



On Becoming a Person

A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy



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CARL K. ROGERS
ON BECOMING A PERSON

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A Process Conception
of Psychotherapy



*I*n the autumn of 1956 I was greatly honored by the American Psychological Association, which bestowed upon me one of its first three Distinguished Scientific Contribution Awards. There was however a penalty attached to the award, which was that one year later, each recipient was to present a paper to the Association. It did not appeal to me to review work which we had done in the past. I decided rather to devote the year to a fresh attempt to understand the process by which personality changes. I did this, but as the next autumn approached, I realized that the ideas I had formed were still unclear, tentative, hardly in shape for presentation. Nevertheless I tried to set down the jumbled sensings which had been important to me, out of which was emerging a concept of process different from anything I had clearly perceived before. When I had finished I found I had a paper much too long to deliver, so I cut it down to an abbreviated form for presentation on September 2, 1957 to the American Psychological Convention in New York. The present chapter is neither as long as the initial form, nor as abbreviated as the second form.

It will be discovered that though the two preceding chapters view the process of therapy almost entirely from a phenomenological point of view, from within the client's frame of reference, this for-

mulation endeavors to capture those qualities of expression which may be observed by another, and hence views it more from an external frame of reference.

Out of the observations recorded in this paper a "Scale of Process in Psychotherapy" has been developed which can be applied operationally to excerpts from recorded interviews. It is still in process of revision and improvement. Even in its present form it has reasonable inter-judge reliability, and gives meaningful results. Cases which by other criteria are known to be more successful, show greater movement on the Process Scale than less successful cases. Also, to our surprise it has been found that successful cases begin at a higher level on the Process Scale than do unsuccessful cases. Evidently we do not yet know, with any satisfactory degree of assurance, how to be of therapeutic help to individuals whose behavior when they come to us is typical of stages one and two as described in this chapter. Thus the ideas of this paper, poorly formed and incomplete as they seemed to me at the time, are already opening up new and challenging areas for thought and investigation.



THE PUZZLE OF PROCESS

I WOULD LIKE to take you with me on a journey of exploration. The object of the trip, the goal of the search, is to try to learn something of the *process* of psychotherapy, or the *process* by which personality change takes place. I would warn you that the goal has not yet been achieved, and that it seems as though the expedition has advanced only a few short miles into the jungle. Yet perhaps if I can take you with me, you will be tempted to discover new and profitable avenues of further advance.

My own reason for engaging in such a search seems simple to me. **Just** as many psychologists have been interested in the invariant aspects of personality — the unchanging aspects of intelligence, temperament, personality structure — so I have long been interested in

the invariant aspects of *change* in personality. Do personality and behavior change? What commonalities exist in such changes? What commonalities exist in the conditions which precede change? Most important of all, what is the process by which such change occurs?

Until recently we have for the most part tried to learn something of this process by studying outcomes. We have many facts, for example, regarding the changes which take place in self-perception, or in perception of others. We have not only measured these changes over the whole course of therapy, but at intervals during therapy. Yet even this last gives us little clue as to the *process* involved. Studies of segmented outcomes are still measures of outcome, giving little knowledge of the way in which the change takes place.

Puzzling over this problem of getting at the process has led me to realize how little objective research deals with process in any field. Objective research slices through the frozen moment to provide us with an exact picture of the inter-relationships which exist at that moment. But our understanding of the ongoing movement — whether it be the process of fermentation, or the circulation of the blood, or the process of atomic fission — is generally provided by a theoretical formulation, often supplemented, where feasible, with a clinical observation of the process. I have thus come to realize that perhaps I am hoping for too much to expect that research procedures can shed light directly upon the process of personality change. Perhaps only theory can do that.

A REJECTED METHOD

When I determined, more than a year ago, to make a fresh attempt to understand the way in which such change takes place, I first considered various ways in which the experience of therapy might be described in terms of some other theoretical framework. There was much that was appealing in the field of communication theory, with its concepts of feedback, input and output signals, and the like. There was the possibility of describing the process of therapy in terms of learning theory, or in terms of general systems theory. As I studied these avenues of understanding I became convinced that it would be possible to translate the process of psychotherapy into

any one of these theoretical frameworks. It would, I believe, have certain advantages to do so. But I also became convinced that in a field so new, this is not what is most needed.

I came to a conclusion which others have reached before, that in a new field perhaps what is needed first is to steep oneself in the *events*, to approach the phenomena with as few preconceptions as possible, to take a naturalist's observational, descriptive approach to these events, and to draw forth those low-level inferences which seem most native to the material itself.

THE MODE OF APPROACH

So, for the past year, I have used the method which so many of us use for generating hypotheses, a method which psychologists in this country seem so reluctant to expose or comment on. I used myself as a tool.

As a tool, I have qualities both good and bad. For many years I have experienced therapy as a therapist. I have experienced it on the other side of the desk as a client. I have thought about therapy, carried on research in this field, been intimately acquainted with the research of others. But I have also formed biases, have come to have a particular slant on therapy, have tried to develop theoretical abstractions regarding therapy. These views and theories would tend to make me less sensitive to the events themselves. Could I open myself to the phenomena of therapy freshly, naively? Could I let the totality of my experience be as effective a tool as it might potentially be, or would my biases prevent me from seeing what was there? I could only go ahead and make the attempt.

So, during this past year I have spent many hours listening to recorded therapeutic interviews—trying to listen as naively as possible. I have endeavored to soak up all the clues I could capture as to the process, as to what elements are significant in change. Then I have tried to abstract from that sensing the simplest abstractions which would describe them. Here I have been much stimulated and helped by the thinking of many of my colleagues, but I would like to mention my special indebtedness to Eugene Gendlin, William Kirtner and Fred Zimring, whose demonstrated ability to think in

new ways about these matters has been particularly helpful, and from whom I have borrowed heavily.

The next step has been to take these observations and low-level abstractions and formulate them in such a way that testable hypotheses can readily be drawn from them. This is the point I have reached. I make no apology for the fact that I am reporting no empirical investigations of these formulations. If past experience is any guide, then I may rest assured that, if the formulations I am about to present check in any way with the subjective experience of other therapists, then a great deal of research will be stimulated, and in a few years there will be ample evidence of the degree of truth and falsity in the statements which follow.

THE DIFFICULTIES AND EXCITEMENT OF THE SEARCH

It may seem strange to you that I tell you so much of the personal process I went through in seeking for some simple — and I am sure, inadequate — formulations. It is because I feel that nine-tenths of research is always submerged, and that only the iciest portion is ever seen, a very misleading segment. Only occasionally does someone like Mooney (6, 7) describe the whole of the research method as it exists in the individual. I too should like to reveal something of the whole of this study as it went on in me, not simply the impersonal portion.

Indeed I wish I might share with you much more fully some of the excitement and discouragement of this effort to understand process. I would like to tell you of my fresh discovery of the way feelings “hit” clients — a word they frequently use. The client is talking about something of importance, when wham! he is hit by a feeling — not something named or labelled but an experiencing of an unknown something which has to be cautiously explored before it can be named at all. As one client says, “It’s a feeling that I’m caught with. I can’t even know what it connects with.” The frequency of this event was striking to me.

Another matter of interest was the variety of ways in which clients do come closer to their feelings. Feelings “bubble up through,” they “seep through.” The client also lets himself “down

into" his feeling, often with caution and fear. "I want to get down into this feeling. You can kinda see how hard it is to get really close to it."

Still another of these naturalistic observations has to do with the importance which the client comes to attach to *exactness* of symbolization. He wants just the precise word which for him describes the feeling he has experienced. An approximation will not do. And this is certainly for clearer communication within himself, since any one of several words would convey the meaning equally well to another.

I came also to appreciate what I think of as "moments of movement" — moments when it appears that change actually occurs. These moments, with their rather obvious physiological concomitants, I will try to describe later.

I would also like to mention the profound sense of despair I sometimes felt, wandering naively in the incredible complexity of the therapeutic relationship. Small wonder that we prefer to approach therapy with many rigid preconceptions. We feel we must bring order *to* it. We can scarcely dare to hope that we can discover order *in* it.

These are a few of the personal discoveries, puzzlements, and discouragements which I encountered in working on this problem. Out of these came the more formal ideas which I would now like to present.

A BASIC CONDITION

If we were studying the process of growth in plants, we would assume certain constant conditions of temperature, moisture and sunlight, in forming our conceptualization of the process. Likewise in conceptualizing the process of personality change in psychotherapy, I shall assume a constant and optimal set of conditions for facilitating this change. I have recently tried to spell out these conditions in some detail (8). For our present purpose I believe I can **state** this assumed condition in one word. Throughout the discussion which follows, I shall assume that the client experiences himself as being fully *received*. By this I mean that whatever his feelings — fear, despair, insecurity, anger, whatever his mode of expression — silence, gestures, tears, or words; whatever he finds him-

self being in this moment, he senses that he is psychologically *received*, just as he is, by the therapist. There is implied in this term the concept of being understood, empathically, and the concept of acceptance. It is also well to point out that it is the client's experience of this condition which makes it optimal, not merely the fact of its existence in the therapist.

In all that I shall say, then, about the process of change, I shall assume as a constant an optimal and maximum condition of being received.

THE EMERGING CONTINUUM

In trying to grasp and conceptualize the process of change, I was initially looking for elements which would mark or characterize change itself. I was thinking of change as an entity, and searching for its specific attributes. What gradually emerged in my understanding as I exposed myself to the raw material of change was a continuum of a different sort than I had conceptualized before.

Individuals move, I began to see, not from a fixity or homeostasis through change to a new fixity, though such a process is indeed possible. But much the more significant continuum is from fixity to changingness, from rigid structure to flow, from stasis to process. I formed the tentative hypothesis that perhaps the qualities of the client's expression at any one point might indicate his position on this continuum, might indicate where he stood in the process of change.

I gradually developed this concept of a process, discriminating seven stages in it, though I would stress that it is a continuum, and that whether one discriminated three stages or fifty, there would still be all the intermediate points.

I came to feel that a given client, taken as a whole, usually exhibits behaviors which cluster about a relatively narrow range on this continuum. That is, it is unlikely that in one area of his life the client would exhibit complete fixity, and in another area complete changingness. He would tend, as a whole, to be at some stage in this process. However, the process I wish to describe applies more exactly, I believe, to given areas of personal meanings, where I hypothesize that the client would, in such an area, be quite definitely at one stage, and would not exhibit characteristics of various stages.

SEVEN STAGES OF PROCESS

Let me then try to portray the way in which I see the successive stages of the process by which the individual changes from fixity to flowingness, from a point nearer the rigid end of the continuum to a point nearer the "in-motion" end of the continuum. If I am correct in my observations then it is possible that by dipping in and sampling the qualities of experiencing and expressing in a given individual, in a climate where he feels himself to be completely received, we may be able to determine where he is in this continuum of personality change.

FIRST STAGE

The individual in this stage of fixity and remoteness of experiencing is not likely to come voluntarily for therapy. However I can to some degree illustrate the characteristics of this stage.

There is an unwillingness to communicate self. Communication is only about externals.

Example: "Well, I'll tell you, it always seems a little bit nonsensical to talk about one's self except in times of dire necessity."*

Feelings and personal meanings are neither recognized nor owned. Personal constructs (to borrow Kelly's helpful term (3)) are extremely rigid.

Close and communicative relationships are construed as dangerous.

No problems are recognized or perceived at this stage.

There is no desire to change.

Example: "I think I'm practically healthy."

There is much blockage of internal communication.

Perhaps these brief statements and examples will convey something of the psychological fixity of this end of the continuum. The

* The many examples used as illustrations are taken from recorded interviews, unless otherwise noted. For the most part they are taken from interviews which have never been published, but a number of them are taken from Louis Rogers and Shlien (5).

individual has little or no recognition of the ebb and flow of the feeling life within him. The ways in which he construes experience have been set by his past, and are rigidly unaffected by the actualities of the present. He is (to use the term of Gendlin and Zimring) structure-bound in his manner of experiencing. That is, he reacts "to the situation of now by finding it to be like a past experience and then reacting to that past, feeling *it*" (2). Differentiation of personal meanings in experience is crude or global, experience being seen largely in black and white terms. He does not communicate *himself*, but only communicates about externals. He tends to see himself as having no problems, or the problems he recognizes are perceived as entirely external to himself. There is much blockage of internal communication between self and experience. The individual at this stage is represented by such terms as stasis, fixity, the opposite of flow or change.

SECOND STAGE OF PROCESS

When the person in the first stage can experience himself as fully received then the second stage follows. We seem to know very little about how to provide the experience of being received for the person in the first stage, but it is occasionally achieved in play or group therapy where the person can be exposed to a receiving climate, without himself having to take any initiative, for a long enough time to experience himself *as received*. In any event, where he does experience this, then a slight loosening and flowing of symbolic expression occurs, which tends to be characterized by the following.

Expression begins to flow in regard to non-self topics.

Example: "I guess that I suspect my father has often felt very insecure in his business relations."

Problems are perceived as external to self.

Example: "Disorganization keeps cropping up in my life."

There is no sense of personal responsibility in problems.

Example: This is illustrated in the above excerpt.

Feelings are described as unowned, or sometimes as past objects.

Example: Counselor: "If you want to tell me something of what brought you here. . . ." Client: "The symptom was—it was—just being very depressed." This is an excellent example of the way in which internal problems can be perceived and communicated about as entirely external. She is not saying "I am depressed" or even "I was depressed." Her feeling is handled as a remote, unowned object, entirely external to self.

Feelings may be exhibited, but are not recognized as such or owned.

Experiencing is bound by the structure of the past.

Example: "I suppose the compensation I always make is, rather than trying to communicate with people or have the right relationship with them, to compensate by, well, shall we say, being on an intellectual level." Here the client is beginning to recognize the way in which her experiencing is bound by the past. Her statement also illustrates the remoteness of experiencing at this level. It is as though she were holding her experience at arm's length.

Personal constructs are rigid, and unrecognized as being constructs, but are thought of as facts.

Example: "I can't ever do anything right — can't ever finish it."

Differentiation of personal meanings and feelings is very limited and global.

Example: The preceding example is a good illustration. "I can't ever" is one instance of a black and white differentiation, as is also the use of "right" in this absolute sense.

Contradictions may be expressed, but with little recognition of them as contradictions.

Example: "I want to know things, but I look at the same page for an hour."

As a comment on this second stage of the process of change, it might be said that a number of clients who voluntarily come for help are in this stage, but we (and probably therapists in general) have a very modest degree of success in working with them. This

seems at least, to be a reasonable conclusion from Kirtner's study (5), though his conceptual framework was somewhat different. We seem to know too little about the ways in which a person at this stage may come to experience himself as "received."

STAGE THREE

If the slight loosening and flowing in the second stage is not blocked, but the client feels himself in these respects to be fully received as he is, then there is a still further loosening and flowing of symbolic expression. Here are some of the characteristics which seem to belong together at approximately this point on the continuum.

There is a freer flow of expression about the self as an object.

Example: "I try hard to be perfect with her — cheerful, friendly, intelligent, talkative — because I want her to love me."

There is also expression about self-related experiences as objects.

Example: "And yet there is the matter of, well, how much do you leave yourself open to marriage, and if your professional vocation is important, and that's the thing that's really yourself at this point, it does place a limitation on your contacts." In this excerpt her self is such a remote object that this would probably best be classified as being between stages two and three.

There is also expression about the self as a reflected object, existing primarily in others.

Example: "I can feel myself smiling sweetly the way my mother does, or being gruff and important the way my father does sometimes — slipping into everyone else's personalities but mine."

There is much expression about or description of feelings and personal meanings not now present.

Usually, of course, these are communications about past feelings.

Example: There were "so many things I couldn't tell people — nasty things I did. I felt so sneaky and bad."

Example: "And this feeling that came into me was just the feeling that I remember as a kid."

There is very little acceptance of feelings. For the most part feelings are revealed as something shameful, bad, or abnormal, or unacceptable in other ways.

Feelings are exhibited, and then sometimes recognized as feelings. Experiencing is described as in the past, or as somewhat remote from the self.

The preceding examples illustrate this.

Personal constructs are rigid, but may be recognized as constructs, not external facts.

Example: "I felt guilty for so much of my young life that I expect I felt I deserved to be punished most of the time anyway. If I didn't feel I deserved it for one thing, I felt I deserved it for another." Obviously he sees this as the way he has construed experience rather than as a settled fact.

Example: "I'm so much afraid wherever affection is involved it just means submission. And this I hate, but I seem to equate the two, that if I am going to get affection, then it means that I must give in to what the other person wants to do."

Differentiation of feelings and meanings is slightly sharper, less global, than in previous stages.

Example: "I mean, I was saying it before, but this time I really felt it. And is it any wonder that I felt so darn lousy when this was the way it was, that . . . they did me a dirty deal plenty of times. And conversely, I was no angel about it; I realize that."

There is a recognition of contradictions in experience.

Example: Client explains that on the one hand he has expectations of doing something great; on the other hand he feels he may easily end up as a bum.

Personal choices are often seen as ineffective.

The client "chooses" to do something, but finds that his behaviors do not fall in line with this choice.

I believe it will be evident that many people who seek psychological help are at approximately the point of stage three. They may stay at roughly this point for a considerable time describing non-

present feelings and exploring the self as an object, before being ready to move to the next stage.

STAGE FOUR

When the client feels understood, welcomed, received as he is in the various aspects of his experience at the stage three level then there is a gradual loosening of constructs, a freer flow of feelings which are characteristic of movement up the continuum. We may try to capture a number of the characteristics of this loosening, and term them the fourth phase of the process.

The client describes more intense feelings of the "not-now-present" variety.

Example: "Well, I was really — it hit me down deep."

Feelings are described as objects in the present.

Example: "It discourages me to feel dependent because it means I'm kind of hopeless about myself."

Occasionally feelings are expressed as in the present, sometimes breaking through almost against the client's wishes.

Example: A client, after discussing a dream including a bystander, dangerous because of having observed his "crimes," says to the therapist, "Oh, all right, I *don't* trust you."

There is a tendency toward experiencing feelings in the immediate present, and there is distrust and fear of this possibility.

Example: "I feel bound — by something or other. It must be me! There's nothing else that seems to be doing it. I can't blame it on anything else. There's this *knot* — somewhere inside of me. . . . It makes me want to get mad — and cry — and run away!"

There is little open acceptance of feelings, though some acceptance is exhibited.

The two preceding examples indicate that the client exhibits sufficient acceptance of his experience to approach some frightening feelings. But there is little conscious acceptance of them.

Experiencing is less bound by the structure of the past, is less remote, and may occasionally occur with little postponement.

Again the two preceding examples illustrate very well this less tightly bound manner of experiencing.

There is a loosening of the way experience is construed. There are some discoveries of personal constructs; there is the definite recognition of these as constructs; and there is a beginning questioning of their validity.

Example: "It amuses me. Why? Oh, because it's a little stupid of me — and I feel a little tense about it, or a little embarrassed, — and a little helpless. (*His voice softens and he looks sad.*) Humor has been my bulwark all my life; maybe it's a little out of place in trying to really look at myself. A curtain to pull down . . . I feel sort of at a loss right now. Where was I? What was I saying? I lost my grip on something — that I've been holding myself up with." Here there seems illustrated the jolting, shaking consequences of questioning a basic construct, in this case his use of humor as a defense.

There is an increased differentiation of feelings, constructs, personal meanings, with some tendency toward seeking exactness of symbolization.

Example: This quality is adequately illustrated in each of the examples in this stage.

There is a realization of concern about contradictions and incongruences between experience and self.

Example: "I'm not living up to what I am. I really should be doing more than I am. How many hours I spent on the job in this position with Mother saying, 'Don't come out 'till you've done something.' Produce! . . . That happened with lots of things."

This is both an example of concern about contradictions and a questioning of the way in which experience has been construed.

There are feelings of self responsibility in problems, though such feelings vacillate.

Though a close relationship still seems dangerous, the client risks himself, relating to some small extent on a feeling basis.

Several of the above examples illustrate this, notably the one in which the client says, "Oh, all right, I *don't* trust you."

There is no doubt that this stage and the following one constitute much of psychotherapy as we know it. These behaviors are very common in any form of therapy.

It may be well to remind ourselves again that a person is never wholly at one or another stage of the process. Listening to interviews and examining typescripts causes me to believe that a given client's expressions in a given interview may be made up, for example, of expressions and behaviors mostly characteristic of stage three, with frequent instances of rigidity characteristic of stage two or the greater loosening of stage four. It does not seem likely that one will find examples of stage six in such an interview.

The foregoing refers to the variability in the general stage of the process in which the client finds himself. If we limit ourselves to some defined area of related personal meanings in the client, then I would hypothesize much more regularity; that stage three would rarely be found before stage two; that stage four would rarely follow stage two without stage three intervening. It is this kind of tentative hypothesis which can, of course, be put to empirical test.

THE FIFTH STAGE

As we go on up the continuum we can again try to mark a point by calling it stage five. If the client feels himself received in his expressions, behaviors, and experiences at the fourth stage then this sets in motion still further loosening, and the freedom of organismic flow is increased. Here I believe we can again delineate crudely the qualities of this phase of the process.*

Feelings are expressed freely as in the present.

Example: "I expected kinda to get a severe rejection — this I expect all the time . . . somehow I guess I even feel it with you. . . . It's hard to talk about because I want to be the best I can possibly be with you." Here feelings regarding the therapist and the client in relationship to the therapist, emotions often most difficult to reveal, are expressed openly.

* The further we go up the scale, the less adequate are examples given in print. The reason for this is that the quality of experiencing becomes more important at these upper levels, and this can only be suggested by a transcript, certainly not fully communicated. Perhaps in time a series of recorded examples can be made available.

Feelings are very close to being fully experienced. They "bubble up," "seep through," in spite of the fear and distrust which the client feels at experiencing them with fullness and immediacy.

Example: "That kinda came out and I just don't understand it. (Long pause) I'm trying to get hold of what that terror is."

Example: Client is talking about an external event. Suddenly she gets a pained, stricken look.

Therapist: "What — what's hitting you now?"

Client: "I don't know. (*She cries*) . . . I must have been getting a little too close to something I didn't want to talk about, or something." Here the feeling has almost seeped through into awareness in spite of her.

Example: "I feel stopped right now. Why is my mind blank right now? I feel as if I'm hanging onto something, and I've been letting go of other things; and something in me is saying, 'What more do I have to give up?'"

There is a beginning tendency to realize that experiencing a feeling involves a direct referent.

The three examples just cited illustrate this. In each case the client knows he has experienced something, knows he is not clear as to what he has experienced. But there is also the dawning realization that the referent of these vague cognitions lies within him, in an organismic event against which he can check his symbolization and his cognitive formulations. This is often shown by expressions that indicate the closeness or distance he feels from this referent.

Example: "I really don't have my finger on it. I'm just kinda describing it."

There is surprise and fright, rarely pleasure, at the feelings which "bubble through."

Example: Client, talking about past home relationships, "That's not important any more. Hmm. (Pause) That was somehow very meaningful — but I don't have the slightest idea why. . . . Yes, that's it! I can forget about it now and — why, it *isn't* that important. *Wow!* All that miserableness and stuff!"

Example: Client has been expressing his hopelessness. "I'm still

amazed at the strength of this. It seems to be *so* much the way I feel.”

There is an increasing ownership of self feelings, and a desire to be these, to be the “real me.”

Example: “The real truth of the matter is that I’m not the sweet, forebearing guy that I try to make out that I am. I get irritated at things. I feel like snapping at people, and I feel like being selfish at times; and I don’t know why I should pretend I’m *not* that way.”

This is a clear instance of the greater degree of acceptance of all feelings.

Experiencing is loosened, no longer remote, and frequently occurs with little postponement.

There is little delay between the organismic event and the full subjective living of it. A beautifully precise account of this is given by a client.

Example: “I’m still having a little trouble trying to figure out what this sadness — and the weepiness — means. I just know I feel it when I get close to a certain kind of feeling — and usually when I do get weepy, it helps me to kinda break through a wall I’ve set up because of things that have happened. I feel hurt about something and then automatically this kind of shields things up and then I feel like I can’t really touch or feel anything very much . . . and if I’d be able to feel, or could let myself feel the instantaneous feeling when I’m hurt, I’d immediately start being weepy right then, but I can’t.”

Here we see him regarding his feeling as an inner referent to which he can turn for greater clarity. As he senses his weepiness he realizes that it is a delayed and partial experiencing of being hurt. He also recognizes that his defenses are such that he cannot, at this point, experience the event of hurt when it occurs.

The ways in which experience is construed are much loosened. There are many fresh discoveries of personal constructs as constructs, and a critical examination and questioning of these.

Example: A man says, “This idea of needing to please — of *having* to do it — that’s really been kind of a basic assumption of my

life (*he weeps quietly*). It's kind of, you know, just one of the very unquestioned axioms that I *have* to please. I have no choice. I just *have* to." Here he is clear that this assumption has been a construct, and it is evident that its unquestioned status is at an end.

There is a strong and evident tendency toward exactness in differentiation of feelings and meanings.

Example: ". . . some tension that grows in me, or some hopelessness, or some kind of incompleteness — and my life actually is very incomplete right now. . . . I just don't know. Seems to be, the closest thing it gets to, is *hopelessness*." Obviously, he is trying to capture the exact term which for him symbolizes his experience.

There is an increasingly clear facing of contradictions and incongruences in experience.

Example: "My conscious mind tells me I'm worthy. But some place inside I don't believe it. I think I'm a rat — a no-good. I've no faith in my ability to do anything."

There is an increasing quality of acceptance of self-responsibility for the problems being faced, and a concern as to how he has contributed. There are increasingly freer dialogues within the self, an improvement in and reduced blockage of internal communication.

Sometimes these dialogues are verbalized.

Example: "Something in me is saying, 'What more do I have to give up? You've taken so much from me already.' This is *me* talking to *me* — the *me* way back in there who talks to the *me* who runs the show. It's complaining now, saying, 'You're getting too close! Go away!'"

Example: Frequently these dialogues are in the form of listening to oneself, to check cognitive formulations against the direct referent of experiencing. Thus a client says, "Isn't that funny? I never really looked at it that way. I'm just trying to check it. It always seemed to me that the tension was much more externally caused than this — that it wasn't something *I used* in this way. But it's true — it's really true."

I trust that the examples I have given of this fifth phase of be-

coming a process will make several points clear. In the first place this phase is several hundred psychological miles from the first stage described. Here many aspects of the client are in flow, as against the rigidity of the first stage. He is very much closer to his organic being, which is always in process. He is much closer to being in the flow of his feelings. His constructions of experience are decidedly loosened and repeatedly being tested against referents and evidence within and without. Experience is much more highly differentiated, and thus internal communication, already flowing, can be much more exact.

EXAMPLES OF PROCESS IN ONE AREA

Since I have tended to speak as though the client as a whole is at one stage or another, let me stress again, before going on to describe the next stage, that in given areas of personal meaning, the process may drop below the client's general level because of experiences which are so sharply at variance with the concept of self. Perhaps I can illustrate, from a single area in the feelings of one client, something of the way the process I am describing operates in one narrow segment of experiencing.

In a case reported rather fully by Shlien (5) the quality of the self-expression in the interviews has been at approximately points three and four on our continuum of process. Then when she turns to the area of sexual problems, the process takes up at a lower level on the continuum.

In the sixth interview she feels that there are things it would be impossible to tell the therapist — then “After long pause, mentions almost inaudibly, an itching sensation in the area of the rectum, for which a physician could find no cause.” Here a problem is viewed as completely external to self, the quality of experiencing is very remote. It would appear to be characteristic of the second stage of process as we have described it.

In the tenth interview, the itching has moved to her fingers. Then with great embarrassment, describes undressing games and other sex activities in childhood. Here too the quality is that of telling of non-self activities, with feelings described as past objects, though it is clearly somewhat further on the continuum of process. She con-

cludes "because I'm just bad, dirty, that's all." Here is an expression about the self and an undifferentiated, rigid personal construct. The quality of this is that of stage three in our process, as is also the following statement about self, showing more differentiation of personal meanings. "I think inside I'm oversexed, and outside not sexy enough to attract the response I want. . . . I'd like to be the same inside and out." This last phrase has a stage four quality in its faint questioning of a personal construct.

In the twelfth interview she carries this questioning further, deciding she was not just *born* to be promiscuous. This has clearly a fourth stage quality, definitely challenging this deep-seated way of construing her experience. Also in this interview she acquires the courage to say to the therapist; "You're a man, a good looking man, and my whole problem is men like you. It would be easier if you were elderly — easier, but not better, in the long run." She is upset and embarrassed having said this and feels "it's like being naked, I'm so revealed to you." Here an immediate feeling is expressed, with reluctance and fear to be sure, but expressed, not described. Experiencing is much less remote or structure bound, and occurs with little postponement, but with much lack of acceptance. The sharper differentiation of meanings is clearly evident in the phrase "easier but not better." All of this is fully characteristic of our stage four of process.

In the fifteenth interview she describes many past experiences and feelings regarding sex, these having the quality of both the third and fourth stage as we have presented them. At some point she says, "I wanted to hurt myself, so I started going with men who would hurt me — with their penises. I enjoyed it, and was being hurt, so I had the satisfaction of being punished for my enjoyment at the same time." Here is a way of construing experience which is perceived as just that, not as an external fact. It is also quite clearly being questioned, though this questioning is implicit. There is recognition of and some concern regarding the contradictory elements in experiencing enjoyment, yet feeling she should be punished. These qualities are all fully characteristic of the fourth stage or even slightly beyond.

A bit later she describes her intense past feelings of shame at her

enjoyment of sex. Her two sisters, the "neat, respected daughters" could not have orgasms, "so again I was the bad one." Up to this point this again illustrates the fourth stage. Then suddenly she asks "Or am I really lucky?" In the quality of present expression of a feeling of puzzlement, in the "bubbling through" quality, in the immediate experiencing of this wonderment, in the frank and definite questioning of her previous personal construct, this has clearly the qualities of stage five, which we have just described. She has moved forward in this process, in a climate of acceptance, a very considerable distance from stage two.

I hope this example indicates the way in which an individual, in a given area of personal meanings, becomes more and more loosened, more and more in motion, in process, as she is received. Perhaps, too, it will illustrate what I believe to be the case, that this process of increased flow is not one which happens in minutes or hours, but in weeks, or months. It is an irregularly advancing process, sometimes retreating a bit, sometimes seeming not to advance as it broadens out to cover more territory, but finally proceeding in its further flow.

THE SIXTH STAGE

If I have been able to communicate some feeling for the scope and quality of increased loosening of feeling, experiencing and constructing at each stage, then we are ready to look at the next stage which appears, from observation, to be a very crucial one. Let me see if I can convey what I perceive to be its characteristic qualities.

Assuming that the client continues to be fully received in the therapeutic relationship then the characteristics of stage five tend to be followed by a very distinctive and often dramatic phase. It is characterized as follows.

A feeling which has previously been "stuck," has been inhibited in its process quality, is experienced with immediacy now.

A feeling flows to its full result.

A present feeling is directly experienced with immediacy and richness.

This immediacy of experiencing, and the feeling which con-

stitutes its content, are accepted. This is something which is, not something to be denied, feared, struggled against.

All the preceding sentences attempt to describe slightly different facets of what is, when it occurs, a clear and definite phenomenon. It would take recorded examples to communicate its full quality, but I shall try to give an illustration without benefit of recording. A somewhat extended excerpt from the 80th interview with a young man may communicate the way in which a client comes into stage six.

Example: "I could even conceive of it as a possibility that I could have a kind of tender concern for me. . . . Still, how could *I* be tender, be concerned for *myself*, when they're one and the same thing? But yet I can *feel* it so clearly. . . . You know, like taking care of a child. You want to give it this and give it that. . . . I can kind of clearly see the purposes for somebody else . . . but I can never see them for . . . myself, that I could do this for me, you know. Is it possible that I can really want to take care of myself, and make that a major purpose of my life? That means I'd have to deal with the whole world as if I were guardian of the most cherished and most wanted possession, that this *I* was between this precious *me* that I wanted to take care of and the whole world. . . . It's almost as if I *loved* myself — you know — that's strange — but it's true."

Therapist: It seems such a strange concept to realize. Why it would mean "I would face the world as though a part of my primary responsibility was taking care of this precious individual who is me — whom I love."

Client: Whom I care for — whom I feel so *close* to. Woof! ! That's another *strange* one.

Therapist: It just seems *weird*.

Client: Yeah. It hits rather close somehow. The idea of my loving me and the taking care of me. (*His eyes grow moist.*) That's a very nice one — very nice."

The recording would help to convey the fact that here is a feeling which has never been able to flow in him, which is experienced with immediacy, in this moment. It is a feeling which flows to its full result, without inhibition. It is experienced acceptantly, with no attempt to push it to one side, or to deny it.

There is a quality of living subjectively in the experience, not feeling about it.

The client, in his *words*, may withdraw enough from the experience to feel *about* it, as in the above example, yet the recording makes it clear that his words are peripheral to the experiencing which is going on within him, and in which he is living. The best communication of this in his words is "Woof! ! That's another strange one."

Self as an object tends to disappear.

The self, at this moment, *is* this feeling. This is a being in the moment, with little self-conscious awareness, but with primarily a reflexive awareness, as Sartre terms it. The self *is*, subjectively, in the existential moment. It is not something one perceives.

Experiencing, at this stage, takes on a real process quality.

Example: One client, a man who is approaching this stage, says that he has a frightened feeling about the source of a lot of secret thoughts in himself. He goes on; "The butterflies are the thoughts closest to the surface. Underneath there's a deeper flow. I feel very removed from it all. The deeper flow is like a great school of fish moving under the surface. I see the ones that break through the surface of the water — sitting with my fishing line in one hand, with a bent pin on the end of it — trying to find a better tackle — or better yet, a way of diving in. That's the scary thing. The image I get is that *I* want to be one of the fish myself."

Therapist: "You want to be down there flowing along, too."

Though this client is not yet fully experiencing in a process manner, and hence does not fully exemplify this sixth point of the continuum, he foresees it so clearly that his description gives a real sense of its meaning.

Another characteristic of this stage of process is the physiological loosening which accompanies it.

Moistness in the eyes, tears, sighs, muscular relaxation, are frequently evident. Often there are other physiological concomitants. I would hypothesize that in these moments, had we the measure for it, we would discover improved circulation, improved conductivity

of nervous impulses. An example of the "primitive" nature of some of these sensations may be indicated in the following excerpt.

Example: The client, a young man, has expressed the wish his parents would die or disappear. "It's kind of like wanting to wish them away, and wishing they had never been . . . And I'm so ashamed of myself because then they call me, and off I go — swish! They're somehow still so strong. I don't know. There's some umbilical — I can almost feel it inside me — swish (*and he gestures, plucking himself away by grasping at his navel.*)"

Therapist: "They really do have a hold on your umbilical cord."

Client: "It's funny how real it feels . . . It's like a burning sensation, kind of, and when they say something which makes me anxious I can feel it right here (*pointing*). I never thought of it quite that way."

Therapist: "As though if there's a disturbance in the relationship between you, then you do just feel it as though it was a strain on your umbilicus."

Client: "Yeah, kind of like in my gut here. It's so hard to define the feeling that I feel there."

Here he is living subjectively in the feeling of dependence on his parents. Yet it would be most inaccurate to say that he is perceiving it. He is *in* it, experiencing it as a strain on his umbilical cord. *In this stage, internal communication is free and relatively unblocked.*

I believe this is quite adequately illustrated in the examples given. Indeed the phrase, "internal communication" is no longer quite correct, for as each of these examples illustrates, the crucial moment is a moment of integration, in which communication between different internal foci is no longer necessary, because they become *one*.

The incongruence between experience and awareness is vividly experienced as it disappears into congruence.

The relevant personal construct is dissolved in this experiencing moment, and the client feels cut loose from his previously stabilized framework.

I trust these two characteristics may acquire more meaning from the following example. A young man has been having difficulty getting close to a certain unknown feeling. "That's almost exactly

what the feeling is, too — it was that I was living so much of my life, and seeing so much of my life in terms of being scared of something.” He tells how his professional activities are just to give him a little safety and “a little world where I’ll be secure, you know. And for the same reason. (*Pause*) I was kind of letting it seep through. But I also tied it in with you and with my relationship with you, and one thing I feel about it is fear of its going away. (*His tone changes to role-play more accurately his feeling.*) Won’t you *let* me have this? I kind of *need* it. I can be so lonely and scared without it.”

Therapist: “M-hm, m-hm. ‘Let me hang on to it because I’d be terribly scared if I didn’t! . . . It’s a kind of pleading thing too, isn’t it?’”

Client: “I get a sense of — it’s this kind of pleading little boy. It’s this gesture of begging. (*Putting his hands up as if in prayer.*)

Therapist: “You put your hands in kind of a supplication.”

Client: “Yeah, that’s right. ‘*Won’t* you do this for me?’ kind of. Oh, that’s terrible! Who, Me? Beg? . . . That’s an emotion I’ve never felt clearly at all — something I’ve never been . . . (*Pause*) . . . I’ve got such a confusing feeling. One is, it’s such a wondrous feeling to have these new things come out of me. It amazes me so much each time, and there’s that same feeling, being scared that I’ve so much of this. (*Tears*) . . . I just don’t know myself. Here’s suddenly something I never realized, hadn’t any inkling of — that it was some *thing* or *way* I wanted to be.”

Here we see a complete experiencing of his pleadingness, and a vivid recognition of the discrepancy between this experiencing and his concept of himself. Yet this experiencing of discrepancy exists in the moment of its disappearance. From now on he *is* a person who feels *pleading*, as well as many other feelings. As this moment dissolves the way he has construed himself he feels cut loose from his previous world — a sensation which is both wondrous and frightening.

The moment of full experiencing becomes a clear and definite referent.

The examples given should indicate that the client is often not too

clearly aware of what has "hit him" in these moments. Yet this does not seem too important because the event is an entity, a referent, which can be returned to, again and again, if necessary, to discover more about it. The pleadingness, the feeling of "loving myself" which are present in these examples, may not prove to be exactly as described. They are, however, solid points of reference to which the client can return until he has satisfied himself as to what they are. It is, perhaps, that they constitute a clear-cut physiological event, a substratum of the conscious life, which the client can return to for investigatory purposes. Gendlin has called my attention to this significant quality of experiencing as a referent. He is endeavoring to build an extension of psychological theory on this basis. (1)

Differentiation of experiencing is sharp and basic.

Because each of these moments is a referent, a specific entity, it does not become confused with anything else. The process of sharp differentiation builds on it and about it.

In this stage, there are no longer "problems," external or internal. The client is living, subjectively, a phase of his problem. It is not an object.

I trust it is evident that in any of these examples, it would be grossly inaccurate to say that the client perceives his problem as internal, or is dealing with it as an internal problem. We need some way of indicating that he is further than this, and of course enormously far in the process sense from perceiving his problem as external. The best description seems to be that he neither perceives his problem nor deals with it. He is simply living some portion of it knowingly and acceptingly.

I have dwelt so long on this sixth definable point on the process continuum because I see it as a highly crucial one. My observation is that these moments of immediate, full, accepted experiencing are in some sense almost irreversible. To put this in terms of the examples, it is my observation and hypothesis that with these clients, whenever a future experiencing of the same quality and characteristics occurs, it will necessarily be recognized in awareness for what it is: a tender caring for self, an umbilical bond which makes him a

part of his parents, or a pleading small-boy dependence, as the case may be. And, it might be remarked in passing, once an experience is fully in awareness, fully accepted, then it can be coped with effectively, like any other clear reality.

THE SEVENTH STAGE

In those areas in which the sixth stage has been reached, it is no longer so necessary that the client be fully received by the therapist, though this still seems helpful. However, because of the tendency for the sixth stage to be irreversible, the client often seems to go on into the seventh and final stage without much need of the therapist's help. This stage occurs as much outside of the therapeutic relationship as in it, and is often reported, rather than experienced in the therapeutic hour. I shall try to describe some of its characteristics as I feel I have observed them.

New feelings are experienced with immediacy and richness of detail, both in the therapeutic relationship and outside.

The experiencing of such feelings is used as a clear referent.

The client quite consciously endeavors to use these referents in order to know in a clearer and more differentiated way who he is, what he wants, and what his attitudes are. This is true even when the feelings are unpleasant or frightening.

There is a growing and continuing sense of acceptant ownership of these changing feelings, a basic trust in his own process.

This trust is not primarily in the conscious processes which go on, but rather in the total organismic process. One client describes the way in which experience characteristic of the sixth stage looks to him, describing it in terms characteristic of the seventh stage.

"In therapy here, what has counted is sitting down and saying, 'this is what's bothering me,' and play around with it for awhile until something gets squeezed out through some emotional crescendo, and the thing is over with — looks different. Even then, I can't tell just exactly what's happened. It's just that I exposed something, shook it up and turned it around; and when I put it back it felt better. It's a little frustrating because I'd like to know exactly what's going on. . . . This is a funny thing because it feels as if I'm

not doing anything at all about it — the only *active* part I take is to — to be alert and grab a thought as it's going by . . . And there's sort of a feeling, 'Well now, what will I do with it, now that I've seen it right?' There's no handles on it you can adjust or anything. Just talk about it awhile, and let it go. And apparently that's all there is to it. Leaves me with a somewhat unsatisfied feeling though — a feeling that I haven't accomplished anything. It's been accomplished without my knowledge or consent. . . . The point is I'm not sure of the quality of the readjustment because I didn't get to see it, to check on it. . . . All I can do is observe the facts — that I look at things a little differently and am less anxious, by a long shot, and a lot more active. Things are looking up in general. I'm very happy with the way things have gone. But I feel sort of like a spectator." A few moments later, following this rather grudging acceptance of the process going on in him, he adds, "I seem to work best when my conscious mind is only concerned with facts and letting the analysis of them go on by itself without paying any attention to it."

Experiencing has lost almost completely its structure-bound aspects and becomes process experiencing — that is, the situation is experienced and interpreted in its newness, not as the past.

The example given in stage six suggests the quality I am trying to describe. Another example in a very specific area is given by a client in a follow-up interview as he explains the different quality that has come about in his creative work. It used to be that he tried to be orderly. "You begin at the beginning and you progress regularly through to the end." Now he is aware that the process in himself is different. "When I'm working on an idea, the whole idea develops like the latent image coming out when you develop a photograph. It doesn't start at one edge and fill in over to the other. It comes in *all over*. At first all you see is the hazy outline, and you wonder what it's going to be; and then gradually something fits here and something fits there, and pretty soon it all comes clear — all at once." It is obvious that he has not only come to trust this process, but that he is experiencing it as it *is*, not in terms of some past.

The self becomes increasingly simply the subjective and reflexive awareness of experiencing. The self is much less frequently a perceived object, and much more frequently something confidently felt in process.

An example may be taken from the same follow-up interview with the client quoted above. In this interview, because he is reporting his experience since therapy, he again becomes aware of himself as an object, but it is clear that this has not been the quality of his day-by-day experience. After reporting many changes, he says, "I hadn't really thought of any of these things in connection with therapy until tonight. . . . (*Jokingly*) Gee! maybe something *did* happen. Because my life since has been different. My productivity has gone up. My confidence has gone up. I've become brash in situations I would have avoided before. And also, I've become much less brash in situations where I would have become very obnoxious before." It is clear that only afterward does he realize what his self has been.

Personal constructs are tentatively reformulated, to be validated against further experience, but even then, to be held loosely.

A client describes the way in which such a construct changed, between interviews, toward the end of therapy.

"I don't know what (changed), but I definitely feel different about looking back at my childhood, and some of the hostility about my mother and father has evaporated. I substituted for a feeling of resentment about them a sort of acceptance of the fact that they did a number of things that were undesirable with me. But I substituted a sort of feeling of interested excitement that — gee — now that I'm finding out what was wrong, *I* can do something about it — correct their mistakes." Here the way in which he construes his experience with his parents has been sharply altered.

Another example may be taken from an interview with a client who has always felt that he had to please people. "I can see . . . what it would be like — that it doesn't matter if I don't please you — that pleasing you or not pleasing you is not the thing that is important to me. If I could just kinda say that to people — you know? . . . the idea of just spontaneously saying something — and it not mattering whether it pleases or not — Oh God! you could say

almost *anything*: But that's true, you know." And a little later he asks himself, with incredulity, "You mean if I'd really be what I *feel* like being, that that would be all right?" He is struggling toward a reconstruing of some very basic aspects of his experience.

Internal communication is clear, with feelings and symbols well matched, and fresh terms for new feelings.

There is the experiencing of effective choice of new ways of being.

Because all the elements of experience are available to awareness, choice becomes real and effective. Here a client is just coming to this realization. "I'm trying to encompass a way of talking that is a way out of being scared of talking. Perhaps just kind of thinking out loud is the way to do that. But I've got so *many* thoughts I could only do it a little bit. But maybe I could let my talk be an expression of my real thoughts, instead of just trying to make the proper noises in each situation." Here he is sensing the possibility of effective choice.

Another client comes in telling of an argument he had with his wife. "I wasn't so angry with myself. I didn't hate myself so much. I realized 'I'm acting childishly' and somehow I chose to do that."

It is not easy to find examples by which to illustrate this seventh stage, because relatively few clients fully achieve this point. Let me try to summarize briefly the qualities of this end point of the continuum.

When the individual has, in his process of change, reached the seventh stage, we find ourselves involved in a new dimension. The client has now incorporated the quality of motion, of flow, of changingness, into every aspect of his psychological life, and this becomes its outstanding characteristic. He lives in his feelings, knowingly and with basic trust in them and acceptance of them. The ways in which he construes experience are continually changing as his personal constructs are modified by each new living event. His experiencing is process in nature, feeling the new in each situation and interpreting it anew, interpreting in terms of the past only to the extent that the now is identical with the past. He experiences with a quality of immediacy, knowing at the same time *that* he ex-

periences. He values exactness in differentiation of his feelings and of the personal meanings of his experience. His internal communication between various aspects of himself is free and unblocked. He communicates himself freely in relationships with others, and these relationships are not stereotyped, but person to person. He is aware of himself, but not as an object. Rather it is a reflexive awareness, a subjective living in himself in motion. He perceives himself as responsibly related to his problems. Indeed, he feels a fully responsible relationship to his life in all its fluid aspects. He lives fully in himself as a constantly changing flow of process.

SOME QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS PROCESS CONTINUUM

Let me try to anticipate certain questions which may be raised about the process I have tried to describe.

Is this *the* process by which personality changes or one of many kinds of change? This I do not know. Perhaps there are several types of process by which personality changes. I would only specify that this seems to be the process which is set in motion when the individual experiences himself as being fully received.

Does it apply in all psychotherapies, or is this the process which occurs in one psychotherapeutic orientation only? Until we have more recordings of therapy from other orientations, this question cannot be answered. However, I would hazard a guess that perhaps therapeutic approaches which place great stress on the cognitive and little on the emotional aspects of experience may set in motion an entirely different process of change.

Would everyone agree that this is a desirable process of change, that it moves in valued directions? I believe not. I believe some people do not value fluidity. This will be one of the social value judgments which individuals and cultures will have to make. Such a process of change can easily be avoided, by reducing or avoiding those relationships in which the individual is fully received as he is.

Is change on this continuum rapid? My observation is quite the contrary. My interpretation of Kirtner's study (4), which may be slightly different from his, is that a client might start therapy at about stage two and end at about stage four with both client and therapist being quite legitimately satisfied that substantial progress

had been made. It would occur very rarely, if ever, that a client who fully exemplified stage one would move to a point where he fully exemplified stage seven. If this did occur, it would involve a matter of years.

Are the descriptive items properly grouped at each stage? I feel sure that there are many errors in the way I have grouped my observations. I also wonder what important elements have been omitted. I wonder also if the different elements of this continuum might not be more parsimoniously described. All such questions, however, may be given an empirical answer, if the hypothesis I am setting forth has merit in the eyes of various research workers.

SUMMARY

I have tried to sketch, in a crude and preliminary manner, the flow of a process of change which occurs when a client experiences himself as being received, welcomed, understood as he is. This process involves several threads, separable at first, becoming more of a unity as the process continues.

This process involves a loosening of feelings. At the lower end of the continuum they are described as remote, unowned, and not now present. They are then described as present objects with some sense of ownership by the individual. Next they are expressed as owned feelings in terms closer to their immediate experiencing. Still further up the scale they are experienced and expressed in the immediate present with a decreasing fear of this process. Also, at this point, even those feelings which have been previously denied to awareness bubble through into awareness, are experienced, and increasingly owned. At the upper end of the continuum living in the process of experiencing a continually changing flow of feelings becomes characteristic of the individual.

The process involves a change in the manner of experiencing. The continuum begins with a fixity in which the individual is very remote from his experiencing and unable to draw upon or symbolize its implicit meaning. Experiencing must be safely in the past before a meaning can be drawn from it and the present is interpreted in terms of these past meanings. From this remoteness in relation to his experiencing, the individual moves toward the recognition of

experiencing as a troubling process going on within him. Experiencing gradually becomes a more accepted inner referent to which he can turn for increasingly accurate meanings. Finally he becomes able to live freely and acceptantly in a fluid process of experiencing, using it comfortably as a major reference for his behavior.

The process involves a shift from incongruence to congruence. The continuum runs from a maximum of incongruence which is quite unknown to the individual through stages where there is an increasingly sharp recognition of the contradictions and discrepancies existing within himself to the experiencing of incongruence in the immediate present in a way which dissolves this. At the upper end of the continuum, there would never be more than temporary incongruence between experiencing and awareness since the individual would not need to defend himself against the threatening aspects of his experience.

The process involves a change in the manner in which, and the extent to which the individual is able and willing to communicate himself in a receptive climate. The continuum runs from a complete unwillingness to communicate self to the self as a rich and changing awareness of internal experiencing which is readily communicated when the individual desires to do so.

The process involves a loosening of the cognitive maps of experience. From construing experience in rigid ways which are perceived as external facts, the client moves toward developing changing, loosely held construing of meaning in experience, constructions which are modifiable by each new experience.

There is a change in the individual's relationship to his problems. At one end of the continuum problems are unrecognized and there is no desire to change. Gradually there is a recognition that problems exist. At a further stage, there is recognition that the individual has contributed to these problems, that they have not arisen entirely from external sources. Increasingly, there is a sense of self-responsibility for the problems. Further up the continuum there is a living or experiencing of some aspect of the problems. The person lives his problems subjectively, feeling responsible for the contribution he has made in the development of his problems.

There is change in the individual's manner of relating. At one end

of the continuum the individual avoids close relationships, which are perceived as being dangerous. At the other end of the continuum, he lives openly and freely in relation to the therapist and to others, guiding his behavior in the relationship on the basis of his immediate experiencing.

In general, the process moves from a point of fixity, where all the elements and threads described above are separately discernible and separately understandable, to the flowing peak moments of therapy in which all these threads become inseparably woven together. In the new experiencing with immediacy which occurs at such moments, feeling and cognition interpenetrate, self is subjectively present in the experience, volition is simply the subjective following of a harmonious balance of organismic direction. Thus, as the process reaches this point the person becomes a unity of flow, of motion. He has changed, but what seems most significant, he has become an integrated process of changingness.



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