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**This special section of the Journal contains tributes that celebrate the lives and times of Bill Abbott and William Glasser.**

**Invitation to Institute Members and friends to submit tributes for two very special members of the William Glasser Institute.**

The first is **Rose Inza-Kim** (who will be our host at the International meeting to be held in Seoul, Korea, this summer).

The second is the late **Ken Larsen**, who has served our organization's various media needs invaluablely for many, many years.

**Please send your tributes for either or both of these highly esteemed individuals to [parishta@gmail.com](mailto:parishta@gmail.com) so that they might appear in the next issue of the Journal.**

## **Introduction to the *Journal*, its editor, editorial board, and essential info regarding the *Journal*.**

### ***IJCTRT* Editor:**

The current editor of the *Journal* is **Dr. Thomas S. Parish**. Dr. Parish is an Emeritus Professor at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas. He earned his Ph.D. in human development/developmental psychology at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, and subsequently became CTRTC certified, specializing in the areas of mental health, educational counseling, and marriage and family counseling. He has authored hundreds of refereed journal articles (many of which having focused on CT/RT) that have appeared in more than thirty different professional refereed journals. He has an extensive background in designing and conducting research studies as well as developing strategies for the implementation of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy. He was recognized as One of the Top 100 Educators in the World in 2005 by the International Biographical Centre located in Cambridge, England. Any correspondence, including questions and/or manuscript submissions, should be sent to Dr. Parish at: [parishts@gmail.com](mailto:parishts@gmail.com) You may also contact him by phone at: (785) 845-2044, (785) 861-7261, or (785) 862-1379. In addition, a website is currently operational for the *Journal*. It is [www.ctrjournal.com](http://www.ctrjournal.com). Plus the *Journal* is no longer password protected on the William Glasser Institute (WGI) website, so anyone can now gain access to it—without charge--at their convenience.

### ***IJCTRT* Editorial Board:**

Besides **Dr. Thomas S. Parish**, who serves as the editor of the *Journal*, there is also in place an outstanding team of individuals who have agreed to serve on its editorial board. They are:

**Emerson Capps**, Ed.D., Professor Emeritus at Midwest State University, plus serves as a member of the William Glasser Institute Board of Directors, and as a faculty member of the William Glasser Institute.

**Janet Morgan**, Ed.D., Licensed private practice professional counselor in Columbus, Georgia.

**Joycelyn G. Parish**, Ph.D., former senior research analyst for the Kansas State Department of Education in Topeka, Kansas.

**Patricia A. Robey**, Ed.D., Associate Professor at Governors State University, University Park, Illinois, Licensed Professional Counselor, and Senior Faculty of WGI-US and William Glasser International

**Brandi Roth**, Ph.D., licensed private practice professional psychologist in Beverly Hills, California.

**Jean Seville Suffield**, Ph.D., Senior Faculty, William Glasser International, as well as president and owner of Choice-Makers@ located in Longueuil, Quebec, CANADA.

**Jeffrey Tirengel**, Ph.D., Professor of psychology at Alliant International University, and also serves as a licensed psychologist at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, California.

**Robert E. Wubbolding**, Ed.D., Professor Emeritus at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, and is the Director for the Center of Reality Therapy, also in Cincinnati, Ohio.

#### **IJRTCT Technical Advisor:**

Finally, since the *IJCTRT* is currently an on-line journal, we have also chosen to have a “Technical Advisor” working with the editor and the editorial board. He is **Glen Gross**, M.Ed., Distance and Distributed Learning Specialist, from Brandon University in Brandon, Manitoba, CANADA.

#### **IJCTRT Mission:**

*The International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy* is directed toward the study of concepts regarding internal control psychology, with particular emphasis on research, theory development, and/or the descriptions of the successful application of internal control systems through the use of Choice Theory and/or Reality Therapy.

#### **Publication Schedule:**

The *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy* is published on-line semi-annually in the fall (about October 15) and spring (about April 15) of each year.

#### **Notice to Authors and Readers:**

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#### **Indices of Previous Authors and Titles:**

Indices of Previous Authors and Titles are Located in the Following Volumes:  
Vols. 1-5 in Vol. 6.1; Vols. 6-10 in Vol. 10.2; Vols. 11-15 in Vol. 16.2; Vols. 16-20 in Vol. 20.2; Vols. 21-24 in Vol. 25.2; Vols. 26-30 in Vol. 31.2.

**Though it's been Mentioned before in Past Issues of the Journal, What Follows are the Answers to Key Questions Regarding Choice Theory and Reality Therapy—**

**Are YOU interested in *finding* past research, ideas, and/or innovations regarding Choice Theory and/or Reality Therapy? If so, you might do the following:**

Check out the last sections of the 2011 issues of the *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*, as they summarize CT/RT research, ideas, and innovations, which are categorized by topic and by author.

**Are YOU interested in *acquiring* past issues of CT/RT-related articles? If so, you might note the following:**

All issues of *IJCTRT* from 2010 until present are available at "<http://www.ctrtjournal.com>." Notably, future issues of the Journal will also be made available at this website, too, all without charge. Yes, it's available to anyone, be they members or not!

Anything prior to 2010 can be acquired by going to <http://education.mwsu.edu> then under the Links Area, click on the hyperlink "International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy," which will take you to the Journal page. On this page there will be hyperlinks to abstracts and a form to request a copy of any full article(s), which is (are) available to you free-of-charge.

Bottom line: *The International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy* definitely seeks to help EVERYONE to know more about Choice Theory and Reality Therapy. After all, our goal, like The William Glasser Institute, is to *teach* the world CT/RT, and we are absolutely committed to reaching this end!

**BOOK REVIEW by Rhon Carleton of the FOLLOWING:  
David Jackson's (2015) *Becoming a better Samaritan: Using scripture and choice theory psychology to help others live more abundantly.* Independence, MO:  
Corporate Copy, Inc.**

For decades efforts to train Christian pastors, leaders and caregivers in Choice Theory (CT) and Reality Therapy (RT) have generally proved to be futile. The main objections have centered on the writings and teachings of Dr. William Glasser being labeled as the work of a secular psychiatrist without the undergirding of biblical truth. Workshops offered in churches to teach CT and RT in the Christian Context have often attracted little interest in spite of the expressed desire to equip lay leaders and clergy as care givers. The demands on pastoral staff members leave little time for visitation of hospitals, homes, assisted living centers and nursing homes. The question always remains, "Who can we send as well trained care givers on behalf of the church?"

Responding to this challenge, Dr. David Jackson has written a definitive workbook couched in the language of faith and Choice Theory Psychology, which has proven to be attractive to the average Christian care giver. In my estimation this is the book Christian leaders have been seeking.

Using Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, he builds anticipation that Christian care givers can become Better Good Samaritans (BGS) assisting Distressed Persons. The workbook he created successfully integrates Christian theology and biblical quotations with a step-by-step learning process internalizing the principles and procedures of CT and RT. Beginning with the description of what a Samaritan is, he defines the meaning of a BGS as one who practices the great commandments "to love God and your neighbor as yourself." The effectiveness of this book not only lies in the simplicity of the author's teaching, but in his use of life experiences as a counselor, which serve as examples of Choice Theory Christian Care Giving applications. He lifts up Jesus as the greatest counselor in history.

Dr. Jackson then methodically teaches relationship building, the needs of CT and scripture, RT, our perceptions and the quality world. He continues with chapters on the great importance of facilitating successful self-evaluation and planning--- all while employing the helpful connecting habits of a BGS. Each chapter includes the teaching of scriptures compatible with CT Psychology, as well as applications and questions to review that promote the internalization of the concepts. He concludes the workbook with five exceptional scenarios to support the learning process. The Epilogue reviews suggested role play procedures used to help BGS's internalize the new knowledge and procedures. This book can be used to teach the knowledge and applications to any persons seeking to become BGS's with or without a CT/RTC facilitator. I highly recommend that CT/RTC individuals and WGI Faculty members consider using this fine publication in workshops for Christian care givers worldwide.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chaplain Rhon Carleton, CT/RTC (Senior Faculty), Congregational Care Pastor, Frazer United Methodist Church, Montgomery Alabama.

For further information regarding ***Becoming a better Samaritan: Using scripture and choice theory psychology to help others live more abundantly***, please contact Chaplain Rhon Carleton at [carleton.rhon82@gmail.com](mailto:carleton.rhon82@gmail.com)

## **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS OFFERED BY DR. ROBERT E. WUBBOLDING REGARDING DAVID JACKSON'S BOOK ENTITLED *BECOMING A BETTER SAMARITAN* . . .**

In his previous book, *Reality Therapy and Choice Theory: Managing Behavior Today, Developing Skills for Tomorrow*, Dr. Jackson described how choice theory and reality therapy (CT/RT) are used in a correctional setting. In this his most recent book he adds a new dimension to the literature of choice theory and reality therapy. He shows that CT/RT is not a religious system. Nevertheless, the theory and practice are not only compatible with biblical theology, but can readily be used to implement spiritual principles. He shows how the parable of the Good Samaritan complements the use of reality therapy and how the "caring habits" can help people become even "Better Good Samaritans".

In the parable, the Good Samaritan helps a foreigner and stranger whose life, i.e., survival need, was threatened. Using the altruism presented in the parable, Jackson implements Glasser's caring habits and the RT procedures. In the beginning of the book he illustrates reality therapy in action with specific case applications. For instance, he describes situations in which the helper uses reality therapy as a saving tool illustrating that the practice of "Good Samaritanism" is not in any way limited. He brings home the principle that reality therapy is a stand-alone system characterized by human empathy. He skillfully describes how a helper can touch the soul of a young person who is at first unwilling even to speak to a caring adult. The helper succeeds after showing respect and honoring the individual's choice to resist assistance while at the same time not giving up on the person. David Jackson draws the person into a conversation. As a result, the "client" moves toward more healthy behaviors and choices. Thus, by compassionately reaching out to a suffering human being, he applies the biblical principle of concern and benevolence to a person who feels emotionally isolated.

He skillfully describes the internal control nature of choice theory and the methodology for its implementation. External forces do not control human beings. Their behavior springs from internal drives or needs. David presents the indisputable fact that choice theory is congruent with biblical teachings. Utilizing an abundance of quotations from both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures he establishes the connection between biblical teaching and the five human needs as well with behavior as chosen rather than forced on us by fate or circumstances. With this interface in mind, he seamlessly transitions from a secular use of choice theory/reality therapy to ways in which the Christian church, or any religious institution, can utilize choice theory and biblical theology to train church members to become what he aptly calls "Better Good Samaritans". With this CT/RT background they can be immensely helpful to distressed persons. He describes distressed persons as unhappy persons who are in need of better human relationships and spiritual values. What better combination than to link the relationship-building and compassionate injunctions of the Bible with the inherently empathic seven caring habits formulated by William Glasser, M.D., and with the more specific delivery system of reality therapy?

Dr. Jackson hopes that church leaders will come to value and learn specific skills associated with reality therapy and integrate them with biblical teachings. They will then grasp the wisdom of training Good Samaritans to become Better Good Samaritans. If every church could boast of one better Good Samaritan for every 25 church members, the church in the



United States and worldwide would witness a renewal and an enthusiasm that has occurred only a few times in history. David Jackson's book should be read by pastors, church council members, educators, youth leaders and/or anyone else interested in furthering the message taught by the prophets, the apostles, and by the Lord Himself.

To purchase this book entitled "*Becoming a Better Good Samaritan . . .*," the following instructions should be followed:

For those residing within the United States, just go on-line and order this book from the William Glasser Institute\* for \$15.00, plus \$4.00 for shipping and handling.

For those residing outside the United States, just go on-line and order this book from the William Glasser Institute\* for \$15.00, plus \$12.00 for shipping and handling.

For those who wish to order ten or more copies of this book they should contact David Jackson directly at [jave77755@hotmail.com](mailto:jave77755@hotmail.com) to receive their books, as well as a special discount.

## **A COMPARISON OF EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL CONTROL PSYCHOLOGY**

Thomas S. Parish, Ph.D., CTRTC  
Joycelyn G. Parish, Ph.D., CTRTC, LCP

### **The History of External Control Psychology**

About 100 years ago Dr. John B. Watson said that he could take any child and make him into a doctor, a lawyer, a beggar or a thief. More than fifty years ago B. F. Skinner reported that he had actually raised his daughter (between 1 and 2 years of age) in an "air crib" (i.e., a Skinner Box) so that he might better control the environment around her. A contemporary of John B. Watson, Ivan Pavlov also demonstrated how he could condition dogs to salivate to the sound of a bell, which was then followed by John B. Watson's use of such procedures to condition Americans to buy certain products that were advertised on the radio. Notably, these same conditioning procedures are also used today on both radio and television in order to influence our buying habits, as well as our voting habits too.

All of the above examples certainly demonstrate how external control psychology works, often without seeking any consent and/or knowledge on the part of those being so conditioned. As reported by Deranowa Yarmalenko, during the 1940's, such conditioning actually seems to work best if those being conditioned are unaware that this is so. Consequently, these approaches to conditioning children and/or adults are basically used today in promoting propaganda via the various forms of mass communications which are bombarding us each and every day.

### **Internal Control Psychology . . . An Alternative Approach to Helping Others**

In contrast to "external control psychology," "internal control psychology" operates best when people are fully cognizant of their various options, and are then able to think and act more efficiently as to the decisions that they would need to make. The most well known approach that works to foster "internal control psychology" is referred to as "Choice Theory," which was introduced by Dr. William Glasser in 1998. William Glasser (1965) also created the therapeutic approach called "Reality Therapy," which provides one of the best ways to implement fully the concepts that are emphasized in Choice Theory." Notably, Yarish (1986) effectively utilized Reality Therapy-type procedures in order to enhance the internal locus of control used by juvenile offenders. In addition, Wubbolding (2000) included an entire chapter of his book entitled *Reality Therapy for the Twenty-first Century* to describing various research studies that have successfully implemented Reality Therapy-type procedures in order to help various populations with various problems in various settings.

In order to foster greater internal control in people it seems clear that there are two concepts are very important here. They are (1) the need to create cognitive dissonance (i.e., ownership of one's goals and a desire to move toward them), and the avoidance of creating "psychological reactance" (which refers to the need to not seek to influence or force people to do things in a certain way, since if we do so they will likely go the opposite way).

As described by Parish (1988), the eight steps or elements of Reality Therapy can be best understood by seeing how they seek to employ cognitive dissonance, while also avoiding the creation of "cognitive dissonance."

Step/Element #	Fosters Cognitive Dissonance	Avoids Psychological Reactance
Make friends		X
Ask: "What do you want?"	X	X
Ask: "What are you doing?"	X	X
Ask: "Is it working?"	X	X
Have client make a plan	X	X
Did s/he do the plan?	X	X
Don't accept excuses	X	X
Never give up!	X	X

As the client(s) go through these steps or elements s/he should come to better understand that they need to be responsible for their various thoughts and actions. In fact, before long clients and/or students may no longer need direction from the counselor or teacher since all they need to do is implement the above elements or steps, and continue to do so until s/he has achieved his/her desired success.

To make this work, however, each individual must wish to have a goal in mind, and a willingness to achieve it within a certain period of time.

One possible goal for students everywhere is to be "happy at school."

To achieve this end what will each student need to do?

Based upon previous research (Parish, Parish, & Blatt, 2000; Parish & Parish, 2003; Parish & Parish, 2005), it's been shown that significant associations often exist between certain student behaviors and those who were identified as being "happy at school." They include the following:

- Treat teachers with respect at this school.
- Treat fellow students at this school in a caring and respectful manner.
- Work cooperatively with other students at this school.
- Does one's best to learn about things that s/he needs to know to prepare him/her for his/her future.

Notably, these above-mentioned student behaviors have been converted into queries by simply placing an answering grid beside each of them:

Never Always

I \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_

Using this survey technique, across multiple grade levels (i.e., 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, & 9<sup>th</sup>) remarkably consistent findings have been reported by Parish, Parish, and Batt (2000), Parish and Parish (2003) and Parish & Parish (2005). More specifically, a robust association was found in each case between happiness at school with certain student behaviors suggesting perhaps that if students treated their teachers and fellow students with respect, worked cooperatively with others, and did their best to learn, that they would be much happier at school than their classmates who indicated otherwise. These findings provide insights for students who really wish to be happy at school, but aren't. For once they understand that these actions, noted here, can help them to be happier at school, they will much more likely choose to act accordingly in order to test the hypothesis that they, too, might use these behavioral choices in order to be happier at school.

Notably, teachers were not a key factor in these studies. That is, these results held for students across all teachers and all classrooms. Of course, such findings are significant by themselves. But what if teachers also sought to befriend and respect (i.e., connect with) their students, were cooperative with them, and always helped all of their students to do their best? With such "connectedness" being extended by the students to their teachers, and by the teachers to their students, the end result could/should mean tremendous benefits for all involved, and the impact of these efforts should make a substantial impact on everyone for many years to come.

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**Brief Bios—**

Thomas S. Parish is an emeritus professor at Kansas State University. He earned his Ph.D. in human development/developmental psychology from the University of Illinois. He is also CTRT certified, and currently serves as the editor of the International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy. Finally, he has authored or co-authored hundreds of refereed journal articles, of which many have involved the examination and/or use of choice theory and/or reality therapy.

Joycelyn G. Parish is a Licensed Clinical Psychotherapist. She earned her Ph.D. from Kansas State University and is a Certified Reality Therapist. She has previous experience in academia and in research design and implementation. Joycelyn Parish and Thomas Parish are in private practice with one another in Topeka, Kansas, currently serving individuals, couples, and families as mental health and life coach associates and as community resources for LDS Family Services located in Independence, Missouri.

# **USING REALITY THERAPY TRAINED GROUP COUNSELORS in COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAMS to DECREASE the ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GAP**

Cynthia Palmer Mason

## **Abstract**

The primary purpose of this manuscript is to examine the potential impact of structured group counseling sessions on the academic achievement gap in the United States when implemented in comprehensive school counseling programs. Pertinent literature on the status of academic achievement in the United States will be reviewed. This will be followed by the core tenets of the program components of the American School Counselor Association's National Model (ASCA), reality therapy, and group counseling expectations. Lastly, implications for training future counselors and suggestions for additional research are explored.

*Keywords:* achievement gap, group counseling, ASCA National Model, reality therapy

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Achievement gap refers to the observed, persistent disparity of educational measures between the performances of groups of students, especially those differentiated by socioeconomic status (SES), race/ethnicity, and gender. The implications of the achievement gap can be observed in different academic areas which include standardized test scores, grade point averages, dropout rates, and college enrollment and completion. In fact, the growing inequities in postsecondary degree attainment and the increased emphasis on the importance of a college degree have raised concerns about the quality of college readiness counseling available to high school students, particularly those students who are either from low-income families or from underrepresented minority groups (Engle, Bermeo, & O'Brien, 2006; McDonough, 2005; Public Agenda, 2010).

Research studies into the causes of achievement gaps between low-income minority students and middle-income white students have been ongoing since the 1966 publication of the report, *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (Equality of Educational Opportunity, 1966). This investigation was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education. The results of that research suggested that both in-school factors and home/community factors impact the academic achievement of students and contribute to the gap.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), an evaluation that is used nationwide, provides evidence of the racial achievement gap in the United States (Achievement Gap, 2011). Efforts to combat the gap have been numerous and have included reducing class sizes, creating smaller schools, expanding early-childhood programs, raising academic standards, improving the quality of teachers provided to poor and minority students, and encouraging more minority students to take high-level courses (Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, 2011). Although the gap seems to have narrowed somewhat in recent years according to this particular measure, there continues to be large disparities between black and white students and between Hispanic and white students in the U.S. (Achievement Gap, 2011).

Fensterwald (2013) reported on the latest results of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA); this is an international test in math, science, and reading that is given in 65 nations. The overall score of U.S. students in 2012 was below most industrialized nations and education systems. On this particular assessment, the United States scored below 29 nations in math, 22 nations in science, and 19 nations in reading.

## **ASCA National Model**

The significance of comprehensive school counseling programs has been well documented. For instance, a clear connection between school counseling programs and student academic achievement was made by Myrick (2003) who used a variety of examples to illustrate that developmental guidance programs positively impact student learning. In addition, a previous study by Gerler, Kinney, and Anderson (1985) revealed that underachieving students who received counseling improved significantly on the Self-Rating Scale of Classroom Behavior and also in mathematics and language arts grades.

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) published the ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs in 2003 (American School Counselor Association, 2003). The techniques, methods, and resources that counselors employ to deliver the ASCA National Model are framed within four interactive program components: guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, and system support (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012). These elements serve as organizers for the many guidance and counseling activities required in a comprehensive school counseling program. Each component makes specific contributions to enhance academic achievement, career decision making, and personal/social development for students (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012).

Squires (2005) defined curriculum as a document that "describes (in writing) the most important outcomes of the schooling process; thus, the curriculum is a document in which resides the district's 'collected wisdom' about what is most important to teach" (p.3). A curriculum is discipline specific and according to Squires (2005), "a curriculum is based on standards" (p. 3). Standards typically describe appropriate content to be mastered by students over a specific range of grade levels. In the ASCA National Model, standards identify the attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills important for students to acquire as they progress from kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade (American School Counselor Association, 2003). These elements are usually grouped under domain titles such as academics, career, and personal/social. School counselors teach, team teach, or support the teaching of guidance curriculum units. Guidance curriculum activities may be conducted in the classroom, guidance center, or other school facilities (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012).

The Individual Student Planning component of the ASCA National Model assists students with developing and using individual learning plans. Within this component, students explore and evaluate their education, their career options, and their personal goals. School counselors work closely with students on an individual basis. The significance of the personalized learning is that it allows each student to understand who he or she is, what adult roles seem most desirable, and how to get from where he or she is to there in the most productive manner (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2004).

The Responsive Services component is designed to work with students whose personal circumstances are threatening to interfere with or are interfering with their personal, social, career, or academic development. This element organizes guidance and counseling techniques to respond to student concerns as they occur. Services in this component are implemented through individual counseling, small-group counseling, consultation, or referral.

The System Support program component provides administration and management activities that establish, maintain, and enhance activities in the other three program components. This component is typically implemented in the areas of research and development, professional development, staff and community public relations, community outreach, program management, community and advisory boards, and fair-share responsibilities (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012). Now that the program components of the

ASCA National Model have been reviewed, the paragraphs that follow will discuss reality therapy and the characteristics of reality therapy practitioners.

## **Reality Therapy**

Reality therapy is a method of counseling and psychotherapy that was developed by William Glasser (1965). It has been effectively applied to schools (Glasser, 1990, 1993), parenting (Glasser, 2002), and counseling and therapy (Wubbolding, 2000, 2004; Wubbolding & Brickell, 1999). This theoretical approach has been successfully taught and practiced in the United States, Canada, Korea, Japan, Singapore, the United Kingdom, Norway, Israel, Ireland, Germany, Spain, Slovenia, Croatia, Italy, Colombia, Kuwait, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, and Hong Kong (Wubbolding, 2000).

Choice theory is the underlying theoretical basis for reality therapy. According to choice theory, all humans are motivated by five genetically encoded needs—survival, love and belonging, power or achievement, freedom or independence, and fun—that drive us all our lives (Glasser, 1998). This approach emphasizes that beginning shortly after birth and continuing all through life, individuals store information inside their minds and build a file of wants called the *quality world*. The *quality world* consists of people, activities, events, beliefs, possessions, and situations that fill personal needs (Wubbolding, 2000). People are the most important component of each *quality world* and these are the individuals clients care about and want most to connect with. Choice theory explains that everything we do is chosen and every behavior is our best attempt to get what we want to satisfy our needs (Glasser, 2001). For this approach to be successful, a therapist must be the kind of person the client would consider putting in his/her *quality world* (Glasser, 1998).

Reality therapy emphasizes the importance of the therapeutic relationship which is the foundation for effective counseling outcomes (Wubbolding & Brickell, 1999). Counselors are able to develop positive relationships with students when they possess the personal qualities of warmth, sincerity, congruence, understanding, acceptance, concern, openness, respect for the client, and the willingness to be challenged by others (Corey, 2013). Student relationships are further enhanced when counselors eliminate the seven deadly habits of criticizing, blaming, complaining, nagging, threatening, punishing, and bribing or rewarding for control. These toxins must be replaced with the seven caring habits of supporting, encouraging, listening, accepting, trusting, respecting, and negotiating differences (Wubbolding, 2009). The personal characteristics and attributes of school counselors allow them to function as advocates who are able to instill a sense of hope in students. Once the therapeutic relationship has been established, the counselor assists students in gaining a deeper understanding of the consequences of their current behavior. At this point, students are helped to understand that they are not victims of circumstances but have a range of options from which to choose (Wubbolding, 2009).

Reality therapy provides the delivery system for helping students take more effective control of their lives; a basic goal of this approach is to help them learn better ways to fulfill their needs. The procedures that lead to change are based on two specific assumptions (Glasser, 1992). The first assumption is that their present behavior is not getting them what they want; the second assumption is that humans are motivated to change when they believe they can choose other behaviors that will at least get them closer to what they want.

Before focusing on the importance of academic achievement, personal/social adjustment, and career development; reality therapy practitioners work at involving, encouraging, and supporting students to help them feel that they are cared for and actually belong to this specific group and this particular school. This interaction helps to build trust. It is through



this relationship with the therapist that students begin to drop their defenses and learn from them. The acronym WDEP was developed by Wubbolding (2000) and is used to describe the basic procedures of this approach. Each of the letters in the system refers to a cluster of strategies: W=wants, needs, and perceptions; D=direction and doing; E=self-evaluation; and P=planning. These strategies are designed to promote change. With the emphases on connection and interpersonal relationships, reality therapy is well suited for various kinds of group counseling (Corey, 2013). Groups provide members with an abundance of opportunities to explore and meet their needs through the relationships formed within the group.

### **Application to Schools**

Reality therapy started in a mental hospital and a correctional institution; however, shortly after the publication of *Reality Therapy* in 1965, requests came from educators who wanted Glasser to apply his ideas to the classroom (Wubbolding & Brickell, 1999). In 1968, Glasser wrote, *Schools Without Failure* which described how to use reality therapy in a classroom with large groups. Since that time, reality therapy has been effectively used with groups in school settings.

For instance, the ideas described in *The Quality School* (Glasser, 1990c) were first applied on a schoolwide basis with at-risk secondary students at Apollo Continuation School in Simi Valley, California. Greene and Uroff (1991) described the results the school achieved when the principal and staff expanded their mission to include the components of quality environment, quality work, quality school, and quality relationships. The authors insisted on addressing the affective domain and applying reality therapy in a quality school that would embrace the entire educational experience. After several years, the students at Apollo had a 78% attendance improvement, weekly drug usage dropped from 80% to 20%, and students on probation dropped from 30% to 5%.

In another study, which was tightly controlled, Comisky (1993) investigated the impact of reality therapy with at-risk ninth grade students. She measured the effect of reality therapy on students' self-esteem, locus of control, academic achievement, attendance, and classroom behavior. Researchers set up three groups of students, each receiving a different treatment for 14 sessions. One group received reality therapy counseling alone; a second group received reality therapy counseling combined with a *partial school within a school* program; the third group (a control group) worked on career development. An analysis of the pre- and posttests that the students took revealed significant differences in academic achievement, self-esteem, attitude, and attendance. Reality therapy was most effective when used with students in the *school within a school*.

One of the most significant studies on the effect of reality therapy in schools was conducted at the Benjamin Franklin High School in Palos Heights, Illinois (Swenson, 1995). This was an alternative school with 138 students. These students constituted the experimental group which was compared with a control group of 157 students, a stratified random sample selected from the three home schools in the district. Faculty and parents considered the Franklin school as a *Glasser School*. Franklin staff had received advanced training and the faculty relied on consultants from the William Glasser Institute to assure that they were adopting the Quality School Model. The results were positive with regard to the effect of reality therapy in schools. Specifically, significantly greater emphasis was perceived by Franklin students on quality work than on controls, and significantly more Franklin parents reported teachers emphasizing quality work and encouragement of high aspirations. In addition, Franklin students viewed their teachers as noncoercive managers who encouraged them to take responsibility for their education (Swenson, 1995).

## Reality Therapy and Group Counseling

When reality therapy trained school counselors use the group counseling process to decrease the academic achievement gap, it is important to be aware of the specific components of reality therapy: 'environment' and 'procedures' (Wubbolding & Brickell, 1999). The former implies creating a friendly, empathic atmosphere where students feel listened to, accepted, and safe. The acronym WDEP is used to describe the basic procedures of this approach whether used for individual, small group, or large group counseling sessions. Each letter refers to a cluster of strategies: W=wants, needs, and perceptions; D=direction and doing; E=self-evaluation of wants, needs, perceptions, behavior, commitment, and plans; and P=plan for change. These should be seen as a system with the group counselor selecting what is useful at a given moment and implementing it at that time. There need not be a chronological, step-by-step sequence for the components of the system. Before the first session, the leader will have explained and discussed the issues of confidentiality, informed consent, and other basic rules (Ethical Standards for Group Counselors, 1989). Corey (2016) identified four stages of group process: (a) initial stage, (b) transition stage, (c) working stage, and (d) consolidation and termination stage. These will be discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

**Initial Stage.** Corey (2016) describes the first stage of group development as the stage at which inclusion and identity are dealt with. Participants wonder about their role in the group, whether they will be accepted, and how they will fit. The group leader helps the participants to get beyond their anxiety and moves on to inclusion activities by answering questions and setting boundaries. At this time, students are asked to explore their wants: what they want to get from the group experience, what possible benefits they see, and how they feel about being in the group. After this discussion, participants talk to each other in pairs or groups of three. They are asked to share their wants as much as is comfortable for them. No pressure is exerted and each dyad or triad makes a list for further discussion. Someone from each subgroup reads their list to the entire group. The leader then facilitates a discussion of the aggregate of expectations, thoughts, and feelings of the participants. Questions for discussion usually include:

1. What are the common wants and expectations?
2. What are the common feelings and thoughts?
3. How much effort will it take to get the desired results from the group experience?

Some reality therapists prefer to use the activity *Who am I?* early in the group experience. The discussion of these data in the group process helps members to develop a feeling of belonging, a sense of inclusion, and the belief that there is something for me in this group because the other people are both similar to me in some ways and different from me in other ways.

**Transition Stage.** Corey (2016) describes the second stage (transition) as *difficult* for the members as they deal with anxiety, resistance, and conflict. The group leader helps group members recognize and express their feelings, and points out power struggles and resistive behaviors (Corey, 1995). Asking the participants about their levels of commitment and internal obstacles to progress is a useful activity that can be related to each level of *wants* in their list of priorities.

**Working Stage.** The third stage is the working stage and several elements can be described as most characteristic of this stage of group development. The first characteristic of this stage is that members establish the perception that they are able to work together after dealing with conflicts with each other and also challenging the legitimacy of the group leader's role. Another characteristic of this stage is that members usually experience a

higher level of commitment; this can be to self-improvement, to solving problems, or a commitment to the group itself. This commitment to personal change fulfills the need for power and achievement and the commitment to the group enhances the feelings of belonging. Corey (2016) describes a third characteristic of this stage as *cognitive restructuring*. During this stage a change in thinking behaviors occurs and the members conduct an honest and sometimes searching inventory and evaluation of the effectiveness of their behavior, the attainability of their wants, and the depth of their commitment to change. The role of the group leader in this stage is to facilitate the interdependence of group members, to build a sense of cohesion, and to help members elevate their levels of commitment (Corey, 2016).

**Consolidation and Termination Stage.** In the final phase (Consolidation and Termination Stage), group members are usually enthusiastic about having completed the group experience and having made changes, and at the same time they feel anxious and fearful because the familiar support group will cease to exist. The efforts of the leader during this stage are aimed at allowing participants to discuss, without criticism, their feelings of sadness, fear, anxiety, hope for the future, and pride in what they have accomplished. At this time, the leader directly asks members to provide feedback to each other as a final gesture of friendship.

At this point, participants are asked by the leader to summarize their progress. With the help of the leader's direct questioning, the participants evaluate their progress. They are encouraged to formulate ways to maintain their effective behaviors and also to cope with the urge to choose the old, less effective alternatives.

The stages of group development, described by Corey (2016), are applicable to reality therapy groups in schools. The effective reality therapist is aware that various needs are more prominent at different stages of development. At times the reality therapist listens and supports students, at other times *evaluation* is used – helping participants determine the effectiveness of behaviors, the attainability of wants, the depth of commitment, and the congruency of perceptions – to challenge participants. Also, it is important to note that the WDEP system used in groups is most effective when geared to the personal style of the counselor: assertive, laid-back, more directive, or less directive (Wubbolding & Brickell, 2015).

## **Group Counseling**

Group counseling in schools involves a number of students working on shared tasks and developing supportive relationships in a group setting. It is an efficient, effective, and positive way to provide direct services to students with academic, personal/social, and career concerns. By allowing individuals to develop insights into themselves and others, group counseling makes it possible for more students to achieve healthier personal adjustment, cope with the stress of a rapidly changing environment, and learn to communicate and cooperate with others (Gerrity & DeLucia-Waack, 2007; McGannon, Carey, & Dimmitt, 2005; Paisley & Milsom, 2007).

Group facilitation in schools has some unique components (Falco, 2011). Group services offered to students and families are usually based on individual student, school, and community needs, which are assessed through survey data, a referral process, or other relevant information. Group counseling should be offered to all students in P-12 settings and best practice will include parental consent and student agreement to participation. In addition, school counselors have a responsibility to screen potential group members and also to address informed consent, purpose of the group, goals, limits of confidentiality, and voluntary participation.

During an interview, Jonathan Orr, president of the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW), a division of the American Counseling Association, suggested that group counseling is always a better alternative than individual counseling because groups are the natural settings for humans (Meyers, 2015). From Orr's perspective, it is important that clients can choose what to reveal in group settings and can also listen and learn from what others share. In addition, Orr reasoned that it tends to be easier to discuss problems with people who have experienced similar difficulties. Moreover, group leaders involved in this study, emphasized that although proper facilitation skills are crucial to the effectiveness of group interventions, many of the most significant contributions and changes are the result of the participants' interactions (Meyers, 2015).

When ACA and ASGW member Jonathan Ohrt was an assistant professor in the counseling and higher education department at the University of North Texas (UNT), he worked with groups of students who were struggling academically and at-risk of falling behind or even dropping out of school (Meyers, 2015). UNT had an agreement with two area middle schools to work with students the schools deemed to be at risk for dropping out. Students qualified as at-risk for this study by using a combination of teacher recommendations and specific items from the Texas Education Agency's at-risk factors which include falling below an average of 70 in two or more courses in the previous or current school year and having multiple suspensions in the previous or current school year (Myers, 2015).

Ohrt and his team researched which elements were most predictive of students' academic success or failure and found that social and emotional factors played larger roles than GPA's and test scores. Considering these findings, Ohrt decided to use the Student Success Skills (SSS) curriculum designed by counselor educators, researchers, and ACA members (Meyers, 2015). This decision was made because this curriculum has shown success with factors such as goal setting, self-regulation, academic self-efficacy, and engagement. Although this program includes elements of psycho-education, Ohrt suggests that the practical elements of goal setting and peer support are most critical to group members' success. There were six to eight students in each group, with one 40-minute session per week, for eight weeks.

The first session was planned as an introductory session which allowed students to get to know one another and the group facilitators, as well. The second session was psycho-educational in nature with the facilitators discussing life skills that are directly related to being successful; these included goal setting, progress monitoring, memory skills, managing attention, and managing anger. The SSS curriculum includes worksheets that explain the life skills areas; the facilitators reviewed these with students and helped them to identify areas they needed to work on. The objectives for sessions three through seven were to help students set goals and work toward maintaining them. Session eight served as a general wrap-up for the group with students talking about what they had learned and how much progress they had made.

Ohrt and his team tested for three elements both before and after the sessions; those were self-regulation, perceived academic efficacy, and self-esteem. The results showed that although the students' self-esteem had not improved, they had made significant progress in both their perceived academic efficacy and their self-regulation (Meyers, 2015). It is important to note that although Ohrt used solution-focused counseling during this process, the author recommends reality therapy because of its emphasis on the therapeutic relationship and the counselor's personal characteristics.

## Discussion

The purpose of this article is to examine the potential impact structured group counseling sessions can have on the achievement gap in the United States when implemented in comprehensive school counseling programs. Despite the efforts to combat the achievement gap in the past, the differences in academic achievement between black and white students and between Hispanic and white students continue. This is a serious problem that negatively impacts society as a whole. As a result of this review, there is reason to believe that instead of looking only at GPA's, standardized test scores, and public assumptions about them; educators should consider other elements that could possibly contribute to decreasing and ultimately eliminating the achievement gap in P-12 schools.

First, school counseling programs are important and the four program components of the ASCA National Model are ideal for focusing on enhancing academic achievement for all students in P-12 schools, particularly those whose averages are below 70 in at least two courses for any reason. The guidance curriculum component is used to impart guidance and counseling content to students in a systematic way. When deciding on lessons and activities for each grade level, counselors must include lessons on the importance of academic achievement, how to study, and how to manage time. The responsive services component will be used for structured small group counseling sessions for students who are at risk of failing or dropping out of school and the individual student planning component will allow counselors to work closely with students who need additional assistance on an individual basis. The primary focus in the individual student planning component is on goal setting, academic achievement, career planning, problem solving, and an understanding of self (American School Counselor Association, 2006).

Second, the training and personal characteristics of those who deliver the school counseling programs are factors to be considered. Reality therapy training is recommended because it emphasizes the importance of the therapeutic relationship which is the foundation for effective counseling outcomes. Reality therapy trained counselors are able to develop positive relationships with students because they possess the personal qualities of warmth, sincerity, congruence, understanding, acceptance, concern, openness, respect for the client, and the willingness to be challenged by others (Corey, 2013). After the therapeutic relationship has been established, reality therapy trained counselors assist students in gaining a deeper understanding of the consequences of their current behavior. All through this process, counselors work at involving, encouraging, and supporting students to help them feel that they are cared for and actually belong to the school.

Third, group counseling is an important element of school counseling programs. This process involves a number of students working on shared tasks and developing supportive relationships in a group setting. It has been documented as an efficient, effective, and positive way to provide direct services to students with academic, personal/social, and career concerns (Gerrity & DeLucia, 2007; McGannon, Carey, & Dimmitt, 2005; Paisley & Milsom, 2007).

In summary, although further work is required to gain a more complete understanding of the reasons for the academic achievement gap in the U.S., findings from this investigation suggest that perhaps the problems with academic achievement for poor and underrepresented groups have more to do with a lack of intrinsic motivation than with external factors. Therefore, in addition to encouraging more research in this area, it is recommended that all school districts adopt and implement the ASCA National Model School Counseling Program. It is also recommended that districts provide one week of reality therapy training for all newly hired school counselors and at least a two-day workshop each year thereafter. Moreover, it is further recommended that counselors be trained to use the

model of group development described by Corey in *Theory and Practice of Group Counseling* (1995). These proposed changes have the potential to significantly decrease the achievement gap in P-12 schools and also to improve the rank of American students on future academic performance reports. Perhaps more important, there is reason to believe that these proposed changes have the potential to enhance academic achievement for all students while also creating a better educated and more equitable society.

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### **Brief Bio--**

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## **DIGITAL CHOICES AND FULFILLMENT OF CHOICE THEORY'S FOUR BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS**

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### **Abstract**

The present study sought to understand how people fulfill basic psychological needs while engaging in console-based video games. Results were intended to influence how future clinicians could use video games as possible interventions, but also as a connection to better understand their clients. William Glasser suggested the idea that people are motivated by four basic psychological needs: (a) love/belonging, (b) power, (c) freedom, and (d) fun (Glasser, 1998). These needs would be one of the tenets of choice theory. While these needs are constant throughout people's lives, the way they are met are continually augmented to fit the culture in which they fit. Data collected via interviews with game playing participants suggested that each of them met at least one basic psychological need, as viewed through the choice theory lens.

### **Background of the topic and study:**

Glasser (1965, 1998, 2000) suggested that the basic needs were an inherent component of all humans. However, the way in which peoples' needs were expressed, and subsequently fulfilled, varied substantially between persons. Glasser (1998, 2000) and Wubbolding (2000) commented that the basic needs could be misunderstood by others not engaged in the activities and could potentially overlook the benefits of said engagement. From a counseling perspective, discovering and understanding ways people meet their psychological needs is imperative to our understanding of their quality world (Glasser, 1998). By gaining knowledge of people's preferences for fulfilling basic needs, clinicians can more easily ascertain when clients are not living well mentally. Additionally, possible interventions could be learned by studying how people currently meet their needs and apply that to conversations and concepts to be used with others who may benefit from the activity.

Video game sales have doubled between the years of 2003 and 2013 (Ipsos MediaCT, 2014). With 42% of Americans playing three hours a week or more, it is a hobby that has become a mainstay in American culture (Ipsos MediaCT, 2015). Furthermore, video games offer a space for counseling interventions to succeed (Granic, Lobel, & Engels, 2013; Langlois, 2013). By being intrinsically interactive and many allowing for a multitude of choices, video games serve as a tool for future clinicians to not only use in sessions or as part of interventions, but also as a conduit for learning more about the client. McGonigal (2011) and Bissell (2011) commented on the potential for video games to serve as analogies for people's decision-making in their real lives.

### **Purpose**

We set out to study how the four basic psychological needs (deferring the survival need) might be met by engaging in console-based video games. Glasser (1998, 2000) pointed out that in choice theory clients have choices in nearly every aspect of their mental health. In many of today's console-based video games (and other versions of video games) choices and decisions are so intertwined with the gameplay; it is often times forgotten by the game player because it is so ingrained in the process that is traversing the game (Procci, Singer, Levy, & Bowers, 2012). This activity has been attributed as a Flow experience, an

immersive state where everything outside the chosen, focused activity, is forgotten (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). This is, of course, intentional by the game producers because the pinnacle of the vast majority of video games is complete immersion in the media. It is within this subtype of media, that I believed there could be data and more importantly, lessons to be learned, about how people meet their basic needs. This article's purpose is to showcase how participants viewed their choices in their gameplay. This will then be discussed in regards to choice theory and how the participant's choices in games could be a talking point in counseling to better understand their real-life decision making.

## **Qualitative Methods**

This study employed the use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). This type of qualitative methodology was used to understand the meaning and essence of the participant's experiences when engaged in a particular activity (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The hope was to give readers an inside look into the participant's lives and delve into the motivations and emotions that are derived from their experiences (Smith, Jarman, & Osborn, 1999). IPA is linked to hermeneutics, the study of interpretation. In this study, I analyzed the participants' experiences and interpreted the data in context of choice theory. Additionally, IPA was used to focus on the idiographic nature of this topic (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009). To examine, in-depth, the participants' understanding of their own engagement with video games and the possible meaning and needs the gameplay could provide for their mental health.

Each participant conducted a roughly, sixty – ninety minute interview, which provided the bulk of the data for this study. Interviews were constructed using a semi-structured set of questions. Each participant was asked the same questions, however, depending on the flow of the interview, additional questions or discussions were included as dictated by myself as the researcher. Additional questions were intended to elaborate on experiences and perspectives of the participants' own meaning in regards to fulfilling basic needs. However, participants were not specifically asked about their feelings of meeting the basic needs. Rather, questions detailed subjects such as, who they played games with, their favorite genres, and fond memories of particular gameplay or stories.

## **Participants**

Eleven participants were interviewed for this study. The participants ranged from 20 years old to 32 years old. Along with the interview, each participant completed a demographics sheet. The information gathered from this sheet included age, gender, race/ethnicity, marital status, number of children, employment status, education completed, gameplay hours per week, and what type of genres they preferred. The most common responses to the demographics sheet: male, non-Hispanic white, single, no children, employed, were currently attending or completed four year college degree. The most common genres that were reported were shooters, adventure, and role-playing.

## **Qualitative Results**

Each participant discussed the idea of choice and decision-making as the concepts related to console-video games. While each participant relayed varying experiences of love/belonging, power, freedom, and fun/pleasure, the ability to make choices in games was universally expressed by all of the participants. The participants commented that video games, unlike that of most books, television, or film, offered a sense of autonomy and control. While there were additional themes developed, this article will concentrate on the concept of

choices and the interplay with the four basic psychological needs. Within the concept of choices, there were three main themes that evolved from the data:

- 1) Connecting and choice of digital and real identities
- 2) Sense of control
- 3) Safe spaces for experimentation

### **Connecting through Choice of Digital and Real Identities**

For several of the participants, the ability to choose what character traits their in-game personification could yield, paired with the opportunity in many games to customize the visuals of the character was important. It appeared that the game players were meeting a need for power and freedom in their exploits within the digital realm (Glasser, 1998). The agency of games allows for players to enjoy a feeling of limitless control and self-efficacy but also the choice to engage in that power in various ways. Joel explained why he enjoyed the process of creating a character with special traits:

Whenever a game gives me the option to create my own character I tried to make it a little bit similar to me. And when it comes to abilities, I like to be able to give myself things I can't do in real life...Because in real life if I wanted to I can go outside and learn to swing a sword and stuff but no matter what I'm not learn[ing] how to shoot a fireball out of my hand [laughs].

Crash discussed a similar feeling by being able to go into a new world: "I can't pick up a sword and go on a quest. Just being a hero in a game is cool." For Peter, the act of power in a game changed his identity while playing: "I guess feeling like a superhero. I definitely played the Spiderman games to do that. That was cool . . .the superhero-esqe feeling. I like pretty much any game where you can do that type of thing."

Other participants commented on the choice to make their avatar, their on-screen game character by controlled by the user (Salen, 2008), similar to their personality and appearance. It seemed that their identity traversed from the real-world into the digital world. Arthur touched on his decisions for his avatar:

And so the character that I built was an Archer. With high sneak and high archery skills. And that certainly seems a match of my personality. It would've been dis-congruent for me to be a dual-wielding swordsman that would have left me open to a lot of attacks.

Carl discussed his view of avatar creation as similar to Arthur's: "I'm a pragmatic guy . . . I'll probably choose my race based on what attributes those races get, rather than what they look like." In both scenarios for Arthur and Carl, they saw themselves as similar to what was happening in the game world. Despite their knowing it was fake and constructed by producers into a somewhat linear storyline (depending on the game); the ability to function within that storyline with decisions was still impactful. While the player may be directed toward a goal at the end of the story or goal as directed for a team of players, the actions that accumulate into the finale of the mission or story is still in the game players hands.

Joel commented on the mixing of identity during his engagement but also after he had finished: "Seeing how the other characters in game reacted to it . . . is what made it really click with me. And [for to] me think about that." Will shared a similar understanding with Joel. He discussed his connection to characters:

So you've spent three games playing as him/her. So no matter what you do seeing he or she going to die, [is] kind of sad. And to me that's more in depth than what most movies and books will get. Because you're controlling this person, making their decisions for them, so, especially the end of Mass Effect 3, coming to it and seeing that there is literally nothing you can do to avoid this death is very . . . kind of grim.

While movies and books also function by bringing its viewers on a journey through the storyline, the difference lies in the agency of the consumer of the product. Whereas films and books can articulate a world by words, sounds, and visuals, they cannot fully ask the viewer to change anything that has not already been accounted for in the media. While subtle, this difference allows the game players to fulfill basic needs as related to their identity. A clinician could possibly understand how clients fulfill their need for freedom by listening to the way clients details their decisions in a video game. How they might meet their need for power by mastering a series of skills to overcome a challenge in a game. Or maybe break down what pleasure means for the client by what brings them joy in specific completed tasks and games. The players have a stake in the story and the personality of avatars. This concept can be used by clinicians as a window into clients' psyche and how they would construct an alternate version of themselves.

### **Sense of control**

Glasser's concept of power (1998, 2000) was showcased by several participants in their experiences. Joel talked about the experience of controlling characters in the video games he played: "Since the character you're controlling is happening because you're the one controlling the character. Everything is your fault or your accomplishments." John mentioned a similar comment, "I think it's very interactive and you're in control of the action." Peter furthered this connection by adding that his experience lauded him the chance to be in control over his entertainment:

I like ones where you get to make your own choices. Just because you get to live in a world that these designers created and that's pretty cool that you can do that. And kinda see how you can influence the game. The more control you have in the game, I feel like is more satisfying it is to play.

Ryan deconstructed his view of choices in games how that gave him a sense of control and feeling that he was accomplishing goals:

But a game like Mass Effect was interesting to me because I knew going in that there wasn't one path to go . . . your choices throughout kind of change the game . . . this kind of maybe, gives you a sense of independence or control, or more control over what is there. I think for gameplay a lot of people want to immerse themselves in it, and I think it definitely helps. Because it brings more of real life and more of that aspect into the game.

Carl reflected on how many video games immersed him in the environment by requiring him to engage in the actions rather than start the story and step back:

The thing that video games have going for them is that they're an active experience rather than a passive one . . . it requires mental effort to make choices and actually participate by you're doing rather than just take everything in. It's two-way rather than just all input. You're more connected to it that way. And even if you only have

two choices . . . at least you have a choice. Having the controls is just more fun because it makes for a more personalized experience that you can control.

Carl's response also hints on the fun/pleasure component of choice theory (Glasser, 1998). For Carl, being able to make his own choices in regarding his fun/pleasure need heightened the experience. While it may seem that every decision to have fun is in fact, our own, the acts we engage in are not always inclusive to our own generation of pleasure. We might gain pleasure by witnessing feats of amazing qualities but as viewers we are not privy to the pleasure of completing those acts. Moya hinted at this concept as well:

Games have lots of action in them. Say if you're playing a game and you're in a very intense dark scary scene you're going to feel that fear more because you're the one that's in control. It's kinda different when you're reading a book or watching a movie. I think it's different when you have control over something. People like to be able to make decisions. And to have control over stuff.

Moya's comment suggests that responsibility plays a role in video game player. By mentioning that a player must assume the consequences of his or her actions, the game crosses a threshold of control from what was produced and then handed to a viewer, to what is produced and accepted by the game player. For participants in this study, this responsibility and choice brought them closer to the experience and thus, more entrenched in their identity. Brinual explained that the chance to be a woman in a game brought her closer to the choices she made within the game:

I would choose a gender that I want and it's probably going to be female because that's who I am. And that makes it easier for me to . . . see through that character's eyes, not necessarily but it's nice to have a choice. Nice to have a choice.

Will suggested that the various choices offer different routes for a person. Humans are complex decision makers, and as we see in the counseling field, make decisions based different motivations. Crash made a point to say that movies and books offered a different type of experience that couldn't match video games in some respects:

They're interactive. I'd rather sit and play a game because I'm actually telling the character what to do instead of just watching the whole time . . . I feel like I am more that character than I do in a movie, just because I'm choosing what they're doing.

Arthur also made a similar comment: "Watching the TV show or reading the book . . . there is no sense of agency or ownership over what happens. The decisions I made in this video game reflected myself and in a real way." Arthur commented that video games also offer a separate experience because as characters roam throughout the game, players are only privy to information as it is released or stumbled upon by the game player: "To see and to be part of that character's realization, the character doesn't realize it until I realize it."

This aspect of games also has implications for counselors. Video games in many ways only function by way of the player continuing to engage in the activity. As counselors we attempt to formulate an understanding of what might happen next in a person's life, but that the person has to be active in their treatment to traverse the issues. This analogy could be helpful for gaming clients to understand how they might engage more fully in their treatment. Brinual commented on her hesitation to go out to see real life people in the social setting. She reflected on the ability to feel socially fulfilled without seeing real life people:

[sighs] I guess [paused] it's all down to personality. So for me I don't do well talking to people . . . I'm going to be really awkward and I'm going [to] get embarrassed and then, they are going to think, "What's wrong with you?" Or I can stay in and play this game and it's more fun and more fulfilling it would have felt like I've actually done something . . . And depending on the game . . . 'Hey I did something cool even if it wasn't actually doing anything in the sense that a lot of people would consider it.' Choosing between something I'm not 100% comfortable with, or ya know, playing a game I would rather play the game . . . then do that other thing.

Brinual's previous comment details the possibility for games to act as a surrogate for obtaining power and freedom as we traditionally knew the concepts (Glasser, 1998). As Wubbolding (2000) pointed out, people meet their basic needs in a multitude of ways that are difficult to understand for the populace but nonetheless are effective for those particular people (provided that those actions do not harm others or themselves). In this case, Brinual seemed to be articulating how this concept could be working for her. While some people may not understand how this could possibly meet her needs for love/belonging, power, and freedom, it seems that she has been able to find a medium that works for her despite popular understanding of the process.

### **Safe spaces for experimentation**

In several instances, participants noted that console-based video games were an activity that afforded them with the chance to try out different personalities or decision making processes. In these digital realms, there seemed to be an effective arena in which players could alter their normal thought patterns and make decisions based on different motivations other than in their real lives. Carl commented, "It's fun, it's just variety of the fact that you don't do that stuff in real life." Crash felt in a similar manner to Carl's thoughts:

I'd rather just go through the game and do whatever I want. Usually in a game, I want to be bad. I feel like it's more fun because you can just do whatever you want and get away with it. At the end of the day it's still just a game. I never equate how I feel about something to what I'm doing in a game.

However, while some of the participants intentionally differed from their real world personalities, other participants had difficulty with this difference. Ryan discussed how real life consequences had nothing to do with his in game decisions:

One of the things in that game [Bioshock], you got to choose whether or not you are going to save these little girls. So there is a choice of good or evil. I'm generally not the evil person and it's like, you tell yourself, "It's just a game" . . . in that perspective, if I would do this in real life, I wouldn't do this action but will it help me . . . I always still have a hard time . . . I tend to be more towards my personality in those games.

Brinual thought back on her experience dealing with decisions in games:  
I was going to start over . . . and I'm going to be a renegade this time . . . and darned if I couldn't actually do it because I would just feel bad, I don't know why . . . Nothing bad would happen to anyone if I chose the mean thing to do but I still could never do it because I just felt . . . whatever the renegade option was, was so against my character that I could never choose it.

This type of usage suggests that video games could be used as way to understand client's personal decision making models. Of course, it would have to be delineated whether they bought into the fact that they made choices in games similar to that of their real life. Though, it may not rule out those who do act different in games than their real life. Will explained how he learned about real life through experiences in games and the consequences of actions:

I guess it taught me that there are ramifications to your actions and those can be very real. Things I hadn't necessarily experienced in life before. I think this could be, essentially a life simulator, kind of helpful, especially to developing children.

Moya shared comparable experiences, experimenting with a way to get out anger in a safe place that did not have real-life ramifications:

I think to a certain point it makes it a little more realistic to them [other players] because they get to make a decision and they get to deal [with] the consequences whether good or bad in the game. And it's better for them to experience it in a video game then doing something horrible in society.

Ultimately, Arthur pointed out something he learned in video games, which was that it offered him a different perspective. And with that different viewpoint he was able to assess his own actions and decisions in a way that was detached from his consciousness.

Games offer that sort of, second life in a way. For me, games are about being put in a situation that I'm never going to find myself in again. And getting to explore the choices I make in that situation. So I'm thinking of The Walking Dead . . . A situation that I hope I never find myself in [laughs], zombie apocalypse. What choices do I make? Same thing with the Mass Effect series. I'm never going to be Commander Shepherd . . . But if I were that person what would I do? I don't really see the choices as a way to explore other versions of myself, or other possible selves. But I do think it's a way to explore my true self. Who I am?

Arthur expanded on this concept of his identity as a real person and how video games task him with exploring how he would deal with decisions:

I played a game about a year and half ago [The Walking Dead a Telltale Games Series] before my wife was pregnant in the story sets up a pretty strong father-daughter dynamic. With the main character Lee, coming across this little girl and as the time goes on you get more attached to this girl. And you start thinking about [tears up] . . . what would you do to protect this child, this little girl? I think that the way the characters interact with each other and with the environment sets up the chance to explore what . . . [pauses . . . laughs softly . . . tears up] . . . What would you do to help this little girl survive in this world? What does it mean to be a father? In this situation, what are your responsibilities to yourself, to your own sense of what's right and wrong, and to the survival of . . . of your child. I didn't expect to be so invested [laughs]. I'm glad that I had that experience.

By being able to see through a lens of a different world, environment, and version of himself (his avatar) and amongst other non-playable characters, he was able to reflect on what he might do in his real life. As sort of an alternate universe, where he could test, fail, and succeed in a host of different scenarios. Through these experiences, it appeared that many, if not all, of the participants had a question that ran through their minds at point or another

while they engaged in these games, "How do I see myself in these games" (Alexander, 2015).

For some, their identities were malleable to the chosen environment and storyline of the games. For others, their identity was only formed more strongly by the challenges that the games provided. These participants did not choose to act disproportional to their real life selves and stood steadfast in the ability to change their personas. For them, whether they tried to or not, could not imagine a scenario where and why they should forgo the personality and identity that they had carved out throughout their lives. The data from this suggests that there are potential avenues for counselors to proceed down to understand how their game playing clients understand their quality worlds.

Glasser (1998) pointed out that an effective and fulfilling quality world required a person be consciousness of his or her decisions and the consequences of those decisions. Whether it is related to social relationships or personal choices, a person must overcome challenges to meet his or her basic needs and fill their quality world successfully. Similarly, players overcome obstacles, traverse long (digital) distances and make difficult decisions in games. Storylines test players' resourcefulness, principals, and ideals (Juil, 2005; McGonigal, 2011; Newman, 2004; Nitsche, 2008). It is these problem solving activities that make console-based video games an unexpected but possibly effective realm to understand and assist in mental health field. And as Arthur discussed, video game environments may be an optimal place to understand values, decision-making processes, and identities.

So, how do we uncover some of this information in a counseling session? Listed below are questions that relate to the four psychological basic needs. As a clinician, use these questions as a springboard for further questions and ultimately as a conduit to understand clients' connections to video games and their perceptions of that connection. It is important to note, that not all video game players may have thought about these types of topics and possibly may not find their gameplay as any sort of data indicative of their mental health. And in general, there is still debate on what video culture is exactly and how it functions (Shaw, 2010). So care must be taken not to assume that a player subscribes to certain ideologies in their video game engagement.

In my professional opinion, these clients should not be pushed on but gradually introduced to it through their thoughts and feelings. Additionally, care should be taken to understand their experiences as fully as possible. This may involve asking questions about the video games they mention, the specific systems they play on and the process in which they engage with them. Just as in any intervention, the counselor should be as fully knowledgeable about the topic as possible. Luckily, nearly every client I've worked with was happy to discuss his or her video game engagement. This is especially prevalent in children and adolescents, as they generally enjoy the idea that their counselor is interested in their video game habits.

The data reported in this article is of limited scope compared to the full amount in the study. The data in this article was compiled to introduce the reader to the concept of using console-based video games (and other types of video games) as a conduit toward understand clients concerns, thoughts, and emotions more fully. Please refer to the full dissertation for more results and recommendations for counselors.

### **Practitioner Question Recommendations**

1) Tell me about your characters in the game.



**Reasoning:** This question leads to insights of the basic needs of power, freedom, and fun. Though, what may be most helpful is information regarding how clients see themselves and might lead into a discussion of their quality worlds. In some games the player does not get a choice regarding their 'avatar' (the in-game playable character) but you can still ask if they like the character and why (or if they don't like the character and why). If your clients get to create their avatar this question resonates more so. This is a chance to hear why your clients chose specific skills, attributes or to look a certain way for their in-game identity.

2) What is fun about the game?

**Reasoning:** This question is more specific toward the fun/pleasure component of basic needs. Though it may be difficult, at first, to get past an answer of, "I don't know, it's just fun." An example from you why you enjoy a hobby may be helpful in getting clients to give you examples. For example, "Well you know, I do those plane models because it relaxes me. And it's a challenge, when I build the whole thing, I feel good that I completed it." The hope is that you can gain some idea of why they feel fulfilled in the game. The creation aspects give them control over the environment. It feels awesome (read: confident) to beat the puzzles in the game. These answers might even clue you in to reasons why they like certain real-life hobbies or school subjects.

3) Who do you play with online?

**Reasoning:** Initially, this question is based in the social, love/belonging realm. However, it also has implications for freedom and power. Also, especially if you are working with clients under 18 years of age, it's good to know with whom they are interacting in their lives. This is no different online. The trick here is to ask about the people and the roles children and their friends have in the game. Do they talk with others online and what's that like for them to talk with opponents or teammates in the game? This may be a good time to revisit life skills for strangers and what types of information to give out (or more importantly not to give out). But it's also important to figure out what's important about playing online. Do they get a sense of teamwork? Maybe they are fostering responsibility for taking a certain role on the team. Whatever knowledge you learn will be helpful.

4) What choices did you make in the game?

**Reasoning:** As this article set out to accomplish, this question delves into all four psychological basic needs, love/belonging, freedom, power, and fun/pleasure. Video games offer a unique medium to engage in for clients. Unlike movies, games only go as far as the player pushes the controller or keyboard. Inherently, video games provide substantial amounts of choices and thus a sense of control and freedom to make decisions. Tracing through decision making, even seemingly inconsequential decisions within the game offer a window into how our clients might make decisions. There is a potential to glean how clients construct solutions and reasons for their actions. But be sure to inquire about the difference between the game environment and their real selves. Just because the client takes some risky chances in the game to conquer a challenge doesn't necessarily mean the client would do this in real life. Think of it as an opportunity to have a conversation about decision making and reasoning skills.

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**Brief Bios--**

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## **AN INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT E. WUBBOLDING, Ed.D.**

Carlos P. Zalaquett, Ph.D,

### **Abstract**

Carlos P. Zalaquett requested an interview with Robert E. Wubbolding in which he asked questions and received answers about Dr. Wubbolding's views of the current status of the counseling profession, the impact of multiculturalism as well as the current and future worldwide status of reality therapy. Included in the discussion are ideas about the importance of maintaining an optimistic view of the profession as a whole. Part of the comments are related to Wubbolding's hope for the broadening of multiculturalism to embrace a wider diversity of viewpoints, especially as it touches on the future of the counseling profession. He describes reality therapy as a universal system already adapted to various cultures around the world. He presents William Glasser International as a vibrant worldwide organization that embraces subunits formed by various countries and regions. It is the hope of people who subscribe to this system that instructors from various cultures will come to accept choice theory/reality therapy and take ownership for its adaptation in order to make it their own. Throughout the interview a conversational tone is maintained in the dialogue.

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### **THE INTERVIEW:**

**CZ: Dr. Wubbolding, what defines you as a professional person?**

RW: Well, I think a couple of things... What defines me as a person is the fact that I'm a Christian, a Catholic Christian, and a married man of 34 years, living in the United States. What defines me as a professional is that I'm a counselor educator for 40 years and have specialized in the area of reality therapy which I have developed a special interest in and written 14 books on this topic. That would pretty much define me.

**CZ: And what led you to become the person that you are?**

RW: I spent 9 years in the Catholic seminary and 6 years as a clergyman, as a priest and I resigned many years ago. Nowadays, I have to add that I resigned honorably and freely. I think that training shaped a lot of my thinking, my values and my attitudes toward people. And it stayed with me after these many decades so I think that has helped me to be the person I am. Also, being married and interacting with my wife has taught me that there's more to life than just myself, in a personal way.

**CZ: Do you consider reality therapy and your books on this topic your major contribution to our field?**

RW: I would say that remains my major contribution, expanding the ideas and applying them in areas where they have not been applied before, such as addictions, family counseling and cross-culturally.

**CZ: What challenges did you face in your path toward becoming the person you are and what helped you make it through those challenges?**

RW: Well, I think the challenge is the fact that my views are somewhat different about many topics, and what has helped me is reading and studying. Becoming educated helped me realize that there's a lot more to the world than what I read in the conventional literature.

**CZ: When you mentioned cross-culturally you brought me into our second area of questions. What led you to an awareness of the multicultural movement?**

RW: What led me to this is that even as a high school student before going to college I really liked to study history. I liked everything about it. And then when I became a high school teacher I taught world history which at that time was western civilization. We broadened it into world cultures which was the name of the course. I liked that concept. Years later I lived in Japan for a year and I lived in Germany for a year, and I think that helped me become aware of cultures other than my own. These experiences led me to be interested in the wider world around me.

**CZ: Now you mentioned growing up happily in the United States but Catholics are not the majority; therefore, there was a multicultural element associated with being in a non-majority religion. Was that ever an issue in your life?**

RW: No, that was never an issue. I never felt any rejection or marginalization because of that. I have studied the history of religion in the United States and there has been and remains pockets of antagonism and bias and even hatred. And yet, my experience has included very little if any such hurt inflicted on me.

**CZ: You have mentioned that what helped you in becoming a cross-culturally oriented professional; did you face any challenge in that process.**

RW: I would say yes, but this is where my thoughts are different from the current thinking in the profession. My experience and my reading have led me to some very different conclusions. So the challenge that I faced was to see the world a little bit differently than the people who write the majority of the books on multiculturalism. I've read many, many books, in fact by actual count in the last 14 years I've read 166 books that have multicultural implications. The topics are culture, race, history of religions, gender, homosexuality, the whole business. And I've come to some very different conclusions and the challenge I face is when I'm active in my own profession, alternative viewpoints seem to receive less credibility than they deserve.

**CZ: What do you mean?**

RW: Well, I think multiculturalism stated out as a very noble effort, teaching people to be aware of other cultures, to be accepting, to be not so harsh in judgments. But I am concerned that it seems to have become a kind of doctrinaire, dogmatic, and I hesitate to say it, narrow way of looking at the world. For example, there was an article in the *American Psychologist* and part of it was about micro-aggressions. These are statements that people make that the authors of the article describe as micro-aggressions. Many of them, it seems to me, are simple statements that people make that are really very innocent or what I would call innocent. Some might be thoughtless. Some might even be deplorable or inconsiderate. But some, it seems to me, are ordinary inquiries that people make. But, to call them aggressions is a bit much. For instance, the question, "Where are you from?" The implication is that asking such a question to an Asian person sends the message "You're not American".

Now to me that implication is jumping to an unfounded conclusion. That's the kind of literature we have, and I think there's another side that needs to get equal opportunity. In other words, in the multicultural world, I wish there were more diversity. I think we have one side of the picture presented. So that to me is a challenge. At the same time, I'm not on any crusade about this or about anything. But I just would like to see many viewpoints represented.

**CZ: So, what are your reflections about the status of multiculturalism and social justice in our field, and where will the area of multiculturalism counseling and social justice should go in the future?**

RW: I think it should stick with its roots. Teaching people about other cultures and recognizing the facts, instead of always emphasizing what's wrong with the western culture. Why not stress the facts and the fact is that it is a remarkable opportunity driven society. You don't see that in the multicultural literature. You have to read outside of the multicultural literature to really get that impression, because they don't say any of this. For example, a while back, I read every word on an issue on racism in the *Journal of Counseling and Development*, the premier journal for our profession. I read every word carefully in that issue including the ads and there was one statement that said, things are better than they used to be. A grudging concession to the fact that things aren't quite the way they were in the 40's or 50's. I think when we give people information and emphasize negative forces in our societies we do them a disservice because we are providing incomplete information.

**CZ: So let me then ask you the next question which is what advice to you have for professionals who want to increase their multicultural and social justice competence?**

RW: To be fair. I think to be fair in presenting all viewpoints and all data. Otherwise, I fear for our profession, that it will die and it will be a deserved death in 30 or 40 years. I just think that's a possibility. But I don't know. I'm not a prophet of doom or a prophet of any kind. I think that ultimately, people will see the broader picture and there seems to be signs of that already. When I meet graduate students and most professors in the counseling profession I become very hopeful and positive about the future. What I mean is there seems to be at least two possibilities for the future. One is to emphasize the down side (which is real) of society or the up side (which is also real). I hope the counseling profession chooses the second possibility. Please note, the significance of the word "emphasize". It would be foolish to ignore problems and injustices. I'm not suggesting that at all.

**CZ: Like?**

RW: Well, like you're interviewing me. You may not have known you were getting into this. I may be the only writer on this that has quoted some of the people I have quoted. For me to be competent culturally, I think I need to have read three books at least, obviously more, but three books. One is called *Race and Culture: A World View*. One is called *Conquests and Cultures*, and one is called *Migrations and Cultures*. These are all written by a very politically incorrect author, Thomas Sowell. He is a brilliant scholar but you'll never see him quoted and this is unfortunate. And I don't like everything he says, but it's not a question of whether we like it or not, it's a question of the fact that here is a scholar who is ignored in the field of race and culture. I'm dropping a few names, Carlos. Abigail Thernstrom's books such as *Black and White in America*, *One Nation Undivided* is at least worthy of mention in our

profession. She was on the President's committee on Civil Rights a while back. These are just a few sources. I don't think it's a matter of whether we accept the information contained in these sources, but I think their research should be included in our discussions.

I think dialogue is what I'm hoping for. But I don't see it happening. There are some glimmers, as I said, and I think many people are willing to hear all sides. Of course, everyone has very good intentions. I simply would like to see the field broadened, at least a little bit.

**CZ: What are your reflections about the status of our field in general today?**

RW: I think we need more data to validate what we do. There seems to be an increasing interest in the necessity for evidence-based counseling systems. In my area of reality therapy, there is a major committee, chaired by Dr. Janet Morgan, assembling research, controlled studies, that validate the system. This is only one example. The world of multicultural counseling including the need for "cultural competence" will undoubtedly be researched even more in the future.

**CZ: Can you explain this more?**

RW: I think that with the problems on campuses, for example the Virginia Tech massacre a few years ago might lead to a re-evaluation of ethical principles such as duty to warn.

**CZ: The question was what are your reflections about the status of our field today?**

RW: I believe and I teach students that the counseling profession and all the helping professions are among the most noble endeavors that anyone could enter. We need to keep the idealism alive with our students and teach them about the exciting work that they do to help people. It is an exciting field and they are doing something very significant.

I tell my students a couple of things. I say, number one, when you impact somebody and you help them become less bigoted, or you help them learn to handle situations better, or you help break the cycle of abuse, you are not only influencing them, you are also influencing their children and *their* children. What we do cascades down through history. So to me that's a very noble calling that we have been given. And I think that connects with the status of our profession. It's a very wonderful profession.

And the second thing I try to get across is, Look, you are not .... Do not believe that you are racist, and do not believe that you are victims. There is a little bit of both in all of us, of course, maybe, but I don't know about all people. We are human beings and so we are going to be subject to these things. But don't label yourself either way, because if you do you will live up to that label. How you see yourself is how you will live. So that's my little preaching that I do for students.

**CZ: I see ...**

RW: I attended a program a couple of years ago put on by the Cincinnati Police Department for mental health professionals, 12 nights and it was an excellent

program created to get mental health professionals to work together more closely with the police department. During this program one policeman asked the question, "Do you know how many policemen are mugged when they go through parking lots in civilian clothes?" "When they're in parking lots or when they're in parking garages and similar places?" The participants said that probably just as many as anybody else proportionately. He said, none. They seem to have a way of communicating that they are not victims and most potential muggers avoid them. I thought that was a fascinating statement and wondered if you can generalize from that... it's a bit of a leap, I know, but I think if we see ourselves as victims, it won't help us. We need to see ourselves as contributors: that to me is part of the work of counseling: to help clients see their potential and not to indulge their feelings of victimhood.

**CZ: What do you see, then, as needing change or supplementation in our field?**

RW: Change or what?

**CZ: Supplementation.**

RW: That's a good point. I've thought a lot about this. What I would like to see is more emphasis on family. You know, the American Counseling Association's Pre-Convention Learning Institute, at one time, a couple of years ago, had about 16 questions on the evaluation form. I forgot the exact number but almost half were about multiculturalism; none about family. And yet, look how important family is in our society. You can see the tremendous breakdown of the family and the devastating effect that breakdown has had. For example, most people in prison come from very dysfunctional families. So I would like to see the profession emphasize the role of the family and develop more tools for family counseling, which is of course a very important cornerstone in our work as counselors, but it seems to me we need to somehow integrate that into our teaching a little bit more.

**CZ: You have done some of this by integrating reality therapy family counseling. Why are you so passionate about reality therapy? I feel it is part of your life...**

RW: Yes it is, Carlos. One of the reasons is that after I finished my doctorate in 1971 I went to different seminars and workshops put on by various leaders in the field. I went to behaviorist workshops, I went to Adlerian, in fact, I went to the first rational emotive behavioral conference in Chicago, and I liked it, but the one that I went to was a reality therapy workshop put on by a friend, or who turned out to be a friend later, in Cleveland, Ohio and I liked it more than any of the others. It just made more sense to me. So I started attending the training programs that he had said were mostly held in Los Angeles and were actually conducted by William Glasser himself. One year I went four times to Los Angeles. Finally, Dr. Glasser asked about this guy who keeps showing up? So he decided to let me lead a group and then I just kept attending the sessions and leading groups. Eventually, he made me his director of training, a position I held from 1988 until 2011.

**CZ: How interesting...**

RW: I happen to be in the right place at the right time, Carlos. But my wife always sighs when I say that because she says that nothing happens by accident.

**CZ: It's possible.**



RW: Yes, I think that's true.

**CZ: Would you like to teach us about reality therapy in a nutshell?**

RW: Okay. Teach about reality therapy. By the way, my thoughts about multiculturalism expressed earlier: anyone can disagree with them 180 degrees and still practice good reality therapy. So, there's a lot of room for disagreement here, and I'm the first to say that I'm not absolutely right or anything like that. I was just expressing one viewpoint.

So about reality therapy, I would like to teach that central to the effective use of it is that we choose our behavior. But that's a statement that needs a lot of distinctions and a lot of unpacking before people can carry it. People might carry it too far. It means we have more control over what we do than we thought we did. So we talk about choices that people make no matter what circumstances they're in, and no matter how constricting the outside world is to them, whether it's family or culture or bigotry or whatever it may be, they have some choices and so we're going to work with those choices, not to ignore the other parts and not to ignore systemic interventions. In fact when we use reality therapy in schools it's, I would say, 75% systemic aimed at changing the structure and the atmosphere of the school, so that people can make better choices. But that's a central part of the system, that we choose our behavior and that we do it for five reasons. One is self-preservation, one is to gain a sense of belonging, another one is so that we have more control over our lives or inner control, one is fun and one is freedom. These are the human needs. And you can see how there can be a lot of threats from the outside preventing the fulfillment of these needs. We try to help people change their environment and then also change their own choices if their choices are unsatisfactory. So that's what I would suggest is crucial to reality therapy.

**CZ: I've heard Dr. Glasser is not very interested in the medical view. What do you think?**

RW: Yes, he doesn't even know his cholesterol count. He is a human being with a very strong view about this, but I'm the opposite. I want to know everything. There are certain things I don't want to know, like if I were to get cancer, I personally would not want to know how long I'd have to live. I don't want the doctor to give me a stopwatch. But I would want to know that I had cancer. And I don't think it has anything to do with reality therapy. These are personal viewpoints.

**CZ: One of the things you did with reality therapy was to bring it into new areas. Please elaborate a little bit more about this.**

RW: Yes, gladly. I wanted to go into that... especially cross-cultural counseling. Reality therapy is quite relevant to many cultures, and I base this not just on my ideas of those cultures but on what people have said. I have personally taught it around the world and have introduced it into about six or seven countries, and yet it's not my job to colonize people or anything like that. If they want to learn it we can teach it to them and then they adapt it to their own respective culture. For example, my friend Masaki Kakitani is an instructor in Japan. I helped train him and teach him but he has taken it much further and adapted it to his own work in Japan. They now have a thriving organization. Another illustration is that of Korea. Professor Rose-Inza Kim is one of the principle instructors in Korea. In fact, there is a huge amount of research on reality therapy conducted in Korea. She was the first female dean at Sogong

University in Seoul, Korea. Now she's retired from that position but she still labors day and night teaching and practicing reality therapy through the Korea Counseling Center. She told me recently that she and others have facilitated over 500 doctoral dissertations and masters theses on reality therapy. So I see that as evidence of the fact that it extends beyond its place of origin, the United States. In recent years, at various international reality therapy conferences sponsored by the William Glasser Institute there have been people attending from every continent in the world except Antarctica. I often say jokingly, that I hope to go to Antarctica some day, but only in the summertime!

**CZ: I hear you...**

RW: I think that this is one of the marvelous characteristics of this system and there are many other systems that have cross-cultural applications. Each year, I attend conferences conducted by the Milton Erickson Foundation. There are over 130 Milton Erickson Institutes around the world. I don't want to overstate anything or make outlandish claims, but it appears that reality therapy is applicable because people think it's applicable and they want to learn it. Local individuals in various countries form their organizations and connect themselves to what is now called William Glasser International, the organization composed of individuals and groups from around the world. The best thing I can figure is that when we teach people from other cultures and when they learn this theory or other theories, we would do well to stay out of their way if they've been well trained and let them alone. Of course, I hope that there will always be the international connections and relationships both personal and organizational. Notably, the least desirable message that we need to communicate as people from North America is that we wish to enlighten and colonize others.

**CZ: Let me see if I understand you well. You're saying, they were interested and I went there to tell them about a theory, but I can see that you encourage them to adapt the theory to their own cultural values. Am I hearing you right?**

RW: Yes, that's exactly right. One of the things in reality therapy is we talk about what people want. So we try to ask them what they want. That question, what do you want, is kind of intrusive in Japan, so I'm told. I'm basing it on what Masaki told me, and so they translate it into softer, maybe a little more indirect language. And when it comes back into English it means, what are you seeking? What are you looking for? To my western ear, this doesn't sound very much different, but apparently it is when it comes across in Japan. These are little subtleties that an outsider can easily miss.

**CZ: Very true, but as you said, working with persons from that particular country or a particular group, may help us increase our chances to have a more respectful and sensitive approach.**

RW: Yes, I had a friend who was going to Korea to teach and he kept calling me and asking about what he could say and do there, because he never spent a lot of time in that country. What about this and what about that, and what about this and what about that? And finally I said, you know what, when it all comes down to it, use your ears and your mouth in the proportion in which God gave them to you. Chances are you're going to be okay. There's no guarantee but you're certainly going to be a lot

better off than if you run your mouth continually. You are never too far wrong if you listen respectfully.

**CZ: Going back to our question then, any current thoughts about or additional aspects that you would like for us to learn about reality therapy?**

RW: Well, I think that the only thing I'd say is to re-emphasize that it is very adaptable from what people say. I'm not just saying this on my own authority, but this idea is based on the universality of the system itself. We've taught it in the Middle East and I must say that it takes much more adaptation there than elsewhere. But it's quite adaptable and useful there and in any culture. I don't want to say that with absolute certainty. Another thing I'd like to say about it is that it's growing in its acceptance. For instance, I have written 34 chapters in textbooks about reality therapy. This appears to represent its widespread credibility.

Another point worthy of mention is that some years ago the William Glasser Institute initiated a program, now completed, for sponsoring 12 university professors to be trained through certification in a cohort. In return, they agreed to conduct research on reality therapy. The success of this program is demonstrated by the fact that they continue to publish and conduct highly credible research. In fact, at least three of the twelve professors or 25% of the cohort will attend and make presentations at the William Glasser International conference in Seoul Korea in 2016. This conference is the first such conference held in Asia.

**CZ: Interesting...**

RW: Aside from the need for more research in our profession and in reality therapy, I think we need to continue to appeal to the idealism and good-heartedness of students rather than communicating that they are either victims or oppressors. I'd like to see the profession emphasize the glories of western civilization rather than the negative side of it. There is much to be negative about, but we know that. I think we've made that point. So, I'd like to see that kind of teaching become widespread. I hardly need to say that we can do this without arrogance or condescension to "other" cultures.

**CZ: What advice do you have for professionals as they face the next 20 years of counseling or psychotherapy practice?**

RW: I would say read, read, read, not only in the field of counseling but outside our field. Read some of the works by authors I mentioned earlier. Read and study and get a broad picture of culture and societies around the world. I make this suggestion as one add-on to what professionals already know: the importance of consultation, supervision, continuing education, etc.

**CZ: Now this is really the last question. Was there anything else that I should have asked you and didn't? Or is there anything else you would like to add before we end our interview?**

RW: No, Carlos. I think you've really covered it. You're very thorough. I am so grateful that you chose to interview me. I am truly honored by your choice. You are indeed one of the eminent scholars and leaders in the field of counseling.

**CZ: Thank you.**

**Brief Bios—**

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## **“HAND-IN-HAND FOR HAPPINESS”: AN INTERVIEW WITH ROSE INZA-KIM**

Patricia A. Robey, Ed.D., LPC, CTRTC

### **Abstract**

This article presents an interview with Dr. Rose Inza-Kim, senior faculty of William Glasser International (WGI), a charter member of WGI, and the founder of the William Glasser Organization in South Korea. In this interview, Dr. Inza-Kim answers questions about her experiences with learning and teaching choice theory and reality therapy, including memories of Dr. William Glasser. She shares stories of how she has used Glasser’s concepts in counseling and teaching, and offers her vision for the future of the Glasser organization in Korea and internationally.

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### **Biography**

Dr. Rose Inza-Kim began her studies in Bio-Chemistry at Benet College in Greensboro, North Carolina. In 1958 she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Bio-Chemistry at St. Mary College in Leavenworth, Kansas. She earned her Master of Science degree in Counseling and Guidance at Loyola University in Chicago, Illinois in 1965. In 2005 she was recognized by the award of an Honorary PhD in Liberal Arts, from the University of Saint Mary in Leavenworth, Kansas.

From 1960 through 1996 Dr. Inza-Kim was a Professor of Psychology and Education at Sogang University, and then served as Dean of the Liberal Arts College. From 1996 through today she is Professor Emeritus at Sogang University.

Dr. Inza-Kim’s other professional activities included being Chairman of the Good Human Relationship Association. She is active in the Korea Family Therapy Association, the Korea University Counseling Association, and the Korea Reality Therapy Association. She is also the President of Korea Counseling Center, and Chairman of Board of Trustee Dae-In Positive Psychology Educational Foundation. Dr. Inza-Kim is a charter Member of the IPPA (International Positive Psychology Association) Board and an internationally certified Instructor/Trainer of PET [Parent Effectiveness Training], RT [Reality Therapy], PPC (Positive Psychology coaching), YQMT [Youth Quality Management Training], and QMT [Quality Management Training]. From 2010 through 2012 she was an Advisory Member of the Army Leadership Training Center. She has also served as President of the Graduate School of Yong Moon Counseling Psychology

Dr. Inza-Kim is a Senior Instructor of Reality Therapy and a Charter Member of the Board of William Glasser International.

In addition to all her other service and career contributions, Dr. Inza-Kim has contributed to the professions of Psychology and Education with the many book translations she has completed: *Confidence in Communication* by R.B. Adler; *Psychology in Adaptation and Parent Effectiveness Training in Action*, by Thomas Gordon; *Control Theory, Positive Addiction*, and *Fibromyalgia* by William Glasser; and *Using Reality Therapy* by Robert Wubbolding. She has also written the book *Reality Therapy and Control Theory: 8 Keys to Open Human mind*.

### **The Interview**

**Robey:** I am so pleased to have this opportunity to interview you, Rose, and to share your story with our readers. Your biography is an impressive one! I can see that you have many interests outside of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy, and I can also see how your interests complement and enhance one another. I'm curious to know how were you introduced to Glasser's ideas and what excited you about them.

**Rose Inza-Kim:** Choosing to learn RT,CT, LM, and QS [reality therapy, choice theory, lead management, and quality school] is the major attributing factor determining where I am now, along with my University faculty experience. Though I was teaching the theories of counseling during the basic psychology class at Sogang University, Glasser's control theory among others attracted me more to delve deeply into it.

One of the key characteristics of RT, self-counseling, has helped me convert difficulties in life to an experience of successful achievement and subsequently become a happiness evangelist.

**Robey:** I like the term "happiness evangelist!" I would enjoy hearing some of the success stories that are related to your use of these terms and/or ideas.

**Rose Inza-Kim:** Two stories come to mind.

The first is of an old doctor who was suffering from depression and had a big gap between his quality and perceived world. He had a picture of treating patients and watching their happy faces after being cured, which was being missed in his perceived world when he found no patients at his clinic anymore. I helped him find out a way to satisfy the picture in his quality world, by working as a doctor for elderly people. He had created his depression from his behavioral system.

Another story is of two families. After 12 years of raising their children, one family found out they are not the biological parents of the child. The child must be returned to the biological parents because the real parents have been identified. Luckily, it was found that the two children were mistakenly changed from one to another at the hospital they were born. The problem started because both children were extremely frightened and did not want to be separated from the parents who they thought they are their real parents. In the end, the children decided to live with biological parents. After 6 months of trying out this arrangement they both ended up having two fathers and two moms along with other siblings. The two families have become an extended one big family. I focused on building good relationships. Two and three children from each family became friends, even spending weekends together. In the end, 4 adults and 5 children of two families have become close. For them, their frustration has become their strength.

**Robey:** Those stories emphasize how we can help people come up with creative solutions when we understand choice theory and utilize the reality therapy process in counseling. On the other hand, I wonder if you have faced some challenges as you attempted to teach others about these ideas.

**Rose Inza-Kim:** There are a sizable number of people and universities in Korea who have a faith in Choice Theory and Reality Therapy, but there remains a substantial number of departments of psychology in main universities that are somewhat reluctant in accepting RT/CT as one of their psychology courses. However, RT/CT's acceptance level is on a steadily increasing trend in 2015. So far, the number of RT, CT related MA, and PhD theses amounts to 580 plus.

**Robey:** You have a long history and relationship with Bill Glasser and the William Glasser Institute. What are some of your memories of the development of the Institute and its changes over time?

**Rose Inza-Kim:** Whenever Bill saw me he always gave me a big greeting with saying "Here comes Rose Kim, mountain over mountains!" "What now?" In 1987, during my visit to the States I called Bill and said we need RT in Korea. So you teach me RT and in this regard I would like to meet with you. He replied he is a very busy person. So I said back I am a very busy person as well and added I came from all the way from Korea. He said "OK you may come to my house." So my husband Charles had rented a car and we visited him. Afterwards, I made a visit to his small office where Linda Harshman was working. After that my first RT learning schedule, place and dates, was set but changed three times to a different location. The third one was in St. Louis. Our plane could not land in St. Louis due to a thunderstorm and instead it touched down in Kansas City. We then rented a car and drove to St. Louis. Then my next schedule was to go to Japan for a Basic Practicum. My activity in Japan had triggered me to think of other Korean colleagues to be given an RT training opportunity. Bob Wubbolding came to Korea for the BIW training and has become an advisor of WGI-Korea ever since. Since then I have never missed annual RT conferences, observed how other faculties are teaching, and invited some of them to Korea for RT training courses.

Whenever Bill saw me he asked how RT in Korea was performing. I replied "mountain over more mountains." He visited Korea twice and on one of his visits he took the time to come to our house with Naomi. He expressed his concern whether we had to sell the nice house we lived in due to economic crisis then; Korea was at the mercy of IMF [International Monetary Fund]. During that difficult time in Korea, 1997-2001, he shared his concern over my personal welfare and RT status in Korea. Further, we used to have an open discussion about CT/RT whenever there was an opportunity during one of the conferences.

In many ways Glasser was a model of humbleness. A man of his caliber rather easily accepted something that was brought up to him with politeness. For example, he fixed the white Control System Loop line to place it on the blue chart. Also, there used to be a thick black line that separated quality world and perceived world. As I mentioned, it should be removed because QW is part of the Perceived World.

Choice Theory used to be Control Theory. On his way to Korea, Bill had decided to call it Choice Theory instead of Control Theory. So we had to change printings on all of the welcoming and commemorating banners.

He always revealed specific references and recognized colleagues for their work. From the beginning of his claiming validity of CT/RT in the early days up until the last moment of his life, he always expressed his appreciation to Dr. Harrington for his big support to Glasser. He never called Dr. Harrington my advisor, instead called him my teacher. I never saw anyone else who call his colleague or advisor, a teacher.

**Robey:** Tell us the story of how you developed the William Glasser Organization in Korea.

**Rose Inza-Kim:** I went through a series of steps in this process. In the first step, I learned new theory and set up a road map. The second step involved building up of the instructor pool. Third, I selected subject areas and people to apply (students, parents, teachers, business CEO's, and soldiers). My fourth step was to lay down a research program to encourage and support MA and PhD theses. The fifth step was to get connected with global network systems; I connected and combined RT with PET (Parent Effectiveness

Training) and Positive Psychology.

RT has become a part of daily life. I collected cases of RT applications to my life and shared them with others by role plays.

**Robey:** What do you hope to see as the future of William Glasser International and the future of the Glasser organization in Korea?

**Rose Inza-Kim:** For WG International, I wish to establish a William Glasser Foundation (like the Milton Erikson Foundation) to teach the world Choice Theory.

For Korea, to teach Choice Theory to as many people as possible. Hopefully our case could serve as a model for other countries, one of the ways to contribute to the peace of the world.

**Robey:** Wouldn't it be wonderful if both those things happened?

You have devoted so much of your career to the advancement of choice theory and reality therapy, including research and publication that support these ideas in many applications. You are a respected and honored member of the Glasser organization, and I personally admire you very much and appreciate the opportunity to spend time with you when I see you at our conferences. Tell me, with all that you have done in your life and career, what would you most like to be remembered for?

**Rose Inza-Kim:** Koreans deserve to be happier. My initiative and effort toward enhanced happiness for Koreans by holding a "Hand-in-Hand for Happiness" campaign works and is appreciated by people that they become happier. Whenever KCC (Korea Counseling Center) had an annual convention, we put "Natural Festival for Those Who Chose Happiness" on the banner and other promotional material.

**Robey:** Your theme for the International conference in Korea 2016, "Hand-in-Hand for Happiness," certainly reflects that vision, Rose. I'm looking forward to being there.

It's been a privilege for me to have this opportunity to interview you Rose. I wonder if there is anything you would like to add that I haven't asked you about?

**Rose Inza-Kim:** I have many ideas for future direction. I hope that we as an organization would put more focus on Research and Development. We need to recruit youth and junior RT members. I would like to see a senior social charity voluntary service team for handicapped elderly. Finally, I hope we will begin to discuss the possibility of developing a Master's degree for RT (MART) program through the internet.

**Robey:** Those are all great ideas, Rose! Thank you again for taking the time to participate in this interview, and for your leadership and friendship.



**Brief Bio--**

Patricia A. Robey, Ed.D, LPC, CTRTC, is an associate professor of counseling at Governors State University, the MA in Counseling Program Coordinator, a Licensed Professional Counselor, and a senior faculty member of the William Glasser Institute – US and William Glasser International. Pat has authored and co-authored numerous articles and book chapters on applications of choice theory and reality therapy and is lead editor and chapter contributor to the book *Contemporary Issues in Couples Counseling: A Choice Theory and Reality Therapy Approach*.

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## **HOW CAN WE IMPROVE OUR RELATIONSHIPS BY USING THE LANGUAGE OF CHOICE THEORY?**

Thomas S. Parish, Ph.D., CTRTC

A recent focus within the WGI organization is that we all need to improve our relationships with others (as well as ourselves) by using the language of Choice Theory. An example was offered recently by Carleen Glasser through the use of self-talk in an effort to gain entry into her own "Quality World" by placing more emphasis on the "acting component" of her "total behavior." Consequently, she has engaged in more physical exercise that has helped her, in turn, to become both healthier and happier!

Having achieved these ends, Carleen has said that she wants to hear from others regarding their stories as to how they, too, have used the language of Choice Theory to improve their lives. Then, Jim Coddington e-mailed me and asked that I write a poem that uses the language of Choice Theory in it, so what follows is my best effort to try to satisfy both of their requests:

### **After Valentine's Day, What Comes Next?**

While Valentine's Day has already past,  
Many are still looking for a love that will last!  
No surprise, though, since they may be looking for the impossible,  
Unless they use choice theory to make it more probable.

You see, finding perfect love is very difficult, indeed,  
Since it is only co-created by those who can satisfy each need.  
That's why choice theory seems to fit so well here,  
Because it offers tips that can work well for us throughout the entire year!

To begin, we should become more aware of our partner's wants and needs,  
And do all that we can to help our partners to fulfill them, and never impede.  
In so doing, we should seek to adopt habits that are so caring,  
And disregard what might be deadly or overbearing.

Most importantly, we need to put others' needs before our own,  
If we really wish to convey things in a loving tone.  
In addition, we need to be sure to watch the words that we say,  
And only use loving ones, I humbly pray!

Yes, hurtful words may destroy all that we hoped to achieve,  
And this destruction may linger longer than any would believe.  
In sum, learning choice theory and reality therapy, too,  
May definitely be the smartest thing we might ever do!

For as we implement the things that the Glassers want us to know,  
Our lives will certainly improve, unless we don't want it so.  
So, let us make choices right now with thoughtfulness and bliss,  
Knowing that when we choose wisely, we can create happiness!

## **Reflections about . . .**

### **Bill Abbott--**

I have very fond memories of Bill. In 1990 the Institute was going through major changes in how they delivered the training programs. I was doing my advanced week in Cincinnati and Bill and Fitz George Peters were my instructors. Both men were amazing. Our group had been through the testing process of demonstrating our skills in front of a panel of judges which looking back was a great experience and real opportunity to step outside my comfort zone, although not that enjoyable. By the time I got to advanced endorsement, I had no idea what to expect but our group was pleasantly surprised. Bill and Fitz both were wonderful. Bill had such a gentle, kind, encouraging approach that it was a joy to for him to endorse me as an Advanced Practicum Supervisor. From that point on we remained friends, connecting at conferences when possible. He was extremely committed to the ideas of Dr. Glasser.

Maureen Craig McIntosh

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### **Dr. Glasser--**

It was the early 1990's and Dr. Glasser had come to Moncton to do a one-day speaking engagement on Reality Therapy. By now I was an Advanced Practicum Supervisor and working towards becoming an instructor. I was always shy, but Bill was easy to talk with. He and I were sitting in the backseat of the car as we were driving to the airport. I was struggling in my relationship of 23 years and was doing everything I could to keep it together. I was still very unhappy.

As I described my marriage with Dr, Glasser, he looked at me and said:

" Maureen, if you do everything he wants you to do, the way he wants you to do it, when he wants you to do it, your marriage will survive!" It was such a powerful statement for me to hear. A couple of years later my marriage was over. I was happy to be able to remind him of that and how much it meant to me, when I saw him at the last Conference in LA. This was a very special connection, one of many over the years.

Maureen Craig McIntosh

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**If you would like to further preserve the legacies of Bill Glasser and/or Bill Abbott, please drop me a line or two, and I'll include them in the next issue of the Journal for you! Just send it to: [parishts@gmail.com](mailto:parishts@gmail.com)**

**Thank you!**