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*Kindly take special note regarding Pat Robey's article that will review for the readership various historical aspects of the William Glasser Institute, which will be described in essays by prominent authors who are well-known for their efforts to teach the world Choice Theory and Reality Therapy, plus other Glasserian concepts too! The next issue of the Journal, in spring, 2017, will be dedicated to publishing this important report that should be of interest to everyone!

Then, the fall, 2017 issue of IJCTRT will focus on the future of the WGI organization, both nationally and internationally, as authors will seek to describe—from various perspectives-- what will likely happen to it and to its membership, too, for many, many years to come! All correspondence, and/or requests for further information, regarding either the spring or fall (2017) issues of the Journal should be sent to Dr. Patricia Robey at patrobey@gmail.com, who will be serving as the "Guest Editor" for these two issues of the Journal.

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

***IJCTRT* Editor:**

The 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 recently served as a consultant for LDS Family Services, which is located in Independence, Missouri. This organization provides various psychological and family services to much of Kansas and Missouri. Any correspondence, including questions and/or manuscript submissions, should be sent to Dr. Parish at: 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. Plus the *Journal* is no longer password protected on the William Glasser Institute (WGI) website, so anyone can now gain access to it, any time, 24/7!

***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., is a former senior research analyst for the Kansas State Department of Education and is currently a licensed clinical psychotherapist 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., Learning Technology 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:

Material published in the *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy* reflects the views of the authors, and does not necessarily represent the official position of, or endorsement by, the William Glasser Institute. The accuracy of the material published in the *Journal* is solely the responsibility of the authors.

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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.ctrjournal.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!

A PREVIEW OF A SPECIAL EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHOICE THEORY AND REALITY THERAPY: ESSAYS ON THE HISTORY OF THE WILLIAM GLASSER INSTITUTE

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

I am excited to share with you this preview of our special historical edition of the IJRTCT that will appear in the next issue of the Journal (i.e., spring, 2017).

With the encouragement of Tom Parish, editor of the International Journal of CT/RT, I am taking on the role of lead editor for this special edition of the Journal, which will focus on the history and development of our organization, from the Institute for Reality Therapy, to the Institute for Control Theory, Reality Therapy, and Lead Management, to The William Glasser Institute, and then to William Glasser International.

Just like Dr. Glasser, our organization has been constantly growing and evolving. People came and went, ideas and concepts were created and then changed, plus our training process has evolved. Some members were privy to certain conversations and events that others weren't. Before we lose this rich history, we want to have at least a part of it recorded in this special historical version of the journal.

The development of an organization is not always a smooth process. Therefore, we have invited our contributors to share their memories of the ups and downs and the struggles and successes of this process. These memories will be based on the contributors' perceptions of events and may differ from how others may have perceived them. We believe that this will be part of what will make it a rich and interesting history.

Preview

Following is a preview of some of the topics you can expect. Note that this list is preliminary. I expect that many others will be added to the list of contributors as more people become involved in this project. I have indicated this as TBA (To Be Announced).

We have a long history and many stories to tell. If you would like to be part of this project, please contact me at patrobey@gmail.com and share your ideas. Due date for submissions to this special edition is January 15, 2017.

Barnes Boffey Remembers: Keynote from the WGI-US 50th Anniversary of Reality Therapy 2015 Conference

-Barnes Boffey

The Glasser Organization: William Glasser International

-Brian Lennon

Inside the Mind of William Glasser: A Tribute Clarifying the Meaning and Intent of Glasser's Ideas from a Personal Perspective

-Carleen Glasser

From The Journal for Reality Therapy to The International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy: The Evolution of our Journal over Time

-Tom Parish

From Young Woman to Senior Citizen . . . A Professional Life Journey with William Glasser and Associates

-Nancy Buck

Remembering the 25th Anniversary of Reality Therapy Conference in Cincinnati

-Bob and Sandie Wubbolding

The Glasser Scholars Project

-Bob Wubbolding and Jon Brickell

Reflections by the 1st and only Director of Training: a 23 year experience

-Bob Wubbolding

Theory vs Ideas vs...

-Brandi Roth

The Quality Community Project

-Marjorie VanVleet

Glasser Speaks about the Institute: Excerpts from *William Glasser: Champion of Choice*

-Jim Roy

The Quality School

-TBA

Remembering Linda Harshman

-Jean Suffield

Remembering Naomi Glasser

-Sandie Wubbolding

Growing up Glasser

-Martin Glasser

Africa

South Africa

-Mitch Messina

-TBA

Asia

Japan

-Rhon Carleton and Masaki Kakitani

-Bob Wubbolding

Korea

-Rose Inza-Kim

-Bob Wubbolding

Singapore

-Liz Tham
-TBA

Australia and New Zealand

-Judy Hatswell
-TBA

Canada

-Jim Montagnes
-TBA

Central and South America

-Juan Pablo Aljure

Europe**EART**

-TBA

England

-John Brickell

Ireland

- Suzy Hallock-Bannigan
-TBA

CONTINUING & GROWING THE LEGACY OF William GLASSER, MD, PART 1

Robert E. Wubbolding, EdD, LPCC, RTC, BCC

Abstract

This article is an adaptation of the author's keynote address at the first conference of William Glasser International held in Seoul Korea July 7-9, 2016. The author opens with a metaphorical description of the wisdom of the world followed by a summary of the mission of William Glasser International. He presents the need for maintaining and increasing the visibility of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy in scholarly journals. The core of the presentation is the acknowledgement of the achievements of Professor Rose In-za Kim and the immeasurable value of the official elevation of Reality Therapy to the level of an evidence-based system. This endorsement by SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) adds to the acknowledgement of Reality Therapy as a scientifically proven system by the European Association of Psychotherapy in 2008 and renewed in 2015. Part II of this keynote address will be published in a subsequent edition of the *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*.

I wish to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to all of you who worked many hours, months and years to organize this conference. Many thanks also to all of you who are in attendance. It is not easy to get off work and leave family especially in these economic times. The dedication of the planners and attendees to the principles taught by Dr. Glasser is evident and praiseworthy. I now suggest that you turn to your neighbor and for about 15 seconds, smile without speaking. . . Having done that, I wish to say that when we smile, even for a few seconds, our brain functions in a different manner. This simple activity is healthful and engages us with other people (Arden, 2014).

Our Indebtedness

We are all deeply grateful to William Glasser, MD and his monumental contributions to the world of mental health and to the many forms of education: schools, management, family and in general, human relationships (1998). Although he died August 23, 2013 he lives on in our thoughts and hearts and in our behavior. To you, Bill, we say, "We will see you again."

I wish to recognize the "Glasser" of Korea and extend special appreciation and gratitude to Professor Rose In-za Kim for her unswerving commitment to Choice Theory, Reality Therapy and its many applications including the quality school Yang Up High School, as well as to her relentless desire and efficacious choices to preserve and extend the legacy of Dr. William Glasser. Many thanks to you Dr. Rose In-za Kim for organizing this conference.

Professor Kim has committed herself to making Choice Theory and Reality Therapy a Korean system as others have done throughout Asia. A special thank you to her husband Charley Suh and to the Korea Counseling Center. Additionally, Masaki Kakitani and Satoshi Aoki and their teams in Japan and a wide range of people in Singapore have *culturized* Choice Theory and Reality Therapy. It is now becoming a Malaysian system, an Australian system, and a New Zealand system. I am only mentioning Asia because of the location of this conference.

Choice Theory and Reality Therapy are now localized systems rather than ideas that have merely washed up on the various shores of the world.

Now I would like to thank you for the opportunity and the unique honor of presenting this keynote address to the 1st International meeting of William Glasser International to be held in Asia. I believe I can say that we are all thrilled to have delegates from many countries and from every continent except Antarctica. We look forward to the day when we will have delegates from every continent on planet Earth and not have to say, “except.”

Driving the Behavioral Car

Dr Glasser always emphasized that small short range plans can be significant, as when you smiled at your neighbor. If you were to listen to a happy recording by the American King whose name you all know, Elvis, you would experience a short burst of joy. These seemingly trivial experiences provide us and our clients with concrete evidence that we have within our grasp the possibility and a plan to be happy. In her book, *The Myths of Happiness*, Sonya Lyubomirsky (2013) states, “short bursts of gladness . . . are not trivial. It’s the frequency not the intensity that counts” and incidentally she states, “most of us seem not to know this” (p. 196).

Road to Happiness

I would like to emphasize that in this talk I will assume that you already know the basics of Choice Theory: needs, wants, behaviors, perceptions, etc., as well as the basic procedures of Reality Therapy and how they are summarized in 4 letters of the English alphabet (Wubbolding, 2011). I don’t want to discuss what you already know. However, I believe that preserving Dr Glasser’s legacy does not mean that we drive our behavioral car into the future with our eyes glued to the rearview mirror. If we are to honor Dr. Glasser appropriately, we need to understand what he taught, but even more we need to grasp the depth and the implications of his teaching while making *new* applications to an ever-changing world and ever-changing problems. In her book *The How of Happiness*, Lyubomirsky states, “We have to stretch our skills or find novel opportunities to use them. This is wonderful because it means that we are constantly striving, growing, learning, and becoming more competent, expert, and complex” (p. 182). The happiness psychologist Martin Seligman has sketched out that happiness derives from 4 basic elements: positive emotion, relationships, meaning in life and accomplishments. Ben-Shahar suggests that we cultivate 3 personal habits: Be with the people we care about; Exercise: we are not meant to be sedentary; Meditate, which helps us develop resilience to negative emotions.

Metaphorical Reflection

I would like to ask you to meditate on a metaphorical story. Please understand, this is not hypnosis nor is it guided imagery. I read this story somewhere many years ago, and the author is unknown to me.

Please sit with both feet flat on the floor and your hands in your lap. Close your eyes and breathe in deeply. Exhale slowly. Now breathe in deeply a 2nd time. And exhale slowly. Now repeat this breathing once again. Be aware of your posture in the chair: your feet, your legs, your torso, your arms, your neck, and your head.

Keep your eyes closed. Now I would like to ask you that for a moment you focus on being aware of your own awareness. Sit quietly and relax your muscles. In so doing you pause your sympathetic nervous system and allow your parasympathetic system to take over. One of my points will be that we have control of our physiology, at least more than we, at first, believe. Please keep your eyes closed and listen to my voice as I tell a story.

Many years ago there was a kingdom in Asia ruled by a king and queen. They ruled with justice and benevolence. Their subjects loved them because they were always fair and reasonable, and cared very much about their kingdom. They had 3 children. When the children were young the king and queen decided that they wanted their children to grow up wise and of sound judgment. So the king and queen gathered their advisors together. They gave them the following assignment: "We want you to go out into the world and gather all the wisdom of the world in one document and bring it back to us so that we can pass it on to our children."

And so the advisors traveled throughout the world and talked to learned individuals. They researched the libraries far and wide and after a few years they returned to the king and queen and presented them with a beautiful, leather bound book with gold edges. They said, "Your highnesses we have summarized the wisdom of the world and placed it in this beautiful book." The king and queen accepted this treasure and, in turn, presented it to their children with the words, "Learn everything contained in this book." They then once again turned to their advisors and they commissioned them, "Go out in the world and return with all the wisdom summarized into one chapter." The advisors groaned, but they knew their king and queen were very wise and the advisors were determined to fulfill their assignment. After consulting with other wise people around the world and studying the books contained in the libraries of the world, and after time had passed they returned to the kingdom and presented the king and queen with a chapter summarizing the wisdom of the world. They asked if they could rest a while because they knew they would receive yet another assignment. The king and queen granted their request and presented the chapter to their children telling them, "Memorize these words of wisdom." And before long they called their advisors together again and said, "We now want you to return to the world far and wide and come back with the wisdom of the world summarized in one sentence. The advisors knew that this would be a difficult journey. Their hair was turning white. Their eyesight was failing and their shoulders were becoming bent over from long years of study, but they were happy to fulfill their responsibilities to the king and queen. They traveled far and wide and returned to the kingdom and asked for an audience with the king and queen. The king and queen were eager to hear how their advisors fulfilled their assignment. They summoned them and said, "Please be seated in these comfortable chairs. We know you have aged and we know that your health is fragile. But you have returned to us with the wisdom of the world summarized in one sentence."

The advisors said to the king and queen, "Your highnesses, we were not able to summarize the wisdom of the world in one sentence. But we have summarized it into 4 sentences." The king and queen responded and said, "We are so pleased with your hard work, your diligence and your wisdom. Tell us the 4 sentences."

The advisors said, The 1st sentence is:

"There's no such thing as a free lunch "

The king and queen looked at each other and nodded in approval.

The 2nd sentence is:

"This, too, shall pass."

The king and queen pondered this statement and said to each other, "this principle is filled with wisdom."

The 3rd sentence is:

"No one ever drowned in sweat."

The king and queen looked at each other and smiled and said, "We will teach this to everyone."

And the 4th sentence is:

"Count your blessings, not your afflictions."

The king and queen spent a full day in silence considering this last statement. They then responded to their advisors, "These are indeed wise principles to live by. We will teach them to the children and ask them to teach them to the entire kingdom. But please provide for us a brief elaboration on each of them.

The advisors said, "There's no such thing as a free lunch" means that someone somewhere in some way pays for every benefit that is given to anyone.

The 2nd wise saying "This, too, shall pass" means that your children are advised to see the world around them as temporary. There are times when viewing from a high level of perception is appropriate, and there are times when viewing the world from a lower level of perception is also appropriate. They will be wise if they keep in mind that no matter what the current crisis is, it will pass. We only have certainty and security when we look back on our history. In fact, even the good times will also pass. We are not meant to live on this earth permanently.

The 3rd sentence summarizing the wisdom of the world, "No one ever drowned in sweat" is another way of saying that your children should value hard work and achievement. They will need to pursue relentlessly the satisfaction of their inner motivation for achievement and inner control, their need for fun or enjoyment, their need for freedom and making choices, and most importantly, their need for satisfactory relationships with other people. They will also need to teach this to their subjects.

The 4th admonition in the wisdom of the world is "Count your blessings, not your afflictions." This means that your children and each member of the kingdom at each day of their lives stand at a fork in the road. They have a choice. They can travel in either direction. One direction is characterized by the relentless recital of what's wrong in the world around them, what's lacking in themselves, and how their relationships are dysfunctional. The other pathway is the wiser one. On this path they pursue happy and healthy relationships,

activities, creativity, accomplishments, wisdom and many other uplifting qualities. They search for solutions. They include other people as appropriate and they include even people they disagree with. They see the world as filled with opportunities. They adopt the motto, "The harder I work, the luckier I get." But their work is neither drudgery nor aimless. They look for ways to focus their energy on goals that are attainable and that contribute to the wellbeing of others. Thus, through their efforts they find satisfaction. They will find life in their relationships. And they should harbor within their hearts the belief that their lives are worthwhile, that the fruits of their labor will endure and that they are even pleasing to the Almighty. Oh yes, there was another sentence, the 5th one, "It's all about relationships: love and belonging, human connectedness, acquaintanceship, affiliation, friendliness, and even intimacy."

End of story

Now I'm going to count backwards from 5 and then I'm going to ask you to open your eyes.
5 ... 4 ... 3 ... 2 ... 1. Open your eyes and look around the room. Now, for a moment, please think about the parable that you just heard. There is no need to draw practical conclusions from this story. There is no need to "apply the lessons" unless that is your preference. There is no need to define the implications of the story, unless that is your preference. It is merely intended to create an atmosphere for relaxing, thinking, and feeling. Just allow your mind to think about this metaphor. (Pause) Now, please turn to the person next to you and share your thoughts. Allow these ideas to rest in your creative behavioral system. Later, when the ideas surface again, write down your thoughts. In fact, a very helpful idea might come to you in the middle of the night. You should be sure to write it down.

And now, relax your muscles again.

Some of what I say in the rest of this talk might be familiar to some of you. Much of what I say will be thought-provoking and possibly controversial. These are the goals of this presentation. Even more I hope that what I say will stimulate discussion, growth, and creativity. It really doesn't matter what I think about any of this material. What matters most is the discussions, the sharing, the courteous disagreements that always result in more energy, a higher level of understanding, and a higher level of commitment by individuals and by organizations.

Visibility, Promotion and Increased Respect

The overall mission of William Glasser International and its many member organizations is to preserve, nurture, develop and extend the legacy and the ideas of William Glasser. Among the ideas useful to the growth of this organization, the legacy of William Glasser and the continued teaching of Choice Theory/Reality Therapy and its many applications is the ongoing self-examination of the applications. Research occupies a central place in our work. For example, how can we increase communication and publications regarding the contributions of the many cultures in which Reality Therapy is taught? It began as a westernized system, but is now taught around the world as is evidenced by the large number of people from so many countries attending this conference. There are certainly differences in the manner of communication between East and West. We need to discuss these differences and examine how they enrich our teaching and practice. Please translate

at least some of the research studies conducted in Asia and publish them in Western journals. One of our strategies should be to gain more exposure in other professional journals around the world. Publishing applications that illustrate the many cultural nuances of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy would provide added credibility to our work. And it would also increase the scholarly basis that some of us have worked very hard to achieve.

International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy

Dr. Tom Parish has given a countless number of hours and months and years in the publishing of the *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*. We are forever grateful for your work, Tom, and we are all indebted to you, as well as to Larry Litwack who originally founded the Journal in 1981. I travel to many conferences and I can say with absolute certainty that our credibility increases when I tell people that we have an international journal as well as an international conference. And when I tell people there is a Korean Journal and a Japanese Journal our credibility jumps even higher. Are there plans for more journals in other countries? If so, please let me know and inform all of us about this important fact so that in our teaching we can inform our students that we have a first-class worldwide organization. My personal mission is to contribute to this effort. This is why I have written 35 chapters in textbooks, plus I've published 15 books on Reality Therapy. These resources were derived from the work of William Glasser and they help spread the ideas thereby keeping the readers up-to-date. Most importantly, these resources continue the legacy and keep it growing.

Research

Related to the topic of increasing credibility and scholarly recognition, I would like to again recognize Professor Rose Kim who has facilitated over 500 Masters' Theses and Doctoral Dissertations on Reality Therapy. This kind of leadership is virtually unknown in the helping professions. She co-authored an article in *The International Journal of Choice Theory* edited by Jeff Tirengel. This journal no longer exists, but has been replaced with the current one edited by Tom Parish, i.e., the International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy. The title of her article is "A Meta-Analysis of Reality Therapy and Choice Theory Group Programs for Self-Esteem and Locus of Control in Korea." This article is often referenced in my writings and in the writings of other authors who write textbooks in this area.

Janet Morgan also deserves our collective gratitude for her work in chairing the Institute Committee on Research. She recently announced that we can state publicly that Reality Therapy is now recognized as evidence-based. Thank you, Janet, and your committee, for this major contribution. She is determined to demonstrate to the professional world the inestimable value of Reality Therapy as evidence-based. There will be several presentations during this conference on research and on the absolute necessity to continue to provide evidence of the efficacy of Reality Therapy and its theoretical base, i.e., Choice Theory. We are well advised to keep in mind the words of Bill and Carleen Glasser: Choice Theory is the train track and Reality Therapy is the train. To stay in the mainstream of the professions we need to know the difference and to research Reality Therapy, the methodology. One textbook author told me that Reality Therapy is among the few systems in the world today that clearly distinguishes theory and practice. In describing the relationship between theory and practice, Heinz Kohut once remarked that--Without theory and ordering principles we

see nothing. But with theory alone we are closed to new experience. Choice Theory provides the ordering principles and Reality Therapy, as expressed in the WDEP system, provides a path to new experiences for both client and counselor. We destroy this difference at our own peril.

Consequently, the ongoing publication of research studies will ensure that Dr Glasser's legacy continues far into the future. And there are many approaches to this important topic. For example, the theoretical physicist Michio Kaku (2011), in his book *Future of Physics*, provides a summary of the long-term studies of Walter Mischel of Columbia University. He says, "Children who were able to refrain from immediate gratification (e.g., eating a marshmallow given to them) and held out for greater long-term rewards (getting 2 marshmallows instead of 1) consistently scored higher on almost every measure of future success": test scores, success in life, loving relationships and career success. Deferring gratification, then, while growing up points the way toward subsequent and long-term need satisfaction. A suggestion for research might be showing that the use of Choice Theory, or more accurately the Reality Therapy procedures, helps young people to delay gratification. In short, our research needs to connect our interventions with already existing scientifically-proven facts.

Summary

Part I presents a meditation for the reader to consider and to allow your creative system to ponder the implications of the king and queen's injunction to summarize the wisdom of the world. You are also asked to realize Dr Glasser's injunction that small plans can lead to major change. Moreover, the prestige of William Glasser International and Choice Theory/Reality Therapy requires ongoing validation through scientific inquiry. I suggest that our research focus on specific behaviors in addition to organizational quality. Part II will focus on the re-evaluation of total behavior as it relates to trauma and on the connection between mindfulness, neuroscience, Ericksonian principles and Reality Therapy.

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UP-CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH WILLIAM GLASSER

Carleen Glasser

Carleen Glasser is a Senior Faculty Member of the William Glasser Institute International and wife of the late William Glasser, M.D. She co-authored four books with Dr. Glasser and lectured extensively with him for over twenty years. She is currently releasing a book of Letters written by her late husband answering people who wrote to him sharing their lives and work with him.

Abstract:

This article is a tribute to the genius of William Glasser, a man, who contributed some of the most ground-breaking ideas of our time to the field of Psychology. As William Glasser's wife and partner for the last twenty years of his life, I uniquely understood his vision for helping people improve their lives.

I was often the first person he would tell about a new direction or approach to teaching his ideas. On July 8, 2016, coincidentally the Anniversary of our wedding twenty-one years prior, I delivered a keynote address at the William Glasser International Conference in Seoul, Korea. In this address, I paid tribute to my husband by remembering his personal visions, as well as the evolution of his ideas.

The purpose of presenting this information in this article is to emphasize the significance of knowing Glasser's ideas as he intended them to be understood. Hence, my ultimate goal for this presentation is to impart these ideas to people who truly wish to learn them.

Introduction:

Two significant books accurately depict William Glasser's thinking and philosophy. They are: *Reality Therapy for the 21ST Century*, by Robert E. Wubbolding, Ed.D. and a biography based on ten years of interviews and research by Jim Roy Ed.D. called, *William Glasser, Champion of Choice*.

As in any study, implicit in these works are questions that inspire us to seek a deeper level of understanding of a man like William Glasser. This article will attempt to answer, from an inside perspective, various questions that have arisen about Glasser's ideas and the man who produced them.

The important questions answered in this article concern the relationship between Choice Theory and External Control. What is the role of the need for power in the practice of Choice Theory? What was Glasser's position on Control Theory after 1996? Is Choice Theory a Psychology?

Methods:

In this keynote, I will present information, divulged to me personally or observed first hand, over a span of twenty years with William Glasser. During this time we lived and worked together as husband and wife, plus I served as editor of eleven of his books written while we were married, and as co-author of four of the twenty-one books he wrote in his long and productive career.

Our last collaboration before he died was the recently published book entitled, *Take Charge of Your Life*, a revision of the former 1984 publication entitled, *Control Theory*. Dr. Glasser wanted to ensure that all of his books accurately reflected his current thinking, which is Choice Theory, and not Control Theory.

Currently, I will soon release a new book called, *Thoughtful Answers to Timeless Questions, Decades of Wisdom in Letters from the Author of Choice Theory, William Glasser, M.D.* This book of letters from people who wrote to him over the years, and the answers that he sent back, uniquely illustrates the evolution of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy. It also provides another insight into the man and his passion for helping people, no matter who or where they were.

Bill and I shared a life filled with happiness in our personal relationships, and enjoyed a partnership based on compatible goals and mutual respect. The following is from the transcript of an address I delivered at the William Glasser International Conference in Seoul, Korea to the hundreds of people in attendance there from all over the world.

Statement:

Carleen Glasser's Keynote Address: A Tribute to William Glasser, July 8, 2016, in Seoul, Korea

Thank you so much for inviting me to give this address. The title is, *A Tribute to Bill*, my husband, your mentor and our friend William Glasser. Today I am going to share some memories I have of the twenty years we spent together in a very loving relationship. This is my tribute to him; but the best tribute of all today, is your presence here at this International Conference. It is a celebration of all the contributions he made to teach the world his groundbreaking ideas. His legacy is now in your very capable hands.

To honor his memory, I am going to tell you about my husband's Quality World. The Quality World is a special place in our mind where we store pictures of the people, places, things and systems of belief that we believe already do or possibly could satisfy our basic needs. Bill's Quality World was no secret to me. When you are in a loving relationship, whether you are married or not, or whatever your connection might be, you share your pictures with one another. That is what being in love is. First, we put each other into our Quality World and then we made a commitment to preserve our relationship by honoring each other's Quality World.

Bill Glasser cared every day about what was in my quality world. He would listen to me and always take into consideration what I wanted. He was the most authentic person I ever met. Why do I say authentic? Because, he actually practiced what he taught.

He offered people a way to improve their relationships. He told them about, seven caring habits that nurture relationships and the seven deadly habits that destroy them. And I can honestly say, he never once used any of the deadly habits with me. He never criticized, blamed, complained, nagged, threatened, punished or rewarded for control. He used to tell everyone that in all the years we were married we never had a harsh word between us. He said it was because, from the beginning, we decided to have a Choice Theory marriage.

I've written down a few notes on these index cards that I want to tell you today, about Bill's Quality World. This is, because there were many ideas so important to him that he wanted the world to understand, and some things that were just important to him personally which he put into his Quality World. As my tribute to him, I want to tell you some of the most important things he cared about and how he shared them with me.

First and foremost, a system of belief he had in his Quality World was Choice Theory. He also very much respected Reality Therapy. Notably, he developed Reality Therapy first. He used it and taught it in every way that he could, but he truly believed Choice Theory could change the world. That idea is one he held on to, right up until the end of his life. He would not have asked us to teach Choice Theory to the world if he didn't believe that it would be very useful. He dedicated his life to offering information that people could use to help themselves. He was very generous with his ideas. He shared them with everyone he met, and was happy to see his ideas incorporated into the work of others.

But, you may ask, how did Choice Theory get into Bill's Quality World? Well, I'll tell you because I was there when it happened. Bill was a very creative man, probably the most intensely creative person I've ever known in my entire life. Often I experienced his creativity when he was writing, when he was lecturing, and when we were at home just dealing with everyday life. Whenever he was working on something new it was so interesting because he would regularly get ideas in the middle of the night. He said that, creativity never sleeps. It's alive and moving all of the time. We never stop using our creativity, even when we're asleep. Our creativity offers us ideas and solutions to problems without our even being aware that it's been working on the problem. He was busy writing from nine to five, but long after he had stopped for the day his creativity kept on working. I soon became aware of when Bill's creativity would burst into action. It usually occurred, as I said, in the middle of the night. He would wake up, at something like 3 o'clock in the morning. He would nudge me and ask, "Are you awake?" He'd wait, then with the volume turned up a little, he would repeat, "Are you awake?" Eventually, I'd answer, "I am now!" He did this regularly, whenever he was working on a book or anything new. When he was sure I was awake, he would ask, "What do you think of this idea?" He loved to tell me his new ideas. That was a very special experience we shared together. Of course, I lost a little sleep, but for me, the memory of those moments with him will never be lost.

He would tell me his brilliant idea and we'd talk about it a little bit then he would tell me another idea and elaborate on it. Finally, I'd ask, "Bill, don't you think maybe I ought to get up and write this down so you don't forget it?" and he'd say, "No, if it's not a good idea, I won't remember it". So, that's the way he dealt with his creativity.

He was constantly feeding his creative mind by reading everything he could get his hands on. He read William Powers' work on the human being as a control system, a simple negative feedback system applying a control engineering principle to human psychology. He was fascinated by this idea because he thought he could teach it to the people he counseled with while using Reality Therapy to help them understand how and why they behave. He began to develop his own version of these ideas, but continued to call it Control Theory. He retained that title for over fifteen years, but in 1994 he began to hear objections to the word "control" from certain William Glasser Institute faculty.

I remember when we were in Ireland for the Annual WGI Conference in 1994. Bill gave the keynote address. Arthur Dunn, one of the Irish instructors, got up during question-and-answer time to speak: "Must we call what we teach control theory? It is quite cumbersome for us to explain to people, that we don't mean control over people we mean control of yourself." Notably, it seemed that the Irish have historically had a high need for freedom. Dr. Glasser, having a very high need for freedom himself understood their point. He didn't want to control other people, nor was he ever observed doing so. I also noticed, that he would never allow anyone to control him. He heard Arthur and said his question was quite thought-provoking. He put Arthur's question in his vast memory bank where it remained for two more years. Sometimes it took awhile for ideas to "season" with Bill.

His high freedom need created a picture in his Quality World that motivated him to stand up for what he believed in and he often believed in things that nobody else agreed with. Ten or more years ago, when we would go to his speaking engagements and he would say something to the audience about mental illness or brain drugs and invariably some people in the audience would become so outraged they'd walk out. Well, in a talk many years later he would say the exact same thing to a similar audience and he got a standing ovation. That's how ahead of his time he was. He had very progressive opinions. He was innovative, and his ideas were constantly evolving. He never gave up. He understood everyone needs time to process new information.

He had listened to the Irish instructors' claim in 1994, that they disliked the word control. He agreed with them and realized that he, too, hated the word control and especially since it was used in External Control Psychology, which he saw as a plague on society as it destroyed all relationships.

On July 8th, 1995, a year after the Irish Conference, we got married. Today would have been the 21st Anniversary of our wedding. The following spring of 1996, less than a year after we were married, I was initiated into the life I could anticipate as William Glasser's wife. He casually announced that we would be leaving in a month on a ninety-three day speaking tour around the Pacific Rim. So, he said we'll go to New Zealand first and then we'll go to all the major cities in Australia, then we'll go to Singapore, Korea, and Japan.

"Okay, Dolly" he said, "Start packing!" After many trips and suitcases later, all packed by me over the years, we continued to travel and he continued to call me Dolly.

We came here to Korea in 1996, during that 93 day trip. It was wonderful. I put Korea right into my Quality World when I experienced the great hospitality and beauty of this country and the dedication of Rose Inza Kim. I've never seen such genuine enthusiasm. Rose is very excited about Bill's ideas. She teaches them skillfully and has been the driving force behind the growth of this whole movement here. This conference would not be happening here without Rose and her able committee members.

By the time we got to Australia, it was the Spring, of 1996, as I recall, we were in Brisbane, and Bill had given talks at three different venues that day. We were exhausted by the time we got back to the hotel, and we were trying to get to sleep. Has anybody here ever heard of a Kookaburra bird? There's a song Australians sing called, *Kookaburra, Laughing in the Old Gum Tree*. Well this bird was certainly laughing merrily and quite loudly right outside our window. I tried to get to sleep, but his noisy laughter prevented it. I kept wishing the fellow would get over this fit and just quiet down and go to sleep so I could do likewise, but apparently they sometimes laugh all night, right, Australians? Unbelievable as it was to me, Bill slept through the whole thing, another one of his many talents.

No sooner had I fallen asleep, when at the magic witching hour of 3 o'clock in the morning Bill nudged me, "Wake up, wake up," he said "What? What's happening?", I groaned. That's when he announced: "I'm changing the name of Control Theory, to Choice Theory." I said, "You're what?" But I wasn't surprised because he was constantly clarifying ideas and improving upon them. That was his pursuit of quality. Quality is a moving target. You keep evolving, you keep growing, and you try new ideas. But this was a major change, quite possibly the most important decision he ever made in his long career besides the development of Reality Therapy. It had been brewing in his head for two years, ever since Ireland.

So, why, you may ask, did he call it Choice Theory? "You know," he said, "I've always talked about people being responsible for their behavior; I wrote about that in the book, *Reality Therapy*. But, I no longer use the word responsible because it just sounds too demanding. "Who's responsible for this?" "The implication that you expect responsible behavior from someone seems controlling." Bill rejected the word control and decided choice was a better word because if you choose it, you're also responsible for it. He then came to the conclusion that "Choice Theory" would be a more accurate name to call all the work that he had done so far, as he sought to refine the "Control Theory" that he had discovered in Powers' work. Even though he rejected control theory and embraced choice, he continued to hold William Powers and his work in high esteem for the rest of his life.

Powers got his ideas for control theory from the work of several mathematicians and engineers. Among them were, Claude Bernard, who was in control systems engineering, and the mathematician Norbert Wiener who coined the word cybernetics-how we control and communicate information. Bill Glasser thought the concept of humans behaving as control systems was very important information, because he believed that all behavior is chosen.

He studied Power's work carefully and added elements consistent with Reality Therapy and his own understanding of human behavior, such as Total Behavior. The concept of Total Behavior has been recognized as one of his most brilliant contributions. Included would be his explanation of the basic needs and the Quality World pictures as the driving force or intrinsic motivation to choose any behavior.

In the basic needs he described the need for power and when we teach that need for power as instructors we tell people there are two kinds of power, there is the power over, such as subjugation by external control. That is, to force people do what they don't want to do by using external power over them. Then there is the internal or intrinsic type of power. That's what intrinsic power is, a power within. You know, when you give up external control you get more power, it just happens to work that way. The more control you give up, the more power you get. This is a more effective way to get your need for power met.

So Bill's creativity, as I said, never stopped working; but he also had this intense need for freedom, which is where his creativity originated. He believed that when people have choices their possibilities are endless. In his mind, Choice Theory was the antithesis of External Control Psychology. He believed learning to implement Choice Theory could lead people to adopt a new, Choice Theory based, personal psychology, a psychology of Intrinsic Power so to speak, as an antidote to the External Control Psychology they had personally been experiencing in a world controlled by external powers. He thought the only way that people can be truly free is to exist in an environment in which they can have choices and look at different ways to behave, different directions they can choose to take in living their lives. He believed hope resides in alternative choices.

Now back in Australia, we had this dilemma. How is he going to tell his audience that he has rejected control theory and changed it to his own voice, which he called, Choice Theory. Well, he just went in the next day, it was in May, 1996. He got up to talk to the audience, a large crowd of people and said, "Now I may make a mistake once in awhile when I'm giving this lecture. I may call my theory control theory because that's what I've been calling it for many years now, but I've decided to change the name of Control Theory to Choice Theory.

Everyone in the audience burst into applause. He assumed it was because scores of Australians had ancestors who long ago were exiled to Australia by the British who used it as a penal colony. They had been incarcerated for various reasons, some unjustly, and finally forced onto ships bound for Australia from Great Britain. Probably because of this cultural heritage, Australians seemed to have a deep hatred for the word control because control represents a history of punishment and hardships. Bill concluded that they burst into applause because they were so happy that he changed the word "control" to "choice." I personally was not at all expecting this to happen. I thought the change would result in much more resistance but apparently this was not the case in Australia. Finally it was accepted everywhere and he revised every book he'd written, replacing the words control theory with Choice Theory. So, after that trip, Choice Theory remained and that's how it came to find its place in Bill's Quality world.

Another prominent place in his Quality World for many years were his ideas to improve schools. Many of you visited the first Glasser Quality School in Korea the other day as part of this conference. I am sure Bill would have been very proud of this school and the people who worked so hard to make it a reality.

Over the years Bill worked with many schools around the world teaching them how to eliminate External Control and change the system to one where every student can succeed. What he would ask the teachers to do is to learn Choice Theory and teach it to their students then, to develop a plan for the parents to learn it. He showed the teachers and administrators how to create an environment where there is no coercion, an environment in which no one is being hurt or punished and where problems can be solved by talking them over. It is a safe, loving relationship that creates a need-satisfying environment for the students to learn. Bill envisioned schools where everyone got along with each other. School would be a joyful place where students and teachers feel connected, important to themselves and important to each other. It would be a school where they have the freedom to make creative choices and whose reward for learning is fun.

Choice Theory is applicable to so many other problems we confront in our lives and in society. Very early in his professional life, Bill placed his work in corrections in his Quality World. He was very invested in the most effective ways to offer rehabilitation programs in prisons. These programs, based on Choice Theory, are being successfully implemented by some very dedicated people working in corrections as currently as right now. The inmates are learning new information and recognizing the power within their own minds to make more effective choices.

When Bill Glasser changed the name Control Theory to Choice Theory it was for a purpose. He took a risk, but he held firmly to what he knew he wanted to teach the world and it was embodied in the word "choice." Choice Theory has been widely accepted and recognition for it has clearly been given to William Glasser. The testimony to this exists right here at this conference in Seoul, Korea. There are over 350 people in attendance from all over the world, who are here to learn more about his ideas and to perpetuate his life's work. I am quite sure that today and every day, The William Glasser International Institute and all its members are very much in Bill's Quality World. If he were here I know he would be smiling right now.

I'm going to move along now and tell you some of the things that mostly a wife would know about Bill's Quality World. Food, let's talk about food. Bill was not a very picky eater. He would eat almost anything except he didn't like salmon. In fact, I know that he actually hated salmon, but he would eat any other food on his plate that I would give him. However, if I would put too much food on his plate he would lose his appetite. He was like that his whole life. So I had to be very careful to give him small portions, unlike the American all-you-can-eat buffets. He loved to go to Japan or wherever he could get tiny bowls with little bits of food beautifully presented in them. He appreciated that.

Sweet, especially fruit, was his favorite taste. He had a specific picture in his Quality World, I don't know where or when he put it in, but it must have been a long time ago of the

perfect piece of apple pie. You know what apple pie is? He described it whenever we went to a new hotel and ate at the restaurant. If apple pie was on the menu, he would say to the server, now let me tell you how I want this pie to look and if it doesn't look this way do not bring it. He would describe apples stacked up like bricks not oozing out the sides. He didn't want it heated. He didn't like hot apple pie he wanted it room temperature. He was very specific about his wishes and his Quality World pictures. He didn't want ice cream on top he wanted it on the side. And so like I said he had a picture of this apple pie and whenever he got it he would be delighted. A big smile would come to his face and when he liked something a lot he would start to hum while he ate it. So when I got here last night to this hotel we went downstairs for a bite to eat. Well, surprisingly I found Bill's perfect piece of apple pie on the menu. In honor of him I had to order it. He would have been so pleased with that piece of pie and it only cost a dollar, which would have pleased him even more.

Now, he was a very generous person with everyone else. He just was frugal with himself. He was a saver so he had a high need for survival. That need was challenged because he grew up during the depression in the United States in the 1930's. People he knew had lost a lot, their entire savings were wiped out. He remembered those times and that memory remained very scary for him and for many of those children when they became adults. So that piece of apple pie which only cost one dollar, would have made a really big hit with him. Although once when we were in Japan he paid seven dollars and fifty cents for one apple. But it was quite possibly the largest and best tasting apple either one of us had ever eaten in our entire lives.

As I said, he had anything sweet in his Quality World, but mostly fruit. So, in Southern California we grow citrus trees in our backyard. We had small oranges from a big tree and big lemons from a small tree and we had an ordinary sized kumquat tree. Do you know what kumquats are? They are like baby oranges about this big. (Showing two fingers making a 1" circle) Kumquats have sour insides and sweet skin. Whenever they were ripe Bill would go out in our yard and pick every kumquat off that tree, and there were lots of them. After he carried his grand harvest of kumquats into the kitchen I realized he never washed them off because he didn't believe in washing fruit. He believed in eating a little dirt to strengthen your immune system, right? And he was a physician so he may have known something I didn't know. Then he would get a cutting board and a sharp knife and would painstakingly cut every kumquat into tiny slices. There are a lot of seeds in kumquats, but he would laboriously pick out every seed; you couldn't find one in the whole batch. Then he put them all in a glass pot. He'd dump a ton of sugar on top. Then he'd put it in the microwave to cook for four minutes at a time, his very own recipe. He made this up. After four minutes he would take it out, stir it, and taste it. When he got it sweet enough and the pectin had come out of the fruit to make jelly he finally let it cool off and put it in jars. He made the most wonderful homemade marmalade you ever tasted. It was delicious! He'd slather it all over his toast in the morning and he'd put it on top of ice cream for dessert. He enjoyed his kumquat jam, that's why it was in his Quality World.

Some people have met him in person. Well, they know and I can tell you for a fact that he could get up in front of a thousand people and with his deep voice booming, he could talk for six hours without one notecard in his hand. He would have it all in his head. He would

share his ideas and tell funny stories and everyone would be learning and laughing all day. And you would think, "Oh, wow, what a fun guy to be with. I would love to throw a party and invite him!" No you wouldn't. He was very shy in smaller groups. He would just go into himself and be very quiet. He would listen to everybody and he would be there, but he wouldn't be, you know, what do they call that? "The Life of the party." That was not Bill. Bill was no life of any party, but he had humor in his Quality World. You could tell because he was so quick-witted. His funny, casual comments had me laughing all the time.

One time when we were starting to go together, we went to some kind of function for the Institute, like a board meeting, and afterwards we went to dinner with all the board members. So we were in a small room with only about ten people, but Bill seemed to want to show me for some reason, that he wasn't shy. I found this just delightful. He started telling jokes and suddenly, he became the life of the party. I think he wanted to impress me with his social skills. His was a very spontaneous, quick humor, plus he also knew hundreds of jokes. The ones he liked best were limericks. Here is one he told that I always laughed at:

*Once, there was a young girl from Natches,
Whose clothes were all torn and in patches,
When asked to explain why,
She would simply reply,
"Wherever I itches, I scratches."*

I realize this may not make sense to you if English is not your first language. Masaki Kakitani used to translate for Bill in Japan. The Japanese aren't in the audience right now because they're touring the Glasser Quality School here. But I'll tell you a story about Masaki's skills as a translator. At a point in his talk where Bill would make a joke the people in the audience who spoke English would laugh because they understood it, but if they didn't understand it, Masaki would tell them, "Laugh now, he said something funny." Bill was happy he got two laughs for every joke he told in Japan.

Ordinary people, who read his books, wrote him letters and they would send them to the Institute. Linda Harshman, who was the Executive Director of the William Glasser Institute, for 25 years, would bring stacks of letters over to the house for Bill to read. You know he read every letter. He was so generous with his time he answered every letter anyone sent him. Now, Linda Harshman, being a wise and conscientious Canadian woman, saved all the letters people had written to him, and attached to each a copy of Bill's reply. I found boxes of those letters in her office after both she and Bill had passed away.

I started going through those letters and tears came to my eyes because I could hear his voice in every word he wrote. Whenever I'm lonely for him, I read something that he's written. In those letters I can hear him talking because he wrote the way he talked. I could hear his voice saying things to all of us. So, I decided to compile the letters--not all of them because there are way too many--but selected letters, in categories. Some about addictions, some about corrections and jails and probation, and some about schools, some were about relationships--a lot of them were about relationships--and parenting--all the

different categories of problems people would send him, each one asking for his help. He answered every one of them. Jim Coddington has worked diligently to get this book ready for publication. We deleted the names of the senders to maintain confidentiality. Jim and I are publishing the letters in a new book. It is going to be released this year. The title of the new book is, *Thoughtful Answers to Timeless Questions, Decades of Wisdom in Letters From the Author of Choice Theory*, William Glasser M.D.

Besides all those letters, what else did Dr. Glasser read? He learned to read at the age of four and immediately put reading in his Quality World. He simply loved to read. He was definitely a life-long learner. In the twenty years that we were together, I never saw him without a book. He'd read on the plane, he'd read before he went to sleep, he'd read during the day. When he wasn't writing, he was reading or playing tennis

Once I commented to him, "Bill, if you didn't have a book to read - I'll bet you'd read the dictionary. Wouldn't you?" And he said, "I've done that." Some books that were his favorites were, *Raintree County* by Ross Lockridge. I don't know why he loved that book so much, but he recommended it to everyone including a friend who thoughtfully found and gave him a rare original edition of that book. Another author he liked very much was the prolific novelist, Anthony Trollope. Bill also read scholarly books. He liked Darwin and all kinds of interesting scientific books. Reading is what I saw him do every day for entertainment. He enjoyed books but the other thing he loved very much was lecturing.

There is one thing I knew of that he didn't like reading. You know how after some lectures the organizers hand out evaluation forms for the audience to complete and then they give them to the speaker to read? Bill never read them. He said, "If you get someone in that audience who has a high need for power and is lonely, they will take a pot shot at you to feel better about themselves." He said, "I don't need their negative thoughts in my head." He chose not to entertain negative thoughts. He lived in the present and he didn't worry about the things people say using the seven deadly habits, especially when they tried rewarding to control him. He believed in self-evaluation. That came from his work with Reality Therapy, which creates a need-satisfying environment for people to self-evaluate. He was also funny about reading the mail, when the mailman delivered it. He never read his mail until about three days after he got it. I'd say, "Why don't you read the mail when you get it?" He'd say, "No, I like to let it season for a while."

He was widowed and lonely. It was 1993, about a year after his wife Naomi, to whom he was married for 46 years, had died. I was a board member from the Midwest Region. In November, Linda Harshman told him that I was going through a divorce so I probably wouldn't be available to attend the next board meeting. About a week after that news reached him I received a letter in the mail and it was from Dr. Glasser. I thought maybe it was about the board meeting or some training I was doing. When I opened it up and read it I was stunned. In his letter he asked me if I would like to spend some time with him getting to know each other. I knew he wanted an answer to his letter, but for sensible reasons, I was concerned about whether to get personally involved with him or not. It was about three weeks before I mailed my answer. He admitted to me years later that this was the one time

in his life that he had gone to the mailbox everyday waiting for a letter that he opened before it had time to season.

So we got together and the rest is history. We were in love. Ours was the most magical relationship I have ever experienced in my life. A love like ours is hard to describe. After he finished the book, *Choice Theory* he wrote the dedication. If you've ever read the dedication in the book *Choice Theory*, you know about his feelings for me. I still can't read it without crying so I'm not going to try to read it here. To me, it is a true example of his Quality World driving his creativity to express what he felt about our relationship.

Bill's Quality world pictures for fun were met when he played tennis and watched Basketball, Football and Baseball on the television with friends. He didn't like to go to the games he said they're much better on TV. He would go to movies and watch movies on television. He loved movies, but not violent ones. He liked live theatre on Broadway and local productions in Los Angeles. His favorite musical was *The Music Man*. I think he related to it because he marched in his high school band, playing trumpet, in Cleveland, Ohio.

Also, when we were in Japan he loved going to the Kabuki Theater. I was not terribly fond of the Kabuki myself, but he certainly had it in his Quality World. So we went. And when we were in Germany one time, at the Evolution of Psychotherapy Conference in Hamburg they gave us free tickets to the theater. One night we went to see the musical *Cats* and the second night to see the musical *Phantom of the Opera*. The only problem was that they were both sung in German. We sat there in the audience, enjoying the music but couldn't understand a word of it. Whenever we were in London we always went to the theatre district to see a certain kind of British Comedy, they call, a Farce. Then, of course, the famous Abby Theater in Dublin was one of his favorites. When people asked Bill his favorite vacation destination he always answered, "Our house right here in Los Angeles, California. For vacation, he wanted to be home and he wanted to relax. He bought our house in 1954. He said, "I want to live here the rest of my life. And so he did. He died at home on August 23, 2013. I had the honor of being the only one with him at that moment. He had a quiet and peaceful passing.

He had been quite ill for 4 years before he died. But he was absolutely the most phenomenal patient you would ever want to see. He never complained, he just calmly told you exactly what was in his quality world. The one thing I remember vividly was anytime I'd do anything, even the smallest thing for him, he would always say, "Thank you Dolly. Thank you for taking such good care of me." He was so very, very loving and kind. Beyond family his Quality World had room in it for all the people who loved him and even those who didn't. The wellbeing of our world was a high priority for him.

To that end, the political beliefs he had in his Quality World were compatible with Choice Theory. He was very generous and progressive. He believed that the most destructive behavior in the world is greed (He described greed in the book *Choice Theory*). He maintained that greed is a major detriment to human progress. He strongly held to the idea that External Control is the sad story of what is wrong with this world. The people who are fighting, killing each other and blowing everyone up are all seeking power and

desperately trying to find it by using External Control. "I know what is right for you and I'm going to make you do it or else." So many guns and so many killings when is it all going to end? He strongly believed the hope of a solution begins by learning Choice Theory and becomes a reality by practicing it.

And that's why Bill was so very adamant about his mission, the vision he had was, to change the world with choice theory, even if he could only teach it to one person at a time. You can effect change in the world by giving people the new information they need to make choices that are much more effective. Offer them Reality Therapy when they are suffering from the symptoms of unhappiness and teach them Choice Theory to provide them with tools to stay happy.

Bill's need for love and belonging was fulfilled in his life because he loved others. In his Quality World he was driven by the belief that everyone needs to be loved by at least one person in life to be happy. The main problem in the world is the fact that so many people do not know how to get the love they need. He never gave up on the belief that his ideas could show people how to connect and find happiness.

He offered them an education in life. He knew education is using knowledge to improve your life. He stressed that being truly happy depends on having and keeping good relationships. He was so interested in having a good relationship, that the year before we got married he started writing the book, *Staying Together*. It was April, 1995, and he was finishing up the final draft of the book when his publisher Harper Collins, called and wanted the end flaps, you know the little flaps of paper that are on the ends of the book cover where you find information about the author. Since they wanted it right away he wrote something that morning then called me up at The Schwab School, which was a middle school where we worked together for one year, in Cincinnati, Ohio. When I answered the phone, he said, "Dolly, let me read you what I've written for this end flap, this is what I want to say and I just want your opinion. So, he read the whole thing to me, including the last line in which he wrote, "And in July, Carleen and I are going to be married." I gasped when he read it! When I asked for details he gave them to me. He had it all planned out just the way I wanted it to be. I realized at that moment, our Quality Worlds were in sync and they have matched ever since. That's how he proposed marriage to me. He announced it on the end flap of a book and read it to me over the phone. I mean, now wasn't that romantic? I came to understand that true love is commitment and that marriage was firmly in his Quality World.

From that day on he focused exclusively on the importance of having good relationships in your life to be truly happy. He never gave up the hope that Choice Theory could help us create a better world. He inspired me to dedicate the rest of my life to this purpose. I invite you to join me in my effort to preserve his legacy by teaching the whole world Choice Theory and Reality Therapy while always remaining true to his vision and the body of work he created.

This commitment is my tribute to Bill. Thank you very much!

Discussion:

The purpose of this article is twofold. First it is a tribute to the legacy of William Glasser, M.D. by clarifying his intentions for what that legacy would include. Second it offers a unique perspective of a man, who is recognized as one of the great thinkers of our time. The information in this article is presented from the vantage point of his wife, Carleen Glasser, who was with him for the last 20 years of his life. She knew his authenticity from experiencing it everyday. He actually practiced what he believed in, which was exactly what he taught others who followed his ideas to do.

The information presented in her keynote address at the 2016 International Conference in Korea covers both the professional and the personal life of William Glasser, M.D. It is a journey in exploration of her husband's Quality World summarized in questions about:

How and why did he put certain pictures in and take certain pictures out of it?
How did his creativity play a part in the development of his ideas?
When did Choice Theory become the main focus of his teachings?
Why did he decide to use the word choice and reject the word control?
Why is Choice Theory an antidote to External Control Psychology?
What were his personal likes and dislikes?
What kind of personality did he have publically and privately?
And finally, what was his ultimate vision for the world?

Inherent in these questions is the invitation to think about the topics discussed in this article from your own perspective and bring them to the table for open discussion.

Conclusions:

This article provides insight into various positions taken by William Glasser that may not be completely understood or have possibly become the subject of conjecture within the Institute. The facts presented here are an attempt to clarify these positions and put closure on any misconceptions that may exist.

One purpose of presenting this article is to honor the memory of William Glasser by sharing this information with everyone in respect to his Quality World pictures. Another purpose is to offer accurate information, which can impact how he will be perceived by future generations of students of his ideas.

Finally, a complete and accurate representation of him as a man and as the innovator of his unique ideas will more likely contribute to the way he is defined by historians of psychological theory development in the next decade and beyond. Further exploration into the specific intensions of Williams Glasser in relation to his theories and contributions to the field of Psychology are recommended to maintain the integrity of his work and how it is presented in the world.

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CHOICE THEORY: INVESTIGATING HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN FOUR DIMENSIONS

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Abstract

Human beings consistently have lived with complexities, tensions, or external and internal conflicts throughout the ages. History has witnessed fights for power, as well as for personal beliefs, and also resistance against orders from others since the beginning of recorded history, if not earlier. If you think carefully, you will find that one external factor has played a major role underlying all of these various conflicts, and according to Choice Theory, it was thought to be external psychology. External psychology, of course, is being used every day by people to obtain what they want from other people. The advent of such psychology in human behaviors basically opposes the need for freedom, one of the five basic needs built into the human genome, leading to a vicious circle of force on the one hand and resistance on the other. This circle of force and resistance occurs in most marital conflicts. As developed by William Glasser, Choice Theory has no place for mental illness, setting out that what humans do is the choices made to meet their inner needs which may be built-in based on their own genes. According to Glasser, mental illness is due to humans acting out of unhappiness, rather than mental disorders. Thus, human behaviors are actually internally motivated through five basic needs such as survival, love and belonging, power, freedom and fun. In Choice Theory, disconnectedness is the cause of all types of dysfunctional behaviors, like drug abuse, violence, crime, school failure and child abuse which, in turn, have often been described as forms of mental illness. This article will seek to demonstrate what Choice Theory is, how it works, and how it may come to have a major impact upon us in many different ways.

Introduction

In this part we will briefly set out to describe Choice Theory. Then we discuss why Choice Theory is the best approach in formulating the origin of human behaviors. Choice Theory simply points out that we all engage in various behaviors in order to meet one or more of the needs built into a person's genes. These needs are survival, love and belonging, power, freedom and fun. Choice Theory posits that the vast majority of people throughout the world use external psychology today. Unfortunately, this psychology, according to Glasser, includes such things as "forcing" and/or "punishing," which often ruin interpersonal relationships. So instead of creating bonds of connectedness, such actions may actually give rise to feelings of dissatisfaction and disconnectedness with those whom we wanted to be connected. In addition, this theory alludes to seven caring habits to replace seven deadly habits to maintain our relationships.

Seven Caring Habits	Seven Deadly Habits
Supporting	Criticizing
Encouraging	Blaming
Listening	Complaining
Accepting	Nagging
Trusting	Threatening
Respecting	Punishing
Negotiate differences	Bribing to control

These seven caring habits need to be utilized by all of us, and should hopefully replace the seven deadly habits we've used in the past, if we truly wish to improve our relationships with others. For example, supporting should replace criticizing, otherwise it harms relations as a matter of external psychology.

Five Core Principles of Choice Theory

Human basic needs

We are born with five basic needs. These needs include: survival, love and belonging, power, freedom and fun. All people have these needs, though they may experience them at different levels and express them in different ways. Hence, someone may need a higher degree of love, while someone else might prioritize having more freedom. This may be because we are all genetically and biologically motivated to meet our needs, however we can, and hopefully, as efficiently as we can.

Quality world

All of us have our own quality world comprising of things, pictures, people or activities, which matter to us and are made up of how our needs have been met in the past, or how we think they will meet our needs in the future. We construct our quality worlds when we interact with others. All things placed within our quality worlds tend to be highly needs satisfying. These things do not have to match with the quality of the society. For instance, drug abuse is in the quality world of a drug abuser, stealing is in the quality world of a thief, and aggression is in the quality world of an aggressor. In order for something to enter into our quality world, it must meet one or more of our needs and make us feel good.

Perceived world

The only way that we can experience the real world is through our perceptual system. Information in the real world first passes through our sensory system: ears, eyes, mouth and skin. Then, these senses pass these messages through our perceptual system. In our perceptual system, the information is filtered through our knowledge filter and our valuing filter. The knowledge filter is what we know or experience. When information is meaningful

to us, it enters into our valuing system. If information is what we have learned or need satisfying, we place a positive value on it. Because we come to all situations through different knowledge, experience and values, therefore we perceive the real world differently. Although we live in the real world, what matters is our perception of the reality. We behave depending on what we perceive to be real, whether we are right or wrong. Because of these filters, two people may witness the same event or take part in the same activity and yet have different perceptions. Thus, according to Choice Theory, we can only experience our perception of the real world, rather than the real world itself.

Comparing place

Our brain constantly compares two pictures. Our perception of reality and the picture of our quality world of what we want at that time. The purpose of all behaviors is to create a match between our perceptions and what we want. When there is a match we maintain our behavior, but when there is a mismatch we feel discomforted and will likely choose another behavior spontaneously in order to create that match.

Total behavior

All behavior contains four components, acting, thinking, feeling and physiology. When we change any of these components, other parts change too. The easiest parts over which we have control are acting and thinking. But it's much more problematic for us to directly have control over our feeling and physiology components. For example, imagine you could feel less depressed or less distressed because you just wanted to. So by changing our acting and/or our thinking, we might, in turn, be able to change our feelings and our physiology too. Said somewhat differently, Og Mandino (1968) once said that strong is he who has his behaviors control his emotions, but weak is he who allows his emotions to control his behaviors.

Discussion

With regard to what we have explained, Choice Theory develops a newer picture of human behavior. This theory sets out that we are not the victim of our past unless we want it to be so. It shows us the reality of life that what we are and do is choices made to meet our needs at that time. Generally speaking, this theory demonstrates how humans through four comprehensive dimensions compared with the ACT or CBT which show just one dimension of human behavior, called rational dimension. These four dimensions in choice theory indicate this reality that humans are not confined to only thinking; rather acting and thinking are two wheels of a car pulling feeling and physiology. Choice Theory is the best theory to better understand the origin of human behavior in that humans are not confined to thinking and do not possess one dimension. The acting leads to thinking and thinking, in turn, leading to acting. Thus, it's much easier to control acting than thinking. We are driven internally to behave based on our needs. Contrary to the other therapeutic approaches, the power of the mind is taken for granted in Choice Theory. What matters is that Choice Theory explains humans behaving in differing ways because they satisfy their needs to differing degrees, and that anybody has his or her own quality world owing to a variety of factors, be they a function of nature, nurture, and/or personal choice. These individual differences make us different individuals and therefore, people are not equitable across groups of individuals. Furthermore, the quality world of any person is only the reflection of

what s/he perceives to be real. Glasser believes the only one whose behavior we can control is ourselves. To Glasser, all long term mental problems are relational problems. In fact, without knowing this reality that all humans are different and have different views and values, we resort to external psychology in an attempt to make others do what they don't like to do. Many a better world we will build if we can abandon the notion the external psychology is king, and then turn instead to controlling our own behaviors and thoughts, for by so doing many a relational, ethnic and religious conflict may be avoided and/or eradicated through the use of Choice Theory.

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Brief Bio—

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A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME COULD STILL REFER TO REALITY THERAPY

Ernie Perkins

Abstract

Through the years, therapists have often customized Dr. William Glasser's Reality Therapy into their own methods of doing therapy. One such fictionalized therapist has been Dr. Ernesto Perkinstine, who was in Oklahoma City recently and was interviewed by CTRTC Ernie Perkins. The following is an account of that fictionalized interview. It is given here to help the reader to see how the principles of Reality Therapy work even under an assumed name.

An Interview with Dr. Perkinstine, Psychologist

Dr. Perkinstine first became a well-known figure with the publication of his best seller, *Acting Your Way to Feeling Good*. In his book, Perkinstine argues that as one acts and thinks in his or her mind (where else does one do his or her thinking, he asks), the person will live out through his or her actions. He advocates the counseling method that he calls Act Good/Feel Good Therapy. Many have attacked AG/FG, a cognitive approach, by calling it "wishful thinking or Pollyanna"ish psychology. Perkinstine has accepted their criticism as a compliment, and has been reported as saying, "That is a good definition of AG/FG." Dr. Perkinstine was in Oklahoma City for the International Conference of Act Good/Feel Good Therapists. I had an opportunity to interview Dr. Perkinstine for the radio program, Noon Time, I host over WISE. The interview was recorded live, and it will, of course, contain those normal grammatical mistakes that one finds in a conversation between two persons.

The Interview

Ernie: Dr. Perkinstine, it is an honor to have you with us today on Noon Time.

Perkinstine: Thank you, Ernie; it is a pleasure to be here.

Ernie: Dr. Perkinstine, since we have only a limited time, I hope you won't mind if I get right into the subject of AG/FG. Your theory has taken the psychological world by storm. You seem to have many followers, but there are also many who criticize what you advocate as a counseling method.

Just what is AG/FG?

Perkinstine: AG/FG is just a modern day application of an essential truth that has been around for centuries. Essential Truths, which I spell with a capital letter by the way, do not change. They may disappear for a while, but because they are Truths, they will resurface. In the Bible, for example, the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk told of a situation where everything was bad. Yet, he decided he was going to rejoice. Because, he said, "He (God) will make my feet like Hinds feet, and make me walk on my high places." The hind, Ernie, is a mountain deer that never worries about where its back feet

are going to land when it is running across those dangerous high trails. The hind's back feet always land where the front feet had been. The Essential Truth is simply this: If we focus (i.e., land) our actions on good things, our feelings (the back feet) will also land on those same good things.

Ernie: Isn't that a little like Norman Vincent Peal's *The Power of Positive Thinking*?

Perkinstine: Oh, yes. Of course it is. But, after all, Ernie, isn't thinking an action? When you see someone just sitting and staring into space, and you may ask, "What are you doing?" And, the person may reply, "Nothing. I'm just thinking." But, that person is, in fact, doing something. He or she is truly involved in an action.

Ernie: I know what you mean. I tried thinking once and I was tired for three days afterward.

Perkinstine: (Chuckling) Well, it can be hard work at times.

Ernie: Doctor, I suppose the two questions that everyone would love to ask someone like you are: What causes psychological distress? And, how can a person, either the therapist or the client, relieve psychological distress? So, let me ask those questions of you.

Perkinstine: "What causes psychological distress?" That is a very simple question that has a very simple answer. Psychological distress is the result of a person's response to an abnormal situation in his or her life. Normality may bring boredom, but it doesn't bring distress. If one begins to let the boredom move to a very high degree, then, normal has become abnormal . . . and distress can occur. It doesn't have to, you understand. It can, but it doesn't have to.

Ernie: What causes it to become so? Distressful, I mean.

Perkinstine: Remember the answer? Psychological distress is the result of a person's response to an abnormal situation. The abnormal situation must be responded to. But, how am I going to respond to it? Am I going to let it kick my feelings into gear, before I have an opportunity to act on it? By all possibilities, I might. After all, our feelings are often responsive to outside stimulants. If the abnormal situation was one that can produce anger, anger can be produced in a second's time. But though it does, I can regain control over my anger if I will do the right things. The hind is running backward for a few moments. But, I can turn the animal around. And, if I want to be psychologically healthy, I really need to turn the animal around now!

Ernie: That almost answers the second question, then, doesn't it?

Perkinstine: Help me, Ernie. What was the second question again?

Ernie: How can a person, either the therapist or the client, relieve psychological

distress? In other words, what needs to be done?

Perkinstine: If the therapist is going to help the client, he or she must help the client realize that only the client, no one else, not the therapist, not a spouse, not a friend, can do the actions for the client. The client must act his or her way out of their own depression. One of my favorite verses from the Bible is "Faith cometh by hearing." And, I believe that. But, Ernie, let me ask you a question. "If faith comes by hearing, how does it begin?" You see, I believe it begins by proclamation. I proclaim my faith even when I don't have it, so that I can have it. If I find myself getting into a state where I am depressing (my friend's, William Glasser, term), I need to start something exciting (my term). In 1960, my little buddy Charles Brown was standing with his head bowed low and his shoulders stooped. And, he said to his friend, "I am practicing being depressed. How you stand," he continued, "determines how well you can depress. If I stand like this," he says, as he straightens up and holds his head high, "it is awfully hard to enjoy a good depression. How you stand has everything to do with it."

Ernie: Sounds to me as if you need to hire him as a front man now that Charley is out of a job.

Perkinstine: (Laughing) It does, doesn't it?

Ernie: Doctor, another of your critics accuses AG/FG as a band-aid that works with on a symptom, and not with the real problem. At its best, they say, it is a quick-fix that doesn't really go to the heart of the problem. How do you respond to this charge?

Perkinstine: I am thrilled when AG/FG is identified as a quick-fix, but it isn't only that. You see, my friend, most people come to see a therapist as a last resort. They are hurting and they are coming to the emergency room of the hospital. Yet, many methods react to their emergency as if it were a visit to their doctor for an annual physical. Notably, however, the person is truly hurting and needs help immediately. AG/FG's aim is to give that help now, in the ER. Then, after we have taken care of the immediate and most critical part of the situation, we will start work on the long-term care part of the program. AG/FG isn't just listening, and nodding the head, and grunting "Un hum" occasionally. It is a whole different way to handle life, not just one unpleasant situation. When the client learns the principles of AG/FG, the person will have a happier life in every avenue of his or her life.

Ernie: That is some goal. It sounds almost too idealistic for any one method. Does it work?

Perkinstine: We are seeing it work all over the country. Yes, it works. Let me take the marriage relationship as an example, Ernie. I am more in love with Mrs. Perkinstine today than I was when we got married. More in love, even, than I was a year ago. The reason is I act out love every day. I do love. I search for those things about her that are thrilling, and I turn a blind eye to those things that might have the possibility of being irritating. I purposefully practice "love is blind." As much as I love her today, I believe I could kill that love if I started looking for every fault, every non-attractive thing she does or says. If

every day I told myself, "My love is dead. She has killed it. I just don't love her anymore." If I were to do this, my feelings would follow my actions, and we could be in a divorce court in a year. Our actions are very powerful. So, to answer your question, yes, we do ER, and then we go into the long-term care.

Ernie: By long-term care, are you talking about years of therapy?

Perkinstine: Oh, no. Our method does not need the client to be in weekly sessions for years, as do some methods. Remember our premise. No one can do the client's actions but the client. Therefore, we encourage, we assign, and we hold the client accountable, but the client learns quickly the principles and either accepts the challenges to change or chooses not to.

Ernie: Dr. Perkinstine, if the relations between client and therapist aren't a forever relationship, then, just how important are the relations between the therapist and the client? Is this an important issue with AG/FG?

Perkinstine: Oh, absolutely, Ernie. The relationship is one of the most important issues in our method. Let me emphasize again. AG/FG is a teaching method. We help our therapists learn how to lead the client to understand the importance of that client's taking responsibility for his or her actions. "You make me so mad?" a person can say. But, in reality, the action may be dissatisfactory to the speaker, but it is the speaker who is choosing to become angry over the action. The best teachers I had, as a child, were those teachers who were not afraid to let me know that she loved me as a student, or as a person. I was able to see in my favorite teachers a love for the classroom that went far beyond the salary he or she was earning. We want our therapists to have a wholesome, loving relationship with their clients. Notice, now, I said wholesome! We have been accused of encouraging transference, but transference can happen with any method. We believe people who come to us are hurting, and we want to help them learn how to act in a manner that the hurt will diminish, and maybe even disappear.

Ernie: But, transference is a major concern, isn't it? What if a young married lady comes to you, you're a sharp-looking, young man, and I suppose ladies would find you attractive, and she has an unloving, hateful husband. Won't it be easy for her to transfer her romantic feelings toward you?

Perkinstine: Possibly, but this can happen in any method. The important thing is for the therapist to behave in an ethical manner. We are trained for this type of thing. If the situation gets out of hand, it will do so because the therapist did not behave, or act, right.

Ernie: Well, how directive should the therapist be? You said the session is a teaching session, don't some theories believe in letting the client find his or her own answers?

Perkinstine: Yes, they do, and, we do also, but we will encourage the client to work out his or her own course of action. Meanwhile, we will help them understand, and teach them, if

you will, regarding how to develop a course of action if they have trouble doing so on his or her own.

Ernie: How do you do this?

Perkinstine: Do what?

Ernie: How do you help the client work out his or her own course of action?

Perkinstine: Robert Wubbolding, a Reality Therapist, has an outline that we have adopted into our program. It is WDEP. Say, we have a lady coming with a problem. "W" asks the client what she is **wanting**. "D" asks what she is currently **doing** to achieve the goal of getting what she wants. "E" asks if the actions she is currently doing is getting her what she wants (i.e., **evaluation**), are her current actions being successful? And, "P" helps her develop a **plan** in order to reach her subsequent goal(s).

Ernie: I have a hard time remembering outlines.

Perkinstine: I remember it as "**W**anda's **DEP**artment."

Ernie: Well, doctor, I see that our time is almost up. But, I do have one more question. Does AG/FG have the therapist sitting at the head of the couch while the client relives his or her childhood trying to find something to blame on mommy?

Perkinstine: Ernie, you do have a way with words. No, we are ahistorical. That is, we know bad things have happened in most lives. But the fact is, there isn't a single thing we can do about it. We can't change it. We can't make it go away. All we can do is to determine what we are going to do about it now and in the future. We help our clients establish new actions that will overcome the negative things of the past. Never to dwell in the negative past, but to look forward to the future with a positive attitude, a new course of action, that will produce happier feelings.

Ernie: Thank you, very much. Folks, our guest today has been Dr. Ernesto Perkinstine, psychologist and author of the book, *Acting Your Way to a New Feeling*. Until this same time tomorrow, this is Ernie Perkins wishing you a happy Noon Time.

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P.S., Please remember that while this interview was 100% fiction, but that the points highlighted throughout it are invaluable if they are applied correctly, regardless of what we call the therapeutic method used! Nevertheless, we should always be thankful to Dr. William Glasser for making this entire process fully learnable and doable for everyone on this planet, no matter what people choose to call it!

Brief Bio—

Ernie Perkins is a motivational speaker, an educator (three masters and four earned doctorates), counselor (CTRTC, WGI Faculty Member), and humorist. On average, he speaks over 200 times a year to groups from several to several hundred. He is often used as a humorist entertainer. He keeps his furniture in his home in Edmond, Oklahoma and tries to come by to check on it a couple of days each month. His wife of fifty-four years, Wanda, is his travel and ministry companion.

LEARNING TO HIT A CURVE BALL

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Abstract

The author is a Southern Baptist evangelist whose ministry takes him into a different church between thirty-five and forty weeks every year. It is in these situations that he finds opportunities to share the truths he has learned in his study of CT/RT with the pastors and staff members of those churches. His counseling is brief supporting counseling with the goal of teaching truths that the counseled uses in their work a long time after I have left. This article shares an example of his doing so.

He was a great ball player, but when his secret was discovered, his ball-playing days were over. He could field with the best of them. He was a great base runner. He had so many skills, except for one major weakness. He just could not hit a curve ball. When his secret became common knowledge, all the opposing team had to do was to put on the mound any pitcher who could throw a curve ball, regardless of how weak that pitcher was. He just could not and would not connect.

Of course, pretty much everyone has a weakness. If that weakness is not in the field of our work, it may not be a big problem. However, for most of us, there will be an area in our chosen field in which we "can't hit a curve ball." What do we do in those situations?

This is where what I have learned in CT/RT has been a tremendous help. Using the principles of CT/RT, one can still "get on base" and score, regardless how strong the curve balls are.

To illustrate, I'll tell you a story. I had arrived for another revival with a church where I had been several times before. The typical revival for me starts with the Sunday morning service and has services each evening through Wednesday night. The church may or may not have a noon luncheon where I do entertaining and hopefully teaching sessions in which the people will learn as well as have fun.

Sunday had gone very well, and I was pleased with the results of our Monday luncheon. The pastor and I were standing outside the church when he shared, "Bro. Ernie, I am having a few problems I need to talk with you about."

From where we stood, I could see the beautiful church sign sharing the name of the church. "There are two words on your sign that told me that already," I said. "Do you know what those two words are?"

Surprisingly he turned and looked at the sign for a long minute and then replied, "No, I don't."

"They are the words 'Baptist Church'," I said. "Every Baptist church has a few problems because the church is people and not the building." Then, I added, "Share with me the problems that you are concerned about."

"I have a divided congregation," he replied.

"In what way? And over what?" I asked.

He shared that apparently one of the deacons had found a survey form he decided would be good for the deacons to pass out to the membership. The survey form would give them information concerning the people's thoughts about the pastor, the deacons, the church's programs, and the church's failures in areas of ministry.

Without talking to and including the pastor in the process, they mailed the form to over two hundred families and received back over seventy responses.

The pastor thought the survey was sent in order for the deacons to measure and assess his leadership and standing within the congregation. He felt betrayed and hurt that after years of being the pastor he was being treated like a hired hand.

He showed me the results of the survey and there were areas in which dissatisfaction was apparent, not only with the pastor, but also with the deacons, and with various church ministries. I couldn't see, however, anything in the results that was of a major problem.

The division was within the questions, and their distribution to the members of the congregation. "Basically, did the deacons have the authority to do the survey without including the pastor throughout the process?" Furthermore, there were some who asked, "Should not the whole matter have been brought before the congregation for approval before it was started?" Notably, there was also division even within the deacon body.

From my CT/RT training, I thought I needed to do two things in light of this situation: First, I wanted to help the pastor get hold of his own feelings about the matter, and second, I wanted to help him see how he could put a positive spin on the situation and turn it from a divisive situation into a unifying and church-building situation.

To work toward the first goal, I shared things that he already knew, but needed to be reminded of them. More specifically, many professions, including the ministry, have members who find their value in what they are instead of who they are. Thus, to reject their work is to reject them personally. This rejection can be either real or imaginary; it actually does not matter. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," (Proverbs 23:7) is a tremendous essential truth. As Dr. Glasser and CT/RT have so eloquently pointed out, our thoughts can often have great influence over our feelings and our physiology.

The pastor's interpretation of the survey's purpose was to judge his work, and thus judging him personally may or may not have been the outcome sought. It did not matter as far as how he felt. It was easy because of his own biblical knowledge and experiences to help him

see a potential danger, and to remind him of a greater fact: He has value because of who he is. I did this by walking him through Glasser's five basic needs that each of us has, and how they may have a "domino effect."

First, if one thinks that his "power" (significance) need is denied (and that one thinks he/she has no value), then he/she will likely think that his/her person (love need) is rejected too. In turn, this failing of the love need will likely affect his freedom need because the person will think that everything he/she is doing is being judged. This unfilled freedom need will then hit the fun need and the work, or ministry, will cease to be fun, or fulfilling. This will bring down the last need, i.e., the survival need ("Is my job actually being threatened?").

I shared that the natural feeling for him to have is anger, and he confessed that he had to work through that. I then shared that the next feeling is depression, and although I had not sensed it in him, I encouraged him to do those things that work to combat that feeling.

The second goal was even more challenging, but potentially the more rewarding of the two goals. From my evaluation of the response received from the survey, I stated how he conceivably could turn the situation into a positive situation. I shared the essential truth as expressed by Dr. Glasser that it is impossible to change the past. It is unchangeable, but not unusable. I gave him a scenario in which I was in his situation facing a deacons' meeting the next Sunday night with the same problems.

"Men," I would say, "we are facing a tremendous opportunity right now. We can disagree whether the thing that got us here was right or not, but that is in the past and there is nothing we can do about the past. Therefore, I would like for us to never speak of it again. Instead, I would like for us to take the results of the survey and determine how we can use them for the good of the church and for our future ministries."

As a result of the survey, the church already had a great foundation upon which to build a strategy plan for future ministries. Most Baptist churches, if not churches in general, have no formal, worked-through strategy plan. Instead, most churches' strategies for ministry is based on the circumstances. We have good buildings, but few people; thus, our plan/goal is to reach more people. Or, we have too many people and not enough room; thus, the plan/goal is to build more buildings. And, so it goes from year-to-year. If secular businesses operate like most Baptist churches do, they would likely go out-of-business within a few years.

I shared the process for doing a strategy plan from my book, *Traveling the Highway to Change without Crashing*, and immediately ordered him a copy from Amazon. The above illustration of my trying to help a pastor and his church is but one example of the type of counseling I do. My itinerate ministry does not permit me to do long-term counseling from my office, but if I can share the principles of CT/RT one-on-one with pastors and church workers across the nation, I think I will have made a major contribution and use of my work in learning this great psychological tool.

Brief Bio—

Ernie Perkins is a motivational speaker, an educator (three masters and four earned doctorates), counselor (CTRTC, WGI Faculty Member), and humorist. On average, he speaks over 200 times a year to groups from several to several hundred. He is often used as a humorist entertainer. He keeps his furniture in his home in Edmond, Oklahoma and tries to come by to check on it a couple of days each month. His wife of fifty-four years, Wanda, is his travel and ministry companion.

CHOICE THEORY AND COMMUNITY LITERACY WORK: QUALITY LITERACY

Cheryl Brown
Wendell Dryden

Abstract

This paper builds on an earlier examination of the way Choice Theory can be integrated into family or community literacy work. It examines some of the ways in which the application of Choice Theory in schools and workplaces differs from its application in Reality Therapy, paying attention to important contextual differences. In doing so, it describes a fourth, distinct application of Choice Theory the authors term "Quality Literacy."

In the summer of 2003, an outdoor reading and borrowing program ran for nine weeks in a low-income neighbourhood in Saint John, New Brunswick. The reading program, called 'Storytent' was developed as a means of providing easy access to family literacy support. Storytent was a superficially simple program - one or more canopies, blankets and ground sheets, popular adult and children's books, two or three workers to welcome families - delivered in two-hour sessions, weekday mornings and afternoons, at over five different neighbourhood locations. Yet, program results were impressive. These outcomes, and our understanding of the part Choice Theory played in obtaining them, was the subject of a paper published earlier in this Journal (Brown & Dryden, 2004).

Since that publication, we have delivered a variety of storytent or storytent-like programs and events in multiple neighbourhoods. We have also helped others develop their own storytent-like programs; writing a "how-to" document, presenting basic orientation workshops, and providing concrete, on-site training and follow-up support. On these occasions, we present Choice Theory as a major source of our success. In a single or half-day workshop, our presentation of Choice Theory is necessarily compressed. Nonetheless, workshop attendees often later identify Choice Theory as the most interesting or potentially useful part of our presentation; and organizations often identify Choice Theory as an important part of their program. Thus, a 2012 report on a storytent program taking place at the other end of our province reads, in part . . .

Following previous successes, the Storytent program was implemented in 2012 for a fifth consecutive summer. Storytent aims at improving family literacy by developing and supporting quality relationships between staff, parents and children. The program's day-to-day operations are guided by William Glasser's Choice Theory, which emphasizes the use of techniques that offer choices to participants in an open and positive environment.

(Castonguay, 2012, p. 2)

Locating Community Literacy Work Among Choice Theory Applications

The challenge of introducing Choice Theory, briefly and effectively, has invited us to ask which aspects of this psychology are most important to our work. Providing clear examples of how we apply Choice Theory has also raised questions about where our work fits among

established applications of Choice Theory (e.g., Reality Therapy/Lead Management/Quality Schools). In considering these questions, we came to see our community literacy work as a distinct application of Choice Theory; one which most closely resembles Reality Therapy.

The following table offers a quick overview of eight elements we think characterize different Choice Theory applications. Some are elements the applications seem to have in common. Some are elements which help distinguish one application from another. Neither this list, nor the discussion that follows, is meant to be exhaustive or authoritative. We offer them only to explain why we have begun to self-describe our work as Quality Literacy.

Table 1: Applications and attending characteristics

	Quality Schools	Lead Management	Reality Therapy	Quality Literacy	#
Environment and Relationship	✓	✓	✓	✓	1
Total Behaviour	✓	✓	✓	✓	2
Perceived vs. Quality Worlds	✓	✓	✓	✓	3
Increased Health and Happiness	✓	✓	✓	✓	4
Increased Productivity and Quality Work	✓	✓			5
Self-Determined Objectives			✓	✓	6
Self-Determined Measures of Engagement			✓	✓	7
Self-Determined Measures of Success			✓	✓	8

1. Environment & Relationship

Whether it is applied in the therapist's office, the classroom, or the workplace, Choice Theory starts with building positive human relationships.

Therapists practicing Choice Theory typically start off with what Dr. Glasser has called the "getting acquainted talk and banter" needed "to develop the warm supportive relationship necessary for successful counseling" (Glasser, 1998, p. 64). His advice to teachers in *The Quality School Teacher* (1998) is to talk to students "much more than most of you have ever done before" and also to "get rid of the standard rectangular classroom configuration of rows" (p.3); making "a warm, supportive classroom environment" (is) the first of his six conditions of quality schoolwork (p.18). Lead managers, Kenneth Pierce reminds us in *Using Lead Management on Purpose*, make work "a talking and listening place" where workers "feel empowered" and are "more likely... to do quality work" (2007, p.94).

This same holds true in our community work. Our 2006 storytent manual contains a section titled "The First Twenty Minutes" which reads, in part . . .

Relationship building is the most important part of the Storytent program.

Everything we do in the storytent, from set-up onwards, is done in a way that builds relationships.... When children come into the tent, workers smile and greet them. We tell them what happens in the tent, offer to read a book, or offer several books for them to look at, and then respect their choices.

(Brown & Dryden, 2006, p. 51)

2. Total Behaviour

According to Choice Theory, human beings directly choose their actions and their thoughts, as well as indirectly choose their physical and mental-emotional feelings. Reality Therapists, lead managers and quality school teachers recognize that clients, workers and/or students with unmet needs are likely to indirectly choose feeling of sadness, anger or anxiety. They may also experience negative or disabling physical symptoms.

While these feelings and symptoms call for empathy, the key to wellness lies in thoughts and deeds. Reality Therapists engage in conversations and relationship-building to help their clients choose new ways of acting and thinking, thereby indirectly choosing better mental and physical health. For example, in his fictionalized first meeting with Teresa, Dr. Glasser is concerned to help his client overcome the immobilizing power of depressing, a feeling she has indirectly chosen through her thoughts and deeds (Glasser, 2000). He wants her to see new ways of acting, and so he introduces "the word choose in a positive sense," adding . . .

Now my job is to steer the conversation around so she sees that something good actually happens in this hour. I don't know what it can be, but I'll keep thinking and something will come to me. Or maybe to her.

(Glasser, 2000, p. 123)

With Teresa, Glasser engages in an open-ended process. Lead managers and lead teachers operate in a narrower framework, and so they should "focus on helping the workers [/students] without coercion to act and think more effectively on the job [/at school]" (Glasser, 1992, p. 87). In both instances, the focus is on someone making new, more effective choices.

Storytent is an optional, self-selected activity for families quite unlike school, work or counselling. Nonetheless, in the storytent we recognize the impact of direct and indirect choices both on ourselves and on our participants. For example, we are mindful of how choices around sleep, diet and hydration can affect things like patience, humour, enthusiasm or concentration. We understand why we might meet cranky kids and grumpy parents on a hot afternoon, and understand the need to use connecting language as we help them navigate this part of their day.

On the other hand, mutual support and self-care ("effective choosing") is a major preoccupation for storytent workers because we understand that we need to be relaxed,

open and present in order to react well to challenges and provide families with a good experience.

You need to constantly re-evaluate.... You have to be very okay with changing your plans and being adaptable. There's a physical aspect of this job, too, that I don't think any of us anticipated. It's physically taxing. –

Worker Survey response, 2003

It is tiring to work this project. This project is physically and emotionally demanding. There is constant exposure to poor weather, to children and families in disheartening socio-economic situations....

Worker Survey Response, 2004
(Brown & Dryden, 2006, p. 42).

The concept of total behaviour has become part of an on-going reflection and program improvement process. If our behaviour is ineffective in the tent, we ask ourselves basic CT questions: "What did I do? What was I thinking?" But we also ask more specific questions like "Am I over-tired? Am I comfortable in what I'm wearing? What have I been eating and drinking?"

3. Perceived vs. Quality Worlds

It is dissatisfaction, the gap between how we see the world and the picture of the world we want to see, which spurs us to behave in the ways described as total behaviour.

Consequently, the Choice Theory process involves reflection on or conversation about these pictures.

In schools, students behave in accordance with these pictures (Glasser, 1992). When teachers and schoolwork are part of students' quality world pictures, they are more likely to choose effective school behaviours. It is the job of Quality School leaders to use connecting behaviours to remain in their students' quality worlds. A similar dynamic is at play in the workplace, and once again it is the role of manager-leaders to be aware of perceived world and quality world pictures as they build the positive relationships that yield quality work. In Reality Therapy, quality world pictures are individual and personal. The role of the therapist is to help the client close the gap between their perceived and quality world pictures either by changing their behaviour or adjusting their pictures. Dr. Glasser tells us it is possible a client will hold conflicting quality world pictures (Glasser, 1998). It is the client who decides whether or not "change is beneficial to them" (Wubbolding, 2000, p. 10) and what they want. This is similar to our approach in the storytent. We watch and listen for insights into the perceptions children and families have around books, reading and their own status as readers, as well as those quality world pictures which spurred them to come to the storytent, and support accordingly.

4. Increased Health and Happiness

The goal of Reality Therapy is to help clientele to become healthier and happier because they feel they have more effective control over their lives, through choosing “a change in behaviour resulting in need satisfaction and greater happiness” (Wubbolding, 2000, p. 10). The particular total behaviour and quality world pictures involved in this sense of gaining control will change from client to client, and in that sense the details matter less than the client’s positive shift in actions and beliefs.

The situation is a little different in schools where helping students choose health and happiness, a laudable goal in its own right, can also be part of a process of removing barriers to learning and quality schoolwork. In the workplace, where unhappiness or illness can have an impact on the financial bottom line, it makes sense that improvements in worker health and happiness becomes a manager’s concern. Elsewhere, we discuss the link between our literacy work, including storytent, and population health (Brown & Dryden, 2004).

The provision of fresh fruit in an outdoor reading program equally shifted eating habits. There, some children met their first orange, melon or dulse, and quickly began looking for fruit each day. In this same program, our organization of space and learning created a low-stress atmosphere—a social support network, healthy social environment and safe physical environment—which, parents claimed, reduced violence and raised the quality of life for several children in the community.

(Brown and Dryden, 2004, pp. 8 - 9)

Thus, we make improved physical and mental well-being an explicit goal of all our work because we employ Choice Theory, and we believe using Choice Theory will almost always increase wellness.

5. Increased Productivity and Quality Work

The rationale for employing Choice Theory in the classroom and/or workplace includes more than having happy, healthy students and employees. Schools and workplaces have external goals toward which teacher-managers and administrative-managers direct their students and employees. In fact, it is exactly this shared concern for externally measurable outcomes that allowed Dr. Glasser to use W. Edward Deming’s principles of workplace management as the basis for his Quality Schools approach (Glasser, 1992, pp.2-3). “When the above principles are put into practice in school or elsewhere, the worker cannot help but see that the manager is as concerned with the workers’ needs as with his or her own,” he writes in describing the quality school (Glasser, 1992, p.35). Dr. Glasser is clear on the personal and societal benefit of “quality work” that can be accomplished in schools.

The concept of “quality work” fits less well as an outcome of Reality Therapy. While better schoolwork and/or a more productive workday are both positive by-products of better mental health, it is the health itself; the client’s acquired skill in handling his or her problems, through behavioural change, that is the primary goal for both the client and the therapist. This is a small but important difference between the individualist focus of Reality Therapy as a Choice Theory application, and the team or corporate focus of quality schools and lead management.

In our community literacy work, we also have no “quality outcomes” beyond those set by, and measured by, the individuals or families who ask for our help. Participants may learn skills or behaviours that serve them well at school or on the job, but this is incidental to our work of providing access to the literacies families and communities tell us they want and need.

6. Self-Determined Objectives

The quality school teacher and lead manager are charged with creating warm, supportive environments and selling their choice of product to their worker/students because they must lead rather than boss, *but they must lead*.

Managing is the process of convincing people that working hard and doing a quality job of what the manager (teacher in the case of the schools) asks them to do will add quality to their lives and, usually, to the lives of others.

(Glasser, 1992, p. 176)

This is very different from the learner-directed approach we take in Storytent. We will not ask a child or adult to do anything: rather, we want to know what, if anything, we can do for them:

Any child who enters the tent voluntarily is telling us that they think the storytent holds something of value for them. If we start right away to create a positive relationship, we can discover what that something is.

(Brown & Dryden, 2006, p. 25).

Children are free to pick any books they want to read or look through on their own. In the Storytent, children's reading is not criticized. We wait to be asked before supplying a word or correcting an error. Also, we would never make negative comments about a choice of book. However, we would tell a child about a book that we thought matched their interest and reading level.

(Brown & Dryden, 2006, p. 27).

So too, in Reality Therapy, it is the client who sets the objective; does so indeed in the act of choosing to talk to a therapist (Glasser, 1998, p.75). Glasser states that:

I started, as I almost always do with a voluntary client, by saying,
“Lucy, you came here for good reason. It would help me a lot if you’d start by telling me what’s on your mind?”

(Glasser, 2000, p. 28)

Glasser also taught us that it is possible that a client will have an unobtainable goal in mind rooted in conflicting quality world pictures. In this case, the counselor is not passive: the counselor cannot tell a client what to do, “but he or she can frame the options” (Glasser, 1998, p. 115). This is also similar to our approach to literacy support, in that we will not tell a learner what to do, however we will ‘frame the options’ that are available to them and then support them in their choices.

7. Self-Determined Measures of Engagement

Just as the agenda is more open in Reality Therapy and Quality Literacy than Lead Management or in Quality Schools, there is greater discretion with respect to the degree and length of involvement. A counselling client may attend a handful of sessions, seek counselling for years, or drop in periodically as life presents more or fewer challenges. There is some negotiation called for here. Private practitioners may choose to set limits as to who they will see and for how long, and therapists working for institutions may have other boundaries placed on them. However, because a sense of effective self-control is an intended outcome of Reality Therapy, it makes sense for it to be the client who would determine how intensive or extensive their sessions might be.

This is not the case in the school or workplace where people are reasonably expected to show up at set times, for a set length of time, with certain tasks pre-set. Employees can leave their workplace freely, but they rarely get to drop back in for a few weeks if something comes up. Additionally, students coming and going unexpectedly through the school year would often be a reason for real concern.

In our community work, there are a variety of conditions that might apply. Sometimes, like the Reality Therapist under contract with an institution, we have obligations to funders which, in turn, limit our own accessibility. Sometimes, we work in partnership with institutions that place limits on whom or how many people we can serve. Sometimes, we have reason to draw our own, personal boundaries which we require our participants to respect. Generally speaking, however, we offer the kind of services that allow people to come and go as they please.

8. Self-Determined Measures of Performance

This distinction between external product and internal satisfaction arises again when we look more closely for success indicators. Quality work feels good and is very nearly its own reward. Nonetheless, whatever the internal state of student or worker, it is the outer product - the well assembled automobile or well written essay - which manager and worker co-verify as "quality."

In the context of ordinary counselling (that is, where the counselling is not mandated by an outside party), there is no external product for therapist and client to co-verify: there are only the client's perceptions and quality world pictures. Once a positive relationship has formed, the therapist asks questions and provides perspective purely to aid the client in reflection. The WDEP tool (in simple format) - WANT - What do you want? DOING - What are you doing to get what you want? EVALUATION - Is that working? PLAN - What else might you do? (Wubbolding, 2000, p. 98 - 159) - result in the client learning to self-assess and take effective control over their own lives, without a dependence of external validation.

There is a similar focus on self-evaluation in the Quality Literacy work we do. In the Storytent program, children decide for themselves if they want to learn to read, and when they have become readers. They decide for themselves if they are "good" readers. They decide for themselves if they are happy with a book, with the storytent, or with themselves. In this sense there is no failure, no falling behind the crowd. We believe that

this self-monitoring plays an important part in the positive shift in many children's perceptions of themselves as readers.

(Brown & Dryden 2006 p. 31)

Quality Literacy

Storytent is our best-known program, but it is not all we do. We do door-to-door, year round lending programs, and establish participant-managed libraries. We join neighbourhood events and seasonal celebrations. We run short-term projects, and also offer mentoring and hands-on learning for volunteers who want to organize and deliver their own events and projects. We provide private tutoring and small group literacy learning for adults. We engage in advocacy work with new Canadians and families in crisis, offer parent sessions on topics like home and school relations or helping children with homework, and offer professional consultation on topics like assisting low-literacy customers or using clear writing. Finally, we regularly run in-house 'Choice Theory Focus Groups' (Glasser, 2003) as part of our on-going professional development.

Throughout all of these efforts Choice Theory is integrated into all of our work. We employ lead management in-house. We strive for quality by constantly reflecting on our work and looking for ways to make improvements. We view challenges through the prism of what we can control, what it is we want, and what else we might do to reach our goals. We share our perceptions and quality world pictures, and then negotiate any disagreements. We are careful about the language we use. Being mindful of total behaviour, we pay attention to the things we need to do to stay healthy and happy in our work. It is this constellation of the different ways we integrate Choice Theory with our work that has led us to speak of it as "quality literacy."

Conclusion

In this paper we have set out some of the ways in which the application of Choice Theory in schools and workplaces differs from its application in Reality Therapy. We have highlighted the client-centered, client-directed nature of the latter against the institutionally-directed nature of the former. In both settings, a non-coercive, non-judgemental approach allows people to grow and become mentally fit, socially productive, and, for the most part, happy. Nonetheless, there are important contextual differences that require quality schools and lead management workplaces to give attention to publicly measurable products and outcomes in a rational, structured environment, where the reality therapist focuses on personal, even private, dispositions in a highly tailored way.

We do not practice anything like Reality Therapy in the storytent or during a Family Literacy Day event. Yet, it is the tailored, conversational, self-directed tone of Reality Therapy that most closely resembles what we do there, in the application of Choice Theory, which we have begun to call "Quality Literacy."

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Brief Bios—

Cheryl Brown, MEd, CTRTC, ECE is an Educator and Counsellor working in Saint John, NB Canada.

Wendell Dryden, CACA is a Community Literacy Worker and Adult Learning Teacher in Saint John, NB Canada.

Both are interested in and work to resolve questions regarding barriers and access to community literacy in isolated and/or low income neighbourhoods.

APPLICATIONS of CTRT IN COUNSELING GRIEF: JOURNEYING THROUGH GRIEF

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Abstract

Working with grief is an area of high need in today's world. Be it ambiguous loss, disenfranchised grief or complicated grief, therapists are required to have some knowledge of how to deal with this specialized area of therapy. Complicated grief, for instance, requires therapists to reintegrate the broken relational bonds with the deceased into the current reality of individuals. Forgiveness of ourselves and others, facing and letting go of guilt, finding a special place for the deceased in our lives are all required when working with grief. As therapists, we have to sit with clients in their grief and trust in our presence and in the models that we apply to therapy. Through case analysis this paper discusses appropriate application of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy in the management of grief issues. Grounded in the philosophical aspect of the quality world pictures, CTRT can effectively face challenges working with grief in heterogeneous grief groups, as well as in individual settings.

Introduction

Regardless of one's race, ethnicity, gender and/or background an experience universal to all human beings is the experience of grief. The longer we are alive on this planet, the higher the probability that those near and dear to us will pass on. Grief while it is a universal human experience, can be lived through by individuals in many different ways. Recent grief research looks at grief in its more complex forms such as ambiguous loss, disenfranchised grief, anticipatory loss and complicated grief. As therapists dealing with human experiences, it is inevitable that we come across clients working through their grief, yet there are few papers dealing with how CTRT can be effectively applied in managing grief.

The Applications of Choice Theory/Reality Therapy

Perhaps it is not so surprising that there are few papers written on counselling those experiencing grief as most reality therapy practitioners work in the here and now, creating non-coercive and non-judgmental relationships, taking responsibility for total behaviors and focusing on the specific plans and actions that will lead to high internal control and effective behaviors (Glasser, 2001.) There is an excellent metaphor used in CTRT therapy where Total Human behavior is likened to a car, with the front wheels, thinking and doing, in control of the car instead of the back wheels which are feeling and physiological state. Thinking and doing, we are able to take conscious control. If we consciously direct our thinking and doing, the feelings and body will follow.

When one is in bereavement, however, the back wheels of the car seem to take control, the car spins out of control as there is really nothing one can do about death. The physical relationship with the loved one is over, leaving the bereaved disconnected and unsatisfied. At this point there is nothing one can do to get them closer to the person they need.

Arguably, self-evaluation, which is a cornerstone of CTRT (Wubbolding, Brickell, Loi, & Al_Rashidi, 2001), may lead clients to increased feelings of disconnectedness as behavior change will not lessen the emotional loss created by grief.

For an instance, when addressing the components of the human control system identified in the 22 types of self-evaluation questions developed by Wubbolding (2000), the answers to the questions may do more harm than good. The self-evaluation of beliefs of grieving may by less trained therapists be worded, "Do your beliefs about the death in your family enhance or impede harmony in your family?" This is a reasonable question, but it is also a brutally logical and rational one, that may cause the client to disregard their personal emotional need in favor of satisfying the family need.

Someone in grief wants their loved one back, and self-evaluation of the wants while once again logical and rational cannot heal the disconnectedness that is experienced by those in grief. They want their loved ones back; this want is seen by the griever as clear, in line with their best interest and yet impossible to achieve. How can one apply CTRT effectively when the application of cornerstone tools require a thinking behavioral response, where grief is highly personalized and emotional? Is CTRT's effectiveness based on dealing with clients' behavior with the living and prioritizing the other over their personal grief needs?

This paper argues that if practitioners understood the essence of grief, philosophy and complexity of choice theory, CTRT can and, in my experience, is an effective therapy for supporting a client through their grief.

What is Grief?

It is perhaps helpful to understand some basic terminology associated with grief. A loss refers to a loss of something in an individual's life that may take any form, from financial to emotional. Bereavement is the term specifically applied to death-related losses. Grief refers to all human reactions, be it physical, emotional, social, cognitive and/or physiological reactions related to the loss. Mourning in this paper is defined as the social, public or ritualized response to loss, while grieving is a personal journey of individuals in managing their personal loss.

In thanatology literature (study of all things related to death) numerous forms of grief have been identified. Anticipatory grief has been defined as "The phenomenon encompassing the process of mourning, coping, interaction, planning and psychosocial reorganization that are simulated and begun in part, in response to the awareness of the impending loss of a loved one and the recognition of associated losses in the past, present and future." (Rando, 1986, p. 24) Anticipatory grief in brief is the emotional state of individuals who in caring for loved ones are aware of the impending and inevitable loss. (Simon, 2008, Zilberfein, 1999, Gilliland & Fleming, 1998)

Disenfranchised grief is reflective of a situation where the loss of the griever is not recognized due to stigma, social bias or the circumstances of the death (Robson & Walter, 2013, Lenhardt, 1997). For instance, grief of the child of a pilot suspected in the disappearance of the airplane was mocked on social media, when she posted about missing

her father. It is the grief experienced by people when their "loss is not or cannot be openly acknowledged, publicly mourned or socially supported." (Doka, 1989, p. 4) Those who may experience such grief are those who are not recognized in the lives of the departed such as same-sex partners, unacknowledged children or partners from extramarital affairs; where the circumstances of the death creates stigma such as suicide, AIDS or drunk driving or when society may not recognize the significance of the loss. This includes elective abortions, perinatal deaths, death of pets or online friends.

Ambiguous loss is loss that is traumatic, confusing and without closure (Boss, 2010, 2004, 1999). Ambiguous loss may be experienced in two distinct ways. The first is when the individual is physically absent but psychologically still present due to the lack of concrete evidence as to the fate of the loved one or due to the lack of a body. This form of ambiguous loss is experienced in kidnappings, major disasters where the bodies are not recovered such as the disappearance of MH370 and the Boxing Day tsunami. The second form of ambiguous loss is when the person is physically present but psychologically absent such as Alzheimer's and drug addictions.

Complicated grief or pro-longed grief has been placed under Conditions for Future Study in the DSM V. This means that while normal grief is seen as a natural human process, if the grief is prolonged for over six months, meets a certain set of criteria as proposed by Shear et al. (2011), the duration of the impairment or symptoms must persist for a month, and this impairment must be culturally inappropriate and cause significant impairment in a major area of the individual's functioning, it may be deemed a disorder (Boelen & Prigerson, 2012, Ogden & Simmonds, 2013, Shear, 2010). With this proposed inclusion in the DSM V there are fears of medicalizing treatments for grief, hence the requirement for reliable therapeutic interventions when working with grief and loss has become increasingly essential.

Goals of Grief Therapy

It is an unfortunate reality, at least in my home country of Malaysia, that it would not be anecdotal to say that if you ask a normal therapist to name a grief theory, he or she will invariably respond Kubler-Ross, Five Stages of Grief (1969). Kubler-Ross work was based on how the terminally ill faced their own death, yet it has been generalized to how people experience grief. The theory by Kubler-Ross while well accepted in popular culture has been challenged by numerous thanatology researchers (Weismann, 1972, Schulz & Aderman, 1974, Doka, 2014.) Personally, I would challenge the notion that one will ever transcend or even truly accept the death of a child, a sibling or a beloved parent. Daily life may carry on, but twenty or thirty years after the death of a loved one, on quiet nights, during special occasions and sometimes just when sunlight hits the leaves just right, the memory of the loved one surges within, bringing fresh tears and the bittersweet pain of love absent, but still not gone.

Regardless of the theoretical descriptions of grief, the goals for therapy is similar, that is, the integration of the individual's past, present and future. Grief therapy does not seek to encourage clients to leave the past behind or simply 'get over' the death, instead grief work

revolves around the development of effective continuing bonds with the deceased. (Ho, Chan, Ma, & Field, 2013, (Strobe, Abakoumkin, Stroebe, & Schut, 2011))

Instead of avoiding thoughts of the deceased and distracting ourselves from grief by immersing ourselves in daily hassles, new hobbies and work, grief therapy focuses on supporting clients as they engage with the loss and through that engagement develop new ways of engaging with the rest of the world. With re-engaging with the world, clients redefine enjoyment and explore positive aspects of life, integrating the past and the future. Through active engagement and restructuring of grief, new meaning is found in the loss experience. Meaning making is a key ingredient in grief healing process. Individuals need to develop a new self-narrative in the devastation caused by the death of a loved one (Neimeyer, Klass, & Dennis, 2014).

A Case Application of CTRT in Journeying with a Client through Grief.

Kara was a 21 year old female student who was coming in for therapy due to prolonged sexual molestation and abuse by a club physical instructor. She was highly stressed and believing that none would listen as those she had disclosed parts of the abuse to, had turned a blind eye, avoided responsibility and even blamed her for allowing the abuse. Kara initially presented as highly suicidal, and with over a year of therapy had stabilized and was doing well. Three months after the therapy had ended, late at around four in the evening, Kara telephoned the therapist frantic as her brother, her main ally and supporter in her family had been in an accident. Her home was two hours away and the family was sending a car to her. They refused to divulge details on the phone, provided platitudes and left her waiting. When she reached home two hours later it was only to learn that her beloved brother had died in a tragic accident while driving to his tuition center. His car had gone out of control, jumped the divider and smashed on the guard rail. Autopsy reports stated he died on impact, and the accident was attributed to mechanical failure with no evidence of substance abuse or foul play. The therapist from that point journeyed with the client, first in the area of immediate trauma, and later supporting the client through her grieving process. At the time this article was written, two years had passed since the brother's death and the client was moving forward carving a new life. This case will be used to highlight the application of the fundamentals of CTRT in managing grief.

The Therapeutic Relationship Empowers Clients.

A basic genetically-coded need, according to Glasser, is the need for power, in line with the idea of internal control, power is the power to have some choice, some control and some influence even when it seems the world is spinning out of control. Therapists need to ensure that clients lead sessions and feel empowered and supported. This is highlighted tragically in the phone conversation between Kara and myself when she had been informed of the accident but was given no further information.

Kara was understandably distressed and worried. She was frantic and seeking comfort.

Kara: They are telling me it's going to be alright. My Aunt said that they are going to the hospital. He is going to be alright.

Counselor: Hmm . . .

Kara: He is going to be alright, right?

Counselor: I don't know, what have they said about his condition?

Kara: I don't know, they just say they will tell me when I get there (sobs). He is going to be alright (sobs)? He has to be alright.

Counselor: Ummm . . . Umm (Making non-committal supportive encouragers)

Kara: Doc, it's going to be alright? (Please) tell me it's going to be alright!

Counselor: I'm not there I don't know what is happening.

Kara: (Persisted, insisting) Doc, please tell me that it's going to be alright!

Counselor: Kara, please, do you need me to lie to you?

Kara: (long silence, very quiet) Yes!

Counselor: Yes, Kara. It's going to be alright. Everything is going to be fine.

(Phone session continued in a comforting manner until she was picked up by the driver)
Kara's request for comfort was based on the need for love and belonging and the need for safety. To reply with platitudes and information that the counsellor just did not have would have actively damaged the therapeutic alliance that had been forged between the client and the therapist, as trust would have been destroyed. This statement is supported by the client who later was extremely angry at her Aunts and relatives who informed her that everything was going to be fine and gave allusions to her brother being in the hospital, when her brother had in fact died on impact. She felt terribly betrayed by them. The therapeutic alliance between the client and the therapist, however, was strengthened, as by getting permission from the client to 'lie' the client's need for power, love and belonging and safety had been respected. The question placed control of an untenable situation in the hands of the client, reducing client's frustration and pain.

In applying the genetic needs of clients and respecting clients attempts to gain effective control of their lives, CTRT requires that therapists make the hard decisions of respecting, trusting and accepting client's choices, these connecting habits help preserve the counselling relationship in very uncertain situations. The reason clients ask almost impossible to answer questions is due to their need for love, belonging and safety. The response of getting permission to lie, connects with and has an empowering impact on the client. Trusting the client to articulate his or her needs and responding to those needs, respects clients' decisions and shows acceptance of their internal control. CTRT posits that people choose the behavior that has led them into therapy because it is always their best

effort to deal with a present, unsatisfying relationship, or worst no relationships at all (Glasser, 2001).

Applying the connecting habits in hard situations and respecting that the client's behavior and responses are the client's best attempt to satisfy his or her basic needs, builds an empowering therapeutic relationship with the client. CTRT stresses the idea that to satisfy every need, one must have good relationships with other people. This means that satisfying the need for love and belonging is the key to satisfying the other four needs (Glasser, 2001). This explains that when the client is able to satisfy his or her need for love belonging, he or she will be able to fill up the gaps in the need for power, fun, and freedom.

Working with Grief through the Quality World

The Quality World is basically what one wants most. When a client is in grief, what the client wants most is the picture of the person alive, with them, and giving them strong positive feelings. This is, of course, no longer possible to achieve so everything that passes through the valuing filters, whether positive events, negative thoughts, or neutral perceptions, all lead to frustration and pain, as nothing in the present will ever meet the picture based on the past that the client has in their quality world.

Based on the effective grief management discussed above, CTRT is uniquely suited to support clients through their grief when we apply the fundamentals of how the brain works to manage grief. Choice theory provides an explanation of human behavior and how the human mind functions (Wubbolding, 2011).

The CTRT chart allows us to address the deep cause of pain which is the imbalance between the perceived world and the quality world. Kara's brother was alive in her quality world, the absence of her brother in reality meant . . . that in daily life, no matter who else was present it became a source of imbalance and pain. The first task of therapy therefore, seven months after the tragedy was to examine those beloved pictures in the quality world.

Kara was initially stuck on talking about the accident, the death and the funeral. The focus on the tragedy obscuring any thought of the future. Through the process of storying and re-storying, the therapist worked with the client to express the whole story of the tragedy, including details that would usually be missed. This was to allow for a complete story to be told. Events that were rushed by the client, such as the actual funeral was slowed down, thus allowing the entire experience to be drawn out. Details that had been unsaid or glossed over in earlier repetitions, were allowed space to be expanded on, allowing the client to express completely what had occurred. For instance, Kara just mentioned in the first session that she had gone to the police impound the day after the accident to collect items from the car. It seemed an aside in the whole story. However, in the fourth session when the counsellor got the client to focus on the event, details that she had needed to say gushed out. When she collected the items, she had been told to get them from the actual wrecked car. She said the impact of the Jaws of Life breaking the driver's doors open, the rust colored stains on the wheels, floor boards and smell was terrible. The only girl accompanied by male cousins, she had done her best to act 'normal', not realizing the amount of internal trauma it caused.

Once this whole story was out, Kara's earlier need to revisit the events of the tragedy seemed to slowly diminish. Only after being heard fully was the client able to move slowly away from the story of the loved one's death to the story of the loved one's impact on the lives of his family members. Having the comfort of being heard, understanding the placement of the loved one in the client's quality world, became the major focus of therapy. Kara's brother was not only a beloved sibling he was the one in her family who was proud of her, who encouraged her to have a better future for herself. In her quality world he was her cheerleader, confidant and support. Without that she felt stuck and unable to look forward to the future.

Relocating the loved one in the quality world by acknowledging the past, reframing current reality, focusing on the key need of Love and Belonging and journeying with the client to the future, linking the client's personal goals to the new placement of those dearly departed in the quality world. The placement of the departed in the quality world allows for the continuing bond that has been identified as a key factor in grief therapy. In a meta-research study, the contradictions in the finding of the continuing bond, Root and Exline (2014) stated that "because of the diversity in expression, it may be difficult to identify clear implications of empirical findings or to isolate characteristics of the continuing bond experience that contribute to specific grief outcomes." (P.4). By developing the continuing bond within the quality world, CTRT potentially addresses the issue directly as clients develop the bond based on what they want in the now and in the future.

Kara, for example, was afraid that 'moving on' meant forgetting about her brother. People did not seem to want to talk about him. The only way it seemed to keep him alive was to nurse the grief, and that was the price for keeping him alive in her Quality World that she was willing to pay (Glasser, 2003). In therapy, we worked on placing a future orientation in the quality world picture of her brother. What she wanted was for her brother to be remembered. We built on that image, that she was his legacy, people would remember him, respect him because of her actions that are inspired by him. The pictures contained in the quality world are specific, changeable and developmental. These characters include both the realistic and unrealistic wants and Kara was able to merge her wants into an image that was healing and motivating to her.

The memories of loved ones who have passed away can be kept in the quality world for the continuing bond, and the future orientated wants of CTRT supports the clients as they journey from dwelling in the past to focusing on the here and now. The client's relationship with the departed in the present is supported, allowing for the development of a new satisfying relationship which is the ultimate goal of counselling (Glasser, 2001).

As the quality world is in metaphors, images and pictures allow access to the quality world and supports clients in shifting their quality world images (Glasser, 2003). As the restructured meaning that emerges here are based in the quality world of the client, frustrations are diminished as more accurate comparisons of current reality and what the client wants the most is achieved. Even when the pictures or wants are specific, they may be blurred. A major part of the counselling process is helping the client clarify imprecise goals, objectives and hopes which are their wants. CTRT helps the client to gradually come

to the realization that some of the wants are unrealistic, others unreasonable and others helpful to recovery and to interpersonal relationships (Wubbolding, 2011).

CTRT helps the client to take charge of their own choices and be in control. The focus of CTRT is not to inform clients of how long or how short their grief process needs to be. As long as the client is able to orientate to the future, there will be times that our loved ones are remembered in what is termed as STUG or Sudden Temporary Upsurge of Grief (Alger, 2013, Leary, 2012). As one who has experienced grief and loss myself, I would firmly contend that the STUG has been misnamed. My personal preference is to name it a Sudden 'Therapeutic' Upsurge of Grief. As the individual is in our quality world, they never disappear from our lives. Thus there will be times when we miss them and remember them. In CTRT terms at this moment the back wheels of the car act up, instead of getting frustrated and annoyed at our emotions and bodily state, we respect them and send the back wheels a bit of attention and servicing, after which they work fine. So too, at times we just miss our loved ones and feel bad, so we service the want to reconnect with the loved one. When a STUG occurs, honor the memory. These memories and surging emotions are a testament to how much we love and were loved in return. It is the tugging of the most essential need for love and belonging. Honoring the love and the memory goes a long way to healing. During moments of STUG what I do and what I encourage clients to do is to take the moment to remember, write a poem, go for a walk, sing a song, cry, laugh, look at old pictures; basically live the moment.

As Glasser mentioned, we use symptoms to avoid situations we fear and that will increase our frustration. Many times people are afraid to grieve after losing a loved one. The choice to depress gets them off the hook for a while. What they are afraid of is further rejection and loss. Painful as depressing is, it is less painful than facing this possibility (Glasser, 2001). Embracing the moments of STUG allows us to challenge the fear and accept the unique roles our loved ones will always have in our quality world.

The Journey Forward

CTRT through the quality world allows those who grieve to maintain continuing bonds with their loved ones in an active and realistic manner. Therapists and counsellors of CTRT support clients as they reposition their loved ones in the quality world to create a healthy and satisfying relationship that is locked in the here and now. Working with the quality world requires a deep understanding of client's internal processes that comes from the storying and re-storying. Once understanding has been achieved, the therapist and the client move to repositioning the loved one in the quality world and honoring the moments the client needs to remember.

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Brief Bios—

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AN INTEGRATION OF MINDFULNESS WITH CHOICE THEORY AND REALITY THERAPY

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Abstract

Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to the present moment in a purposeful and nonjudgmental manner (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). In this article, we integrate Choice Theory and Reality Therapy with Buddhist psychology along five different dimensions: (1) using awareness of the gap to enhance choice; (2) the nature of perception and filtering of the mind; (3) flow versus fixation in the quality world; (4) original nature and the quality world; and (5) basic goodness and the creative system. We also apply these five dimensions with two different case studies to demonstrate ways in which the integrative approach enhances understanding and effectiveness in counseling.

Mindfulness has its roots in Buddhist psychology. According to Jon Kabat-Zinn (1994), mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to the present moment, on purpose, in a nonjudgmental way. While Kabat-Zinn (1990) developed a program that is a secular approach to mindfulness, any attempt to integrate mindfulness psychology inevitably borrows from Buddhist psychology. Its value in therapy, as well as in everyday life, is that mindfulness allows clients to be more aware of the present moment as well as their patterns of distortion and bias; mindfulness allows therapists to respond to clients more accurately and with greater sensitivity.

Mindfulness has been integrated into many different theoretical approaches (McWilliams, 2012) and is now one of the most popular interventions used in the application of psychotherapy (Brazier, 2013; Davis & Hayes, 2011; Ivey, 2015). For example, Pierce (2003) offered a version of the 8 week mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR) program that could be understood from the framework of a reality therapy approach. In spite of the popularity of the integration of mindfulness in therapy, there has been limited exploration into the ways that mindfulness can be integrated with reality therapy or choice theory.

In this article, we will integrate five different dimensions from Buddhist psychology with choice theory. The five different areas of integration are: (1) using awareness of the *gap* to enhance choice; (2) the nature of perception and filtering of the mind; (3) flow versus fixation in the quality world; (4) original nature and the quality world; and (5) basic goodness and the creative system. In order to demonstrate how useful the integration of the two frameworks can be, we will also apply the integrated theory to two cases.

Using Awareness of the *Gap* to Enhance Choice

According to both choice theory and Buddhist psychology, we are always making choices and yet we are not always aware that we have done so. When we respond by habit, we are choosing to engage in the same behavior as we did in the past. But why do we have the

tendency to make the same longstanding choices? Because we are not aware of what we are doing, we do not realize the other possibilities. Reality therapy (Glasser, 1965; Wubbolding, 2011) is one avenue by which we may enhance consciousness of other possibilities. Specifically, spending time talking with a counselor can help us realize choices we did not see in the past. We can see different choices and different outcomes that can improve our relationships and our world. Optimally, someone can help us learn how to see other possibilities on a regular basis so we can continue to make wiser choices throughout our lives. Likewise, learning to see the possibilities in the present moment is one of the most potent effects of mindfulness.

Choygam Trungpa Rinpoche, a Tibetan meditation teacher who is a major figure in the development of mindfulness in the West, emphasized the importance of noticing the *gap* that appears in our experience (Nichtern, 2015). We are often highly consumed with an agenda that we move quickly from one distraction to another. If we can slow down in our activity, we can notice a *gap* between finishing of one thing and starting of another. In this *gap*, we step out of our agenda and we can notice life just as it is, without having to be anywhere but the present. It is in the present moment, without judgment or bias, that we experience mindfulness. Subsequently, we can experience a sense of spaciousness in which we notice and appreciate the world around us through our senses (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). When we experience a sense of spaciousness, many other possibilities are open to us. We step out of our distraction and conditioning and realize the openness and true potential of the situation.

Mindlessness, the opposite of mindfulness, occurs when our minds follow patterns of *organized behavior*, that is, habitual patterns that have been established by previous experience. Governed by the fear of repeating something painful and the desire to optimize our happiness, we generate patterns of living that support our tendency to repeat deep-rooted behaviors. In fear and confusion, our minds are crowded and heavy with agenda. Only when we can learn to slow down and be present are we able to consider other possibilities and make wiser choices. An awareness of the *gap* not only increases the possible choices we have, but also makes it more likely that we will see things more clearly and make better choices.

The Nature of Perception and Filtering of the Mind.

Both mindfulness and choice theory incorporate notions about how perceptions form and are affected. According to Glasser (1998), we are the only ones capable of making choices for ourselves that can lead to greater happiness. Using habits in our organized behavior that externalize the cause of our suffering and impede our recognition of the ways we are contributing to our own suffering keep us trapped. As long we view our suffering as having an external locus of control, we cannot realize the choices we are making or could make.

When we recognize that we are the only ones who have control over ourselves and that we cannot control other people, we are in a better position to make the best of the situations of our lives (Glasser, 1998). In addition to realizing our choices, we also can realize that we have choices regarding how we perceive what is happening in any given situation. In many cases in which we experience suffering, we are taken over by negative distortions. As an

aspect of the distortion, we project qualities and feelings about ourselves onto others. We end up only repeating our patterns and bolstering our negative beliefs.

Like choice theory, mindfulness is concerned with working with our minds and perceptions to see through our own patterns of distortion so we can make different choices. It is when we become aware of the *gap* and are clear that we can make the best decisions and better identify instances in which we project and distort. The more we can become aware of how our perceptions are impacted by our projections and distortions, the more we can adjust our behavior so we are more likely to get our basic needs met (survival, love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun).

In choice theory, Glasser (1998) stated that our *valuing filters*, an important function of the perceptual system, are oriented to classify incoming sensation in three potential ways: (a) if it helps in meeting our needs, we place a positive value on it; (b) if it hinders the meeting of our needs, we place a negative value on it; and, (c) if it neither hinders nor helps our needs, it has little or no value so it remains neutral.

The *valuing filters* are very similar to the five *skandhas* in Buddhist psychology (Trungpa, 2013). The skandhas are a description of the five principle components of how the mind processes incoming stimuli:

1. *Form*: A stimulus makes contact with the physical body.
2. *Sensation or Feeling*: Raw physical data arise from contact between the world and the contact is sensed and enters the nervous system.
3. *Perception*: Mental processes use previous experience to judge what the object is and whether it is pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral.
4. *Mental Formation*: We form concepts which determine what is happening in the environment and the relationship between the object being perceived and the ego. The object can be determined to be friendly, dangerous, or neutral.
5. *Consciousness*: Based on what forms in the mind, an impulse enters the conscious mind as to what to do with the object being perceived (e.g., engage or disengage, fight or flight, etc.).

Our bodies are the *form* through which we have contact with the world. In order to register with what is happening, we need to feel *sensation*. When we are numb, we cannot register contact with the environment. If we allow ourselves to feel, sensation is experienced as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral. We perceive the sensation in order to assess what is creating the sensation. Then, based on our narrow agenda of self, we develop *mental formations* (i.e., concepts and thoughts about what is happening). We determine whether the object is a support, a threat, or irrelevant to our sense of self. Finally, we become more fully *conscious* of what is happening and take action. As a result of our perceptions, we either orient towards the object (attachment), push away the object (aversion), or ignore

the object (delusion). In Buddhism, the preconceived sense of self filters perception, cognition, and action. In the same way, choice theory describes how sensation is marked with positive, negative, or neutral value depending on whether it will help us match our quality world. Both approaches are interested in how we filter sensation to form perceptions that lead us to choose how we will act. We are often unconscious of our motives for perception and action. Both approaches invite us to reflect on our pattern of self or quality world and reflect on what we would like our values to be.

In contrast to choice theory, the mindfulness tradition offers that the true nature of reality is interdependent and that objects are “empty” of separate existence. We are all embedded in an interconnected web of life. A fundamental ignorance occurs when our perceptual process separates experience into separate objects, and then decides which objects are friendly and which objects are dangerous. Thus, if we are to be truly present and connected with reality, we need to see through our ignorance and realize we need to work with our negative experiences of objects and people in our world.

Flow versus Fixation in the Quality World

According to Buddhist psychology, when sensation enters the nervous system with fear, the result is that our perception is much more fixated and rigid and we fall into the ignorance of separateness. One of the basic functions of the nervous system is to assure survival, and we subsequently pay special attention to the potential causes of future harm. While the threat system of our brain helps us to adapt to immediate danger, it has a tendency to overgeneralize its protective response. Even when things change for the better, the rigidity and fixation of our minds prevent us from reflecting and revising our perception. As a result we continue to cling to old behavioral responses. Human beings have a tendency to resort to the threat response mode, even when danger is not present for years later.

As we grow and develop in a healthy way, we are open to take in new experiences and change our sense of what is really important to us. In this case, our perception becomes more relaxed and open and less affected by fear. As a result, our quality world changes and becomes more developed and refined. When we are not in threat mode, we let ourselves open to learning and change. When values are derived from fear and pain, aspects of the quality world are based on outdated danger signals and therefore based on distorted notions or ideas. Fear and pain create a fixation and rigidity in the quality world that prevent a person from developing and learning from experience.

Pema Chodron (2009), a Tibetan trained Buddhist nun, refers to these fixations in our nervous system as *shenpas*. When we have a *shenpa* triggered, we react ignorantly and disproportionately to the environment. A stimulus in the environment has just enough similarity to a previous danger that our threat system is activated. As a result, we go into a fight, flight, or freeze mode and we make unwise choices based on a limited perception. The goal of meditation and mindfulness is to learn how to be aware of these *shenpas*, and eventually learn how not to be overcome so we are able to act in a more conscious and adaptive manner.

Original Nature and the Quality World

According to the Buddhist tradition, our original and inherent nature is good. What is meant by “good” is not in a moral sense (i.e., good versus bad), but in an engaging, open, and life appreciating sense. Even mistakes and painful experiences are appreciated as part of the goodness of life. Original goodness, or Buddha Nature, is also characterized as wise, kind and strong. Strength is characterized by being able to maintain an open compassionate and loving heart in the midst of stress and difficulty. When the mind is not trained, and we have experiences that cause fear and defensiveness, our original nature becomes overshadowed by shenpas (Chodron, 2009).

Our quality world is a mixture of our original goodness and our shenpa-influenced values. As we become aware of our shenpas and learn to recognize the distortions that fearful experiences have had on our mind, our quality world becomes aligned with our original goodness. Our way of perceiving ourselves and life situations changes in a positive way. Relationships also change as we begin to see that others too are affected by shenpas and also have a basic goodness that has been overshadowed. When we perceive another’s basic goodness, even though it is overshadowed by fear and defensiveness, the result is that it helps the person being perceived to experience his/her goodness more consciously. The more our quality world is influenced by our basic goodness rather than our negative distortions, the more positive and healthy our relationships become.

Basic Goodness and the Creative System

Even when our consciousness is clouded by shenpas, our basic goodness is still at work. One way to view how basic goodness continues to exert an effect on consciousness is through the creative system of the mind. According to Glasser (1998), the creative system facilitates additional possibilities to all our total behavior. Glasser considers, in particular, the ways in which the creative system expresses itself through the body that can allow people to recover from physical symptoms. Like Sarno (2006) has suggested, emotions that the conscious self will not allow to surface can manifest in particular pathways in the body.

Under the influence of shenpas embedded in the quality world, the conscious-self forms perceptions against certain choices. As these possibilities are obstructed and disallowed by the conscious self, basic goodness and openness are still at work more deeply in the mind. As a result, the creative system begins to generate other possibilities. The creative system finds a way through the body and behavior for the disallowed choice to be enacted. If the person affected by the symptoms continues to resist the disallowed choice, the symptoms only escalate. If the person can become conscious of what choice the creative system is channeling through the body and behavior, then the symptom resolves or begins to heal. The possible choice is now in the conscious mind and no longer needs to reside in the body and be expressed through enactment.

Two Case Studies

Following are two examples of how the creative system prompted symptoms in individuals for choices that were disallowed. [Names and identifying characteristics have been changed for confidentiality.]

The first case involves Mark, who was raised in a family that emphasized routine and security at the cost of exploration. As a result, Mark learned to follow what was expected of him and to please others to such an extent that he had no idea of what he really liked or wanted for himself. He came to therapy as a result of frustration with his job as an accountant and he expressed how miserable he had been in various jobs as an accountant for schools. However, he had also developed an interest in coaching basketball and other sports. After several sessions with Mark, it became clear that he was just now learning what he liked to do and it did not include a career in accounting. In spite of his growing awareness of his dislike for his career, he was terrified of the idea of leaving his job and he was primarily focused on his quality world picture of providing financial security for his family. As this pattern progressed, he exhibited more and more behaviors of depression. He also developed physiological symptoms. He would periodically get breaks from his job in order to have shoulder surgeries that never seemed to heal properly, even with physical therapy. Finally, after his last surgery, he took the initiative and quit his job. Although his wife and mother were upset with him, he and his wife developed a plan for him to join a company that coordinated sport leagues for park districts. He explained that once he quit, he felt an immediate relief in his shoulder and his rehabilitation was more successful than ever.

To understand Mark's case it is important to know that he grew up in family in which very little room was allowed for him to explore what arose spontaneously. His untested perception that he needed to follow his parents' structure was emphasized to the point that he ignored any *gap* that appeared in his secure world. As a result, some of his quality world pictures included fixation and rigidity. He followed directives from others in order to attempt to make his parents and teachers happy. Despite his desire to please his parents and teachers, however, his original nature was still at work in a free flowing way through his interest in coaching. His creative system was active in finding a way to get away from the work he disliked. He continued to have shoulder problems until finally he was able to find the courage to leave the profession he disliked and took a risk to follow what he loved to do. Once he did this, his physical symptoms disappeared and his shoulder healed more smoothly. In therapy, he learned to let go of his need for security and allow the wisdom at work within him to finally have its way. He often discusses how differently it feels to follow the spirit within and how much happier he is when he does. While he continues to express bouts of insecurity in which he doubts his career change, he is generally much more alive and inspired.

The second case involves Tina, who was experiencing many challenges in her life and family. She was overwhelmed with stress, her immune system was compromised, and she developed pneumonia. She felt helpless with her circumstances and didn't know how to handle her situation. In the process of this experience, her voice was reduced to a whisper and she couldn't talk, which in turn compromised her job as a teacher. Not surprisingly, Tina felt even worse.

Over the course of six months, Tina sought opinions from numerous doctors in her quest for a cure. Extensive medical testing involved various tubes and cameras traveling down her throat to find a diagnosis that would explain why she did not have a voice. The doctors

were unable to determine a cause or effective treatment. She was told by her last specialist that she was going to have to live without a voice. Tina continued to struggle but finally she decided she needed to accept it and deal with the reality.

One Friday night before going to bed, she was reading Glasser's (1998) book on choice theory and came to the chapter on the creative system. She read about how sometimes our physiology, as a part of total behavior, takes over and creates a way to cope with unconscious emotions. Tina wondered if that was what happened to her voice, although she further wondered why she would not want to talk. As she reflected, it occurred to her that she felt powerless in the face of the recurring challenges and that she could not control the situation, so she felt she had no voice. She also realized that if she was creating her physiological symptoms, she could stop them. At that moment, the phone rang and Tina answered the call with a clear voice. It was the first time the caller had heard Tina's voice in six months. Tina realized that she was choosing behaviors that resulted in the loss of her voice. Her understanding of behavioral choice and the purpose of her behavior enabled her to choose a different way of thinking, which resulted in the change of her actions, feeling, and physiology.

Despite her lack of success in finding medical explanations for the loss of her voice, Tina was able to find an answer by connecting with what was going on through her creative system. In her quality world, Tina held a picture of herself as being in control and having the ability to solve the family challenges. However, the situations were overwhelming and the effort she was making to control them was ineffective. Tina's basic goodness expressed itself through her creative system - she could not help because she could not talk. It is only as she became accepting of her helplessness and aware of what her creative system was doing that she was able to accept the reality of her situation and talk again.

In both cases, a lack of awareness existed that was based on rigid fixations of the mind. Unrealistic expectations and quality world pictures had most likely developed from family values, which were internalized and formed *shenpas* that affected the possible choices. The fixations existed within the quality world of both individuals and ultimately impeded them from accepting and facing the difficult realities of their lives. Yet basic goodness and wisdom manifested through the creative systems which led to "real" physical limitations. It is only as each person allowed for a *gap* in the usual way of thinking that a new way to accurately perceive the situation arose. Each person became awakened to the pattern they were enacting, accepted difficult feelings, and made new choices of what needed to be done (or not done). Through that process, physical problems and symptoms were resolved.

Summary and Conclusions

The integration of mindfulness and Buddhist psychology with choice theory provides a deeper understanding of choice and perceived options. In this paper we have offered five areas of integration including: (1) using awareness of the *gap* to enhance choice; (2) the nature of perception and filtering of the mind; (3) flow versus fixation in the quality world; (4) original nature and the quality world; and (5) basic goodness and the creative system. The practice of mindfulness opens a person to other possibilities that did not exist previously in conscious awareness. The conviction that basic goodness expresses itself

through the creative system allows for an appreciation of negative symptoms and circumstances in one's life. We have presented two actual and true cases, Mark and Tina, to illustrate how transformation can occur through physical symptoms: a shoulder injury and the inability to speak. Through such symptoms and circumstances, awakening occurs. Such awareness leads to a shift in fixations and shenpas in one's quality world. In this way, mindfulness naturally serves to expand the sense of choice within the quality world and the greater possibility that healthier choices can be made.

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Brief Bios—

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INNOVATION: USING ILLUSTRATED CARDS AS A TOOL IN TANDEM WITH CTRT INTERVENTION

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Abstract

In this innovation paper, the author shares how she integrates illustrated cards into CTRT intervention within a simplified 5-step framework. The working framework is derived from the basic CTRT framework to provide a simplified structural approach to the integrated methodology of using illustrated cards and CTRT intervention in a counseling environment. This method allows the counselor to access the client's quality world effectively via the client's projection onto the cards. It is well known that projective techniques effectively bypass a client's conscious awareness and this enables the counselor to tap into a client's subconscious needs and wants and work more effectively with them. This method is especially useful with clients who face language and verbal barriers. Using illustrated cards also allows the client to draw on their inner resources for solutions and provide the client with visual memory of chosen effective behaviors.

Reality Therapy (RT) and Choice Theory (CT) are counseling methods founded by Dr. William Glasser, an internationally renowned psychiatrist, dynamic lecturer, author, and president of William Glasser Institute (Peterson, 2000). According to Dr. Glasser, we essentially choose everything we do and we are responsible for our behavior, including behavior that is commonly termed a mental illness (Glasser, 2000). Most of the time, we choose functional or dysfunctional behaviors unconsciously to fulfill our unmet needs (Wubbolding, 2002). With CTRT counseling methods, the task of a counselor is to help the client determine what they want and bring awareness to behavior that move them further away from their wants and ultimately help the client to choose new sets of effective relationship-improving behaviors that bring them closer to their quality world.

The focus of the intervention would be the client's action and thoughts in which the client is offered the choice to change. By highlighting and bringing awareness to how changes affect their physiology and feelings, the counselor demonstrates to the client that they do have control to choose over painful behavior or fulfilling behavior in their daily connections with significant people, including themselves. The control mentioned here is similar to the internal control emphasized by Dr. Glasser. He contended that most relationships fall apart because one party uses external control psychology on another party to behave the way that they want them to (Glasser, 1999). He believes that the heart of CTRT is getting clients to realize what they choose to do in a relationship and not what others choose to do.

In order to create this realization, there are numerous methodologies, concepts or tools that have been used in tandem with CTRT in recent years. Here are a few examples; Sand Play (Sory & Robey, 2013), Spiritual Intervention (Jackson, 2014), Solution-Focused Therapy (Dermer, 2014) and Structured Reality Therapy Questions (LaFond, 2014) based on the relevancy of each type of case. During my internship, I utilized illustrated cards in my CTRT

intervention for clients with self-esteem issues, self-development issues, relationship issues and those who are stressed. In this innovation paper, I would like to share my experience with using illustrated cards as a tool in tandem with CTRT intervention in a counseling environment.

Illustrated Card as a Tool

The aforementioned illustrated cards are the DiXiT Memories cards. Originally, it is a storytelling card game created by Jean-Louis Roubira, which has won numerous awards. The DiXiT Memories deck of cards (84) contain colorful illustrations which include dream-like images that depict different action themes; acting as stimuli in CTRT intervention when used as a tool. I found that the colorful dream-like images enabled clients to explore deeper into their quality world with every CTRT question asked by the counselor. The stimuli led the counselor into the client's quality world and to better understand the client's needs and unmet needs, obstacles and challenges. Here, projective techniques are used tandem with CTRT intervention. With relevant CTRT questions, the client narrates his/her story based on his/her projection onto the picture.

The 5-Step Framework

During CTRT intervention with DiXiT cards, I use a simplified 5-step framework which is derived from the basic CTRT concept. The first three steps involved the use of illustrated cards that may be completed in one session. Steps 4 and 5 are usually done in the following session.

5-step framework with illustrated cards:

1. Understanding a client's *perceived* world and access total behaviors – (unsatisfying relationship)
2. Understanding a client's *quality* world and access total behaviors - (wants)
3. Evaluating self and refining behaviors – (Add/delete/change thinking and doing)
4. Educate client to take responsibility – (learned choice theory concepts; internal controls and connecting behaviors)
5. Plan: List concrete actions to get closer to the client's wants or attain satisfying relationships.

I would further describe the framework here. Considering that the rapport with the client is well established, I would usually begin the intervention by understanding the client's dissatisfaction/unhappiness that led him/her into counseling. I would ask the client to choose a card or two that most closely represent his/her current 'dissatisfied' relationship or situation. Then, I will ask a couple of relevant CTRT questions so that the client will further narrate on the card he chose. The questions asked depends on how deep the counselor would like to go in understanding the client's situation that is deemed to be helpful in better understanding the client's case.

Here are some examples of questions based on the chosen cards: What is the story of this card? What is the person in the card doing/thinking/feeling? How would the person's body feel in this situation you just described? Who do you think the person in the card

represents? This final question will be to bring the client's projection back to himself/herself. As the client talks about the chosen card, the behavior (action), physiology, feeling and thinking of the client's persona that is projected onto the illustrated card is explored and written down in a four-quadrant chart (shown below in case example).

Next, I would request the client to choose another card (one or two) that most closely represents the situation or the type of relationship that he would like to have. Additional cards can be chosen for deeper exploration. Usually, however, two cards are sufficient. Similar to the first step, relevant CTRT questions will be asked to explore the client's wants. Both total behavior for the 'dissatisfied' situation and 'satisfied' situation are charted. The objective of the chart is to bring awareness to the client on how his/her own thoughts and actions can control their physiology and feelings by drawing a visual comparison between the two total behavior charts. Having explored both the 'satisfied' and 'dissatisfied' relationships, relevant CTRT questions will be directed to the client to help him/her talk about the gaps between his/her current 'dissatisfied' relationships and his/her 'satisfied' relationships. The client would also evaluate if his/her current behaviors would bring him/her closer or further apart from the relationship that s/he wants.

Sometimes, additional cards may be needed to be chosen when the client has a picture of 'wants' that is too idealistic. Hence, it is important to check with the client if the type of relationships that the client wants is realistic or not. Unrealistic relationships, which depend heavily upon external factors where the client has the least control, will only add to the client's frustration. Based on the additional card(s) chosen, I will guide the client to readjust his/her wants to a more realistic picture that s/he is satisfied with, agree upon and have more control over. Similarly, this is done by asking relevant CTRT questions based on the chosen cards.

Before proceeding, it is very important that the client acknowledges that what s/he is currently doing would not help to get to what s/he wants. When s/he is ready to move out from his/her current 'dissatisfied' situation, only then would I ask him/her to choose the two cards that most closely represent what s/he thinks s/he can do to get closer to realizing his/her realistic wants. As in Step 1 and Step 2, I would ask relevant questions to guide the client to find his/her own solutions based upon the illustrated cards s/he chose. New effective behaviors, listed by the client, are then explored. The client would need to evaluate whether these effective behaviors are realistic and manageable for them. Realistic and manageable behaviors are identified and written down, and the client needs to realize and be ready to give up his/her non-effective behaviors. This is usually achieved when the client becomes aware of the difference in the total behavior charts and in their narration based on the cards of the different situations (perceived situation versus ideal situation).

In Step 4, I would cover some psycho-education about taking responsibility of the choices we make, about internal versus external control, and connecting behaviors depending on the case. Then, in Step 5, I would get the client's commitment on the plan (which is usually done in the next session), and a more detailed plan of what s/he can do to meet his/her wants on a daily basis. The client will share how s/he did in follow-up sessions. The session

will highlight helpful behaviors and non-helpful behaviors, and sometimes the plan is revised to bring him/her closer to his/her wants.

The case of James: Implementing illustrated card with Choice Theory and Reality Therapy for Father-Son relationship issue.

James (name is changed to protect client's privacy) is a 38-year old married man with two children. James came in for therapy because he has a strained relationship with his son. Recently, his son refused to listen to him at all and wanted to run away. They are constantly in a tense situation whenever they are together. James is very critical of his son and most encounters for both of them end up feeling hurt. I noticed that James has problems with verbal expressions, as he didn't say much during the intake session. Hence, I decided to use illustrated cards in tandem with the CTRT intervention with him.

The first session with James was mainly an intake interview and for building rapport. The intervention only took place during the second session after rapport was established. I began the intervention by explaining to James about the basis of the intervention that he will be going through in the session and how I will use illustrated cards as a tool in the intervention. The process with James began after I asked him to choose a card that closely represents his current relationship with his son. He chose a card of an adult wolf sitting opposite a small rabbit at a round table (See Picture 1, below).



The wolf was projected as himself and the little rabbit was his 10-year old son. When asked what is the wolf is thinking, James said that the wolf thinks that the rabbit should be under control, and listen and obey the wolf. James also added that for him to be a good father, he thinks he needs to teach and discipline his son well. When I asked him further about his behavior with his son based on the card (i.e. how is the wolf treating the rabbit?), James explained that the wolf was behaving as such to control the rabbit and at the same time he is also giving guidance to the rabbit.

Picture 1: Illustrated card chosen by James for the current perceived relationship with his son.

Next, I asked James about the wolf's physical reaction and feelings with regard to the wolf's thoughts and behavior based on his projection. James further explained that when the rabbit refuses to listen to the wolf, the wolf feels a burning sensation and that he wants to swallow the rabbit. James added that the wolf would feel very angry and at the same time be disappointed with the rabbit. James' current perceived relationship was explored by understanding his total behavior that was projected onto the card. We spent some time processing his total behavior by relating to the picture he chose and his story. By telling his story through the illustration on the card, James was able to realize his total behavior better in the 'dissatisfied' relationship (Chart 1).

Action: 1. Control	Thinking: 1. Rabbit should be under control. 2. Rabbit should listen. 3. I need to be a good father, need to teach and discipline him well.
Physiology: 1. Burning	Feeling: 1. Angry 2. Disappointed

Chart 1: Total Behavior chart of non-effective behavior of perceived world.

To explore James's ideal relationship with his son, James was requested to choose two cards to represent the kind of relationship that he wishes to have with his son. The first card he chose depicted an older boy carrying a younger boy on his shoulder while the younger one holds a stick with a game controller dangling in front of the older boy (Picture 2). Looking at



the chosen first card, James narrated that he wishes to have fun time and laughs with his son, for example, playing X-box together where both parties are happy and have lots of fun as in the picture. The second card, James narrated that he wishes to have a warm relationship with his son, like how the panda is hugging the cub (Picture 3) feeling love and closeness.

Pictures 2 and 3: Illustrated cards chosen by James that represented his wants.

Following that, I checked with James on his thoughts of the persona in the cards that he projected to be himself? James saw himself as the character giving the piggy ride and the panda hugging the little cub. James explained that he wants to love and support his son and provide him with the essential knowledge to be a good person. When asked further about how his body feels with those thoughts, James explained that he felt warmth and his body relaxed. The total behavior chart of James' quality world is charted (Chart 2).

Action: 1. Hugging each other. 2. Playing together.	Thinking: 1. Want to give knowledge. 2. Want to love. 3. Want to support.
Physiology: 1. Warm.	Feeling: 1. Happy. 2. Contented.

Chart 2: Total Behavior chart in Quality World

After exploring James's 'dissatisfied' situation and his wants with the cards, I moved to Step 3 of the framework – the self-evaluation step. James evaluated whether his current behavior will move toward the kind of relationship and situation that he wants. Looking at all the illustrated cards he chose and the total behavior charts, James acknowledged that what he is currently doing would not bring him closer to the kind of relationship that he wants with his son. Then, I shared with James the five human basic needs and how it drives our behavior to meet those needs. These behavior influences our physiology and feelings. At this point, James was aware of his physiology and feelings when he tried to control his son's behaviors in order to meet his own desires to be a good father.



When James was ready to move toward his wants, I asked him to choose cards that most closely represent what he can do to bring himself closer to the kind of relationship that he wants with his son. Again, based on the cards that he chose, a new total behavior was charted. James explained the card with the illustration of a ship with the waves shaped like a hand holding the ship (Picture 4) primed him to think that he can

Pictures 4 and 5: Illustrated cards chosen by James for effective behaviors to meet his needs.

probably adopt a balanced approach between exerting controlling and providing guidance for his son and to be more open to listening. The wave that was shaped like a giant hand prompted James to ask GOD for help through prayer. The other card depicts an old man fishing (Picture 5). The old man is waiting at a bridge with his fishing rod, above a small stream with fishes. This card primed James to think about the thoughts he can have when dealing with his son. For a change, James thought that he should always remind himself to be patient and have self-control like the old man in the cards, instead of pressing towards the thought that his son should always be listening to him. I asked James further, "How would he feel when he thinks that he should be patient and have more self-control?" and James replied that he feels cool, safe and relaxed. The total behaviors are charted out in chart 3.

Here, I noticed how the illustrated cards helped to prime James to look inwards and draw out his inner resources of possible new effective behavior and thoughts. This also allowed

Action: 1. Balanced approach. (Between controlling & guiding, authoritative). 2. Pray to GOD for help.	Thinking: 4. Self-control. 5. Be Patient.
Physiology: 2. Relax.	Feeling: 3. Cool. 4. Safe.

Chart 3: Total Behavior chart of effective behaviors (Step 3)

him to be aware of how the new set of thoughts and behaviors changed his physiology and feelings. By charting out the total behavior chart with three different situations with the

support of the illustrated cards, James was more aware and understood that he could be more in control of his behavior and how thoughts can influence his physiology and feelings.

Following this, I shared with James about controlling habits versus connecting habits, internal control and choice theory and he was open to learning more about them. Having the awareness and understanding of internal controls, James was ready to move to the final step of the framework, which is to work on the details of a plan to connect better to his son. When detailing the plan with James, I did not use the cards. However, James needed to understand that the daily thing he plans and his commitment in executing the plan shall be based on the new total behavior charts. The plan includes practicing self-control and using a balanced approach with his son, such as getting a hobby that they can do together and spending 20 minutes to talk and connect daily, and using connecting habits and effective behavior in every encounter. During the follow-up session, James said that whenever he starts to get out-of-control, he was able to identify his physiology signals. In addition, the picture card of the ship and the old man reminded him about his effective behaviors, which are to be patient, calm, and to have greater self-control.

The Benefits of Integrating Illustrated Cards in CTRT Intervention

Based on my experience with DiXit cards in CTRT intervention, I found that clients who have challenges in language and verbal expressions are able to express themselves better using DiXit cards because the illustration on the cards could help to prime the client's hidden emotions and internal conflicts. Another significant benefit I noticed when using the DiXit cards in CTRT intervention is that the counselor may easily tap into both conscious and sub-conscious inner needs, values, and the quality worlds of the clients via the client's projection onto the illustrated cards. This could be due to the projective technique used, as this technique is known to be able to bypass the client's conscious defense awareness better than most normal interviewing methods. When this happens, the counselor can work with the client more effectively using CTRT interventions. Related to effective behaviour, I noticed that the illustration on the chosen cards helped the client to draw on his inner resources for solutions. The visual illustrations also enabled the client to have a good visual memory of the effective behaviour when dealing with adversity. However, a word of caution here, when using DiXit as a tool in CTRT intervention, it is very important not to make your own interpretation of the client's chosen cards. The counselor must be open and listen to the client's stories and in order to be able to better grasp important CTRT-related working elements that are at work with the client. Finally, this methodology seems to be better suited for clients who can think more abstractly.

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Brief Bio—

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USING CHOICE THEORY TO CONCEPTUALIZE CO-LEADER RELATIONSHIPS IN GROUP WORK

Kevin A. Fall
Elizabeth Kjellstrand Hartwig

Abstract

Co-leadership is a group facilitation modality where the relationship between the co-leaders is meant to be a curative force within the group. While the importance of this relationship has been established, guidance on how to develop, maintain, and understand the relationship is scarce. This manuscript outlines a conceptualization of the co-leadership relationship from a Choice Theory perspective with the goal of providing practitioners with a theoretically consistent method of potential relationship growth.

Keywords: Choice theory, reality therapy, group counseling, co-leader

Co-therapy as a counseling modality has grown from its first use in individual counseling when Adler and Freud would utilize multiple therapists to interact with clients (Dreikurs, Shulman, & Mosak, 1984), to its eventual primary use with groups (Hadden, 1947). For years, co-leadership has emerged as a common form of group leadership and its efficacy is widely accepted (Kivlighan, London, & Miles, 2012; Okech & Kline, 2006). Co-leadership is defined as "A form of psychotherapy in which the relationship between co-therapists becomes a crucial factor in the change process" (Roller & Nelson, 1991, p. 3). This definition emphasizes the purposeful therapeutic nature of the co-therapy relationship and clearly identifies that the clinical rationale for choosing co-therapy should rest with the focus on the relationship. "Therefore, any choice to co-lead a group would necessitate attention dedicated to the creation and maintenance of a positive, highly functional co-leader relationship" (Fulton & Fall, 2016, p. 1).

In an effort to explore the nature of co-leading, the literature has created several models to illuminate the process by which the relationship evolves along developmental lines (Dick, Lessler, & Whitside, 1980; Fall & Wejnert, 2005; McMahon & Links, 1984). Although the names of the stages differ across models, each model describes a process parallel to that of a developing group, with a beginning stage characterized by a tentative, superficial connection, followed by stages exhibiting more disclosure on meaningful aspects of self, conflict, conflict resolution, deepening intimacy, and termination. As the relationship evolves, dynamics occur that obstruct or facilitate progress within the co-leader relationship which, in turn, can have positive or negative effects on the group.

Although consensus exists regarding the nature of the developmental process of the co-leader relationship and the impact that has on group growth, very little has been written about specific theoretical approaches to help conceptualize the co-leader relationship. Without a scaffolding for understanding the nature of the relationship, practitioners are at risk of ignoring the dynamics of the co-leader relationship, which could greatly enhance their groups and at worse, could create unhealthy relationship patterns that could

negatively impact their groups. This manuscript uses Choice theory as a theoretical backbone for understanding the relationship and discerning between unhealthy and healthy relationship behaviors.

A Model of Co-Leadership Development

According to Huffman and Fernando (2012), of all the developmental models of co-leader relationships, "Fall and Wejnert (2005) drew the clearest connection between the co-leader relationship and the group as a whole by adapting Tuckman and Jensen's 1977 model of group development to the co-leader experience" (p. 154). In the spirit of clarity, Fall and Wejnert's model is used to provide a concise overview of co-leadership development. Fall and Wejnert contend that the co-leader relationship can be described in the following stages:

Forming: The Forming stage is characterized by superficiality and awkwardness as the co-leaders explore how the team will work together. Most of the interaction is positive as risk and trust tend to be low. Pre and post group processing between the co-leaders can help each learn more about the other and build a sense of connection between the leaders. As the connections grows stronger, trust increases and leaders begin to risk with disclosing deeper aspects of self. As the leaders take more risks and are more honest about their thoughts about the direction of the group, the transition to the next stage begins.

Storming: In the Storming Stage, conflict increases as a result of differences that occur between the co-leaders. Healthy co-leader pairs expect these disagreements and understand that they are an important part of the life of the group and the co-leader relationship. As such, they will openly discuss conflict in the group and in processing meetings and work to non-defensively manage the conflict. With the resolution of conflict, the relationship now moves forward with a greater sense of intimacy and cohesion.

Norming: With the intensity surrounding conflict consistently managed, the co-leaders now begin to negotiate roles within the group. Each feels comfortable exploring self and others within the group and uses processing time to work through successes and differences as a way to promote greater cohesion with the group and co-leader team. It is important in this stage to keep pushing the boundaries of the relationship in order to grow it. Some co-leaders get too comfortable with this stage and begin to avoid conflicts in order to preserve the relative peace and begin to regress. Continuing to push the envelope allows the relationship to reach a true sense of cohesion, where continuous growth and reflection becomes the core value of the team.

Performing: Building on the increased acceptance and cohesion, the Performing stage allows the co-leaders to reap the benefit of a relationship dedicated to deeper growth. In this stage, the co-leaders are consistently using the relationship in the way it was meant to be used: for the therapeutic impact it has on the group. In this stage, co-leaders are using the skills of forecasting and open processing to use the relationship to positively affect the group process. Co-leaders will continue to use processing outside of the group to maintain growth and further deepen the relationship.

Adjourning: Termination is a vital stage of development and provides a time to bring closure to the experience and assess how this relationship worked and what might be done differently in the future. Co-leader pairs are encouraged to use the processing time, both in and out of group, to allow space to fully explore the end of the relationship and deal with the feelings that arise from the termination.

These five stages of co-leadership development provide a framework for understanding how the relationship develops and changes as co-leaders work together in group settings.

Basic Tenets of Choice Theory in Conceptualizing the Co-leader Relationship

Choice theory, developed by Glasser (1998), provides a system for understanding human behavior. People perceive their world and make choices based on those perceptions. Each person's perceptions are created as a function of their experiences and the dynamics get even more complicated when two worlds collide in a relationship. While one might think that co-leaders, who have similar training, theoretical perspectives, and goals for the group, would also have congruence in their group approaches, there can actually be stark differences due to the fact that humans perceive the world in unique ways. To fully understand a person, one must look to examine the choices made as a function of how they choose to meet basic needs, their total behavior, and their quality worlds. Each will be explored and connected to the co-leader relationship dynamics.

Choice theory holds that all human behavior is purposeful, and that choices for behavior are driven by five basic needs. The five basic needs are survival, love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun (Glasser, 1998). These needs are fulfilled by each person in individually derived ways, and are the general motivation for behavior. While all of these needs are interwoven in aspects of daily life, at any moment a given need might be more primary than others.

The most fundamental need is survival. This need, which is similar to the first two levels of Maslow's (1954) Hierarchy of Needs, is defined by having adequate food, water, sleep, shelter, and physical and emotional security. Basic physiological needs can be met by healthy eating, physical activity, getting sufficient sleep, and having a safe place to live. Group co-leaders are responsible for meeting their own basic needs, but can encourage their co-leader to practice self-care and wellness. Physical and emotional security can be met by being aware of physical surroundings in group settings and developing a safe and trusting relationship within the co-leader partner. Dugo and Beck (1997) recommend that co-therapy teams establish a foundation for their relationship by creating norms, discussing how each person conceptualizes the change process and group dynamics, and exploring role differentiation.

If one were forced to rank the needs in order of importance to overall functioning, the need of love and belonging would take the first slot from a Reality therapy/Choice Theory (RT/CT) perspective, especially in societies or situations where the survival needs are satisfied (Wubbolding, 2000). As Glasser (2000) noted, "To satisfy every other need, we must have relationships. . . . This means that satisfying the need for love and belonging is the key to satisfying the other needs" (p. 23). Co-leadership, as a modality, is well suited to meet the

need of belonging, as it includes the pairing of two people in an otherwise solo task. The work of counseling is often a lonely task, largely done in isolation, but co-therapy offers the benefit of having a partner share a valuable aspect of self that most people do not get to witness (Roller & Nelson, 1991; Russell & Russell, 1979). Healthy co-leaders will take advantage of this opportunity for need fulfillment and will openly provide feedback to each other in the areas of competence and areas for growth. Within this dialogue, each co-leader can experience validation, connection, and growth. By not understanding how this need can be met within the co-leader relationship, leaders will largely ignore each other. In the beginning stages of the relationship, which is characterized by superficial connection, leaders will get stuck in this stage, both desiring to keep the relationship positive, but also fearing what would happen if deeper thoughts were shared (Fall & Wejnert, 2005). This impetus to not “rock the boat” will limit the depth of the relationship, stagnate its development and the paralysis could carry over into the willingness to share by group members. As the co-leader relationship moves through the developmental stages, co-leaders can be mindful of healthy ways to meet the need the love and belonging by fostering a positive co-therapy relationship through authenticity, connection, and open dialogue.

The need for power is defined by one’s pattern for creating a sense of competence or accomplishment in life. Healthy attainment of the need involves creating a sense of self-worth through cooperation, while unhealthy striving is met through gaining significance at the expense of others. Co-leaders can develop a successful identity of co-leadership by perceiving significance and potency as coming from the cooperative unit or team, rather than from each individual. From this perspective, power is achieved through cooperation and competition or other behaviors which divide the unit would be seen as eroding the significance of the work. Dugo and Beck (1997) suggest that co-therapists establish a team identity with a structure that allows for both converging and diverging elements of their personality and perspectives. Working together and successfully navigating the challenges and celebrations of group work together can help co-leaders feel confident and competent.

In co-leadership, it should be obvious that unhealthy behaviors and thoughts would lead to competition and a lack of working together for the good of the group. In these instances, co-leaders would work against each other by struggling over the agenda or direction of the group, which could lead to confusion on the part of the group members. In this example, each co-leader demonstrates need to feel “right” or have the group members like them best, which would create a schism in the leadership team and the group as a whole.

GLEvine and Gallogly (1985) identified tandeming as a dysfunctional communication pattern where the co-leaders use verbal interaction as a way to gain power within the group. For example:

Group Member: I am hesitant to form new relationships for fear of being hurt.

Co-Leader A: You have a lot of betrayal in your past and you are fearful of the same issues occurring here, in our group.

Co-Leader B: Yeah, you are scared, but that seems normal considering your past relationships.

Group Member: I guess I need to do some work on those things. I just don't know where to start.

Co-Leader A: I think that by sharing your struggle, you are beginning the work you need to do.

Co-Leader B: It might also be good to force yourself to be more open with the group. You could start now by looking around the room and identifying one person you feel you can trust

While the co-leaders don't contradict each other in this example, the problem that arises is that the group member has received double feedback (i.e., feedback from both leaders). This can cause the messages from the group leaders to lose strength and may set a precedent for other group members to wait and hear from both co-leaders before sharing or responding. Fall and Wejnert (2005) note that if the co-leader messages were contradictory, this creates a power struggle that can divert members from the group process.

The need for freedom is characterized by a person's desire to make choices about the path of daily living. As Glasser (1998) observed, "I believe the need for freedom is evolution's attempt to provide the correct balance between your need to try to force me to live my life the way you want and my need to be free of that force" (p. 40). When co-leading groups, the co-leaders immediately confront the need of freedom as they must share and negotiate the direction and flow of the group. Unhealthy attempts to meet the freedom need will exhibit a lack of communication and collaboration on what each person wants to happen in the group. Healthy co-leader teams will understand that the decision to co-lead automatically means that there will be a loss in personal freedom, however, by attending to the relationship, strategies for each person to have a voice in the group can be explored and identified. Co-leaders are encouraged to have these difficult discussions in front of the group, so the members can reap the benefit of seeing two people work through freedom conflicts, which will be applicable to their own lives outside of group.

The fifth basic need, fun, is characterized by humor, play, and enjoyment. Glasser (1998) wrote: "Fun is the genetic reward for learning. We are descended from people who learned more or better than others. The learning gave these people a survival advantage, and the need for fun became built into our genes" (p. 41). Glasser also noted laughter is the best indication of fun. Group co-leaders can cultivate fun in their relationship and in co-leadership by developing a positive working alliance, utilizing humor in adaptive ways to enhance group processing, and including interactive techniques into the group process, such as expressive art and/or group sandtray (Erford, 2016; Flahive & Ray, 2007).

Mindful attention to how the five basic needs are operating within the co-leader relationship can provide a useful structure for exploration and development. In addition to the five needs, focusing on one's total behavior can also be a helpful addition to the understanding

of the relationship. Total behavior, another choice theory concept introduced by Glasser (1998), is comprised of four distinct, but interconnected, components: acting, thinking, feeling, and physiology. Glasser proposed that individuals have considerable choice in how one acts and thinks, and less choice over feelings and physiology. Glasser utilized the metaphor of a car to describe the concept of total behavior. They characterized the parts of behavior in this way: engine = the five basic needs; steering wheel = individual's ability to choose, front wheels = acting and thinking, and rear wheels = feelings and physiology. In using this metaphor with co-leadership, co-leaders must share the driving responsibilities on the journey of group process. Co-leaders may take turns driving by taking the lead in asking purposeful questions, responding to group members, and providing directions. Co-leaders might also take turns being a passenger by listening to group members and providing reflections and summarizations of group members' contributions, but not actively leading the discussion or group activity.

Glasser (1998) also introduced the concepts of quality world and perceived world. A *quality world* as an ideal picture of the world in which people want to live, made up by relationships, beliefs and rituals to which an individual consigns value. Choices and behavior are an individual's attempt to match experiences with their vision for a quality world. As people utilize total behavior to meet needs, they do so within the landscape of the quality world. The quality world provides a detailed roadmap to achieving all needs in an ideal manner. This quality world contains memories and pictures of the ways to achieve these needs, which, for healthy people, is how changing life experiences occur. According to Glasser and Glasser (2000), "As long as we live, the pictures in our quality world are the actual motivation for all our behavior" (p. 64).

Much like a marital relationship, when co-leaders come together, they each have images of what an ideal relationship would look like. These pictures represent what each co-leader wants out of the relationship, as well as behaviors that will produce satisfaction of the needs. Good partners are able to use the idea of the quality world in two very important ways. First, each recognizes that these inner picture albums are personal constructs, uniquely created by the individual, and therefore do not represent the absolute right way to relate. Because each individual is working from their own album, they both recognize the importance of sharing their quality world with each other and working together to modify the pictures as needed to get what they want out of the group experience. This sharing can occur spontaneously within the group sessions or can be a part of the processing time before or after group. Regardless of when it happens, the key aspect is knowing that making one's quality world known to one's partner is a crucial piece of the relational process.

Seven Caring Habits of Co-Leaders

While the preceding information provides a theoretical structure for understanding and conceptualizing the co-leader relationship within a developmental model, the Seven Caring Habits of Choice Therapy (Glasser & Glasser, 2000) provide a practical guide for the application of helpful mechanisms for co-leader teams. The beauty of this approach is that it focuses on what each person can do to positively impact the relationship. It provides a reminder to focus on changing self and to not try to change the behavior of your co-leader.

Glasser and Glasser suggested, "If we are dissatisfied in a relationship, we should focus on what we can do to improve the relationship and not attempt to change the other. The partner almost always changes as we rid ourselves of external control" (2000, p. 39). As each co-leader moves away from external control, the goal also includes striving to meet the basic needs and to helping facilitate your partner's need fulfillment within the relationship. Each habit is listed with example of how to make use of them within the co-leader dyad.

Listening: Listening is the practice of hearing not only what your co-leader has to say at the content level, but also attending to any underlying themes and understanding how what is being said facilitates both the group and the co-leader relationship. In order to be an effective listener, co-leaders need to not only be present within the group, but also make time outside of the group to discuss aspects of the group and the co-leader relationship. These dialogues provide excellent opportunities to learn about your co-leader, discuss how the group is meeting each other's needs, and to make a plan for the future.

Supporting:

As a co-leader, your goal is to help your partner meet basic needs through the participation as a co-leader of the group. In this effort, power struggles and efforts to undermine your partner are detrimental not only for the co-leader relationship development, but to the group as well. Okech (2008) note that it is common for co-leaders to develop negative relationship patterns that will stagnate the group. Unhealthy attempts to meet the need for power by trying to be better than the other leader or control the behavior of the group or leader are also common signs that the co-leaders are struggling and are not attending to the relationship in a healthy manner. Refocusing on the habit of support can realign the co-leaders' priorities.

Encouraging: Akin to supporting, encouraging helps emphasize the positive aspects of the co-leadership identity. During group session, and in co-leader processing meetings, co-leaders can note positive events and highlight successes. During the developmental stage where conflict provides a gateway to deeper intimacy, each co-leader can create a safe, encouraging space for difficult and courageous conversations to take place. These dialogues, which may be conflict or success based, can also be exhibited in session so the group members gain the benefit of healthy relationship modeling.

Respecting: Choice theory co-leaders understand and respect what each person wants. This habit facilitates each co-leader to take the time to know what each leader wants from the experience, in accordance with their own basic needs, and creates a space for each to fulfill those needs with the group experience and co-leader relationship. It may also be helpful to seek outside supervision or consultation for assistance and feedback with the relationship. This is an explicit message to the co-leader team that we respect the relationship so much that we are willing to do all we can to nurture and improve their connection.

Trusting: This habit allows each co-leader the freedom to focus on the process of the group as it occurs, without being pre-occupied and worried about whether or not the other leader

is doing the “right” thing at any given time. This habit helps each move away from external control and focus more on what self is doing to be effective within the group environment. Trust can manifest in logistical and practical ways. For example, showing up to group every week, being prepared, and participating in co-leadership processing are all ways to convey and build trust.

Accepting: Regardless of what is occurring in group, understanding that each co-leader is doing the best with what they have at the time provides an attitude of acceptance that will be necessary for assessing the progress of the group as whole as well as the co-leader relationship. The focus is not on blame, but on understanding and committing to the mutual goal of improved group and co-leader functioning.

Negotiating Disagreements:

Choice theory stipulates that although all people have the same basic needs, everyone fulfills those needs in different ways. These differences can lead to conflict in relationships, so negotiating the disagreements with regard to need fulfillment become vital to the success of the relationship. Because the health of the co-leader relationship greatly impacts the health of the group, this habit becomes essential for the success of both the co-leaders and the group. The fundamental understanding that is central to negotiating disagreements is “We can control only our own behavior” (Glasser and Glasser, 2000, p. 40). From this understanding, each co-leader will approach the conflict, whether it be group based or relationship based, with an idea of how their own behavior can be changed to improve the situation. Each party is willing to listen to the other with respect (overlapping nature of the habits) and work towards the mutual goal.

Creating quality world images using the seven caring habits can help integrate the habits into one’s total behavior. As a co-leader consistently practices the caring habits, the likelihood of using the seven deadly habits (i.e., criticizing, blaming, complaining, nagging, threatening, punishing, and bribing to control) are reduced. Replacing the deadly habits with caring ones is essential. As Glasser concluded, “Exhibiting [deadly habits] in any relationship will damage that relationship. If you keep doing so, the relationship will be destroyed” (2002, p.13). To assist in this process, co-leaders can keep a journal that tracks the progress of utilizing the caring habits and these reflections can be shared between co-leaders before and after group processing.

Conclusion

Co-leadership is a group facilitation modality where the relationship between the co-leaders is meant to be a curative force within the group. The literature is replete with information that emphasizes the importance of this relationship as well as clearly documenting the developmental nature of the co-leader relationship process. However, what is missing from the available literature is a theoretically consistent conceptualization which provides guidance as to how to create and maintain a functional co-leader relationship. In many respects, it is like being told that travelling from point A to point B is important and a map has been provided, but no vehicle or means of transport is apparent.

RT/CT provides a vehicle for helping the practitioner understand and make progress towards creating an effective co-leadership team. Each co-leader can begin by understanding

personal ways of perceiving and interacting with the world through the concepts of basic need, total behavior, and our quality worlds. That level of self-awareness can then be shared within the relationship in an effort to learn more about the partner's own ways of perceiving the world around them, and in turn, the group. RT/CT offers a philosophy that not only values the relationship, but also supplies a language for discussing and negotiating common issues that often arise. On the practical side, the Seven Caring Habits add a scaffolding for co-leader teams to focus and build healthy relationships that have the potential of moving the team through the developmental stages in a healthy manner. While the theoretical elements have been presented, like much of the literature on co-leadership, empirical research is still needed. Future research could examine the efficacy of RT/CT in the development and maintenance of the co-leader relationship. Specific training and supervision from a RT/CT perspective could also be qualitatively and quantitatively explored to provide evidence of impact on both co-leader growth and group member impact. These avenues of research could help practitioners more fully understand the dynamics of the co-leader relationship and could help provide empirical support for the use of RT/CT in clinical settings.

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Brief Bios—

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

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Abstract

The present study sought to examine 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 possibly 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/pleasure (Glasser, 1998). These needs would be one of the tenets of choice theory. And 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 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

This study examined 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 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 participants' experiences when engaged in a particular activity (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The hope was to give readers an inside look into the participants' 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 their basic needs. Rather, questions detailed subjects such as, who they played games with, their favorite genres, and fond memories of a 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 (Glasser, 1998). 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, but 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 the game reacted to it . . . is what made it really click with me." Will shared a similar understanding with Joel. He discussed his connection to these characters:

So you've spent three games playing as him/her. So no matter what you do seeing him or her 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 they fulfill their need for freedom by listening to the way a client 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 their own 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 accomplishment." 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 players. By mentioning that a player must assume the consequences of their 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.

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 a way to understand a client's personal decision-making models. Of course, it would have to be delineated whether or not they bought into the fact that they made choices in games similar to those that they made in their real life. Though, it may not rule out those who do act differently in games than they do in their real life. Will explained how he learned about real life through experiences in games and the consequences of his 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 requires a person be conscious of their decisions and the consequences of those decisions. Whether it is related to social relationships or personal choices, a person must overcome challenges to meet their 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, principles, and ideals (Juul, 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, then, these clients should not be pushed on the topic, but gradually introduced to the space in which they can fill it with 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 are 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/pleasure. 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 even more strongly.

This is a chance to hear why your clients chose specific skills, attributes and/or choose 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 whom they are interacting with in their lives. This is no different online. The trick here is to ask about the people and the roles your child 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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TRUANCY AMONG STUDENTS AT A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN MALAYSIA BASED ON CHOICE THEORY

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Abstract

This research was conducted to study truancy behavior among students at a secondary school in Perak, Malaysia based on Choice Theory. The purpose of this study is to analyze the external and internal control psychology, the basic needs and the total behavior of the students involved in truancy. The research design is a case study. A total of four main respondents and three additional informants were involved in this study. Data were collected by structured interview and documents analysis. Data were analyzed using Nvivo software. Research findings showed that the (3 components) elements of love and belonging, fun and freedom are the most dominant basic needs among the respondents. The contribution of this study is meaningful in understanding truancy behavior among students based on Choice Theory so that early prevention can be taken in handling truancy behavior in school. This study also demonstrates the crosscultural application of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy.

Introduction

Truancy is a behavioral problem that can occur in any country. In Malaysia, truancy is also one of the most common problems existing among students and has impacted the learning process in schools. A study by Wilson, Malcolm, Edward and Davidson (2008) showed the impact truancy has on many problems in school such as dropout rates, discipline problems, and bullying, all of which create an unconducive atmosphere in the school environment, causing enthusiasm to fade among students and teachers alike. Though the scenario has changed over the past twenty years, truancy is still the main problem schools face, with counselors and teachers focusing on how to overcome this issue.

Literature Review

Hallfors, Vevea, Iritani, Cho, Khatapous and Saxe (2002) identified truancy, low academic achievement and sex as the key factors that caused alcohol, drug and cigarette use among students in grades 7-12. In particular, truant students were also found to have the tendency to abuse drugs.

A study carried out by Baker, Sigmon and Nugent (2001) showed three factors linked to truancy: school, family and community and the student's own behavior. The school factor was associated with an ineffective school attendance policy, an unsafe school setting and a school atmosphere unconducive to learning. The family and community factor included peer pressure to play truant, a family unsupportive of education, family pressure such as financial and health problems, abuse, and unsafe conditions near the house or school. The study also showed that the student's character and behavior influence truancy in school. The behavior factor included a low-achieving academic background, low self-worth, a bad

attitude, previous doping violations and alcohol use. Baker et al. (2001) also found that truancy or unauthorized absences were very closely related to delinquency activity among youth and can lead to negative behavior during adulthood. There is also an association between truant students and other future problems such as marital problems, employment problems and involvement in crime.

Nor Asmah (2008)'s study, which aimed to understand the behavior of skipping school from a behavior theory perspective, was carried out on four, sixteen-year-old secondary school students. This case study found that the features that influenced the behavior of skipping school were individual, friend, class, teacher, school and family. The findings also showed that the operant conditioning concept, which consists of positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement, was identified as the most dominant factor in motivating students to skip school.

Rohani (2007) reported the causes of truancy were lack of control, supervision and parents' attention on their children. In this study, the father confessed in his interview that he was so busy in his business that he didn't have time to spend with his children at home. This condition caused two of his five children to play truant, and both were arrested as suspected drug addicts. The two children played truant to avoid being fined for not completing their homework and because they worked part time as a caddy in golf course, a laborer on a construction site, and a salesman in a supermarket to support their lifestyle. They were absent from school because they were too tired from working.

According to Azizi et al. (2007), the cause of truancy was the change of the environment around the school, which varied due to the urbanization process but could include video game arcades, cybercafés, a shopping center near the school. Other causes include the influence of electronic media, a lack of love and monitoring from parents, peer influence and a strict school setting.

Studies conducted by Nik Jaafar, Tuti, Mohammad, Wan Salwina, Fairuz Nazri, Kamal, Prakash, and Shah (2013), Sälzer, Trautwein, Lüdtke and Stamm (2012), Darmody, Smyth, and McCoy (2008), Ek and Eriksson (2013), McIntyre-Bhatty (2008), and Attwood and Croll (2015) described the psychology of student truancy. These studies focused on reasons why students were absent and the factors influencing their behavior.

Studies by Hudson and Ron (2004) identified the influence of family ties, academic achievement and intimacy with the peer group that lead to delinquent behavior among youth. A study carried out on a sample of teenagers from various regions in Mississippi using Choice Theory, Sociological Theory (Sutherland and Cressey) and Social Control Theory (criminology - Hirshi) showed that the peer group was indicated as the main cause of the problem of delinquency among the youth at 12%, followed by family ties at 5%, with academic achievement at only 1%. This study showed that the higher the family ties score, the lower the delinquent behavior score. Likewise, with academic achievement, the higher the academic score, the lower the delinquent behavior scores. On the other hand, the higher the peer group relationship scores, the higher the delinquent behavior.

Loyd and Byron (2005) conducted a study to measure the effect of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy on need perception and how this need influenced behavior changes among secondary school students. This study, operating on two different groups of students, is quantitative and quasi experimental. The treatment group was disclosed with the choice theoretical principle. The research results showed that the Choice Theory principle is effective in enhancing freedom, fun and power and can help change student behavior.

Studies conducted by Yamamura (2011) and Hendricks, Sale, Evans, McKinley, DeLozier and Sherri (2010) have been researching intervention and treatment for truancy behavior.

Statement of the Problem

Truancy is a behavior that violates school rules. Hyacinth Foo (2003) reported that students involved in cases of truancy are 3.5 times likelier to become involved with crime and other social problems. Sociologists have called truancy the "kindergarten of crime" because it can lead teens toward maladaptive behavior (Mulrine 2001). In particular, truancy is a major factor of delinquent behavior in Malaysia. According to a 2012 statistic, in the state of Perak, Malaysia, a total of 2,493 students were involved in truancy compared to a total of 17,343 in all of Malaysia (Johor Education Department, 2013). Overall, the data showed a drop in truancy in Malaysia, but the appropriate action should be taken to continue decreasing these numbers.

Although numerous studies have been conducted to determine the cause of truancy and at the same time find a cure, most previous studies have focused on finding the cause or the occurrence of external behavioral factors rather than by exploring these issues from a counseling theory perspective. Basically, every theory has an individual philosophy for understanding the cause of the problem. One counseling theory that can be used to understand problematic student behavior is Choice Theory. According to Choice Theory, problems start when there is a conflict between an individual's wants and what the individual actually has. For example, many people have their own needs in life, but others don't usually understand those needs. Based on the fundamental principles of Choice Theory, it is reasonable for the professional to understand the specific of a student's situation. Problems occur when counselors do not understand the client's motivation and believe that they can help the client without following scientific counseling theories. However, professional help should be given to truant students only after counselors understand the students' motivation based on Choice Theory.

Choice Theory

According to Glasser (1998), the principle of Choice Theory is an internal control psychology; it explains why and how humans make the choices that determine the course of their lives. Choice Theory also emphasizes that an individual has a choice in determining individual behavior and thus should be responsible for the choices he or she makes. Glasser (1965) stated that human problems arise from the unfulfilled basic needs. All human behavior is guided by these basic needs. Individual basic needs include both physiological and psychological aspects. Glasser (1998) argues that Choice Theory explains in detail how all happiness and pain is derived from our efforts to fulfill the five basic needs built into our

genes. These needs are love and belonging, power, fun, freedom and survival. All behavior that attempts, but fails, to satisfy one or more of these needs is painful.

Glasser (2003) defines external control psychology as destructive; it can destroy a relationship because it destroys personal freedom. The external world control believes that a person who is doing wrong should be punished, so that the person will do the right thing continuously and be rewarded. Glasser (2003) said that a person who is having difficulty getting along with another is considered to be an external control person. Glasser used the term "external control" because it is the direct opposite of self-control. People under external control are always trying to change others instead of changing themselves. James and Gilliland (2003, p. 210) maintain that the three premises inherent in external control psychology are the attempt to control other people, the overwhelming evidence that external control kills relationships and the belief in the idea that "I know what's right for other people."

According to Glasser (2003), external control psychology operates on the premise of many of the world's prevalent beliefs in and the usage of external controlling strategies such as criticizing, blaming, complaining, nagging, threatening, punishing and rewarding to control. Glasser has replaced external control psychology with internal control psychology, using the following seven connecting habits: caring, trusting, listening, supporting, negotiating, befriending and encouraging.

Glasser noted that conflict arises when what people want differs from what they get in life. This will affect their total behavior, including acting, thinking, feelings and physiology. James and Gilliland (2003, p. 205) understand Glasser's explanation of total behavior to be that people can only directly choose their own actions and thoughts. However, people have an indirect control over most of their feelings and some of their psychology. Their chosen actions and thoughts can be separated from the feelings and physiology that go with them. Their total behavior contributes to a success identity or failure identity. Failure identity forms when individuals fail to adhere to the principles of their basic needs in a responsible manner. People with failure identity are usually disappointed with their life and deny that they have ever failed in order to reduce any self-blame or self-doubt. Due to previous frustration and despair, negative personality symptoms will manifest and eventually lead to ineffective behavior. Individuals who fail will seek to escape from the responsibility of having emotions and thoughts interrupted. Glasser also pointed out that problematic behavior happens when individuals try to deny the reality of life and do not want to be responsible for their own life (Ahmad Jazimin, 2008). The individuals who tend to choose ineffective and unsuitable behaviors will lead them to fail in life.

This study aims to analyze the reasons why students skip school using the Choice Theory. The scope of the study is to analyze the psychological aspects of external control and internal control psychology. Researchers have also examined aspects of the five basic needs (love and belonging, power, fun, freedom and survival) as they pertain to truant students. This study analyzes why the particular behavior of truancy exists among participants by looking at the components of acting, thinking, feeling, and physiology.

Choice Theory is selected as the framework in this study because this theory seems more appropriate in the context of Asia. According to Wubbolding (2000, p. 201), based on human nature itself, Choice Theory explains all human behavior. It is therefore not culture-specific. All human beings have five inner motivations in addition to an inner world of specific desires, core beliefs, and mental images of what is important. They choose behaviors and seek perceptions or informational input from the world. The theory can thus be applied people of all cultures.

This opinion is strengthened by a study conducted by Ahmad Jazimin (2008) on the use of Reality Therapy among counselors in Malaysia. The results showed that Reality Therapy was related to the cultural and religious practices in Malaysia which emphasize the individual's responsibility in decision making. Although there are situations within Malaysian culture that emphasize compliance to the family, which is a challenge to the application of this theory, all of the study participants agreed that they can apply Reality Therapy to handle various issues of their clients. The results of the report showed the study participants among counselor responded positively after applying Reality Therapy in a counseling session. The study participant also found that Reality Therapy is easy to be applied, convenient, simple, and saves time, especially in the school setting.

Research Method

The method of this research is case study. According to Merriam (2009), case studies can be defined in terms of the process of conducting the inquiry (that is, as case study research), the bounded system or unit of analysis selected for study (that is the case), or the product, the end report of a case investigation. Qualitative case studies are characterized as being particularistic, descriptive and heuristic. According to Yin (1994), a case study is an empirical inquiry focusing on investigating the phenomenon in the context of daily life, especially using the context to deepen the comprehension of the phenomenon. Design features of a case study enable the researcher to understand in greater detail the underlying factors for why the study participant chooses to be truant. This method can also help the researcher obtain information that goes beyond the surface level and that offers a clearer explanation for the study participant's behavior. A case study that uses a qualitative approach not only enables the researcher to meet with the study participant, but it also allows the researcher to interact with the study participant and make observations with a sense of empathy, an important tool in the research (Lincon & Guba, 1985).

Collecting Qualitative Data

The data collected in this study was obtained through interviews and document analysis techniques. In this study, four students were involved as participants, and three additional informants provided information as well. The informants consisted of the one teacher of student affairs, one discipline teacher, and one school counselor. For this study, researchers prepared the questions to interview both key informants and additional informants. Researchers obtained informed consent from study participants, parents, students, teachers who become informants, and the school principals in order to avoid any ethical risks and to ensure the integrity of the study. The study participants were informed of the benefits and effects involved in this study. Researchers ensured that the involvement of research subjects in the study did not cause the school to take action against them. In fact, this

study aims to help schools by discovering why students behave in such a way based on the students' perception of themselves.

For the purposes of this study, an interview technique was used to obtain information and research data. The researcher provided two sets of interview questions. One key informant for student truancy was identified and the additional informants were the one teacher of student affairs, one discipline teachers and one school counselor.

The interview questions were designed as semi-structured questions in which the researcher provided the questions to be administered to study participants and informants. According to Choice Theory perspectives, the interview questions began by trying to understand reasons for the study participants' absence. The questions for the informants have more range in order to obtain information about disciplinary problems faced by the participants of the study and the actions taken by the school to overcome the problem. The daily student attendance record was also analyzed to obtain the attendance of the study participants. The data of the study participants' truancy had been collected and analyzed by the researcher.

In addition, the disciplinary and counseling records of study participants have also been reviewed to identify if any of the study participants has been punished or fined for the offense of truancy or other disciplinary offenses. According to Susella (2001), triangulation techniques such as data collection has been used not only because the source document can support and add data from various other sources, but also because it could help to confirm the information obtained from the interviews.

Validity and Reliability Instruments

Validity testing is used to determine and improve the internal validity of the extent to which the findings correspond to reality or real world situations (Merriam, 2001), researchers have taken the following steps:

i) Triangulation

The researchers used a variety of sources such as interviews, analysis of documents and information from the addition informants for the triangulation process. The triangulation allowed the phenomenon to be seen from different angles and perspectives (Merriam, 2001).

ii) Cooperation or collaborative modes of research

Researchers were involved in all stages of the study. Researchers took three months to build relationships with participants in order to take data from them. It is important to strengthen the participants' confidence in researchers.

iii) Researchers' biases

The researchers explained that assumptions, beliefs and bias may affect the findings. The triangulation method was used to prevent or at least reduce the occurrence of bias (Ahmad Jazimin, 2008).

iv) Time allocation

To increase the validity and reliability of the data collected, researchers took three months in the field of study. Allocation of time enabled researchers to meet with study participants more than once.

According to Merriam (2001), reliability means the extent of consistency of the data collected and the extent to which the findings can be used in other situations. The following aspects can be used to improve the reliability of the study:

i) The investigator's position

In this study, researchers described the research based on Choice Theory and related assumptions. The researcher also explained in detail about the study participants and the researcher also explained how the survey data were collected from the social context.

ii) Triangulation

In the context of this study, researchers compared the data obtained from the interviews with documentary evidence and information from informants.

Research Participants

The study participants were selected by purposive sampling based on objective research. Purposive sampling refers to the sampling procedure in which a group of subjects that have certain characteristics were selected as study participants (Mertens, 2010). Selection of participants was based on students who do not attend or have been skipping school more than seventeen consecutive days or forty non-consecutive days. These data were compiled from daily student attendance records. Data were analyzed by themes using qualitative methods.

The location was also chosen after examining the data and information on the level of truancy in schools. Information taken from the reports of student discipline information issued quarterly by the school clearly demonstrates that truant behavior is at the level of serious and worrying. Researchers continue to collect data up to the point of "saturation," where no new information is discovered or information obtained already overlaps with previous information (Lincon & Guba, 1985).

The researchers tend to use Othman's (2009) opinion that the decision to terminate the sampling process should be based on the research objective, the need to research deeply through the data sources triangulation also the probability to expand the research scope through various sampling methods.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The data were analyzed qualitatively based on an analysis of documents and the results of an interview with the study participants and additional informants. According to Yin (2008) in a multiple case study, there are two stages of analysis the within case analysis and the cross case analysis. In a within case analysis, each case is first treated as a comprehensive case in and of itself, while in a cross case analysis the approach is to build abstractions across cases. Researchers have completed the process of encoding data to facilitate the retrieval process conducted during the process of analyzing data. An encoding transcription was made on interviews and document analysis. Determinations of code assist researchers to retrieve the original data and make referrals if necessary. This coding also helps the validity of the data conducted by researchers (Merriam 2001). Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest three key steps for processing qualitative data, including data reduction, data display and conclusion and verification. Researchers used the NVivo 2.0 software for

analyzing qualitative data. This method of analysis involves the verbatim transcription of data, data reduction, construction themes, theme coding, displays results, pattern matching, explanation building and matrix intersection (Bazeley 2007, Yin 2008).

Results

Study participant profiles

Using the analysis of student profiles and documents about school discipline records, the first participant chosen was a sixteen-year-old student. She was the third of six children. She had a low academic achievement record. Her parents were divorced and she lived with her mother, who worked a job potting plants. Her mother's income was about 150 USD per month. The first study participant did not have a record of any discipline problems other than truancy. Based on daily student attendance records, she was truant forty-one days during the year.

The second participant of the study was a seventeen-year-old female. She was the fifth of six siblings. She had a background of strong academic achievement record she started skipping school. Her father worked at the Land Office while her mother was a seller at market. Her parent's income was about 400 USD per month. This second study participant also did not have any record of misconduct in other areas. During the school session that year, she skipped fifty-nine days.

The third study participant was a fifteen-year-old male. He was the seventh of nine siblings. His academic achievement was low. His father worked as a cook in the cafeteria while his mother was a housewife. The household income was 150 USD per month. He had a record of tardiness in addition to truancy. Based on his school record, he skipped school regularly for forty-two days and had been given a warning letter as a final warning.

The fourth study participant was a fifteen-year-old male student. He was the sixth of nine siblings. He had a low academic achievement record. His father worked as a truck driver with an income of 138 USD per month. His mother was housewife. He had record of truancy. He skipped school regularly for eighty-two days that year.

Interview Analysis

Researchers have used the structured interview method to obtain the data from the study participants and information from informants. The focus interview protocol was based on the psychology of student truancy and Choice Theory to determine why students are skipping school.

Internal Control Psychology and External Control Psychology

The findings showed that the participants in the study had problems due to family, friends and school environment. There was also a view that the learning environment and teachers' attitudes contributed to the behavior of truancy. In addition, study participants admitted that they skipped school because they did not get what they want. The first study participant said from an internal control psychology interview:

It was just like that, but ... I hoped my dad would change. But, when I asked my mother whether she loved her husband or not ... My mother said no... I wish I had a happy family

like other people, but my family is not one. We are always apart. We are not close to one to another... I am not happy with my family. I want to be like other families.

The second study participant also felt frustrated because she felt her family, especially her father, did not care about her, even though she has obeyed all his orders. This situation can be seen clearly in the following comment: *I was selected to receive an award at school. The school informed my father to attend the award ceremony. He said, 'Why should I come?'*

Then, from the perspective of external control psychology, the second and fourth study participants said their friends were the cause for them skipping school. Their friends teased them frequently:

How could it be, when I came to school they teased me. There are just not satisfied about me...I think that if I do not come to school, nobody cares!

The third study participant mentioned having a lot of homework. He was afraid to come to school because he did not manage to complete the homework:

I already have a lot of homework ... I'm bored and afraid to come to school

This finding is consistent with the information obtained from informants:

The problem started from the class itself; the truant students have no friends, they have no interest in the teachers and they have problems learning. They can't follow the lesson. They were slow, so when they entered the classroom, they felt very anxious and so did not feel good about school

Basic Needs

The findings indicated that the elements of love and belonging, fun and freedom are the more dominant elements in determining the behavior of truancy among the study participants. Based on the findings, the first and second participants did not get love and belonging from their families and had tenuous family relationships. They were not close to their friends. This lack of love and belonging caused them to choose truancy. For example, the first participant skipped school after not feeling fully loved from her divorced parents. She felt great every time she skipped the school because she could go to the big town. She felt very clever for not being arrested by the school even though she was absent school. She uses the desire for fun and freedom as an excuse for skipping school:

My family... dislikes affection between brothers and sisters ... not like other families my father does not take care of me and our family.

The second participant skipped school to get attention from her father. She felt her father did not give enough affection to their family. She felt her friends were not willing to help and listen to her stories at school. As a result, she chose to be absent.

... Daddy did not love me ... I played truant because I wanted attention from my dad ... My dad did not even care whether I went to school or not ... I hate my dad.

The results showed that the third and fourth study participants put the blame on their family for being over protective, citing that as the reason they chose to be truant. They felt they were being monitored regularly. They wanted to be free from their family's supervision.

They felt good when they shared everything with their friends without any restrictions and regulations. At the same time, by being truant they could show their power to others, demonstrating that they could do what they wanted to do. In addition, the fourth participant cited that he skipped school due to a financial distress background and in order to forget the pain of his natural life. The third study participant stated:

I wanted to play truant for fun ... It was interesting to meet friends when I skipped school ... My parents didn't even care about that.

The fourth study participant felt that survival, especially in terms of money, leisure, food, clothing and everything related to money can't be met as a dream:

I think it's difficult...Because, my eldest brother, he did not support my family even though he is already working. He expected my father to pay all the bills... If I could, sure, I want to feel happy like everyone else.

The informants confirmed responses from the study participants, citing that they skipped school because of family problems such as lack of motivation and encouragement from parents, including parents who did not care about their children education:

The truant student usually has less attention from the family. They do not provide motivation. Their family does not care about them. I went to their parents' house. They even know that their children's are skipping school. There's no awareness, motivation or encouragement in them. They didn't care...

Total Behavior

The findings showed that the behavior of truancy from all study participants involved acting, thinking, feelings and physiology. Based on the analysis made by the researchers, the first participant indicated she became involved in truancy (acting) because by skipping school, she felt free from captivity at home (thinking). The first participant also felt happy (feeling) because she could hang out with friends in town wishing for a stylish outfit. The second participant was truant (acting) because she felt frustrated (feeling) with the attitude of her father. She expected (thinking) that by being truant, her father would give her attention. The third participant was truant (acting) because of being bored (feeling) sitting in the classroom. The third participant also enjoyed (feeling) when being with friends because there were no rules and restrictions (thinking). While the fourth study participant became involved in truancy (acting), because of a health condition (physiological) he was only able to do so very often. The fourth participant also cited truancy (acting) as an enjoyable experience (feeling) when being with his friends.

These findings were consistent with the informants' view that the study participants were truant (action) because they felt (feeling) what they did (action) was right without thinking (thinking) about the long-term effects (physiological) or consequences of their actions:

They do not realize that their future depends on what they are doing. They said they know their responsibilities but they actually know nothing.

Discussion

Based on the results of the study, all of the participants have their own reasons why they choose to be truant. The majority of the study participants wanted to be free, needed attention from others and wanted to be with their friends.

The data showed that the study participants mentioned the school environment, including the attitudes of teachers and the learning environment, as a cause of their truancy. These findings are similar to previous studies conducted by Ratnamla (2009), which stated that teacher and achievement motivation are key factors for truancy among students. A finding by Othman (2005) also showed that an atmosphere of strict discipline, in which teachers are fierce and give a lot of homework, is a major factor in truancy. According to Golloway (1985), the students skipped school because of the school environment; these students are weak in their studies, are not interested and are bored with their teachers and feel pressure from a peer group. This finding is also supported by Reid (2005), who found that a school that is too hard and continuously pressuring teens is a factor. In addition, a study by Baker, Sigmon and Nugent (2001) revealed an unsafe school environment and not favorable school climate as reasons for truancy.

Glasser (1998) emphasized expectations, demands and other individuals perceived as coercive as external control psychology that affects many individuals in choosing appropriate behavior. His research showed the attitudes of teachers, strict school rules and boring learning environments affected the study participants' behavior. However, in order to satisfy basic needs, the internal control psychology of the participant was the main catalyst rather than external control psychology. Based on the findings, the reason for the truant behavior was to fulfill students' basic needs. This is in line with the opinion of Glasser (1998), who showed that a failure identity is usually disappointed with life and will always deny the failure to reduce any painful feelings. Due to previous experiences of frustration and despair, the personality will choose the negative behavior and therefore will make poor choices. . An individual who fails will escape from taking responsibility after their emotions and thoughts are disturbed. At the same time, failure identity will manifest itself in skipping school so that the student may achieve what he or she expected.

Based on the findings, love and belonging are very important elements to all study participants. This is consistent with Glasser (1998), who stated that the essence of love and belonging is important in relation to family, friendships and colleagues. This feeling can be built up by cooperation, helping each other, being willing to share and getting involved with a significant individual. Failure to meet this requirement will caused the individual to choose unsuitable behaviors as happened among study participants. The urge to meet the needs of love causes them to choose truancy.

A broken family background and a lack of attention and support from the family were the main causes study participants were truant. They expected to have a close family relationship. They also expected their family and friends to understand and care about them more. This finding is consistent to The National Literacy Trust (2003), which found that students who skipped school said that their parents did not show interest in helping them do

homework. In order to show their affection, however, some of the parents become over protective. This, too, will make their children feel uncomfortable and shackled.

The study participants skipped school because they wanted to experience freedom with their friends. This is consistent with a study by Muhamad Nur Farhan (2006), which showed that there is a significant relationship between intimacy, personality and peer group habit similarities to school truancy. Glasser (1998) added that in a school setting, students need to feel accepted by their classmates and teachers. If they have an intention to contribute to the school community that will make them feel good. Students who failed to adapt themselves and felt neglected were actually trying to meet their needs. If truancy this situation happens continuously, the individual will face learning and academic problems that will affect their behavior.

Based on the interviews, the survey participants said by skipping school, he or she can feel and do what they wanted to. In fact, the study participants felt superior to their friends. Overall, the results showed that the study participants felt powerful in the sense that they can determine their own activities. They don't need to be scared or even defer to adults. The study participants also felt proud to be able to break away from school without being detected and arrested. This is consistent with the view of Glasser (1998) that the power is not about dominating or controlling others, but in Choice Theory is about being able and capable. It more describes internal feelings of achievement, dignity, a sense of importance, self-concept and also the feeling of being heard and respected as well as feeling skilled by being certified in their respective fields. While in the school context, the power can be interpreted as the ability to make choices and be involved in learning. This will make them feel more confident.

Most of the study participants skipped school only to experience excitement and fun, especially with their friends. They felt excited when they could go everywhere and do anything freely. Glasser (1998) emphasized that the need to have fun is all about the psychological need for pleasure, having a sense of humor, hobbies, interests, and to feel the joy of leisure. Requirements for fun also included experiencing joy, pleasure, relaxation, laughing, and learning.

Based on the opinion of the study participants, they felt good playing truant to experience freedom without restrictions and shackles. According to the study participants' opinions, freedom is when they can do anything, especially with friends. This is consistent with what was said by Glasser (1998) about the need to be freed and powerful, the ability to make choices, create, explore and express oneself freely. Freedom also means having enough space to move around without feeling constrained by limited choices and regulations. . This finding is consistent with studies by Nabilah (2008), which showed that the elements of power and pleasure dominate the basic needs of the students involved with delinquent problems.

The study showed that the participants were truant in order to forget their suffering. An emotional disorder caused by a broken family pushed some of the study participants to find a way out and be happy. The study participants can also forget their suffering while having

fun with friends. The drive to survive among them was also observed when they dared to take risks, facing any consequences that might happen if they are caught and found guilty of truancy. Survival needs of three participants in the study were also threatened when they felt uncomfortable in class due to their low academic achievement. This is because, according to Glasser (1998), the survival needs of the students were dependent on their good academic achievement. Their success will make them feel good and safe in their relationships with the peers and teachers. They should not be afraid to be scolded because of their academics.

In conclusion, although the external control psychology has been mentioned by the study participants as a major factor for becoming involved in truancy, according to the data, psychological themes of internal control psychology can be detected. This is consistent with the opinion of Glasser (1998) that although environmental factors affect the decisions we make, they do not determine our behavior.

Implications for Research

From a theoretical standpoint, the findings from this study can help counselors better understand their truant students by looking at their unfulfilled basic needs such as love and belonging, power, fun, freedom and survival. In addition, through this study, the counselor can understand the patterns of students' behavior by associating the behavior of students with total behavior. This is explained by Glasser (1998), that the individual's desire was formed by five basic human needs: the need to be loved and belong, the need for power, to be happy and to have fun, to be free and independent, and the need for survival. For example, students who lack of love and attention may choose truancy, which in their opinion could meet the requirements of being loved.

At the same time, the Choice Theory approach allows the counselor to explore the present life of the truant students and the expected life of the students in the future. This understanding is beneficial as an effort to understand and to study student behavior.

Moreover, the use of Choice Theory also allows counselors to review the internal and external control psychology of the truant student. Based on Choice Theory, Glasser (1998) asserts that all people basically live in two worlds, the real world and the quality world. All events and incidents that occurred in the real world are recorded as experience and bring meaning and understanding to each individual. This is where an individual's values and knowledge are formed. What is happening in the world of our senses is out of our control. An experience gained through understanding the world is not necessarily what they expected it to be. The knowledge and understanding about the internal and external psychology behind truancy will help the counselor find the underlying cause.

Notably, regardless of the reasons students have given for becoming truant, Choice Theory can be used as a way to understand their behavior, and Reality Therapy can be used to help modify the students' behavior. Consistent with Glasser (1998), the general purpose of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy is to provide situations that can help students build up their emotional strength. According to Glasser, humans have the freedom to choose the appropriate behavior, and after making that selection, humans also have to undertake the

responsibilities according to the choices they made (Ahmad Jazimin, 2008). This study contributes to the counseling field, in which various strategies and learning processes can be used to help clients build up comprehensive behavior more effectively.

Implication for Practice

This study impacts counselors who practice Reality Therapy in counseling sessions for better understanding and to gain knowledge. The counselor could find what caused the client's trouble, the actual situation the client is in, the direction the client is headed and how the client wishes to help him or herself. By understanding the client's self deeply, the counselor can utilize a specific strategy to assess client commitment. Through the valuation method, the client will be responsible for his or her own choice. In this way, clients choose to change their behavior on their own, not because of the counselor's insistence.

On a practical level, this study could not only help the counselor, but also the other teachers who are interested in helping truant students. Choice Theory has the advantage in that this theory is easy to understand, not too technical, can be learned easily, and can be used by anybody and unlimited to those trained only, outcome-orientated and decision, focus on problem, effective for a certain period, resources, and effort and based on rationale (James and Gilliland, 2003).

At the same time, the survey results enable the parents to understand their children's basic needs and how they can build up their children's behavior holistically. The parents can also understand the factors that caused their children's truancy. This information can be obtained through discussion with the school counselor. Understanding the basic needs and how the overall behavior has been formed can also help the study participant in handling the desire to be truant. This will be successful through due a two-way discussion with parents. This consultation and discussion can help the study participant avoid getting involved with more serious disciplinary problems.

Conclusion

Overall, through this study, the researcher can understand why truancy happens based on the Choice Theory perspective. The results showed that the theory can explain why a student chooses to behave in a certain way. The study showed that the study participants had their own reasons for why they were truant: they wanted freedom, attention, or to have fun with friends. In addition, the home environment and they hadn't done his homework were seen as the main reason for their behavior. Based on Choice Theory, all of the study participants were truant because their basic needs were not fulfilled. The study participants agreed that they skipped school to feel great, to have fun and to feel independent. In addition, they played truant because they experienced a lack of love from a significant person in their lives. Through this study, in the future, researchers and counselors can understand why some students choose to be truant. The researchers suggested building a module based on Reality Therapy for future research and to help students who are truant. This module is based on Choice Theory, and the application can be executed based on the procedure in WDEP. In conclusion, the results of this study can be used as a guideline for producing a module based on treatment using a psychological approach. This module

hopefully can help to overcome the problem of truancy among students since they are our hope in contributing to national development.

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