONOMY

- | | | |
|--|---------------|---|
| 11. I struggle to see myself as a separate individual and not still tied to my ex-spouse | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | I see myself as a separate individual with a new identity |
|--|---------------|---|

12. I find it difficult to make decisions without consulting my ex-spouse 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I am able to make decisions on my own, without consulting my ex-spouse

LONELINESS

13. I cannot find fulfilment of my needs on my own without another person in my life 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I can feel completely fulfilled as a person on my own, without another person in my life

14. I need someone to lean on, or I feel lonely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I can cope well without someone to lean on

SOCIAL SKILLS

15. I am unable to resolve conflicts positively with my ex-spouse 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I am able to resolve conflict positively with my ex-spouse

16. I find it difficult to be assertive about my rights and needs 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I am assertive about my rights and needs

17. I feel inadequate in communication skills 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I have a good level of skill in communication

18. I express anger excessively 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I express anger in a healthy way

19. I am unable to express anger 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I express anger in a healthy way

PARENTING

20. I have let my children down by being divorced 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I have not let my children down by being divorced

21. I feel inadequate as a parent 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I feel confident about my parenting ability

22. I do not know how to deal with the effect of the divorce on my children 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I feel confident about dealing with the effect of the divorce on my children

PERSONAL GROWTH

23. Getting divorced was a mistake 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Getting divorced has been a positive step in my life

24. I feel pain in accepting that my marriage is over 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I have accepted fully that my marriage is over and feel free to begin a new life

APPENDIX 5

OUTLINE OF PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME WITH PROGRAMME RESOURCES

SESSION ONE : INTRODUCTION

- 20m 1. HAND OUT FILES, PAPER, ACCOUNTS, QUESTIONNAIRES
Complete Questionnaires **Files and Questionnaires Accounts**
2. OBJECTIVES FOR THE SESSION
To enable members to get to know one another and thus build group cohesion and trust

To develop norms for the group in order to create an atmosphere of trust and participation

To enable members to set their own objectives and to set group objectives

To enable members to place themselves in the process of divorce adjustment, and to develop understanding of divorce as a process of transition

To provide members with reading for homework, in order to set the cognitive framework within which the group will operate
- 15m 3. GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER
Name; adjective describing you; something about yourself **Stickers for names**
- 15m 4. OBJECTIVES
Each person to think of "What I hope to gain from this experience" **Write up on flip chart Leader's objectives**
- 10m 5. NORMS
Rules for the group - what we need to decide upon to make the group comfortable to work in
- 10m 6. MINI-LECTURE ON DIVORCE
See Attached (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 1) **Transition Chart Hand-Out and on Flip Chart**
- 15m 7. DISCUSSION
- Where are you in this transition from the former balance to the new?
- How do you feel about being there?
- How have others coped with feelings during that stage?

- 2m 8. HAND-OUTS
Transition Chart (Callahan, 1979) (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 2)
Selected, Annotated Bibliography (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 3)
Correcting Irrational Beliefs (Ellis, 1967)
(PROGRAMME RESOURCE 4)
Rights, Needs, Survival Musts (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 5)
- 8m 9. ENDING
How is everyone feeling now having been in the
group and having got to know each other?

SESSION TWO : SELF ESTEEM AND DIVORCE

- 10m 1. TUNING IN Name Stickers
How has the week been?
How do people feel about being here?
Recap from last week - ask group members
Hand-Outs from last week - how were they?
2. OBJECTIVES FOR THE SESSION
To re-orientate members to the group and discuss in a non directive way any issues or unfinished business that might exist from the previous session

To encourage self disclosure in the group and in this way increase trust levels among participants

To encourage withdrawn members to participate by providing an opportunity for discussion in pairs - to serve as a less threatening experience

To develop understanding of the way in which divorce and self esteem are related

To enable group members to understand how their particular situation affected their own self esteem

To enable members to become aware of their own self concept and self esteem, to assess past growth and to plan for future growth
- 20m 3. ROUND: HOW DIVORCE AFFECTED THE WAY I FEEL ABOUT MYSELF
Each group member to speak for two minutes about how their experience affected the way they feel about themselves. After each sharing, members to be encouraged to respond.
- 10m 4. INPUT: MINI-LECTURE ON SELF ESTEEM AND DIVORCE : THE REDISCOVERY OF NEW SELF
See attached (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 6)
- 15m 5. EXERCISE; KNOWING MYSELF Sample
Newsprint
Coki's
Crayons
Fold a newsprint in four sections. In each section show the following:
- Who I am (draw)
- Strengths and weaknesses
- How I have changed (i.e. what I have succeeded in changing)
- What I would like to change
- 10m Share this with a partner
- 10m Plenary: How was it to do this exercise?
What was easy/difficult?

What have we learnt about ourselves?

- 5m 6. HAND-OUTS AND HOMEWORK
Cognitive Distortions (Burns, 1980) (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 7)
- Symptoms of inferiority (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 8 :
HAMACHEK, D: 1978. **Encounters with the Self**. Holt,
Rinehart and Winston, New York. [256 - 258])
- Characteristics of Self Accepting Individuals (Johnson,
1981) (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 9)
- Keep a Record of "Put-Downs"

SESSION THREE : SELF ESTEEM

- 15m 1. TUNING IN
How has week been?
Feelings about being here
Recap from last week
Hand-Outs and Homework
Record of "Put-Downs" Discussion
- On Newsprint:
"If I am not for
Myself, Who will
be for Me? But
if I am Only for
Myself, then
What am I?"
- TALMUD
- 5m 2. OBJECTIVES
To provide continuity for members by summarising from the previous week, and discuss any unresolved issues from that session
- To build relationships and improve levels of interaction among group members by working in pairs during a self-disclosure activity
- To increase the levels of support and acceptance in the group by encouraging positive feedback and affirmation between group members (positive strokes exercise)
- To develop members' understanding of the meaning of self concept and self esteem
- To develop members' understanding of the dynamics involved in the formation of self esteem
- To enable members to enhance their own self esteem by identifying and focusing upon strengths within them= selves
- 5m 3. POSITIVE STROKES EXERCISE (PART ONE)
Hand-Out envelopes to group members with the name of another group member on a slip of paper inside. Each member is then asked to observe their person throughout the session for any positive things or strengths about that person - to be shared with them and written for them on the slip of paper at the end of the session.
- Envelopes
with names
of members
- 5m 4. BRAINSTORM
What is self esteem?
How does our self esteem develop?
- Newsprint
Coki to
Record
Masking
tape
- 10m 5. MINI-LECTURE ON SELF ACCEPTANCE/SELF ESTEEM
See attached (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 10)
- 25m 6. STRENGTH BUILDING EXERCISE
(from 'Reaching Out' by David Johnson)

Think of all your successes, achievements, things you have done and felt good about

Share these with your partner, and together with your partner, find what strengths you needed to achieve these successes

Discuss how you can use these strengths you have just identified, to cope with something you are struggling with at the moment

Plenary: What happened; how was the exercise; what did people discover about themselves; how are people going to use their strengths?

15m 7. POSITIVE STROKES (PART TWO)

In the group, people affirm one another according to their observations during the session, in a round

- How did it feel to be affirmed?
- How did it feel to affirm someone?
- What did it do for the group and how people feel about each other?
- What does this say about affirmation and relationships?

5m 8. HAND-OUTS
"88" (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 11)

5m 9. ENDING
How is everyone feeling now?
How are we doing as a group?

SESSION FOUR : LONELINESS

- 10m 1. TUNING IN
How has week been?
How are people feeling now?
Summary of previous session?
hand outs/ Reading - how did people find them?
- 5m 2. OBJECTIVES FOR SESSION
To provide continuity from the previous week, and deal with any unresolved issues from then
- To enable members to develop trust in one another by opportunities for self disclosure
- To encourage members support and acceptance of one another through sharing and open interaction around a painful area of their lives
- To help members explore the meaning of loneliness for them
- To develop understanding of the situations and feelings surrounding loneliness
- To develop self awareness among members about their own feelings re loneliness
- To examine and develop constructive ways of dealing with loneliness
- To offer members and opportunity to assess their progress as a group and as individuals
- 10m 3. FANTASY RE LONELINESS
Guide the members in the following 'fantasy trip':
"Make yourself comfortable. Become aware of your breathing. Close your eyes, and recall a time you were lonely. Try to get into the scene by remembering the setting or space you were in), the sensations (what you saw, heard, felt). Try not to resist the feelings. Recall if you were alone or with others. Remember all the various impressions." (Allow approximately 5 minutes)
- 10m 4. WRITTEN EXERCISE
- Questions on
Flip chart**
- * What does loneliness mean to me?
 - * When am I lonely - situations and times?
 - * How do I feel when I am lonely?
 - * What do I do when I am lonely?
 - * How successful are my attempts ?

- 20m 5. DISCUSSION IN SMALL GROUPS Blank
Newsprint
for each group
Coki's
- Each group to appoint a recorder
- * Definitions of loneliness
 - * Situations and times that bring about loneliness
 - * Feelings and fears when lonely
 - * Constructive ways of coping with loneliness
- 10m Recorder reports back to plenary session Blank Newsprint
for summary
and scribe writes up re loneliness
- 10m 6. MINI-LECTURE
See attached (Callahan, 1979) (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 12)
- 5m 7. HAND OUTS AND HOMEWORK
Strategies for reducing loneliness (Freeman, 1983)
(PROGRAMME RESOURCE 13)
Ways of avoiding intimacy (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 14 :
CALLAHAN, B: 1979. **Workshop Models for Family Life
Education: Separation and Divorce.** Family Service
Association of America, New York. [83 - 87])
- 15m 8. ENDING
Written: How are we doing as a group?
What has been and is good?
What has been and is bad?
What I am gaining by being in this group?
What I am contributing to this group?

SESSION FIVE : DEPRESSION

- 15m 1. TUNING IN
How has week been - any interesting news?
Unfinished business from last session
Recap from last session - ask members to recap for those
who had not been there
Hand-Outs and homework: Hand-Outs on loneliness
'You feel the way you think'
- 5m 2. OBJECTIVES FOR SESSION
To provide continuity from the previous session, and
deal with any unresolved issues from then

To encourage deeper understanding between members by
allowing more time in the plenary session for sharing and
interaction

To maintain interest levels by limiting the length and
time spent on didactic input

To encourage members to take responsibility for attain
ing their own goals as set during the first session, and
to monitor their progress in attaining these goals

To develop members' understanding into how thoughts and
assumptions, rather than actual events, lead to feelings

To enable members to analyse some of their own incorrect
or distorted thinking and assumptions around situations
they feel depressed about

To enable members to develop skill in identifying their
own faulty assumptions and thinking, and correcting these
thought patterns
- 15m 3. ATTAINMENT OF INDIVIDUAL OBJECTIVES
Round of members stating their initial objectives i.e.
why they had come and what they had hoped to gain, and
whether they were achieving these
My Objectives and why I joined this group **Questions on**
Are my objectives being met? **Newsprint**
What can I do to have these met?
- 15m 4. WHAT CAUSES OUR DEPRESSION
Round where members share how they see the causes of
their feelings of depression
- 10m 5. INPUT FROM LEADER: EVENTS AND THE WAY WE FEEL
Mini-lecture (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 15)

Based on Hand-out, distributed 3 days before meeting
(PROGRAMME RESOURCE 16 : BURNS, DAVID: 1980. **Feeling Good, The New Mood Therapy**. A Signet Book, New American Library. [28 - 47])

- 15m 6. EXERCISE IN ASSUMPTIONS **Hand-Out: Exercise in assumptions**
Group divide into pairs and identify the irrational assumptions the people in the illustrations are making. Also, to identify how these assumptions cause the people in the illustrations to feel the way they do.
- 20m 7. EXERCISE: OUR OWN ASSUMPTIONS
Group members, on their own, to answer the following questions:

Something I feel depressed about is.....
When I feel depressed I feel.....
The assumptions or thoughts I have that cause me to feel this way are.....
Constructive thoughts I can adopt to change my feelings are.....
- 20m Group members then to share their ideas in the plenary session
- 5m 8. HAND-OUTS AND HOMEWORK
"Countering Depression"
(PROGRAMME RESOURCE 17 : WILLIAMS and LONG: 1983. **Toward a Self Managed Lifestyle**. Houghton Mifflin Company, USA. [Chapter 8])
Choose one of the strategies in the Hand-Out and apply it during the following week

Hand-Out on Assertiveness (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 18 : PREKEL, T: 1982. **Clear Communication at Work and Home**. Unpublished Article. UNISA, Pretoria.
- 5m 9. ENDING
How are we doing as a group - group compliments

SESSION SIX : ASSERTIVENESS

- 15m 1. TUNING IN
Any incidents during the week or unfinished business from last week
Recap from last week
Homework: Strategies for dealing with depression: who did what
Introduction on using here and now for practise on assertiveness
Link between last week topic and assertiveness
- 5m 2. OBJECTIVES FOR SESSION
To provide continuity from the previous week and deal with any unresolved issues from then

To include withdrawn members by encouraging them nonverbally

To provide a positive experience for members by giving them feedback, and especially the members with low self esteem, by concentrating on the positives

To provide members with an opportunity to develop their own assertiveness skills

To develop members' understanding of the difference between assertiveness, aggressiveness and submission/non-assertion

To provide members with an opportunity for assessing their own assertiveness problem areas

To provide members with the opportunity for feedback on their own assertiveness skills
- 5m 3. BRAINSTORM ON ASSERTIVENESS
What is involved in assertive behaviour i.e. what are the components of assertive behaviour?

Write answers on Newsprint
Not aggressive; Stating needs; Taking into account others' needs; Not non-assertive or submissive; Eye contact; Facial expression; Gestures/Posture; Voice tone; Timing
- 10m 4. MINI LECTURE
The three various ways of interaction are discussed i.e. aggression; Non-assertion and Assertiveness. The components of assertive behaviour are also discussed i.e. eye-contact; facial expression; gestures/posture; Voice tone; Timing (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 19)
- 5m 5. DISCUSSION OF PROGRAMME
Members to discuss whether they would prefer to do an exer

cise on self assessment of assertive behaviour, or whether they would like to work in pairs (During this discussion, they are to practise their own assertiveness re needs and wants)

15m 6. WORKING IN PAIRS OR QUESTIONNAIRES (DEPENDING ON CHOICE IN 5 ABOVE)

Pairs with people they have not worked with before. Choose A and B. First round: A asks B a favour they would like, and B to refuse the favour assertively. Then roles change and B asks A etc. Second round: B gives A a compliment, and A accepts the compliment. Then roles change and repeat.

Feedback in plenary: What happened, how did it feel, why, what can be learnt.

OR

Hand-Out questionnaires on assertive behaviour (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 20) Everyone completes individually, then discuss in plenary: What have we learnt about ourselves

20m 7. RESPONDING AGGRESSIVELY, SUBMISSIVELY AND ASSERTIVELY
Hand-Out vignettes for assertiveness (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 21) Group members in round, to respond to each case illustration in three possible ways, and to get feedback from the group on components of assertive behaviour

8. HAND-OUTS

Seven Assertive Problem Types (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 22 : BAER, J : 1976. **How to be an Assertive (not Aggressive) Woman**. Signet Books, USA. [58 - 60])

Comparison of alternative behaviour styles (Callahan, 1979) (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 23)

9. ENDING

Comments about the session

How do members feel they are doing as a group

Remind members there are only four more sessions left

Topic for next week: Conflict resolution

Homework: Practise Assertiveness and be aware of 3 styles

Focus on and examine conflict situations

SESSION SEVEN : CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- 15m 1. TUNING IN
How has week been?
How are people feeling?
Any unfinished business from last session
Discussion re usefulness of Hand-Outs
Linking to last session i.e. assertiveness and conflict resolution
- 5m 2. OBJECTIVES
To provide continuity from the previous week and deal with any unresolved issues from then
- To negotiate with members about the content of the next session, in order to involve them in decision making and negotiation, as well as to operationalise the principle of self determination
- To involve the members who have been absent or withdrawn during sessions by conscious verbal and non-verbal expressions of warmth, genuineness and acceptance
- To begin preparation for termination by reminding members that there are three sessions left
- To give members an opportunity to engage in conflict in order to recognise their personal styles of conflict resolution, and for them to receive feedback from and give feedback to each other, by means of the 'fall-out shelter exercise'
- To develop members' awareness of positive conflict resolution skills by means of roleplay
- To enable members to recognise negative and positive styles of conflict resolution
- 40m 3. FALL-OUT SHELTER EXERCISE
Hand-Out and read aloud the instructions, after the group has divided into two groups of five (or four) (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 24). Groups have 15 minutes to complete the task.
- Hereafter, each person to complete a questionnaire about own responses and feelings (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 25).
- Plenary
What happened in the two groups?
How did people react and what were the styles used?
What did you learn about yourself during the exercise?
What have we learnt about conflict styles in general?
(Discuss: Your style of conflict resolution,

- 20m 4. ROLEPLAY **Hand-Out rules for conflict**
Two volunteers to do the roleplay. One mother, one daughter. Choose topic. Give players rules for constructive and destructive conflict resolution. They roleplay a negative situation for 5 minutes. Rest of group to observe what is happening both verbally and non-verbally. Discussion thereafter on what happened and what was observed. Players then roleplay a positive situation according to the rules they were given (also 5 minutes). Rest of group again observe. Discussion then on what happened.
- What have we learnt re conflict resolution?
Hand-Out rules for conflict resolution to all members
(PROGRAMME RESOURCE 27)
- Write up on newsprint under columns for positive and negative**
- 5m 5. HAND-OUTS
Rules for constructive and destructive conflict resolution

Farewell to Anger (Dyer, 1976) (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 28)
- 10m 6. ENDING
How do people feel about this session?
How are they feeling about the group (positive and negative)?
Discussion on content for session 9
Remind members there are only three session left

SESSION EIGHT : SINGLE PARENTHOOD

- 10m 1. TUNING IN
How has week been?
Any unfinished business?
Recap from last week
Experiences during this week that may have related to previous topic i.e. conflict
Hand-Outs from last week and usefulness of books?
Topic for next session
- 5m 2. OBJECTIVES
To provide continuity from the previous session, and deal with any unresolved issues from then

To affirm members wherever possible in order to develop self esteem

To consciously encourage silent members' participation in discussion

To identify commonalities between members regarding difficulties with their children that relate to the divorce situation - thus to relieve feelings of aloneness

To clarify misconceptions about the effect of divorce on children

To develop members' understanding of three parenting styles namely authoritarian, authoritative and permissive

To develop members' understanding of the concept of active listening

To develop members' skills in the use of active listening
- 10m 3. WARM UP EXERCISE RE CHILDREN
Round of one minute each wherein group members describe their children, and also tell the rest of the group two things they feel good about, and two things they do not like in their children
- 10m 4. CONCERNS FOR CHILDREN RELATED TO DIVORCE
Open discussion on members' concerns and fears for their children as a result of the divorce situation
- 5m 5. INPUT : DIVORCE AND CHILDREN
See attached (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 29)
- 10m 6. THREE APPROACHES TO PARENTING
Group Leader to read vignettes and ask question: "What are the possible ways of reacting to these situations?"
Responses written in one of three columns for authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting
"Three year old Carol sees a shiny vase on the coffee table. As she begins to reach for it,
- Write up on Newsprint in three columns**

her mother comes into the room."

and

"Four year old John has been playing in the mud and sees his mother arriving home from work. He runs up to her to greet her with a hug."

and

"Fifteen year old Cathy arrives home late after a specified time agreement. She says that she was having such a good time that she forgot the time and only realised ten minutes later that she was late."

5m 7. INPUT ON PARENTING STYLES

See attached (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 30)

15m 8. ROLEPLAY : NEGATIVE LISTENING AND RESPONDING

Members to form pairs. Choose A and B. A to talk for five minutes about a problem they have right now. B to respond using road-blocks to communication (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 31). A and B then to reverse roles and repeat exercise.

Plenary: What happened?

How did the responses feel?

What did the responses do to the problem?

What did the responses do to the relationship?

What did the responses do to feelings?

5m 9. INPUT ON ACTIVE LISTENING

Hand-Out re Active Listening (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 32 : GORDON, T: 1975. **Parent Effectiveness Training**. New American Library, USA. [49 - 61]) and discuss some key aspects

20m 10. ROLEPLAY USING ACTIVE LISTENING

A and B to do same roleplay with the same problem, with the listener using active listening responses only i.e. identifying feelings and reflecting back to speaker.

Plenary: Same as questions above in section 8.

11. HAND-OUTS

Childrearing Practices (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 33 : HAMACHEK, DON : 1978. **Encounters with the Self**. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, USA. [144 - 189])

5m 12. ENDING

Topic for next session

Remind members that there are two sessions left

SESSION NINE : SELF AWARENESS

- 10m 1. TUNING IN
How has week been?
Unfinished business
Hand-Outs from the previous week
Any comments on experiences re active listening
- 5m 2. OBJECTIVES
To provide continuity from the previous week and deal with any unresolved issues from then

To change the focus from interpersonal relationship skills to the individual, in keeping with the natural phase in the group work process of ending i.e. lowered participation and interest levels

To develop members' understanding for the need for self awareness

To provide members with an exercise of self discovery and exploration (Gestalt exercise : 'The Rose-Bush')

To increase members' own self awareness
- 10m 3. ACTIVE LISTENING : THEORY
Members to summarise important points from the hand-out in order to refresh and develop members' understanding of active listening.
- 30m 4. ACTIVE LISTENING ROLE-PLAYS
Members form pairs. A talks about a current problem. B uses active listening. Feed-Back for two minutes on how it was. Change roles and repeat exercise.

Plenary: What happened?
How did it feel to be listened and responded to in this way?
What did these responses do to feelings, the problem, and feelings toward the listener?
- 30m 5. ROSE-BUSH EXERCISE
(PROGRAMME RESOURCE 34)
Members to relax and close eyes. Read the fantasy trip. Exercise processed after completion.
How was the exercise?
Each group member to share their experience
What did people feel?
What did it say to you about yourself?
What did people learn about themselves?
- 10m 6. SELF AWARENESS
Discussion on need for and value to self awareness

Why is it important for us to know ourselves - our feelings, thoughts, values, where we come from, where we're going.

- 5m 7. ENDING
How did members find the session?
Planning for termination the following week

SESSION TEN : TERMINATION

- 15m 1. TUNING IN
How has week been?
Unfinished business from the previous week
How are members feeling about ending?
- 5m 2. OBJECTIVES
To provide continuity from the previous week and deal with any unresolved issues from then

To enable members to disengage from the group

To enable members to get in touch with their feelings re termination, and so to learn about endings in general

To provide members with the opportunity to positively affirm one another in writing, as a significant 'gift' of ending

To enable members to consolidate for themselves content and gains they have had

To enable members to plan and contract with themselves about areas they need and want to work on during the following four weeks

To provide members with an opportunity to evaluate the experience

To complete the research process by allowing the members to complete the post test scales
- 10m 3. TERMINATIONS IN GENERAL
Discussion: "Members have shared about their feelings related to this ending. What does this say about terminations in general i.e. about the ending of relationships, losses etc."
- 10m 4. RECAP AND HIGHLIGHTS
Round: "What stands out most from these ten weeks of our Personal Growth Journey" (Summarise programme briefly)
- 20m 5. AFFIRMATIONS
Blank sheet of paper with a name of a group member at the top. Page to be passed around and each member given an opportunity to write a specific, affirmative comment about the named member. Members may sign their comment or remain anonymous. Section of page with comment then folded, and passed on to next member.
- 10m 6. PERSONAL CONTRACT WITH SELF
See attached (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 35)

Members to complete, place in envelope and seal. Group leader to post to members after four weeks.

20m 7. EVALUATIONS

Members to complete evaluation forms. See attached (PROGRAMME RESOURCE 36)

8. GOOD-BYES

Invite members to say whatever they need to, to one another.

9. POST TEST QUESTIONNAIRES

To be completed before members leave.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 1 : MINI LECTURE ON DIVORCE AS A PROCESS AND PERSONAL GROWTH OPPORTUNITY *

I'd like to discuss with you divorce as a crisis, and how you can turn it into a personal growth experience. We will be looking at divorce as a process of transition, with various stages.

There exists in society a myth called the maturity myth. It is that if you make the correct choices and decisions as a young adult, you will be guaranteed of personal fulfilment for the rest of your life. During the first ten years of adulthood, it seems as if this myth is true - one has chosen a career, married, started a family and 'settled down'. The myth ignores the fact that emotional security has a lot to do with one's inner self.

In the first stage of balance, or former marital relationship, there were various positive and negatives to the marital relationship. Positives included: companionship, sexual intimacy, mutual obligation, kinship relationships, security, shared parenting, trust shared goals. Negatives may have included: fighting, disdain for one's partner, damaged self esteem, disappointment, guilt, pain, frustration, anger.

The second stage occurs when there is physical separation or divorce. The myth then does not hold anymore.

The third stage is that of crisis, where there is much ambivalence. One has to re-evaluate oneself (contrary to the maturity myth). One feels attracted to the former spouse, but at the same time repelled. There are emotional ups and downs because of the separation distress, with a lot of anxiety. One feels a failure, because of the assumption that at this stage of one's life things should be secure and stable. The truth is however that one has not failed, but has entered a new period of growth.

The fourth stage is when there are attempts to restore balance. It is very important during this stage whether one copes constructively or destructively. Coping constructively implies the following: accepting the ambivalent feelings, working through the feelings of guilt and anger, allowing oneself to feel the pain of mourning, and to allow the full impact of the feelings to be felt. It is during this time that one can re-evaluate each part of the marriage and of oneself. Destructive coping during this time occurs if defence mechanisms occur such as denial of reality, acting out behaviour, or regression.

During the last stage there is a surge of growth, where new balance is restored. One finds a whole new identity. This is different from the maturity myth because it implies choices and decisions according to one's needs. During this time one enjoys the new found freedom, being independent, self confident, and experiencing a new sense of autonomy and wholeness. Personal growth is a process of getting to know yourself, becoming aware of what you need and the choices open to you.

* From CALLAHAN, B : 1979. **Workshop Models for Family Life Education: Separation and Divorce**. Family Service Association of America, USA.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 2 : TRANSITION CHART

<u>PAST - WHAT WAS FORMER BALANCE</u>	<u>CHANGE</u>	<u>CRISIS PERIOD</u>	<u>ATTEMPTS TO REGAIN BALANCE</u>	<u>NEW LIFE - BALANCE RESTORED</u>
<u>MARTIAL RELATIONSHIP</u>	<u>PHYSICAL SEPARATION OR DIVORCE</u>	<u>AMBIVALENT PERIOD</u>	<u>CONSTRUCTIVE COPING DEALING WITH REALITY</u>	<u>EMOTIONAL DIVORCE</u>
<u>POSITIVE FACTORS</u> Companionship Sexual Intimacy Mutual obligation Kinship Spouse security Shared parenting Trust Mutual respect Shared goals	Decision by one or both spouses together to end the legally binding relationship leading to loss of many positive factors in the marriage	Reactions to loss of marriage are very paradoxical Attracted to former spouse and also repelled Suffer emotional 'ups' and 'downs' from separation distress High anxiety	Accept ambivalent feelings Free self from past by working through feelings of guilt and anger Mourn loss of relationship by allowing oneself to feel the impact of feelings	Establishing new single identity and own goals. Enjoying new freedom, open to new relationships and experiences as an independent person. Self confidence, wholeness, increased self worth and autonomy <u>OR</u> <u>RECONCILIATION</u> Re-Establishing marital bonds of mutual obligation. Rebuilding respect and trust in spouse and commitment to working through problems that led to separation <u>OR</u> <u>LACK OF RESOLUTION OF CRISIS</u> Imbalance remains Hanging onto fantasy world, growth in any direction is blocked
<u>NEGATIVE FACTORS</u> Fighting Disdain for spouse Damaged self esteem Disappointment Guilt Pain Frustration Anger		Guilt and anger surface Sense of failure Attempts to determine on whom or what to blame marital breakdown	<u>DESTRUCTIVE COPING: DENIAL OF REALITY</u> Use of defences: Denial Regression Depression Acting Out Psychosomatic illness Use of 'games'	

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 3 : SELECTED, ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY
(Books marked * available at group meetings)

Assertiveness

* BAER, J. 1976. **How to be an Assertive (and not Aggressive) Woman.** Signet Books, USA.

BAER, J. 1978. **Don't say Yes when You want to say No.** Signet Books, USA.

SMITH, M. 1975. **When I say No I feel Guilty.** Bantam Books, New York

Communication

* JAMES, M & JONGEWARD, D. 1977. **Born to Win.** Addison Wesley Publishing Company, USA.

* JOHNSON, D W. 1981. **Reaching Out.** Prentice Hall, USA.

* MILLER, S et al. 1978. **Alive and Aware.** Interpersonal Communications Programme, USA.

SATIR, V. 1972. **Peoplemaking.** Condor-Souvenir Press, California

Divorce

KRANTZLER, M. 1973. **Creative Divorce.** New American Library, USA.

* MINDLEY, C. 1969. **The Divorced Mother: A Guide to Readjustment.** McGraw Hill, USA.

NAPOLITANE, C. 1977. **Living and Loving after Divorce.** New American Library, USA.

* POSS, S. 1981. **Towards Death with Dignity.** George Allen and Unwin, London.

* SHERIDAN, K. 1977. **Living with Divorce.** Thomas More Press, USA.

* VAN STADEN, S. 1977. **My Huwelik het Misluk.** Owen Burgess Uitgewers, Kaapstad.

Parenting

* GINOTT, H. 1969. **Between Parent and Teenager.** Avon Books, USA.

* GINOTT, H. 1969. **Between Parent and Child.** Avon Books, USA.

* GORDON, T. 1975. **Parent Effectiveness Training.** New American Library, USA.

* GORDON, T. 1975. **What Every Parent should Know.** National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, USA.

Self Esteem

* BURNS, DAVID. 1980. **Feeling Good : The New Mood Therapy.** New American Library, USA.

LOSONCY, L E. 1980. **You Can Do It.** Prentice Hall, USA.

* SCHULLER, R H. 1982. **Self Esteem: The New Reformation.** Word Books, USA.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 4 : CORRECTING IRRATIONAL IDEAS*

1. IT IS NOT A DIRE NECESSITY FOR AN ADULT HUMAN BEING TO BE LOVED OR APPROVED OF BY VIRTUALLY EVERY SIGNIFICANT OTHER PERSON IN HIS OR HER COMMUNITY
2. ONE DOES NOT NEED TO BE THOROUGHLY COMPETENT, ADEQUATE AND ACHIEVING IN ALL POSSIBLE RESPECTS IN ORDER TO CONSIDER ONESELF WORTHWHILE
3. IT IS NOT TRUE THAT CERTAIN PEOPLE ARE BAD, WICKED OR VILLAINOUS, AND THAT THEY SHOULD BE SEVERELY BLAMED AND PUNISHED FOR THEIR VILLAINY
4. IT IS NOT AWFUL AND CATASTROPHIC WHEN THINGS ARE NOT THE WAY ONE WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE THEM TO BE
5. HUMAN UNHAPPINESS IS NOT EXTERNALLY CAUSED: PEOPLE DO HAVE THE ABILITY TO CONTROL THEIR SORROWS AND DISTURBANCES
6. BEING CONCERNED AND DWELLING UPON DANGEROUS AND FEARFUL EVENTS WILL NOT PREVENT THEM FROM OCCURRING
7. AVOIDING RATHER THAN FACING CERTAIN LIFE DIFFICULTIES AND SELF-RESPONSIBILITIES IS TAKING THE EASY WAY OUT
8. PEOPLE DO NOT NEED TO BE DEPENDENT ON OTHERS OR NEED SOMEONE STRONGER THAN THEMSELVES TO LEAN ON : PEOPLE SHOULD STRIVE TO ACHIEVE A HEALTHY INDEPENDENCE
9. PAST HISTORY IS IMPORTANT AND DOES INFLUENCE BEHAVIOUR, BUT IT DOES NOT KEEP ON DIRECTING AND AFFECTING IT : THE PRESENT IS THE PAST OF TOMORROW
10. THERE IS LITTLE VALUE IN BECOMING UPSET OVER OTHER PEOPLE'S PROBLEMS AND DISTURBANCES : WE SHOULD BE CONSIDERABLY CONCERNED ABOUT THEM ONLY WHEN WE CARE SUFFICIENTLY FOR THEM, WHEN WE THINK THEY CAN BE HELPED TO CHANGE, AND WHEN WE THINK THAT WE ARE ABLE TO BE OF REAL HELP TO THEM BY BEING CONCERNED
11. THERE IS NO RIGHT, PRECISE AND PERFECT SOLUTION TO HUMAN PROBLEMS, AND IT IS NOT CATASTROPHIC IF A PERFECT SOLUTION CANNOT BE FOUND : TO ERR IS TO BE HUMAN

* ELLIS, A : 1967. **Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy.** Lyle Stuart, New York.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 5 : RIGHTS, NEEDS, SURVIVAL MUSTS...

1. I have a right to state my own needs and set my own priorities as a person independent of any roles that I may assume in my life.
2. I have the right to be treated with respect as an intelligent, capable and equal human being
3. I have the right to express my feelings
4. I have the right to express my opinions and values
5. I have the right to say yes and no for myself
6. I have the right to make mistakes
7. I have the right to change my mind
8. I have the right to say I don't understand
9. I have the right to ask for what I want
10. I have the right to decline responsibility for other people's problems

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 6 : THE REDISCOVERY OF A "NEW SELF"*

The primary task of a single person is the discovery and building of a new identity. The marital roles that existed during marriage, ended with divorce. The role of husband and wife no longer exists, and even the parent role takes on a new meaning.

The marriage relationship was a part of the person him/herself. Separation has been described as the subjective experience of losing a limb. The marriage relationship tied people together physically as well as emotionally. The marriage partner acts as a mirror, reflecting the image of the other: the significant other.

The way in which the marriage partner sees one, is also often the way in which one sees oneself. One accepts the images and impressions as made by the other, for oneself. It is for this reason that a broken marriage can affect one's self image and self esteem. A broken marriage can therefore cause one to have an incorrect and distorted view of oneself.

The positive or negative image that the other has of one, affects one identity. After the divorce this image/impression, continues to affect one. One of the reasons why one's self image remains attached to the impressions/image the other has of one, is due to the roles that have ended e.g. the wife who identified fully with the role of 'supporter of my husband' can feel rejected and useless because there is no replacement for this role in her new life.

Although the process of divorce is painful and a process of grief and mourning must occur, each person experiences and works through their divorce in a unique manner. All people regain sense of self worth and self confidence according to their own time and capabilities. Estimates for the development of this new identity are from 2 - 4 years. It is then that one's life becomes stabilised and the previous marital relationship becomes a distant memory. Contact with the ex-partner is less traumatic. It is possible however, that during contacts with the ex-partner, one might find oneself unstable, and it is possible that memories, negative experiences in a relationship etc can trigger a loss of self confidence. Feeling like this may cause one to feel as if one is never going to attain independence from the former partner because feelings seem to lie so near to the surface all the time.

It is only when the recovery process is complete that the feelings described above are overcome. It is then that words such as those used by Florence Kaslow (1982) can apply: wholeness; independence; enjoyment of new freedom; increase of self worth; and autonomy.

*CALLAHAN, B : 1979. **Workshop Models for Family Life Education: Separation and Divorce.** Family Service Association of America, New York.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 7 : COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS *

1. ALL OR NOTHING THINKING
You see things in black and white categories. If your performance falls short of perfect, you see yourself as a total failure.
2. OVER-GENERALISATION
You see a single negative event as a never ending pattern.
3. MENTAL FILTER
You pick out a single negative detail and dwell on it exclusively so that your vision of reality becomes darkened, like the drop of ink that discolours the whole beaker.
4. DISQUALIFYING THE POSITIVE
You reject the positive experiences by insisting they do not count. In this way you maintain a negative belief that is contradicted by your day to day experiences.
5. JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS
You make a negative interpretation even if there are no facts that convincingly support your conclusion (you don't bother to check out whether the person really is reacting negatively to you, or you anticipate that things will turn out badly).
6. MAGNIFICATION (CATASTROPHISING) OR MINIMISATION
You exaggerate the importance of things (your mistakes or others' achievements) or you inappropriately shrink things (your desirable qualities or other's imperfections).
7. EMOTIONAL REASONING
You assume your negative emotions necessarily reflect the way things really are: "I feel it, therefore it must be true".
8. 'SHOULD STATEMENTS'
You try to motivate yourself with "shoulds" and "should'nts" as if you need to be punished before you could be expected to do anything. The emotional consequence is guilt.
9. LABELLING AND MIS-LABELLING
This is an extreme form of over-generalisation. Instead of describing your error, you attach a negative label to yourself e.g. I am a no-good. Emotionally loaded language is used.
10. PERSONALISATION
You see yourself as the cause of some external event, for which in fact you were not primarily responsible.

*BURNS, D : 1980. **Feeling Good : The New Mood Therapy.**
William Morrow, New York.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 9 : CHARACTERISTICS OF SELF ACCEPTING INDIVIDUALS*

A person who has a strong, self-accepting attitude presents the following behavioural picture (Hamachek, 1971) :

1. He believes strongly in certain values and principles and is willing to defend them even in the face of strong group opinion.
He feels personally secure enough however to modify them if new experience and evidence suggest he is in error.
2. He is capable of acting on his own best judgement without feeling excessively guilty or regretting his actions if others disapprove of what he has done.
3. He does not spend undue time worrying about what is coming tomorrow, what has happened in the past or what is taking place the present.
4. He has confidence in his ability to deal with problems, even in face of failure and setbacks.
5. He feels equal to others as a person, not superior or inferior, irrespective of the difference in specific abilities, family backgrounds, or attitudes of others toward him.
6. He is able to take for granted that he is a person of interest a value to others, at least to those with whom he chooses to associate.
7. He can accept praise without the pretence of false modesty and compliments without feeling guilty.
8. He is inclined to resist the efforts of others to dominate him.
9. He is able to accept the idea and admit to others that he is capable of feeling a wide range of impulses and desires, ranging from being angry to being loving, from being sad to being happy, from feeling deep resentment to feeling deep acceptance.
10. He is able to genuinely enjoy himself in a wide variety of activities involving work, play, creative self expression, companionship, or loafing.
11. He is sensitive to the needs of others, to accept social customs and particularly to the idea that he cannot enjoy himself at the expense of others.

*JOHNSON, D W : 1981. **Reaching Out**. Prentice Hall Inc, USA.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 10 : MINI-LECTURE: SELF ACCEPTANCE*

Introduction

Self acceptance or self esteem is a high regard for yourself. It is a judgement about your self worth. It is related to how much you reveal about yourself, how psychologically healthy you are, and how well you accept others.

Self Disclosure

To be able to share your feelings and thoughts with other people, you have to believe that these thoughts and feelings are acceptable. The more you accept and appreciate yourself, the more you will let other people know who you really are. If you are rejecting of yourself, you will find it difficult to share of yourself or disclose yourself to other people. If you try on the other hand to create an incorrect impression of yourself, you are living behind a mask and it is even harder for people to like you.

Psychological Health

Psychological health is closely related to how people feel about themselves. People who are psychologically healthy, see themselves as likeable, worthy, capable people. Highly self critical people are more anxious, insecure, feel unworthy and unacceptable. In order to grow and develop, one must be self accepting, and to help other people grow, one must help them to become more self accepting.

Acceptance of Others

Self acceptance and acceptance of others is related. If you think well of yourself, you will probably think well of others too.

Self Fulfilling Prophecies

These self fulfilling prophecies happen when you expect a certain reaction from people, and because you are expecting this, you act in a certain way, and this actually makes them react in that way e.g. someone feels unlikeable, so acts rudely to others, and actually causes people to like him/her less - so the expectation becomes true because of the behaviour.

Development of Self Esteem and Self Acceptance

Reflected Self Esteem: How you think other people view you e.g. if others like you then you like yourself too

Basic Self Esteem: Believing that you are unconditionally acceptable/intrinsically good

Conditional Self Esteem: Depending on your successes or failures and how well you perform

Compared Self Esteem: You estimate your worth compared with others

Real-Ideal Comparison: You compare who you are with whom you want to be

*JOHNSON, D : 1981. **Reaching Out**. Prentice Hall, USA.

"May he give you power through
his spirit for your hidden self
to grow strong...."
Ephesians 3:16

Each of us is given an identity at birth.
It is good to affirm this identity, being
grateful for the strengths it has given,
and forgiving the weaknesses.

But each of us has another, a hidden
identity. God's power within us gives us
the potential to be a unique expression
of his life. The seed of that uniqueness,
deep inside, can only grow as we burst
old shells and layers of identity. The
sprouting seed, the tentative shoot, the
uncurling leaf, the fragile blossom....
who would forego the excitement of these
for the warm comfort of remaining in the
soil?

Accepting my identity is good, but dis-
covering my unique self is even better.
When I have blossomed on my own, I will
have something new to give back to the
life cycle.

* Source unknown

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 12 : MINI-LECTURE : LONELINESS*

When asked what they fear most, a great majority of single people answer 'loneliness'. It is not unusual to feel this way because society as a whole stresses that you seek outside of yourself for entertainment, and totally fails to teach you how to nourish yourself. Being alone is viewed as unacceptable or a fearful situation. Unfortunately, we are used to defining ourselves as others see us - and many of us have forgotten that we need to be individuals in our own right.

What is this feared state? Loneliness is being deprived of emotionally satisfying relating, or 'relationship hunger'. It is being alienated from oneself, the world, from others, and experiencing unmet needs. Often it is a voluntary withdrawal caused by fear of rejection. Most experts on the subject feel that many of us create our own loneliness and that people, instead of taking responsibility for our needs and filling them, we try to get others to fill our needs - or bad luck or circumstances are blamed for our loneliness.

How do you know if you are lonely? Loneliness has many of the same symptoms as depression. Unconsciously, loneliness tells you that you are not reaching out to others. You feel upset with yourself when you are isolated, because you have no way to satisfy your social needs. The same feelings and experiences as when you are depressed often sweep over you when you are lonely - anxiety, tension, loss of appetite, sleep difficulties and empty feelings. Because of social conditioning you feel that something is wrong with you if you feel lonely, for example that you are not attractive enough as a person, or not sociable enough to be one of the crowd. It is no wonder that people try to run away from admitting that they are lonely because that says to them that they are a misfit.

The truth is that everyone feels lonely now and then. Loneliness is and always has been a part of our human condition. It is not related to being unacceptable. Not being honest about our human condition alienates one from others and perpetuates loneliness because it blocks intimacy. How can someone know if you are hiding your true feelings and needs from yourself? Running away from and not facing our loneliness squarely makes our self confidence less and our needs seem overwhelming.

*CALLAHAN, B : 1979. **Workshop Models for Family Life Education: Separation and Divorce.** Family Service Association of America, New York.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 13: STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING LONELINESS*

BEHAVIOURAL STRATEGIES

The guiding principle is to plan ahead. Have a list of activities that you know you enjoy doing and that help to reduce loneliness.

1. Plan ahead for evenings, weekends, trips and holidays so that there are enough activities and people for you
2. Help someone else or something else; focus on loving rather than being loved, e.g. volunteer work, friends or pets.
3. Write letters, visit friends, call local or long distance friends.
4. Go out and do something pleasurable by yourself, e.g. go to the movies, go shopping, go for a drive, take a walk.
5. Engage in some kind of physical recreation e.g. work with your hands, dance, sport or exercise.
6. Do some kind of physical or mental work e.g. clean your home, study, do personal or job related work.
7. Engage in some form of creative self expression, e.g. write a journal, sing, write, play music, draw or paint.
8. Keep a scrapbook of poems and advice, engage in spiritual activities, or religious or philosophical thinking that is meaningful to you.

SELF TALK RESPONSES

1. Think about the possible benefits of your experience of loneliness such as telling yourself that you are learning to be self sufficient, or that you will grow from the experience.
2. People have survived for years by themselves.
3. I would rather be with someone tonight, but being here alone is OK.
4. Just because I'm alone now does not mean I will always be alone.
5. I care about myself.
6. There are people who care about me (list them in your mind).
7. There are activities that I enjoy doing alone and things that are meaningful and important to me (list them in your mind).
8. Everybody gets lonely at times.

9. Just because this person has rejected me it does not mean that everyone will.
10. Remind yourself that you actually do have, or again will have, good relationships with people.
11. It's not the end of the world if I do not have an intimate relationship now.
12. It's not vital to be liked by everybody.
13. It's OK at this point in my life not to be romantically involved.
14. Think about things that you are good at doing and qualities that make you attractive to others.

ATTITUDINAL ALTERNATIVES

1. Focus on the advantage of living alone
 - *Living alone I have more time and emotional energy for myself
 - *Living alone I can freely express my emotions
 - *I have many meaningful interests that I engage in alone
 - *I can be involved with different people in many different ways
 - *I can decide when I do and do not spend time with others
 - *There are some unique and exciting experiences one can have living alone
 - *I can develop and discover my own values, interests and beliefs
 - *I can still love: the less I have to be loved, the more I can love others
 - *I can use this opportunity to increase my frustration tolerance for not getting what I want, that is company or love
2. Remind yourself of the disadvantages of being with people and/or involved in a romantic relationship. List in your mind the specific reasons that your last major relationship ended; remind yourself of all the problems and heartaches.
3. Dispute the belief that only love and companionship gives meaning and happiness to your life
 - *Focus on the fact that you are living alone and functioning quite well
 - *The source of enjoyment in life is IN you, not in other people
 - *I have a commitment to my own growth and development
 - *I can be happy even if for a long period of time I am not involved in an intimate love relationship

*FREEMAN, A (Ed) : 1983. **Cognitive Therapy with Couples and Groups**. Plenum Press, New York.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 15 : MINI LECTURE : EVENTS AND THE WAY WE FEEL*

"Feelings are not caused by events and people around you, they are caused by the interpretations, assumptions or thoughts around these experiences" (See illustration by Burns).

	. THOUGHTS: You interpret . . the events with a series . . of thoughts that continually . . flow through your mind .	
. WORLD: A series of positive, neutral, and negative events MOOD: Your feelings are created by your thoughts and not the actual events.

Events and Experiences: Situations and events can be either positive, negative or neutral.

Thoughts, Interpretations and Assumptions: You make interpretations and assumptions about the events that you experience or perceive.

Feelings: Your feelings and moods are a result of what you think about the events rather than the actual events. Example: Your boss cannot upset you, only the interpretations you make about your boss' behaviour can upset you; Your friend cannot upset you, only the interpretations you make about your friend's behaviour can upset you. This means that you can control your feelings. You can decide which feelings you want to keep, which feelings you want to discard. You need to manage your feelings by being aware of the assumptions or thoughts you are having, and correcting them. For example again, you can believe your boss has to like you more than any other employee - but this assumption will leave you unhappy, because there may always be someone the boss may like better than you. You will be depressed because your boss does not like you best! Assumptions such as this one are irrational. Irrational assumptions can be unlearned - and the next few exercises will help you learn to do this."

* BURNS, DAVID : 1980. **Feeling Good : The New Mood Therapy.** New American Library, USA.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 19 : MINI-LECTURE: COMPONENTS OF ASSERTIVENESS

ASSERTIVENESS MEANS: Standing up for your rights while respecting the rights of others; Expressing your feelings and wants honestly; On occasion being selfish; Telling things honestly without distortion, exaggeration or promoting yourself unjustly; Talking about a problem without threatening the other or feeling threatened

DIFFERENT BEHAVIOURS COMPARED

Aggression: Directly standing up for your own rights and expressing your thoughts, feelings and beliefs, in a way that is hurtful, demanding and manipulative - it violates the dignity and rights of the other. One's own interests comes before those of others.

Non-Assertion or Submission: Violating your own rights and self respect, by failing to express your thoughts, feelings or beliefs - or by expressing them in an apologetic or self effacing manner. The non-assertive person usually ends up feeling inadequate, exploited and insecure, and is resentful both towards him/herself and the other.

Assertiveness: Standing up for your own feelings, thoughts and beliefs, in a direct, honest and appropriate way, and not violating the dignity or self respect of the other person. This means there is a healthy balance between self respect and respect for others.

COMPONENTS OF ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Eye contact: Extremely important for an assertive approach. Lack of eye contact can give messages such as anxiety or non-belief in what is being said

Voice Tone: The most assertive message can be lost if delivered in too quiet a voice. This gives the impression of insecurity or fear. On the other hand if delivered too loudly, the listener may be distracted and put on the defensive.

Posture: General rule is to hold the body erect in a posture that is neither too rigid or too relaxed (disrespectful or not serious).

Facial Expression: When the facial expression is not congruent with what is being said, the message can be diluted e.g. smiling when anger is being conveyed. The listener may receive a mixed message, and the intended message not conveyed at all.

Timing: The most appropriately designed assertive statement may be wasted if an inappropriate time is chosen.

Content: Statements may be undermined by a message that sounds blaming, aggressive, meek, mild, or passive. The content should be precise, descriptive and straightforward.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 20 : ASSERTIVENESS INVENTORY*

If we recognise the conditions under which we are not assertive, we can start working on learning appropriate, assertive behaviours that we can substitute for the unassertive behaviours we have been using.

The following assertiveness self evaluation will help clarify those areas in which you may want to change your behaviour in the direction of greater assertiveness.

Evaluate your own assertiveness abilities by completing the following questionnaire. Use the scale below to indicate your comfort and ability with each situation.

- 1 Makes me very uncomfortable
- 2 I feel moderately comfortable
- 3 I am completely at ease with this

1. Speaking up and asking questions at a meeting
2. Commenting immediately about being interrupted by someone
3. Stating your views to an authority figure
4. Offering solutions or opinions to a group
5. Entering and exiting a room where a group is present
6. Maintaining eye contact and leaning forward in conversation
7. Going out with a group of friends being the only one without an escort
8. Exerting your authority directly (e.g. with employee)
9. Returning an item to a store
10. Not apologising when expected to, because you know you are right
11. Requesting the return of borrowed items
12. Refusing to lend an item you do not wish to
13. Accepting a compliment
14. Accepting a rejection
15. Accepting a criticism and discussing it openly
16. Telling someone they are doing something that bothers you
17. Saying No to a favour you do not want to do
18. Initiating a conversation with a stranger
19. Asking for a favour
20. Telling another person you feel they are manipulating you
21. Expressing anger directly and honestly
22. Arguing
23. Telling a joke
24. Sticking to your opinion even when others do not agree
25. Refusing a request from an authority figure

*DOUGAN, B; DEMBO, R; LENAHAN, K; MAKAPELA, R; GAMA, J; and MOUTINHO, D : 1986. **Lifeskills for Self Development**. National Council for Mental Health, Johannesburg, South Africa.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 21: VIGNETTES FOR ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING

VIGNETTE ONE

Situation: You see your physician for a persistent cough. He examines you and prescribes a medication. You ask for a diagnosis, how the medication is supposed to act, and what your prognosis is. The physician says: "You do not need to worry about that. Just take these pills and you'll feel much better."

Goal: To persevere and attempt to obtain the information you requested.

VIGNETTE TWO

Situation: You are already feeling overworked when your boss gives you an extra assignment that you feel could be given to someone else just as easily.

Goal: To attempt to turn down your boss's assignment while explaining your reasons.

VIGNETTE THREE

Situation: Friends of yours invite you to go on a picnic but end up asking you to do most of the shopping and cooking. You accept, expecting it to be a joint venture (you don't have the time or inclination to do all the work). You decide to speak to them in advance of the picnic date.

Goal: To preserve the friendship but want to back out of the chores you have already agreed to do.

VIGNETTE FOUR

Situation: A person working under you has not been doing satisfactory work. You decide to speak privately with the person.

Goal: To be clear about your dissatisfaction about your subordinate's performance yet not be punishing or blaming.

VIGNETTE FIVE

Situation: A friend of yours is perpetually late. He/she has just arrived late again, for dinner this time. The meal you've prepared is slightly dried out as a result of this, having been kept warm in the oven.

Goal: To express your dissatisfaction for this and past incidences, while still allowing for an explanation from your friend.

VIGNETTE SIX

Situation: Someone with a romantic interest in you asks you out and you do not want to go

Goal: To turn him/her down gently but not leave yourself open for further invitations because you're not at all interested in him/her romantically.

VIGNETTE SEVEN

Situation: You meet an interesting new person and you want to get to know him/her better

Goal: To take the initiative to arrange another meeting.

VIGNETTE EIGHT

Situation: You are at a party. You have decided not to eat or drink for personal reasons, but the host is pressuring you to eat or imbibe.

Goal: To turn down your host's offerings firmly but politely.

VIGNETTE NINE

Situation: You are in the middle of a job interview. You are really interested in the job, but the salary they are offering is lower than you are willing to accept.

Goal: To get them to increase the salary offer.

VIGNETTE TEN

Situation: You've heard that a colleague has been bad-mouthing your work. You want to speak to him/her.

Goal: You want to stop this behaviour without creating additional bad feelings or creating a 'scene'.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 23 : COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVE BEHAVIOUR STYLES

	PASSIVE	ASSERTIVE	AGGRESSIVE
CHARACTERISTICS	Allow others to choose for you. Emotionally dishonest, indirect, self denying, inhibited. In win-lose situations you lose. If you do get your own way it is indirect.	Choose for self. Appropriately honest. Direct, self respecting, self expressing, straight forward. Convert win-lose to win-win.	Choose for others. Inappropriately honest (tactless). Direct, self enhancing, self expressive, derogatory. Win-lose situation you win.
YOUR OWN FEELINGS ON THE EXCHANGE	Anxious, ignored, helpless manipulated. Angry at yourself and/or others.	Confident, self respecting goal oriented, valued. Later: Accomplished.	Righteous, superior, depreciatory, controlling. Later: Possibly guilty.
OTHER'S FEELINGS IN THE EXCHANGE	Guiltily or superior. Frustrated with you.	Valued, respected.	Humiliated, defensive, resentful, hurt.
OTHER'S VIEW OF YOU IN THE EXCHANGE	Lack of respect. Distrust. Can be considered a push-over. Do not know where you stand.	Respect, trust, know where you stand.	Vengeful, angry, distrustful, fearful.
OUTCOME	Others achieve their goals at your expense. Your rights are violated.	Outcome determined by above board negotiation. Your and other's rights respected.	You achieve your goal at other's expense. Your rights upheld; others violated.
UNDERLYING BELIEF SYSTEM	I should never make anyone uncomfortable or displeased, except myself.	I have a responsibility to protect my own rights: I respect others, but not necessarily their behaviour.	I have to put others down to protect myself.

ARE YOU MORE ASSERTIVE, AGGRESSIVE OR PASSIVE?

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 24 : INSTRUCTIONS FALL-OUT SHELTER EXERCISE

"Your group consists of members of a department in Washington D.C., that is in charge of experimental stations in the far outposts of civilisation. Suddenly the third world war breaks out, and bombs begin dropping. Places all across the globe are being destroyed. People are heading for whatever fall-out shelters are available. You receive a desperate call from one of your experimental stations asking for help."

"It seems there are ten people, but there is enough space, air, food, and water in the fall-out shelter for only six people for a period of three months, which is the time period they estimate they can safely stay down there. They realise that if they have to decide among themselves which six should enter the shelter, they are likely to become irrational and begin fighting. So they have decided to call your department, their superiors, and leave the decision to you. They will abide by your decision."

"But each of you has to get ready quickly to head down to your own fall-out shelter. So all you have time for is to get superficial descriptions of the ten people. You have half an hour to make your decision. Then you will have to go to your own shelter."

"So, as a group, you now have a half hour to decide which four of the ten will have to be eliminated from the shelter. Before you begin, I want to impress upon you two important considerations. It is entirely possible that the six people you choose to stay in the shelter might be the only six people left to start the human race over again. This choice is, therefore, very important. Do not allow yourself to be swayed by pressure from others in your group. Try to make the best choices possible. On the other hand, if you do not make a choice in half an hour, then you are, in fact, choosing to let the ten people fight it out among themselves, with the possibility that more than four might perish. You have exactly one half hour. Here is all you know about the ten people:

1. Bookkeeper; 31 years old
2. His wife; 6 months pregnant
3. Black militant; 2nd year medical student
4. Famous historian author; 42 years old
5. Hollywood starlet; singer; dancer
6. Biochemist
7. Rabbi; 54 years old
8. Olympic athlete; all sports
9. College co-ed
10. Policeman with gun (they cannot be separated)"

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 25 : QUESTIONNAIRE: FALL-OUT SHELTER

WORKING INDIVIDUALLY, ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. WHAT WERE MY FEELINGS WHEN I WAS DISAGREEING WITH SOMEONE?

2. WHAT WERE MY FEELINGS WHEN SOMEONE DISAGREED WITH ME?

3. HOW DID I ACT WHEN I WANTED SOMEONE TO CHANGE THEIR IDEAS?

4. HOW DID I ACT WHEN SOMEONE WAS TRYING TO CONVINC ME TO CHANGE MY IDEAS?

5. HOW WOULD MY CONFLICT STRATEGIES DURING THE GROUP DISCUSSION BE DESCRIBED?

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 27 : LEARN TO QUARREL AND HANDLE YOUR ANGER

CONSTRUCTIVELY

RULES FOR CONSTRUCTIVE ARGUMENTS

TIME: Not when tired, hungry or in a rush

PURPOSE:

1. Win/Win
2. To maintain self respect
3. To continue the relationship
4. To express fears and hurts

METHOD:

1. Define the issues and stick to the point
2. Listen to and observe both words and feelings
3. Verify what you hear
4. Take responsibility by expressing directly what it is you want or need
5. Use "I" messages rather than "you" messages
6. Attack the problem and not the person
7. Work at a compromise
8. Make plans for a solution that are specific and achievable
9. Forgive and forget

RULES FOR DESTRUCTIVE ARGUMENTS

TIME: Especially when tired, hungry or in a rush

PURPOSE:

1. Win/Lose
2. To destroy self respect
3. To end the relationship
4. To express anger and blame

METHOD:

1. Generalise, using words such as always and never
2. Act on assumptions
3. Prepare responses before you have heard the other's point of view
4. Attack and blame the other for the way you feel
5. Bring up past issues
6. Humiliate and criticise the other
7. Use "should" and "ought"
8. Refuse to compromise
9. Insist on being "right"

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 28 : "FAREWELL TO ANGER"*

ANGER: A SIGNAL TO ACTION

Like all emotions, anger is a result of your thinking. You feel upset because you think something is wrong, unfair, dangerous, and so on. It is important then to ask yourself exactly why you are angry and also to explain this to the person with whom you are angry - instead of just shouting, swearing or blaming. Together you might then be able to decide what action, if any, can be taken to help you stop feeling so angry. In other words, try to use anger constructively. See anger as a signal that something must be done - not necessarily by others - perhaps you should start some changes in yourself.

ANGER: A CHOICE

You do not need to be a slave to anger - it can be controlled.

1. Try postponing your expression of anger for 15 seconds/2 minutes, and breath deeply instead.
2. Remind yourself that other people have a right to their own ideas
3. Ask yourself whether you are angry because you fear something.

Express this fear rather than the anger.
4. Ask others to help you keep control of your anger. Tell them how e.g. by leaving you alone, touching you, making a joke, giving a word of understanding etc.
5. Discuss what makes you very angry at a time when you are not actually angry. If necessary, confide in a friend or have a 'round table discussion'. Often however, people wait till they are in a rage and 'out of control' to express their feelings about a subject.
6. Look at your life generally - what is basically wrong that you are so frequently irritable? What can you do about it?
7. Plan to enjoy yourself more in specific ways. Don't expect others to make you happy - we all have to make our own happiness.

ANGER: IS IT EVER A GOOD THING?

Yes it is. Sometimes a child might need to learn quickly that something is very cruel or dangerous. Brief anger at the action may help imprint this lesson on their minds. There are also times when one needs to show one's anger and defend one's values when issues of injustice or lies arise. Yes, one can also get angry when someone tries to 'bully' us.

Remember - having a temper tantrum can be behaving like an over-grown child. If one is strong and powerful, one might frighten others and win arguments. One does not however win respect, friendship and co-operation.

*DYER, W D : 1976. **Your Erroneous Zones**. Sphere Books Ltd, USA.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 29: DIVORCE AND CHILDREN*

It cannot be denied that the loss of a parent through divorce, separation or death hampers a child's adjustment. It cannot be assumed however that a child will be emotionally damaged because only one parent lives at home. What seems to make a difference is how the divorce or death was handled by the adults involved - not so much that it occurred.

An intact family is no guarantee that the children will grow up to be happy, productive and have high self esteem. Hamachek (1978, 177) quotes Goode (1966) who investigated family disorganisation and observed:

"...that a family in which there is continued marital conflict or separation, is more likely to produce children with problems of personal adjustment than a family in which there is divorce or death ... the choice usually has to be between a continuing conflict, or divorce. And the evidence suggests that it is the conflict of divorce itself, that has the impact on the children."

Hamachek (1978, 178) quotes other research by Nye (1957), who found that adolescents from broken homes showed less psychosomatic illness, less delinquent behaviour, and better adjustment to parents than those from unhappy, unbroken homes - which would suggest that in some cases disruption of the marriage relationship is desirable.

Because the mother is often given legal custody of her children (this trend is changing slowly), the mother in these circumstances carries an enormous responsibility for the self concept and personality development of the children. The lack of male role model for the boy reared by his mother can have the effect of feminising the young boy, and creating dependence on the mother. More important however, is the mother's expressed attitudes about the boy's father and other men. When a growing boy and girl hear their mother talking about the absent father in angry, 'put-down' ways, they lose trust in their father and also learn that men in general cannot be trusted. Children learn to develop close intimate relationships with the opposite sex by learning to trust their own parent in a close relationship first. Parents need to look for the positives in each other and pass that on to their children.

A basic condition for healthy self concept development in children from divorced homes lies in the fact that they are loved and know it. One thing is certain: ceasing to be a wife or husband through divorce does not mean that one ceases to be a parent.

*HAMACHEK, DON : 1978. **Encounters with the Self**. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, USA.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 30: MINI-LECTURE: THREE CHILD REARING STYLES

CURRENT TRENDS

Contemporary child rearing practises do not suggest that we have returned to firm heavy handed discipline, neither to the easy going, laissez-faire style of the fifties. If anything, the emphasis is on understanding the child, as opposed to being too restrictive or easy going. The current trend is to understand the child's feelings, and at the same time holding him/her accountable for his/her behaviour.

AUTHORITARIAN PARENTING

These kinds of parents are strict, rigid and controlling. They favour forceful measures of discipline and value strict obedience. They work hard to develop the child's respect for authority and work, and there is little give and take. The parent is the central figure.

AUTHORITATIVE PARENTING

This approach is rational and issue orientated. These parents rely less on power, and more on the power of reason. There is a lot of give and take, and parents do not box their children in with rigid restrictions. They are able to be firm when there is a need.

PERMISSIVE PARENTING

These parents are very easy going, non-punitive and accepting of everything their children do. Children are given a voice in decisions, but there are few demands on them for responsibilities and orderly behaviour. The child is mostly the central figure.

CONSEQUENCE OF THE THREE STYLES

Both authoritarian and authoritative parents demand socially acceptable behaviour from their children, but encourage it in different ways. Authoritarian parents allow their own needs to take preference over that of the child, while the authoritative parents have more give and take. Their children are more responsible than those of authoritarian parents. The children of permissive parents are found to be lacking when it comes to socially responsible behaviour. Research strongly indicates that both authoritarian control and permissive control parents tend to inhibit a growing child's opportunities to have healthy interaction with people. Too high demands lead to frustration and failure, while no demands leads to understimulation and lack of appropriate behaviour.

WARMTH AND CARING

The most important ingredients however, are warmth and caring. It is not enough to say that parents need to have a balance between toughness and permissiveness, there needs to be warmth together with firmness.

*HAMACHEK, DON : 1978. *Encounters with the Self*. Holt Rinehart and Winston, USA.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 31 : ROAD-BLOCKS TO COMMUNICATION*

1. ORDERING, COMMANDING
 - * can produce fear or active resistance
 - * invites 'testing'
 - * promotes rebellious behaviour, retaliation
2. WARNING, THREATENING
 - * can produce fear, submission, resentment, rebellion
 - * invites 'testing' of threatened consequences
3. MORALISING, PREACHING
 - * creates 'obligation' or guilt feelings
 - * can cause child to 'dig in' and defend position even more
 - * communicates lack of trust in child's sense of responsibility
4. ADVISING, GIVING SOLUTIONS
 - * can imply child is not able to solve own problems
 - * prevents child from thinking through a problem, considering alternative solutions and trying them out for reality
 - * can cause dependency or resistance
5. PERSUADING WITH LOGIC, ARGUING
 - * provokes defensive position and counter-arguments
 - * often causes child to 'turn-off' parent, to quit listening
 - * can cause child to feel inferior, inadequate
6. JUDGING, CRITICISING, BLAMING
 - * implies incompetence, stupidity, poor judgement
 - * cuts off communication: child has fear of negative judgement
 - * child often accepts judgements as true or retaliates
7. PRAISING, AGREEING
 - * implies high parental expectations as well s surveillance
 - * can be seen as patronising or as manipulation
 - * causes anxiety when child's perception does not match praise
8. NAME-CALLING, RIDICULING
 - * can cause child to feel unworthy, unloved
 - * has devastating effect on self esteem, provokes retaliation
9. ANALYSING, DIAGNOSING
 - * can be threatening and frustrating
 - * child can feel trapped, exposed or not believed
 - * child stops communication from fear of distortion or exposure
10. REASSURING, SYMPATHISING
 - * causes child to feel misunderstood
 - * evokes feelings of hostility ("That's easy for you to say")
 - * Message may be picked up as "Its not OK to feel bad"
11. PROBING AND QUESTIONING
 - * child learns to respond with avoidance, half-truths
 - * child becomes anxious about what parent is driving at
 - * child may lose sight of the problem while answering questions
12. DIVERTING, SARCASM, WITHDRAWAL
 - *implies that difficulties are to be avoided and not dealt with
 - * can infer child's problems are petty, unimportant or invalid
 - * stops openness from child when there is a problem

*GORDON, THOMAS : 1975. **Parent Effectiveness Training**. New American Library, USA.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 34 : ROSE-BUSH IDENTIFICATION EXERCISE*

Find a comfortable position, lying on your back if possible. Close your eyes and become aware of your body...Turn your attention away from outside events and notice what is going on inside you...Notice any discomfort, and see if you can find a more comfortable position...Notice what parts of your body emerge into your awareness...and which parts of your body seem vague and indistinct...If you become aware of a tense area in your body, see if you can let go of the tensing...If not, try deliberately tensing that part, to see which muscles you are tensing...and then let go again...Now focus your attention on your breathing...Feel the air move through your nose or mouth...Feel it move down your throat...and feel your chest and belly move as you breathe...Now imagine that your breathing is like gentle waves on the shore, and that each wave slowly washes some tension out of your body...and releases you even more...

Now become aware of any thoughts or images that come into your mind...Just notice them...What are they about, and what are they like?...Now imagine that you put all these thoughts and images into a glass jar and watch them...Examine them...What are these thoughts and images like, and what do they do as you watch them?...As more thoughts and images come into your mind, put them into the jar too, and see what you can learn about them...Now take this jar and pour out the thoughts and images. Watch as they pour out and disappear, and the jar becomes empty...

Now I'd like you to imagine that you are a rose-bush. Become a rose-bush, and discover what it is like to be this rose-bush...Just let your fantasy develop on its own and see what you can discover about being a rose-bush...What kind of rose-bush are you?...Where are you growing?...What are your roots like...and what kind of ground are you rooted in?...See if you can feel your roots going down into the ground...What are your stems and branches like?...Discover all the details of being this rose-bush...How do you feel as this rose-bush?...What are your surroundings like?...What is your life like as this rose-bush?...What do you experience and what happens to you as the seasons change?...Continue to discover even more details about your existence as this rose-bush, how you feel about your life, and what happens to you. Let your fantasy continue for a while...

In a little while I'm going to ask you to open your eyes and return to the group and express your experience of being a rose-bush. I want you to tell it in the first person present tense, as if it were happening now. For instance, "I am a wild rose, growing on a steep hillside, on very rocky soil. I feel very strong and good in the sunshine, and little birds make their nests in my thick vines-" or whatever your experience of being a rose-bush is.

* STEVENS, J O: 1971. **Awareness: Exploring, Experimenting and Experiencing** Real People Press, Moab, Utah.

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 35 : "MY PERSONAL CONTRACT"

Write down what you would like to achieve within the next four weeks. Be as specific and detailed as you can; concentrating on behaviour. Also, how will you know that you have got there? What criteria will you be using to evaluate your progress?

PROGRAMME RESOURCE 36 : PERSONAL GROWTH GROUP EVALUATION

1. What is your assessment of the group?
2. What stands out for you most?
3. What did you hope to accomplish by being in the group. Do you feel you reached your goals?
4. How did the group experience help you grow?
5. How do you feel you helped others to grow?
6. What have you come to value more since being in the group?
7. What is the most significant thing you learnt about yourself from the group?
8. What is the most significant thing you learnt about other people?
9. How would you comment on the style and leadership of the leader?
10. What could have been done differently?
11. Please comment on:
 - Length of sessions:
 - Length of programme:
 - Pace of sessions:
 - Number of members:
 - Hand-Outs and literature available:
12. Any other comments?

APPENDIX 6

UPPER POINTS IN DISTRIBUTION FOR WILCOXON'S TEST STATISTIC*

N	CUMULATIVE PROBABILITIES			
	0,95	0,975	0,99	0,995
5	1	-	-	
6	2	1	-	
7	4	2	0	-
8	6	4	2	0
9	8	6	3	2
10	11	8	5	3
11	14	11	7	5
12	17	14	10	7
13	21	17	13	10
14	26	21	16	13
15	30	25	20	16
16	36	30	24	19
17	41	35	28	23
18	47	40	33	28
19	54	46	38	32
20	60	52	43	37
21	68	59	49	43
22	75	66	56	49
23	83	73	62	55
24	92	81	69	61
25	101	90	77	68
26	110	98	85	76
27	120	107	93	84
28	130	117	102	92
29	141	127	111	100
30	152	137	120	109

*This table is taken from Huysamen (1976:435) who states that the table is based on Table two in:

WILCOXON, F and R.A. WILCOX. 1964. **Some Rapid Approximate Statistical Procedures**. Lederler Laboratories, New York.

APPENDIX 7

LETTER TO CONTROL GROUP MEMBERS

FAMSA

FAMILIE- & HUWELIKSVERENIGING
VAN S.A.



FAMILY & MARRIAGE SOCIETY
OF S.A.

Phone (0461) 22530

FAMILY & MARRIAGE SOCIETY
OF GRAHAMSTOWN

THE OLD GAOL
Somerset Street
GRAHAMSTOWN
6140

25.08.88

Dear

Thank you for agreeing to be a part of my research programme:
"The impact of a Personal Growth Programme on a group of
Divorced Women" (towards a Masters degree in Social Work).

Please find the questionnaires enclosed, as discussed by
telephone with you.

The answers will be treated as completely confidential,
and any information from the questionnaires will be used
only for the purposes of this research.

You will be requested to complete the same set of question-
naires during the first week of November this year, and
you will be contacted during that period again.

Thank you very much again for contributing towards an
important area of research.

Kind regards

LINDA SMITH

RESEARCHER/SOCIAL WORKER