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**A DESCRIPTIVE - EVALUATIVE STUDY
OF THE ROLE OF
INTEGRATED GROUP WORK
AS A MEDIATING INFLUENCE
IN THE DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT PROCESS
IN WOMEN**

A social work study conducted in Cape Town

by

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and Humanities at the University of Cape Town for the
degree of Master of Social Science in Social Work.

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ABSTRACT

There has been a steady increase in the specific divorce rate in the western world in past decades. The disruptive effects of divorce are common knowledge. What is less well known is the facilitating or mediating process which enhances divorce adjustment. The issue of divorce adjustment is of concern to mental health professionals.

A growing number of divorcing and divorced women have sought divorce group counselling in one particular welfare agency in past years. The researcher has conducted integrated, unstructured groups whose theoretical underpinnings are an eclectic blend of social group work and group psychotherapy theory.

The study was conducted as a qualitative descriptive-evaluative case study of two groups of women across a twelve week period. The broad purpose of the study was the description of the influence of participation in an unstructured group on divorce adjustment in women. A major question was the evaluation of those aspects of integrated group work which proved to be a mediating influence on adjustmental variables for women.

The study used multiple methods of data collection:

- a structured open-ended interview pre- and post-group
- the Hudson Clinical Management Package scales
- content analysis of group meetings

- Correspondence analysis of a matrix which relates Yalom's group curative factors to Fisher's divorce adjustment factors

It was concluded that:

- adult developmental issues influenced the experience and expression of divorce-related distress;
- group participants displayed perceptual and attitudinal changes to the marriage and divorce;
- significant changes occurred in levels of depression and self-esteem according to the Hudson Clinical Management scales;
- the majority of group curative factors were found to assist with adjustment to marital dissolution, rather than adjustment to a new life style.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Divorce is a crisis of great magnitude. In South Africa the divorce statistics increase annually. Table 1.1 indicates this increase in overall terms and in terms of the rate per thousand married couples for the 'white' population of the Republic of South Africa (Central Statistical Services 1988). In view of the fact that all participants in this research study were 'white' only these statistics are cited. It should be noted that comprehensive statistics for the entire population of the Republic of South Africa do not exist.

**Table 1.1: Divorces in the 'white' population:
Republic of South Africa**

Year	Total number	Specific divorce rate (per 1 000 married couples)
1970	7 748	9,0
1975	10 730	11,5
1980	16 543	15,6
1985	17 035	14,8
1988	18 432	15,7

In view of the fact that the literature base for this study is American and British, some indication of the varying divorce rates in the United States of America, England and Wales and South Africa (Hoffman 1990, Whitaker 1990, Central Statistical Services 1988) is presented in tables 1.2 and 1.3. British and South African divorce figures are cited per 1000 married couples whereas American statistics are cited per 1000 of the population. It should be noted that statistics compiled from different data bases cannot be compared.

**Table 1.2: Divorce rates in England and Wales
and the Republic of South Africa**

Year	England and Wales (per 1 000 married couples)	RSA 'Whites' (per 1 000 married couples)
1980		15,6
1981	11,9	15,9
1985	13,4	14,8
1987	12,6	15,8
1988		15,7

Table 1.3: Divorce rates in the USA

Year	USA (per 1 000 population)
1980	5,2
1981	
1985	5,0
1987	
1988	4,8

When the cumulative effect of divorce is considered, the picture becomes more alarming. Table 1.4 extrapolated from Norton and Moorman (1987) indicates the rising number of women divorced after first marriages in the USA.

Table 1.4: Divorce experience for women by age in the United States of America

Age	Percentage divorced after first marriage (All races)		
	1975	1980	1985
20-54	18,4	23,1	26,8
25-29	17,1	20,7	21,0
30-34	19,8	26,2	29,3
35-39	21,5	27,2	32,0
40-44	20,5	26,1	32,1
45-49	21,0	23,1	29,0
50-54	18,0	21,8	25,7

Arthur Norton and Jeanne Moorman (1987) have noted a relative stability in the divorce rate in the USA since 1980. They have however, projected a divorce rate, based on census studies, of between 54% and 56% for women then (1985) aged between 25 - 29 years and 35 - 39 years respectively. It is evident that for the foreseeable future there will be an increasing number of people facing the crisis of divorce.

While divorce is not a psychiatric entity per se, psychiatric morbidity figures indicate that divorced people are consistently over-represented in all psychiatric populations (Blumenthal 1967, Berman and Turk 1981). The incidence of breakdown in second and subsequent marriages suggests that remarriage *per se* is not a solution for the problems of divorce (Norton and Moorman 1987).

Each year there has been an increase in the number of individuals and couples who approach the Family and Marriage Society of South Africa (FAMSA) (Western Cape) for divorce counselling (see table 1.5).

Table 1.5: Divorce as a presenting problem among FAMSA (Western Cape) clients 1986-1990

Year	Total number of clients	Divorce as a presenting problem (percentage)
1986	1095	6
1987	1073	6
1988	1464	10
1989	2165	10
1990	2555	9

Divorce as a presenting problem is a 'tip of the iceberg' phenomenon. In a recent research study undertaken at FAMSA (Western Cape) it was found in retrospect that in 51% of couples who approached the agency for marriage counselling at least one partner had divorce as a hidden agenda (Andrea Hill 1987).

It is the researcher's impression that many more women than men requested counselling for divorce-related distress. Regrettably, records have not been kept in such a manner as to verify this. Many of the women who come pre- or post-divorce are in crisis, having experienced multiple, complex and interrelated losses. Several of them present with manifest symptoms of depression. Self-esteem is frequently poor. Few display any real understanding of their own contribution to the marital breakdown or the divorce process.

Numerous studies have found that divorce has a differing impact on men and on women (Hetherington *et al* in Gullahorn 1976; Hancock 1980; Wallerstein 1986; Wallerstein and Blakeslee 1989). Certain social, economic and emotional issues are specifically 'women's issues'. Emotional disequilibrium and changes in self-concept are more sustained for women (Hetherington *et al* in Gullahorn 1987). The process of identity formation differs for men and women (Hancock 1980;

Jordan and Surrey in Bernay and Cantor 1984). Most women suffer some disruption of identity post-divorce.

There are a number of factors which have prompted the researcher to undertake this study:

- her witnessing the anguish experienced by divorcing women friends across many years;
- her awareness of the numbers of women in great distress who have sought divorce counselling;
- her own previously unsubstantiated impression that women have benefitted from participation in divorce counselling groups;
- the knowledge that divorce affects women and men in differing ways;
- the related psychiatric morbidity associated with divorce.

The researcher's clinical experience at FAMSA in the past has suggested that women have benefitted from participation in divorce adjustment groups. These groups have been short-term groups of 10 - 12 weeks' duration. No systematic evaluation of this treatment modality had been conducted by the researcher; therefore this study has been undertaken.

This is a descriptive-evaluative study. The broad purpose is the description of the influence of participation in an unstructured group on divorce adjustment in women. The central question however, is the evaluation of those aspects of integrated group work which prove to be a mediating influence on the adjustmental variables for women. The development of new hypotheses concerning the relationship between integrated group work and divorce adjustment is an anticipated gain (Mouton and Marais 1988).

Divorce adjustment is an elusive concept. Attention has been paid to this in the literature review in chapter two. Paul Bohannon's (1973) concept of psychic divorce is presented; as are research studies of divorce adjustment in women

(Wallerstein 1986; Hetherington *et al* in Gullahorn 1987; Wallerstein and Blakeslee 1989). The researcher's definition of divorce adjustment for the purposes of this study has been markedly influenced by Bruce Fisher's *Divorce Adjustment Factors* (1983), which have been modified to provide one variable for this study.

An increasing number of therapeutic interventions and group programmes have been developed in response to the increasing number of divorcees seeking assistance from mental health professionals. This literature is reviewed in chapter three. It should be noted that while the formal definition of divorce/divorcee is gender-based, the common usage in the literature is the use of the feminine term to encompass all divorced people. This practice will be adhered to in this study.

The researcher espouses a psychodynamic understanding of human beings. She therefore conceptualizes that current behaviour, difficulties and symptomatology are greatly influenced by the experience of early childhood. Divorce as a major loss reactivates the memories and feelings of earlier, unresolved losses. Healing is a slow process. It is facilitated by the re-experience of pertinent affect combined with an integration of cognition or insight.

The researcher's theoretical perspectives on integrated group work are eclectic. They have been formed and influenced by the courses in social group work taught and supervised at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in the School of Social Work, University of Cape Town. This approach to group work is underpinned by the social group work literature; Douglas (1979), Northen (1968,1989) and Heap (1977;1985) are the main authors. Group psychotherapy theory (Johnson 1963, Foulkes and Anthony 1973, Yalom 1975) is complementary. The researcher places great value in the potential of groups provided attention is paid to appropriate group processes so that curative influences may become operative.

Alternative group counselling approaches and the researcher's definition and theoretical perspectives on integrated group work are presented in chapter four. Irvin Yalom's Curative Factors (1975) have provided an important variable for this study.

Research design and methodology is presented in chapter five. This is a clinical case study and the researcher carries out a dual role as researcher and group worker. An attempt has been made to use these terms appropriately: 'researcher' is used in any discussion pertaining to preparation for the study, research design and theoretical reflection; 'group worker' is used when the writer is discussing her involvement in the group as a group worker.

Multiple sources of data are utilized since this is the recommended procedure in descriptive studies (Mouton and Marais 1988). These data sources comprise structured interviews, the use of the Hudson Clinical Management Package scales (1982), content analysis of group meetings and a statistical correlational analysis of the influence of Yalom's Curative Factors on the Divorce Adjustment Factors.

The findings are presented in chapters six to nine. Chapters six and seven are parallel chapters and contain an analysis of structured interviews and Clinical Management Package scores for two discrete groups. Material is presented thematically. Chapter eight contains the content analysis of the major themes that emerged in the groups conducted by the researcher. That chapter concludes with an evaluation of the salient group processes. The ninth chapter is brief and presents the findings of a matrix of Yalom's Curative Factors and Fisher's Divorce Adjustment factors.

The study concludes with conclusions, comment and reflection and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

THE DIVORCE PROCESS AND DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT

PHOENIX

Are you willing to be sponged out, erased,
cancelled, made nothing?
Are you willing to be made nothing?
dipped into oblivion?
If not, you will really never change.

The phoenix renews her youth
only when she is burnt, burnt alive,
burnt down to hot flocculent ash.
Then the small stirring of a new small bub
in the nest
with strands of down like floating ash
Shows that she is renewing her youth like the eagle,
Immortal bird.

D.H. Lawrence

This chapter introduces and discusses the divorce process and the concept of divorce adjustment. Bohannon's (1973) conceptual model of the divorce process is summarized and discussed. The findings of four American research studies into divorce adjustment in women are presented. A definition of divorce adjustment is formulated for the purposes of this study.

2.1 DIVORCE - A MAJOR DISRUPTION

There is a large body of evidence suggesting that divorce is an extremely disruptive ordeal for all who experience it. The literature abounds in graphic descriptions of the impact of divorce on men, women and children. Divorce has been described as "an acute and bewildering catastrophe" (Dominian 1968:158); "one of the most stressful transitions in contemporary American life" (Hetherington *et al* in Gullahorn 1979) and "an identity crisis, a self-worth and self-image crisis, a financial and life-style crisis, a child-rearing and a life-goals crisis" (Taylor 1980).

Holmes and Rahe (1967) cite divorce as the second most stressful human experience, ranking second only to the death of a spouse. Clinical experience has led the researcher to question the validity of this assessment, since divorce is a complex, multifaceted, yet incomplete loss. Except for suicide, death does not involve decision-making and active rejection. The bereaved tend to idealize the departed and experience more sorrow than anger. Divorcees tend to denigrate an ex-spouse, and are able to find little consolation in any positive memories of the marriage. Their predominant emotions may be rage, anger and a desire for revenge or guilt, remorse and relief, depending on the divorcee's active or passive role in the decision-making process. Crosby *et al* (1983) and Clulow and Mattinson (1988:159) would concur with these opinions.

The divorce decree is often regarded as a legal event. The divorce procedure is also a multifaceted process and spans a considerable period of time. Some years may elapse between pre-divorce disillusionment and the post-divorce recovery. Glaser and Borduin (1986:234) have aptly described divorce as "a complex psychosocial process involving the interaction of a number of family and ecological systems".

Douglas Sprenkle and Catherine Cyrus (1983:55) are of the opinion that emotionally-abandoned divorcees are over-represented in therapists' case loads. Yet a surprising discovery in the literature is that everybody suffers as a result of a divorce. It might be simplistically thought that only the rejected partner will experience loss. Yet there is widespread evidence that even people who actively sought divorce are surprised at the extent of the disruption and disorganization in their lives (Gurin *et al* 1960; Dominian 1968; Spanier and Thompson 1981). Weiss illuminates this phenomenon:

There persists after the end of most marriages, whether the marriages have been happy, or unhappy, whether their disruption has been sought or not, a sense of bonding to the spouse. In all ways this persisting bond to the spouse resembles the attachment bond of children to parents described by Bowlby in 1969. (1976 :138)

The literature is clear that resolution or divorce adjustment is not a simple process. The 'bonds' described by Weiss do not sever easily. Wise (1980) and Wallerstein (1986) have noted that women have often remained emotionally involved with an ex-spouse for years following a divorce. Judith Wallerstein and Sandra Blakeslee (1989) have found that in only ten *percent* of divorced couples had both spouses managed to construct happier lives 10 years later.

From these opinions, it is clear that by any standard divorce is a crisis and a major disruption for each person, in any divorcing family.

Table 2.1: Comparison of separation and divorce adjustment stages

Time Sequence	Authors and Stages									
	Bohannon (1970a)	Herrman (1974)	Kessler (1975)	Wiseman (1975)	Weiss (1975)	Brown (1976)	Froiland/Hozeman (1977)	Levy/Joffe (1977)	Kraus (1979)	Smart (1979)
Before Separation	Station I: Emotional Divorce	Stage I: Denial	Stage I: Disillusionment	Stage I: Denial	Stage I: Erosion of Love	Stage I: Decision Making	Stage I: Denial		Stage I: Denial	Stage I: Trust vs. Mistrust
		Stage II: Anger	Stage II: Erosion	Stage II: Loss and Depression			Stage II: Anger			Stage II: Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt
Separation		Stage III: Bargaining	Stage IV: Physical Separation	Stage III: Anger and Ambivalence		Stage II: Physical Separation	Stage IV: Depression	Stage I: Separation	Stage II: Anger/Guilt/Regret	Stage III: Initiative vs. Guilt
		Stage IV: Depression								
After Separation to Legal Divorce	Station II: Legal Divorce		Stage V: Mourning	Stage IV: Reorientation of life style and identity	Stage II: Transition	Stage III: Restructuring: Phase 1. Emotional 2. Legal 3. Parent-child 4. Economic 5. Social			Stage IV: Focus on one's own present functioning	Stage IV: Industry vs. Inferiority
	Station III: Economic Divorce									
	Station IV: Co-parental Divorce									
Goal: Adjustment	Station V: Community Divorce	Stage V: Acceptance	Stage VI: Recovering A. Second Adolescence B. Hard Work	Stage V: Acceptance and new level of functioning	Stage III: Recovery (Persistence of attachment)	Stage IV: Restructuring: Fairly stable and autonomous life style	Stage V: Acceptance	Stage II: Individuation	Stage V: Acceptance of new life style	Stage V: Identity vs. Role Confusion
	Station VI: Psychic Divorce							Stage III: Re-connection		Stage VI: Intimacy vs. Isolation
										Stage VII: Generativity vs. Stagnation
										Stage VIII: Ego Integrity vs. Despair

2.2 DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT - THE LITERATURE

There appear to be three broad streams of literature discussing divorce adjustment. The first stream consists of the conceptual models of the divorce process (see table 2.1). The second stream comprises the research studies that describe divorce adjustment in women (Wise 1980; Hetherington *et al* in Gullahorn 1976; Wallerstein 1986; Brown *et al* 1976). The third stream is made up of clinical studies. Their focus is narrower in that they assess change in specific variables, in response to an intervention or therapeutic programme. These research studies will be discussed in 3.3. Particular attention has been paid to women's experience and women's issues as has been noted in the introduction.

2.2.1 Divorce adjustment: a definition

As has already been mentioned, divorce adjustment is an elusive concept. In the opinion of many authors it is non-definitive and non-standardized. There is no established consensus upon the usage of the term in the literature (Rose and Price-Bonham 1973, Price-Bonham and Balswick 1980).

In a decade review Price-Bonham and Balswick (1980) have identified several limiting factors in regard to the concept and stages of 'divorce adjustment'. These include:

- a lack of definition
- a lack of consistent measures
- a lack of empirical research documenting stages of adjustment
- the stages of adjustment are cyclical and often overlap.

In the literature review that follows, it will be seen that formal definitions are limited, that a general review of the literature is enlightening, but does not provide a definition adequate for clinical purposes. At the close of this chapter (2.5) the

researcher will formulate a definition based on an understanding of the literature, relevant for clinical purposes in the context of this study.

Goode and Raschke and Barringer are among the few theoreticians who have attempted to define divorce adjustment. Goode defines the adjustment process as:

...one by which a disruption of role sets and patterns and of existing social relations, is incorporated into the individual's life pattern, such that the roles accepted and assigned do not take the prior divorce into account as the primary point of reference. (1965:19)

Raschke and Barringer (1977:26) identify three components of divorce adjustment:

- change in family functioning
- level of satisfaction with the divorce
- stress or problems attributed to the divorce.

Broadly speaking, divorce adjustment seems to pertain to a number of psychological and practical tasks which need to be accomplished as well as a number of stages which need to be negotiated. The former will be identified in this section, while the latter will be considered in the discussion of conceptual schemes (2.3).

The psychological tasks include intrapsychic and interpersonal aspects. Divorce is widely understood as a grief process (Weiss 1976; Fisher 1976; Saul and Scherman 1984; Crosby *et al* 1983). The work of mourning requires a confrontation of the inner disorganization and despair (Bowlby 1979:83), and redefinition of identity.

Changes occur in the entire interpersonal network. The process of disengagement from the ex-spouse is complex. In the midst of marital dissolution, parents are required to maintain a respectful co-parental relationship, 'in the child's best interests'. For some parents this is an impossible task (Isaacs *et al* 1986; Jacobs 1988).

The relationship between children and both custodial and non-custodial parents undergoes change, as do relationships with former in-laws. The former couple's friends tend to become polarized in their loyalties when divorce looms. Losses and re-negotiation of these relationships are inevitable.

All members of divorcing families encounter changes in the structures and routines of daily living. At least one adult, if not both, changes a place of residence. Economic changes occur. Responsibilities for homemaking and maintenance are re-allocated. The daily care of and responsibility for children is influenced by custodial or non-custodial parental status.

Sharon Price-Bonham and Jack Balswick (1980:964) have identified some of the demographic and social-psychological adjustmental variables. Divorcees who were rejected, deserted unexpectedly, suffered economic disadvantage, had the care of young children and were socially isolated experienced greatest adjustmental difficulties.

Although the literature has not provided a clear definition of divorce adjustment it has suggested that adjustment may be a process, rather than an entity. In the next section, some of the conceptual models and findings of researchers and clinicians will be presented and discussed.

2.3 CONCEPTUAL SCHEMES

Connie Salts tabulates ten conceptual schemes of the stages or stations of divorce (Bohannon 1970; Herrman 1974; Kessler 1975; Wiseman 1975; Weiss 1975; Brown 1976; Froiland and Hozman 1977; Levy & Joffee 1977; Kraus 1979 and Smart 1979). See table 2.1. With the exception of Bohannon and Brown, the focus is largely on the emotional and personal aspects of divorce adjustment. Herrman

and Froiland and Hozman seek to apply the Kubler-Ross (1969) understanding of the bereavement process to divorce recovery.

Yet the differences experienced between widowhood and divorce are greater than the similarities (Schwartz and Kaslow 1985). Crosby *et al* dispute that a bereavement model is adequate for the understanding of divorce grief. In their view:

There is a vague similarity of sequence but the pattern, the order, the dynamics and the marked circularity of grief resolution in divorce tends to lead us to the conclusion that the experience of bereavement due to death and the experience of grief resolution resulting from divorce are similar in the fact that they are both generally considered to be stressors in crisis situations. (1983:16)

According to Kaslow in Gurman and Kniskern (1981:668) Bohannan's 1973 model is the earliest published in time sequence and one of the most clearly delineated. The latter captures the complexity of the issues, in that divorce is a major personal crisis, in a society that is ill-equipped to support families during the crisis and post-divorce. The six divorce stations may occur in varying sequences, at differing intensities, but appear to be inevitable aspects of the divorce process.

Emotional divorce

For Bohannan this is the first visible stage of a deteriorating marriage. Spouses withdraw emotionally from the relationship, since they find it hard to tolerate the intensity or ambivalence of their feelings. Mutual trust and attraction have disappeared. Antagonism and disappointment are prevalent.

Bohannan regards the inability to tolerate growth and change in the partner, or to see the partner as she/he really is, to be at the root of emotional divorce.

In his view, serious marital tension and conflict may be displaced onto sex and money, when the real issues cannot be named. The spending of money is one

means of enhancing the self. When the self is threatened by a waning marriage, tension may well be expressed about a partner who is 'mean' or 'extravagant'. Since sexuality is closely associated with the integration of the personality, it is not surprising that disturbance in the spousal relationship may be expressed in sexual symptoms.

He differentiates between bereavement and divorce grief, and identifies the difficulties related to grieving when there are no facilitating rituals.

Legal divorce

Judicial divorce, as it is practised today in the USA, is a legal post-mortem on the demise of an intimate relationship (Bohannan 1973:480).

As it emerged in the United States of America, legal divorce was the state's means for responding to the family disruption brought about by emotional divorce. Until recently no country had granted its citizens the clear right to divorce, as they had a clear right to marry. Divorce required 'grounds'. The innocent were vindicated, the guilty were punished. Lawyers became the first 'divorce experts', yet certainly in the 1970s, few had any training in family sociology or psychology.

Major difficulties arose in that the complexities of the situation, as disclosed by clients, needed to be couched in legal terms. In uncontested divorces, or those where the legal process has been able to bring about a settlement, the judicial hearing is brief. Bohannan notes that the legal processes do not allow for discharge of the emotions that are evoked by emotional divorce and the litigation process.

It must be noted that since 1973, most of the American states have introduced 'no fault' divorces. In South Africa divorce may now be granted on grounds of 'irretrievable breakdown', yet the legacy of earlier legislation is enshrined in the attitudes of many lawyers and divorcing people, if not in the statutes. Adversarial lawyers may fan the fires of a couple's divorce-related conflicts. Alternatively, the

couple may enlist the lawyers to do the fighting for them. There is no doubt that the adversarial process can exacerbate divorce distress. In recent years, there has been a greater awareness of the possibility of co-operation between lawyers and mental health professionals. Various centres have offered courses in a mediational rather than an adversarial approach to divorce.

Economic divorce

This pertains to the division of assets and property, the payment of alimony and child support for minor children. Bohannon notes that irrational motives such as revenge or self-abnegation are more often in evidence than the facts of relative need, when financial settlements are being considered.

The principles pertaining to child support are obvious. As long as a father as the major breadwinner is able to do so, the responsibility for supporting children lies with him (1973:483). While the principle is simple, implementation is not. Default on maintenance is a common problem. Custodial mothers respond to non-payment with their own vengeful strategies of discrediting a father or curtailing access.

Co-parental divorce and the problem of custody

The term co-parental refers to the relationship between adults who are divorced from each other, yet bound together as the parents of a child. Bohannon's reflection on the etymology of 'custody' is enlightening. It refers to "responsibility for the care of" someone. It also means "imprisonment." He states :

When we deal with the custody of children in divorces, we must see to it that they are 'in the care of' somebody, and that the care is adequate - we must also see to it that the custody is not punitive or restricting. (1973:53)

Under common law a father had absolute property rights over a child. Current practice has inverted common law. Mothers are awarded custody in 80 to 90% of divorces (Richards in Walczak and Burns 1984; Areen 1978:536 in Kaslow). The overriding consideration in all cases is that the court takes what action it considers to be in 'the best interests of the child.'

Bohannan understands the core of co-parental difficulties to be related to issues of identity. "Lasting pain" prevailed where parents had different aspirations for their children, "morally, spiritually, professionally, and even physically."

This very difference of opinion about the goals of living may have lain behind the divorce. It continues through the children... when a child may become a living embodiment of the differences in basic values. (Bohannan 1973:485)

Community divorce and the problem of loneliness

Divorcees report that disruption in their social network is a common and widespread occurrence. This is not surprising, since changes in civil status or life transitions almost invariably mark changes in friendships and significant communities (Bohannan 1973:501). In-law relationships and those with other married couples are particularly vulnerable. Many divorcing people whose community is a religious one experience ostracism in varying degrees. A number of self-help groups have arisen in response to this human need for relatedness.

Psychic divorce and the problem of autonomy

In this divorce station the problem of autonomy must be confronted and overcome. For Bohannan, this means "the separation of the self from the personality and influence of the ex-spouse." Kaslow in Gurman and Kniskern states succinctly:

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 a specific mate, what unresolved intrapsychic difficulties contributed to the marital strife, and what combination of factors led to the divorce. Once this happens, there can be some equanimity in acceptance of one's current status. (1981:672)

2.3.1 Discussion of conceptual schemes

Paul Bohannon's conceptual scheme is valuable. The delineated stages identify essential work that must be done by divorcing people, and provide some acknowledgement of the affective component, although this is understated. The knowledge of these stages has allowed the present researcher to 'backtrack' with clients who have short-circuited some of these stages, perhaps because of denial, a premature new relationship or an overhasty final divorce decree.

Some of Bohannon's findings and opinions are dated, but do however provide an historical perspective on attitudes which have influenced an understanding of the divorce process for clients and legal and mental health professionals.

The researcher disputes Bohannon's claim that emotional divorce is a mutual experience for couples at a conscious level. Her clinical practice has indicated that usually one partner terminates the marriage. The other partner who is still emotionally invested in the marriage utilizes his/her customary defensive mechanisms to fend off the pain and anxiety related to the loss of the marriage. Rarely is divorce a conscious mutual decision. This view is supported by Sprenkle and Cyrus (1983:55).

Bohannon's discussion on the central guiding tenet of custody decisions 'in the best interests of the child' is fairly limited. This concept has come under considerable discussion in recent scholarship. Kaslow cites Goldstein, Freud and Solnit (1973) and Boszormenyi-Nagy and Spark (1973) who hold opposing views about this matter. The former authors state that:

...consistency and object constancy are of paramount importance and that if visits by the non-custodial parent are anxiety-producing or in other ways detrimental to the child, the custodial parent should be able to end the visits. (Gurman and Kniskern 1981:670)

For the latter authors:

The invisible loyalties inherent in relationships with one's biological parents, no matter who they are, or what they have done, have a continuing existential reality and are inviolate. (Gurman and Kniskern 1981:670)

Walczak, following Richard's (1981) overview of British custody decisions summarizes the dilemma aptly:

...what constitutes the welfare of the child has not been defined. Court decisions are often made in accordance with unwritten rules governed to a large extent by principles, attitudes and precedents. (1984:132)

It is clear that legal and mental health workers need to work together to explore this sensitive issue.

The concept of psychic divorce raises the issues of maturity or individuation as possible responses to the divorce crisis. Achieving psychic divorce even partially is a task that requires insight, endurance and courage, the withdrawal of projections, and acceptance of one's own limitations and humanness.

In the researcher's view, there are some problematic aspects to psychic divorce in women. Independence and autonomy are important components of psychic divorce, yet women's predominant socialization has been for dependence and relatedness. It could be argued that women's identity is achieved through connectedness and relationship (Cantor 1984). Because of the complexity of the task, it is unlikely that many divorcees will attain psychic divorce without lengthy psychotherapy, or some other equally major transformative experience.

Bruce Fisher (1978) is a clinician rather than a stage theorist. He acknowledges the diverse aspects of divorce. In his view, once divorcees have addressed the

emotional, psychological and social aspects of divorce, they are empowered to deal with the legal, financial and parental matters. His text has proved invaluable to the researcher as it expands on the multifaceted nature of divorce adjustment.

The Fisher Divorce Adjustment Scale was developed as a tool to measure how people have adjusted to the "ending of their love relationship" (1978:xi). The researcher sorted Fisher's 100 questions into 9 major categories, as follows:

- reduction in preoccupation with the ex-spouse
- comfort with being alone
- experiencing self-esteem
- reduction of emotional distress
- management of divorce-related feelings
- attitudinal changes to the divorce
- social relationships
- an acceptance of divorced status
- satisfaction / competence in the daily occupation

His Divorce Adjustment Scale has thus provided the basis for the Divorce Adjustment Factors (DAF) which form one variable for this study and the researcher's definition of divorce adjustment. The DAF variables are defined in Appendix 1.

In this section we have considered a conceptual model delineating the stations of the divorce process. In the following section, research findings of the actual divorce adjustment of women will be presented.

2.4 RESEARCH STUDIES: WOMEN'S ISSUES

The focus of the research studies is narrow. Attention is paid to divorce adjustment in women. Four research studies have been consulted in order to clarify and make explicit these women's issues. All studies were of middle-class American subjects. None were clinical studies. None of the divorces could be described as 'high conflict' divorces. All were longitudinal studies of between one and ten years post-divorce (Hetherington *et al* in Gullahorn 1979; Wise 1980; Brown *et al* 1976 and Wallerstein 1986). The major findings are presented as follows:

2.4.1 Practical problems

Employed divorced women had little time to themselves. The combined demands of employment, parenting, homemaking, and home maintenance were found to be major stressors.

Ratings of economic stress were significantly correlated with ratings of depression and incompetence for divorced women. The sense of helplessness in divorced women in the face of economic duress was not only related to available income, but also to feelings of incompetence engendered by sex role ideology and by the lack of experience together with discrimination encountered in financial dealings (Hetherington *et al* 1979). This finding was supported by Brandwein, Brown and Fox (1974) who reported that financial discrimination denies 'head of household' status to divorced women through refusal of credit, mortgages, loans and insurance to divorced women.

2.4.2 Parent-child relationships

Parenting was fraught with stress in a particular way for custodial mothers, especially the mothers of sons. Paternal contact with children diminished

not differ significantly from that at marital rupture, when 44% of women and 20% of men were intensely angry.

markedly, even among initially concerned fathers, after two years. Many women described single parenting as stressful.

Myra Wise (1980) found that there was often a prolonged period of unstable maternal behaviour; physical unavailability to children because of new jobs, depressed mood and tearfulness, neediness and inappropriate demands for intimacy. Some mothers had great difficulty in tolerating their children's sad affect.

2.4.3 Self-concept and emotional adjustment

There are many differences between the self-concept and emotional adjustment of parents in divorced and intact families. Post-divorce, both parents experience a high level of anxiety, tension, depression, rejection, anger and incompetence. The effects however are more sustained for mothers, especially for the mothers of sons. Initially, while divorced men seem to undergo greater changes in self-concept than do women, the effects are longer lasting and more severe in women.

Divorced women felt themselves to be physically unattractive, once they had lost the identity and status associated with being a married woman and experienced general feelings of helplessness. The ebullient sense of freedom, experienced by 25% of women, which initially alternated with apprehension and depression was short-lived. Within a year, this had largely been replaced by depression, anxiety or apathy (Hetherington *et al* in Gullahorn 1979; Weiss 1976:141).

Judith Wallerstein(1986:70) found that anger was sustained for women. "Intense anger and bitterness appear not to have faded much over the decade." Her striking finding was that the incidence of very angry adults at the ten-year mark did not differ significantly from that at marital rupture, when 44% of women and 20% of men were intensely angry.

The continuing centrality of anger in women was linked significantly to several issues; among these were an incremental rise with age at divorce, loneliness, the stress of being a single parent, and continued anxiety about living alone. Unrelenting anger was related to economic issues, although not as strongly as to psychological issues. Greater self-esteem, related to occupational satisfactions, did not moderate the animosity which many women continued to feel. Remarriage often failed to diminish anger, although there was no evidence that chronic anger had interfered significantly with the new relationship.

Not many adults appeared to have reflected on their own role in the marital failure. The research subjects, a group of well-educated women, 47% of whom had been in psychotherapy had suffered and grown in psychological stature. This growth had been largely in the field of reality testing and judgement, rather than self-knowledge. No correlation was found between psychological growth and sustained introspection into the causes of the divorce.

Wallerstein's most crucial findings were that women's ages at divorce were critical to post-divorce adjustment. Saul and Scherman (1984) concurred with this.

Women aged forty plus at separation: Over a decade, none of these women had remarried or entered into a stable love relationship. Older women were significantly poorer than younger women. The economic discrepancy between these women and their husbands was striking. Eighty *percent* of the men were secure, or very secure financially, compared with only 20% of the women.

Fifty *percent* of the group were clinically depressed. Psychosomatic symptoms were significantly higher than among younger women. All these women were moderately or severely lonely. Community, social or occupational involvements did not appear to ameliorate their suffering. Their primary desire was to be

married and maintain a stable family. Few had a career which gave meaning and satisfaction to their lives.

Women aged between twenty and forty: These women were on the whole happier and more secure economically. The greatest differences were between those who had remarried and those who had not. While there was no significant difference in psychiatric dysfunction or ego intactness between these two groups, there had been a marked deterioration in "severely neurotic" women who had not remarried. Loneliness was the most significant issue dividing remarried women from divorced or redivorced women. This loneliness was not alleviated by social or extended family involvements.

One of the relatively few encouraging findings was that several of the younger women had made unexpected major changes in their psychological functioning. Several became very successful in a highly competitive economic market- place for which they had neither previous experience nor education. This was often reflected in a striking rise in self-esteem and increased social poise. It needs to be noted that Rosbrow-Reich (1988) is cautious about psychological growth and intrapsychic development in response to divorce. In her view, the nature of the marital relationship and the extent to which it has permitted ego development may be the determining factor.

Myra Wise (1980) is fairly categorical that her subjects were involved in a disturbed mourning process and were preoccupied with loss and vulnerability. Psychological distress was marked. Projective tests conducted with her subjects indicated reconciliation fantasies, in women who maintained that they were happy post-divorce. In her view, many of the positive feelings expressed about divorce were part of an elaborate defense.

Emily Hancock (1980:19) writes as a psychotherapist rather than a researcher. She regards the family as "a substrate for integrity and self-definition, a crucible for the meaning-making process." Disruption in the family matrix constitutes "a rupture in the integrity of the meaning system and a threat to a sense of belonging". She regards this crisis as the central blow of divorce.

A further critical aspect for women is that of identity redefinition. For men, identity crystallizes in adolescence. It is occupationally related. Society's view of men is independent of their marital status. Women's identity is defined in terms of relationship. They suffer considerable identity loss with separation and their adult status is almost always diminished by divorce.

Carol Brown *et al* (1976) posit that from a feminist perspective, divorce may be the "chance of a new lifetime". In their study, while women acknowledged that the price of independence from a husband is high, there were benefits that accrued. Financial instability was the greatest disadvantage for these women. Among the advantages were freedom from restrictive routines, increased personal autonomy, a sense of competence and the opportunity to develop parent-child relationships "without any interference".

2.4.4 Interpersonal difficulties

Divorced women experienced a fair degree of emotional disruption in their social lives. The dissociation from married friends was greater for women than for men. Many women lost relationships that were related to their husbands' occupational and professional associations.

Employed women fared better socially, but experienced difficulties with managing household chores. They too had difficulty in obtaining relief from childcare. While maternal employment had positive effects for women, the effects were

sometimes adverse for their children, especially if maternal employment coincided with divorce.

Post-divorce spousal relationships were characterized by acrimony, resentment, feelings of desertion, memories of painful conflicts and marked by considerable ambivalence (Hetherington *et al* in Gullahorn 1979).

2.4.5 Discussion of research findings

The findings of these studies are alarming. They indicate that divorce has a widely differing impact on men and women. Certain social, economic and emotional issues are specifically 'womens' issues'. Pernicious effects are sustained longer in women and are clearly in evidence a decade post-divorce. Only a small group of women make a good recovery.

In the researcher's opinions there remain some issues which do not seem to be addressed. There has been no identification of those women most at risk. Clinical experience suggests that the occurrence of maternal deprivation (Miller 1981) and/or significant early or concurrent loss (incapacitating illness or death of parents) markedly exacerbates adverse reactions and prolonged adjustment difficulties. It is argued that divorce adjustment needs to be understood in the context of the personality structure and life history of each woman.

There does not seem to have been an adequate recognition of the influence of a patriarchal society on divorce adjustment in women. The deleterious effects of womens' socialization for dependency, and the limited educational and career opportunities permitted for women create grave difficulties especially for older women post-divorce.

The researcher is cautious of the feminist perspective that divorce may be "the chance of a new lifetime" as postulated by Carol Brown *et al* (1976). In the

former's view, the research findings reflected the subject's bravado and defensiveness. Furthermore, she disputes the claim that divorced (heterosexual) women do not long for new intimate relationships. This has not been her experience, nor was it supported by the findings of the rigorous Wallerstein (1986) study.

Low self-esteem in women, exacerbated by the divorce and the guilt related to failure of a marriage seems to incapacitate women greatly in managing practical chores. Few women have been able to expect co-operation from their children in terms of sharing household tasks, or understood that benefits are reciprocal and mutual. There has been some evidence of guilty, overcompensatory mothering.

It is thus argued that the existing studies have not understood the full impact of divorce-related distress in women. Neither the role of intrapsychic factors nor the influence of patriarchal society on divorcing women have been adequately commented upon.

The researcher acknowledges that her criticism of the research findings as presented needs to be tempered by the fact that these are longitudinal studies and her predominant clinical experience with divorcees has been during the initial two-year crisis period. In addition the research subjects did not represent a clinical population.

2.5 DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT: FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS STUDY

This literature review has indicated that divorce adjustment is a long, arduous, multifaceted and complex process. Bohannon (1973) makes it explicit that there are many diverse tasks to be accomplished. Emotional divorce pertains to emotional separation and the partial dissolution of the attachment bond described by Bowlby (1969) and Weiss (1976). Legal divorce requires that a 'fair' rather than

placatory or retributive settlement is agreed upon. Economic divorce has specific implications for women. There is almost always a reduction in income. Many a woman is beset with the undesirable alternative of being at least partially financially dependent upon a man who is no longer committed to her, or of surviving financially when an ex-husband defaults on maintenance. Co-parental divorce requires the capacity to partialize feelings. Each divorced parent needs to be thoroughly respectful of a child's relationship with the other parent, even when every vestige of respect for the other as a spouse has been lost. Community divorce entails a resocialization process.

Paul Bohannon's (1973) final station, psychic divorce, requires arduous psychological work, leading to independence, the assumption of responsibility for personal wellbeing and the withdrawal of projections from the ex-spouse. It is apparent that these emotional and psychological tasks are extremely demanding. Furthermore they need to be accomplished in the midst of the multiple routine demands of daily living.

The research studies have been explicit that both the divorce experience and the recovery process differ for men and women. The majority of women carry major parental responsibilities. Emotional disequilibrium is sustained longer in women than in men, as is so clearly conveyed by Wallerstein. There is greater disruption of identity and greater personal dislocation. The researcher's clinical experience has concurred with these findings.

The researcher has formulated the following definition, which has been shaped by an understanding of the literature; Bruce Fisher's Divorce Adjustment Scale (1976) in particular, and her own clinical practice with divorcing women. It is modest in nature and it pertains to divorce adjustment in women in the context of

short-term intervention. For the purposes of this study therefore, divorce adjustment has been defined as:

A measure of acceptance of one's single status, some reduction in emotional distress, appropriate emotional expression of divorce related feelings, some recovery of self-esteem, improved insight as to the cause of marital breakdown, some social relatedness, adequate performance in the daily occupation, and some hope for the future.

In the next chapter, alternative therapeutic interventions as a response to the seriousness of divorce-related difficulties will be discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS

The literature review of the previous chapter has indicated very clearly that divorce is an extremely disruptive event in the life of families. This chapter reviews the new therapeutic sub-speciality of divorce therapy. Such therapy was necessitated in part by a large increase in the number of divorces but also by an increased awareness among the mental health community that divorcing people need help uncoupling and assistance with adjustment to their new status (Olsen, Russel and Sprenkle 1980).

A number of different models of divorce therapy exist. (Brown in Olsen 1976; Kaslow in Gurman and Kniskern 1981; Glaser and Borduin 1986; Sprenkle and Storm 1983) The appropriate selection of an intervention approach needs to be guided by the stage of the divorce process: pre-divorce, during and post-divorce.

3.1 CONJOINT AND FAMILY COUNSELLING

According to some authors, this is the mode of choice during the phase of marital dissolution (pre-divorce) and during the divorce (Storm and Sprenkle 1982; Isaacs, Montalvo and Abelsohn 1986; Whitaker and Miller 1967). Couples and families become involved in divorce counselling through a number of channels. Divorce counselling may be the unintended outcome of marital counselling (Hill 1987). A couple may have decided that divorce is inevitable and request assistance with the process of separation. A highly distressed member of the family may use his/her distress to summon the whole family into therapy.

Cheryl Storm and Douglas Sprenkle (1982) utilize an "ecological- developmental model" which includes couple or family therapy pre- and during divorce, and individual therapy post- divorce. Isaacs, Montalvo and Abelsohn (1986) are

adamant that family and couple therapy provide a very valuable milieu for couples facing a "difficult divorce", while Whitaker and Miller are fairly critical of individual counselling during the phase of marital dissolution.

Psychotherapeutic intervention on one side or the other in a marriage, when divorce is being contemplated may serve to destroy the possibility of reconciliation. Despite the therapist's efforts to remain neutral, he (sic) inevitably finds himself thrust into the role of catalyst, judge or alternate mate. (1967:57)

Despite the value of couple counselling during divorce, it is fraught with difficulties when the divorce decision is unilateral. Joint decision-making pertaining to divorce is not common. It has been concluded that in only about 15% of divorces "do both partners equally desire termination" (Berman and Turk 1981; Kaslow and Schwartz 1987:47; Sprenkle and Cyrus in Figley and McCubbin 1983).

Consequently, much divorce counselling is done with only one member or subsystem in a family.

Mediation and conciliation court counselling are two new specific modes of intervention for divorcing couples.

3.1.1 Divorce mediation

This is a short-term highly-structured intervention. Rules and roles are clearly spelled out. Participation by both partners is voluntary, but considered essential. The mediator is an impartial, trained third person, who assists the couple with the decision-making pertinent to the divorce settlement, taking into account the wellbeing of the entire family. Successful mediation terminates when the couple reach a mutually acceptable settlement that can be made legally binding. (The British term for divorce mediation is conciliation counselling.) According to

Kaslow in Gurman, (1981) who cites Coogler 1978, some of the advantages of structured mediation are as follows:

- issues are clearly defined
- procedural methods are adopted for the collection and examination of factual information
- all options for settlement of issues are systematically explored
- options are selected within socially acceptable guidelines
- consequences of options are considered.

In an excellent review of divorce therapy outcome, Sprenkle and Storm conclude that:

There is impressive evidence that mediation is superior to the traditional adversary process for custody and visitation disputes among couples with moderate conflict, relatively limited issues, and reasonable capacity to negotiate. (1983:252)

3.1.2 Conciliation court interventions

In some American states these courts offer non-compulsory counselling. In other states, a request from one partner makes conciliation counselling imperative prior to the granting of a marital dissolution. In South Africa a Family Court Bill and a Divorce Amendment Bill were published in 1985. The Hoexter Commission recommended that a family counselling service should include, *inter alia*, a conciliation process.

The conciliation process will, in effect, provide parties who are already involved in divorce proceedings with a counselling service. (Tregrove 1986)

Sprenkle and Storm concluded that :

Conciliation court counselling appears to increase the percentage of (at least temporary) reconciliations over the short term. (1983:252)

3.2 INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING

Distressed individuals seek individual counselling at all stages of the divorce process. The intervention offered will be determined by the stage or station of the divorce process and the theoretical persuasion of the therapist.

Individual counselling may be offered when a spouse is reluctant to participate in the counselling process. Sometimes it is prejudicial to her interests for a woman to make known her intentions to leave a marriage prior to adequate strategizing. Such counselling may address the issues of options, consequences and resources and may facilitate or impede the divorce decision for a person whose marriage is very stressful. Crisis intervention is the most appropriate form of intervention for the client who presents following an unexpected marital separation.

Individual psychotherapy may facilitate or impede divorce. A client may be empowered to face the reality that the partner's destructive behaviour is unlikely to change. Alternatively a client may come to see the extent of his/her projections onto the partner. As these projections are withdrawn, a more realistic relationship between the partners becomes possible.

In terms of post-divorce psychotherapy, de Fazio and Kleinbort (1975) are of the opinion that individual psychotherapy post-divorce can be "enormously beneficial in facilitation of psychic divorce."

3.3 GROUP COUNSELLING

There is a broad body of literature recommending group counselling post-divorce (Morris and Prescott 1975; Carter 1977; Fisher 1978; Shelton and Nix 1979; Bonkowski and Wanner-Westly 1979; Granvold and Welch 1979; Taylor 1980; Salts and Zongker 1983; Davidoff and Schiller 1983; Johnston 1984; Smith 1989).

This discussion on group counselling examines **clinical studies**, the third strand of the divorce adjustment literature referred to in 2.2. As has been mentioned in 2.2.1, research into divorce adjustment *per se* has been limited by severe methodological and theoretical constraints. Much research has been limited to single factor rather than multifactoral approaches.

The literature bears witness to a variety of divorce adjustment group programmes. The majority of existing research studies have been conducted in structured or semi-structured groups and have been single factor in their design (Granvold and Welch 1979; Salts and Zongker 1983; Smith 1989). Fisher's study (1976) is an exception, in that his groups were semi-structured and multifactoral in their design.

It is important that some attention is paid to the existing work, since this study departs from the more traditional approach to divorce groups in that it concerns the effect of an unstructured group on the divorce outcome process.

According to the divorce group literature, all groups were short-term, ranging from four to ten weeks in duration. The groups fall into the following broad categories: workshop format, structured or semi-structured and unstructured groups.

Structured and semi-structured groups

Structured and semi-structured groups appear to be the most common approach to group counselling for divorcees. Granvold and Welch (1979) found that problem-focussed, skill-oriented groups were effective in addressing problems inherent in post-divorce adjustment. The treatment procedures used in the group included cognitive restructuring, interpersonal competency training, modelling, behavioural rehearsal, group discussion and homework assignments.

Sheila Kessler (1978) conducted a post-test only comparative study of control, structured and unstructured divorce adjustment groups. She found that group

participants were more successful than members of a control group in regaining their sense of confidence and emotional autonomy and learning a better sense of self-mastery. The structured group was also more effective than the unstructured group. Her understanding of this phenomenon was that the structured experience may have provided a modelling order and security which made post-divorce feelings more manageable. Yet those clients who participated in an unstructured group expressed a significantly higher level of satisfaction with the group. Overall esteem was significantly higher. Salts and Zongker (1983) concur with these findings.

Bruce Fisher's (1976) experimental groups were educational and experiential. In his view emotional learning and relearning take precedence over all other aspects of divorce adjustment. His findings were in broad agreement with those of Kessler (1978). Participation in an experimental divorce adjustment group significantly improved adjustment. Salts and Zongker (1983:56) cite his research which indicates that divorcing people showed improvement in the following areas:

- acceptance of divorce
- disentanglement of the love relationship
- rebuilding of social relationships
- total divorce adjustment
- self-concept.

There was however no significant decrease in grief symptoms.

Diane Carter's (1977) feminist approach is eclectic. She uses a combination of gestalt, behavioural and cognitive restructuring techniques. In her view, the development of autonomy is an essential element of recovery for women. She regards women's groups led by women as the most effective mode of intervention.

It is apparent that there is a body of evidence supporting the position that participation in structured groups does facilitate divorce adjustment.

The divorce workshop.

Ida Davidoff, Mildred Schiller (1980) and Taylor (1980) report on a programme that views divorce as a major life transition. Attention is paid to the realities of dissolution and change which are pertinent to marriage and divorce. The programme is didactic and presented by a multi-disciplinary professional team, supplemented by some discussion. No formal evaluation appears to have been conducted on this mode of intervention.

Unstructured groups

Only a few reports of unstructured groups have been found, none of which contain any formalized evaluation. Morris and Prescott (1975) and Bonkowski and Wanner-Westly (1979) in their reports imply that their groups are unstructured. The former authors note that over time their counselling process shifts from a crisis-oriented to a developmental approach. For them a major aspect of adjustment, in addition to the provision of support, is the review of the former marriage undertaken in such a way as to facilitate acknowledgement of the facts of the clients' own life and emotional and behavioural inadequacies.

Bonkowski and Wanner-Westley (1979) consider the elements of emotional input, group support using interpersonal relationships and dealing with psychotherapeutic and intrapsychic concerns.

Discussion

The repertoire of possible interventions within divorce therapy indicates that the mental health profession has taken seriously the needs of divorcing and divorced

clients. Treatment has been made available to individuals, couples, families and groups at different periods of the divorce process. This has ranged from brief to long-term and from structured to unstructured. Yet it is the researcher's impression that most treatment options or programmes are structured and short-term. This may reflect the profession's prevailing view of divorce as a crisis and life transition.

The researcher recognizes divorce as a crisis. In her experience divorce is a major loss, which evokes the memories and feelings of earlier loss, failure and rejection. Divorce radically changes future expectations and is accompanied in the present by turbulent affect and social isolation for many people. These perspectives have led her to develop a way of working with this client group that facilitates mourning, reduces social isolation and understands present responses to the crisis of divorce in terms of the history and experience of each individual. Her counselling stance is presented in the section to follow.

3.4 A PERSONAL COUNSELLING STANCE

The researcher's theoretical stance is eclectic. Psychodynamic thinking is central (Malan 1979). She has some understanding of Object Relations theory (Salzberger-Wittenberg 1970; Mahler 1975) and Analytical Psychology (Whitmont 1973; Fordham, 1978). Work with divorcing women has required the inclusion of crisis theory and feminist perspectives.

Her therapeutic work with divorcees has evolved from reflective, supervised clinical practice. She has counselled women individually and in groups. The majority of these clients have been seen within one year of marital separation. It has become apparent that crisis intervention and grief work are the initial issues which have to be addressed. While it is possible that empowerment and the development of autonomy and independence could be fostered by social skills

training, her view is that these issues are profoundly influenced by intrapsychic factors and merit a psychodynamic approach.

Brief mention needs to be made of the divorce theorists who have informed her practice. The importance of Bohannon's conceptual scheme of the divorce process has already been acknowledged. Fisher's understanding of the multifaceted aspects of divorce adjustment provided guidelines for her initial practice.

Reva Wiseman (1975:206) along with other crisis theorists recognizes the importance of intervention early in the divorce process. She notes too that inherent in crisis are the opportunities for growth. In the process of working through the divorce distress, opportunity is provided for the reworking of unresolved adolescent conflicts related to identity, intimacy, sexuality, values and ethics.

Robert Weiss (1976), Bowlby (1979) and Wiseman (1975) stress the importance of adequate active grief work following a significant relationship loss. For Weiss (1976:136) and Wiseman (1975), the disruption of attachment is accompanied by marked anger and ambivalence. The addressing of this anger and ambivalence is a critical dimension of intervention. Wiseman (1975:206) emphasizes the importance of grief work, lest "there remain the danger of constantly living in the presence of the open casket of a dead marriage."

From a feminist perspective the crisis of divorce raises to consciousness many latent issues for women who were reared and educated (or not educated) in a patriarchal society. Women are reared to be deferential to parents, to men and to authority. In Carter's (1977) view the accomplishment of autonomy is a critical dimension of divorce adjustment. This requires that women begin to identify their own needs and wants. Often this capacity is underdeveloped as many women have been reared to be tuned in to the needs of others (Eichenbaum and Orbach

1986:42; Miller 1983:64). Many women have been socialized to be dependent and respond with fear and anger when the independence of an unsolicited divorce is thrust upon them.

Participation in a group ritualizes a major social and life transition, for which no rituals exist. The shared grieving has often had the quality of a wake, or a 'sitting shiva'. It has been as though, once women have had the opportunity to grieve the death of the marriage and all it symbolised, some 'rebirth' is possible. D.H.Lawrence's *Phoenix* has often been explored as the symbol of rebirth throughout the researcher's divorce groups.

All clinical work requires sound assessment based on diagnostic thinking. Specific client needs and the available therapeutic resources need to be considered. There are some women whose experience of significant maternal deprivation renders them particularly vulnerable during the divorce crisis. These women seem to need an extended period of individual counselling in order to regain some equilibrium. The possibility of psychotic breakdown would be an additional contra-indication for therapeutic group work.

There are many women however, who experience common, rather than idiosyncratic divorce-related difficulties. Social isolation, loneliness, discrimination against women, single parenting, father-child relationships, guilt, grief and rage are issues that divorcing women need to talk about repetitively. The commonality of these psychosocial concerns has provided the clinical basis for this researcher's practice of group counselling with divorcees. It has been her unsubstantiated impression that women have benefitted from these groups. They have referred friends to subsequent groups. Informal encounters with a previous group member have been encouraging. Women have spoken warmly of their group experience and of continued growth and healing. Often they have remained in

contact with other members of their group. For the purposes of this study she has elected to conduct a more formal evaluation of the influence of therapeutic groups on divorce adjustment in women. The development, rationale and practice for the researcher's eclectic approach to group counselling, termed integrated group work, will be presented in 4.4.

CHAPTER FOUR

GROUP COUNSELLING: THE ALTERNATIVES

There is an old Hasidic story of the Rabbi who had a conversation with the Lord about Heaven and Hell. "I will show you Hell," said the Lord and led the Rabbi into a room in the middle of which was a very big, round table. The people sitting at it were famished and desperate. In the middle of the table there was a large pot of stew, enough and more for everyone. The smell of the stew was delicious and made the Rabbi's mouth water. The people round the table were holding spoons with very long handles. Each one found that it was just possible to reach the pot to take a spoonful of the stew, but because the handle of his spoon was longer than a man's arm, he could not get the food back into his mouth. The Rabbi saw that their suffering was terrible.

"Now I will show you Heaven", said the Lord, and they went into another room, exactly the same as the first. There was the same big, round table and the same pot of stew. The people, as before, were equipped with the same long-handled spoons - but here they were well nourished and plump, laughing and talking. At first the Rabbi could not understand. "It is simple, but it requires a certain skill," said the Lord. "You see, they have learned to feed each other."

(Yalom 1975:12)

The researcher's motivation for group counselling has been presented; as has the evidence of the benefit of structured groups for divorcees. Pappell and Rothman (1980) differentiate between three major approaches to group work; mainstream social group work, group psychotherapy and structured groups. Each of these approaches will be considered, prior to a discussion of integrated group work, which is the researcher's eclectic approach to group counselling.

4.1 SOCIAL GROUP WORK

Catherine Pappell and Beulah Rothman note that there is widely accepted agreement that the mainstream group is characterized by common goals, mutual aid and non-synthetic experiences (1980:7). The researcher's basic group work training has been in social group work. Social work groups tend to be specific in their focus and short-term in their orientation. There has always been some focus on non-verbal activities, as an aid to facilitation of the purposes of the group.

There is a varying degree of structure and flexibility depending on the nature of the group and the worker's ability to contain, understand and interpret group processes. Recognition is paid to members' potential, rather than their pathology. Konopka (1978) uses the term 'member' rather than client, as this conveys a democratization of the process. It is a fundamental assumption that every member has the potential to contribute to and influence the group, and that the exercise of this power can generate inner growth and change for each member.

Helen Northen (1969,1988), Heap (1979,1985), and Douglas (1979) have made a major contribution to the researcher's knowledge and understanding of social group work. There are two central aspects of this theory that continue to influence her group practice. Douglas' understanding of group processes is vital. It is the recognition and conscious use of group processes which enhance the purposes of the group. Northen makes explicit a life-cycle understanding of group development. The group worker's role needs to be flexible in response to changing dynamics throughout the developmental stages of the group.

4.1.1 Group processes

In the preamble to his analysis of group processes, Douglas states that:

As a group is a dynamic, rather than a static entity its distinctive properties must also be dynamic and must almost certainly be what are referred to as 'group processes' plus those factors which influence the processes. It has been asserted that a group is a definable entity and therefore that group processes are discernible and can form the basis for intervention techniques. (1979:52)

Thus he regards the capacity for recognition and fostering of group processes as an essential quality in workers. He classifies group processes in the following ways (1979:53).

Table 4.1 Classification of group processes

Category 1	Basic	Interaction
Category 2	Structural	Group development Social structure Sub-group formation
Category 3	Locomotive	Purpose and goal formation Decision making
Category 4	Molar	Norms, standards, values Cohesion Group pressures (influence) Climate

He states succinctly that:

Interaction is absolutely fundamental in that without it no group or process exists. Thus interaction is an integral part, i.e. a generative factor, in all the other identified processes (1979:53).

Category 2 processes are largely defined as group-building processes. Group development will be discussed separately in 4.1.2. Guiding a group through its developmental cycle is an important activity for the group worker. The **Category 3 processes** are those which move a group on towards its operational ends. The molar processes of **Category 4** are essentially processes containing emotional elements which influence the other processes (1979: 53).

4.1.2 Group development

There are several models of group development (Johnson 1963; Sarri and Galinsky 1967; Northen 1969,1988 and Heap 1985). Helen Northen's model (1988) is presented here since the researcher is most familiar with it and it has been found to be valuable for a diagnostic understanding of group development. Heap (1977;1985) expands on some of Northen's perspectives. What is essential to note

is that the worker's role and responsibilities are dynamic in response to the developmental phases of group life. Northen identifies the following stages:

Selection and preparation of members

The group worker takes major responsibility for bringing the group into being, yet mutuality is of the essence of group work. While the group worker is assessing suitability for inclusion, potential members are assessing her and the proposed group.

Sound planning of composition and purpose is essential. Heap (1985:29) makes explicit six aims of group work:

- alleviating isolation
- promoting social learning and maturation
- preparing for an approaching crisis or life change
- solving or clarifying problems at the personal/familial level
- solving or clarifying problems in the members' environment
- achieving insight.

The major focus for Heap is ego enabling and strengthening. The goals for the group as a whole and for the individuals in the group are clearly defined at the outset of the group.

Orientation - inclusion

Inclusion is a core issue. Becoming acquainted, developing trust, managing the anxiety evoked in the group and the development of group cohesion are all major tasks during this phase. Members seek commonality and meaning. The fostering and nurture of group cohesion, the linking of members and norm-setting are stage-appropriate leader tasks. Formal contracting requires clear guidance from the leader, as well as an ability to foster democratic decision-making processes.

Dissatisfaction and power conflict

This mutual process was formerly referred to as 'testing out' (Northen 1969). The group worker revises her initial assessment of the members, their resources, needs and defenses. For members, issues of ambivalence and resistance come to the fore. The trustworthiness and competence of the leader, her capacity for empathy and fairness and her willingness to endure hostility are challenged. The group worker's readiness to tolerate negative transference and her understanding of the importance of this phase are crucial factors. It should be recognised that testing may occur at any stage during the group. It often follows some intense work on painful issues and certainly recurs at termination.

Mutuality and work

Two major emphases herald this stage of group development; the emergence of a cohesive group, with an interdependent membership and the use of the group as a problem-solving medium. Members raise their personal difficulties. To the extent that they have the freedom to prioritize their issues and work at their own pace, their sense of personal autonomy and responsibility is being fostered. Discussion tends to be more focussed than during the orientation phase.

The group worker's involvement in the actual programme is variable. Groups with people who are verbally inhibited require some planned non-verbal activities. The central task and responsibility, however, is the understanding, interpretation and reflection of group processes. It is this capacity in the worker that is fundamental to the functioning of a therapeutic group.

Separation, termination and transition

Separation and ambivalence are part of the central experience of the termination phase. According to Heap (1985:172-181) three conditions are necessary so that

the possible benefits of this phase may be fully exploited. The first is that the transition is to be recognized and faced. The second is that recognition must be given to the ambivalence, the nature and intensity of feelings aroused. Finally, review and evaluation of the work of the group is necessary. Northen stresses the importance of the worker's ability to recognize and interpret the common defensive reactions to termination; denial, regression, withdrawal, as well as the adaptive responses. Termination requires a balance of emotional and cognitive work.

4.1.3 The group worker's role

It will have become apparent that this is a multifaceted and flexible role. The central aspect, that of the ability to foster and maintain a group in its emotional and cognitive tasks and to attend to the group processes, actively using them in the service of the work, has already been mentioned. Northen (1969:61) stresses the importance of the ego supportive function of the worker, through the use of realistic reassurance, the enhancement of feelings of security and self-esteem in members and the transfer of group discoveries to the client's extra-group life. Heap (1985:107-126) emphasizes the worker's role as a model; the good parent, or efficient problem-solver and norm-setter.

4.1.4 Discussion of social group work

Tom Douglas' analysis of group processes is valuable, since it is based on a careful consideration of a large volume of social group work literature. It is a useful aid to the worker in any exploration of difficulties in a group. For example, if a group is 'stuck', a worker may seek to understand this 'stuckness' in terms of each of the categories, as a prelude to appropriate intervention.

Helen Northen's perspectives emphasize stage-appropriate worker interventions. They facilitate understanding of latent communication, which may be phase-specific and provide some guidelines for the evaluation of defensive or adaptive member behaviour patterns. For example, if group members begin extra-group socialization during the orientation phase, it is likely that this is a defensive move, rather than an adaptive one. Pappell and Rothman regard the conception of group development as a distinctive aspect of mainstream social group work.

This conception embodies a profound understanding of the growth of the group as a whole and the integration of the properties and energy in this change process in relation to purpose. (1980:9)

It may be seen that a major aspect of social group work is based upon democratic processes, which are extremely valuable, in that they empower people and augment the opportunities for self-determination. Effective leadership ultimately relates to the enhancement and development of clients' latent potential. The discussion of group psychotherapy that follows will indicate that some authors posit a more authoritarian style of leadership than does the social work literature.

It is argued that Northen, Heap and Douglas provide a sound basis for social group work, even though the major focus is on conscious rather than unconscious material. Their major contribution is the provision of a process orientation to group work. They have provided the basic theoretical underpinning for the researcher's own work.

4.2 GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY

Pappell and Rothman (1980:12) are of the opinion that Yalom (1975) has presented a theoretical integration of principles of group treatment which have the greatest congruence with social group work. This has cast some light on the researcher's intuitive affinity for Yalom's text.

Several authors caution that the terms 'group analysis' and 'group psychotherapy' are used interchangeably (Johnson 1963, Yalom 1975 and Foulkes and Anthony 1973). This discussion is limited to an understanding of group psychotherapy as the analysis/therapy of the group as an entirety, and not the analysis of individuals in the group. Yalom notes that possible goals are broad.

The possible goals of group therapy, which depend on the set of the leader and the composition of the group, may vary from support, suppression and inspiration, to the maintenance of reality testing and prevention of ward friction, to the restoration of functioning and the reinstatement of old defenses, to the rebuilding of new defenses and a change in coping style and characterologic structure. (1975:xi)

For Johnson (1963:15), group interactional patterns are emotionally stimulating; they are underpinned by each individual's conflict and anxiety, which is exacerbated in the group situation. Defensive mechanisms become manifest. The therapist receives transference projections, influenced by members' experience of their parents. This model of group therapy exploits the emotional behaviour between the group members and the therapist, in particular the manifestations of anxiety, during group meetings. In Johnson's view the goals and purpose of group therapy are:

- the improvement of reality testing
- promotion of socialization
- the development of a psychological aptitude
- provision of motivation for additional therapy.

Some commonality of members' needs is desirable. Johnson (1963:88) however, observes that irrespective of their diagnostic categories, people struggle with the same basic underlying difficulties, which he cites. (It may be noted that these difficulties may have contributed to marital breakdown, and would be exacerbated by divorce.)

- chronic repressed anger

- passivity and non-assertiveness
- chronic guilt
- low self-esteem
- difficulties in interpersonal relationships
- disturbing manifestations of anxiety
- distortions of reality
- conflicts with authority figures
- sexual conflicts.

Both Yalom and Johnson emphasize the importance of the group contract. This relates to setting, membership, frequency and length of meetings, whether the group is open or closed, the fee structure and confidentiality.

From a methodological perspective, psychotherapy groups are unstructured.

In our model of group therapy there is no outline or structure provided by the therapist. The group members actually set their own structure from the emotional interaction with each other and the group therapist. (Johnson 1963:206)

Group members' concerns and reflection in group meetings may pertain to their early or subsequent history, daily preoccupations, their symptoms or current relationships. Relationships within the group are of cardinal importance. The therapist fosters a focus on the 'here and now' interactions of members as a reflection of their inner tensions and usual (faulty or limited) responses to other people.

Leadership is discussed at some length by these three theorists. There is accord that the leader occupies a central position as "the most important person" (Johnson 1963:103), "solely responsible for creating and convening the group" (Yalom 1975:106). There is consensus that the capacity of the leader to care is of paramount importance.

Underlying all considerations of technique there must be a consistent, positive relationship between therapist and patient. The basic posture of the therapist to the patient must be one of concern, acceptance, genuineness and empathy. Nothing, no technical consideration, takes precedence over this. (Yalom 1975:105)

Yalom (1975:208) departs radically from the traditional analytic belief that resolution of the patient-therapist transference is the paramount curative factor. He calls for transparency in the therapist and "a judicious use of the therapist's own person."

In this regard, the findings of an outcome study of patients treated in strictly psychoanalytic group therapy should be noted:

The great majority of patients found their group treatment to be a depriving and frustrating experience which left them with resentment toward the clinic.... The sources of resentment have been both (a) the lack of care and consideration in the application of the method and (b) the frustrating nature of the psychoanalytic therapist-patient relationship itself. (Malan *et al* 1976:1314)

Yalom further believes that the theoretical persuasion of the leader is less important than the capacity to facilitate a climate where curative factors prevail. In his view, therapeutic change is an enormously complex process which occurs through the interplay of various guided human experiences, which he refers to 'curative factors'. He divides the curative factors into 11 primary categories:

- instillation of hope
- universality
- imparting of information
- altruism
- the corrective recapitulation of the primary family group
- development of socializing techniques
- imitative behaviour
- interpersonal learning
- group cohesiveness

catharsis
 existential factors.

These factors provide one variable for this study, they are defined in Appendix 2 and more fully discussed in chapters five and nine.

Both Johnson and Yalom acknowledge that careful member selection is a critical element in the establishment of a group and that the therapist's countertransference reaction during the selection and intake process is an important diagnostic criterion.

The therapist's feelings that he (sic) can help patients provides a rapport and bond for them that may contribute significantly to the progress of the group. The therapist's investment in the group members is part of the group therapy process that cannot be defined in concrete terms. (Johnson 1963:101)

One final and important criterion for inclusion is the therapist's personal feeling toward the patient. Regardless of the source, if the therapist experiences a strong dislike for or disinterest in the patient, he (sic) should refer the patient elsewhere. (Yalom 1975:238)

Johnson's style would seem to be more authoritarian than that of Yalom. In his view the following five qualifications and requirements influence the group therapist in his/her role (Colby 1951 as quoted in Johnson 1963:103):

- 1 a body of knowledge concerning normal and pathological thoughts and behaviour in our culture;
- 2 a logically cohesive group of theoretical concepts which are convenient in understanding this thought and behaviour;
- 3 technical experience in therapeutically integrating observations with concepts through clinical work with patients;
- 4 intuition as a practised and controlled ability to read between the lines and empathically grasp what the patient means and feels beyond the face value of what is being said;
- 5 awareness of the therapist's own inner wishes, anxieties, and defenses and their influence on his/ her therapeutic technique.

Johnson further considers the importance of diagnostic thinking, the clarification of the therapist's expectations for change in the patient, the understanding and

utilization of anxiety and silence in the group, the making explicit of themes as they emerge in the course of meetings. The majority of interpretations given to the group concern group processes.

Yalom pays considerable attention to the tasks and techniques of the therapist; among them creation and maintenance of the group, culture building and process commentary. His text is validated by his outcome studies.

No discussion about group psychotherapy is complete unless some recognition is given to the role of conflict and resistance. Foulkes and Anthony (1973;118) state lucidly and explicitly that conflict in therapeutic situations is pervasive and that categorizing it introduces artificial distinctions. Nevertheless, they identify four aspects of conflict: conformity, authority, dependency, and change. Each of these is a different facet of the overall dominance in the basic sense of the parent's domination over the child.

The conflicts pertaining to **conformity** have to do with the tension between individual narcissistic needs and the equally strong human need to belong. Conflicts about **authority** are an expression of the ambivalence which children experience towards parents. In a group of adults this may be manifested by the tension members experience between their gratitude for being understood and their disappointment or anger that the leader has not 'magically' cured them. In the researcher's view, sibling rivalry conflicts are an aspect of the conflict with authority. The expression of these conflicts is often subtle rather than overtly hostile.

All **dependency conflicts** have their origins in childhood. In the therapeutic situation, this may be experienced as neediness and helplessness, accompanied by shame about the infantile parts of the personality. In the researcher's view, highly-structured groups foster this dependency in a way that leads to disappointment.

Members are led to believe that an omniscient therapist knows what will heal their wounds.

The **conflict over change** is the most subtle. The leader and members work together for the ostensible purposes of change, yet what members really seek at a deep level is that they will be accepted, 'wounds and all.' Unless a leader can understand and work with this resistance, she will be puzzled by the apparent regressions in the group. Real intrapsychic change occurs slowly. Leaders need to be able to identify and acknowledge modest change.

4.2.1 Discussion of group psychotherapy

There are several concepts from this body of theory that have influenced this author in her development and practice of therapeutic group work. Each of those identified has become internalized in some way and is made use of consciously. James Johnson's understanding of the role of anxiety in group work, and his identification of themes has been helpful. Foulkes and Anthony's discussion on the four manifestations of conflict has been very valuable in working with resistance in groups. Yalom's exposition on curative factors has provided the basic manual for the researcher's group work. There has been a conscious attempt to promote these curative factors in her groups. What has been less specific, but as significant is that Yalom *par excellence* writes in such a way as to foster, in this reader at least, a sense of reverence for clients in their woundedness, and an attitude of humility and transparency, rather than omnipotence in the therapist.

4.3 STRUCTURED GROUPS - A CRITIQUE

The format and design of structured and semi-structured groups has been presented in 3.3 as has the researcher's critical evaluation. Pappell and Rothman (1980:16) identify the benefits of structured groups. Learning rather than

treatment is the hallmark. Structured groups are particularly valuable for the learning of life skills, the resolution and understanding of critical life themes and life transitions. Since purpose and programme are defined by the leader, the absence of early decision-making reduces initial confrontation or differences between group members.

However, the consensual, pre-determined form of the structured group may limit the group-building process as a source of growth and change for participants. Yalom is critical of structured programmes and exercises as accelerating devices, noting that:

The exercises appear to plunge members more quickly into a greater degree of expressivity, but the group pays a price for its speed. It circumvents many developmental tasks and it does not develop a sense of autonomy and potency. (1975:448)

The existing studies on structured groups reflect ages of participants, but do not reflect the time lapse since separation or divorce. While a structured group may be of benefit some years post-divorce, provided the loss has been adequately mourned, the researcher is of the opinion that this is a limited form of intervention for people undergoing a significant life crisis. In her view the structures and pre-planned programme restrict emotional discovery and expression. Furthermore, a structured group encourages dependency whereas a group-directed programme enhances autonomy and empowers people.

4.4 INTEGRATED GROUP WORK - AN ECLECTIC APPROACH

Integrated group work has evolved from the researcher's exploration and evaluation of her own practice as a group worker over a number of years. Initially, an integration of the structured approach within a social group work context was attempted. Focus on the 'programme' for any particular meeting was found, however, to be less helpful than giving women the therapeutic space where they

could reflect on old and new divorce-related concerns. Retrospectively, the researcher became aware that a programme may be effective primarily to allay a group worker's own anxiety and minimize the countertransferential elements in a group where pain abounds. For this reason structured groups may help novice group workers explore the territory of divorce groups in some safety. Some growing confidence as a practitioner and an affinity for Yalom's work permitted her to explore a more flexible approach which resulted in an integration of social group work and group psychotherapy. Supervision, discussion and consultation with Valerie Moss-Morris over a number of years and perusal of her thesis (1982) and conference paper (1990) have contributed immeasurably to the formulation of the ideas which are presented in this section. The researcher has presented her theoretical foundations and her personal counselling stance in 3.4. In 4.4 a general description of integrated group work and some discussion of her style and skills is submitted. For the purposes of this study, she has defined integrated group work as follows:

The integrated group is a treatment modality that facilitates the experience, expression, exploration and some resolution of divorce-related feelings, issues and difficulties. Meetings are unstructured. Current concerns take precedence over any pre-planned group activities. Leadership is democratic and flexible in response to the changing needs of the group throughout its life. Attention is paid to group processes. The fostering of curative factors is an essential leadership task.

4.4.1 Leadership style

A study of the efficacy of leadership in encounter groups (Lieberman et al 1973) found that the ideological leanings of the leader told little about actual leader behaviour. However, the effectiveness of the group was largely a function of the leader's behaviour. A factor analysis of a large number of leadership behaviour variables identified four different leadership functions:

- **emotional stimulation**
(challenging, confronting, activity, intrusive modelling by personal risk-taking and high self-disclosure);

- **caring**
(offering support, affection, praise, protection, warmth, acceptance, genuine concern);
- **meaning attribution**
(explaining, clarifying, interpreting, providing a cognitive framework, for change, translating feelings and experiences into a theoretical framework);
- **executive function**
(setting limits, rules, norms, goals, managing time; pacing, stopping, interceding, suggesting procedures).

These four leadership functions have a clear and striking relationship to outcome. To use the analogy of a graph, caring and meaning-attribution have a linear relationship to positive outcome. The higher these attributes, the higher the positive outcome. Emotional stimulation and executive function have a curvilinear relationship; too much or too little of these leader behaviours lowers the likelihood of positive outcome. The researcher has attempted to develop an appropriate balance of these attributes as a group worker.

4.4.2 Therapeutic skills

The following three sets of skills are thought to be necessary for facilitation in a therapeutic group.

Diagnostic and assessment skills

- A basic understanding of psychiatric diagnosis according to one of the official nosological categories; International Classification of Diseases - 9 (ICD 9) or the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Diseases 111R (DSM 111R). It is sometimes difficult to establish whether high levels of distress and disorganization in a divorcee reflect a severe reaction to loss, or fairly major personality disturbance. Accurate diagnosis will influence available intervention. Where a woman has an underlying major psychiatric illness, consultation with her psychiatrist is essential.

- A psychodynamic formulation which considers the woman, in the light of her developmental history, core intrapsychic difficulties, personal resources and use of predominant defenses.
- An ability to assess and evaluate member interactions, habitual patterns and group development and processes on an ongoing basis.

Relationship skills

Basic social work relationship skills are well documented and do not require much discussion. Biestek (1957) identifies them as individualization, the capacity to tolerate and work with "the purposeful expression of feelings" , controlled emotional involvement, acceptance, a non-judgemental attitude, the ability to permit and foster client self-determination, and confidentiality. The researcher feels that Hollis' concept of sustainment should be used with caution. The "direct expression of the worker's confidence or esteem for the client, or confidence that some external threat is not as dangerous as it seems"(1981:109) may be used defensively by counsellors. Casement (1990:122) would concur with this.

Basic psychotherapeutic relationship skills are extremely valuable. These include the capacity to tolerate a client's anxiety without resorting to reassurance, to accept transference projections until it is timeous to interpret them, to explore and work with countertransference.

While these clusters of relationship skills for individual counselling are a necessary preparation for a group worker, some of them may need to be held in abeyance for the greater good of the group. Initially, the group worker may need to use relationship capacities such as empathy or non- judgemental acceptance so as to permit group members to experience them. Ultimately, she needs to allow group

members to develop and express these qualities. It is in this way that the worker fosters and facilitates the development of curative factors in the group.

Yalom's understanding of relationship skills is most pertinent for group work intervention. He acknowledges that transference does occur and must be understood by the therapist. For some patients therapeutic benefit occurs through the resolution of transference issues, but for others, their prime therapeutic experience is via the medium of interpersonal learning in relationship with other members. He notes that a therapist who behaves as a good, providing, wise nurturing parent keeps a group in a dependent position. Growth, responsibility and autonomy are inhibited.

Some of the other therapist qualities which he values are spontaneity and transparency. He sets great store by therapists being human and 'real' with their group members (Yalom 1975:204-217).

Relationship qualities are developed through the therapist's own relationships, and not via theoretical perspectives. Supervision and psychotherapy, or group psychotherapy would be regarded as essential so that a therapist may come to know herself and her vulnerabilities, in order to use herself therapeutically in the group.

Intervention skills

Yalom (1975), Northen (1988), and Heap (1985) identify the basic creation, maintenance and culture-building or norm-setting skills without which no group is likely to be or remain therapeutic. The leader shapes norms as a technical expert, through the conscious and deliberate use of group processes and as a model-setting participant. This is done both through explicit or implicit social engineering, and through personal behaviour in the group (Yalom 1975:120). The skills which are

stage-specific and those which are necessary for the fostering of group processes have already been identified in the discussion on the work of Douglas and Northen.

There are an additional set of interventive skills which Yalom details (1975: 121-168). These are the skills which move a group on beyond the usual work conducted in a self-help group, a social work group, or a structured divorce group. They pertain to the ability of the therapist to work in the 'here and now', to bring the group to reflect upon immediate interpersonal transactions through activation and process illumination. It is the researcher's contention that as members become conscious of their own particular style of communication and relating to others that they are in a position to begin to consider their own contribution to marital breakdown, provided they have attained some level of emotional equilibrium.

There are however several factors which seem to preclude extensive use of these techniques in a twelve week group.

- The women are in crisis in the early weeks of the group. There is an urgency in their need to grieve. It is the researcher's contention that this emotional work takes precedence over cognitive and self-reflective work.
- It is more difficult to develop this way of working in a short-term group, although Yalom indicates that the therapist might begin using process illumination within a first meeting.
- This researcher is relatively unskilled in the use of these techniques. However, she is aware that when they have been used, they break new ground in the group.

4.4.3 General structure

As already acknowledged, the researcher regards mourning, resocialization, insight and empowerment as central and critical aspects in the divorce adjustment process. Her basic task concerns the facilitation of these aspects of adjustment, by working in, with and through the group.

Members are selected on the basis of an interview, some assessment of personality structure, of the likely 'fit' between each person and other potential members, and a countertransference response to the client. In the early meetings the worker pays attention to clarifying the contract in a democratic way, the establishment of norms, and the linking of members in terms of their commonalities. Meaning attribution seems to be particularly valuable in helping members to understand the divorce stations and the associated emotional turbulence. An attempt is made to identify and make conscious the emerging themes.

Group sessions are unstructured. Members explore together divorce-related issues. There has been a sense in successive groups that the telling and retelling of the sorrows of the marriage, the desolation of betrayal, or the guilt and sorrow of leaving a marriage have prepared the way for the embracing again of life. The ancient Jewish wisdom of the 'shiva' tradition and contemporary psychiatric opinion affirm the value of the free expression of grief in a safe environment (Gordon as quoted in Kubler-Ross 1975).

The termination phase of the group is found to be valuable, since divorce is for most people an unfinished ending. The therapist's conscious and deliberate attention to the issues and feelings pertinent to 'endings' confront members anew with unfinished business related to the divorce.

There is always a high level of emotional catharsis and self-disclosure. There is some work done with the recognition of individual and group defences. Transference is explored as it becomes manifest.

The role of the leader is flexible in response to the developmental and dynamic group processes. The initial fostering of interaction is a major focus of intervention during the orientation-inclusion phase. Facilitation of emotional work and some sharing of information pertinent to the divorce process is done.

Some discussion arises which concerns childrens' needs and difficulties. In the researcher's view this often provides a means of vicarious expression of concern. The prim, moralistic woman who says 'My daughter says her father's new girl friend is a slut' is telling us much about herself. While maternal concerns are heard, there is an attempt to keep in focus that this group is for women. Ultimately, the better their adjustment, the better their childrens' adjustment (Wallerstein and Blakeslee 1989).

As much linking as is possible is done between family-of- origin material and the recent family situation. The researcher's understanding of marriage is psychodynamic (Dicks 1967, Clulow and Mattinson 1988). Understanding **why** the marriage broke down can be an aid to forgiving oneself and one's partner for the failure.

A second area of linking is that for many women divorce is a 'second adolescence.' Issues of leaving home, independence, heterosexual relationships, dating and sexuality inevitably arise. Younger women experience conflict around their parents' attitudes to their divorce. Women with adolescent children agonize over the issues of shepherding their children through adolescence, when an errant father may have 'broken all the rules and may taint the children with his

immorality'. Older women are often dealing with general midlife concerns pertaining to the aging or death of parents and 'empty nest' issues.

This section reflects the researcher's conscious and intentional practice as a group worker. Inevitably, its expression in practice is restricted by her limitations, her deafness at times to unconscious communication and her own personal 'blindness'.

Chapters two to four have provided the clinical perspectives for this study. In chapter five research design and methodology will be made explicit.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter makes explicit the research design and methodology that have provided the foundation for this study. The general question considered is: How does participation in an integrated group facilitate divorce adjustment in women? In broad terms an exploration is conducted and described and an evaluation of the efficacy of a specific form of therapeutic intervention is offered. The central question in this research project explores which aspects of integrated group work impact on which aspects of divorce adjustment in women. It is a qualitative, descriptive-evaluative case study and is multifaceted in its means of data collection and analysis.

5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN: A DESCRIPTIVE - EVALUATIVE CASE STUDY

This is a descriptive-evaluative case study of two groups of women comprised of six members each. The evaluative component permits a "finding of numerical expression for and appraisal of" changes in depression and self-esteem and a statistical analysis of the correlation between integrated group and divorce adjustment variables (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1979).

A case study is an empirical enquiry that has distinct advantages in terms of exploring a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has limited control, and which uses multiple sources of evidence.

According to Bromley (1986:2-4), a psychological case study is a reconstruction and interpretation of a major episode in a person's life. It is a reconstruction, in that the facts need to be collected through the process of historical research. It is an interpretation in the quasi-judicial sense that a verdict (a conclusion, solution,

decision or recommendation) needs to be made on the basis of rational argument about the relevant evidence. A psychological case study calls for a set of observations together with some kind of commentary on the significance of those observations. The study may be systematic because of the existence of a clear conceptual framework within which the data can be organized and interpreted.

Based on an understanding of Glaser and Strauss (1967), Henley in Fink (1978) and Mouton and Marais (1988), the following rationale for this study is offered.

1. No empirical study of the influence of unstructured therapeutic groups on divorce adjustment had been found in the literature.
2. A descriptive study permits in-depth observation and description of the divorce adjustment process in a qualitative rather than quantitative manner.
3. This is an appropriate method for a correlational study where the relationships between the curative factors in groups and divorce adjustment factors can be explored.
4. No formal evaluation has been conducted into this mode of therapeutic intervention at FAMSA.

Robert Yin (1984) identifies the following traditional prejudices to the case study method :

- lack of rigour
- the provision of too little basis for scientific generalization
- the production of massive, unreadable documents.

It would seem that these prejudices emerge from the ongoing debate and false dichotomy in social science research between the superiority of generation of theory and verification of theory. In reality, they are interdependent processes. As theories are postulated, so they may be verified. This in turn may generate new hypotheses (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

5.2 METHODOLOGY

Bromley (1986) would disagree that the above stated prejudices to case-study methodology are valid criticisms about the method *per se*, but may be pertinent about the application of the method. In his view, while no set format for case studies exists, the following basic rules and procedural steps have been formulated (Bromley 1986:24). It will become evident that careful attention has been paid to these rules and procedural steps in this study:

- honest and accurate reporting;
- explicit and unambiguous statement of the aims and objectives of the study;
- an assessment of the extent to which the stated aims and objectives have been achieved;
- skilled and sensitive data collection across an extended period of time minimizes the likelihood of accidental errors, omissions and deliberate misrepresentation by the subject;
- recognition of the subject's ecological context.

The following procedural steps within the quasi-judicial method demonstrate the complexity and rigour of the method (Bromley 1986:26).

- clear definition of the problem;
- the presentation and consideration of *prima facie* and alternative explanations;
- examination of the sources of evidence, as well as the evidence;
- critical enquiry into the internal coherence, logic and external validity of the entire network of the argument;
- selection of the most likely interpretation provided it is compatible with the evidence;
- any implications for treatment should be made explicit;
- the report should contribute to psychological case-law;
- presentation of the report in a clear, direct and objective style.

5.2.1 Sampling: Subject selection

The sampling method selected was that of non-probability, availability and incidental sampling, since :

Non-probability samples are suited to exploratory studies where investigators are interested in obtaining as much unique data on a research question as possible. (Seaberg in Grinnell 1985:143)

Availability sampling refers to the first available appropriate sampling units. Often these are self-selected units, those clients who request specific services from an agency, or are assigned to the worker's case load (Seaberg in Grinnell 1985:143). For a population which is uniform in the characteristics about which there is concern, incidental samples (the most convenient and available) will be satisfactory (Goldstein 1980:196).

All women who were wait-listed at FAMSA for group counselling were invited telephonically by the researcher to attend an intake interview. Each person who attended an interview and returned her registration form was offered group counselling. The outcome of interviews is presented in tables 5.1 and 5.2.

Table 5.1 Pre-group telephonic interviews

Wait-listed for group	21
Declined an interview	3

Table 5.2 Pre-group intake interviews

Attended interview	18
Returned registration forms	12
Sought marital reconciliation	2
Registration forms not returned	4

Had any interviewee been deemed unsuitable for group counselling, an alternative referral would have been offered. The researcher made telephonic contact with those women who had not returned their registration forms. In each instance the woman had found the intake interview 'too upsetting'. None of them felt that it was an opportune time to 'open up old wounds'. Each of these women was invited to approach the agency should she feel differently at another time.

Divorcees were placed in one of two groups, with six members each. The age of the woman and the ages of her children were the variables used for group allocation. Group A comprised women aged between 38 and 51, whose children ranged in age from 10 - 30 years. Group B consisted of women whose age ranged from 27 - 42 with young children. Childless women were included in each group according to their age. The researcher anticipated that personal and family developmental issues would impact upon divorce adjustment, as had been indicated by Wallerstein (1986).

Group members included women who were legally divorced or at any other stage of the divorce process, provided that there was some acceptance of the inevitability of divorce. Preoccupation with reconciliation fantasies is a contra-indication for group participation. Each group included women who had initiated the divorce and women who had been left. The fee requested by the agency was R150. A sliding scale was implemented in response to client's economic need. The profile of each group at intake is summarized as follows:

Table 5.3 Profiles of group members

FACTORS	GROUP A	GROUP B
Age range - years	38 - 51	27 - 42
Average	44,3	33,5
Married - years	18 - 29	5 - 13
Average	22,8	7,7
Total separation - months	3 - 14	10 - 24
Average	9	14,1
Childrens' age range	10 - 30	3 - 7
Legally divorced	4	5
Initiated divorce	1	4

5.3 DATA COLLECTION

Mouton and Marais (1988:91) and Bromley (1986:10) validate the inclusion of multiple sources of data in a descriptive study, since this is likely to increase the reliability of the observations. 'Triangulation' is the term for this concept. The use of complementary methods of data collection may be employed to correct the respective shortcomings of individual methods and addresses any prejudice about the method lacking rigour.

In this study there were two aspects to triangulation; the literature review and multiple sets of data. The literature review of divorce adjustment, therapeutic interventions and group counselling alternatives provided guidelines for the conduct of the study and were used for illumination of the findings. The researcher's definitions of divorce adjustment (2.5) and integrated group work (4.4) were formulated following the literature review. The following sets of data were collected: two structured interviews, Clinical Management Package scales,

audiotapes of group meetings and a correlation matrix of Yalom's Curative Factors and Divorce Adjustment Factors.

5.3.1 The structured interview

This triangulation measure, a structured interview was conducted pre-group as an intake interview and as a post-group evaluation interview. Once the structured interview schedule had been designed, a pilot study was conducted with the first three women who were interviewed. Ideally, this should have been conducted with non-participants. For ethical reasons this was not possible. The pilot study resulted in a shortening of the interview schedule, as it was found to be too long. Subjects became tired before certain vital issues had been addressed within the scheduled hour. The questions which were excluded pertained to sources of personal satisfaction and marital gratification prior to the separation/divorce.

An intake interview is the researcher's standard group intake procedure. This permits a brief and relatively superficial assessment of personality structure, motivation for group therapy, and the exploration of the possibility of mutual rapport.

For the purposes of this study, the researcher designed a structured open-ended interview schedule (see Appendix 3). The interview was conducted as an "unstandardized interview" (Goldstein 1980:226). This permitted the establishment of rapport and sensitivity to the particular emotional state of each woman, while ensuring that the basic research questions were posed. The interviewing was done in a flexible way so as to accommodate for the high levels of distress present in some clients. It was possible to explore all the questions on the schedule.

All group members were interviewed four months post-group for an assessment of outcome. The structured interview schedule was used in modified form. Questions 3 - 5 and 14, 15 were excluded. All interviews were tape-recorded with permission of the subjects. According to research conducted by Good (1963:300) tape recorders do not increase resistance to the interview, destroy interviewer/respondent rapport or alter the responses given. The advantages of using a tape recorder are that no verbal communications are lost and interviewer bias may be identified.

5.3.2 The structured interview schedule

The two sources of influence in the formulation of the structured interview schedule were the literature and the researcher's previous clinical experience. The schedule was designed to permit assessment for suitability for inclusion in group therapy. It was also an essential means of data collection of pre- and post-intervention feelings and attitudes. Questions 1 - 13 were asked by the worker. Questions 14 and 15 were submitted by the women in writing. This permitted a more measured reflection of the issues for potential group members.

To some extent the questions are self-explanatory, in that they address the subject's conscious knowledge and the reality of her situation. Yet they were also designed to tap some of the deeper issues, perceptions, ego strengths and defence mechanisms used by the subjects.

Questions 1 - 4 explore each individual's personal context and attempt to understand each marriage in relation to families of origin. Some history of the marriage emerges, as well as the individual's usual response to crisis. This assessment did not permit a sophisticated differentiation between pre-morbid personality and current, divorce-related indications of distress.

Questions 1, 2 and 14, 15 grant some access to perspectives on the marriage and the extent of the client's investment in the marriage.

Questions 3 and 4 explore conscious knowledge of inter-generational links and patterns.

Questions 6 and 7 permit exploration of a realistic understanding of the marriage and its vicissitudes. Some of the client's usual defensive mechanisms may become apparent. These questions also illuminate the actual process of divorce, its expectedness or unexpectedness, the degree of acrimony, the presence of a third party or any other variables.

Questions 1,2,6,7 and 14,15 address the nature of the marriage, and the woman's role in it, the extent of her experience of dependence or autonomy. These questions also consider the "meaning-making process in marriage" (Hancock 1980:19) and identity issues in women (Cantor 1984:197).

Questions 1 - 4, 8, 10 and 11 permit exploration of self-awareness and insight.

Questions 9 and 12 make explicit the client's own understanding and expectations of divorce adjustment.

Question 13 is a bridging question, in that it prepares the way for some dialogue in preparation for entry into the group. At the post-group evaluation it was used for evaluation of the women's experience of the group.

Gochros (1985:306-330), Jenkins (1975:131), Mindel (1985:210) and Jayaratne (1979:70-71) identify the following merits and demerits of the use of a structured interview. They note the following major benefits, which Bromley (1986:24) regards as procedural steps.

- Subtle and sensitive material may be accessed.

- Interviews are broader than pencil and paper tests.
- The clinician-researcher has an opportunity to observe the client contextually.

The following limitations however, need to be noted.

- The skill, personality and idiosyncratic style of the clinician may become an unacknowledged, but critical variable.
- The subjective interpretation or misinterpretation of client's responses may lead to exploration of issues based on perceived importance, rather than objective criteria.

5.3.3 The Clinical Management Package (CMP)

This was the second of the data triangulation measures used. All potential group members were requested to complete two of the Clinical Management Package (CMP) scales (Hudson 1982) at intake. The selected scales were the Index of Self-Esteem (ISE) and the Generalized Contentment Scale (GCS), since from the literature review as well as in work with previous groups it had become apparent that divorcing women experience depression and a reduction in self-esteem. These were the only two CMP scales pertinent to this client group. There are no contraindications for using only certain scales, or any combination of scales (Hudson 1982:31). These pencil and paper self-report questionnaires were repeated mid-group, at termination and four months post-group.

The individual CMP scales were designed for assessment of the severity or magnitude of a variety of personal and social problems. Each scale has the same format and structure, each has 25 items. The scale is long enough for good reliability, short enough for repeated use and the use of 25 items leads to a simple scoring procedure. **Each of the CMP scales has a clinical cutting score of 30, i.e clients scoring above 30 have a clinically significant problem.** Each scale has a reliability of 0,9 and all have good content, concurrent, factorial, discriminant and construct validity.

The Generalized Contentment Scale (GCS) was designed to measure the degree, severity or magnitude of non-psychotic depression. See Appendix 4.

The Index of Self-Esteem (ISE) was designed to measure the degree, severity, or magnitude of a self-esteem problem (see Appendix 5). Self-esteem, as conceptualized and measured with respect to the ISE is the evaluative component of self-concept. The ISE and GCS scales tend to correlate highly with each other (Hudson 1982:1-4).

The Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) is 5 or 6. Thus, a score change of 5 or 6 is not evidence of real change. **However, if the score changes by twice the SEM, 10-12 points, there is a 95% confidence level that real change has occurred in the degree and severity of the clinical difficulty (1982:24).**

Jayaratne and Levy (1979:74-75) summarize the advantages and limitations of self-administered tests as follows:

Strengths:

- Some studies report that despite the probability of subjective bias self-report data are reliable and not significantly affected by subjective data.
- Coding and data quantification procedures are facilitated.
- Questionnaires are economical in their use. They can be administered independently in a group situation, which facilitates independent, unbiased responses from all participants.
- The uniformity of administration and standardized instruction makes questionnaire response situations more uniform than individually collected data.

The limitations of the method were noted:

- Respondents may misread the questions.
- Testing may facilitate attitude change; post-test scores may be the result of intervention plus the test.

5.3.4 Recording of group meetings

Audiotapes of all group meetings were the third triangulation measure. Transcripts were made of recordings each week for clinical and research purposes.

5.3.5 Matrix completion : Yalom's Curative Factors and Divorce Adjustment Factors

The final triangulation measure was a 9 x 8 matrix designed for the purpose of exploring the association between the group experience (Yalom's Curative Factors)(YCF) and divorce adjustment (Fisher's Divorce Adjustment Factors)(DAF). In the researcher's view, each set of variables was considered to be representative of discrete aspects of group experience or the adjustmental factors. Both sets of variables were shortened as it was felt that it would be difficult to sustain interest and measured responses to more than 72 questions. See Appendix 6 for the YCF : DAF matrix.

Yalom's Curative Factors (YCF)

Yalom's eleven 'curative factors' have been identified in 4.2 and have been embraced within the definition of integrated group work in 4.4. The YCF concepts have been defined in Appendix 2. The following modifications were made for the purposes of this study.

Three curative factors were excluded:

- 'Development of socializing techniques' - since 'social relationships' was included as a divorce adjustment variable.
- 'Imitative behaviour' - as it was thought to be similar to the adjustmental variable, 'Interpersonal learning.'
- 'Existential factors', since these issues are more appropriately addressed once group members have seriously confronted their difficulties and feelings. A premature 'acceptance' of life's injustices can be defensive.

The following were the YCF variables for the purposes of this study, with the influence of the leader included as an additional variable.

Instillation of hope	INSTILH
Universality	UNIVER
Acquisition of information	ACQINF
Altruism	ALTR
Experience of being in a family	FAMILY
Interpersonal learning	INTPERL
Group Cohesion	GPCOH
Catharsis	CATHAR
Influence of the leader	LEAD

The influence of these curative factors on divorce adjustment will be presented in chapter nine.

Fisher's Divorce Adjustment Factors (DAF)

The concept of Fisher's Divorce Adjustment Factors was introduced in 2.3.1. They are presented here prior to an explanation of their use in the YCF: DAF matrix.

Reduction in preoccupation with the ex-spouse	PRECEXS
Comfort with being alone	ALONE
Experiencing self-esteem	ESELFE
Reduction of emotional distress	REDIST
Management of divorce-related feelings	MANDRF
Attitudinal changes to the divorce	ATTCH
Social relationships	SOCREL
An acceptance of your divorced status	ACCDS
Satisfaction / competence in the daily occupation.	

This last factor was excluded from the analysis, since all women felt it was an important factor, but that there had never been any group focus on occupational issues. See Appendix 1 for descriptions of each DAF.

Matrix completion

At the post-group interview group members were asked to complete the matrix together with the researcher, correlating the influence of Yalom's Curative Factors on the Divorce Adjustment Factors. Prior to this a weighting of DAF and a rating of YCF was conducted. This was done in order to familiarize the women with these concepts prior to matrix completion (see Appendix 6).

Matrix completion was conducted in the following way with the use of an interval scale of 1 - 5 for all questions. The first two questions were asked in order to familiarize members with the concepts. These answers were not utilized in any analysis.)

- Participants were asked to weight each DAF: "How important is each of these factors for you, in your experience of coming to terms with your divorce?"
- They were asked to rate each YCF: "To what extent did you experience each of these factors during group meetings?"
- Each person completed the matrix by considering the question: "To what extent did each YCF influence each DAF for you?" For example "To what extent did altruism, (as experienced in the context of the group) influence management of divorce related feelings?"

5.4 DISCUSSION

Qualitative research and descriptive studies have their own research logic which differ from the "canons and rules of evidence of quantitative analysis" (Glaser and Strauss 1967). There is, however, consensus that design tests exist for this research paradigm (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Yin 1984; Bromley 1986:24-24 and Mouton and Marais 1988). Bromley's (1986:107) understanding of reliability and validity in case studies is lucid and helpful:

To the extent that the elements within the network (of a case study) are mutually supportive we can speak of the reliability or internal coherence of the case....in case studies (there is) a distinction between reliability (internal coherence) and validity (external verification). Thus the term 'validity' is often used to refer to the correspondence between what is asserted about a case and how that corresponds to the real world.

5.4.1 Reliability

The central consideration of validity concerning the process of data collection is that of reliability. (Mouton and Marais 1988:79)

The reliability of data is influenced by four variables; the interviewer, the participants, the measuring instrument and the context. **Researcher characteristics** of gender, race and socio-economic status were unlikely to bias data collection. The researcher's psychodynamic perspectives would have contributed a definite, if intangible, bias on the data collection process.

Participant effects were minimized, since during the initial phase of the data collection process and during the course of intervention, research was covert.

Measuring instrument effects; the Clinical Management Package is a standardized scale and its reliability and validity indices have been cited in 5.3.3.

The researcher has had some reservations about the use of the Hudson CMP scales. Changes in the CMP scales might have reflected variables that were not in any way related to the group, such as members having found employment or the

remarriage of an ex-husband. They may have reflected the impact of the group experience in the short-term, which would have meant different things to different people, or they may indeed have reflected real change. For this reason it was felt that the CMP scales could not stand alone, but should be used in conjunction with other measures.

The YCF and DAF scales are modified forms of measuring-instruments which are presumed to have been tested for reliability, as they were designed and used in major research projects by their authors. It has not been possible to obtain positive confirmation of this. Correspondence analysis is a recognized method for correlational studies.

The researcher was of the opinion that contextual effects were unlikely to bias the reliability of data collection in any significant way.

Mouton and Marais (1988) observe that it would be quite impossible for any researcher to identify and account for all nuisance variables. However, the purpose of research design is to increase the eventual validity of research findings by systematic planning and structuring, so as to minimize the combined effects of nuisance variables. This was done by the establishment of rapport, the use of covert research and triangulation. Bromley (1986) argues strongly that provided a case study is conducted according to basic rules and procedural steps, there are built-in checks that permit reliability and validity.

5.4.2. Validity

For Mouton and Marais (1988:70) one of the main distinguishing characteristics of qualitative research is the fact that the researcher attempts to understand people in terms of their own definition of their world. In the mode of qualitative/naturalistic research correct identification of the *native* or *indigenous*

concepts of the subjects being investigated is a major assignment. This task precedes integration of these concepts within the framework of existing social scientific theory or models. This approach is therefore classified as inductive, rather than deductive research (Mouton and Marais 1988:70). As a rule, the concepts which are generated in qualitative research are concrete concepts; that is concepts which accurately reflect the world of the sample. Mouton and Marais further note that:

Qualitative researchers claim that concepts of this nature possess a large degree of construct validity because of the fact that they are rooted in the world of the subjects. (1988:71)

Construct validity is enhanced by the use of multiple sources of evidence and the establishment of a multiple chain of evidence or 'triangulation.' (Yin 1984:36). External validity is limited. The high level of subjectivity of these concepts limits the interpretive scope and the level of generalizability. Internal validity is enhanced through the process of explanation building, which is at the heart of case-study analysis (Yin 1984:36).

5.4.3 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations ought to be foundational to the entire clinical research process (Jayaratne and Levy 1979; Schinke in Grinnell, 1985).

This study was conducted as covert research. The general recommendation is that informed written consent is obtained from clients prior to their participation in a research project. At the post-group interview, clients were informed individually that this had been a research study. Permission was requested for the use of findings. No participant was pressurized. Each person was asked whether she would have preferred to be informed prior to commencement of the group.

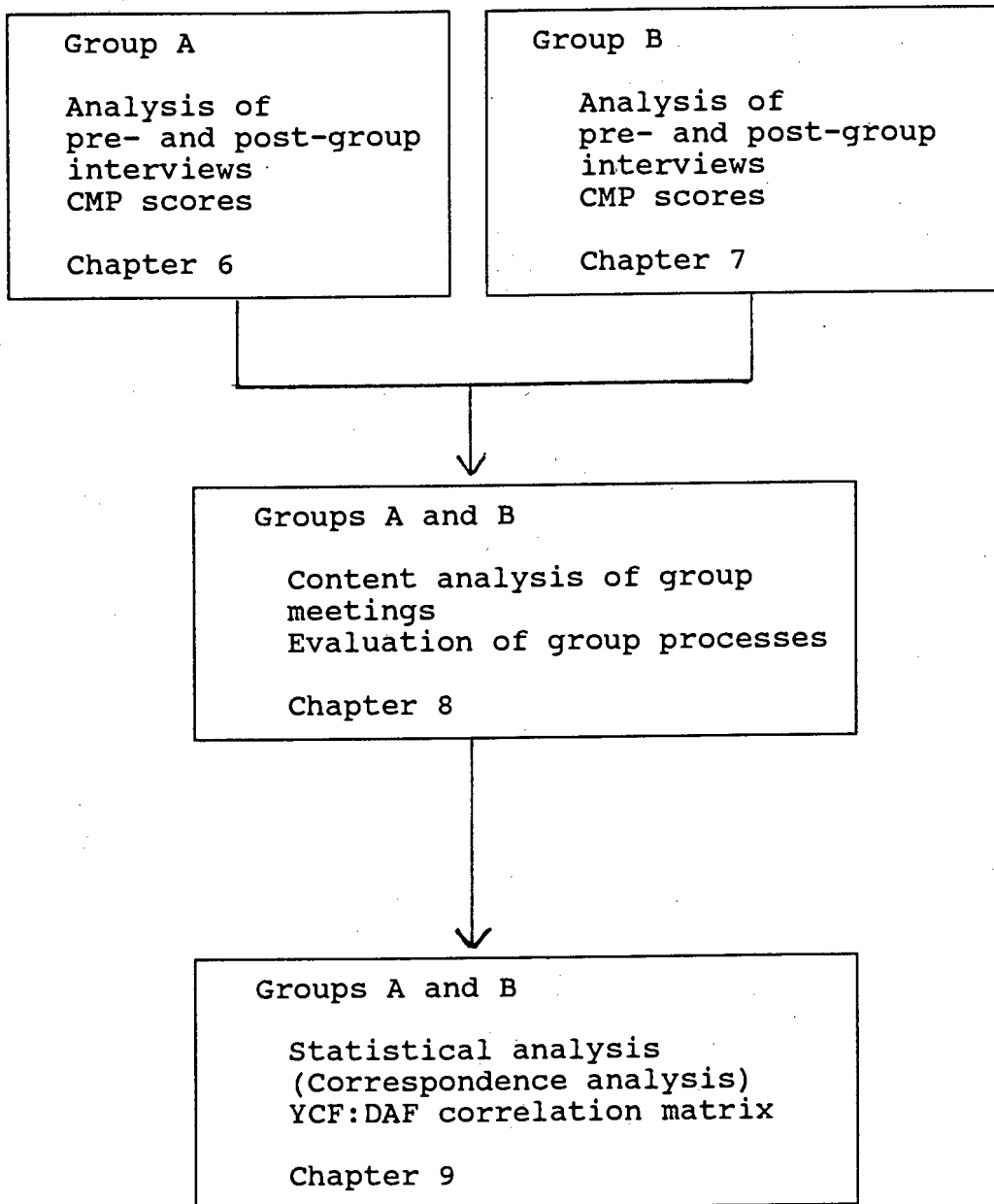
No clients refused permission. There was a general and common expression of hope that their experience might be of help to other women. Mouton and Marais (1988) are fairly critical of covert research as a drastic strategy, which involves deception.

Two factors influenced the researcher's decision to conduct covert research. Therapeutic group work was not an unsubstantiated method. In view of the client's level of vulnerability prior to commencement of the group, it was decided to request permission *post hoc*. The researcher was aware that refusal from any member could substantially alter the presentation of findings. Refusal from several members could jettison the study as a research project. It was, however, the researcher's measured opinion that the primary purpose of the group was clinical, and that research considerations ought to be made subject to that primacy.

5.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Diagram 5.1 indicates the steps taken in the data analysis process. This is supplemented in the discussion following the diagram.

Diagram 5.1 Data analysis process



- 1** Content analysis of the interview schedule. The findings of the pre- and post-group interviews are presented descriptively and thematically. Group A and Group B were analyzed and presented separately.
- 2** Clinical Management Package scales were scored manually after each administration. These were not disclosed to group members, but served to inform the group worker about changes in group member's experience of depression or self-esteem.
- 3** Content analysis of audiotapes of group meetings. Transcripts of group meetings were analyzed and presented descriptively and thematically. Group A and Group B were presented separately. An evaluation of group processes was conducted.
- 4** Correspondence analysis was the statistical method selected for analysis of the correlation of the YCF:DAF matrix. This method was selected since it produces perceptual maps. The two dimensional diagrams related the YCFs to the DAFs as perceived by the respondents. The method therefore presents group member's perceptions of this correlation. Statistical analysis was conducted using MAP - a Correlational Analysis Program (Version 4.0) (M.T.Bendixen) in conjunction with Lotus 1-2-3.

CHAPTER SIX

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS: GROUP A

Chapters six and seven are parallel rather than sequential chapters. They present separately the findings of Group A and Group B. Analyses of structured interviews, pre- and post-group, are presented thematically. The CMP scores are presented prior to the post-group interviews. The analysis of group content follows in chapter eight and the statistical analysis of the YCF:DAF matrix in chapter nine.

6.1 INTAKE INTERVIEWS

Group A was comprised of six women aged between 38 and 51 years. Their children ranged in age from 10 - 31 years. One woman was childless. These women had been married for between 18 and 31 years. Four of them were legally divorced. One member, D, had initiated her divorce. Table 6.1 presents the demographic data of the Group A members at the intake interview:

Table 6.1 Demographic data: Group A

NAME	AGE MARRIED		DIVORCE		SEPARATED
	years	years	legal	initiated	months
A	44	22	No	No	7
B	42	22	Yes	No	3
C	51	29	Yes	No	10
D	38	18	No	Yes	8
E	45	22	Yes	No	14
F	46	24	Yes	No	12

6.2 ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

The findings of the pre-group interview will be presented thematically with reference to the interview questions given in Appendix 2.

Perspectives on the marriages (Questions 1, 2 & 14)

These were all long-term traditional marriages (18 - 29 years). The marriages were described as functional and pragmatic relationships. The women minimized the moderate to severe stress that had existed. The following marital stresses were identified. (The numbers refer to the number of couples concerned.)

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| - | Chronic illness in child or parent | 2 |
| - | High level of overt marital conflict | 3 |
| - | Husband's infidelity | 4 |
| - | Multiple desertions | 2 |

Five ex-husbands had deserted their wives, four of them for an immediate cohabitation relationship with unencumbered women 15 - 20 years younger than themselves. Four of the men had been involved in extra-marital affairs previously. Two of them had each left home on two occasions for a cohabitation relationship. Two of the men had departed suddenly and unexpectedly. Four men manifested some clear symptoms of a midlife crisis.

Dependency in women was a feature of these relationships. Three of the marriages had been contracted prior to any physical separation from the woman's family of origin. These women had never experienced independence as adults, nor ever lived alone. Four marriages had required a considerable degree of submission of the wife's personality 'in order to keep the peace.'

Women had difficulty in expressing what their marriages meant to them. The traditional experience of partnership, stability, security and companionship seemed to represent the kernel of the marriage. It seemed as though it was the loss of the elemental aspects of human relatedness that was so disruptive for them.

Two women articulated their expectations that marriage would fulfil unmet childhood yearnings. Both experienced great sorrow that their ex-husbands had failed to love them adequately. Neither of these women indicated any real understanding that emotional deprivation in childhood might have affected their capacity for a relationship in any way.

Families of origin (Questions 3-5)

Women expressed recollections of their families in vague generalizations - 'a united family'; 'a stable family'; 'parents who did not have an easy time, but were devoted to each other.' It was difficult to access material at any depth relating to parental marriages as experienced by the women during childhood. The researcher's impressions were that the seeds of marital difficulties had been sown deep within childhood. These women seemed unaware, however, of any relationship between childhood experiences and their own experience of marriage.

The understanding and assessment of their ex-husband's childhood families was limited. In two instances the men appeared to repeat their father's relationship patterns; multiple affairs and desertion of the family at the time of their son's late adolescence. Some of these parental marriages had been war-time marriages. There was evidence of war-related family disruption.

These women had tenuous links with their families and were fairly isolated. Two had living parents, or regular contact with siblings. Two women maintained better contact with elderly in-laws than did the ex-husbands.

The experience of divorce (Questions 6 - 8, and 12)

Five of the men left marriages of 22 - 29 years duration. Three of them had been unable to inform their wives directly about their decision to terminate the marriages. All the men were, or rapidly became, involved with other younger women, which exacerbated the feelings of rejection and shame experienced by the group members.

Women expressed little sense of individual or shared responsibility for marital breakdown. They felt victimized and wronged. All five women who had been left attributed major responsibility for marital breakdown to their husbands, the men's personalities and the 'other woman.'

He is a perfectionist, very demanding and intolerant of my physical appearance and lacking in compassion.

The men's midlife crises were recognized. Generally, women displayed little understanding of the stressful nature of this experience for the men.

Aloneness, shame and terrible stigmatization were poignant and pervasive themes for four women. The following quotes convey something of their pathos.

To be alone, to be alone. To be a spare person at the diningroom table.

I feel inferior to every married woman whom I meet. I used to like and accept myself. I didn't mind aging, but now I'm conscious of my physical deterioration.

For two women there were some glimmerings of hope.

I will welcome the end of the psychological bullying, and the opportunity to start afresh.

The loss of a partner and companion was a central theme. The loss of financial and emotional security was a secondary theme. Women lost dignity, self-esteem and self-confidence.

Two women expressed a devastating sense of loss:

I have lost my partner. I now feel only half a person, unloved, unwanted, totally rejected. I have also lost my dignity and self-esteem. I have gained nothing, except perhaps independence.

I have lost my home. He was my home. Everything seems to have been swept away from me. I no longer have financial stability, my beautiful house or my self-confidence. That is how I feel ninety *per cent* of the time.

The gains were perceived to be few and not greatly valued. They included independence, a reduction in harassment, criticism, and tension.

Recovery and divorce adjustment (Questions 9 & 12)

The expectations of recovery were fairly limited. The cessation of grief, shame and the physical manifestations of anxiety were cardinal aspects. The responses of some women expressed their deep sense of hurt and betrayal. The saddest response came from C who longed to return to the past and relive the happy years of her marriage. She had no future expectations and could only live a day at a time.

There was no overt consideration that divorce might herald untapped opportunities.

In response to the query about their greatest longings, women had little to say. For three women a good future could only be conceived of in a dependency relationship with an idealized male companion. For them, divorce adjustment was a very limited concept. It related essentially to the freedom from emotional pain. No hopes or visions for a good future were expressed in any way. It seemed inconceivable that they could feel alive or whole again.

**Personal insight and perceptions of ex-husband
(Questions 10 & 11)**

There was a marked polarization between the women's perceptions of themselves and perceptions of their ex-husbands. All the women discovered themselves to be more competent, resilient and resourceful than they had believed themselves to be as married women. Four of them acknowledged the various ways in which their own personalities had been suppressed in order to 'keep the peace.'

Only one woman was able to acknowledge her dependence on the marriage. Her social and vocational independence was firmly grounded in her dependence on her ex-husband.

All the women had significantly more to say about ex-husbands than about themselves. Men were portrayed in a much harsher light. They were devious, socially indiscreet, immoral, insensitive, 'pigheaded' and 'nasty'. In reality, none of the men had maintained regular contact with their children. Women emphasized the unreliability of these men as fathers.

Some impressions emerged of two men with fairly extensive narcissistic traits. It seemed that these men had been unable to tolerate the aging in their wives. This had contributed to the men's midlife crisis and their involvement with younger, childless women.

Discussion of intake interviews

It became apparent that this group of middle-class women had experienced a fair degree of unacknowledged marital stress. Initially it was difficult to ascertain whether they really had little insight into the dynamics of their marriages, or whether their considerable emotional disequilibrium had diminished insight. Four of the group members had experienced marked grief and depressive and anxiety reactions. They displayed little understanding that these reactions were 'normal'

given the immensity of the loss they had sustained. They experienced a fair degree of shame that they had been prescribed antidepressant or anxiolytic medication.

Marriage was the central aspect of their identity. Five of these women worked outside their homes. Yet neither their worker nor professional identities had compensated for their loss of identity as a wife. All had acquired additional responsibility for the management of their affairs. All were responsible for their children's wellbeing and education. Fathers were conspicuous by their absence.

Only one woman had been assured of pension benefits in her divorce settlement. Great resentment was expressed that although they had shared in the 'lean years' of marriage, there was no provision for them as they aged. They were women who were vulnerable by any standard.

6.3 CLINICAL MANAGEMENT PACKAGE SCORES

The CMP scores are presented in table 6.2 and reflect an objective measure of members' responses to participation in an integrated group. They are also referred to in the discussion of members. The composite CMP graphs which include the GCS and ISE scores have been presented in Appendix 7. It should be noted that the GCS and ISE are independent entities, yet some correlation appears to exist. By presenting the graphs on two axes it has been possible to compare movement two-dimensionally, in terms of direction and magnitude of change across time.

evidence of improvement in her depression at the post-group evaluation. This was confirmed by the absence of change in her GCS score and a deterioration in her ISE score. She remained highly ambivalent about counselling and antidepressant medication. She had gained little insight into her central issues; the loss of her father in childhood and the connection between her own divorce initiatives and those of her ex-husband.

Her major childhood trauma, her ambivalence about counselling, initial high GCS and ISE scores and her late entry into the group may have made her a less than ideal member for short-term group counselling. However, there was a decrease in her social isolation. B had grown in confidence about managing major practical matters.

CMP SCORES:

GCS	55	54	55	53
ISE	43	59	57	55

C was a fifty-one year old housewife, whose ex-husband had left in a 'moonlight flit' for a cohabitation relationship. He had remarried during the group. This had been a devastating experience, but had confronted her with the finality of the divorce. She was more objective about the dissolution of her marriage. She recognized their incompatibility. She also understood that the death of their remaining parents and the adulthood of their sons had confronted her ex-husband with his aging. His lifestyle change was in response to this. Her GCS and ISE scores had improved significantly between termination and the post-group interview and were below the level of clinical significance. The experience of universalization and altruism in the group had helped her greatly. She remained socially isolated and had not generated any new, compensatory social or cultural pursuits. In the researcher's view, she remained vulnerable.

CMP SCORES:

GCS	48	48	39	22
ISE	49	58	53	32

Group member D had experienced considerable emotional deprivation during childhood. She was the only group member to have initiated her divorce. She had grown in confidence and poise and had sought therapeutic help for both her children. She was less guilty about disrupting her marriage and consequently more assertive in terms of having claimed a more realistic divorce settlement.

She had benefitted greatly from participation in the group, in that there was a real improvement in her social network. and had become involved in cultural, religious and community service activities.

CMP SCORES:

GCS	26	42	27	24
ISE	24	15	18	18

E was a competent, pragmatic woman, who was unassertive and at times self-deprecating. Her major gain from the group was the discovery and experience of her suppressed anger, in response to observations and confrontation from group members. It was as though her anger welled slowly into consciousness. Once she was able to experience and acknowledge her anger, she was able to make some assertive demands about her ex-husband's unmet obligations.

She related in an appropriate and healthy fashion to her adolescent children. She coached other mothers in communication and consultation with their children about pertinent matters. What remained puzzling was that there had not been any improvement in her ISE score.

CMP SCORES:

GCS	31	33	24	27
ISE	43	52	40	43

F was a childless woman with high academic qualifications. Her ex-husband's desertion had been sudden and unexpected. She made excellent use of the group. Her ability to express intense divorce-related feelings directly set a norm for affective work in the group. She was outraged at her ex-husband's propensity for relationships with women who had children, when throughout their marriage he had refused her children. In the group she was an advocate for the children. From the group she received an unanticipated empathy for her childlessness.

She seemed more settled about living alone. She had developed a small business, resumed her social activities and undergone maxillo-facial surgery, which had 'boosted her self confidence enormously.' She no longer felt like 'dumped goods.' She was enjoying a 'low intensity' heterosexual friendship. Both her GCS and ISE scores had improved significantly and were below the level of clinical significance.

CMP SCORES:

GCS	36	25	44	17
ISE	36	27	32	16

6.4 ANALYSIS OF POST-GROUP INTERVIEWS

In these interviews a level of rapport existed which had not been present at the intake interview. Less denial and minimization of difficulties was apparent. Issues were much less polarized. Women expressed ambivalence about many issues. Most women shared with the researcher some secret that had not been mentioned in the group.

The major emphasis in the presentation of post-group interviews will be on changed attitudes and perspectives since the intake interview. These findings will be presented thematically with reference to the questions in Appendix 3.

Perspectives on the marriages (Questions 1 & 2)

Women still experienced difficulty in identifying what had kept them in marriages which had been very difficult at times. They did not seem able to express the nature of what they had lost, that had caused such devastation post-divorce. For all of them, marriage meant a person, stability, security and companionship. In the researcher's view, it was the loss of relatedness to another adult and the loss of their identity as married women that had been so disruptive.

There was greater openness and objectivity and a decrease in defensiveness as women spoke about the experience and meaning of marriage. They were more able to acknowledge the mutuality and interactive nature of marital difficulties.

Two women who had felt victimized by their ex-husband's desertion acknowledged their own earlier intentions of terminating their marriages. Both had sought legal counsel. Two women admitted to extra-marital affairs during the marriage. The women regarded ex-husbands in a less villainous light.

**Divorce - the genesis, rationale and consequences
(Questions 6 - 8)**

In these post-group interviews, the indications of gradual marital dissolution over a period of time were much more apparent. Women were able to acknowledge this. In reality, the separation was less sudden than had been portrayed at the intake interview. There was a greater understanding of the multiple factors responsible for marital breakdown. The limited understanding of men's midlife issues persisted.

Lack of communication was again cited as a cause of divorce, although there seemed to be an understanding that the real issues concerned the breakdown in marital intimacy. Values and preferred lifestyles had changed. Whereas there had been some understanding expressed of the interactive nature of marital difficulties,

there was considerably less understanding that marital dissolution was a mutual process. They were not yet able to share in the responsibility for the divorce.

Divorce had multiple consequences. Group members lived in a world of women, spent time with other (female) divorcees and no longer felt welcome in the society of married couples. They felt stigmatized. Men regarded them as 'easy prey'. Women friends were anxious about possible relationships between their husbands and their now divorced friends. Four of the women expressed religious conflicts and concerns about their divorced status. Envy was expressed that men had the means and opportunities to pursue old interests and new hobbies, denied to the women because of limited financial means or childcare responsibilities.

**Personal insight and perceptions of ex-husbands
(Questions 10 & 11)**

There had been a deepening of the women's understanding of themselves, but little tempering of their perceptions of their ex-husbands. They valued the discovery of their own resilience and competence. Three women felt that divorce gave them an opportunity to be truly themselves. They emphasized again how their essential selves had been suppressed during the marriage. Two different women expressed these issues in the following ways:

The strong part of me wasn't allowed to live in the marriage.
I was always the stupid one.

In the marriage I was socially inept, since he was very disapproving if I talked or laughed too much. When he is around, I become very deferential. I draw him out and present him to others at social gatherings.

Women enjoyed the greater flexibility of lifestyle possible post-divorce. Only one had discovered her fragility and vulnerability. She had known moments of 'shocking depression', times when she felt a breakdown was imminent.

One woman identified a repetitive pattern between her mother's marriage and her own:

My mother lived in a similar marriage. Her personality was suppressed. She had no life skills. Without my father she had no identity. She went 'quite mad' when my father died. I would sooner go through this pain, than become like my poor mother.

Ex-husbands remained pariahs. They were described as insensitive and very selfish. General anger and resentment was expressed that all the men had been able to establish new relationships with younger women. Three women had begun to formulate some understanding of their ex-husbands' fairly complex personalities. Women had not been fully aware of men's difficulties with dependency or emotional problem-solving. For F this awareness was sharper:

He made several failed academic attempts. The one way in which he was able to accept my success was to tell everyone that I had put my name to something he had actually done. His relationships with women were compensatory for failure in other realms of his life.

Recovery and divorce adjustment (Questions 9 & 12)

This group of women expressed a limited and stilted understanding of what recovery would mean for them. One woman expressed recovery in terms of independence or autonomy. C had no future longings, except the cessation of her hurt and pain. Two themes were prevalent. The cessation of manifest grief and shame was the first. A new heterosexual relationship was the second. This latter longing was a common, central and ambivalent theme: "Needing men so much is almost idolatry."

Evaluation of the group (Question 13)

Evaluations of the group were generally positive.

- Relationships with women in a similar situation were valued. New friendships had begun as a result of the group.

- Altruism was acknowledged. Members helped each other and witnessed mutual growth.
- The opportunities provided for catharsis were appreciated. Several women recognized that they needed to talk repetitively about their emotional concerns. 'Happily married friends' had become weary with the prolonged grieving, denied that a divorce had 'really' happened, or encouraged them to 'let bygones be bygones'. By contrast, in the group, they sensed an acceptance and an understanding of their extensive and prolonged suffering.
- Universalization was extremely helpful. Several of the women had feared a 'nervous breakdown' or insanity. Listening to others acknowledge their jealousy of ex-husbands' new lovers, or fantasies of revenge normalized much of the emotional turmoil.
- Opportunities for interpersonal learning were valued. Childrens' difficulties with their fathers, and their own occasional inevitable encounters with ex-husbands were frequent subjects of discussion and mutual consultation in the group.
- Several women acknowledged the value of confrontation by group members, about issues that they themselves had minimized.
- There was a sense that participation in the group reduced some of the divorce-related stigmatization. "I had an horrific image of divorcees, from a singles club that I had attended. I had seen craven women enacting the hunger and shame of divorce. In the group, far from shame, I realized what a shocking experience many of us had come through."

The following criticisms of the group were raised:

- The most vulnerable women from a clinical perspective expressed regrets that the group had been too short. Both had entered the group at the fourth week.
- B found it difficult to take time in the group for herself. She would have valued more assistance from the researcher. Retrospectively, the researcher recognized that the undivided attention given to B by a lonely and adoring mother had not prepared her for the give-and-take of sibling relationships in a group situation.
- D had been in individual counselling with the researcher for six months prior to the commencement of the group. She felt she derived relatively little benefit from the group. The 'self-pity' of members held her back from exploring the challenges in her own life.

Discussion of post-group interviews

It is argued that these women had gained a broader, more holistic perspective for their marital difficulties and the complexity of the dissolution process. To some

limited extent they had begun to see themselves as partly instrumental in marital difficulties, but less so for the divorce.

They had become more confident of their personal assets and capacities. There was a limited awareness of their personal difficulties. The tempering of their attitudes to their ex-husbands was only marginal and partial. Many disparaging and critical perspectives of the men persisted, even though a long-term relationship with another man was widely sought. There was very little understanding that they were still ill-equipped for more realistic heterosexual relationships.

While the more vulnerable women expressed the personal meaning of divorce as 'being alone for ever', there did not seem to be a realization that living alone for the rest of their lives was a high probability. It is conceivable that it was too soon for the acknowledgement of this painful reality.

From the analysis of the findings of the structured pre- and post-group interviews it is argued that participation in a short-term therapeutic group does benefit women in the initial crisis phase. Processing of affective aspects of the divorce experience is voluntarily entered into. This seems to generate enough energy for women to develop new social, cultural or community pursuits in the latter weeks of the group, which are sustained following termination.

Group participation seems to provide a facilitating ritual for the marriage-divorce transition, not provided for socially or within the religious systems. The next chapter presents Group B in parallel form to this chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS: GROUP B

7.1 INTAKE INTERVIEWS

Group B was comprised of six women aged between 27 and 42 years. Two women were childless. The ages of the other womens' children ranged between three and seven years, all of them male. These women had been married between five and thirteen years. Four had initiated the divorce. Five were legally divorced.

Five of the women presented with scores of clinical significance (>30) for depression and self-esteem on both Clinical Management Package (CMP) scales.

Table 7.1 presents the demographic data of Group B members at intake.

Table 7.1 Demographic data: Group B

NAME	AGE	MARRIED years	DIVORCE legal	SEPARATED initiated	months
G	27	5	Yes	Yes	14
H	42	6	Yes	Yes	11
J	30	8	Yes	No	18
K	36	13	Yes	Yes	10
L	31	7	No	No	24
M	35	7	Yes	Yes	12

7.2 ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

The findings of the semi-structured interviews will be presented thematically with reference to the questions in Appendix 2.

Perspectives on the marriages (Questions 1-2 & 14)

Five of these women had been involved with their ex-husbands since their teens or early twenties. There had not been any separation from their families of origin. Marriage or cohabitation legitimized their leaving home. Those who had acquired some tertiary qualification had been financially dependent on their parents. For two of them pregnancy pre-empted marriage.

The ex-husbands were described as immature or irresponsible. There was some objective basis for these perceptions. There was evidence of unemployment, alcohol abuse and poor financial management in several of the marriages. For all these women marital security was short-lived. Disappointment was a pervasive theme. Many unfulfilled yearnings were expressed. There was little evidence of marital bonding, a paucity of common pursuits, mutual passions or shared experience.

The major stressors in these marriages were idiosyncratic and personal rather than general. The following stressors were identified. (Numbers refer to couples.)

- psychiatric illness in one partner 2
- moderate to severe untreated depression in wives 2
- moderate to severe overt marital conflict 4
- moderate to severe alcohol abuse in husbands 2

Families of origin (Questions 3-5)

Two of the women proffered idealized descriptions of their families. In each case the parental marriage was 'traditional, secure and religious'. From a clinical perspective, it appeared that some major communication difficulties existed within these 'ideal' families. Neither of these young women had been able to discuss their marital unhappiness with their parents.

The remaining four parental marriages were described on a continuum from 'difficult' to 'terrible'. High levels of overt marital conflict were present. In two cases a parent had been hospitalized for psychiatric illness. These marriages had been particularly traumatic. There was a paucity of information about the in-law marriages. Four of these marriages were described as 'strange', 'estranged', or 'catastrophic'. Two of the women described the childhoods of their ex-husbands as very unhappy.

With one exception all these women had current and active relationships with their parents. Three were living at home. Two sets of parents had never approved of the marriages and were relieved at their dissolution. Those parents with strong religious affiliations regarded their daughter's divorces as an indictment against themselves.

Four women described their relationships with their mothers as very difficult. Criticism and emotional manipulation were predominant features of these relationships. It was apparent at the outset that the unresolved adolescent conflicts of dependence and independence and separation were a marked feature of this group.

The experience of divorce (Questions 6 - 8, & 12)

Four women recognized their high levels of marital dissatisfaction and unhappiness. Each of them responded to some 'last straw' event and initiated a divorce. The men who had deserted them immediately commenced new relationships with other women.

The reasons for the breakdown of the marriages varied. One common theme of marriages contracted between immature men and dependent women emerged. Immaturity, incompatibility, a dearth of shared interests and a breakdown in communication undermined these marriages and inhibited their ratification as psychologically stable relationships.

Divorce was a distressing experience even for those women who sought it. Multiple and multifaceted losses were a recurring theme. The loss of companionship, of self-esteem, self-respect and self-confidence were acknowledged.

Independence was the major gain, but women were surprised to discover how little it gratified their needs. Two women who had emerged from chaotic marriages had begun to realize that the divorce gave them an opportunity to discover themselves in a way which had not been possible in the marriage. Mothers had gained closer relationships with their children and for some of them, these relationships were the major sources of nurture for the mothers.

Recovery and divorce adjustment (Questions 9 & 12)

Recovery related largely to emotional divorce, and a reduction in reactivity to the contacts and behaviour of ex-spouses. For three women the cessation of overwhelming loneliness would constitute recovery. Two women were concerned with identity issues, discovering themselves and finding out what they really wanted

in life. Some women longed for a 'special' relationship with an understanding and caring man.

**Personal insight and perceptions of ex-husbands
(Questions 10 & 11)**

These women had been fairly introspective; three of them had become aware that their partner's immaturity or instability and the general marital unhappiness or chaos had masked their own personal difficulties. There was some acknowledgement of their own negativity, unassertiveness, prolonged unsatisfying emotional involvement with an ex-spouse, and insecurity. Two young mothers discovered that they had a better capacity to parent than their ex-husbands had led them to believe.

Two women had established fairly respectful co-operative co-parental relationships with ex-husbands post-divorce. They had been able to recognize some of the positive qualities in these men.

The most vulnerable group member seemed to have distilled a grounded wisdom out of her experience of severe and incapacitating depression. She presented a realistic objectivity about her ex-husband: "He is more vulnerable than I thought he was. He too struggled during the marriage. I now realize that he did try to protect me. I idealized him, now I can admit my irritations with him."

Discussion of intake interviews

Essentially, these marriages had been disappointing and bonding had been poor. The majority of group members had terminated their marriages. These women made limited use of projection and accepted a measure of shared responsibility for marital failure. Some understanding of the interactive nature of marital difficulties was articulated.

member there was significant improvement in both CMP scores. CMP scores are reflected graphically in Appendix 7.

Discussion of group members

Group member G had married in order to leave home. As she became competent and independent in response to her husband's lengthy work-related absences she no longer 'needed' to be married. She had made excellent use of the group; she had confronted personal difficulties and supported, encouraged and affirmed other members in their enterprises. G had worked at establishing an adult relationship with her father, commenced a new job, joined a sports club and became involved in a new relationship. There was evidence of her maturing in the past months. In the researcher's view her divorce could be described as an individuation divorce (Cantor in Bernay and Cantor 1984:201).

Both GCS and ISE scores had improved significantly.

.CMP SCORES

GCS	61	33	34	36
ISE	55	47	38	33

H had repressed a great deal of the painful divorce-related affect and in the group made extensive use of minimization. Her ISE scores registered at a subclinical level. However, the evidence in the group was that she struggled with many esteem-related difficulties. It is conceivable that defense mechanisms such as repression, denial and minimization distort CMP scores. Hudson (1982) does not discuss this possibility.

She was the oldest group member and kept herself a little apart. She expressed concerns about opinions and judgements of 'the other girls'. Her major contribution to the group was her exploration of issues which pertained to the rebuilding of her life, social integration, dating and sexuality. Retrospectively, it is

apparent that this was premature for her. Prior to post-group evaluation, in response to a crisis, she had entered individual psychotherapy and was facing the pain of her failed marriage.

CMP SCORES:

GCS	16	19	14	19
ISE	24	27	8	10

J was a pragmatic, competent and hardworking woman, who minimized her own competence. She made excellent use of the group as she grieved week by week. Her ex-husband's rejection of her for another woman had been a searing experience. There had been considerable growth in insight into the connections between her ex-husband's experience of childhood and his relationship difficulties in adulthood. She was often dismissive of the positive feedback given to her by her peers in the group. She struggled with acceptance of her own worth and competence.

By the post-group interview, she had found another job, with better benefits and resumed her maiden name. She had sold her home and purchased more suitable accommodation. Both CMP scores had improved significantly. Both the GCS and ISE scores registered at a subclinical level.

CMP SCORES:

GCS	57	37	39	24
ISE	45	35	22	18

Group member K had left her ex-husband, whose multiple relapses of his major psychiatric illness had been responsible for much chaos in their lives. She was a reserved woman who was ambivalent about any form of psychotherapeutic intervention. She had considered leaving the group after entering into a new relationship. Her three absences reflected her ambivalence. At termination she

was extremely apprehensive about proposed cohabitation in the new relationship, for which she had left her marriage.

At the post-group interview, it was clear that she had reflected deeply about herself and her situation. She realized that marital chaos had masked her own personal difficulties. Her conflict between career ambitions and her biological drive for motherhood was far from resolved. She had terminated her cohabitation relationship. Both sets of CMP scores measured a significant improvement.

CMP SCORES:

GCS	59	44	36	31
ISE	62	51	45	43

L had experienced a very troubled childhood. Her father and two older siblings suffered from a major psychiatric illness, as did she herself. At intake she was receiving psychiatric care.

Her participation in and use of the group was unanticipated. Initially, the researcher was concerned that she might be too depressed to participate in a group. Indeed, there were some sessions when her presence was leaden, yet she became a central member of the group. Different members identified with various facets of her experience. Her participation in the group reduced her sense of 'social leprosy' markedly. She seemed to have distilled an existential wisdom out of her great suffering. She was perceptive and able to confront appropriately. As the most vulnerable member of the group, her confrontations were effective.

At the post-group interview, the improvement in her GCS and ISE scores was marked and significant. The major improvement occurred between termination and the post-group interview. The reason for this is not apparent and may reflect her particular sensitivity to separation, some benefits of consolidation post-group

or other extraneous factors. She had found part-time employment and was able to care for her child. She was less socially isolated.

CMP SCORES:

GCS	74	86	74	48
ISE	70	59	83	39

M had cohabited with an irresponsible man outside of her religious affiliation. They married 'for the sake of their parents and the baby' during her pregnancy. She had an embroiled and conflictual relationship with her mother, with whom she had lived for years during her marriage.

She worked steadily in the group. She frequently rehearsed her preparation for finding more remunerative employment, leaving her mother and living alone. By the post-group interview, she had accomplished all three. She worked in a task-oriented way and did relatively little introspective or emotional work. Both CMP scores had improved significantly and were below the level of clinical significance.

CMP SCORES:

GCS	47	39	33	26
ISE	43	31	28	16

7.4 ANALYSIS OF POST-GROUP INTERVIEWS

As in chapter six, the main findings from the post-group interviews will reflect perceptual and attitudinal changes.

Perspectives on the marriage (Questions 1 & 2)

Women were disillusioned and critical about directionless marriages. The following phrases convey something of the tension and emptiness experienced by these women:

"It just fell to pieces, quite a sick relationship."

"Full of tension, anger and mixed feelings."

"Very unhappy and very unfulfilling."

Several women recognized the influence of developmental issues on the marriage and subsequent divorce. Their own and their partners' immaturity, inadequate separation from and over-involvement with their parents and in-law intrusion had all compounded marital difficulties.

These women recognized their heavy investment in and their high expectations that marriage would meet all their needs, yet marriage had meant pain, anxiety and loss of respect for their partners.

Divorce - the genesis, rationale and consequences
(Questions 6, 8 & 12)

These women displayed an integrated understanding of the relationship between marital difficulties and marital dissolution.

Divorce had different meanings and consequences for each of the women. For J it signified great loneliness, much responsibility and social isolation. The men whom she had met socially had retreated very rapidly upon discovering that she had two children. L had discovered some of the more positive aspects of her marriage. She displayed a mature and holistic understanding of the meaning of her marriage and separation. She recognized the mutuality of their shared capacity for love and destructiveness, their immaturity and yet their capacity for mutual respect. Through an 'excessive amount of pain', she had grown a great deal.

Personal insight and perceptions of ex-husbands
(Questions 10 & 11)

Each of the women had grown in self-awareness. Most of them manifested an ability to give themselves some credit for their positive attributes. Three women valued their increased capacity for assertiveness. Some women recognized that premature marriages, incomplete education, limited work experience and their

dependent role as wives had left them in a precarious position as breadwinners post-divorce.

Discoveries about ex-husbands seemed fairly realistic. There was some recognition of the interactive nature of marital difficulties. There was an acceptance of their ambivalent feelings about ex-husbands. They recognized the efforts made by ex-husbands to promote harmonious post divorce relationships.

Recovery and divorce adjustment (Questions 9 & 12)

Recovery related to the reduction in depressive and anxiety symptoms, reduction in the daily preoccupation about why the marriage had failed and decreased reactivity to encounters with an ex-husband. J questioned whether she would ever recover. She recognized that 'recovery came through the experience of the pain'. She feared becoming as bitter as other divorcees known to her.

For each of the women, their greatest longing was a better heterosexual relationship, companionship, understanding and financial security. The childless women spoke of having a child.

Evaluation of the group

Evaluation of the group was generally positive.

- Reduction in isolation was a central positive response. Women were immensely relieved to discover that their divorce-related difficulties were experienced and understood by others.
- The opportunities for catharsis and ventilation were valued. The relief related to their confessions was unanticipated.
- Their capacity for altruism, even when they felt quite low, was unexpected.
- The regularity of weekly meetings and unstructured nature of sessions was found to be helpful: "Weekly sessions forced me to unearth all that awful stuff inside, making me feel much lighter".

- Two members reflected on the paradoxical nature of the group experience. They had experienced both distress and relief at the discovery of hidden and unacceptable parts of themselves.
- Two women reflected on their difficulties in the group in that their reserve and fears of being 'judged' by the others inhibited their full participation.

Discussion of post-group interviews

All members of Group B expressed more moderate views of men and greater objectivity about their marriages than they had shown at intake. The researcher would maintain that an understanding of the past increases the possibility for the forgiveness of self and the other and increases the likelihood of a realistic acceptance of the present.

The changes in CMP scores have already been discussed. The accompanying reduction in symptomatology was apparent.

There was a clearly discernible growth in self-awareness and self-esteem. Each woman was able to acknowledge some valued aspect of her own personality.

The majority of these women had come from homes where conflict was overt or suppressed. There were unrealistic expectations of marriage as salvation from the sorrows and vicissitudes of childhood and adolescence. Their disappointment about marital failure was commensurate with their initial optimism.

The group's capacity to contain a severely depressed member and this member's excellent integration in the group was unanticipated by the researcher. This bears testimony to the healing potential available in a group. The group worker had an image which persisted throughout the weeks of the group. She envisioned L as the hub of a wheel, who was connected by a spoke of common concern to every other member through a particular identification, a shared perception or a common

difficulty. The researcher is aware that without the permission and support of L's psychiatrist her inclusion would have been neither wise nor possible.

The post-group interview is a new feature of the group worker's procedure for such groups. It has proved valuable, since it has indicated that changes are sustained post-group. It has also alerted her to the discontents which women had not felt free to articulate in the presence of their peers.

7.5 COMPARISON BETWEEN GROUPS A AND B

It has been considered necessary to comment briefly upon the most significant differences between these two groups of women. In chapter eight it will become apparent that there was little overlap of manifest content in the group discussions, yet a marked commonality of response to the crisis of divorce in both groups.

The older women in Group A had been deserted following long-term marriages. To some extent they experienced themselves as victims. Judith Wallerstein (1986) has indicated the ways in which such women are particularly at risk. In the researcher's view, their preoccupation with the affairs of their ex-husbands and the extent of their rage and revenge fantasies arise from such victim status. The majority of group members in Group B had elected to leave marriages where bonding had failed to occur. It is conceivable that their greater responsibility for the divorce decision had granted them a different perspective on divorce. Each of them had discovered that she had some power over the circumstances of her life.

The younger women in Group B had been more introspective about themselves and their partners. Generally, they made less use of projection and consequently accepted a greater measure of responsibility for marital failure.

The CMP scores suggest that the women in Group B experienced greater emotional distress and self-esteem difficulties in response to the divorce,

irrespective of their agency in the decision. This raises the possibility that their pre-morbid /pre-divorce difficulties might have been greater than those of the older women.

In the researcher's opinion, the important differences which emerged could be acknowledged and addressed in an unstructured group, in a way which would not have been possible in a structured or programmed group.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ANALYSIS OF GROUP CONTENT: GROUPS A AND B

As has been noted in 5.1 this study was undertaken to describe and evaluate the effect of integrated groups on the divorce adjustment process in women. The unstructured nature of the groups has permitted the recognition, discussion and therapeutic exploration of group members' most urgent concerns. It has been necessary to present the major themes generated in the groups, since in the researcher's view, it is this work which has contributed to any adjustmental gains.

8.1 CONTENT ANALYSIS OF GROUP MEETINGS: GROUP A

The content of group meetings is presented thematically. All topics were generated spontaneously by the groups. The researcher's psychodynamic understanding of marriage and divorce and of the importance of mourning in divorce, discussed in 3.4, may have influenced the material raised by members. This potential source of bias needs to be acknowledged.

For Group A, eight predominant themes arose and were explored in many group sessions. Different group members participated in these explorations at different times. No member was excluded or non-participative. An attempt will be made to explore the development of themes, their place in the overall work of the group and any resolution of issues that seemed to occur.

Rage, hatred, jealousy and revenge

This group of women had suffered considerably in response to marital dissolution and their subsequent divorce. Abandonment after 21 or more years of marriage was a deep and searing wound. Three women had been treated with

antidepressants for a minimum six-month period. Some were ashamed of their grief and depression. Two women went to great lengths to be 'reasonable in their grieving.' Anger was suppressed 'so as not to upset the children'. Friends expected them to 'cope maturely'. One woman had suppressed her rage, then felt numb, confused and depressed for months. As a group they expressed very little understanding of the effects of this major disruption on their lives.

It appeared that as the women experienced and expressed their anger, they became assertive in a firm clear way. As they felt less victimized there was subsequently less expression of anger.

The extent and repetitive nature of fantasies of revenge were unanticipated by the researcher. One woman had kept a diary of all the broken promises suffered by her children at the hands of their father. She had wanted to shame him in the presence of a third party. Each woman in some way shared this yearning for revenge.

I have often thought of releasing the handbrake of his precious car, and letting it roll down the hill into the sea. I have wanted to deface his 'pride and joy' and write AIDS all over his car.

I have a fantasy of a Mafia gang of brothers who would avenge me. He would be terrified. I would want to watch his terror. I have wanted to shoot bullets over his house. I want him to feel as terrified as I have this past year.

The universalization of fantasies of revenge, possible in a group, seems to have been a source of relief and comfort to divorcing women. The researcher contends that this preoccupation with revenge is a normal response to the experience of betrayal and divorce-related abandonment rage, but has not been well-documented in the literature.

Ex-husbands and their new liaisons

The relationships between ex-husbands and their younger 'girl friends' remained a persistent and intense preoccupation throughout the life of the group. Vindictive pleasure was apparent at the vicissitudes experienced as any of these relationships deteriorated. Moral outrage could not be contained at the men's sexual indiscretions in front of adolescent children.

Ex-husband's new partners were variously described as 'brazen hussies', 'alley cats' and 'loose women'. One member remarked: "She flaunted herself in front of my teenage sons in a see-through negligee." Women were expressively angry that fathers had broken all the rules for conduct which they as parents had jointly espoused and taught their children. Women were offended at the 'immorality' of former spouses, even when they had themselves been involved in extra-marital relationships of varying degrees of emotional and physical intimacy. Women had 'relationships', but the men had 'gone down the drain'.

In the closing weeks of the group, some women had begun to understand that their ex-husbands were in fact happier than they had been previously. It was painful for them to begin to consider that maybe 'she is not so awful after all.' At this stage there was a mild, but short-lived tempering of the general climate of anger at ex-husbands. Retrospectively it seems likely to the researcher that issues of loss of youth and marital sexuality underlay some of these intense concerns. With one exception, group members were unable to talk directly about their aging.

The remarriage of one ex-husband precipitated a marked crisis for his ex-wife and the entire group. Group members were confronted with the possibility of the remarriage of their ex-husbands. There was a resurgence of anger. Remarriage

was a public proclamation of the ultimate finality of divorce. Fantasies of reconciliation were being eroded.

It is argued that the expression of anger, disapproval, hate and resentment is a normal and appropriate response to desertion in long-term marriages. The group provided a crucible where anger and rage could be experienced in white-hot intensity. This lessened group members' needs for inappropriate ventilation. The outlet provided by the group seems to have permitted some resolution of depression and facilitated the channelling of anger in appropriate, assertive and constructive ways.

Mothers and children

In the early weeks of the group (meetings one to four) women spoke at great length about the effects of the divorce on their children. Young people were distressed, disillusioned and despondent about their fathers' initial and continuing abandonment of them. Two issues were intermingled. Young people had suffered as a result of the divorce. For some of the women divorce had been a major narcissistic injury. Mothers projected their profound hurt onto their children and identified with the hurt experienced by the children. Initially women minimized their own pain and were unable to express their loss directly.

Fathers and children

None of the men had established a satisfactory post-divorce parenting relationship with their children. Contact was sporadic. Three women experienced frequent difficulties in terms of stipulated maintenance payments. From an objective perspective it was apparent that this group of men had relatively poor relationship skills.

Some of the men's own conflicts emerged. Two men offered generous gifts to their children, while pleading poverty in terms of erratic or grudging maintenance payment. Few of these gifts ever materialized.

In reality, the women were angry at the neglect of their children, yet they were also highly ambivalent about the children developing a more positive relationship with their fathers. The possibility of prolonged visits or holidays with fathers generated many anxieties. There was much antipathy at the prospect of their children relating to 'the other woman'. The more insecure women feared the loss of closeness with their children with the prospect of any bonding between potential step-mothers and their children. They feared their own loneliness while children would be away.

It was difficult for the researcher to establish to what extent this maternal ambivalence affected the fathers' somewhat diffident and difficult relationships with their children. It was apparent that for women for whom divorce was a narcissistic wound, their only means of retaliation was a wounding of the father-child relationship (Jacobs 1988). Such women had extreme difficulty hearing that children were entitled to and needed time with their fathers. It is argued that the group provided a forum where women could share these concerns, and learn from each other about alternative responses to a shared dilemma.

Multiple losses

Multiple divorce-related losses were a recurrent and repetitive theme between sessions four and seven. Four women had lost their homes and some treasured furniture of symbolic value. "We have lost so much, I suppose it is natural to cling to some treasured piece as though it is of priceless value." All had lost some married friends, their financial security and their status as married women.

One member sold her home and moved into a considerably smaller house during the weeks of the group. Her sense of loss, her difficulty in feeling 'at home' in a new house when her husband had been her 'home', and her initial glimmerings of pleasure about the new house were vicariously experienced by the group.

All group members had lost several of their married friends. Even childhood friends were capable of disclosing confidential issues to ex-husbands. There was a recognition that friends struggled with issues of divided loyalties. Group member C understood that she may have overstrained friendships by her great distress and bitterness during her initial abandonment.

Women felt deeply betrayed by friends who maintained a relationship with the ex-husbands. As group members discussed the issues of 'friends of the marriage and who sides with whom', one group member was able to share 'primitive, unspeakable feelings.' She no longer wanted to speak to anyone who even responded to her ex-husband's greetings. She felt enraged that friends might even have allowed him to sit down on their chairs.

The indignity of losing a husband by divorce rather than by death was expressed in this way:

Every good memory has been sullied. Had I been widowed, I would have displayed a large photo of him in a prominent place. I have even been robbed of respectable grief.

Financial stresses

These were a source of enormous resentment and great anxiety. All the women struggled to adjust to their reduced income. High anxiety about destitution and a 'penniless old age' was a repetitive theme. There was a universal sense of injustice. These women had struggled alongside their husbands through the lean years of early family life. Now they anticipated that some other woman would obtain the

ex-husband's pension benefits. Only one woman had an earning capacity similar to that of her ex-husband.

What exacerbated the problem were the mens' pleas of poverty when presented with legitimate family expenses, even though women had evidence of their lavish spending on entertainment, extravagant gifts or holidays. One ex-husband was sufficiently indiscreet to have his bank statements sent to his former wife's address. Women expressed enormous envy and resentment about the gifts of expensive jewellery given to 'girl friends'. There were occasions when children had witnessed this gift-giving.

A contested divorce

Between sessions seven and ten, one member was preparing for a contested divorce. Much group time was given to her anxieties about an adequate settlement, her legal consultations, failed mediation attempts and an eleventh-hour settlement.

This was 'everyone's divorce.' The defeat of one husband was the defeat of all men. The entire group were invited to a celebration supper following the granting of this group member's divorce decree. The contested divorce was a highly evocative issue. The insults, apprehensions and ultimate triumph were experienced vicariously. Each woman reviewed the experience of her own divorce, her relief that it was 'all over now' or her regret that she had not fought harder for a better deal. What transpired was that many mixed motives lay beneath the filing for divorce.

Three of the women who had been abandoned filed for divorce. Lawyers were respectively blamed for fanning the fires of fury, prolonging the litigation and not fighting for a good enough deal for the women. It appeared that these women who

had been deserted had instigated divorce proceedings to save their residual dignity or to call their ex-husbands' bluff.

New opportunities

Slowly, the more intact women began to anticipate some new possibilities for the future. They sought different options, cultural pursuits, broadened their occupational experience, or commenced new business ventures. Little group time was spent on these new beginnings. These ventures were self-generated as women experienced some recovery of their energy and basic competence.

Women acknowledged that the sharing of their suffering and the encounter with and acceptance of their own intolerable feelings had left them calmer and more energetic. There was evidence of greater assertiveness and more confident problem-solving than had been manifested earlier.

Two members were still quite depressed at closure of the group. Yet, they seemed to have benefitted from the reduction in isolation, the universalization, and had established ongoing relationships with other group members.

8.2 CONTENT ANALYSIS OF GROUP MEETINGS: GROUP B

It will become apparent that there was relatively little overlap of manifest content in Groups A and B, yet at an affective level common issues emerged. Reflective exploration and disclosure of intrapsychic and family-of-origin concerns were a marked feature of this group. The researcher's psychodynamic perspectives would have encouraged and supported this work.

Divorce grief - a common bond

The initial common bond between these fairly disparate women was their shared experience of grief, loss and depression. Rejection and failure were keenly felt both by those who rejected and those who were rejected. Social isolation and

loneliness were lamented repeatedly. All group members reported manifest symptoms of clinical depression at some stage of the marriage or divorce process. The CMP scores reflected moderate to severe depression and self-esteem disturbance in five members. With one exception, they had received limited care for their depression. Sadness, loss and longing were pervasive. Some women wept most weeks.

As a group they lamented the lack of ceremony of a divorce. G felt humiliated by the judge's levity. H recounted a fantasy about "wedding rings being returned to former partners, to piped music, in a kind of funeral chapel."

The mutual identification and sharing of common pain fostered group cohesion. The active grieving, the normalization of divorce-related feelings and the reduction in isolation may have contributed to a significant improvement in the CMP scores that occurred. Johnson (1963:88) attributes the reduction in depression in therapeutic groups to the recognition and ventilation of repressed anger or rage. With development of assertiveness in the group and the ventilation of anger there is a rise in self-esteem and a lessening of guilt.

Relationships with parents

With one exception, all these women were involved in and dependent upon their parents. Unresolved adolescent dependence/independence and separation conflicts clamoured to be addressed. While these parental relationships were a major source of environmental support, they contributed greatly to psychological and emotional stress.

Women were angry that their parents had not fostered their independence. Some recognized the relationship between adolescent dependence and their marriages. They realized that had their independence been fostered, they would not have needed to get married as they had done.

There were difficulties between fathers and daughters. Fathers with traditional religious convictions were mortified that their daughters were divorced. Some fathers had difficulty accepting the adulthood of their daughters; some still called them by their childhood names. Others had difficulty maintaining emotional relationships with their daughters and could not bear their divorce-related-affect. Group members lamented the socialization of men in terms of emotional and relationship issues. They discussed the implications of this as the mothers of sons.

The majority of women reported difficult relationships with their mothers. Elements of emotional manipulation, 'martyrdom' and criticism were evident. None of their parents seemed able to talk about the divorce without recriminations. Consequently, although divorce was responsible for closer family relationships, it remained a taboo subject in these families.

There was a great deal of mutual identification between these women as they struggled to attain more autonomous and assertive relationships with their parents. They coached and supported each other in constructive communication skills. This discussion spanned meetings one to seven.

Self-esteem

Low self-esteem was another common theme. It was manifest at a conscious level between sessions one and nine. Initially, none of the group members were able to accept and integrate any validation or affirmation given them by any other member. There was repeated dismissal of any recognition. Minimization about real competence was repetitive. There were repeated denigratory or disparaging remarks expressed about their own sorrow, unhappiness or the longevity of their grief. They described themselves as 'pathetic' and 'wallowing in self-pity'. The group worker's repeated reflection of these dynamics led to open discussion.

One subgroup with a common religious heritage explored religious undermining of their self-worth. A perpetual emphasis on sin and fear had increased their self-hatred. 'Should, ought, right and wrong' were terms used frequently during the early weeks of the group. By the post-group evaluation, there was significant improvement in ISE scores for five out of six women.

New relationships

These were a source of intense and continuing interest to most members between sessions eight and ten. The logistics of meeting men, dating anxieties and rules for sexual conduct were discussed with much zest. Some members shared their envy and apprehension as others spoke of dating. Concerns were expressed that a new adult relationship would interfere with existing close mother-son relationships. Some limited, tentative exploration was conducted about the mate selection process in marriage. Those who were dating were encouraged to identify similarities and differences between their new partners and ex-husbands.

There was some grounded discussion about the importance of 'finding oneself' prior to entering into a serious relationship. There was evidence of some maturing, as women recognized that no man could 'rescue' them from their parents or themselves. There was a great deal of ambivalence expressed about men. They longed for the solace and personal enhancement of male companionship; yet they were often dismissive of men in general and displayed little understanding of men's needs.

Marriage review

In the seventh and eighth weeks there was intense and focussed review of the vicissitudes of their marriages. They sought to understand what had gone wrong and whether things could have been different. Why had neither their partners nor themselves seen the signs of emotional divorce? Some women were able to

identify aspects of their own behaviour which had seriously undermined the marriage.

Women spoke openly about intimate sexual matters. They acknowledged their prior misinformation and ignorance. They resented their mothers' sexual repression. Some women shared their perplexity about a husband's sexual cooling during pregnancy or lactation. Two women spoke of the unrecognized sexual withdrawal which accompanied the phase of emotional divorce.

Idiosyncratic concerns

These women were more disparate than the women in Group A. Fewer common themes emerged. Yet each women spoke with great intensity of the profundity of her own experience of crisis. These episodes were remarkable for the awe, reverence and respect accorded by the entire group to each person. They were significant experiences of the group containing the solitariness, pain and vulnerability of each member. L spoke of her multiple encounters with psychosis. She and a sibling had been placed in a children's home following her father's first psychotic breakdown. Another sibling had committed suicide following a breakdown. Her husband had deserted her during her first admission for a psychotic illness. After a number of relapses of her illness, she was incapacitated and unemployed.

G had had an affair during her husband's prolonged absences. Her shame, guilt, sorrow and depression were exceedingly painful for her to express. She realized that she was grieving the loss of two relationships. The group heard her confession with a gentle solemnity.

Each of the women had begun to face her own deep-seated and complex personal difficulties. Each displayed a capacity to work intently and at depth. As a group they held and sustained each other through difficult emotional work. As the group

drew to a close, it was evident that these difficulties would not and could not be resolved within twelve weeks.

8.3 COMPARATIVE COMMENT

It will be apparent that when women are given the opportunity to explore their divorce-related stresses, they do so. In Group A most of the thematic material pertained to the multiple vicissitudes of being divorced at or after age forty. The younger women in Group B explored their own different experience of divorce.

It is the researcher's contention that the focussed attention given to the work of mourning in both groups was a major factor in enabling members to undertake new tasks and projects which were sustained in the post-group phase. It may be that participation in such a group creates a shared ritual which facilitates the transition from marriage to divorce in a society where no such ritual exists.

The content analysis of two different groups indicates that some issues are common to divorcing women irrespective of their age, or their agency in a divorce. Intense grief and wounds to self-esteem are common concerns. What emerged was that developmental issues markedly influenced the expression and manifestation of women's difficulties. Older women's latent concerns about their aging was displaced onto a preoccupation with their ex-husband's sexuality. For the younger women in Group B, whose marriages had been contracted prior to adequate resolution of adolescent issues, the reworking of unresolved conflicts was an essential aspect of divorce adjustment. Issues of dependence/independence, separation from parents, dating and sexuality recurred time and again. Indeed, these marriages may be understood as one expression of adolescent separation conflicts (Stierlin and Ravenscroft 1972).

It is highly likely that unresolved adolescent issues contributed to marital difficulties in both groups. In Group B this was more apparent as women reflected

on relationships with their parents and worked at developing more mature, constructive relationships. The group worker felt that it was inopportune to raise issues as to the role of the influence of family-of-origin relationships on their own capacity for relationship, or their choice of a partner in either group. Florence Kaslow in Gurman and Kniskern (1981:672) would argue that this understanding is an essential element of psychic divorce. There were occasions when the group atmosphere in Group B was more that of an initiation rite than a divorce ritual. Women explored their issues with adolescent anxiety and vigour.

Self-denigration, punitive and critical attitudes towards their own pain and negation of their individual giftedness were marked. This suggests that while divorce may have exacerbated these qualities, it was likely that these attitudes had their roots in childhood. It was therefore unrealistic to expect greater resolution of self-esteem difficulties in a short-term group.

The high CMP scores for the members of Group B suggested that these women had experienced varying degrees of personality disorganization in response to their divorces. It would be difficult to establish the extent of pre-morbid pathology. All group members manifested an ability to work at depth on personal issues and to become part of a group that made such work possible. In the researcher's view, the significant improvement of CMP scores indicates that group members responded to the therapeutic environment in the group and benefitted from it. Each woman could have benefitted from a longer exposure to group work.

The researcher argues that both groups developed to a high level of functioning. The group cohesion, trust and mutuality facilitated intensive therapeutic work and the unstructured nature of the group permitted members to raise their own most pertinent issues. In the group worker's experience there is a greater commitment to the group and the therapeutic process when group members are granted this autonomy.

8.4 EVALUATION OF GROUP PROCESSES

The researcher contends firstly that the responses to post-group interviews in 6.4 and 7.4 and the thematic content analysis presented in 8.1 and 8.2 provide some evidence that women benefit from participation in an integrated group. Her second contention is that it is highly unlikely that exploration of material in such depth and intensity could have occurred in a structured group or an unstructured social situation. It is the group worker's understanding, recognition, fostering and containment of group processes that permits a group to develop to a high level of functioning (Douglas 1979:166). For this reason some evaluation of the group worker's role in the understanding and facilitation of group development and allied processes is necessary in a study of this nature. This evaluation will be conducted from a developmental perspective (Northen 1988). Some attention will be paid to the changing nature of group processes in the life of the group (Douglas 1979).

8.4.1 Selection of members

Both Johnson (1963:56) and Yalom (1975:219) recommend careful selection of members for group therapy. A selection interview is the researcher's standard intake procedure. For the purposes of this study, however, greater care was taken in that a partly-structured interview was used. This more thorough intake procedure facilitated a self-selection process. Women who felt too traumatized by their reflection during the initial interview, declined to participate in the group. All were offered alternative counselling.

The structured interview permitted an abbreviated form of history-taking and an initial personality assessment. Reaction to the divorce and current emotional state were also assessed. The group worker did this within a context of empathy and respect. The likely fit between each woman and other potential group members was considered. Countertransference experience was taken into account. An

opportunity was provided to offer information about the group and to explore potential members' concerns. The group worker was guided by the relevant literature (Johnson 1963; Yalom 1975 and Northen 1988 :152 - 172).

It is the researcher's view that the attention to the intake process made a contribution to high levels of commitment to the group. This was reflected by good attendance at group meetings with no fall-off in membership. Tables 8.1 and 8.2 indicate the attendance record for Groups A and B respectively.

Table 8.1 Attendance at group meetings: Group A

Name	Meetings											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
B	-	-	-	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
C	-	-	-	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
D	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	*	*	*	*	*
E	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
F	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

- prior to joining
 * indicates attendance
 A indicates absence, apologies submitted.

Table 8.2 Attendance at group meetings: Group B

Name	Meetings											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
G	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	*	*
H	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
J	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
K	*	*	A	*	*	*	A	*	*	A	*	*
L	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	*	*	*	*
M	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	*	*	*	*

* indicates attendance
 A indicates absence, apologies submitted.

Selection of two members in particular required clinical sensitivity. The inclusion of group member D in Group A was a measured risk. Her prior relationship as

the researcher's client, some difficult negative transference experience and her role as the only woman to initiate divorce in the group needed to be considered. The reasons for her inclusion were her social isolation, and her difficulties in establishing peer relationships with women.

The group worker was concerned about L's history of psychiatric illness, her level of distress and the extent of her depression. It was conceivable that her depression could immobilize the group, yet she reported participation in a church-based group. She was included since many of her difficulties were similar to those of other potential group members. Her psychiatrist was supportive and encouraging of her participation in the group.

8.4.2 Orientation - inclusion

This phase spanned four sessions in Group A. The literature alerts group workers to the issues of client anxiety, ambivalence, resistance, hesitant participation and trust-related issues (Johnson 1963:11-16; Yalom 1975:301-331; Northen 1988:185-221). For this reason, the worker paid attention to these issues.

Douglas' emphasis on **interaction** as the fundamental group process has already been noted (1979:53). Interaction was established fairly easily in this group as the women were articulate and possessed good social skills. The homogeneity among members in terms of common experience, difficulties and shared feelings enhanced this. The researcher facilitated interaction by identifying common experience, by linking members with similar issues and by inviting people to respond to each other. Members were encouraged to pace their self-disclosure during their introductions according to their own level of comfort. The late entry of two members was supported by the worker. Predictably, conversation was scattered, diffuse and unfocussed during the early meetings (Northen 1988:186).

Attention was paid to **locomotive processes** (Douglas 1979:55-60). The broad goals could be described as the women's expressed need for assistance with their divorce adjustment. Their own level of pain and disequilibrium intensified their commitment to the group purpose. Personal goals related to a reduction in personal suffering.

During the second and third sessions, the worker suggested the setting of individual specific goals. There was no direct response to either of these interventions. Her impression from this and previous groups is that when women are emotionally overwhelmed they are unready for goal setting. The evidence however has been that once women have grieved adequately, they have begun to implement personal goals.

During the initial contracting it became apparent that many anxieties existed about trust and confidentiality. These predictable difficulties were intensified by recent divorce-related experience of betrayal and abandonment. The group worker therefore attended to **molar processes** (Douglas 1979:65-73) from the outset. A central aspect of facilitating a group relates to the creation of a climate where curative forces may become operative. Norm-setting involves the democratic development of norms where respect for themselves, each other and their own pain is observed. Feelings are to be accepted and not dismissed. Any events which have troubled group members may be raised. All divorce-related matters were valid group concerns. Group cohesion was actively enhanced by the worker. Limited educational input pertaining to the divorce process normalized some of the more extreme feelings.

The group worker promoted exploration and expression of divorce-related feelings. Women minimized and were fairly dismissive of their own pain. The worker legitimized their grief and introduced mourning as a sanctioned activity. During the orientation phase there was a major emphasis on the pain children

suffered in response to parental divorce. The researcher opened the fifth session by reflecting that their children's pain had been a pervasive theme in the previous meetings. She encouraged members to explore their personal experience in more direct ways. This seemed to facilitate the onset of the working phase.

The initial **social structure** (Douglas 1979) manifested the dimensions of inclusion-exclusion and acceptance as a two-way process. Northen (1988:185) identifies this as the core concern of this phase. Three women formed a high status core subgroup. They had been abandoned, had suffered greatly, and their ex-husbands were involved with other women at the time of the group. Two women who joined the group in the fourth week were of relatively lower status. They experienced a little difficulty entering the group. Both were quite depressed, fairly introverted and shy women.

In Group B, women introduced themselves in terms of their families of origin. There was a high level of self-disclosure of their loneliness, unhappiness and stress. Initially, these issues were addressed in an emotionally contained manner.

In the researcher's view, the **molar processes**, the climate and norms that are established in a group, facilitate the development of Yalom's curative factors. Therefore the group worker's initial therapeutic input was focussed on the necessity and inevitability of the mourning process and the amorality of feelings. She reflected the self-denigratory comments which were expressed by all members of this group. Members were introduced to the concept of respecting themselves, caring for themselves, learning to recognize their own needs. They were given permission to take care of these needs. There was some exploration in the group about the differences between self-respect and selfishness. The religious subgroup had been well-indoctrinated with the ethics of self-denial, and their own unworthiness. Several of the group described their mothers as 'martyred'. Consequently their model of womanhood and motherhood was one of resentful

self-denial. Because of the disparities between members, it was essential for the group worker to foster inclusion of each member.

The group worker facilitated the **locomotive processes** (Douglas 1979:55-60) by promoting a democratic group contract. In her view, the practice of encouraging members to take responsibility for their use of time in the group promotes empowerment and autonomy in group members.

Interaction between members was encouraged through identification of commonalities and the linking of members with common concerns. She also served as a link between meetings, relating current discussion to themes and issues from previous meetings. The result of this was that individual meetings were not experienced as isolated events, but part of a whole.

In terms of **social structure**, the initial subgrouping reflected common experience, professional associations, childlessness and the shared religious heritage. The worker was conscious of facilitating an integration between these initial subgroups and the group as a whole.

8.4.3 Dissatisfaction and power conflict

The literature is in agreement that conflict in the group situation is inevitable and pervasive. Unless the expression of hostility or conflict is permitted, encouraged and processed non-defensively, the group developmental process is undermined. Cohesion is delayed, communication is stilted and unhelpful norms emerge. Persistent and impenetrable hostile attitudes will develop which hamper effective interpersonal learning (Johnson 1963:64; Foulkes and Anthony 1973:118; Yalom 1975:62-63 and Northen 1988:222).

Dissatisfaction and power conflict is not a discrete phase, but manifested throughout the duration of the group. In view of the researcher's awareness of the importance of this dimension of group experience, the expression of negative

attitudes towards the group worker was consistently invited. Permission was given for members to feel and express discontent about her. Non-verbal and latent expressions of hostility towards her were made explicit. Initial and subsequent challenging of the leader's authority and competence emerged indirectly on several occasions. In Group A this pertained predominantly to her limitations as a married person who had not experienced divorce. One member spoke repeatedly and warmly of the excellence of her previous counsellor who had been divorced.

The researcher displayed less facility in identifying and making explicit conflicts which pertained to sibling rivalry. Some conflict between group members D and F was apparent in session four. F was angry that D had left her husband since this was a 'betrayal of womanhood'. Retrospectively, it seems likely that in the researcher's preoccupation about the integration of new members, she minimized the conflict between established group members.

The issues and expression of conflict change across the developmental cycle of a group. Group conflict was understood in terms of Foulkes and Anthony's (1973:118-124) conceptualization of conflict as conflict over dominance. **Conformity** conflicts were played out throughout the life of Group A. Conformity was a difficult experience for these women who were still coming to terms with the unsought identity of divorcee. The stigmatization of divorced women had already been acknowledged. The conflict over conformity played itself out by the assumption of a common identity - that of 'rejected women'. Group member D's role of isolate was an inevitable aspect of the manifestation of this conflict.

For the duration of the group, D idealized her relationship with 'her counsellor'. Members denied that this previous relationship affected them in any way. Retrospectively and with hindsight, the researcher is aware that D's unresolved

transference issues and the group's denial of their envy were not adequately explored.

During the termination phase (tenth session) however, when members were encouraged to articulate their discontents with the group and the worker some extremely important unfinished business was raised. D expressed her experience of peripherality and confusion in the group. She confronted the entire group about their 'self-pity', and laid her passivity at their door. She had not been able to proceed with the rebuilding of her own life while they were in mourning. The group responded appropriately to this confrontation. There was a constructive resolution of this conflict. D discovered in the closing weeks of the group that she did belong. Northen illuminates this process most aptly.

The resolution of major interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts usually cannot occur until the group has developed a basic consensus that provides strength to face and weather serious differences.
(1988:271)

Conflict in reaction to authority was subtle. Members frequently expressed dissatisfaction about the limited understanding of married people for their distress. This conflict was most apparent around the issue of D's inclusion in the group. She consistently denied that she had experienced any loss in the sharing of her counsellor with group members. Members consistently denied that they had any negative feelings about her prior relationship with the researcher although the most acrimonious expressions of feeling related to D's relationship to and participation in the group.

In retrospect, the worker is aware that the conflict was focussed on the polarized relationship between the abandoned and the abandoner. Very little hostility was directed at the group worker. It is conceivable that the women's vulnerability had increased their need for the worker's good will and their resultant protection of her from their anger.

Issues of dependence and independence were very much to the fore especially during the working and termination phases. Three of these women had not in any way resolved dependency issues in their original families prior to marriage. All group members had been in dependent, rather than interdependent marriages. Divorce was for five of them an unsolicited independence. The three more intact women responded positively to the worker's approach of encouraging autonomous work. The remaining three women behaved in a more dependent manner. They indicated post-group that they would have valued greater facilitation of their participation in the group. This was valid criticism in view of their greater vulnerability.

Conflicts over change were fairly subtle. Resistance to change is common therapeutic experience. From the researcher's perspective, change is even more difficult when divorce adjustment is the desired state, although divorce per se is undesirable. The group worker understood some of the feedback given at termination to reflect regret that members had not utilized the group to the full. During termination, when an evaluation of the group was being conducted, there were calls from the least participative members for greater structure, homework assignments and a reading list. Post-group interviews however, indicated that growth and change had been sustained in all group members.

In Group B conflict and hostility remained latent and covert throughout the life of the group. There was no evidence that any of these women had achieved adult relationships with their mothers, in which their own hostility could be tolerated. Their high levels of distress and need of care during the group seemed to lock them into a role of being the good daughters of a benevolent therapist-mother in the group. Thus **conflict with authority** was expressed in mild and veiled criticisms of the group worker.

Some initial challenging of the group worker, of her competence and her limited ability to heal their pain was predictable. In this group, one session was postponed between meetings two and three as a result of her illness. The group denied any negative feelings towards her. There were marked expressions of concern and solicitude. In her view this threat of the loss of the good object subverted the expression of hostility. However, the group was given permission to feel angry or disappointed about the disruptions in the meeting schedule.

Conflicts pertaining to dependence and independence were an ongoing group theme in Group B as has already been mentioned. Women were actively working for independence in their personal lives yet their dependence on the group worker did not permit them to challenge her openly.

Sibling rivalry conflicts were apparent, in that group member H boasted much personal independence, yet in the group remained largely in a dependent position towards the group worker. She attempted to establish an intellectual liaison, consistently asking philosophical questions. Her setting of herself apart from 'the other girls' was not addressed by the worker. Members were expressively envious of each other's circumstances, having/not having children, living alone, living with another person, having access to parents, not being pressurized by parents. The issues of their envy of each other as siblings in a group was not addressed.

Conflict with authority was expressed in subtle discontents during the working phase. Members were dissatisfied that the worker had no solutions for them and gave no advice. Irritation was expressed that the worker 'could never know our pain'. Conflict during termination was manifested in passivity and withdrawal. This is discussed more fully in 8.4.5.

8.4.4 Mutuality and work

This was an extremely fruitful phase in Group A. Constructive work occurred in working subgroups. Membership of these subgroups fluctuated from week to week. The following issues were explored in some depth, some of them in a single meeting: leaving and being left, necessary interactions with ex-husbands and the management of personal pain. Those women who were deserted following an unanticipated 'moonlight flit' were able to share the shock and dismay of this discovery. They identified with each other in the shame and mortification of telling friends that they did not know where their husbands were. Humiliation and rage were mutually understood. There is evidence that this form of desertion increases divorce trauma markedly (Sprenkle and Cyrus 1983).

One subgroup consisted of two women related through marriage. They generated occasional minor 'family business' distractions: "Are you going to Aunt Mary's birthday tea?" In this group of women who no longer 'belonged' to nuclear families, kinship in a clan was a source of status in the group.

The group worker's major role during this phase was the protection of the working subgroups. She supported non-working members, offered limited educational input and adopted an advocacy role on behalf of the children.

The social structure reflected egalitarian working groups. A norm had developed that recognized members' disparate experience and expertise. Members valued each other's contributions during the work of subgroups. No one member was excluded from this working phase.

In Group B the phase of mutuality and work spanned meetings three to nine. Initially work was conducted in subgroups, with shifting membership. In the later weeks, individuals claimed time for themselves and shared intimately about themselves. The working subgroups explored issues in single sessions. These concerned professional interests, employment options, resources and skills

training. They discussed their children's response to their own distress. (It is noteworthy that there was little discussion of their children's divorce-related distress per se.) They explored the relationship between power and dominance in women and men's subsequent feelings of intimidation.

The worker used three predominant modes of intervention during this period. She offered cognitive input in response to material raised and discussed by the group on issues such as mate selection, children's needs post-divorce and the meaning of co-parental divorce. She worked at an affective level which facilitated the mourning process and nurtured self-esteem. She normalized the extreme divorce-related feelings by educating group members about the divorce process. She was aware that her use of self-disclosure seemed to facilitate participation at deeper levels for some members.

An analysis of the social structure during the working and termination phases indicated that the group core was comprised of members J and L who worked in a focussed way in each session. Their accessibility to their own pain was often catalytic in that they engaged other members in working dyads or subgroups. The other group members were more distant. Two were reserved, introverted and fairly well-defended women who experienced some difficulty in self-disclosure. One member who had been the good, conforming, undemanding child of her parents felt unentitled to time in the group, unless it was offered to her.

The **molar processes** were manifest in the climate of mutual respect which prevailed. Group B was relatively cohesive, but less so than Group A, where greater initial homogeneity existed. Support, encouragement and recognition of individual abilities were features of this group. There was an acceptance that members were different. Their goals were different. These ranged from short-term concrete goals, 'a new job within three months', to long-range less tangible

goals 'to come to terms with being alone'. There were often affect-laden silences. The group displayed a limited ability to process these silences. Retrospectively, the researcher has wondered whether this tentativeness manifest in their participation in the group was in some way a reflection of their capacity for commitment to and participation in relationships.

It is the researcher's contention that provided reasonable care has been paid to the selection and molar processes, **locomotive processes** will take care of themselves. It has seldom been necessary to take members to task. Their own pain and disequilibrium have provided the impetus for sustained work. The group worker's understanding of resistance is that it may reflect a wise unreadiness rather than a willful reluctance for any member or the group to engage in some new task (Papadopolous 1989).

8.4.5 Separation, termination and transition

Changes in **social structure** were apparent across the life of Group A. The initial high status core had become fully integrated in the group. Each of them had extra-group contact with one of the other women. Subgroups had developed according to common issues or residential proximity.

The worker continued to attend to **molar processes**, yet there was a sense that norms and values had become internalized in members. Cohesion had developed to a high level. Yalom notes that cohesiveness and comfort are not synonymous. Cohesive groups show acceptance, intimacy, understanding, yet there is evidence that they permit greater development and expression of hostility and conflict (1975:63).

The group moved through flight and denial to a reasonably constructive resolution. Initially members insisted that the group was not really ending since they planned to meet socially. The group worker reflected the short-circuiting in process and

insisted that the loss of the group needed to be faced. Their disappointment and regrets were called for.

In all groups the termination phase provides an opportunity for reflection of other losses and endings. Divorce is an unfinished ending. Regrets, gratitude and goodbyes are seldom expressed. Some acknowledgement and exploration of this was possible during termination work in Group A.

There was a general acknowledgement that the emotional sharing in the group had been a humanizing experience. Three women certainly appeared to be calmer, less fragmented and ready to engage in new pursuits. For the remaining three members termination was untimely. Two of them still manifested clinically unacceptable CMP scores for depression and self esteem. Group member D had not managed to extricate herself from an emotionally undermining platonic relationship.

Separation, termination and transition proved to be a difficult phase for Group B. There was an absence of two members during session ten and a postponement of the final session by one week to ensure full attendance. Divorce is an extended crisis; the remarriage of her ex-husband during this phase of the group generated enormous distress for J. A crisis of this magnitude intrudes into the termination phase of the group. Other members raised 'new' problems and expressed resentment that many unresolved difficulties still existed.

The molar processes and social structure reflected the dissipation of the group. There was limited identification about the issues of spousal remarriage. There was very little cohesive response to termination. Members responded individually, utilizing their own predominant defenses. Anger, minimization, flight, devaluing and silent withdrawal were apparent. Sadness and disappointment were pervasive. The dissolution of the group made any real exploration of termination issues difficult. Members were however able to set

some future goals for themselves. At termination the group worker was aware that this group of women remained vulnerable in that they remained socially isolated.

8.4.6 Discussion of group process evaluation

The evidence presented in this chapter is that in both groups women made excellent use of the opportunity provided for the exploration of divorce-related concerns. The content analysis has indicated that both groups developed to a high level of functioning. Each group was different, both in terms of manifest content and in terms of process, yet significant work was accomplished in each group. As has been stated it is the researcher's view and Douglas contention that the group worker's ability to recognize, foster and interpret group processes is a major factor in the enhancement of a high level of functioning in a group. There seems to be confirmation of this perspective in the scores in table 9.1 which reflect group participants experience of leadership style and function as a facilitating variable in the divorce adjustment process.

In the penultimate chapter nine, the statistical analysis of the influence of Yalom's curative factors on the divorce adjustment process is presented.

CHAPTER NINE

CORRESPONDENCE ANALYSIS OF THE CORRELATION MATRIX

9.1 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

It was found necessary to analyze together the entire sample of twelve responses because of the small sample sizes in each group, given that it was not possible to get statistically significant results on two separate samples. In table 9.1 the findings of the statistical analysis (Correspondence analysis) of the YCF : DAF correlation matrix which was conducted on the entire sample of 12 group members from two separate groups is presented. It is worth noting that some differences might have existed based on the groups being discrete. These differences would be eliminated by combination of two samples and the averaging out of differences. As a result of statistical necessity the strands of two discrete groups have become woven into a single research project. The analysis is based on the following table of ratings averaged over the sample of twelve respondents.

Table 9.1 YCF: DAF average ratings of 12 respondents

FACTOR	PRECXS	ALONE	ESELFE	REDIST	MANDRF	ATTCH	SOCREL	ACCDS
INSTILH	3.50	3.33	3.67	3.42	3.75	2.83	3.33	3.25
UNIVER	3.42	3.75	3.75	3.67	4.00	3.08	3.00	3.71
ACQINF	3.08	3.33	3.83	4.00	3.88	3.08	3.13	3.96
ALTRU	3.58	3.92	4.08	3.42	4.13	3.17	3.21	3.63
FAMILY	2.21	2.92	3.46	3.79	4.00	3.33	3.42	3.79
INTPERL	2.83	3.25	3.75	3.38	3.71	3.21	3.21	3.46
GPCOH	3.17	3.83	3.92	3.67	4.04	3.25	3.08	3.63
CATHAR	3.67	3.42	3.96	3.92	4.00	3.38	3.17	3.54
LEAD	3.42	3.75	4.13	3.92	4.42	3.29	3.38	4.00

For reader convenience descriptions of the concepts and codes are repeated here from 5.3.5.

Yalom's curative factors (YCF) variables:

- Instillation of hope
 - Universality
 - Acquisition of information
 - Altruism
 - Experience of being in a family
 - Interpersonal learning
 - Group Cohesion
 - Catharsis
 - Influence of the leader
- INSTILH
UNIVER
ACQINF
ALTR
FAMILY
INTPERL
GPCOH
CATHAR
LEAD

Fisher's divorce adjustment factors (DAF):

- Reduction in preoccupation with the ex-spouse	PRECEXS
- Comfort with being alone	ALONE
- Experiencing self-esteem	ESELFE
- Reduction of emotional distress	REDIST
- Management of divorce-related feelings	MANDRF
- Attitudinal changes to the divorce	ATTCH
- Social relationships	SOCREL
- An acceptance of divorced status	ACCDS
- Satisfaction/competence in the daily occupation.	

An initial reflection upon the scores in table 9.1 will indicate that group members received greatest assistance with four adjustmental factors (2+ scores >3.9):

Experiencing self-esteem	ESELFE
Reduction of emotional distress	REDIST
Management of divorce-related feelings	MANDRF
An acceptance of divorced status	ACCDS

They received least assistance with one DAF (scores 2+ <2.9):

Reduction in preoccupation with the ex-spouse	PRECXS
---	--------

The following group curative factors were found to be most helpful (scores 2+ >3.9):

Acquisition of information	ACQINF
Altruism	ALTRU
Group cohesion	GPCOH
Catharsis	CATHAR
Influence of the leader	LEAD

One YCF (two scores <2.92) was found to be the least helpful curative factor:

Experience of being in a family

FAMILY

Table 9.2: Correspondence analysis

DESCRIPTION FILE =
DATA FILE = YCFDAF.DAT

TRACE =0.014788

AXIS	EIGEN VALUE	% TRACE	CUM. % TRACE
1	0.010252	69.3	69.3
2	0.003094	20.9	90.2

2 FACTOR SOLUTION

CO-ORDINATES FOR VARIABLES

VARIABLE	QUALITY	MASS	INERTIA (%)
INSTILH+	0.672	0.063	2.6
INSTILH-	0.672	0.048	3.4
UNIVER+	0.930	0.066	3.8
UNIVER-	0.930	0.045	5.5
ACQINF+	0.870	0.065	5.4
ACQINF-	0.870	0.046	7.8
ALTRU+	0.917	0.067	4.2
ALTRU-	0.917	0.044	6.4
FAMILY+	0.990	0.062	10.7
FAMILY-	0.990	0.049	13.7
INTPERL+	0.858	0.062	2.9
INTPERL-	0.858	0.049	3.7
GPCOH+	0.899	0.066	4.1
GPCOH-	0.899	0.045	6.0
CATHAR+	0.693	0.067	2.8
CATHAR-	0.693	0.044	4.3
LEAD+	0.989	0.070	4.7
LEAD-	0.989	0.041	8.0

VARIABLE	AXIS 1		
	CO-ORD	SQ COR	CONT (%)
INSTILH+	0.049	0.397	1.5
INSTILH-	-0.064	0.397	1.9
UNIVER+	0.081	0.764	4.2
UNIVER-	-0.117	0.764	6.1
ACQINF+	0.102	0.844	6.6
ACQINF-	-0.146	0.844	9.5
ALTRU+	0.071	0.553	3.3
ALTRU-	-0.110	0.553	5.1
FAMILY+	0.114	0.509	7.9
FAMILY-	-0.146	0.509	10.1
INTPERL+	0.075	0.806	3.4
INTPERL-	-0.094	0.806	4.3
GPCOH+	0.088	0.846	5.0
GPCOH-	-0.129	0.846	7.3
CATHAR+	0.061	0.590	2.4
CATHAR-	-0.093	0.590	3.7
LEAD+	0.098	0.976	6.6
LEAD-	-0.168	0.976	11.3

VARIABLE	AXIS 2		
	CO-ORD	SQ COR	CONT (%)
INSTILH+	0.041	0.276	3.4
INSTILH-	-0.053	0.276	4.4
UNIVER+	0.038	0.166	3.0
UNIVER-	-0.055	0.166	4.4
ACQINF+	-0.018	0.026	0.7

	QUALITY	MASS	INERTIA (%)
ACQINF-	0.025	0.026	1.0
ALTRU+	0.058	0.363	7.2
ALTRU-	-0.089	0.363	11.2
FAMILY+	-0.111	0.480	24.7
FAMILY-	0.141	0.480	31.5
INTPERL+	-0.019	0.052	0.7
INTPERL-	0.024	0.052	0.9
GPCOH+	0.022	0.053	1.0
GPCOH-	-0.032	0.053	1.5
CATHAR+	0.025	0.103	1.4
CATHAR-	-0.039	0.103	2.1
LEAD+	0.012	0.014	0.3
LEAD-	-0.020	0.014	0.5

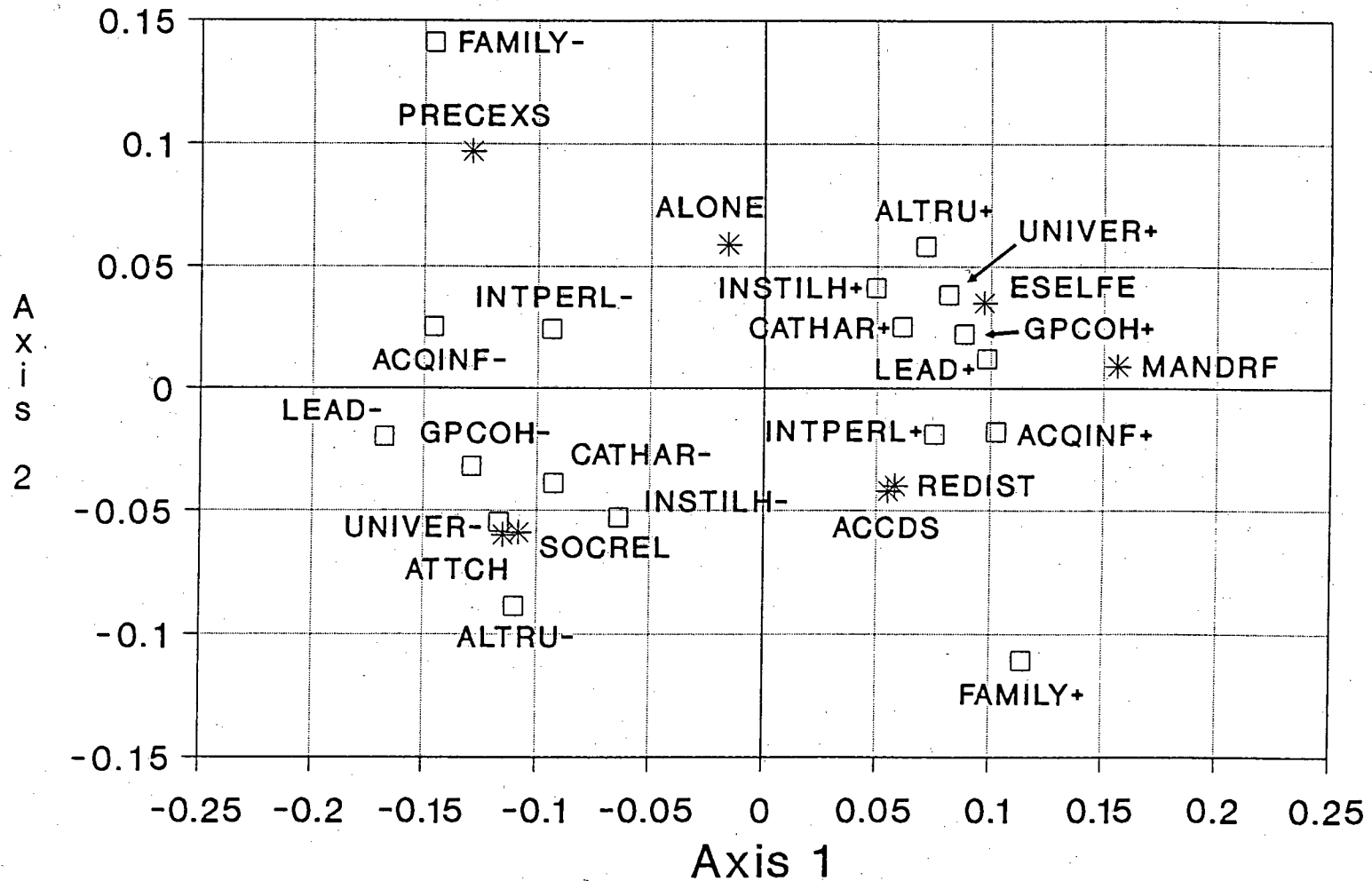
CO-ORDINATES FOR OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION	QUALITY	MASS	INERTIA (%)
PRECEXS	0.961	0.125	22.9
ALONE	0.616	0.125	5.2
ESELFE	0.918	0.125	9.9
REDIST	0.679	0.125	6.2
MANDRF	0.967	0.125	21.4
ATTCH	0.935	0.125	15.2
SOCREL	0.904	0.125	14.2
ACCDS	0.801	0.125	5.1

OBSERVATION	AXIS 1		
	CO-ORD	SQ COR	CONT (%)
PRECEXS	-0.129	0.612	20.2
ALONE	-0.016	0.041	0.3
ESELFE	0.097	0.811	11.6
REDIST	0.058	0.464	4.1
MANDRF	0.156	0.964	29.8
ATTCH	-0.115	0.736	16.1
SOCREL	-0.108	0.693	14.2
ACCDS	0.055	0.509	3.7

OBSERVATION	AXIS 2		
	CO-ORD	SQ COR	CONT (%)
PRECEXS	0.097	0.349	38.2
ALONE	0.059	0.575	14.3
ESELFE	0.035	0.107	5.1
REDIST	-0.040	0.214	6.3
MANDRF	0.009	0.003	0.3
ATTCH	-0.060	0.199	14.4
SOCREL	-0.059	0.211	14.3
ACCDS	-0.042	0.292	7.1

Two Dimensional Correspondence Analysis of Curative & Divorce Adjustment Factors



Graph 9.1: Two dimensional correspondence analysis of curative and divorce adjustment factors

Correspondence Analysis

Based on the table 9.2 the YCFs are referred to as variables and the DAFs are referred to as observations. The method requires the doubling of data in order to obtain a full set of responses. Doubling creates a symmetry between the two poles of each binary variable, thus all negative YCFs on Graph 9.1 are exactly opposite all positives and therefore negative YCFs can be ignored (Hoffman and Franke 198:215).

The meaning of the axes

Under the heading 'Co-ordinates for Observations' Axis 1 in table 9.2 the following numbers are important:

	Axis 1		
OBSERVATION	CO ORD	SQ COR	CONT(%)
ESELF		0.811	
MANDRF		0.964	
ATTCH		0.736	
SOCREL		0.693	

The co-ordinates of ESELF (experience of self esteem) and MANDRF (management of divorce-related feelings) are positive, while those of ATTCH (Attitudinal changes to the divorce) and SOCREL ((Social relationships) are negative. Axis 1 may therefore be illustrated in the following way:

Attitudinal change <.....> Experience of self-esteem

Social relationships <.....> Management of divorce-related feelings

It is conceivable that in making use of a continuum concept Axis 1 may be conceptualized as an adjustmental timeline axis:

long-term/
ultimately desirable <.....> short-term/initial

For Axis 2 in table 9.2 the following numbers are important:

Axis 2			
OBSERVATION	CO-ORD	SQ COR	CONT(%)
PRECXS		0.349	
ALONE		0.575	
ACCDS		0.292	
REDIST		0.214	

On this table the co-ordinates of PRECXS (pre-occupation with ex-spouse) and ALONE (comfort with being alone) are positive while that of ACCDS (acceptance of divorce status) and REDIST (reduction in emotional distress) are negative.

Axis 2 may be conceptualized in the following way:

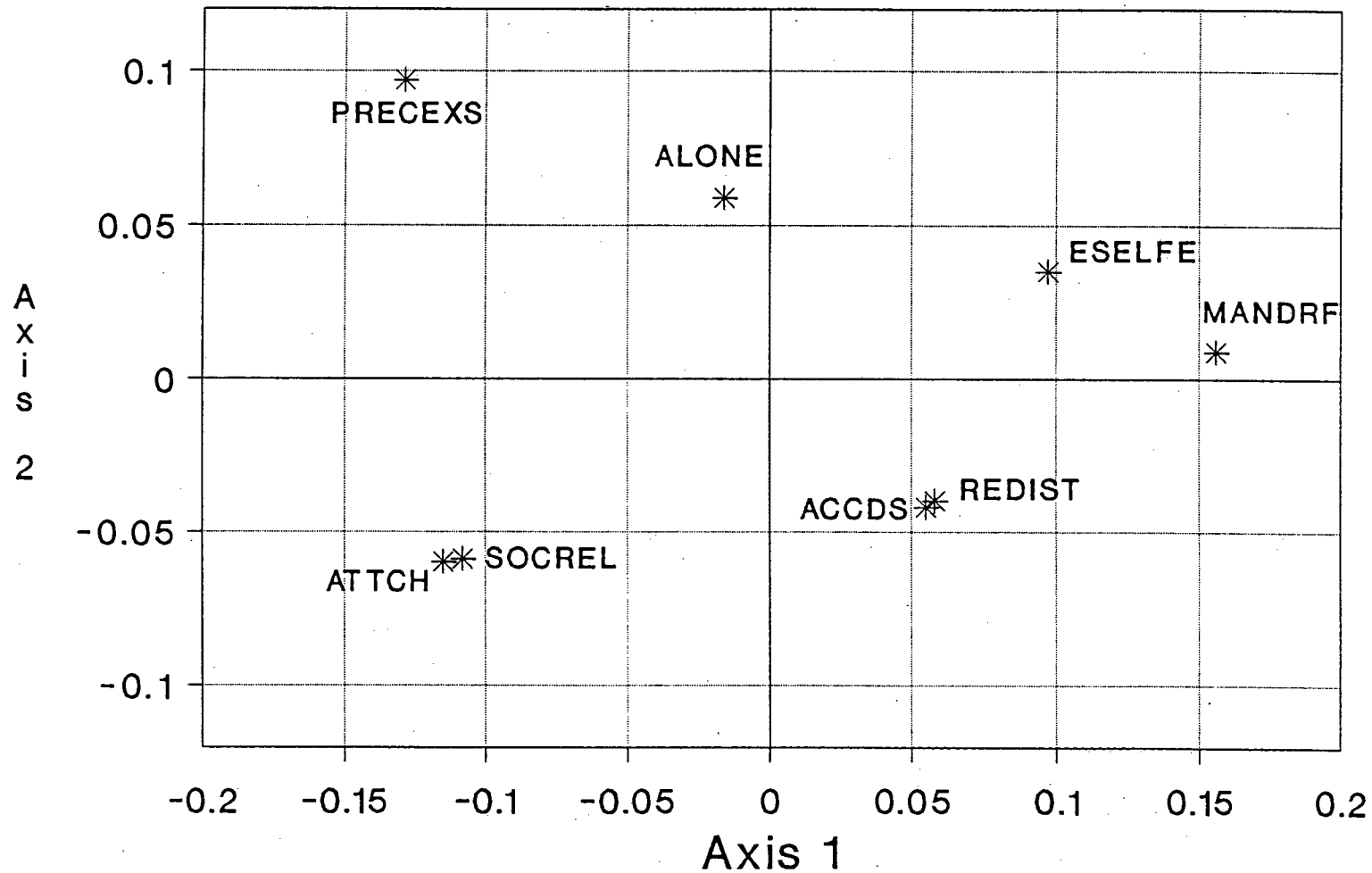
Acceptance of
divorce status <.....> Pre-occupation with ex-spouse

Reduction of
emotional distress <.....> Aloneness

Axis 2 may be regarded as experience of status in the community, since the experience of aloneness and a preoccupation with an ex-spouse are contrasted with an acceptance of one's divorce status and a decrease in emotional distress. There is a contrast between those adjustment variables that contain a social re-integration component and those variables which perpetuate isolation. Thus axis 2 may be conceptualized in the following way:

Community
re-integration <.....> Isolation/ individualism

Two Dimensional Correspondence Analysis of Curative & Divorce Adjustment Factors

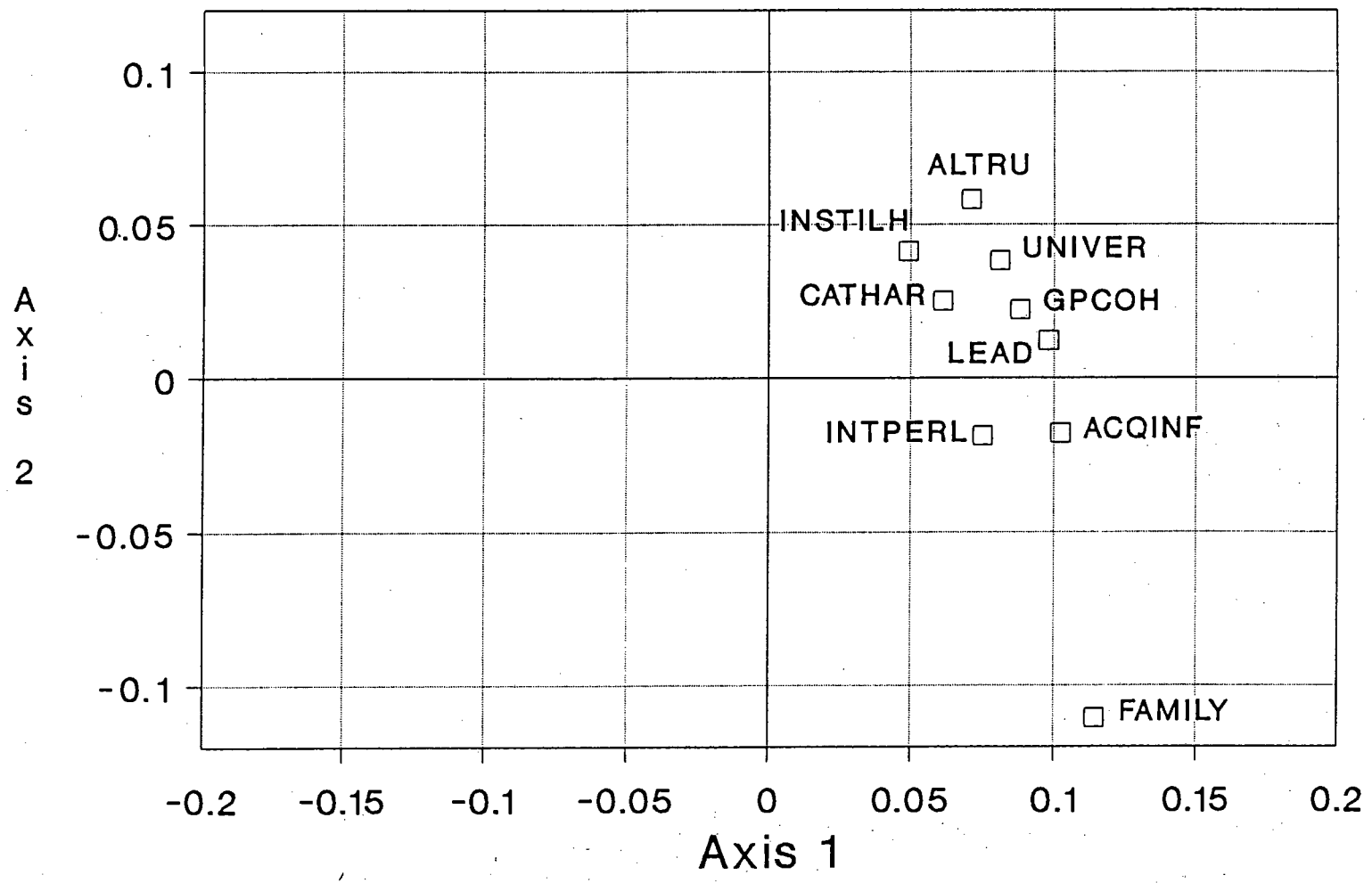


Graph 9.2: Two dimensional correspondence analysis of curative and divorce adjustment factors

The following observations can be made from Graph 9.2 concerning the DAFs:

- * ACCDs and REDIST are very close on the graph. Acceptance of divorce status and reduction of emotional distress are therefore seen to be very similar in terms of the way the group perceived the relationship between YCFs and DAFs.
- * In the same way social relationships (SOCREL) and attitudinal change (ATTCH) were perceived to be quite similar.
- * Experience of self-esteem (ESELF) was diametrically opposed to attitudinal change (ATTCH) and social relationships (SOCREL). They were therefore seen to be very dissimilar, in terms of the group's perception between YCFs and DAFs.
- * Reduction of emotional distress (REDIST) and acceptance of divorce status (ACCDS) were diametrically opposite reduction in preoccupation with an ex-spouse (PRECXS), which suggests that they are very dissimilar.
- * Preoccupation with an ex-spouse is far from both axes; the negative aspects of axis 1 and the positive aspects of axis 2 are embodied in PRECXS, thus it is reflected as a long-term, ultimately desirable variable and one which reflects isolation and individualism.

Two Dimensional Correspondence Analysis of Curative & Divorce Adjustment Factors



Graph 9.3: Two dimensional correspondence analysis of curative and divorce adjustment factors

The following observations can be made from Graph 9.3 concerning the YCFs

The axes of this graph are the same as those on which the DAFs were plotted.

The following observations can be made:

- * There are three discernible groups of YCFs as perceived by group members in the context of divorce adjustment.

- the 'functional' factors;

group cohesion

GPCOHES

leadership

LEAD

acquisition of information

ACQINF

interpersonal learning.

INTERPERL

- the 'emotional' factors;

catharsis

CATHAR

universality

UNIVER

installation of hope

INSTILH

altruism

ALTR

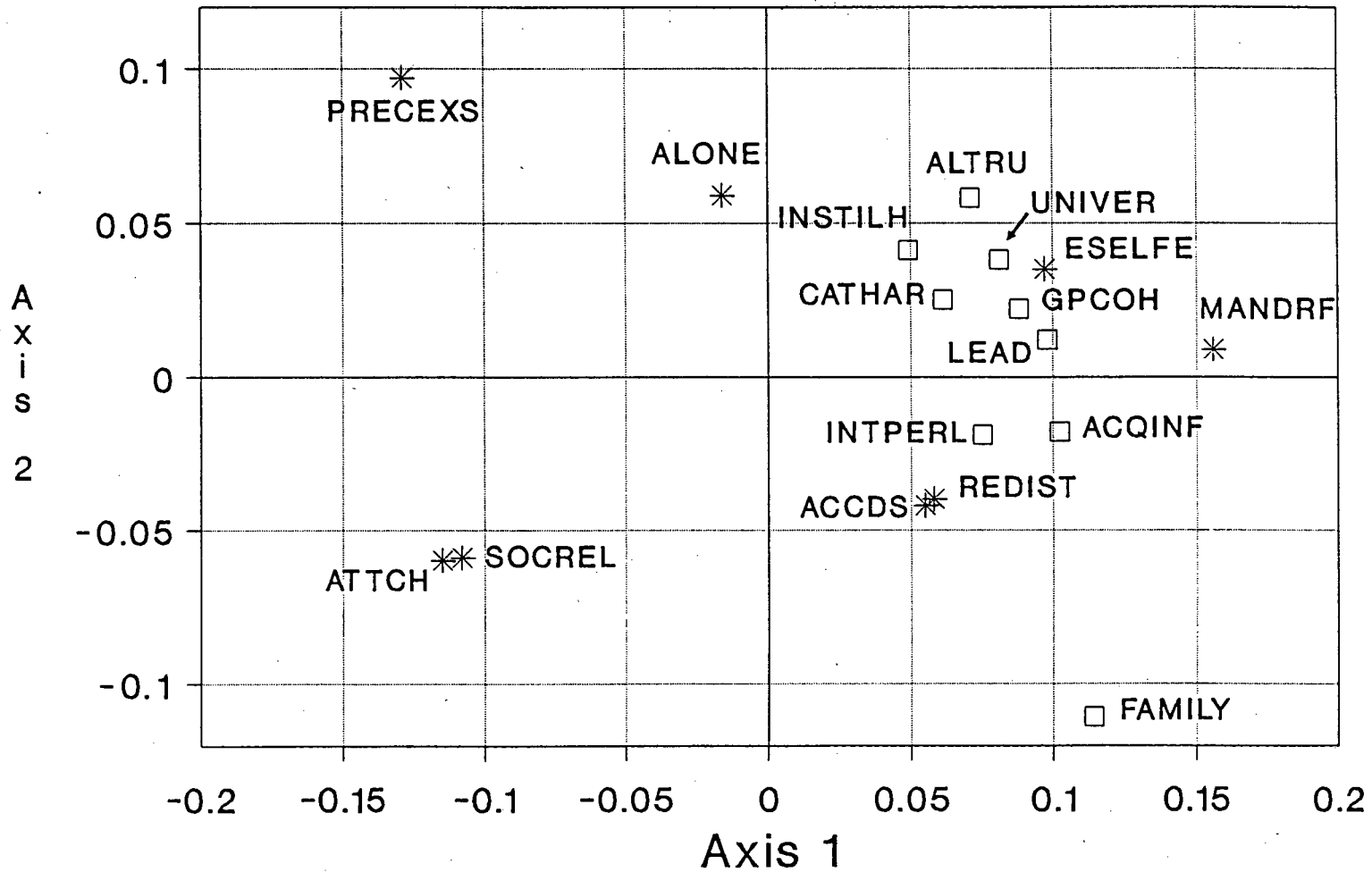
- family

FAMILY

- * The FAMILY YCF is quite distinct from the others. The functional YCFs are roughly centred on axis 1, while the emotional YCFs contain elements of axis 2.

- * None of the YCFs are plotted on the left of the graph, i.e. the negative direction of axis 1.

Two Dimensional Correspondence Analysis of Curative & Divorce Adjustment Factors



Graph 9.4: Two dimensional correspondence analysis of curative and divorce adjustment factors

Graph 9.4 indicates both YCFs and DAFs on the same axes.

The distance between the YCFs and DAFs is not significant, but the position relative to the axes and centre of the graph (the origin) is. The following observations can be made:

- * The experience of self-esteem (ESELFE) lies in the same direction from the origin as altruism + (ALTRU +), acquisition of information + (ACQINF +), catharsis + (CATHAR +), group cohesion + (GPCOH +), leadership + (LEAD +). Therefore most of the YCFs related positively to the experience of self-esteem.
- * Management of divorce-related feelings (MANDRF) lies along axis 1, as do group cohesion + (GPCOH +), influence of the leader + (LEAD +), acquisition of information + (ACQINF +) and interpersonal learning + (INTPERL +). Therefore 'functional' YCFs related positively to management of divorce-related feelings.
- * Acceptance of divorce status (ACCDS) and reduction of emotional distress (REDIST) lie in the same direction from the origin as FAMILY +. Therefore there is an association between acceptance of divorce status, reduction of emotional distress and family.
- * None of the YCFs lies anywhere near pre-occupation with an ex-spouse (PRECXS), comfort with being alone (ALONE), attitudinal change (ATTCH) nor social relationships (SOCREL). There is no association between these DAFs and the YCFs. It must therefore be concluded that the group did not contribute to divorce adjustment in these areas.
- * The FAMILY + YCF is almost diametrically opposite to pre-occupation with an ex-spouse (PRECXS). (Alternatively PRECXS is in the

same direction as FAMILY -). Therefore the FAMILY YCF is contraindicated for the reduction in preoccupation with an ex-spouse.

- * A similar conclusion can be drawn regarding attitudinal change and social relationships, and the 'emotional' YCFs.

9.2 DISCUSSION OF YCF : DAF MATRIX

In the researcher's view, these findings may best be understood in terms of an understanding of adjustmental stages. Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989:30) identify three discrete stages ; acute, unstable/unsettled and renewed sense of stability. Spanier and Casto in Levinger and Moles (1979:213) are of the opinion that there are two distinct but overlapping adjustments; the adjustment to the dissolution of the marriage and the adjustment to the process of setting up a new lifestyle. In each phase there are practical matters and emotional issues. The acute stage is marked by acute emotional distress related to separation anxiety, the later emotional aspects pertain to both chronic difficulties, such as loneliness and anger and ambivalent matters, increased wellbeing or heightened self-esteem. The discussion which follows is based on an understanding that an association existed between most YCFs and the DAFs which concerned adjustment to marital dissolution rather than adjustment to the setting up of a new lifestyle.

Divorce Adjustment Factors (DAF) Graph 9.2

- * Group members perceived a relationship between the YCFs and the experience of self-esteem (ESELF), management of divorce-related feelings (MANDRF), acceptance of divorce status (ACCDS), and reduction in emotional distress (REDIST). In the researcher's view, these are adjustmental difficulties of the initial, acute or unstable crisis stage of divorce adjustment.

- * That experience of self-esteem (ESELFE) was diametrically opposed to social relationships (SOCREL) and attitudinal change to the divorce (ATTCH) was not surprising. ATTCH and SOCREL are difficult to attain. ATTCH requires the capacity to take some share of responsibility for personal contribution to the failure and dissolution of the marriage, without being guilt-ridden. SOCREL requires the relinquishment of the 'stigmatized divorcee' status and enough self-confidence for the initiation of new social relationships. The researcher would regard adequate and restored self-esteem as a prerequisite for these more difficult tasks.

- * PRECXS was far removed from both axes. Group members may have been justified in perceiving the group to have helped little with reduction of this preoccupation. The active grieving permitted in the group would have increased this preoccupation initially. It was the researcher's hope that grieving would ultimately allow women to 'close the casket of the dead marriage.' Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989) have indicated that intense anger, sexual jealousy and pre-occupation about the ex-spouse were an aspect of the abiding post-divorce legacy.

Yalom's curative factors (YCF) Graph 9.3

The family YCF was found to be distinct from other YCFs. There seem to be three possibilities for this.

- * The experience of the group as a substitute family may have heightened group member's awareness of the fragmentation of their own families.
- * The researcher's limited ability to address family dynamics within the group directly may have limited the value of this YCF in the experience of group members.

- * It is conceivable that FAMILY is a YCF which is dependent upon other group-building YCFs and would be present in greater measure in later stages of group life.

Two-dimensional analysis of YCFs and DAFs Graph 9.4

- * It is of note that the containment provided by 'functional' YCFs helped with a major emotional DAF, that of management of divorce-related feelings (MANDRF).
- * In the researcher's view, pre-occupation with an ex-spouse (PRECXS), comfort with being alone (ALONE), attitudinal changes to divorce (ATTCH) and social relationships (SOCREL) are aspects of later adjustment and were therefore less accessible to YCFs within the acute adjustmental period.
- * The experience of being in a family (FAMILY+) was found to be diametrically opposite preoccupation with an ex-spouse (PRECXS). It is conceivable that the experience of the group as a family, even in a limited way, increased the sense of being cut-off from an ex-spouse.
- * Attitudinal change to the divorce (ATTCH) and social relationships (SOCREL) were found to be diametrically opposite the 'emotional' YCFs. In the researcher's view, emotional work takes precedence during the crisis phase. Some resolution of grief, recovery from depression, restoration of self-esteem and self-acceptance are prerequisites to more reflective introspective therapeutic work. Premature therapeutic exploration into attitudinal change or insight perpetuates a divorcee's sense of guilty self-blame and feelings of failure.

The entire concept of social relationships (SOCREL) as an adjustment variable needs further exploration. The researcher defined this dimension of adjustment as 'social relatedness'; this has proved to be too vague a concept. There is a reality

that divorce disrupts the social network for divorcees and that women benefitted from the relatedness within the groups, but that new social relationships do not compensate for the loss of the marriage relationship. These impressions were supported by Wallerstein (1986) and Wallerstein and Blakeslee's (1989) findings.

It is indubitable that divorce adjustment is a complex process. The evidence from Correspondence analysis is that most group curative factors were perceived by group members to have influenced those variables which are most closely associated with adjustment to marital dissolution rather than to adjustment to a new lifestyle. The complexity of the adjustmental process will be acknowledged more fully in the final chapter.

CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 CONCLUSIONS

This study confirmed the findings of the literature that divorce is a crisis of great magnitude for women irrespective of their agency in the decision to divorce. This evidence has been presented in the discussion of pre- and post-group interviews, CMP scores and the content analysis of group themes. For each of the subjects there had been a cluster of different and stressful lifestyle changes. None of them had been prepared for the multiple major decisions they would be required to make on their own. With two exceptions they were financially more stressed following divorce than they had been as married women. Each had lost any medical aid insurance that had been provided by ex-husbands. Single parenting had been found to be a burdensome responsibility. The majority of the participants in this study had experienced depressive symptomatology related to marital separation or divorce. Only three of the women had received adequate medical or psychological care following marital separation. For certain women medical/ psychological and/or legal consultation had exacerbated their difficulties.

The study has confirmed that divorce adjustment is a complex, circuitous and lengthy process. The researcher's 'modest' definition of divorce adjustment in 2.5 has been found to be somewhat overambitious for short-term group intervention. The definition embraced both adjustment to marital dissolution and adjustment to setting up of a new lifestyle (Spanier and Casto 1979; Wallerstein and Blakeslee 1989). Unanticipated and/or recurring crises or chronic difficulties, such as the remarriage of a former partner or maintenance default make the recovery process hazardous.

There is some evidence that ultimate divorce adjustment and the ability to utilize the therapeutic possibilities of short-term group work are influenced by a woman's basic personality and pre-morbid/pre-divorce mental health. Therefore, some individuals will suffer more intensely and take longer to achieve some degree of equilibrium. The extent and longevity of the divorce crisis, the complexity of the recovery process and the over-representation of divorced people among the psychiatrically-ill require that the mental health profession take seriously the implications for facilitation of the divorce adjustment process.

It can be argued with some conviction that integrated group work is a beneficial mediating influence in the divorce adjustment process in women. The researcher has reviewed the definition of integrated group work, formulated in 4.4 and for her it remains unmodified. In the process of this study there has been a deeper integration of theory and a renewed commitment to this form of therapeutic intervention as a result of the findings of this study.

The researcher has argued throughout this thesis that the unstructured nature of integrated group work permitted women to explore their own most urgent issues. None of the evaluative studies on structured groups discussed in 3.3 reported a reduction in emotional distress, grief or management of divorce-related emotionality.

Sheila Kessler (1978) is of the opinion that "the structured group experience (for her subjects) may have provided a modelling order and security which made post-divorce feelings more manageable" (Salts and Zongker 1983:56). This study has suggested that the functional YCFs (group cohesion, leadership, acquisition of information and interpersonal learning) were generated by the group and the leader together, and provided the containment which permitted the re-experience and expression of grief, rage and revenge by most group members. Thus, the self-

directed groups empowered members to work co-operatively for their own healing. It seems possible that the particular contribution of unstructured groups to divorce adjustment lies in the realm of reduction in emotional distress and management of divorce related feelings.

The empowerment of these women was further manifested in the diverse ways in which all group members had implemented some well thought-out plans which improved their quality of life post-group. Change and growth were sustained.

The groups were found to provide a valuable therapeutic medium for the majority of women whose distress was not excessive. Participation in a group of this nature may provide a facilitating ritual to mark the end of a way of life and a significant relationship. The commonality of experience develops community. Social isolation had been reduced, as had the sense of stigmatization. The women in Group B worked actively at developing more appropriate adult relationships with their parents. Group members wept, raged and laughed together. They encouraged and supported each other and shared their resources. As their trust in themselves and each other deepened they were able to acknowledge their shame and their longing for revenge. In the researcher's view, it is unlikely that revenge fantasies would be acknowledged within short-term individual counselling.

There were particular benefits for the older women who participated in a women's group post-divorce and who have continued to meet on a regular basis. In order to overcome their loneliness, women need to learn to value and enjoy other women, and experience nurture and affirmation from them (Carter 1977).

10.2 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

The study was of a small sample of self-selected white middle-class women who had voluntarily sought group counselling. Only limited generalizations could be made around findings.

This research project is very modest in terms of outcome studies (Malan 1973, Malan et al 1976:1306-1307). Yalom concedes that research conducted by therapists of their group members may be crude, often inapplicable and subject to bias and yet of value (1975:4). In this study subject or researcher bias cannot be excluded since there was no independent assessment of findings.

The post-group evaluation and matrix were completed four months after group termination. It is conceivable that extraneous factors influenced either reported changes or the women's assessment of the influence of the group curative factors (YCFs) on the adjustmental factors (DAFs). There is however no other way of ascertaining whether growth and change is sustained beyond termination.

The study does reflect that undeniable limitations of short-term group intervention exist in terms of divorce adjustment. It must be acknowledged however, that participation in an integrated group did facilitate the divorce adjustment process in the majority of women who participated.

10.3 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

It has been argued that the multiple means of data collection have compensated for the limitations of a descriptive-evaluative study. Each of the triangulation measures used in the study indicated that some work was done, or some change manifested in several aspects or dimensions of divorce adjustment.

The researcher's definition of divorce adjustment (2.5) for this study consists of eight adjustmental dimensions:

- 1 a measure of acceptance of one's single status
- 2 some reduction in emotional distress
- 3 appropriate emotional expression of divorce-related feelings
- 4 some recovery of self-esteem
- 5 improved insight as to the cause of marital breakdown
- 6 some social relatedness
- 7 adequate performance in the daily occupation
- 8 some hope for the future.

Judith Wallerstein's (1986:68-9) assessment of psychological change is based on an aggregation of five dimensions of psychological capacity:

- 1 the coherence and effectiveness of the self-concept
- 2 the quality and emotional depth of relationships
- 3 the capacity for sustained growth and commitment to tasks and goals
- 4 the adequate resolution of the divorce-engendered psychological disequilibria
- 5 the finer honing of reality judgements.

It will become apparent that each data source reflected change in some of the Jobson or Wallerstein dimensions.

The structured interviews provided a baseline of the subject's emotional state and predominant concerns and the post-group interviews reflected the perceptual, emotional and practical changes that had occurred during and following participation in the group. There was also some evidence manifest of 'some hope for the future' in the majority of group members (Jobson 8). Wallerstein (1986) and Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989) have provided ample evidence that time alone does not heal divorce wounds. Therefore it can be assumed that some of these changes were a result of group participation. In the

absence of any control group however, it is not possible to state categorically to what extent changes occurred as a result of group participation.

The Clinical Management Package scales supported clinical impressions of improvement at a significant level for seven out of ten women whose initial CMP scores were of clinical significance (>30) in the restoration of self-esteem and decrease in depression (Jobson 1 & 2; Wallerstein 1 & 4).

The content analysis of group meetings indicated that women availed themselves of the unstructured nature of meetings. They grieved, explored their divorce-related difficulties, became aware of how their self-esteem had been undermined; they acknowledged some of their most painful or shameful experiences, they worked at developing relationships and fostered their own growth and development. Wallerstein would regard these as among four major dimensions, (1-4) of psychological growth (1986:68); (Jobson dimensions 2,3,4 and 6).

Correspondence analysis of the YCF:DAF matrix

In view of the small sample it was surprising to get meaningful statistical results. The correlation matrix has indicated a positive association between most curative factors and four adjustment factors:

- acceptance of divorce
- the experience of self-esteem
- reduction in emotional distress
- management of divorce-related feelings

These would constitute two of the five Wallerstein dimensions (2 and 5) and four of the eight Jobson concepts (1 - 4).

An examination of the two axes of the correlation matrix indicates the following:

Axis 1: Group members perceived an association between group curative factors and the experience of self-esteem and the management of divorce-related feelings i.e. those factors which were most amenable to relief through catharsis in the short term.

Axis 2: Group members perceived an association between group curative factors and those adjustmental dimensions which facilitated some integration into the community; an acceptance of their divorce status and a reduction in emotional distress.

Conversely on both axes, there was little or no association between group curative factors and adjustmental variables which Wallerstein (1986) and Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989: 32 and 315)) found to be intransigent in a large number of divorcees ten years post-divorce:

- preoccupation with the ex-spouse
- attitudinal change (insight)
- aloneness
- social relationships.

Thus these findings emphasize both the benefits of group participation for divorcees, and the complexity and longevity of divorce adjustment in terms of psychic divorce.

10.4 COMMENT AND REFLECTION

It was anticipated in the introduction that this study might raise new hypotheses concerning integrated group work and divorce adjustment. It is the researcher's view that short-term integrated group work reveals, but does not address some

issues of major importance which compound the divorce-related distress for women.

There are a number of themes which were present in embryonic form from the first contact with group members. These themes were not explored; neither was there any work done on acceptance or integration of their paradoxical nature. The women's state of crisis and the short-term nature of the group precluded any real wrestling with these matters. If wholeness, integration of the personality and individuation are to be the quest of divorce recovery and indeed of adult maturity, these issues need to be addressed. At least there needs to be therapeutic space for those women who have the courage, energy and capacity to do so, to engage and wrestle with them.

10.4.1 Women's socialization in a patriarchal society

It is an inescapable conclusion that women's socialization in a patriarchal society is responsible for much of their divorce-related distress. Education for group participants had generally not been valued in their families-of-origin. Wives' careers were secondary to any vocational aspirations which men held. Almost nothing in life had prepared them for being alone in the world. For all these women their dependence contributed greatly to divorce distress.

10.4.2 Developmental perspectives

As has already been mentioned the women's shared and common divorce distress was experienced within the context of their adult developmental stages. Women's anxiety about aging was a latent and unexplored theme. There was implied concern about their own sexual unattractiveness vis a vis younger women. Menopausal and 'empty-nest' issues could not be explored. Their fears about a 'penniless' old age were voiced. It angered them that men in their fifties were seen

as eligible dating partners for much younger women. As Gila Sidi (1990:89) has noted, double standards for aging exist. In two instances it appeared that those husbands who were excessively narcissistic could not tolerate the aging of their wives, since this seemed to mirror their own aging. For these men, younger women offered a kinder reflection.

Dorothy Cantor (1984:199) observes that although the women's liberation movement has worked to create a social milieu in which women are freer to develop and express themselves, a large number of women have not completed the process of separation from their parents. For these women marriage serves as a means of avoiding the task of individuation. This was demonstrated for Group B members in particular. Unless individuation is accomplished women are not free to use the opportunities available to them for the regeneration of life post-divorce.

10.4.3 Autonomy and independence

These qualities were not highly sought after by group members. Much of the divorce recovery literature, (Bohannon 1973, Krantzler 1973, Fisher 1976 and Carter 1977) has emphasized the importance of autonomy in divorce adjustment. This lack of concern about autonomy in women is perplexing.

From a developmental perspective **relatedness** is as important as autonomy for women. For these group members, their significant loss and their hope for the future were viewed in the context of a relationship with a male partner. Jordan and Surrey in Cantor and Bernay postulate their understanding of autonomy in women:

A woman's sense of self is ultimately connected to her ability to be in a relationship, and her self-esteem suffers when she feels cut off. This model diverges from theories that emphasize the attainment of autonomy as a hallmark of psychological maturity. (1984:103)

It is conceivable that the measure of positive feedback from group members, about the experience of group participation reflected this relational aspect. Repeatedly women spoke of the value of sharing, being understood, being 'not alone' in the awfulness of their experience. For the duration of the group they were in relationship, where some of the painful affect could be faced and borne together and where mutual consultation facilitated problem solving. Therefore integrated group work is a very important medium for the treatment of divorce-related distress.

Autonomy is a double-edged sword (Young-Eisendrath 1984). Personal freedom is linked with acceptance for life as it is. This involves relinquishment of the victim role and the projection of personal unhappiness onto some person or institution. Healing, groundedness, maturity and courage are forerunners of autonomy, therefore autonomy cannot be an early adjustmental dimension.

10.4.4 Religious conflict

Religious influences and religious conflict about divorce emerged as a source of ambivalence in both groups. Religious teaching had undermined self-worth. Group members had difficulty discerning the difference between 'selfishness' and self respect. They displayed derogatory attitudes to their own distress.

Guilt was increased for those women who felt that they 'ought' to be able to endure their divorce-related suffering without any 'loss of faith' or recourse to antidepressants. Those women for whom their religious affiliation was a core aspect of identity suffered greatly in response to ostracism or exclusion from the sacraments. Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989) have noted that divorce is the family crisis par excellence which does not invite pastoral care. These matters were not explored in any depth.

The researcher's concern was that an emphasis on educational input or focussed discussion was premature and would short-circuit the grief process and evoke or legitimate religious defenses in the group. However, there does seem to be a need for an integrated understanding of traditional divorce prohibitions in the Judeo-Christian tradition and the morality of marriage and divorce in the twentieth century.

10.4.5 Attitudes to men

One major paradox that emerged reflected the contradictions between group members' denigratory attitudes and idealized feelings about men. On the whole these women displayed limited understandings of men as human beings with their own needs, disappointments and conflicts. Disparaging attitudes about men were juxtaposed with an almost universal longing for a new idealized relationship with a male partner who would rescue each of them from loneliness and unhappiness.

The researcher contends that a divorce worker needs to be conscious of her own beliefs and biases about marriage. An understanding of marriage as a system and mate selection as a purposeful if unconscious process prevents the worker from perpetuating the stereotypes of men as villains and women as innocent and powerless victims. Should she collude with these negative perspectives of men, she impedes the group members' own recognition of their contribution to the failure of the marriage.

10.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

10.5.1 Recommendations for group work

This study should be repeated with different groups of women:

- those with different cultural or class variables

- those with different presenting symptomatology
- over a longer period or at different stages in the divorce process, since "themes and patterns shifted with each developmental stage" (Wallerstein and Blakeslee 1989: 37).
- a two-phase group, with an initial crisis group followed by a longer period of group work where deep-seated issues could be addressed.

From the evidence of this study there is a great need for family welfare agencies to develop group-focussed intervention programmes for divorcing women. Training and supervision and personal or group counselling for group work would be essential, since as has been indicated the group worker needs to be able to tolerate much distress in group members, to recognize and elicit group conflict and to simultaneously attend to group processes.

Given the paucity of research into divorce adjustment, there is a danger of intervention occurring in a theoretical vacuum. Intrapsychic, interpersonal and contextual implications of divorce for each individual need to inform the crisis counselling provided to the recently divorced. Knowledge of adult development and women's psychology seems to be essential, since divorce-related distress is manifest through the life stages of divorcing women.

The decision to use age of group members and age of children in this study as the discriminating variable for allocation into two different groups was an arbitrary decision. While it is impossible to generalize about the importance of this factor, it was a striking finding that divorce themes were expressed in developmental terms. It is thus a firm recommendation that age should be an important factor when selecting women for a particular group. Ideally, women's groups should be constituted of women who are facing the same developmental issues.

10.5.2 Educational recommendations

It would be naive to think that education could prevent divorce or divorce distress. Norton and Moorman (1987) and Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989) have stated very clearly that patterns of family life are changing and that divorce will be an aspect of family life for the foreseeable future, yet to fail to consider educational opportunities for the reduction of divorce-related distress is to be deterministic.

Structured and skills-focussed groups do have a part to play in the education of people for life post-divorce. They also provide a reasonably safe medium where novice group workers may begin to explore the territory of divorce group counselling. The evidence in the literature cited in 3.3 (Morris and Prescott 1975; Carter 1977; Kessler 1978; Johnston 1984; Smith 1990) is that such groups do assist with reduction in isolation, symptom relief and the development of social skills for participants.

This study has indicated that when people are given the opportunity to learn about themselves and to work for their own healing, they do so. Educators and mental health professionals are encouraged to explore new modes of educating people in relationship skills. Groups are an excellent medium for such education. There is a need for broad general '**education for family life**'. This could include emphasis on relationship skills which commences in childhood, marriage preparation and education for marriage in its changing circumstances in changing times. Some training of trainers would be essential, since didactic education alone would be inadequate (Whitfield in Dryden 1985).

Women and men alike could benefit from such education for relationships. For women, there is a need for **education for autonomy and relationality**. This would include equal opportunities for formal and vocational education and the fostering of self-worth and independence. In the

early years of family life, it may be appropriate for a married woman to centre her identity around that of being a wife and mother. The development of her independence needs to be conducted in a flexible and unfolding manner, in response to the growth and changes in herself and her family. Identity redefinition needs to take place as children grow older, so that women experience themselves as people in their own right, whose identity is not exclusively linked to that of husbands and children.

There is an equal need for the **education of men in relationship capacity**. The fathers and husbands of the women in this study manifested many difficulties in adjusting to the adulthood of their daughters and in sustaining relationships with their children. Some of the men had lacked the 'courage' or ability to inform their wives of their decision to terminate the marriage.

'**Preparation for divorce**' needs to be widely available. A number of the women in both groups had instigated legal proceedings prematurely and without adequate preparation.

There is a great need for the **education of professionals**. General practitioners, lawyers and ministers of religion are the professionals most frequently consulted during a divorce crisis. There was evidence that many of these professionals had failed to ameliorate or had even exacerbated the divorce distress. Few appeared to have a knowledge of the multifaceted nature of the divorce process or had referred their clients/ patients/ parishioners for any form of counselling or group counselling. It is the researcher's contention that antidepressant medication, although possibly a helpful adjunct, is inadequate treatment of a major life crisis.

10.6 A PERSONAL REFLECTION

There are many challenges for welfare agencies and mental health professionals. Wallerstein and Blakeslee(1989) remind us of the magnitude of the problem. Divorce and change in family life are part of inevitable wider social changes and we have much to learn about this passage of adult life. In this country, in 1991, we face a time of great transition which will inevitably affect family life as has the apartheid legacy. There is a great deal of research to be done into the needs of all families who have experienced fragmentation or divorce and into the implementation of programmes which will facilitate adjustment and ameliorate destructive sequelae for all members of such families.

Psychic divorce is the 'crock of gold at the end of the rainbow' concept that lured the researcher into work with divorcees. With hindsight it seems that her hidden but motivating question was: "How do women come to wholeness?" Her journey with divorcing women on their quest for whatever wholeness could be achieved has been a parallel and vicarious quest for her own wholeness. Ultimately psychic divorce relates to a divorcee's integrated, grounded ability to accept her personal woundedness as a human being, her particular limitations which undermined the marriage, her previously unacknowledged personal inner darkness and her capacity for projecting the unacceptable aspects of the herself onto the partner. This arduous work requires years of psychotherapy or participation in some equally profound transformative experience. It has become abundantly clear that in a short-term group it can only ever be possible to attend to the earlier acute adjustmental needs of group members.

The researcher is aware that the process of learning to work with people is never done. This research project has opened new avenues for exploration and raised new questions. There have been two salient discoveries: divorce adjustment is a more complex process than she ever anticipated and integrated group work does

create the space where people may work co-operatively for their own healing. This study has increased her interest in long-term group counselling and group counselling at other stages of the adjustment process. T.S. Eliot expresses some of the experience of quest, of knowing and not knowing, which for her expresses something of the mystery of working with people in their pain and their quest healing.

You say I am repeating
Something I have said before. I shall say it again.
Shall I say it again? In order to arrive there,
To arrive where you are, to get from where you are not,
You must go by a way wherein there is no ecstasy.
In order to arrive at what you do not know
You must go by a way which is the way of ignorance.
In order to possess what you do not possess
You must go by the way of dispossession.
In order to arrive at what you are not
You must go through the way in which you are not.
And what you do not know is the only thing you know
And what you own is what you do not own
And where you are is where you are not.

"East Coker"

APPENDIX 1

DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT FACTORS

REDUCTION IN PREOCCUPATION WITH YOUR EX-SPOUSE

Emotional independence, or disengagement; no longer feeling dependent on your former partner for your happiness.

COMFORT WITH BEING ALONE

The capacity to find solace or comfort in your own company; finding loneliness less painful.

EXPERIENCING SELF ESTEEM

Feeling worthwhile as a person; reduction in feelings of failure related to the divorce; aware of growth and the development of new skills in yourself.

REDUCTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

Reduction in the extent and amount of emotional distress linked to the divorce; a reduction in physical symptoms of emotional distress.

MANAGEMENT OF DIVORCE RELATED FEELINGS

Anger, revenge, guilt, sadness

ATTITUDINAL CHANGES TO THE BREAKDOWN OF THE MARRIAGE

Insight or understanding as to why the marriage broke down.

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Feeling comfortable socially; establishing new relationships.

ACCEPTANCE OF DIVORCED STATUS

(Mourning may still be in process.)
A reduction/cessation in fantasies of reconciliation.

SATISFACTION AND COMPETENCE IN YOUR DAILY OCCUPATION.

APPENDIX 2

YALOM'S CURATIVE FACTORS

INSTILLATION OF HOPE

Observation of improvement, growth or change in yourself or other group members.

UNIVERSALITY

Discovery that you were not alone in your unhappiness or pain.

ACQUISITION OF INFORMATION

Learning about yourself, the divorce process, new methods of coping with life or additional resources.

ALTRUISM

The opportunity to help, or be helped by each other.

EXPERIENCE OF BEING IN A 'FAMILY'

The repetition of experiences of your own primary family, as you hoped for care from the leader, watched someone else receive care, or be treated preferentially.

INTERPERSONAL LEARNING

Learning about your capacity for and difficulties in relationships with others; having an intense experience of relationship in the group.

GROUP COHESION

The experience of belonging, being accepted and understood by others; sharing your experience with others in an accepting environment; feelings of 'belonging'.

CATHARSIS

The opportunity to express painful or difficult feelings in the group, or in relation to another member or the leader.

INFLUENCE OF THE LEADER

The style of leadership; the contribution made by the leader.

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- 1 How would you describe your marriage?
- 2 What did the marriage mean to you?
- 3 How would you describe your parent's marriage?
- 4 How would you describe your in-law's marriage?
- 5 How have your extended family reacted to your divorce/ impending divorce?
- 6 How did the divorce come about?
- 7 What is your understanding of the reasons for the breakdown of the marriage? (Can you tell me why the marriage broke down?)
- 8 What does it mean to you that you are divorcing?
- 9 How would you know that you had 'recovered' or 'come to terms' with the divorce?
- 10 What have you learned about yourself as a result of the divorce?
- 11 What have you learned about your former partner as a result of the divorce?
- 12 What do you long for more than anything else?
- 13 (Pre-group) How will your participation in a group assist you with the process of coming to terms with your divorce?
(Post-group) How would you evaluate your experience of being a member of your group?

(To be submitted in writing by subjects)

- 14 How would you describe the major events of your marriage?
- 15 What have you gained or lost as a result of the divorce?

APPENDIX 4

GENERALIZED CONTENTMENT SCALE (GCS)

This questionnaire is designed to measure the degree of contentment that you feel about your life and your surroundings. It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Answer each item as carefully and accurately as you can by placing a number beside each one 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 powerless to do anything about my life
- 2 I feel blue
- 3 I am restless and can't keep still
- 4 I have crying spells
- 5 It is easy for me to relax
- 6 I have a hard time getting started on things that I need to do
- 7 I do not always sleep well at night
- 8 When things get tough, I feel there is always someone I can turn to
- 9 I feel that the future looks bright for me
- 10 I feel downhearted
- 11 I feel that I am needed
- 12 I feel that I am appreciated by others
- 13 I enjoy being active and busy
- 14 I feel that others would be better off without me
- 15 I enjoy being with other people
- 16 I feel it is easy for me to make decisions
- 17 I feel downtrodden
- 18 I am irritable
- 19 I get upset easily
- 20 It is hard for me to have a good time
- 21 I have a full life
- 22 I feel that people really care about me
- 23 I have a great deal of fun
- 24 I feel great in the morning
- 25 I feel that my situation is hopeless

Hudson, W.W. (1982:8)

APPENDIX 5

INDEX OF SELF-ESTEEM (ISE)

This questionnaire is designed to measure how you see yourself. It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Please answer each item as accurately as you can by placing a number by each one 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

- 1 I feel that people would not like me if they knew me really 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 that 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 that my friends find me interesting
- 15 I think that 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 made it
- 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 think that 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 I will appear foolish to others
- 25 My friends think very highly of me.

Hudson, W.W. (1982:9)

APPENDIX 6

CORRELATION MATRIX: YCF:DAF FACTORS

DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT FACTORS

FACTOR	PRECXS	ALONE	ESELFE	REDIST	MANDRF	ATTCH	SOCREL	ACCDS
INSTILH								
UNVERS								
ACQINF								
ALTR								
FAMILY								
INTPERL								
GPCOH								
CATHAR								
LEAD								

CORRELATION MATRIX: THE IMPACT OF YCF ON DAF

Question 1: Weight the DAF: How important is each of these factors for you, in the experience of your coming to terms with your divorce.?

Scale A:

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little
- 3 Of some importance
- 4 Significant.
- 5 Very significant.

Question 2: Rate the YCF: To what extent did you experience each of these factors during group meetings.?

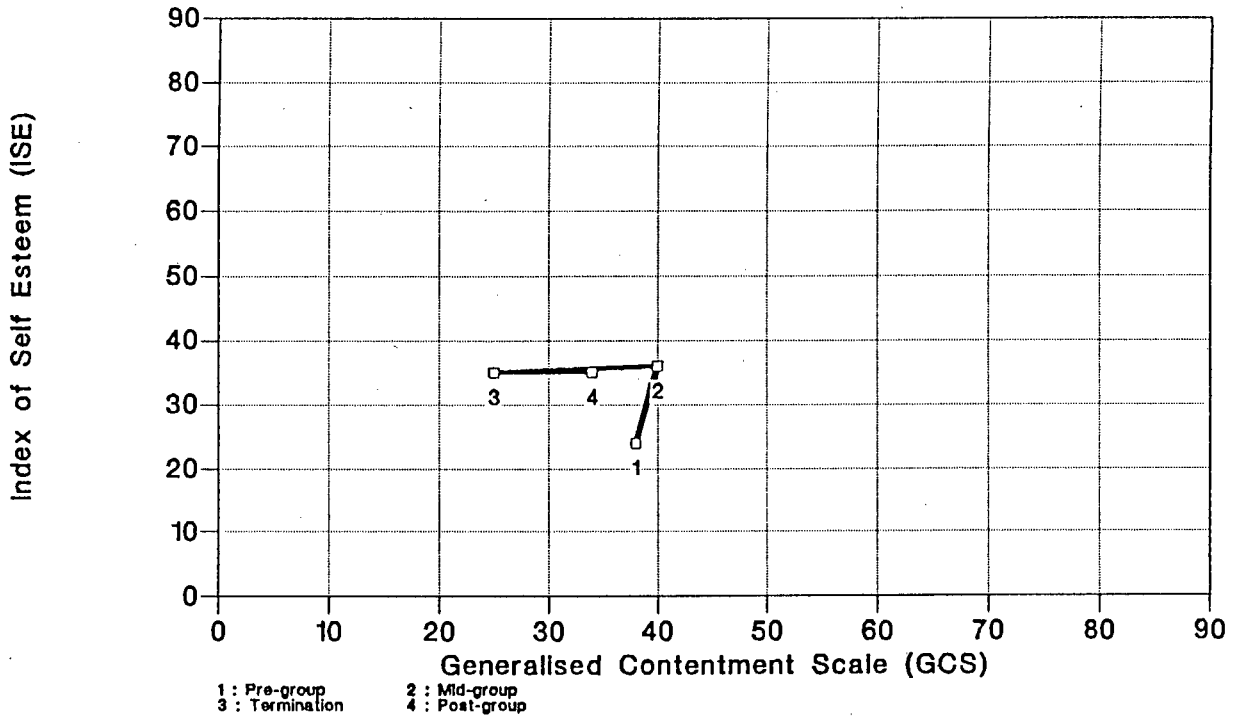
Scale B:

- 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

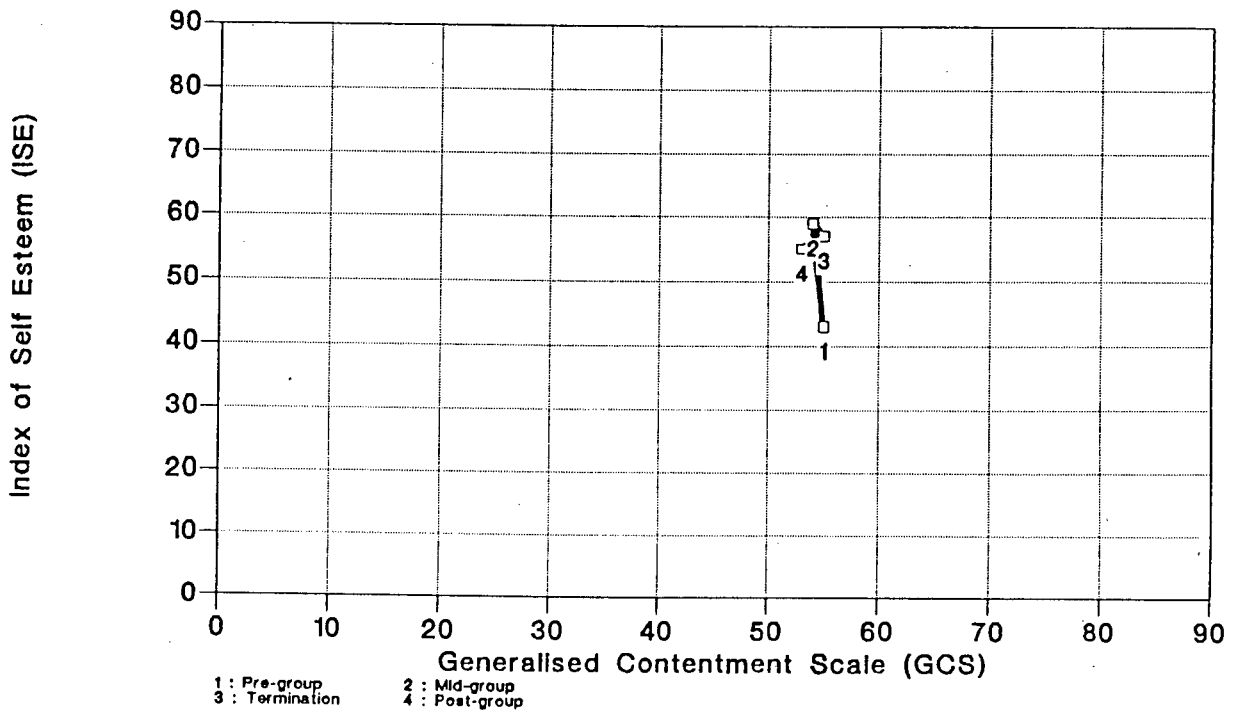
Question 3 To what extent did each YCF influence each DAF for you? (Use Scale A:)

APPENDIX 7 CLINICAL MANAGEMENT PACKAGE SCORES

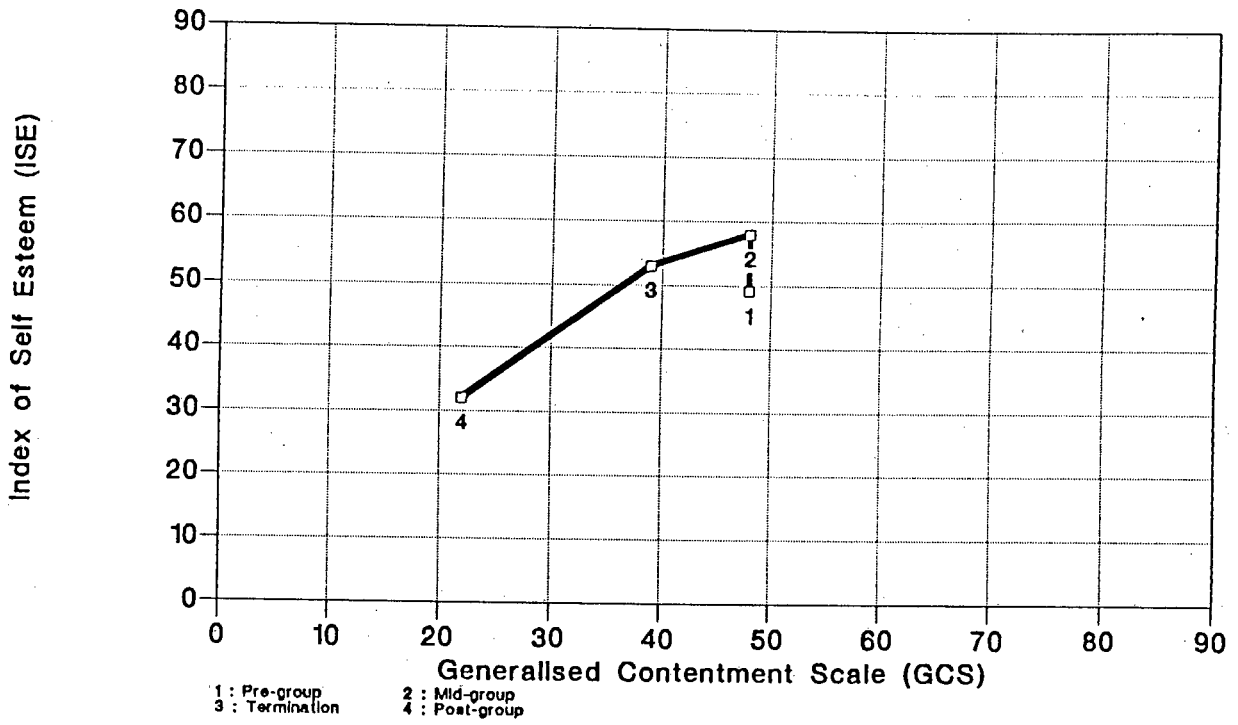
Group member A



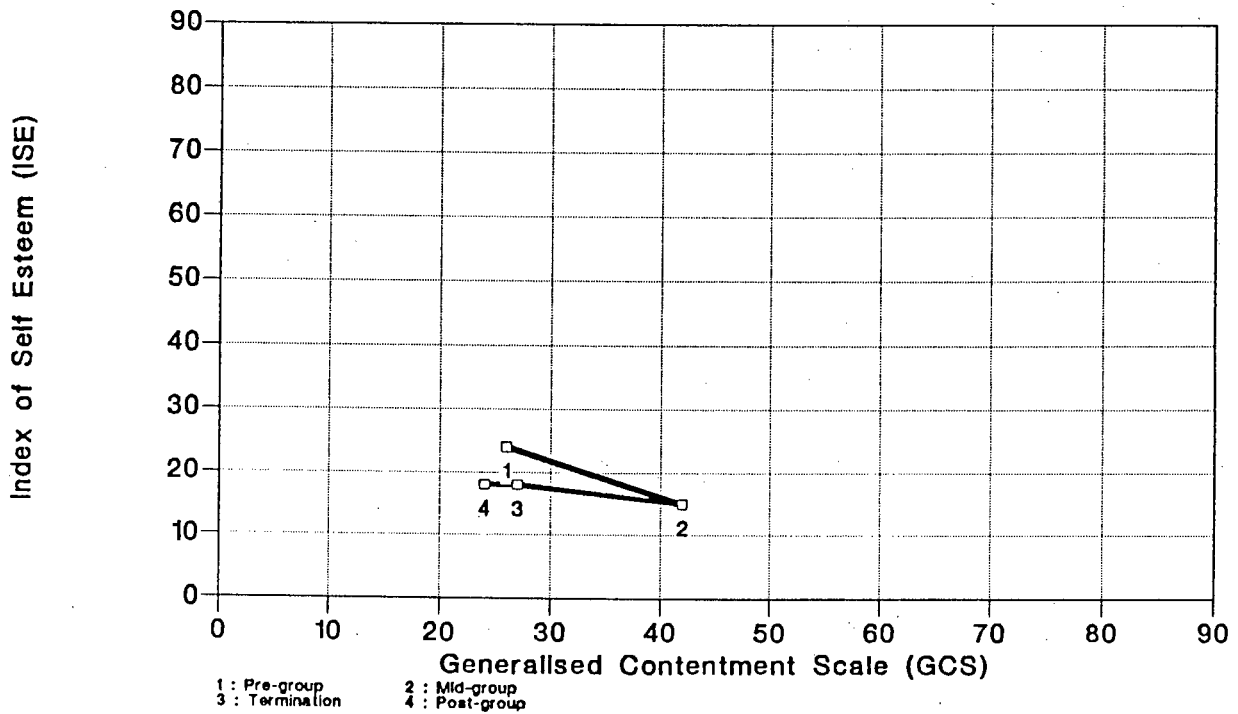
Group member B



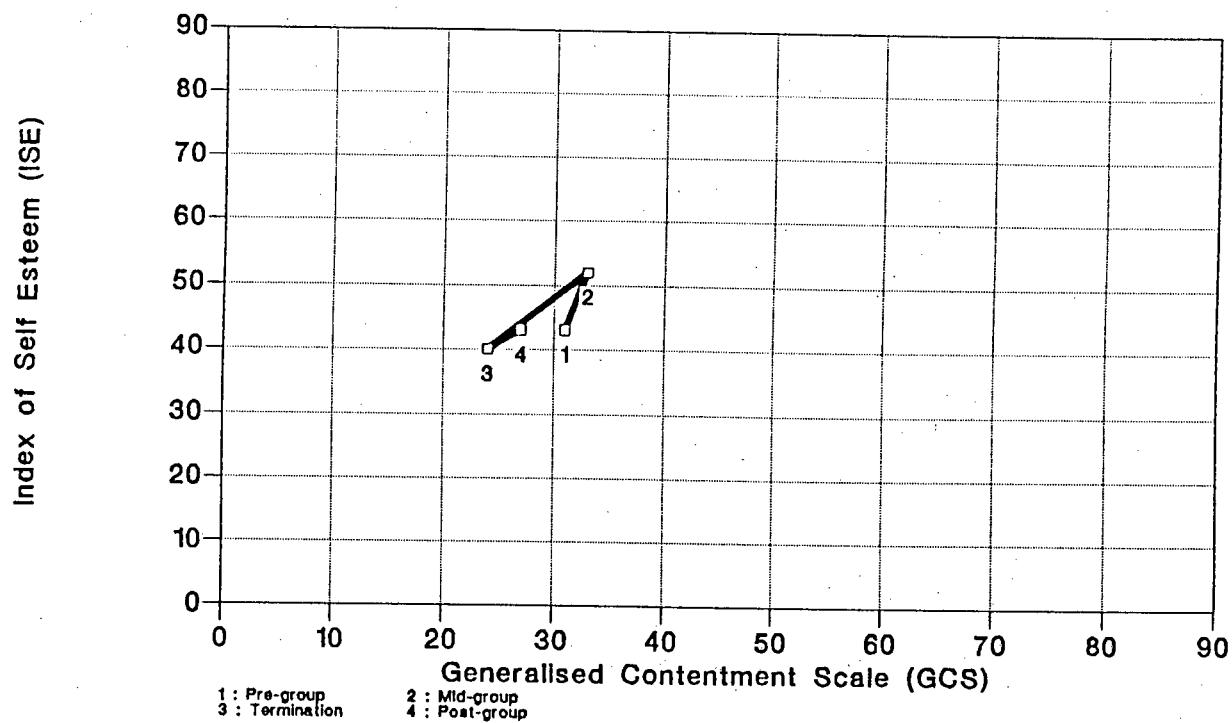
Clinical Management Package Scores - Group member C



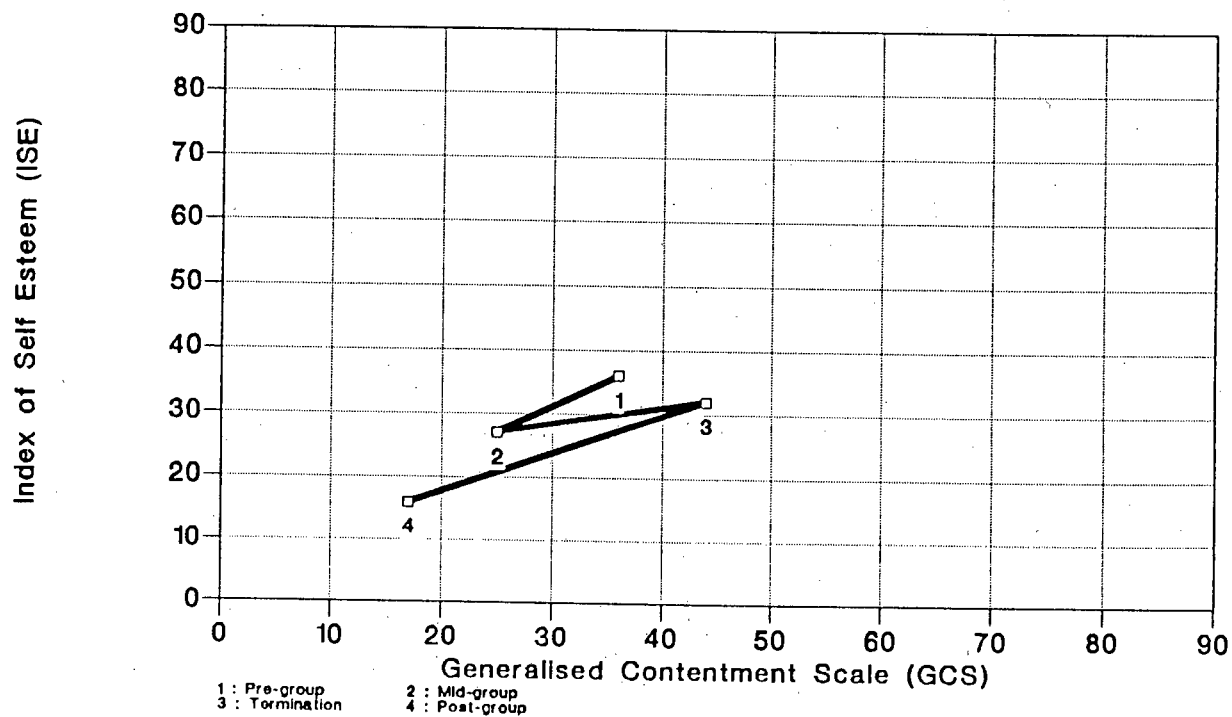
Clinical Management Package Scores - Group member D



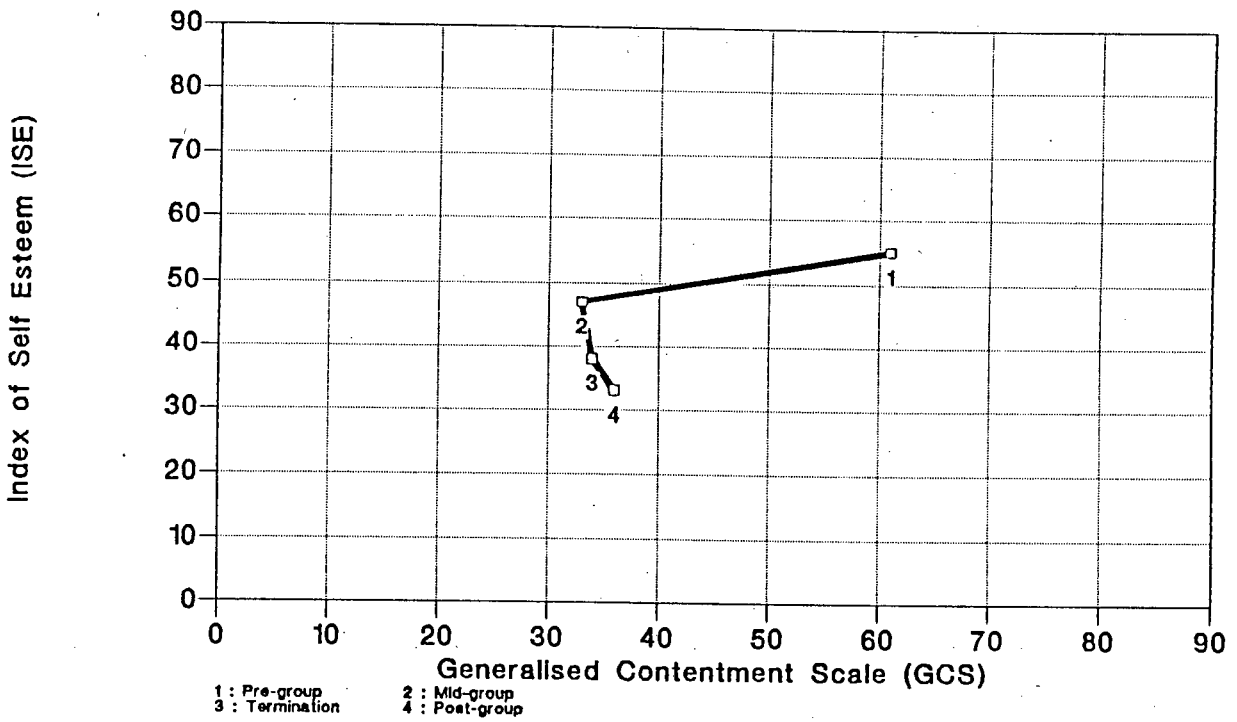
Clinical Management Package Scores - Group member E



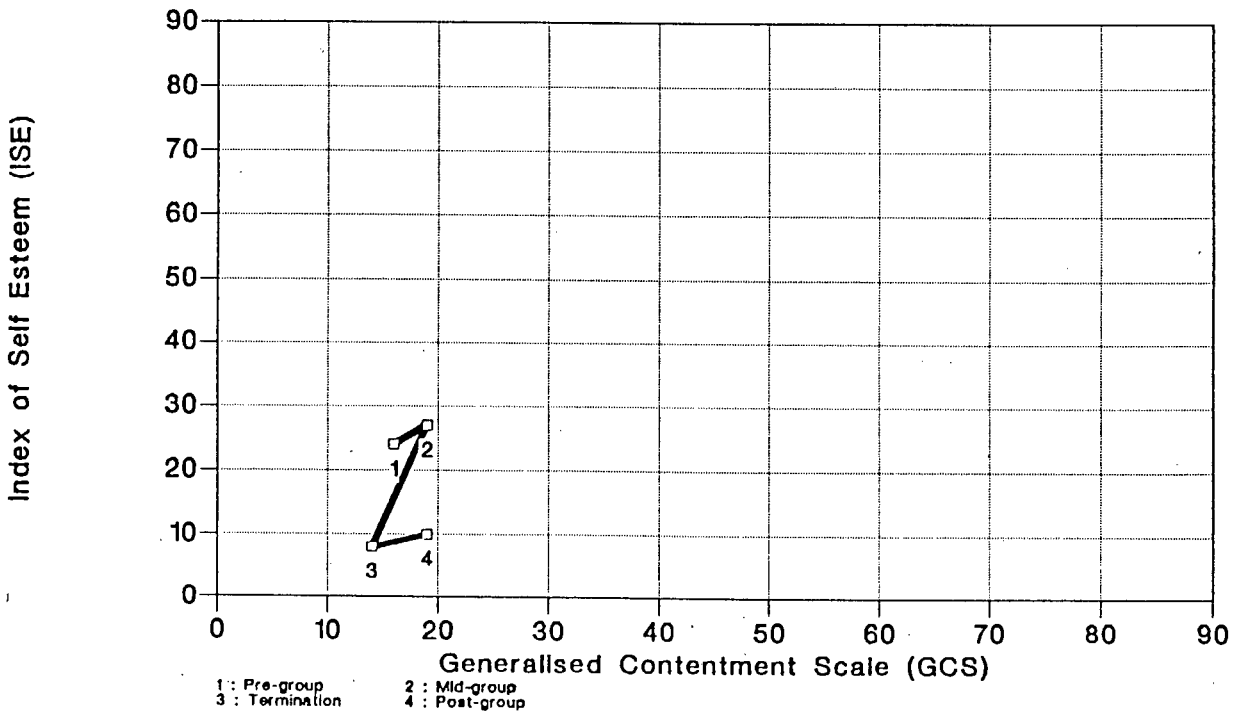
Clinical Management Package Scores - Group member F



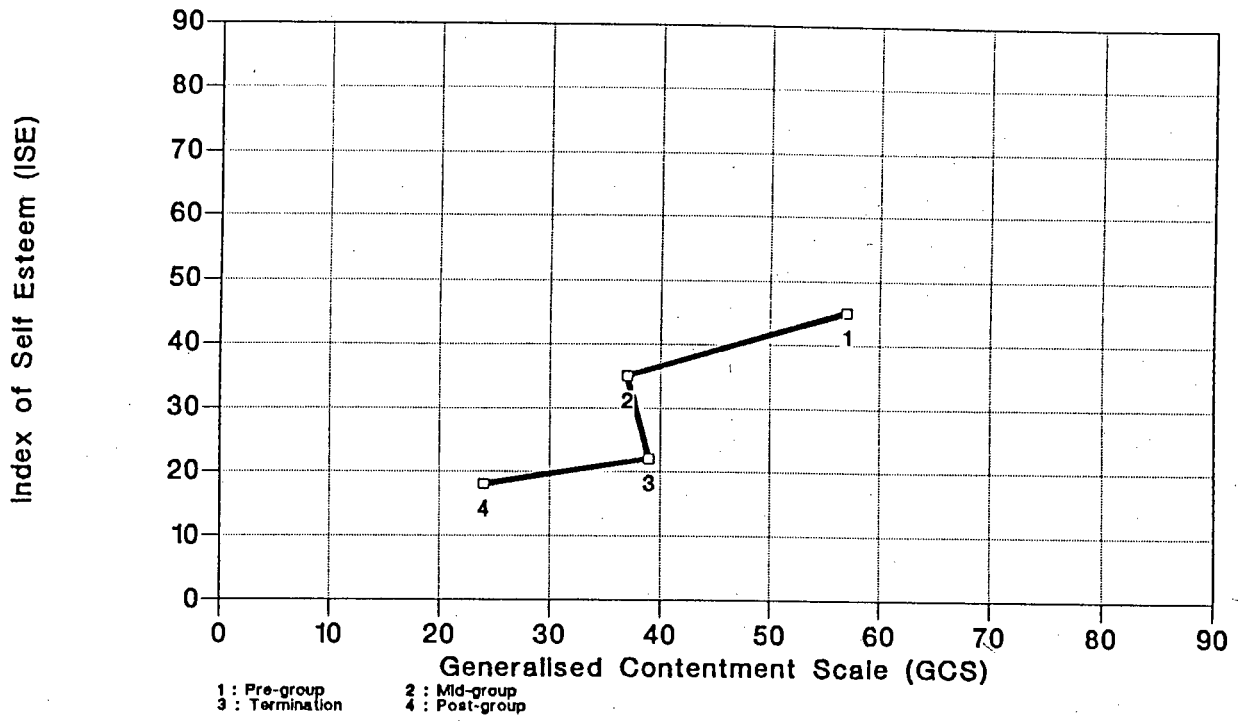
Clinical Management Package Scores - Group member G



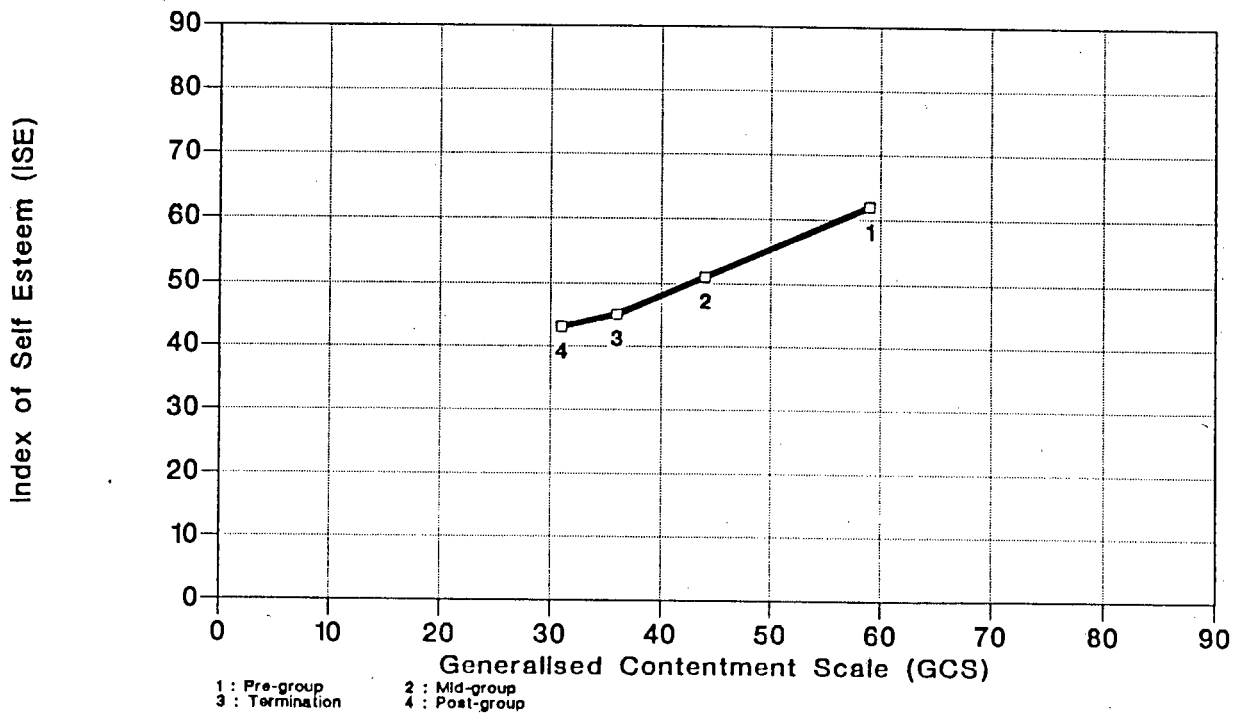
Clinical Management Package Scores - Group member H



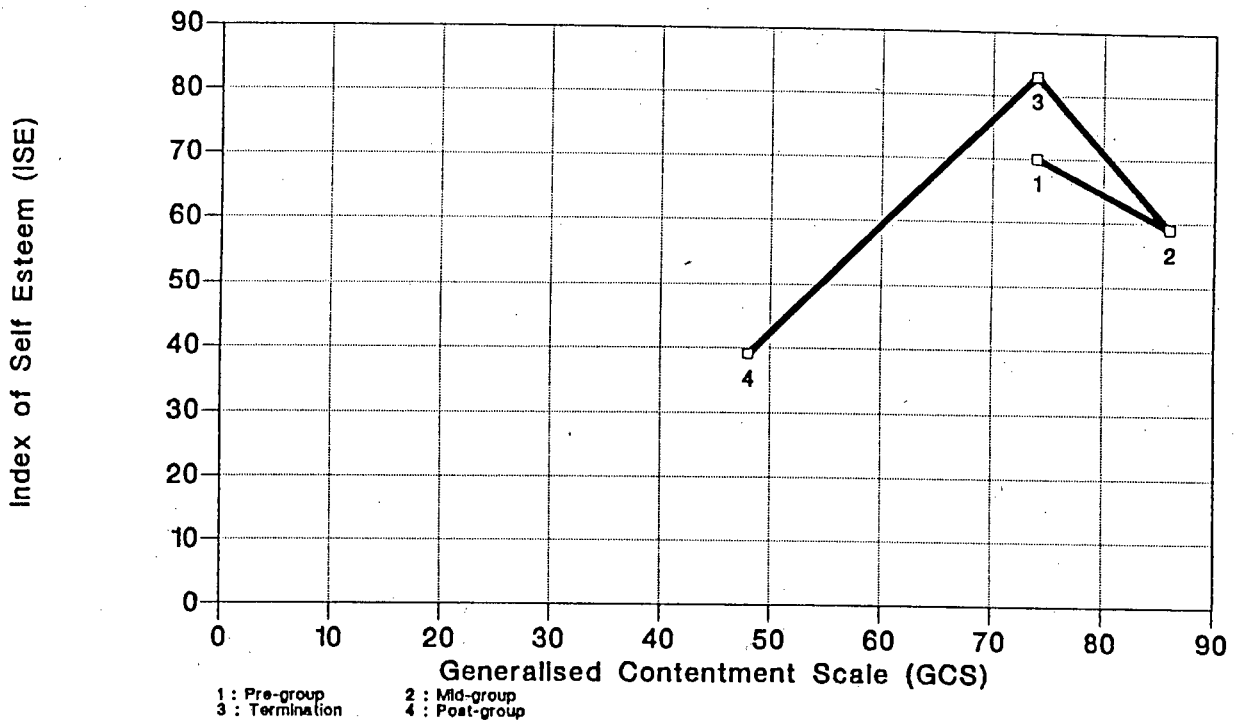
Clinical Management Package Scores - Group member J



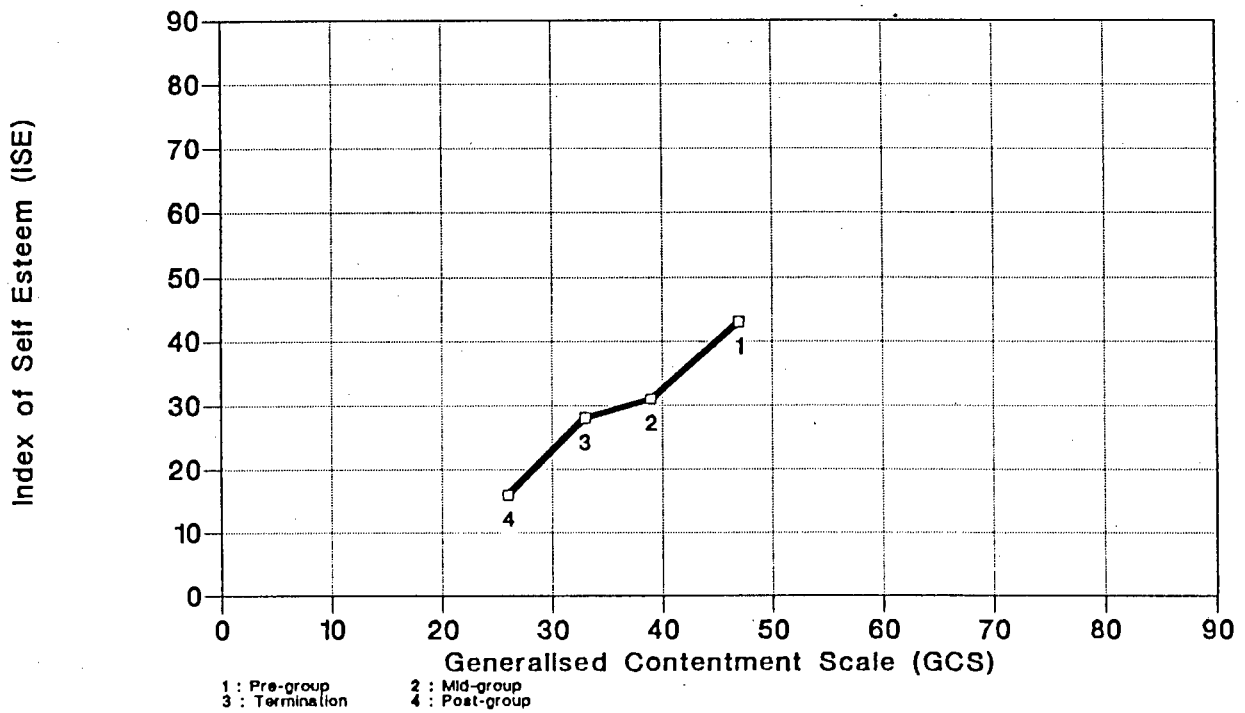
Clinical Management Package Scores - Group member K



Clinical Management Package Scores - Group member L



Clinical Management Package Scores - Group member M



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