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DEVELOPMENTAL CHANGEPOINTS:
THE BIRTH OF A FIRST CHILD

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of *Philosophy*.

NOVEMBER, 1987 Merle Friedman M.A. (Witwatersrand)

To the three women
in my life:
my mother, Blamie,
my daughter, Wendy,
And my friend, Diana.

And to the three men
in my life:
my husband, Frank,
my son, Kevin,
and my son, Gad.
A woman could not
wish for more!

To the three women
in my life:
my mother, Minnie,
my daughter, Wendy,
and my friend, Diana.

And to the three men
in my life:
my husband, Frank,
my son, Kevin,
and my son, God.
A woman could not
wish for more!

How could *Tristan* and *Isolde* have survived
if there had been a child, or Romeo and Juliet?
All the poetry would have been lost in irritation
at feeding time.

Peter Ustinov.

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My husband, my mother, and my children, for their constant moral support and patience through a very difficult time.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted to any other University.

Merle Friedman

.....

Merle Friedman

ABSTRACT

The present study is set within the broad area of adult development and functioning. It is primarily located within the developmental theory of Erik Erikson, who described development, not only from the perspective of the growing child, but with the understanding of the continuity of development over the entire life cycle (1978). As this represents an area of relatively recent concern, there are many gaps in the literature.

A cognitive map in the form of a hypothetical construct termed the Transitional Space was described and developed in this work, to facilitate the understanding of both individual and couple development and functioning. This hypothetical construct was based on Winnicott's (1971) original notion of transitional phenomena, which he located as being between inner and outer reality. The Transitional space may be briefly described as that part of the inner world that is projected outwards, and both reflects the internal frame of reference through which the perception of the world is filtered, as well as those aspects of hidden inner reality that are perceived by others as being "me".

The Transitional Space comprises three aspects, namely: boundary quality, content, and size.

Boundary quality of the Transitional Space reflects the ability of the individual for intimate contact, and is described in terms of the two

parameters of flexibility and permeability.

The content of the Transitional Space is described as that aspect that is concerned with ego identity (Erikson 1968). Finally, the aspect of the size of the Transitional Space is a reflection of progression along the continuum of ego development as operationalized by Loevinger et al (1970).

As it has been found that systems are most accessible to observation and study during periods of change, it was decided to locate the study at a point of developmental change or crisis. The period selected for investigation was the time around the birth of the first child, and thus the transition to parenthood.

In response to evidence of a need in the literature, a model was derived to both describe and explain the changes over this period. The model of change was based on the findings of Janis (1958), in terms of preparation for change, and regression in the face of stress, as well as the theory of "romantic solutions" to transitional periods (Becker, 1973) and the cyclicity of the romantic experience (Livingston, 1980). The model was integrated with the sociological model of LaRossa and LaRossa (1981), to form a more comprehensive description and explanation of the process of the transition to parenthood.

The first aim in the study was to describe and predict adult and couple functioning on the basis of the model of the Transitional Space, with special reference to the changepoint of the transition to parenthood.

Six couples were studied in depth, with a qualitative methodology. Projective interpretation of the responses on the TAT (Morgan and Murray, 1935), the Marital Satisfaction Sentence Completion Technique (Inselberg 1961), and the Sentence Completion Test for Measuring Ego Developmer (Loevinger et al., 1970) were used, together with other projective material that was collected. These couples were tested at about five months of pregnancy, and again about six months after the birth of the babies. On the basis of the responses on these tests at the first testing, their positions on the dimensions of the Transitional Space were derived, and predictions made on the basis of each of their marital configurations as to how they would negotiate the transition to parenthood. It was found that both the descriptions with respect to the aspects of the Transitional Space, as well as the predictions based on these dimensions were accurate and useful. Thus it was concluded that the hypothetical construct of the Transitional Space provides a clear useful and predictive understanding of both individual and couple functioning, particularly over a changepoint such as the birth of a first child.

The second aim in the study was to assess the significance of the transition to parenthood as a developmental changepoint.
Three groups of parents with fifteen couples in each group, were studied. One group had a six week old, a second a six month old, and a third, an eight year old first child. On the Relationship Change Scale (Schlein and Guerney, 1977), all the groups acknowledged a significant change in their lives and relationships at this time. For

most of the people, the change was seen to be a positive one, particularly for the mothers of the eight year old first children. On the basis of the findings in this part of the study, the proposed model of change was re-examined and reformulated with the addition of further information.

The final aim in the study was made up of two parts:.
(a) to design and run an intervention aimed at facilitating a successful transition to parenthood.
(b) to describe the differences in the way intervention and non-intervention groups negotiated the transition to parenthood.

A course, based on psychological principles [illegible]d and run three times, with twelve two hour sessions in each course, for a total of twenty couples.

The intervention was designed, based broadly within the framework of Erikson's Developmental theory (1980), and more specifically on the basis of the understanding of the model of the Transitional Space, and the model of change. Responses to a questionnaire assessing the usefulness and enjoyment of the course was studied, and ideas gained for future improvements in the course.

The second part of the aim, a description of the different groups' negotiation of the transition to parenthood, was conducted on the basis of scores and self-report measures on a number of scales on the one hand, and by using the descriptive data generated in the course, on the other.

As people chose whether to attend the course or not, the groups were not randomly selected from a population. The outcome of self selection of the groups, was that distinct groups emerged, with the non-intervention groups being typically traditional in outlook and practice, and the intervention groups being non-traditional. The resultant understanding of the differences between the groups provided an explanation of the different ways the individuals and couples negotiated the transition to parenthood.

In addition to the quantitative evaluation of these groups, a qualitative evaluation was made in terms of the concept of the Transitional Space. Further support was found for the explanatory and predictive value of the concept of the Transitional Space in terms of the groups, their marital dynamics, and their transition to parenthood.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Transition to parenthood, a period in the life of an adult and the time at which the family is born, straddles many possible fields of psychological and sociological interest and research, ranging from the deeply personal intrapsychic, to family, behavioural, and social. The essence of this thesis attempts to provide an understanding of the transition to parenthood as an aspect of adult functioning. The general perspective is a psychological one, studying the individual from the intrapsychic, the observable and the empirical angles, all set within the context of his/her environment. A hypothetical construct, termed the Transitional Space, is postulated to understand and explain the course and variation of individual and couple response to the transition to parenthood, while certain aspects of this transition are empirically investigated.

For a full understanding of the field and the place of this work in the field, it is important to view this study within a context, and demonstrate how this study naturally evolves out of its context.

There are two interdependent and yet separate contextual aspects of this study. There is, on the one hand, the aspect of the history and developing theoretical models in psychology; on the other, there is the methodological framework and its currently changing face.

The historical context allows for an understanding of the development of the theory, and also provides a perspective on the evolution of advances in the theory.

The history of the concept of life cycle derives originally from Sigmund Freud himself and what he termed "depth psychology." Freud showed how personality development in childhood, profoundly influences one's life in adulthood. Adulthood itself was not seen as a period of further development, rather as a period during which early unconscious conflicts were re-enacted. Jung, a disciple of Freud's, formed his own school - "Analytic psychology" in which he focussed particular attention on adult development. Jung set out to develop a social psychology that understands individual development as a product of both intrapsychic processes and environmental and cultural forces. Erik Erikson is another important figure in life cycle development. He was the first theorist to include the concept of adult development in his theoretical propositions. Erikson's eight stages of development (1973) stress the importance of conflict and the concept of the changing organism developing in a changing social and historical context.

Following on from Erikson in the work on the adult life cycle, is Levinson (1978). Levinson's approach makes use of the Eriksonian perspective, but it shifts the focus from the intrapsychic. From Levinson's perspective, the concept of life

structure is centered more directly on the boundary between self and the outside world. It gives equal consideration to self and world as aspects of life as it is lived.

The present work follows in the tradition of Freud, Jung, Erikson, and Levinson in that it proposes an integration of both the self and the world as the experience and context of life. It also follows the post Freudian shift, of Erikson, Perls, Berne and others, who all operate from a dynamic developmental understanding, while at the same time moving beyond it. The descriptive clinicians, such as Berne and Perls, revolutionized the thinking in psychology. In describing how people relate to each other, they describe not only intrapsychic functioning, but interpersonal functioning as well.

With respect to the growing theory in developmental psychology today, many of the main theorists are primarily clinicians, and the main movements come from clinical insights rather than laboratory studies. It is fundamental to acknowledge the importance and pride of place in which laboratory research stands in the testing of hypotheses. However, it is in the heuristic value of being "in the field", and thus in the derivation of theories, that clinical insights are esteemed. Although, amongst the clinicians, Jung and Erikson both moved away from the pathological perspective of the clinician and concentrated on normal development, the clinical aspect of their professions both informed, and were informed by, the theoretical aspects. The involvement in therapy provides the forum in

which theories may be observed in action, as well as the hothouse for the generation of new theories based on clinical observation and practice. Thus there is real value in the constant interplay between the theoretical and the clinical. In the words of Winnicott - "Psychoanalysis goes on where physiology leaves off. It extends the scientific territory to cover the phenomena of human personality, human feeling and human conflict" (1961, p.13)

One of the basic tenets of developmental and analytic psychology is that the life cycle is an organic whole, that each period contains all the others and that each subsequent period is built on that achieved in the previous periods. Also understood, is that problems and unresolved conflicts from earlier periods will influence the potential for dealing with subsequent stages of development. The implication that derives from this holistic understanding, and a significant consideration in the development of Freudian as well as later analytic theory, is the importance of early child development in laying a healthy context for later development.

A clinician/ theoretican who has made a major contribution to the understanding of early development is Donald Winnicott. A child psychiatrist in the Freudian and Kleinian tradition, he developed his theories of infant and child development on the basis of observations of infants and children and their caretakers, as well as observations made during the

course of psychoanalysis of patients of all ages. Winnicott died without completing the development of his theories; theories that are rich in observation and understanding of the process of early child development and functioning. His perspective begs elaboration, particularly as the implications of those theories must reverberate through the life cycle.

In the present work the model that will be presented, is based on the original concepts of Winnicott and developed, not only in terms of its relevance for infant or child development, but for development over the entire life cycle. This model, will be described and its use evaluated in terms of enhancing the understanding of adult development. Both the description and the understanding of the model will be set within the context of the epigenetic approach of Erik Erikson (1980).

Concurrent with the evolution of the developmental perspective in psychology, was the progress in the behavioural perspective. The behavioural perspectiv led to the development of the mechanistic model which views human development as the product of a series of lawful events which impinge on the organism and determine its progress. The organismic model on the other hand, views development primarily as a result of inner processes of the organism. The dialectical model reflects a synthesis of the two opposing models of human development: namely the mechanistic and the

organismic models. The dialectical model, with its perspective of synthesis, then, encourages a search for causes of development in events that occur both inside the organism and in the world around it.

Thus from the dialectical model, development occurs through interactions between a *changing system* in the organism and a *changing* world, as a response to some disharmony. Jung, Erikson, Levinson, Winnicott, Perls and Berne may all be said to follow the dialectical model, in their perspective on development and functioning.

Allegiance to one or the other of the two opposing models, either the mechanistic or the organic models has implications for the perspective on research, both in terms of the subject matter for valid research and the possible ways of collecting data. While the mechanistic model suggests the use of empirical quantitative methods alone, the organic model tends towards the acceptance of qualitative data.

Concern with the field of scientific enquiry leads into the other important contextual aspect for this work, which has to do with the approach to data collection and theory building. There are two main perspectives in the approach to data collection and theory building. On the one hand, there are those who support the view that it is not possible to talk about the construction of a general theory until an adequate data base has been compiled. On the other hand, there are those who believe that the pursuit of data without theory is

likely to be painfully slow at best, fruitless or wandering at worst (Stevens-Long, 1984). The former group are those who support the exclusivity of the empirical paradigm, whilst the latter group represent those who are interested in the possibilities of qualitative research.

Traditionally, academic institutions have held a position in support of the exclusivity of the traditional empirical paradigm, however, presently, a change in perspective is taking place. There have been increasing influences from paradigm shifts in the fields of physical and atomic science, with the demonstration by Heisenberg's uncertainty principle of the limits of a deterministic interpretation of the physical universe (Capra 1983).

The formulation and construction of this present work, calls for a shift from the exclusive perspective of the traditional scientific paradigm into which psychology has for many years attempted to fit itself. Paradigms are said to impose order upon a basically random order of phenomena (Whitehead 1926) and serve as a "prism" through which certain phenomena are included for inquiry, while certain are excluded. This schema directs the attention of researchers to certain groupings and correlations of data that are themselves amenable to that kind of investigation, and the results of that predetermined investigation verify the paradigm. Whitehead points out that the narrow efficiency of the scheme is the very

cause of its "supreme methodological success". Every time a new paradigm is adopted, however, it produces a shift in the problems recognized as available for scientific inquiry, and in what constitutes a valid solution. These shifts in perspective transform the scientific world view in a profound way. Resistance to such pervasive alterations in world view is inevitable. The process of resistance to such alterations is described by Kuhn (1962),

> Novelty emerges only with difficulty, manifested by resistance against a backdrop provided by expectation. Initially, only the anticipated and usual are experienced, even under circumstances where anomaly is later to be observed. The later awareness of anomaly opens a period in which conceptual categories are adjusted until the initially anomalous has become the anticipated.
> (p. 64)

In effect, then, a paradigm is an agreed upon set of expectancies that excludes other possibilities, and a revision of that paradigm introduces a new order of possibilities.

The reemergence of the call for qualitative research is an example of the paradigm shift that is presently taking place in the human sciences. The call for qualitative research is also evolving out of the emergence of the dialectical model for understanding life cycle development.

Support for qualitative research comes from Wiseman (1984), Hill (1981), Aldous (1981), Handel (1985) LaRossa (1985) amongst others. Hill, (1981) describes how research is turning away from large scale definitive studies to more exploratory descriptive research involving small, nonrepresentative samples.

He suggests that it is a positive rather than negative shift, particularly from its value as a heuristic tool.

Qualitative data, in its richness, provides abundant material for the *generation of hypotheses*, but is always prone to the criticism that, from the almost limitless variety of experience available, the observer will choose observations that support rather than test attractive hypotheses, and that objectivity will therefore be lost. It is thus the supportive balance between qualitative and quantitative research that will yield the most fruitful perspective on all fronts.

After an evaluation of quantitative versus qualitative research in family studies, LaRossa & Wolf (1985), conclude that both qualitative and quantitative research have a place in the social sciences and neither can supersede the other. This conclusion acknowledging the value of both qualitative and quantitative research is embraced in this study.

The hypothetical construct postulated in this work, that *of the Transitional Space*, is set within the dialectical model, where the dialectical model posits a state of a changing organism within a changing environment, as a response to some disharmony. It is also set within the developmental framework, and is conceptualized within the bounds of the empirical data that have been derived with respect to the transition to

parenthood. On the basis of the literature, hypotheses have been derived and tested, within the empirical paradigm.

The essence of this study, however, does not reflect the testing of hypotheses, or the validation of a model. It is rather a proposal for the operationalization of a construct; the proposition of a model to describe both the process and the variation in the process of the transition to parenthood. It is formulated in this way in response to the lack of explanatory data in the literature. It is not within the scope of this study to validate this construct. However, this construct is qualitatively described with reference to couples observed during the transition to parenthood, and formulated in such a way that it may be empirically tested in the future.

The theory, as derived in this work, may be criticized as not being a comprehensive rigorous explanation of human behaviour, yet its strength lies in its value as a useful guide or tool in the future growth of the field.

> Theory is, then, a tool as well as a goal. It can organize and integrate existing knowledge. In fact, at this stage, the best criterion for the importance or excellence of a theory may be how useful it is, rather than how thoroughly it explains human development.
> (Stevens-Long, 1984. p. 54)

Thus it is to the genesis and derivation of the construct of the Transitional Space to which the major part of this work is directed. The aim is to root it firmly in the understanding of dynamic processes, and to support it on the basis of the theoretical and empirical work on which it is founded.

The next chapter on self (ego identity and ego development) is the basis for the development of the construct of the Transitional Space. The following chapters on self and others (contact and intimacy) and change, provide the framework within which to illustrate the functioning of the Transitional Space within relationships, and relevant to change. Finally, the chapter on the transition to parenthood places the construct of the Transitional Space and the understanding of the process of change, within the context of the developmental changepoint around the birth of a first child.

CHAPTER 2

IDENTITY & EGO DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Identity

It is both important and necessary to understand the concept of identity in the study of individual development and functioning, as identity is a core element in early and later development, and underlies much of adult functioning. This period of time, around the change from a marriage to a family, is the point at which both men and women actually change their identities from husband and wife to that of parents. It is a transition that is enforced by the circumstances of the birth of the child; and there is very little information on how adults react to this transition to parenthood at a deeper level: to the incorporation of the role of parent into identity (Whitbourne and Weinstock, 1979).

Identity is an aspect of the self, and the self has been the major interest of the ego psychologists; whereas the developing self is the concern of theorists who are interested in variety of functioning from a developmental rather than a pathological perspective.

Two theorists who have made major contributions to the developmental field are Erik Erikson and Jane Loevinger. Erikson's contribution is mainly a theoretical one based on his clinical and crosscultural observations and described and developed in great detail. Loevinger, on the other hand, derived and rigorously tested a measure of ego development.

Erikson, a psychoanalyst and professor of developmental psychology at Harvard University, has made his major contribution in describing the psychosocial development of the ego. He is a true Freudian in the sense that he accepted and built on traditional Freudian theory, without questioning the fundamental tenets. He developed the theory by focussing on the ego, and stressing the psycho-social aspects of human development and functioning. In his description of the stages of the life cycle, he has "advanced psychoanalytic theory to the point where it can now describe the development of the healthy personality on its own terms and not merely as the opposite of a sick one." (Elkind, 1982 p.13).

2.2 The Eriksonian Concept of Identity

Although only one of the eight stages of development, Erikson viewed the identity crisis as pivotal. In many instances, in fact, Erikson comments that identity has been viewed as the teleological aim in growing up, the end-point at which to aim, the attainment of which would result in that elusive "happiness" that is sought by so much of mankind.

Erikson conceptualized identity, similarly to the other stages of development, as beginning its evolution in the very early stages of infancy, and continuing its development all through both child and adult life. The question, or rather the response to the question, "Who am I, and what is my meaning in life?" is dealt with from preverbal stages right up until death. However, it is at the stage that Erikson terms the

crisis of Identity Achievement vs Identity Diffusion/Confusion that the issues of identity are foremost. Thus Erikson differentiates between identity formation which takes place throughout life, and the identity crisis of late adolescence and early adulthood.

In discussing the difference between identity crisis and identity formation Erikson says,

> While the end of adolescence thus is the stage of an overt identity crisis, identity formation neither begins nor ends with adolescence: it is a lifelong development largely unconscious to the individual and his society. Its roots go back all the way to the first self-recognition: in the baby's earliest exchange of smiles there is something of a self realization coupled with a mutual recognition
>
> (Erikson, 1968, p. 23)

When describing identity formation, he contends that "the process "begins" somewhere in the first true "meeting" of mother and baby as two persons who can touch and recognize each other, and it does not "end" until a man's power of mutual affirmation wanes" (1980, p.122).

A main concern in this work is with identity formation and the effects of this identity on the developing adult.

The concept of identity is very broadly and inclusively denoted. Erikson has been criticized for avoiding a clear definition, although the futility of a simple definition is recognized, with respect to its complexity and inclusiveness (Bourne, 1978). This lack of adequate definition represents both a strength and a weakness in the conceptualization of identity. On the one hand, the strength appears to be in the

common ground of intuitive understanding by academicians, clinicians and the lay population. However, on the other hand, the avoidance on the part of the major theoreticians such as Erikson and Loevinger, to adequately define the concept, results in a series of misunderstandings, *in the non-clarification of* areas of research, and more generally, the kind of confusion that besets anyone attempting to work in this area. It is the aim of the present author to highlight some of the areas of confusion, attempt a level of clarification, reconceptualise aspects, and finally to integrate and extend them in the form of an explanatory model.

2.2.1 Definitions of Ego Identity.

In "Identity and the Life Cycle" (1980), Erikson describes both ego identity and personal identity.

> "The conscious feeling of having a personal identity is based on two simultaneous observations: The immediate perception of one's selfsameness and continuity in time; and the simultaneous perception of the fact that others recognise one's *sameness* and continuity. What I propose to call ego identity concerns more than the mere fact of existence, as conveyed by personal identity; it is the ego quality of this existence". (p.22)

So the concept of a sense of personal identity has to do with two things; firstly that one is aware of "something that is me, that is the same." This "something that is me that is the same" stays and continues over time. The second part is that this "something that is me, that is the same" is also recognized by others. This second part of both personal and

ego identity is important to note as it is Erikson's contention that one's personal identity must be recognized by others as well as oneself. This is part of the social aspect of identity.

Personal identity is differentiated from a sense of ego identity:

> Ego identity then, in its subjective aspect, is the awareness of the fact that there is a selfsameness and continuity to the ego's synthesizing methods and that these methods are effective in safeguarding the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others.
>
> (1980, p.32)

In his definition of ego identity, Erikson remains loyal to the analytic concept of the ego having a synthesizing function, and then expands on that notion by describing this function as being characteristically different for different people; yet for the same person, it is continuous and constant over time. Erikson discriminates between personal identity and ego identity by what he calls the ego quality, and terms it, "an internalized pattern, a basic ego space, which has determined their defense mechanism" (1980, p.32).

In both the above descriptions, Erikson is referring to a "subjective" or "experiential" sense of identity. However, even this subjective experience must include the "other" as it is primarily in response to the "other" that identity is formed. In describing identity formation with this subjective-objective two way process, Erikson refers to how the

process consists of both reflection and observation occurring simultaneously and on all levels of mental functioning. The individual judges himself as he imagines others judge him. At the same time, he judges their way of judging him, from his own frame of reference. The content of both of these processes is always changing in terms of experience and development; a very complex two-way process that embodies within itself the dialectic that is the quality of ego identity.

The dialectic of "ego identity could be said to be characterized by the actually attained, but forever to-be-revised, sense of the reality of the Self within social reality" (1968, p.211).

Another dialectic that confuses the understanding of the concept of ego identity is that of its static yet changing quality. On the one hand Erikson describes the selfsameness and continuity of ego identity, and on the other he talks about both the development and the loss or disintegration of ego identity (1980). Erikson also refers to the development of ego identity to the point where it "acquires its final strength in the meeting of mates whose ego identity is complimentary in some essential point....."(1980 p.40) and on the other, in discussing therapy, he says "Therapy and guidance may attempt to substitute more desirable identifications for undesirable ones, but the total configuration of the ego identity remains unalterable" (1980 p.26). This statement is one that has vast implications for the conceptualization of the aim and purpose of

the therapeutic process. However, if ego identity can and does develop and change, and if it also is always the same and "unalterable," how does this dialectic function, and what then can be the aim of any psychological or therapeutic intervention?

It would appear that, from the Eriksonian perspective, the basis, foundation, or groundplan of ego identity is laid in the very early months of the life of the infant. It is during this period, when the infant for the first time begins to have a sense of "self" being separated from "mother" or "other", that the first sense of who this self is, begins to be formed. This infant antecedent of identity is located within the unconscious processes, and in Erikson's terms changes very slowly, if at all (1968, p.27). The aspect of the early beginning of separation/individuation will be dealt with in greater detail below, suffice it to say, that it is at this stage in the life of the infant, depending on the quality of the early mothering, that this "unalterable" framework of ego identity is set down. It is within this framework, that ego identity may now develop and grow, but only within the bounds of the particular framework that has already been laid. It is also within these boundaries that living, as well as the therapeutic process, takes place. This is the basis of the "unconscious life plan" (1980 p.36) and the "internalized pattern, a basic ego space, which has determined their defense mechanism" (1980, p.32) to which Erikson refers. It is also this framework that sets the scene

for which personalities, or aspects of personality, the developing child will choose to identify with in the process of the elaboration of ego identity.

As to the function or use of therapy, or any intervention, such as the one in this work, its value lies, not in the changing of the basic pattern of the ego identity, which Erikson deems "unalterable," but rather in freeing the individual from the determinism of the unconscious life plan. This is achieved by, firstly, bringing this life plan into awareness so that the person is conscious of the way that he/she determines his/her life. On the basis of this new awareness, the person would then have the autonomy to choose differently and thus to be able to change the way they respond to the stimuli that have, for them, been problematic.

In summary then, from the Eriksonian view, the basis for ego identity is set very early on in the infant's life cycle, and then, as the child develops and progresses through the different stages and deals with the crises of development, he fills out this framework, thus becoming the person that he is. So it is the basic groundplan that is seen as unalterable, while the "filling out" of the sense of identity that is alterable.

2.2.2 Development and the Epigenetic Principle

Crucial to the understanding of Erikson's description of development is what he termed the "epigenetic principle." This

term is derived from the growth of organisms in utero, and "this principle states that anything that grows has a ground plan, and that out of this ground plan the parts arise, each part having it's time of special ascendancy, until all parts have arisen to form a functioning whole" (1968, p.92.). With the concept of maturation, Erikson implies that also here, there is a sequential unfolding in terms of inner laws of development, along a set path, the length of which everyone will traverse through their lifetime,

> Personality, therefore, can be said to develop according to steps predetermined in the human organism's readiness to be driven forward, to be aware of, and to interact with a widening radius of significant individuals and institutions." (1968, p.93).

This progression is stage rather than age related. There appears to be an interplay between the societal and familial demands on a developing person and the stage of maturation that they reach. Whereas they need to deal with aspects of each stage at many ages of development, the particular interface of age/stage and societal demands bring each particular crisis to the fore at a proper rate and proper sequence despite cultural differences.

With reference to the development of the different "items" of personality, Erikson writes that every one is related to all the others. They all depend on the proper development in the proper sequence of each item. He also emphasizes that each item exists in some form before "its"particular and decisive and critical stage arrives. Finally, that each item, must, at the

advent of succeeding crises, be brought up to the new level of the then dominant conflict.

It is at each "critical" time that each item comes to the fore and demands attention, in what Erikson terms the "crisis" of each developmental stage. It is this term crisis that appears to have a lot of misunderstanding, both in the understanding of Erikson's work and in the use of the term in other areas of psychological investigation, particularly the one under present study. In the prologue to "Identity: Youth and Crisis" (1968), Erikson celebrates the fact that "crisis" no longer implies impending catastrophe. He says both here, and later in the book, that "crisis" is now rather accepted,

> in a developmental sense to connote not a threat of catastrophe, but a turning point, a crucial period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential, and therefore, the ontogenetic source of generational strength and maladjustment (p. 96).

These critical stages demand that the individual face and resolve a particular crisis, and Erikson describes these resolutions in terms of their polar opposites, such as trust vs mistrust; identity vs diffusion or confusion. Further he discusses the virtues that result out of the positive resolution of these crises, such as hope; will; purpose; fidelity; care and others. The process of the resolution of these crises is also important to understand in the conception of Erikson's model. In the struggle to deal with the particular crisis at hand, Erikson does not postulate the achievement of a total victory of the positive polar opposite over the other, but simply a dynamic

balance in one's favour. He writes,

> "versus" is an interesting little word, because it can mean a reciprocal antagonism carried further in "vice versa." Developmentally it suggests a dialectic dynamic, in that the final strength postulated could not emerge without either of the contending qualities; yet to assure growth, the syntonic, the one more intent on adaptation, must absorb the dystonic (1978, p.26).

Erikson continues to describe how the struggle remains persistent and a stage is never once and for all "attained" but needs to be confirmed and reconfirmed at many different points. In effect, then, as described and reaffirmed by Erikson, nobody in life is "neatly located in one stage." A view of someone in life will reflect an oscillation between at least two stages and a move to a higher one only when an even higher one comes into play. In fact the "achievement" of an overformulated sense of identity, for example, may hinder the sense of variability so important in the living of a well adjusted life.

2.2.3 The Crisis of Identity vs Identity Diffusion

To return to the concept of identity: The crisis of identity vs identity diffusion or confusion is the fifth stage of development as described by Erikson and this crisis takes place during the period of adolescence. The beginnings of identity formation take place during early infancy, at the first stages of differentiating oneself from the other. Erikson terms this "Unipolarity vs premature differentiation." Further differentiation and development take place at every stage of

maturation, culminating in this crisis of adolescence, with the attainment of the virtue of "Fidelity." Erikson views fidelity as the "ability to sustain loyalties freely pledged in spite of the inevitable contradictions and confusions of value systems" (Evans 1969, p.30). He sees fidelity as the cornerstone of identity and it is inspired by confirming ideologies and affirming companions.

These latter two aspects affirming fidelity and identity, refer in detail to Erikson's perspective on the relativity of identity to three cycles. The three are: the individual one, which comprises all the emerging strengths as well as the inhibiting forces within the individual. These interact with: the generational cycle, the ongoing continuous cycle of generations, and finally with: the social structures that both evolve reciprocally with the individual and social cycles, as well as influence them. Identity formation, says Erikson, could be conceptualized only as a "psychosocial relativity." He emphasizes, time and again, the importance of the social aspects in the formation and maintenance of identity, and refers to Freud's description of his own Jewish identity: "the safe privacy of a common mental construction" (1968, p.21) that is a deep commonality known only to those who share it. Again, in a reference to the dimensions of identity, he locates it both in the "core" of the individual, and yet also in the "core" of his communal culture. In fact, the core of the context from which Erikson views identity, is exemplified in the following quotation:

> Students of society and history, on the other hand, blithely continue to ignore the simple fact that all individuals are born by mothers; that everybody was once a child; that people and peoples begin in their nurseries; that society consists of generations in the process of developing from children to parents, designed to absorb the historical changes of their lifetimes and to continue to make history for their descendants" (1968, p.45).

Again, while discussing the approach of psychoanalysis to the study of the ego, he criticizes the basic flaw of seeing the individual in isolation

> "The resulting methodological divergence has perpetuated in psychoanalytic thought an artificial overdifferentiation between the isolated individual forever projecting his infantile family constellation on to the "outer world", and the "individual-in-the-mass," submerged in what Freud called an "indistinct aggregate " of men. Yet that a man could ever be psychologically alone; that a man "alone" is essentially different from the same man in a group; that a man in a temporary solitary condition or when closeted with his analyst has ceased to be a "political" animal and has disengaged himself from social action (or inaction) on whatever class level - these and similar stereotypes demand careful revision."
>
> (1968. p.46)

2.2.4 The Concept of Identity Status

Although Erikson described carefully and in great detail the different stages of development in the life cycle, he did not attempt to operationalize them. The concept of ego identity, as the cornerstone of adult development, demanded the possibility of measurement. In 1966, Marcia introduced the "identity status" approach, which operationalized Erikson's concepts of the resolution to the identity vs diffusion crisis on the basis of a measure, The Identity Status Interview. Since that time the majority of the empirical work on identity has utilised this

approach. Bourne (1978), calculated that out of a total of forty studies, seven prior to 1966, employed a paradigm other than Marcia's, whereas only four did after 1966. Marcia's status approach allows one to describe how an individual is faring in the identity crisis, further than simply having reached it.

He elaborated on Erikson's original conceptualization of identity as being either diffuse or achieved and developed two other "statuses," which he termed "foreclosed," and "moratorium." These identity statuses are seen to be on a continuum, with diffusion followed by moratorium, followed by foreclosed, followed by identity achievement.

The person who is in the "identity diffusion" status, may, or may not, have experienced a period or periods of crisis. He shows little or no commitment to a particular pathway, and with little or no interest in making any commitments. Someone in the "moratorium" status is presently in the crisis, testing and experimenting with alternatives for commitment.

One who is "foreclosed" has obtained his identity by taking over the values of his parents, without much experimentation or crisis. And someone who is in the "identity achieving" status, has forged his own identity after a period of crisis and role experimentation.

Marcia (1966), defined identity in terms of the two aspects emphasized by Erikson in his description, those being: crisis, and commitment. Two types of commitment are considered as

relevant by Marcia, namely occupational and ideological, the ideological broken down into political and religious.

Abundant research has been conducted, using the concept of identity status (Bourne 1978). In general the results illustrate that the identity achievers and moratorium groups are relatively achievement oriented, and that they appear to show higher levels of intellectual and social competence. Foreclosures showed parent centered values and high scores on authoritarianism (Schenkel and Marcia 1972), as well as being lowest among the statuses on the Edwards Autonomy Scale (Matteson, 1974, Orlofsky et al, 1973). On other measures they appeared as " well adjusted." Among both college men and women they were found to be lowest in anxiety (Marcia, 1967; Marcia and Friedman, 1970) and Adams and Shea (1979) found that the foreclosed subjects appeared remarkably advanced in terms of ego development. It is thus, this foreclosed status group that is the most confounding, as in some ways they appear to be well adjusted but not in others.

Diffusion status subjects have been found, like the foreclosures, to conform in an authority situation (Toder and Marcia, 1973), and on the whole are found to be exceedingly withdrawn (Bourne 1978).

2.2.5 Criticism of the Identity Status Paradigm

There are a number of shortcomings to the Identity Statuses as conceptualized by Marcia (1967). The most evident criticism

rests on Marcia's restriction of the relevant roles in life to occupation and ideology. This is both too restricting and does not cover relevant areas. Bourne (1978) suggests that an increment in validity would result from enlarging the scope of investigation.

It is problematic to conceptualize the identity statuses along a continuum as both identity achievement and foreclosure indicate a resolution of the identity process. It would thus be imperative to view the identity resolution process as forming a fork somewhere in the moratorium status - as foreclosures may or may not have been through some level of role experimentation. It would appear, therefore, that it might be more useful to view the statuses typologically. This perspective is supported by Bourne (1978).

In order to bring the conception of identity statuses closer to reality without losing the obvious value, and increased understanding found by researchers in the area of ego identity, this conceptualization may be extended. Marcia himself (1976b) noted a shortcoming in his identity status approach. It becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible, to make an individual fit into any one status. The value would be to be able to determine where and how a person fits into any, some or all of the statuses, and thus create a profile of an individual at one point in time.

An aspect of identity that was clearly spelled out by Erikson, was the constant change, negotiation and renegotiation of identity. It is this "process" aspect of identity that was

not acknowledged by Marcia in his derivation of the identity statuses. However in 1976, he clearly recognized this issue,

> "Without belabouring well-worn criticisms of typological approaches, it may be productive to begin thinking of identity in terms of ongoing process or dimensions instead of the ide..city status categories and their proliferation." (p. 154)

2.2.6 An Alternative Paradigm

It is possible to acknowledge the ongoing process approach without sacrificing value gained from the status perspective. E...esented an extension of the status approach that recog... the status and the process perspectives. This conceptualization moves the image from an unidimensional one, and views it from two dimensional perspectives. It was deemed necessary, in the present conceptualization, to describe another identity status that had not been one of Marcia's original or proliferated statuses. This status was termed Negative-identity Achieving status. It is different from the diffusion status in that the person in this particular status has been through the moratorium; in a sense has struggled with the crisis of identity and has not achieved a positive identity. Instead he decides on what Erikson terms a "negative Identity." Erikson (1968) describes how this identity is formed. The history of this choice would have involved,

> "a set of conditions in which it is easier for the patient to derive a sense of identity out of a total identification with that which he is least supposed to be than to struggle for a feeling of reality in acceptable roles which are unattainable with his inner means." (p. 176)

The crucial term here is unattainable. The process through which this person has been through is different from that of identity diffusion, where engagement in crisis may not have occurred. In this case, as is implied by the term unattainable, that engagement, either in reality or psychologically has occurred, with failure at the endpoint. It is at this point that a "negative identity" is assumed. Orlofsky et al (1973), described and partially validated a new ego identity status, which they called "alienated achievement". The depiction of this new status fits Erikson's description of negative identity and it is difficult to see why this new term was derived. People fitting into this category were found to have a low need for approval; are self reliant and defiant towards the social order and conventional ways of doing things, and have the strongest need for affiliation, while also probably equalling the identity achievement individual in ego strength and ego resolution.

Another important aspect of extending the conceptualization of ego statuses into a two dimensional one, is that not only can one look at identity status at a point in time, but also over time; not only can one view overall identity, but the different facets that go to make up the overall picture of identity. So a researcher may study identity as it is reflected at a point in time and also how it changes over time.

The one Identity Status that is not included in the proposed model as a status in itself, is the "status" "in moratorium." The reason behind its exclusion is that, in as

much as identity itself is often regarded as a concept in process and changing over time, " in moratorium" is the only "status" that can be regarded as totally process. It can only really be conceptualized as being in process from somewhere to somewhere else, but not as a status in and of itself. Marcia, (1976) deals with this issue with respect to all the identity statuses and states that any adequate theory of identity should have descriptive terms that take movement into account. He suggests that even a foreclosure should be described as coming from someplace and going to someplace. If that person is actively in movement, however, he may, in fact, be considered to be "in moratorium".

Moratorium, therefore may be considered to be the condition of movement that an individual needs to engage in, in order to resolve or re-resolve, at any point of development, the crisis of identity. It is not a status. So an individual may be referred to as being in moratorium, for example, from a diffused to a foreclosed identity status.

A placement at any time, but more specifically at a time when an individual is in a moratorium, needs to be varied enough to establish how far into a category he can be placed. It is therefore necessary to have some measure of achievement of that particular category. So that it may be possible to say that an individual is highly identity achieving, or minimally so; that a person is highly foreclosed, or only so in some aspects while in others only minimally so..and so forth.

It is all these facets of identity and its statuses that are illustrated in the model derived below:

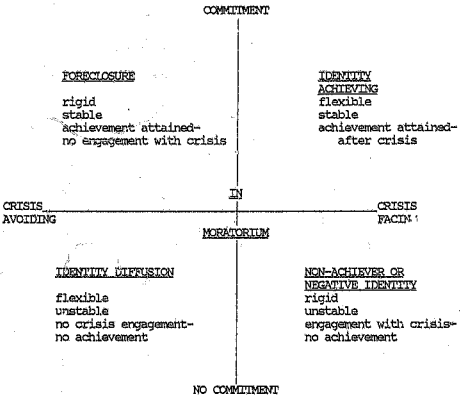

Fig.1 A Two Dimensional Model of Identity

Thus one may graphically represent an individual's position with respect to identity status. It is also possible to compare the position of people on the graph in terms of their identity statuses.

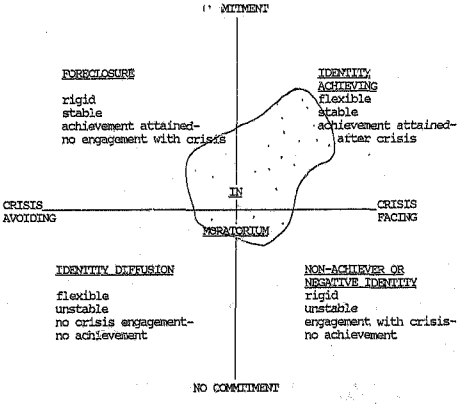

Fig. 2 Scatter Diagram of an Identity Achieving Individual: Each point reflects the position on the axes of one specific role.

In the above diagram, different roles in identity are reflected by the positioning of dots, making up a scatter diagram. This provides a much more realistic picture of identity, than assuming it to be a unitary phenomenon.

Another aspect where this diagram may be used, is in the change in identity status over time. As Identity is neither a unitary nor static concept, it is useful to be able to illustrate both its variance and its movement.

2.3 Loevinger's Concept of Ego Development

Another psycho-analytically based theory of the development of the ego, is that of Loevinger. Loevinger et al (1966) not only developed a stage theory of ego development, but have also operationalized the theory and produced a test. As these stages of ego development and theory of the development of the ego differ from Erikson's, it is useful to understand both the similarities and differences in approach.

Loevinger refers to her concept of ego development as the master trait. She declares that it is second only to intelligence in accounting for human variation. As such it is of primary importance to investigate this facet of personality and attempt to account for it in the investigation of responses to a particular set of changes. In fact Loevinger, in a similar yet even more evasive stance than Erikson, also refuses to make a formal definition of ego development. She asserts that it is more useful to understand it partly from the common domain, partly from other writers, and then adjust and correct one's understanding through one's experiences and from other sources.

Loevinger asserts that to be a scientist it is not good enough to have theory and data, or even to have good theory and sound data. The nub of the scientific approach, she contends, is the constructive interconnection between them, that is, a systematic program for correcting revising, and expanding theoretical conceptions in response to empirical studies.

She criticizes the reification of the hypothetico-deductive approach as the pinnacle of scientific method. Her major thesis (1978) is that data should shape theories, in a similar way to that of how the infant's encounters with his environment shape his schemas.

Loevinger (1966) proceeds to describe what ego development is "not." It is not the same as development of all functions of the ego, and in particular not intellectual development, even though the exercise of intelligence is an ego function, and although intellectual development is seen to vary concomitantly with ego development. It is not a function of age and is seen to vary almost independently of age, although it has been often noted that, at higher age levels there seems to be a higher level of ego development. Loevinger states that,

> "What is common to the developmental sequence and the characterology is an abstraction. To this abstraction and only to this is the term ego development most appropriately applied.
>
> "(1966, p.196)

She distinguishes, not only between ego development and intellectual development, but also between ego development and psychosexual development, and ego development and adjustment. Loevinger asserts that in order to differentiate ego level from intellectual level, from psychosexual level and from adjustment, it is necessary to have very clear conceptual distinction between them. While calling for this clarification, she does not effect it; nevertheless she continues to describe the concept in terms of these conceptualizations that are as yet not discreetly defined.

After describing what the concept is not, Loevinger notes what it is. In effect, she says it is what it is! She describes the concept in terms of the continuum of differentiation and complexity that she and her colleagues have delineated as the stages of ego development. *This is a tautologous description* and does not qualify to stand as a definition. Having said that, however, she then ascribes the construct to a collage, pasted together from many sources "all of them have been concerned with the abstract junction of a developmental sequence and character typology" (p. 198, 1966).

The developmental sequence referred to above, is again implicated in a further attempt at refining the understanding of ego development. Loevinger asserts that the use of the term ego development to cover all of the ego functions does not stand, as many of the ego functions develop at different rates, and not as an "organic unity."

.."only those ego functions that are part of that organic unity are properly included in the definition." (1966, p 205). So, what *is then known is that it embodies functions of the ego* that develop together as well as charac... typology.

In describing ego function Loevinger (1969, p.85) writes,

"The striving to master, to integrate, to make sense of experience is not one ego function among many, but the essence of the ego." It may be concluded, therefore, that these three facets could be assumed to represent the underlying constancy in ego development, reflected in the individual's integrative

processes and overall frame of reference. In a critical review of Loevinger's model and measure of ego development, Hauser (1976) notes that her conception of ego development assumes that each person has a customary orientation to himself and to the world which is arranged along a developmental continuum, the more advanced representing an increasing differentiation of ones's self, of the social world, and of the relations of one's feelings and thoughts to those of others.

> "Thus the search for coherent meanings in experience is the essence of the ego or of ego functioning. The ego maintains its stability, its identity and its coherence by selectively gating out observations inconsistent with its current state." (Hauser 1970, p.8)

Ego development takes place in the order of a hierachical model, (Tanner and Inhelder 1956; 1960). Loevinger describes the stages of development as having an invariable order; that no stage can be skipped; that each stage is more complex than the preceding one; and that each stage is based on the preceding one and prepares for the succeeding one. The diverse aspects of each stage have a single organic unity that develops through organically related steps, and this organic unity is the organizing principle that is ego development. An individual may not develop beyond a certain stage, and individuals at each particular stage may be characterized with respect to the specific features of the stage they have reached, thus generating a typology of character styles. Higher attainments in terms of reaching higher stages of ego development does not

imply better adaptation, and it is quite possible that individuals at some of the lower [illegible] may be considered to be better adjusted and "happy" than others at the higher levels.

The stages succeed each other as milestones in development, as distinct from polar aspects. Loevinger describes milestones as "observable behaviours that tend to rise and fall in prominence as one ascends the scale of ego maturity,"(1966, p.202) and may be illustrated by a bell-shaped curve. With milestones, the rating is a qualitative, rather than a quantitative one with each successive point along the scale being rated as qualitatively different from the others. In terms of maturation, milestones develop dialectically, whereas polar aspects develop non-dialectically.

A description of the stages will illustrate their conceptualization and evolution:

The first stage (I-1) has two phases: The presocial phase is where the infant is oblivious to all but the gratification of his immediate needs. Inanimate and animate parts of the environment are not distinguished. The symbiotic phase is when the infant has a strong attachment to the mother, distinguishing her from the rest of his environment, but not yet distinguishing himself from her.

Both phases of this stage are preverbal, and are therefore inaccessible to study using techniques that require language.

The second stage (I-2) is the impulsive stage, and is characterized by impulsive behaviour. Control over impulses is regarded as defective or undependable; rules are unrecognized

and behaviour is seen to be "bad" or "good" simply because it is punished or rewarded. Physical needs, particularly sexual and aggressive, are the preoccupation of individuals at this stage.

The first step in the direction of the control of impulses is termed self protective (Delta): Rules are recognized, but are obeyed in terms of self interest and expediency and immediate advantage. Interpersonal relations are exploitive and manipulative, but with less dependency. Conscious preoccupations are with control, getting into trouble, domination and deception.

Delta/3 is a transitional phase between delta and I-3, the self protective and conformist stages, and described by responses given on the stems not being complex enough to receive a higher rating, nor impulsive enough to receive a lower rating.

The third stage is the conformist stage (I-3): Rules are obeyed just because they are rules. Disapproval and shame for the transgression of rules play an important role for this individual. Interpersonal relations are viewed in terms of actions and concrete events rather than feelings, or other abstractions. Conscious preoccupation is with material things, and inner states are expressed in cliches.

The transition between the conformist and conscientious stages is (I-3/4): The context of an action is now seen to define its rectitude. There is the beginning of an emergence of introspection, and understanding of psychological causation, self awareness and self criticism. The outside group also no longer provides the absolute guidelines for behaviour.

The fourth stage (I-4) is the conscientious stage. Here morality is now internalized. Inner rules are considered to be more valuable than outer pressures. Guilt is the punishment for transgression, and interpersonal relationships are seen in terms of feelings and motives. Conscious preoccupations have to do with obligations, ideals traits and achievements, defined by inner standards; and the capacity for self criticism has developed.

The third transitional stage is (I-4/5). Individuals at this stage have far more complex responses than those at earlier stages. They display the beginnings of the capacity to tolerate paradoxical relationships between events, and interpersonal interactions in themselves have become highly valued.

The fifth stage is the Autonomous stage (I-5). It is at this stage that both facing and coping with conflict at many levels becomes the primary concern. there is an increased toleration for the choices and solution of others and a recognition of mutuality, as well as the other persons need for autonomy. Conscious preoccupation is around complexity of options, role differentiation, individuality and self fulfillment.

The six and highest stage is the integrated one (I-6). At this stage the individual is beyond coping with conflicts, is concerned more with the reconciliation of conflicting demands, and where necessary the renunciation of the unattainable. There is a real appreciation of individual differences.

Having described Loevinger's main stages it is now relevant to compare her ideas with those of Erikson.

2.4 Comparison of Erikson and Loevinger

As it is usually assumed that Erikson and Loevinger are examining the same abstraction from a different perspective, it behooves a researcher to understand both the similarities and the differences in these two approaches.

The epigenetic principle, as expressed by Erikson, envisages development as " a gradual unfolding of the personality through phase-specific psychosocial crises" (1980, p.130). He sees each part as existing in some form before the time that it becomes phase-specific. The time at which each part becomes phase-specific is precipitated by the interaction of the individual being ready and the society exerting pressure. Erikson contends that each part is systematically related to all the others, as each depends on the proper development at the proper time of the others. The idiosyncratic or characterological aspect of each individual is reflected in the interaction between individual make-up and societal pressures, which determine the rate of development of each and thus the ratio of them all.

The hierarchical model, however, whilst also asserting that there is an invariable order to the stages, none of which can be skipped and that each prepares for the successive and is prepared for by the succeeding one, is different in a basic aspect. That aspect has to do with where an individual may be placed in the order of the stages. Loevinger states that in the hierarchical model there is one and only one characteristic

level for each person. So an individual may be placed at only one level, that being regarded as his characteristic level. The stages of ego development from the hierarchical perspective may be regarded as developing along a unilinear (Werner, 1957) continuum, as one organic whole that is inseparable. However from the epigenetic viewpoint one may be simultaneously at different levels. Erikson has stated that one may cling to the mode of one period while proceeding to the next, and also that even though a solution is found at the time of crisis, that solution may only be "more or less lasting"(1959, p.130). At many points Erikson is careful to point out that an individual needs, at every level, to rework aspects of the previous level, and all of them exist from early life in some form. He describes how,

> Each stage becomes a crisis because the incipient growth and awareness in a new part function go together with a shift in instinctual energy and yet also cause a specific vulnerability in that part" (1968, p.95)

That, together with the demand from the environment to deal with this aspect, produces the task oriented, solution directed perspective, that is the multilinear (Werner, 1957) approach. It is Werner's contention, however, that behaviour is both unilinear and multilinear, being that it reflects both the epigenetic and the hierarchical models, and research in both these areas with their own respecti[illegible] and weaknesses has validity.

The conceptualization of ego identity and ego development is of some interest. As discussed previously, both Erikson and Loevinger have avoided giving clear definitions of their constructs. However it is possible from the intimations and references, to derive a sense of what each of them is meaning, and how they are different and similar.

As referred to previously, Loevinger's perspective on ego development views it as the striving to master, to integrate, to make sense of experience, as reflected in the individual's integrative processes and overall frame of reference. This perspective is not dissimilar to Erikson's description of identity. This overall frame of reference that Hauser (1976) describes as a customary orientation to himself and the world, can clearly be related to Erikson's description of " a subjective sense of an invigorating sameness and continuity", or the "style of one's individuality" (1968, p.50). Again the depiction of the integrative function of the ego by Loevinger, may be related to Erikson's description of the ego as capable of " integrating affective steps toward a tangible future, (1968, p.50) and his continued emphasis on the essence of the ego being its "synthesizing methods."

The final aspect of the ego that she describes is its striving to mastery. This would relate very well to Erikson's perspective on progress in ego development as reflecting the ability to solve the problems or resolve the crises at each developmental level. However, despite this description, Loevinger warns that,

> There is a temptation to see the successive stages of ego development as problems to be solved, and to assume that the best adjusted people are those at the highest stage. This is a distortion. There are probably well adjusted people at all stages" (Loevinger et al 1970 Manual, p.7).

She suggests that it is more realistic to see the sequence as one of coping with increasingly deeper problems rather than the successful negotiations of solutions. Despite this stated difference, it is obvious from the above, that what Loevinger describes as Ego development is not dissimilar, in fact resembles very closely what Erikson calls the development of ego identity. In another description, Loevinger spells out the specific facets that develop with [illegible]opment, namely, impulse control; character development; interpersonal relations; and conscious preoccupations with self including self-concept. Again if Erikson's stages of development are studied, it may be observed that the aspects that are described by Loevinger are certainly covered by Erikson, be they semantically distinct.

Where they clearly do differ, however, is in the understanding of the formation, or actual process of the development of the ego. On the one hand, the overall picture is the same. Loevinger sees ego development to be marked by "a more differentiated perception of [illegible]self, of the social world, and of the relations of one's feelings and thoughts to those of others"(Candee, 1974), while Erikson views it as "a progression through time of a differentiation of parts" (1980, p.54). It is rather the process of how this increasing

differentiation or differentiated perception takes place, and the path that it takes that are the points at which the two theorists diverge.

As mentioned above Erikson sees the path of development as an epigenetic one, with a multilinear format, whilst Loevinger sees it as a hierachical one, with a continuum along a unilinear format, with each successive stage being qualitatively different from the preceding one.

Erikson sees the development to be presumed from the successive resolution of developmental crises, whilst Loevinger sees it rather as simply one of coping with increasingly deeper problems.

As for the process of development, both Erikson and Loevinger view the succession from one stage to the next as a dialectical process, however the resolution of the dialectic, from the Loevinger perspective, is far more well defined and discontinuous than Erikson would perceive. Erikson describes the process of identity formation as follows,

> From a genetic point of view, then, the process of identity formation emerges as an evolving configuration - a configuration which is gradually established by successive ego syntheses and resyntheses throughout childhood; it is a configuration gradually integrating constitutional givens, idiosyncratic libidinal needs, favoured capacities, significant identifications, effective defenses, successful, sublimations, and consistent roles."
> (Identity and the life cycle p.125)

From the evidence presented above, Loevinger's view of ego development and Erikson's perspective on development do not gainsay each other, but rather add and enrich the understanding

of the process of development. It is thus considered useful to work with both of these conceptual perspectives and with their integration. This has already been started in the work of Adams and Shea (1979).

There is an essential difference in the two approaches that has implications for the cohort being studied. This difference is based on the conflict as to whether ego development is age related. Loevinger makes very clear statements refuting this possibility, and contends that even though there may be some covariance, the two aspects are independant of each other. Erikson, on the other hand, links development very clearly to biological aspect of the developing organism, thus age, or rather stage specific; and interfaces this with the particular tasks that the family, society and the environment place before the developing individual at different stages of his development. It is this aspect of what Erikson terms "psychosocial relativity", that seems to be the core issue, and it is the implication of the two approaches that are important to isolate. Erikson, from his perspective of different stages of life precipitating successive developments, implies two things. Firstly that successive development continues throughout the life cycle, and secondly that young adults can in no way have reached the concerns that older adults have, simply in terms of the fact that they have not been through the life experiences that would have precipitated them to confront and deal with these issues.

Loevinger, on the other hand, implies that there is no particular age that one should have achieved the higher realms of ego development, and thus it is possible that at the period of young adulthood, a person might have achieved the highest stages of ego development. The question may then be asked, after such achievement, then what does the rest of adult life hold in the way of development? It is the view of the present author, that there is indeed a very real difference in the quality of "the search for meaning" in life as different stages of maturity are reached.

As referred to above, Erikson describes ego identity as a sense, namely a subjective experience. Also this sense of ego identity has certain characteristic qualities; these are, the awareness of the selfsameness and continuity of its synthesizing methods; that this selfsameness and continuity, through the ego's synthesizing methods, will be observed and preserved by others; also that, this "sense" has its derivations, as with all the aspects of development, in the early infant life of the individual. Erikson elaborates,

> "What would we consider to be the earliest and most undifferentiated "sense of identity"? I would suggest that it arises out of the encounter of the maternal person and small infant, an encounter which is one of mutual trustworthiness and mutual recognition. This, in all its infantile simplicity, is the first experience of what in later reoccurances in love and admiration can only be called a sense of "hallowed presence," the need for which remains basic in man." (1968, p. 105)

It is this early sense of ego identity that develops and fills out over the years. However it is only at the time of the

crisis of Identity vs Diffusion that the young person is invited to confront the question of "Who am I and what is my meaning in this world?" At this stage there is a thrust, both to rework a number of the crises of the earlier years, and to search for a new sense of "continuity and sameness" that by now includes sexual maturity. Erikson suggests that adolescents need above all a "moratorium" at this point in order to be able to integrate all the former childhood elements with the new ones. It is the resolution of this period of integration that results in the achievement or non-achievement of a sense of identity.

The denotation of identity as a "sense" implies the subjective aspect of identity. The question may then be asked, "Do I perceive myself as having achieved an identity, or how, in fact, do I perceive myself?" The answer to that question would determine my personal "sense of identity." It is this subjective aspect of identity that has failed to be noted by many researchers in the field. However, it is not the subjective sense alone that must determine identity status, but that this status, this sense of ego identity, in order to make sense, must also be socially acknowledged.

Erikson describes the different aspects of identity and how to approach identifying and viewing them,

> A sense of identity has a preconscious aspect which is available to awareness; it expresses itself in behaviour which is observable with the naked eye, and it has unconscious concommitants which can be fathomed only by psychological tests and by the psychoanalytic procedure."
> (1968, p.105)

Finally, it is probably accurate to say that people experience themselves as identity achieving, transitorily, even though they may, on the whole and when viewed from the outside, be perceived as being identity achieving. Erikson says that identity is never "established" as an "achievement" in the form of a personality armour, or of anything static and unchangeable. Rather a sense of identity achievement is the result of a subtle interaction between an internal sense of self and feedback from the environment or outside world that verifies that sense. What people attempt to do in living, is create, or find, those experiences in the outside world that will validate that sense of self they already hold (be it positive or negative).

The two concepts described in the present chapter, that of ego identity, and that of ego development will be utilized in the further understanding of adult development as formulated in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 3

IDENTITY AND THE TRANSITIONAL SPACE.

In writing about identity, Erikson (1980) refers to the "ego quality" of ego identity. He writes of "an internalized pattern, a basic ego space" (p. 32), and he speaks of a sense of a "hallowed presence" or numinousness as part of the earliest, most undifferentiated sense of identity. Winnicott (1971) writes about personalization, or the "psyche indwelling in the soma" representing a personal or inner psychic reality for the infant.

These theorists are referring to the early sense of ego identity, that abstract quality of personal existence that embodies a continuous and constant inner reality.

Loevinger (1966) also makes reference to an abstraction, an organic unity that is "so intimately intertwined that one can hardly define much less measure, separately" (Loevinger, 1966, p.200). She describes it as a frame of reference. Again Erikson (1980) describes how the sum of identifications result in a "unique Gestalt which is more than the sum of its parts," (1959, p.129.).

Erikson, Winnicott and Loevinger are all referring to an aspect of being that is difficult to define, yet is recognized as being an integral part of every individual, and the way that individual both acts and reacts in the world. An attempt will

be made to refine and define an understanding of this aspect in the present chapter.

In this chapter a rationale will be presented for a hypothetical construct termed the Transitional Space. This is followed by a definition of the Transitional Space, and further refinements of its structure and function and development, its relevance in therapy, and finally its importance in the present study.

One cannot interact with a person's inner reality as that is their hidden internal world. One may only interact with those aspects that she/he projects outwards. On a similar basis, no two people perceive the outside world as the same. Every person has their own frame of reference, through which they filter perceptions and experience. This frame of reference is founded on the experiences that they have had in the world. It is on the basis of that experience, that a person determines a view of life, and it is through the idiosyncratic filter of this view of life that the outer world is perceived.

It is the present contention, that it is the internalized abstract quality that is inner psychic reality. Aspects of this inner reality are projected on to the immediate surroundings and constitute what Friedman and Shmukler (1986) have termed the Transitional Space. This represents a heretofore undescribed model, the understanding of which, it is proposed, will have important consequences for the understanding of both individual and interpersonal psychology.

The proposition of this hypothetical construct stems from a postpositivistic position. Namely,

> Postpositivism holds that we do not have access to undubitable truths. The knowledge claims that a community accepts are those that withstand the test of practical argument and use. Knowledge is understood to be the best understanding that we have been able to produce thus far, not a statement of what is ultimately real.
> Polkinghorne (1983, p.3).

Further, it is also suggested that the foundation and form of this proposed construct, termed the Transitional Space, is laid during the first year of life of the infant. The basis of this construct, that of the transitional object and the potential space, were originally derived by Winnicott (1963). The construct has, in the work of Shmukler and Friedman, (1985), Friedman and Shmukler, (in press) been both detailed and extended. It will be further extended in the present work.

3.1 Rationale for the Construct of the Transitional Space

Psychic space is a concept that has been addressed by the early and later ego psychologists: Federn (1932), Spitz (1965) and Isakower (1938) all emphasize the importance of the boundaries surrounding the psyche. Federn, in particular described the dissolution of ego boundaries in psychosis. Despite the work of the ego psychologists, Grotstien (1978) asserts that psychic space is neglected, and worthy of psychoanalytic study in the development of a theory which can help to conceptualize the space.

The concept of psychic space was also addressed by Winnicott. In his work on early child development, Winnicott (1971) described what he termed the transitional object, phenomena, and also the potential space. The concept of the Transitional Space extends that of the transitional object/phenomena and links to the concept of the potential space.

There is some confusion as to the place of the concept of the potential space, in relation to Winnicott's other concepts of boundaries and spaces. Commentators on Winnicott's work, Davis and Wallbridge (1981) point out that it was at the time of his death that he was working on these ideas, and that he commented that he still was not satisfied with them. It is proposed here, that the concept of the Transitional Space is that natural extension to Winnicott's work which fills the gap between the transitional object and the potential space.

3.2 The Transitional Space Defined

The Transitional Space is that aspect between inner and outer reality that is both inner and outer reality and neither. The transitional space falls between the me and the not-me, between inner and outer reality. It is that part of the inner world that is projected outwards, and both reflects the internal frame of reference, through which the perception of the world is filtered, as well as those aspects of hidden inner reality that are perceived by others as being "me".

Inner psychic reality, on the other hand, includes beliefs about self, others and life; memories and fantasies; knowledge and thinking ability as well as fixations and introjections. It contains what Winnicott terms the central self.

The central self could be said to be the inherited potential which is experiencing a continuity of being, and acquiring in its own way and its own speed a personal psychic reality and a personal body scheme.

As described above, this central self is what Erikson terms the sense of ego identity. It is an inner sense of the self, which in turn contains both the true self and the false adapted self. What is projected outwards into the Transitional Space, is not the reality of the internal world, but rather how that person would like to be seen, contaminated by the traumas and unresolved issues in his/her life. So that what is projected is consciously filtered and unconsciously contaminated aspects of internal reality, which is the outwardly perceivable ego identity.

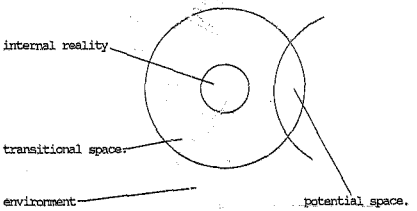

Fig. 3 : Illustrations of Aspects of an Individual in his/her environment

It is proposed that the transitional space can be described in terms of boundaries, size and content. It is also proposed that Winnicott's concept of the potential space will be more clearly understood when explained in the light of the Transitional Space.

3.3 The Origin of the Transitional Space

The origin of the Transitional Space is best described by invoking the concept of the dialectic. In the very early relationship between mother and child, general theory on early development accepts that for the infant there is no inner reality, as there is no sense of self - no subjectivity or ego. Thus there is also no Transitional Space, as the Transitional Space can only exist in the dialectic between the me and the

not-me. One may be able to say that the entire existence of the infant at that *point is in* the potential space of the mother. This may be described as an ego-lessness of being. Ogden (1985) in describing the mother-infant unity appreciates this perspective, adding to it.

> "Winnicott (1960) can be taken quite literally when he says that there is no such thing as an infant (without a mother). I would add that within the mother-infant unit, neither is there any such thing as a mother. The preoccupation of the mother with fitting herself into the place of the infant would be considered an illness if this type of loss of oneself in another were to occur in a different setting." (p. 131)

The infant exists in what Winnicott terms "unintegration". Davis and Wallbridge (1981) relate, that in the fragmentary preparation for one of *Winnicott's* lectures, there is this description of the unintegrated state.

> ...in the quiet moments let us say there is no line but just lots of things they separate out, sky seen through trees, something to do with mother's eyes all going in and out, wandering round. Some lack of need for any integration...That is an extremely valuable thing to be able to retain. Miss something without it. Something to do with being calm, restful relaxed and feeling one with people and things when no excitement is around. (p. 39).

Winnicott has also described this as a state of "going on being" (1956, p.303) which will later become the background of experience. At this time, however, it is "invisible" because there is nothing with which to contrast it; it is both background and foreground. This condition may be represented by the illustration below.

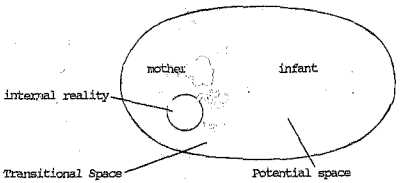

Fig. 4 : Illustration of the Early Infant-Mother Relationship in terms of Transitional and Potential Spaces

Ogden notes that this undisturbed, harmoniously functioning mother-infant unit may only be a hypothetical entity because of the inevitable imperfection of the mother-infant fit. "The well dosed frustration that results provides the first opportunity for awareness of separateness" (p. 132), and this imperfection of fit is what Winnicott alludes to when he describes the "good-enough mother." Good-enough discriminates from perfect. Whereas the perfect mother would perfectly anticipate and meet all the needs of the infant before they in fact become needs; thus denying the infant the opportunity of subjectivity and the experience of the me.

The imperfection of fit and the resultant frustration of the infant's needs, provides the first experience of "other" not meeting his/her needs, and simultaneously of "me" not having my

needs met. "Thus the paradox where "I-ness is made possible by the other.....this constitute an interpersonal dialectic wherein "I-ness" and "otherness" create one another and are preserved by the other." (Ogden, 1985 p.131). Ogden describes the beginnings and growth of this interpersonal dialectic with great facility.

> The movement from mother-infant unity (invisible environmental mother) to mother and infant (mother as object) requires the establishment of the capacity for a psychological dialectic oneness and of separateness in which each creates and informs the other. At first the "two-ness" (that coexists with oneness) cannot be distributed between the mother and the infant in a way that clearly demarcates the two as separate individuals; rather , at this point "two-ness'" is a quality of the mother-infant. This is what Winnicott (1958a) is referring to when he talks about the infant's development of the capacity to be alone in the presence of his mother. The transitional object is a symbol for this separateness in unity, unity in separateness. The transitional object is at the same time the infant (the omnipotently created extension of himself) and not the infant (an object that he has discovered that is outside of his omnipotent control). The appearance of a relationship with a transitional object is not simply a milestone in the process of separation-individuation. The relationship with the transitional object is as significantly a reflection of the development of the capacity to maintain a psychological dialectical process.
>
> (p. 132)

3.4 The Derivation and Development of the Transitional Space

The Transitional Space will be described in relation to the understanding of the concepts of the transitional objects or phenomena and the potential space.

Inner and outer reality are aspects of experience and awareness that captured Winnicott's imagination, and he addressed them with tremendous creativity (1970). Winnicott

believed that it was inadequate to encompass human nature in terms of inner psychic reality and outer shared reality. He thus deduced that there is an intermediate area to which inner reality and external life both contribute, and he termed it the "area of Illusion". He suggested that by means of this area the inner and outer world continue to overlap. As the infant begins to distinguish the me from the not-me, there is still, and will continue to be, an overlap between the two, "so that what the infant discovers in the outer world, as it becomes not-me, he also creates" (Davis & Wallbridge, 1981, p.58).

Grotstien (1978) describes how the development of awareness and toleration of the "gap", the space in distance and time between the going and coming of the primary object (mother), constitutes the "baptism" of space. "If the infant can "contain" this space in the absence of his object, he is able to initiate and expand his sense of space and is therefore able to be separate. Because of this he can perceive some separated aspects of his experience which he can then begin to represent" (p. 56).

Winnicott understands this process similarly but postulates that in order to protect himself from the unspeakable anxiety of abandonment, the baby invests an object or some phenomena with the contents of its world. At this point there is as yet no clear distinction between inner and outer reality and the world of the infant is, in effect, the mother the child, and mother-child interaction. So the transitional object is in the paradoxical situation of being mother and not mother. It is

baby and not-baby, and it is the mother as created by the baby, and is also the phenomenon it is. It is in the area of illusion where reality and fantasy meet. The transitional object is between the me and the not-me.

> "Winnicott (1970) says we are never to ask the question: Is this part of the inner world or the outer world? Rather we must accept the paradox of the transitional object, that it belongs to both and lies in the zone of illusion.
> (Shmukler and Friedman, 1985, p.208)

> As the child grows and develops over time this transitional object or phenomena are not forgotten, but rather lose their meaning, and this is because the transitional phenomena have become diffused, have become spread out over the entire intermediate territory between inner psychic reality and the external world as perceived by two persons in common, that is to say, over the whole cultural field.".
> (Davis and Wallbridge, 1981, p.60).

The diffused transitional object thus becomes the frame of reference through which the world is experienced and has been termed by Shmukler and Friedman (1986), the Transitional Space.

> The Transitional Space acts as a CONTEXT within which the child/person lives and interacts. The qualities of both the space itself and the boundaries of the space influence the intrapsychic and interpersonal processes of the developing individual. The qualities of the boundaries and the space itself, are created by the baby as a function of the quality of the interaction, or lack of interaction, with the mother or caretaker and reflect the attitude of trust or mistrust as described by Erikson."
> (Friedman and Shmukler, in press)

Interestingly, Grotstein (1978) in passing refers to a concept which he terms the transitional space.

> Transitional space may be an ad hoc spatial allotment to permit an intermediate area between self and object for experiences such as psychoanalytic transferences to occur.
> (p. 60).

He makes no further reference to this concept and develops his concepts of inner space along different dimensions.

In understanding Erikson's description of the epigenetic stages of development by their polar opposites, and the resolution of each crisis of development, it becomes evident that human development proceeds in a dialectical manner. As related to the definition of the dialectic by Ogden (1985), intimacy, for example, only exists in terms of isolation; and isolation in terms of intimacy. They both create, inform, preserve and negate each other. They move towards integration, but integration is never complete. And furthermore, each integration creates a new dialectical opposition and a new dynamic tension in the movement towards the next crisis of development.

This dialectical process also occurs in the relationship between inner reality and the Transitional Space, where they both create, inform, preserve and negate each other. In similar fashion, potential space is related to Transitional Space, and potential spaces to each other. In terms of the elusive, and abstract quality of these aspects of being, it is more than appropriate that Winnicott places them in the area of "illusion".

The rudimentary structure of the space in terms of the type of boundaries, is laid down in early childhood. The size of the Transitional Space grows, as one makes progress in ego

development. The content of the space is the outwardly projected ego identity.

3.5 Transitional Space and Potential Space

Although the Transitional Space is an original contribution which has not been described previously, Winnicott (1970) has described a concept called the potential space. In the following section, the potential space is described, and differentiated from the Transitional Space.

Potential space is described by Winnicott as the potential, but never actual, space between the mother and child. It is always potential because it is filled with the state of mind that embodies the paradox that is never challenged: the infant and mother are one; the infant and mother are two.

As Davis and Wallbridge (1981) explain,

> The potential space is thus the place where *meaningful* communication takes place. It is the common ground in affectionate relationships where instinct tension is not a main feature, relationships made *possible by the* ego-relatedness in infancy. Here communication comes about through "mutuality in experience" or the overlap of potential spaces, and *interpersonal relationships* can "attain a richness and an ease which carries with it stability of a flexible kind which we call health". (p. 128)

Transitional Space may be said to represent the frame of reference - the structure from which experience perception and action derive. It is suggested that the Transitional Space is much more than the "relaxed self-realization" that is described by Winnicott as being the potential space. The potential space although termed a space, is actually described by Winnicott as a

process. It is that part of the Transitional Space that is in contact with another, an activity, or an experience, the process of which is clearly elucidated in the description of "flow" as written by Csikszentmihalyi, below:

> The experience of enjoyment - or flow, as we have come to call it - is characterized above all by a deep, spontaneous involvement with the task at hand. In flow, one is carried away by interaction, to the extent that one feels immersed in the activity - the distinction between "I" and "it" becomes irrelevant. Attention is focused on whatever needs to be done, and there is not enough left over to worry or to get bored or distracted. In a state of flow, a person knows what needs to be done and knows whether the goals are being achieved or not - the feedback is clear. Yet the question of whether one is doing well or not seems to matter little; in flow a person does not worry about his or her performance. The sense of time becomes distorted: hours seem to pass by in minutes, but afterwards one might feel that an eternity has elapsed. The ego that surveys and evaluates our actions disappears in the flow of experience; one is freed of the confines of the social self and may feel an exhilarating sense of transcendence, of belonging to a larger whole. (p. 321)

In summary, every individual carries with them a projection of their internal world. This is the Transitional Space. When alone and "experiencing" or being creative, or when in contact with another, a person is in the potential space, that is, a person is out of himself, and removed from the immediacy of instinct tension.

3.6 Description and Function of the Transitional Space

As mentioned above, the Transitional Space is a context within which an individual lives; it is the "basic groundplan" of the sense of ego identity that is referred to by Erikson, that he terms the relatively unconscious and unalterable infantile antecedents of identity.

The analogy of the growth of a nut may be used to elucidate the process of how the sense of identity develops within the context of the Transitional Space. The fruit develops from the flowers, on the tree, while the nut develops inside the fruit. Depending on the quality of the fruit, so will be the quality of the nut inside. Thus, ego identity develops within the constraints of the context called the Transitional Space.

In this vein, Gregory Bateson (1978), describes how the net of ontological and epistemological premises with which a man surrounds himself, whether ultimately true or false, become partially self validating for him. This net of a person's "epistemology," which reflect habitual assumptions or premises that are implicit in the relationship between him and his environment, are described by Bateson.

> "His (commonly unconscious) beliefs about what sort of world it is will determine how he sees it and acts within it, and his ways of perceiving and acting will determine his beliefs about its nature."
>
> (1978, p.285)

The concept of life scripts, originated by Berne (1978) encompasses both the above aspects: the early derivation, and the directive quality of early decisions in setting the course of an individual's life. Eric Berne, (1975, p.58) quotes Adler as the closest of the early theorists to his own conceptualization of life scripts. Adler writes,

> "...every psychic phenomenon, if it is to give us any understanding of a person, can only be grasped and understood if regarded as a preparation for some goal...an attempt at a planned final compensation and a (secret) life plan... the life plan remains in the unconscious,.."

Berne developed his own concept of life script, which he defines as follows:

> "A script is an ongoing program, developed in early childhood under parental influence, which directs the individual's behaviour in the most important aspects of his life." (1975, p.418).

He also points out that scripts belong in the realm of transference phenomena and are derivatives, or rather adaptations of infantile reactions and experiences. It was Erskine and Zalcman, (1979) who refined the idea of the components of script, and included amongst them the individual's beliefs about themself, others, and the quality of life. This reference as to how the individual assumes an abstract context to his/her life is what Bateson refers to as their epistemological premise, or simply their epistemology; and it is this epistemology that partially describes the concept of the Transitional Space.

> "The development of the Transitional Space has important implicctions for future healthy functioning since it is in this space between the me and the not-me, between inner and outer reality, that life's satisfying experiences take place. These experiences include play, intimacy, creativity and daydreaming. Here the self is free to express itself without fear of judgment or need to adapt to others, and yet still meet "the other" in Buber's "I-Thou" sense. The transitional object is the baby's first act of creation and the "space" the source of creative energy. Shmukler (1985), in highlighting the centrality of this transitional area both for the developing child and for the healthy adult personality functioning, says:

> No human being is ever free of the strain of relating inner and outer reality. Thus we all have a continuing need for an intermediate area that is not challenged. The potential space, originally between mother-infant, is replicated between children-family, individual-society and individual-world. It is the location of cultural experience providing consolation from the starkness of the reality principle. Thus as the young child abandons the illusion of omnipotence, his most important transitional compensation comes through play, supplemented later by every aspect of our cultural heritage."(Shmukler, 1985)
> (Shmukler and Friedman, 1985. p. 208)

3.7 Extension and Expansion of the Concept of the Transitional Space

As becomes clear from the descriptions above, the Transitional Space is neither a unitary nor a simple concept. It reflects both content and process, and embodies not only the potential and limitations for being, but also the potential and limitations for being with others. It thus both defines and limits the context of our lives personally and interpersonally.

It is not possible for there to be interaction with an inner reality, so in order for interaction to take place, inner reality has to be projected outwards, into this Transitional Space; and it is in the overlapping of the Transitional Spaces in the potential space that communication takes place. Where the overlapping is minimal, due to either a permeability problem of the boundary,or simply because there is little depth of intent in the level of communication, the encounter remains superficial. Mutuality occurs with the overlapping of large areas of Transitional Space.

3.8 Dimensions of the Transitional Space

As mentioned previously, it is proposed that the Transitional Space has three dimensions namely, boundary quality; size; and content.

3.8.1 Boundary quality

The boundary quality of the transitional space describes the potential for relating to others, and most specifically, the potential for contact and intimacy.

The quality of the boundaries of the transitional space are laid in early childhood, and are a function of the quality of the holding environment, in particular the relationship between mother and child. It is on the basis of a "goodenough" holding environment that the potential for future relationships is laid. If there has been good contact and the possibility for adequate periods of unintegration in the safety of a holding environment, there will be an increased probability for further such experiences. The effects of such experiences are reflected in the potential of the boundaries to allow for overlapping or fusion to take place.

The qualities of the boundaries may be described on the basis of two dimensions; flexibility-rigidity; and permeability-impermeability. Flexibility implies the ability to accommodate easily and well to the vagaries of demands and needs of other people. The permeability of the boundary on the other hand, determines the individual's potential for contact.

Intimacy may be described as the capacity to maintain periods of intense contact over a period of time.

Erikson defined intimacy as "the ability to fuse your identity with someone else's without fear that you are going to lose some of yourself" (Evans, 1969 p. 48).

The importance of Erikson's definition here lies rather in the concept of fusion, and a fusion where "you are not going to lose some of yourself". Whitbourne and Weinstock (1979), based their illustration on this conception of intimacy, in which both partners commit a portion of themselves to the union while still maintaining their identity. They illustrate the different intimacy statuses derived by Orlofsky, Marcia and Lesser (1973), by using circles to represent the individuals and the overlap between the circles to show how they relate to each other.

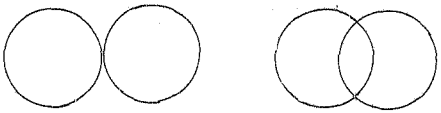

Fig. 5 : Diagram representing different intimacy statuses, after Whitbourne and Weinstock (1979)

To return to the present model, a flexible and permeable boundary implies that the individual is, in fact, flexible, is able to accomodate easily and well to the vagaries of demands and needs of other people, and is capable of true intimacy.

A flexible and impermeable boundary would reflect a person who could accomodate living with another person, in that their boundaries are flexible enough to accomodate. However a relationship of pseudo-intimacy would exist as his boundaries are impermeable.

A rigid and permeable boundary would describe a person who has a tendency to merger type relationships, where she/he are able to immerse their rigid selves in an all-encompassing relationship that may not be described as mutual.

Boundaries that may be described as both rigid and impermeable, will not encourage any relationship, and this type of person will tend to be an isolate.

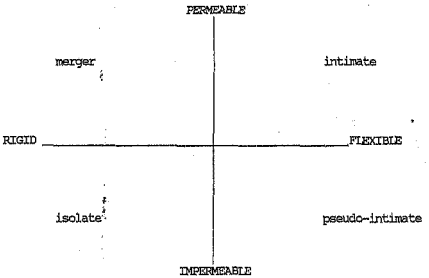

Fig. 6 : Diagram to illustrate the dimensions of boundary quality and their predicted effects on mutuality of relationship.

Another aspect to the boundaries of the transitional space is boundaries that are impermeable and at the same time fractured. Individuals who have this type of boundary structure, alternate between being too excluding or, on the other hand, not having enough boundary; so they move between relationships that are enmeshed, - and isolation. This may, in fact, also be the movement within a relationship itself. This type of oscillation in relating, when operating to a pathological degree, has been described as the pattern of a "borderline" personality structure, (Erskine 1982).

Finally, dealing with severe pathology, on the two extremes; where there is no boundary at all, no distinction between the me and the not-me, between inner and outer reality, you will find psychosis. At the other extreme, where the boundary between the me and the not-me is too rigid, being impregnable rather than impermeable and leaving no opportunity of interaction, there is the condition which has been termed autism. This concept of the variability of boundaries is supported in the work of Winnicott. Davis and Wallbridge (1981) note that,

> "It is possible to say that the distortion of the boundary brings about distortion in the space (and therefore in the maturational processes). Boundary can be distorted in itself in the sense of being weak, or fractured, or even absent when needed. Such distortion takes away form, so that what occurs in the space has no meaning." (1981, p.154)

3.8.2 The Content of the Transitional Space:

This aspect of the Transitional Space refers to a very inclusive definition of identity which comprises Erikson's notion of a sense of ego identity being a psychosocial reciprocity thus embracing the intrapsychic, the interpersonal and the environmental aspects as reflected in the development of this sense. The inclusion of the social or environmental aspect is also supported by Winnicott:

> "A description of the emotional development of the individual cannot be made entirely in terms of the individual, but in certain areas, and this (the potential space) is one of them, perhaps the main one, the behaviour of the environment is part of the individual's own personal development and must therefore be included (1971, p. 62).

and again,

> "when one speaks of a man, one must speak of him along with the summation of his cultural experiences. The whole forms a unit" (1971, p. 116).

An added facet in the conceptualization of a sense of ego identity that is implied in Erikson's approach but spelled out in the work of Bateson (1978), and Erskine and Zalcman (1979) (see above), has to do with the belief about the quality of life itself. So the content of the transitional space has, in early infancy, the basic groundplan or epistemological premise of the individual, which gets filled out during development with the details of the life plan or script as part of this inclusive concept of identity.

Thus the content of the space is the outwardly perceived ego identity, that is , who the person seems to be.

In order to produce an exhaustive study of the Transitional Space, all aspects of ego identity would have to be described and assessed. This is beyond the scope of this study. It is necessary, however to have a reasonable representation of ego identity. It is on the basis of one's identity that one deals with all aspects and problems of living, including the resolution of the "crisis of identity vs identity diffusion". It is this aspect of ego identity, the type of response and resolution to the identity crisis, that will be used as a way of representing or ascertaining, ego identity. This is different from the sense of identity. The sense of identity is part of the inner world and as such is inaccessible. What is accessible, however, is that part of the sense of identity that is projected out and becomes part of the Transitional Space.

3.8.3 The Size of the Transitional Space

The size reflects the progress along the continuum of ego development (Loevinger, 1966), so that a large size implies advanced development, perhaps at the autonomous or integrative stage, whereas a small size would reflect a limiting of development. The model of development that must be assumed here, is one that is not primarily linked to stage, although the epigenetic model may be incorporated.

These three aspects together form an *abstraction*, the Transitional Space, that mediates and sets the tone, atmosphere, and parameters of being. This Transitional Space, that determines the context for being, although represented graphically, perpetuates the paradox, as it cannot be reflected in a physical dimension, but describes rather the potential, both in the sense of limitations and the horizons to which one may aspire.

The implications of the concept of the Transitional Space, as described above, are that this context, set early in infancy, will limit development. This is both true and not true. The quality of the boundaries, that are determined in early childhood, do remain "relatively unalterable," in Erikson's terms; and the quality of the boundaries, as they are concerned with the ability and ease for interaction and intimacy, will certainly influence development, as it is through interaction that development takes place. However, both the *size* and the content of the transitional space are still able to grow. In fact, in the process of normal development, the size and the content of the transitional space are continuously developing. Winnicott (1980), although writing about what he terms the potential space, notes,

> "The potential space has a capacity to expand: it's extent can be minimal or maximal, according to the summation of actual experiences. "(*Playing and Reality: the place where we live.*)
>
> (p. 127)

It is the pathological structure and definition of the boundaries of the Transitional Space that are laid down early in life, not the content or the size, and it is the aim of in-depth psychotherapy to effect changes in the structure, so that size and content may be enhanced. From this perspective it is easy to appreciate the worth of regressive therapy.

The following diagram illustrates the interface between the quality of the boundaries and psychological health in their relationship with the development of a healthy or pathological context for living. The Y axis represents progress along the continuum of health, whereas the X axis reflects the permeabilty of the boundaries.

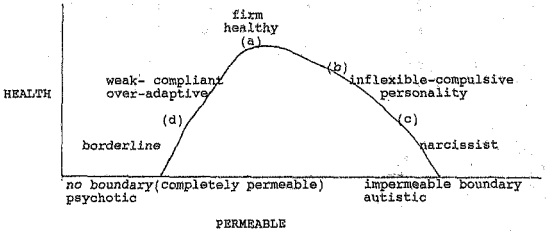

Fig 7 : Boundary Quality and Psychological Health

Two polarities at the bottom reflect pathology at the autistic and symbiotic levels.

Other boundary problems reflect pathology at the later levels.

All lower levels represent problems with the separation/individuation process.

It is possible to locate the revised identity statuses on this graphic presentation: The curve represents the maximum possible achievement, while the usual achievement in progress, along the continuum of health, is generally below the curve. The identity achieving individual would be placed at the apex (a); the foreclosed individual is placed in the normal range on the side of the inflexible-compulsive personality, (b); the negative identity is further along the impermeability axis and reflecting earlier pathology and retarded development, (c); and the diffused person is located along the curve at a position which reflects boundaries that are too much on the permeable side combined with reasonably poor progress in ego development (d).

In studying role variability as an aspect of ego identity, Block (1961) describes its two extremes.

> "At one end of this dimension, there is "role diffusion", where an individual is an interpersonal chameleon, with no inner core of identity, fitfully reacting in all ways to all people. This kind of person is highly variable in his behaviour, and is plagued by self doubts and despairs, for he has no internal reference which can affirm his continuity and self-integrity. At the other extreme, there is what might be called "role rigidity," where an individual behaves uniformly in all situations disregarding the different responsibilities different circumstances may impose. Here the core of identity is hollow, based not on a genuine and

> unquestioned sense of personal integrity, but rather upon deep seated fear of any amount of self-abandon. Somewhere in between presumably, a proper balance can be struck in the struggle both for identity and the capacity for intimacy." (p. 394)

With reference to the paradigm of the Transitional Space, it becomes clear that Block is not only describing the "identity issues" involved, but rather the entire Transitional Space, including the boundaries, size and content. It is also relatively easy to place his descriptions of the personality types on the diagrammed curve.

As a further illustration of the model descriptions of six of the most obvious characterological derivatives will be presented below. What is important to note is that they are presented here as ostensibly static and fixed types. This is not the reality as individuals are always in process. The static quality simply reflects a cross section in time, a useful, if not totally accurate way to view a process, and also certainly not regarded as an entire view of human complexity.

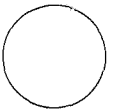

Diagram 1: represents a person where the boundaries are flexible and permeable, thus having potential for true intimacy, the size is large and roomy, thus denoting advanced progress along the continuum of ego development; and the content of this particular kind of ego space would tend towards identity achievement.



Diagram 2: This person had all the potential, in terms of the right context in early childhood, yet has failed to develop. There are flexible and permeable boundaries, thus allowing for the option of true intimacy; however, because the space available for overlapping is so limited, reflecting retarded ego development, even though intimate, the relationship will be very limited in depth. This kind of person will probably be reasonably happy, with reasonably good relationships and a foreclosed identity.

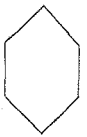

Diagram 3: The boundaries of this person are rigid and impermeable, yet despite this, there has been the opportunity to grow and develop. Because this growth has taken place without the kind of human interaction that is desirable, there is the element of mutuality that is missing from this kind of person. They do see many options and are creative, but only within the bounds of their own framework, and there is little capacity for true intimacy. This kind of person is often autocratic, dominant and egocentric, and can be found among many successful business people who call themselves "workaholics". They would have a tendency toward identity achievement.



Diagram 4: This type of individual has rigid and impermeable boundaries, without the potential for true intimacy; the size of the Transitional Space is small, reflecting major trauma and fixation at early stages of development that have resulted in a retardation of the process of ego development. This illustration would represent what has been termed the narcissistic personality, and would probably tend to a negative or perhaps achieved identity.



Diagram 5: This configuration has boundaries that alternate between being rigid and impermeable, and not having boundaries at all. The illustration therefore depicts fractured boundaries. This type of person oscillates between "wonderful" expansive enmeshing intimacies, and isolation. They may have progressed fairly well along the continuum of ego development, however, there is a quality of instability about their life. One could probably place this person in the identity status of diffusion, but there is strong tendency to often be in moratorium from one status to another. This person may be very creative, but there is a sense of brittleness or explosiveness about them.



Diagram 6: Finally, this diagram also illustrates fractured boundaries, with the inability for real intimacy. This person, like the one represented in diagram 4, has had very early trauma and fixations, resulting in a limited size of transitional space, and thus little progress in terms of ego development. This type of person would tend to have a diffused/confused sense of ego identity, and portrays the borderline personality, with typical alternation between needing closeness and needing distance.

Fig. 8 : Diagrams representing the different configurations of Transitional Spaces

Below is a table illustrating the boundary quality and size of individuals, as well as the tendency to which those aspects would shape the direction of identity resolution.

Table 1: Interaction of Aspects of the Transitional Space

EGO DEVELOPMENT STATUS	CAPACITY FOR CONTACT	IDENTITY
SIZE	BOUNDARY QUALITY	CONTENT
large	good	achieving
large	bad	achieving
large	fractured	diffuse
small	good	foreclosed
small	bad	negative identity
small	fractured	diffuse

To return to the conceptualization of ego statuses presented earlier, it is considered useful to integrate that portrayal of ego identity, representing the content of the Transitional Space, with the diagrams reflecting the size and boundary quality.

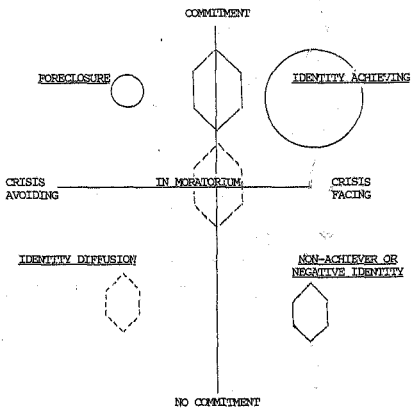

Fig. 9 : Diagram integrating the size, content and boundary quality of the Transitional Space.

The fourth dimension of the transitional space that will simply be described, but not elucidated, is the extension of that being, neither of inner or outer reality, a quality that can only be described in transpersonal terms, a religious quality. It is both of the self, the other, and the space. Erikson, in his description of the poem in Dr. Borg's life cycle, says,

> "The poem, the setting, the tone, seem to confirm the sense in which every human being's Integrity may be said to be religious (whether explicitly or not), namely in an inner search for and a wish to communicate with, that mysterious,

> that Ultimate Other: for there can be no I without 'other'. That, in fact, is the first revelation of the life cycle, when the maternal person's eyes shiningly recognise us even as we begin to recognise her."
>
> (1978 p. 12)

In other places, Eriksun refers to a sense of hallowed presence or numinousness, reflecting the original experience between infant and mother of mutual trustworthiness and mutual recognition.

Winnicott refers to the evolution of religious groupings as a degree of overlapping of personal potential spaces. However, it is the view of the present author that true religious experiences must be the ultimate in experience of the potential space, as described by Dr. Borg, above.

3.9 The Transitional Space and Therapy.

A final aspect of the transitional space with which it is important to deal, is that of the transitional space and psychotherapy. This has been dealt with in greater detail previously, (Shmukler and Friedman, 1985; Friedman and Shmukler, in press). In brief:

> The transitional area is significant not only for healthy development, but also for psychotherapy since "psychotherapy is done in the overlap of the two play areas, that of the patient and that of the therapist" (Winnicott, 1970, p. 63). When the patient has not developed this space, it is necessary to create the play space or transitional area before therapy can occur because it is here that true communication is possible. Implicit then to the task of therapy is the use or the creation of the space.
>
> (p. 209).

Winnicott believed that the difficulty in therapy arises

when "the play area has been lost, or has never developed." (Davis and Wallbridge, 1981, p.170) and so he tackled that problem,

> "in the setting provided by his personal reliability, which sometimes meant doing nothing more than being alive and attentive (silent communicating), a point could be reached where a potential space could begin to be."
> (Davis and Wallbridge, 1981, p. 171).

The therapeutic process is an attempt to change the basic structure of how inner reality is projected into the transitional space. Inner reality itself cannot change, as it is a record of the history of the individual. A useful way to view human functioning is through Berne's notion of ego states (Berne, 1962). As a part of the inner psychic reality, the Parent Ego State (Berne, 1981) contains all the material that is introjected from the parents, parental figures and culture. This Winnicott refers to as the "inherited potential," which, he maintains gives inner reality its organization and its structure. Another part of inner reality, the Child ego state is made up of a series of fixated points in development as they occurred to the developing child. Both of these ego states are accurate representations of the history of experience.

"Selective perception" takes place with the ego's integration of these two aspects or ego states, in the search for meaning. Things are recalled and aspects perceived in a way that will fit into the epistemology of the individual. The function of the Adult ego state is to project inner reality into the Transitional Space and so interact with the environment in terms of the here and now. The Adult ego state is limited in this function by the contamination of its space by the other ego

states. Thus the projection into the Transitional Space will not reflect the actual history of the *individual*, but rather the history of that individual that is reflected within the context of his epistemology. It is *through*, and *within* this projection, that living and interaction takes place.

During the process of psychotherapy it is possible to access areas of memory that had been repressed, thus affirming the existence of all aspects of inner reality. The process of in depth regressive psychotherapy attempts to reach the epistemology, the basic premises, whether verbal or preverbal that have shaped a client's life. Through the re-experiencing of the trauma, with different outcomes, the aim is to change these basic premises, and thus the persons context for living, as reflected in the Transitional Space.

3.10 The Transitional Space and the Present Study

It is within the context of these three aspects of the Transitional Space, namely; the site as reflected in ego development, the content as represented in an inclusive view of a sense of identity; and the quality of the boundary which reflects the capacity for closeness or intimacy, that a person will choose a partner in life. These aspects of the two partners will define the parameters of their marriage.

It is hypothesized that the interplay between personal characteristics and the type of intimacy status that results will influence both the context within which the baby is born, and also the impact this birth will have on the partners and

their marriage. The baby itself, together with its own genetic predisposition, epistemology and thus developing Transitional Space, will most certainly play its role in the effect on both the partners, and their marital relationship.

The concept of the Transitional Space is a contribution to the understanding of human experience and functioning, in the sense that it allows one to separate the internal hidden world, the world that can only be reported on, from that which is perceived by others.

The understanding of the Transitional Space illustrates the concepts of contact, boundaries and boundary disturbances in a graphic manner and allows extrapolation in terms of interaction and interactional patterns. It graphically illustrates the basis and development of an individual's frame of reference, and how these frames of reference are interpolated between individuals.

The concept of the Transitional Space elucidates how relationships work, and why certain relationships don't work.

Finally, the concept of the Transitional Space allows one to place Winnicott's concept of the potential space, understand the blurring of boundaries, not only between people, but also between a person and an involving activity. It explains the concept of flow, and links it to to that of contact in an original way.

CHAPTER 4

INTIMACY

Terms often used to describe the underpinnings of good marital relationships are love, and intimacy. In this chapter the concept of love will be explored and related to the basic concept of contact originated by Perls (1978). The concept of contact will be used to describe an aspect of the previously postulated hypothetical construct, the Transitional Space, and the understanding derived therefrom will be used to explain intimacy and how it functions in the marriage.

4.1 Love

Love is an aspect of being that begs reflection, as it is on the basis of love that long term commitments are most often made. Love is that elusive condition that so many yearn for, that is edified by poetry and song, and is so highly valued that people are even prepared to die for it. It is so often clearly and romantically expressed at the beginning of a relationship, highlighted at the start of a first pregnancy, and mourned with sadness whenever ended.

The first issue to be addressed is to define or describe this elusive thing called love. As stated by Pope (1980. p. ix), "such fundamental human activities as falling in love

have been glossed over, ridiculed, or ignored entirely in scientific research and clinical practice." A significant area for attention, when studying couples and their relationships during the transition to parenthood, is the development and change of the love relationship between the couple and between them and their new infant. This is of primary concern at this time.

Pope proposes a working definition of love:

> A preoccupation with another person. A deeply felt desire to be with the loved one. A feeling of incompleteness without him or her. Thinking of the loved one often, whether together or apart. Separation frequently provokes feelings of genuine despair or else tantalizing anticipation of reuniting. Reunion is seen as bringing feelings of euphoric ecstasy or peace and fulfillment." (1980, p.4)

Both the theoreticians and the researchers have all provided descriptions of love. On reviewing the major recent work it appears that although all describe love using different terminology, they all, in effect, have reduced love to three major components which may be related to the major components described by Sternberg (1986).

Sternberg, in his triangular theory of love, describes these three components as: (a) intimacy, which refers to feelings of closeness, connectedness, and bondedness; (b) passion, which refers to the drives that lead to romance, physical attraction, sexual consummation and related phenomena; (c) decision/commitment, which refers to the short term decision, and long term commitment to the love relationship.

Rubin (1970), as illustrated in the "Love Scale" describes: (a) an affiliative and dependency need, which may be related to "intimacy" (b) an orientation of exclusiveness and absorption, which may be related to "passion", (c) a predisposition to help, which may be related to commitment.

Weiner (1980) contends that an intimate relationship requires (a) communication, (b) mature romantic love, (c) commitment. Csikzsentmihalyi (1980) differentially defines: (a) love in the broader sense when a person invests attention in another person with the intention of realizing that person's goals (b) Romantic love when a person cannot control his or her attention being invested in another person, yet enjoys the experience.

He sees the criterion of love as striving to realize the other's goals, while the criterion of romantic love is seen as spontaneity and enjoyment. When all three conditions are satisfied at the same time, love and romantic love are both present, merged in the same act of attention.

Again, this description is not divergent from the one offered by Sternberg (1986). What becomes clear from the this tripartite division, is that it is possible to have any combination of the three components of love, but that none, other than the three in combination, will result in what Sternberg (1986) calls consummate or complete love. For example, passion, on its own may be called infatuation, which suffers from all the problems of a relationship that has neither intimacy nor commitment. Intimacy, without passion and with commitment, may be viewed as what has been termed "companionate

love"(Walster and Walster, 1978).

The conclusion that may be drawn from the literature and from common understanding, is that while the term "love" may be used by many people and researchers in a description of a relationship, it will mean different things to different people, and so, unless clearly defined, it may be confusing rather than clarifying. What is relevant from the perspective of the Transitional Space construct, is that of the three major components of love described by Sternberg (1986), two, those of intimacy and decision/commitment are included in the description of the Transitional Space. What is also of significance in all the above descriptions, is that the aspect of commitment appears to be one of the cornerstones of a loving relationship. It is this aspect of commitment, that recurs, both in the theory and research on identity as well as in that of love. Thus the basic capacity for loving is contained within the Transitional Space

4.2 Aspects of love

It would appear, therefore, that one of the basic features of ego development that underpins the ability to be identity achieving, is the capacity to commit oneself to a cause, activity or career. It is this capacity for positive commitment that again appears as the cornerstone of loving relationships. It thus becomes obvious, from a theoretical standpoint, as to why the relative achievement of identity is necessary in order to achieve a mature loving relationship.

Immature love, the love described by Erikson (1969), as the search for identity as reflected in the other, most often ends with disastrous consequences.

Geller and Howenstien (1980), confirm the inadequacy of immature love, and state that "paradoxically, fulfillment of any romantic strivings, including "infantile" wishes, is possible only when an individual has grown up" (p. 84). The finding of Levinson and others, (1978) indicate that young men are novice lovers, husbands and fathers. They are, in general, not capable of highly lov[illegible]y free, and emotionally intimate relationships, bec[illegible] guiding energy during early adulthood tends to be narcissistic.

Weiner (1980), in discussing healthy and pathological love says that:

> A prerequisite to adult romantic love is the development of a certain level of intrapsychic and interpersonal maturation. In the psychoanalytic view, adult love requires successful completion of the oral, anal, and oedipal stages of psycho-sexual development. That is, one distinguishes one's self and one's own needs from others', develops a sense of autonomy and self-direction, and sufficiently disentangles from the sexualized attachment to parents to love a person for himself or herself and not because of his or her similarity to, or dissimilarity from, a parent.
>
> (p. 114)

4.3 Developmental and adult consequences

However, love is not enough to sustain an intimate relationship. Weiner (1980) states that "Love provides the bond between people, but their personal attributes provide the structure of the relationship" (p. 126-127).

Walster and Walster (1978) use "equity theory" to explain why people seem to get what they feel they deserve from life and from a marital partner. Sager (1976), postulates that married couples make implicit and explicit contracts with each other; and Klimek, (1979) views love to be motivated "in part by the fact that the partner meets unconscious needs and in part by finding a replacement for the first lost love" (p. 60). Finally Erskine (1982), proposes, in his model of interlocking racket systems, that

> "the script in each family member is intricately woven into a family pattern. Each person influences and is influenced by the behaviour of others in the family, who provide reinforcing experiences that confirm the script beliefs" (p. 254).

Clearly, then, in the same way, each of the partners will provide reinforcing experiences that confirm the script beliefs of the other.

In effect, the implications of all the above research and theory, is that for romance to develop into a long term relationship involving some degree of intimacy and commitment, there has to be, in addition to the attraction of passion, some interlocking in meeting the unconscious needs of each other.

Classically then, love would represent a transference relationship, at least in part, with the repetition compulsion occurring frequently, as each partner attempts to have their unconscious needs met (Weiner, 1980, Klimek, 1979).

"The adult needs for kissing, smiling, and physical caring

> or love-making have their origins in the shared gaze, touch, holding and vocal conversations of infant and mother.
>
> (Scharff, 1982, p.24)

It is necessary, however,to distinguish between well *functioning* and *pathological* relationships, because although each will have aspects of the other, it is in the degree to which certain aspects pertain in the marriage that makes it viable or not. It is only in pathological, or ill-functioning systems, that such aspects actually dominate the relationship. Weiner (1980) describes the common elements in pathological love relationships that differentiate them from healthy love relationships. They are static and repetitive, and they are closed systems that do not allow new information to enter. He observes that the repetition compulsion occurs in many love relationships and that the mature person's ties to his or her parents form only a partial framework for adult love relationships, while for the immature person, they form rigid confines.

Both an explanation and expansion of the above perspective is found in the writings of Geller and Howenstein (1980). They refer to Loewald's reasoning (1978),

> based upon Kierkegaard's notion of the "dialectic of repetition," is that repetitions of transference paradigms during adulthood contain aspects of novelty as well as an active and imaginative reorganisation and elaboration of early love relations, and that consequently our love relations do not remain determined by the unmodified power of infantile prototypes.
>
> (p. 70)

It is the creative elaboration of early love relationships that allows for the mutative, growing and developing relationship, as described by Goethals (1980).

Csikzsentmihalyi (1980) embraces this perspective in his criticism of closed views of behaviour and his proposal of the acceptance of an open view of behaviour. He describes a closed view as perceiving that needs motivations and rewards are set by genes and prior experience. From this viewpoint, whatever the organism encounters later in life will have no chance to modify the already established structure of needs and reward contingencies. Every new experience derives its meaning only from its relation to a set pattern of motivations. An open view of behaviour, on the other hand, assumes that individuals

> learn new "needs," motivations, and rewards in the course of their development, and that these emerging motivational systems must be understood in their own right, rather than be explained away solely in terms of past conditions of the organism.
>
> (Csikzsentmihalyi, 1980, p. 309)

He defines emergent motivation as a process whereby previously neutral stimuli become reinforcing because they produce new experience.

Even though the distinction between the two systems is a valid and useful one, understanding systems function is more complex than the simple acceptance of one model over another. In fact, it would appear that both aspects, that of closed

static systems and emergent motivational systems need be appreciated in the study of love and loving relationships. It is the static, closed repetitive systems that are pathological and end up with marital problems, while it is the emergent motivational open system that describes the healthy successful relationship.

4.4 Contact and the Contact Boundary

There is increasing evidence that relationships form the basis of our mental and physical well-being (Duck, 1986); they are certainly the building blocks of marital and family life. Contact may be viewed as the unit out of which relationships are built. In the following section, the concept of contact will be presented within its historical context, and linked to the hypothetical construct of the Transitional Space

Fritz Perls, originally a psychoanalyst, whose contribution to psychology is Gestalt Therapy, not only described and emphasized the importance of contact between an individual and the environment, but he based a large part of his work on contact, interruptions to contact, and the contact boundary. Perls, (1973) wrote:

> On the psychological level, man needs contact with other human beings as much as, on the physiological level, he needs food and drink. Man's sense of relatedness to the group is as natural to him as his sense of relatedness to any one of his physiological survival impulses. Indeed, this sense of identification is probably his primary psychological survival impulse.
>
> (p. 24)

Eric Berne, the originator of Transactional Analysis, writing

at the same time as Perls also recognized the value of contact between people, and described it as a basic need, or "hunger":

> The intolerance for long periods of boredom or isolation gives rise to the concept of "stimulus-hunger", particularly for the kind of stimuli offered by physical intimacy. This stimulus-hunger parallels in many ways, biologically, psychologically, and socially, the hunger for food."
> (Berne, 1981. p. 77)

Berne based his ideas about the need for recognition on the work of Spitz (1945), who found that infants who were emotionally deprived, in terms of inadequate social handling and physical intimacy, displayed organic deterioration as well as psychic changes. Berne thus developed his concept of "strokes" and stroking. He viewed strokes as a unit of recognition, and the basic underlying motive for most forms of interaction.

Both Berne and Perls were among the first theorists to take psychotherapy out of the exclusive domain of the intrapsychic, into the inclusive, holistic perspective of man in interaction with his environment. Interaction with the environment implies contact, and thus contact with the environment and with other individuals become the natural development from intrapsychic, to interactional interest.

Perls sees the contact boundary as the point of balance between man and society. "His difficulties spring not from the desire to reject such equilibrium, but from the misguided movements aimed towards maintaining it" (1973, p. 24).

Essentially the concept of contact and contact boundaries, is a statement about the individual in an environment, and the

interaction of each with each other.

In order to acquire positively cathected objects, the individual contacts his environment, he reaches out towards it, and withdraws from those objects or people that have negative cathexis.

> ...Contact itself is neither good nor bad.....Hence, not every contact is healthy and not every withdrawal unhealthy. One of the characteristics of the neurotic is that he can neither make good contact nor can he organize his withdrawal. (Perls, 1973. p.20)

Further elucidation is offered by Perls, Hefferline and Goodman (1976):

> When we say "boundary" we think of boundary between; but the contact boundary, where experience occurs, does not separate the organism and its environment, rather it limits the organism, contains and protects it, and at the same time it touches the environment.....it is essentially the organ of a particular relation of the organism and the environment." (p. 275)

The experience of the contact boundary reflects how the individual interacts with the field, which is "an exciting, choice making experience" in which "...customary things are out, and artful decisions become a necessity" (Polster and Polster, 1973, p.103).

The Gestalt approach views contact and withdrawal as dialectical opposites, and as descriptions of the way individuals meet psychological events. They describe how individuals deal with objects in the field, at the contact boundary.

As stated above, neither contact nor withdrawal, as such, are seen as healthy or unhealthy, it is rather an appropriate

balance of time spent in either, that manifests psychological health.

4.4.1 Disturbance of the Contact Boundary

Perls describes how all neurotic disturbances arise from an inability on the part of the individual to find and maintain a proper balance between himself and the environment; and how this imbalance is experienced as the environment boundary extending too far over into the individual.

> His NEUROSIS is a defensive manoeuvre to protect himself against the threat of being crowded out by an overwhelming world. It is his most effective technique for maintaining his balance and his sense of self regulation in a situation where he feels the odds are all against him."
> (Perls, 1973. p. 31)

The four boundary disturbances described by Perls, are introjection, confluence, projection and retroflection. An understanding of these boundary disturbances is facilitated with reference to the concept of the Transitional Space and the boundaries thereof. In the disturbances of introjection and confluence, boundaries disappear, and the person no longer has a sense of the me and the not-me. In the disturbances of projection and retroflection, rigid impermeable boundaries are erected, interaction is essentially with self, and there is no possibility of real contact with the other. So, in describing contact and withdrawal as dialectical opposites, Perls kept them within the "normal" range. However, if you extend both states to their extremes, the polarities are, confluence on the one hand, and isolation on the other, representing the boundary

disturbances.

A descriptional analysis of the boundary disturbances with respect to the construct of the Transitional Space may be found in Appendix A.

When looking at the the qualities of the transitional space, the content and size, as reflecting a developmental progression, are apt to change fairly slowly. However, the boundary quality, even though generally reflecting a certain form, may change many times in one day, and even many times within an interaction with one person.

For example, a person may approach an interaction with another, wondering what that person thinks of him, using projection to fill in the gaps created by his anxiety. As the interaction progresses, and is going well, he begins to take down his defenses, make good contact, and even possibly during an intensely emotional mutual experience, have moments of confluence. At some point, the other may begin to withdraw or do or say something hurtful, at which point the person again feels threatened, erects a strong boundary between them, bites down on his teeth to stop his own vicious response, and is at that point retroflecting.

Perls (1973) described the optimal conditions of psychological health, in terms of the individual contacting his environment. Contact with another individual also may be subsumed under the same description:

> If contact is overprolonged, it becomes ineffective or painful; if withdrawal is overprolonged, it interferes with the processes of life. Contact and withdrawal, in a rhythmic

pattern, are our means of satisfying our needs, of continuing the processes of life itself.

(Perls, 1973. p.23)

In similar vein, Eric Berne described intimacy as what can happen between people that is beyond games:

Bilateral intimacy is defined as a candid, game-free relationship, with mutual free giving and receiving and without exploitation.

(1978, p.25)

4.5 Contact and the Transitional Space

The concept of the Transitional Space enhances the understanding of contact and withdrawal and their function in intimate relationships. An intimate relationship is conceptualized by Whitbourne and Weinstock (1979) as two individuals, represented by two circles. Parts of the areas of the circles overlap in an intimate relationship, as illustrated in the figure below.

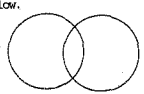

Fig.10 : Illustration of an Intimate Relationship (Whitbourne & Weinstock, 1979).

The rhythmic pattern of contact withdrawal, as described by Perls (1978) would be represented by energy being cathected and withdrawn from the overlapping areas. When the energy is cathected, there is an overlapping of that aspect of the Transitional Space that has been termed the potential space, and

intimacy is experienced. However, when energy is retracted, and the parties withdraw, the potential space is still there, making the return to intimacy that much easier in the future.

Each person has their own particular Transitional Space with its specific configuration of boundary size, quality and shape. When two people come together and form a relationship, their relationship will be a function of the characteristics of these two Transitional Spaces, as well as more than the sum of them. This relationship will consist of the special way that these two transitional spaces overlap, or fail to overlap, thus forming a unique area of relationship.

Interestingly, long before Perls and Berne, the concept of overlapping personal spaces and unique forms or areas of relationship was previously described by Lewin (1935), although largely disregarded. In his conception of the interpersonal field, Lewin wrote how human beings create in a dyad an interpersonal field: "A" interacting with "B" is not simply "A" plus "B"; it is "A" interacting with "B" to create a third field "C". A man and a woman represent differentiated individuals as "A" and "B," as well as being in the dyadic field of "C".

In another, and rather appealing reference to this unique configuration of a relationship, Zephyr (1982) has even given it a name. She describes how, when a relationship is formed between two people they create between them, what she calls a "spiritual child", namely, the particular configuration of the coming together of those two people. It is this "spiritual child" that is the function of the characteristics of their

Transitional Spaces as well as more than the sum of them. This spiritual child only exists for the two of them in each other's presence. However they each carry with them the potential space to house that particular relationship. It is as though the relationship has a special size, shape and form which *imprints* itself into the Transitional Space of the two individuals, and each time they come together, they can slip into the potential spaces already created and not need to create that space anew; thus the experience of friendship or intimacy, where people can simply pick up where they left off even after long periods of separation. The understanding of this model has two important implications.

The first one has to do with the importance of the primary familial relationships. It may be that those relationships had a particular form that the individual tries to match with other intimate relationships to fit into the familiar potential space. If that person's own system of functioning is a closed and static one s/he will continuously try and fit the same or successive people rigidly into the same mold, like trying to fit the proverbial square peg into a round hole, with the dire consequences to which it will lead.

Secondly, major changes in one or the other of the partners, producing changes in the shape size or boundary characteristics of their Transitional Spaces may change the context of the potential space and so that even though the potential space, or the spiritual child of a particular relationship still may exist in its original form, the new characteristics of the

Transitional Space of one or both of the partners may change the future potential of the relationship.

4.6 Intimacy

In an interesting introduction to the discussion of Intimacy vs Isolation, Erikson (1973) remarks that the particular strength acquired in the resolution of the previous crisis is "tested by the necessity to transcend it in such a way that the individual can take chances in the next stage with what was most vulnerably precious in the previous one" (1973, p. 237).

Ironically then, it is when an individual has successfully resolved the crisis of Identity vs Identity diffusion, and attained a measure of a sense of identity, that this sense of identity will need to be transcended and jeopardized as intimacy implies the ability to fuse one's identity with that of another, without the fear that one would lose one's own. (Perls et al. 1976). What is meant by the fusion of identities? Erikson defines intimacy as "the capacity to commit himself to concrete affiliations and partnerships and to develop the ethical strength to abide by such commitments, even though they may call for significant sacrifices and compromises." (1978, p.237).

For a proper understanding of the concept of intimacy, an examination of the relevant terms in the above definition will clarify what intimacy is and is not. The term to commit, is defined in the Concise Oxford Dictionary as to "pledge oneself by implication, bind oneself". This implies a carefully

considered entrusting of oneself to another; a giving over of one's self to another in the belief that the other will respect and care for that self.

A partnership implies that this commitment of self to another is a mutual one, in which both partners have equal rights and shares. Erikson (1978) then states that one must then develop the ethical strength to abide by such commitments. This underlies the attainment of a significant level of moral development; at the same time Erikson does not expect this ethical strength necessarily to exist at the time of commitment, but that it does need to develop to sustain the commitment. In order to sustain a commitment, significant sacrifices and compromises have to be made. Thus intimacy is not viewed with the romantic lense with which it often begins, but rather as a long term commitment of oneself to another and the accepting of the other's commitment to oneself, together with the joys and the difficulties that this type of relationship implies.

Intimacy is described by Erikson (1978) as being more than genitality as expressed in orgastic potency, as rather heterosexual mutuality. Thus sexual intimacy is only part of true intimacy, and sexual intimacy is often present before the development of a true and mutual psychological intimacy between people. Marriage, also does not necessarily imply either the attainment of identity or true intimacy. Many people marry in the search for their own identity as [illegible]ed in the other, most often with disastrous consequenc[illegible].

In his description of the Utopi[illegible]nitality, Erikson

includes:

1. mutuality of orgasm
2. with a loved partner
3. of the other sex
4. with whom one is willing and able to share mutual trust
5. and with whom one is able and willing to regulate the cycles of
   a. work
   b. procreation
   c. recreation
6. so as to secure to the offspring, too, all the stages of a satisfactory development.

(1978, p.239)

As implied in the above description, intimacy naturally should evolve into the concern for the next generation. And so the next stage of development that of Generativity vs Stagnation is faced. Generativity is seen as the interest in establishing and guiding the next generation, the major aim of parenting. Thus the fruits of intimacy result in the push to generativity. Again Erikson warns that the fact of having or even wanting to have children does not imply generativity. In fact it is the severe problems that are faced by many parents that often attest to the failure to have achieved the developmental stage of generativity.

The implications of Erikson's work have found widespread interest and application. Many researchers have carried out work to validate and extend the concepts.

Yufit (1956) found that the individual who may be described as having the potential for intimacy, was characterised by stability, sociability, and warmth. The isolate on, the other hand, was self-centered, self-doubting, mistrustful, and "at best his relationships with others are formal and stereotyped,

lacking in warmth and spontaneity" (Yufit, 1956, p.69).

Orlofsky, Marcia and Lesser (1973) derived five intimacy statuses, reflecting five variations in the resolution of the intimacy-isolation crisis. This was an expansion of the dialectic proposed by Erikson to represent the resolution of this crisis. This expansion presumed that rather than simply two possibilities, there is a broad range of possible outcomes of the crisis. These outcomes are described as the Intimate, preintimate, pseudointimate, stereotyped relationship, and isolate statuses. Kacerguis and Adams (1980) confirmed and extended the findings of Marcia (1966) and Orlofsky et al (1973). They found that more [illegible]ages of identity development were associated with higher levels of Intimacy formation, not only for males, but for females as well.

Orlofsky, (1976) measured and validated his described modes of reacting to the intimacy-isolation crisis of young adulthood. An interesting finding in this study, was that "Commitment is the aspect of intimacy which is most specific to the stage of young adulthood described by Erikson" (p. 96) "Commitment" in the previous sentence, may more realistically be stated as, the capacity for commitment to a cause - hence one may understand the rationale for the relationship between intimacy and identity resolution, as commitment is also [illegible] of the axes on which identity resolution is determined.

4.7 Boundaries, Intimacy, and the Experience of Love

The experience of deep intimacy is generally accepted as involving a blurring of boundaries and the losing of a sense of separateness from the other. (Freud 1961; Fancher 1973; Horner 1978; Fromm 1956),

> "But toward toward the outside at any rate, the ego seems to maintain clear an sharp lines of demarcation. There is only one state - admittedly an unusual state, but not one that can be stigmatized as pathological - in which it does not do this. At the height of being in love, the boundary between ego and object threatens to melt away"
> Freud (1961, p. 13)

This is seen as both the positive experience of losing one's self, or merging, and the negative, of total vulnerability to the loved one (Fromm 1956; Fancher, 1973). This experience of the loss of boundaries is reflective of the earliest levels of psychosexual development where there is no differentiation between self and other (Weiner 1978; Erikson 1978). This is described by Benedek (1959); Mahler et al (1975) and others as a normative symbiotic phase. It must be noted that the experience of the loss of boundaries is not continuous, but rather moments of confluence as described by Perls.

In order to experience this deep sense of intimacy in the losing of one's boundaries and one's identity, it is presently concluded that the individual must be well differentiated, and has to have progressed well along the continuum of ego development, and has achieved some sense of ego identity. This is necessary in order to be able to give that over in the loving of another, and so the two orientations of individuation-merger are seen as functionally inseparable

(Leverson and Harris 1980; Fromm 1956, May 1969). Thus there is the ability of the healthy well differentiated adult to have a deep and fulfilling love relationship, while an immature relationship will be primarily narcissistic. A pathological relationship will be an endless repetition of the attempt to get the fixated needs met, while holding on to a poorly defined sense of self; or alternatively of desperately trying to regain the symbiosis that was felt as safe, but never evolved beyond, in early childhood.

Another allusion to the blurring of boundaries is made by Csikszentmihalyi (1980), as he describes the experience of enjoyment or flow.

Losing the confines of the social self may be related to Winnicott's concept of the immersion in the activity and of the potential space,

> For the individual, then, the potential space is the area of all satisfying experience through which he or she can reach into "intense sensations" which "belong to the early years" and thus to awareness of being alive.
> (Davis and Wallbridge 1981, p. 64)

Thus the concept of the Transitional and potential space and the blurring of boundaries permits a clear illustration of the processes of involvement and intimacy.

In the discussion of intimacy, love and the loss of boundaries, clarity is lost by inadequately defined terms. Intimacy is sometimes defined as the experience of closeness, and the loss or blurring of boundaries; in other words the experience of contact (Perls 1973). At other times, particularly in the work of Erikson, intimacy is defined as all

of the above, plus the aspect of commitment (1978, p.238).

Confusing these two definitions result in confusion in conceptualizations and implications. It is necessary, then to refine the definitions. The former definition of intimacy will be termed contact. The latter definition, the one inclusive of commitment, is termed Intimacy. On this basis, Erikson's proposition becomes acceptable that there cannot be intimacy *without having* achieved a reasonable sense of identity. On the other hand, the capacity to have many contactful experiences, without having a well differentiated identity, and without being able to make the true commitment that true intimacy requires, or to stay through the process of contact withdrawal, is equally tenable. In terms of the paradigm of the resolution to the crisis of intimacy vs isolation the three outcomes of Identity achievement, foreclosure and negative identity all have in common the internal perception of an identity. This exists regardless of the process by which it is achieved or the social acceptability of this identity. It may be concluded, therefore, that in terms of the capacity for intimacy, persons in those three categories will be able to achieve some level of intimacy; whereas it is the diffuse individuals and those in moratorium that do not have the capacity to risk the identity they do not possess.

Now, in relation to the Transitional Space, it becomes necessary to redefine the concept of boundary quality as rather the capacity for contact. The capacity for intimacy, in terms of the above definition, and the quoted research in the area

would be a combination of the size (Identity); content (ego development); and boundary quality (capacity for contact) of the transitional space.

4.8 Marriage:

The question that follows from the above discussion is, can there be marriage without intimacy? The answer is in the affirmative, as many people marry while experiencing the combination of passion and good contact. However, the partners may not have either the level of development that would allow for commitment, or perhaps the motivation for the commitment that will carry the marriage through the rough periods that inevitably occur in every marriage.

Marriages that last must have a level of commitment, and if they still maintain good contact, in the sense of the alternation of the blurring of boundaries and withdrawal, it may be said that it is a relationship of intimacy. Most marriages begin with at least passion and contact. It is the existence of just those two aspects without commitment that is termed infatuation; and it is commitment that transmutes it to love. Marriages that begin with all three are obviously best able to weather the vagaries of marital life. Nevertheless, as Erikson suggests, if commitment only develops later, that too will make for a successful relationship.

In describing the different types of marriages, we are looking at the capacity for extended relationships. It is useful to examine this aspect in the light of the kinds of

individuals derived in the description of the Transitional Space, and how these types may come together in terms of a relationship. Although there are many different variations and computations of the three aspects of personality functioning as described in the hypothetical construct of the Transitional Space, relationships will be described that result only from the aforementioned types. Also, on the basis of dealing with a normal population, only those which exclude obvious pathology will be described. Thus personality types 4 and 6 which do not fit the "normal" paradigm will be excluded.

The illustrations of marital types may be found in Appendix C. In this chapter, aspects of love, contact and intimacy have been described and related to the concept of the Transitional Space. Finally, a description of different marital types was presented on the basis of all the aforementioned material. In the following chapter, the concept and process of change is examined, as the interest in this work has to do with how different individuals and marital configurations accommodate to change.

CHAPTER 5

CHANGE

Life is a continuous series of changes. The recent burgeoning field of adult development attests to the understanding that adult human beings do not come to the end of their maturation and development at the advent of adulthood, but continue to grow, develop and mature all the way through their adult years. Erikson, the first major theoretician to acknowledge the notion of life span development, in developing his epigenetic principle, saw change as a natural progression through life. The resolution of the crisis of identity vs identity diffusion is tested by the necessity to transcend it, by risking that identity in the fusion with another, to resolve the crisis of intimacy vs isolation; whereas intimacy naturally, [illegible] evolve into the concern for the next generation, and thus into the stage of development of generativity vs stagnation.

Modern theorists, basing their work on Erikson, have viewed the life cycle in terms of stages of quiet and periods of upheaval. Allman and Jaffe (1982) describe how "the life process consists of a somewhat orderly sequence of developmental stages and tasks, which are punctuated at each point by individual crises and difficulties" (1982 p.3).

Levinson (1979) describes how the life cycle evolves through a relatively ordered sequence during the adult years; and that the essential nature of the sequence consists of an alternating

succession of stable and transitional periods. Both Erikson (1968) and Levinson (1979) explain the process and the tasks of the transitional periods. Erikson writes of how the individual needs to rework all the previous stages as well as risk the last achieved stage in order to progress. Levinson asserts that the primary developmental task of each transitional period

> "is to terminate the existing structure and to work toward the initiation of a new structure. This requires a man to reappraise the existing life structure, to explore various possibilities for change in the world and in the self, and to move toward the crucial choices that would form the basis for a new life structure in the ensuing stable period" (p. 100).

What may be clearly deduced from the above is that these descriptions imply a large psychological upheaval during such periods, and Erikson has termed the periods "crises". The problem of the term "crisis" and its implications have been discussed in a previous chapter.

It is the term crisis that appears to produce a lot of confusion, both in the understanding of Erikson's work and in the use of the term in other areas of psychological investigation, particularly the one under present study. In the Eriksonian sense, crisis is viewed as a turning point, a period of "increased vulnerability and heightened potential". It is in this sense, the Eriksonian sense of a developmental turning-point or point of change, that the birth of a first child, where developmental familial and societal pressures change, might be thought of as a crisis.

Critical stages demand that the individual face and resolve particular issues, and Erikson describes these resolutions in terms of their polar opposites, such as trust vs mistrust; identity vs diffusion or confusion, as well as the virtues that result out of the positive resolution of these crises, such as hope; will; purpose; fidelity; care and others. The process of the resolution of these crises is also important to understand in the conception of Erikson's model. In the struggle to deal with the particular crisis at hand, Erikson does not postulate the achievement of a total victory of one positive polar opposite over the other, but simply a dynamic balance in one's favour. He writes,

> Developmentally it suggests a dialectic dynamics, in that the final strenth postulated could not emerge without either of the contending qualities; yet to assure growth, the syntonic, the one more intent on adaptation, must absorb the dystonic.
>
> (1978 p.26).

Erikson continues to describe how the struggle remains persistent and a stage is never once and for all "attained", but needs to be confirmed and reconfirmed at many different points. In effect, then, as described and reaffirmed by Erikson, nobody in life is "neatly located in one stage." A view of someone in life will reflect an oscillation between at least two stages and a move to a higher one only when an even higher one comes into play. In fact the "achievement" of an overformulated sense of identity, for example, may hinder the sense of variability so important in the living of a well adjusted life.

5.1 Aspects of change

Change may manifest as either small variations in the natural progression of daily living, or major changes as illustrated in major life events like marriage, the birth of a first child, divorce or the death of a spouse. It has been emphasized by some researchers, (Holmes and Rahe, 1967; Holmes and Masuda, 1974) that it is the magnitude of change in a person's life that is the key factor related to the amount of adjustment required. However, others propose that other factors such as the quality of the stressor, in terms of desirability or undesirability or the area of stress, are also relevant (Gersten et al, 1974; Vinokur and Seltzer, 1975; Ruch, 1977). There are three aspects of change to which every individual must respond during the course of their lives. The aspects of change are internal or intrapsychic change; interpersonal change; and environmental change.

Internal change, although most often precipitated by an external event, are changes in the intrapsychic functioning of the individual. This may be represented by further progress in ego development, with its concomitant developing ability to deal with conflict and paradox, and concern for others; or it may be a function of the the engagement in, or resolution of one of the stages of development, resulting in a differing perception of self and others, and thus a different set from which to view the world.

Environmental change may be described as a change in the physical context within which the couple live. This may vary from moving home, to the addition or loss of a family member.

Interpersonal change is concerned with the differences and changes in a person's relationships with others. In this particular study the relationship of prime concern is the marriage.

Irrespective of the environmental impingements on the couple, it is suggested by most writers that a love relationship, and most particularly a marriage, will go through a life course of its own. This may be roughly delineated as a romantic "honeymoon" phase, followed by a period of disillusionment, and finally acceptance. A novel interesting and realistic perspective, that includes a clear description of the life course of a marriage, but extends the view to see it also as a recurring cycle, is proposed by Weiner (1980). It is the repetitive nature of the love cycle, as described by Weiner, that makes it of interest in the present study. Weiner describes a series of five stages that are repetitive, comprising what he terms, the love cycle. He suggests that..

> An intimate relationship that lasts over a significant period of time will go through many partial or full love cycles as the people change individually, and as partners in the relationship.
>
> (p. 21)

Briefly, a description of the five stages is as follows:

First stage is early courtship.

The second stage of romantic love is "falling". Falling pertains to the partially involuntary reduction of the lovers' ordinary interpersonal boundaries, which are lowered to allow the other "in" and which lead to the feeling of emotional and physical fusion. The transition from romantic to

companionate love comprises the last three stages of the love cycle.

Stage three is unmasking.

In stage four, the disappointed lovers attempt to force their beloved to become what they were thought to be or were expected to become.

Stage five is the stage of resolution. Illusion is recognized as illusion.

The capacity to come to satisfactory conflict resolution is the hallmark of a truly adult love relationship, for it is not based on idealization, but on increasing acceptance of the other as he or she really is.

In summary then, no part of adult life may be seen as constant or unchanging, whether it is on the intrapsychic, the marital, or the environmental level.

5.2 Response to change

Despite the variant sources of change, there is, on the part of the individual, some drive for homeostasis or sameness, for the safety of continuity and the knowledge of constancy. Sullivan, (1953) formulated a theory of ego stability, an anxiety-gating theory. In this formulation the person, by selective inattention, recognizes only that which fits his self system. His ego is thus his frame of reference, and will be maintained as it stands, with the purpose of minimizing anxiety.

The concept of the gating mechanism proposed by Sullivan, has been accepted by Loewinger (1970) as the mechanism used to maintain the stability, identity and coherence of the ego.

A process of identity maintainance and change very similar to the anxiety gating theory has been described by Whitbourne and Weinstock (1979). They propose that a derivation of the Piagetian concepts of accommodation and assimilation provide an authentic description of the process of identity change and maintainance. They propose that the process of assimilation is where the individual fits any new incoming information into schemata that are already part of their repertoire. In this circumstance their is a rigid and defensive sense of self. This individual resists change to maintain that sense of identity. It is only when faced with a situation that is so divergent from what may be comfortable dealt with, that they fall into crisis and at that point have to accomodate and change aspects of identity.

In this "realistic appraisal of one's identity, one's experiences and the congruence between the two" (Whitbourne, 1986 p.30), there is a serious challenge to the sense of identity that the individual has been holding. It will result in the need to consider taking steps in order to regain equilibrium, and these steps would usually involve a change of identity.

As mentioned above, interpersonal relationships also do not remain constant. The myth of "and they got married and lived

happily ever after" has disappointed many generations of couples with its promise of eternal bliss. As described by Levinson (1979) and others, there are stable and transicional periods in individual and personal life. During periods of transition, the existing structures are terminating and a re-evaluation of life and its structures needs to take place. During such periods of psychological or emotional upheaval there is a tendency for an individual to regress and experience a need for emotional dependence. Janis (1958) terms this regression "apparently out grown modes of response to childhood dangers" (p.224). He also addresses the need for emotional dependence. He writes about a "marked increase in affiliative needs" repeatedly noticed among persons who are exposed to external dangers or deprivations, (p. 225). "Romantic solutions" to problems in living have been found to be a particularly conspicuous feature of transitional periods, irrespective of the era in which they occur (Becker, 1973). An understanding and combination of the work of Sargant (1959) and Janis (1958) would exemplify this process. Janis describes how in response to stress, individuals regress. Sargant describes how stress increases a person's suggestibility, and alteration of a person's thinking processes may be achieved; and Janis also talks about the increase in affiliative needs under stress. This process of stress and regression may explain why the solutions at this period are romantic. Romance fills the

infantile or Child need to lose boundaries, but in an adult sense. In fact the experience of deep intimacy has been described by Geller and Howenstein (1980), Weiner (1980) and others, as temporary loss of boundaries, indicating a temporary regression to the earliest levels of psychosexual development, when one was not able to differentiate one's self from one's environment. Thus particularly for some adults, each transitional point may result in a romantic solution - either the reaffirmation of a commitment, or commitment to a new romance. It becomes interesting at this point to examine how the propositions of Goethalls (1980), Livingstone (1980), Csikszentmihalyi (1980) and Becker (1973) support this contention. All of the above describe how love exists and is kept alive with some level of concomitant threat. Goethalls (1980) defines love as an "amalgam of profound ecstasy with the anticipation of possible loss." A related view is that of Livingstone (1980), who proposes that as long as there is a continuation of the reduction of uncertainty, individuals will continue to experience love. As described above, Becker (1973) describes romantic solutions as a feature of transitional periods; and Csikszentmihalyi (1980) refers to the dynamic balance between challenges and skills. Thus it would appear that both falling in love and staying in love are particularly relevant during changepoints in the life of an adult.

The cyclical nature of the love relationship accords well with what has been described above with respect to transitions

in the relationship. Thus, a transitional period, whether precipitated internally by personal change or externally by environmental change, will have similar effect. On the basis of a good, open and well functioning system in which both parties have the commitment that was described as being so important, it will stimulate the start of a cycle, manifesting early courting and falling in love again. This will be experienced and perceived as a mutative relationship with new challenges and the learning of new skills. It will provide a whole new bank of uncertainty that will feed into the system, and thus the reduction of uncertainty will begin afresh - with new horizons pertaining to many emergent motivations.

In a relationship which on the other hand, is a pathological one, or has major ill-functioning elements, the transitions, experienced as stress, will lure the partners into their own scripts (Berne 1978). This will result in repetitive attempts to meet unconscious fixated needs in a closed system. The partners will experience stress and anxiety, and the fixations defining the closed system will restrict the couple from finding their own solutions.

Because of the increased vulnerability, both in terms of the original stress and in terms of the compounded stress of not being able to get needs met in the relationship, there will be an increased chance of a romantic solution outside of the relationship.

5.3 Change and the Birth of a First Child

Jaffe and Allmen in their discussion of change, conflict and couple styles, describe how,

> Just as the individual has a life cycle, so too do a couple and a family. A couple and family are units continually adapting to new situations and crises by modifying their structure. For example, no change is so profound as the emergence of a third person out of a couple, and the birth of a child profoundly and permanently alters the nature of a couple.
> (p. 180)

A marriage has to respond to the changes that occur from the developmental life sequence of the family itself. As the development of the family proceeds, its members must accommodate to the transitions, and the form of the family itself must change. The form and development of the family system has been described by Friedman and Shmukler (1985). In this formulation, the concepts of Parent Adult and Child originated by Berne (1981) to describe states of the ego, have been extended back into what was their original derivation, the family system. The Parental subsystem in the family, refers to whoever occupies the limit setting and nurturing functions, the Adult subsystem reflects whoever is in the decision and problem solving roles; and the Child subsystem represents those members of the family who are in effect the children or in children type roles or positions. In young couples, before the advent of children, they both should occupy the Parental, Adult and Child subsystems. In terms of this family systems model, a major

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changepoint in the family is the birth of a first child and thus the change from a dyad to a triad. At the point of the birth of the first child, the Child subsystem in the family increases in size, and both the Parental and Adult subsystems must be able to expand and grow in order to accomodate the increased needs of the biological child as well as the Child needs of both of the parents. However, if the system is a closed fixated system that doesn't take in new information, there will be major problems in growing and accommodating to the needs of the developing family. In terms of the construct of the Transitional Space, the family system represents the overall overlap of all the transitional spaces of the members of that system.

The advent of the birth of a first child has two aspects. Not only is there the event of the birth and the addition of this new child to the family so that the family system must change, but there is also the required change in identity of both of the partners, from simply husband and wife, to also parent. In terms of Erikson's description of a crisis being a normative turning point and a period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential, this period, around the time of the birth of the first child, is exactly that. It is most certainly a turning point or changepoint and a period of increased vulnerability as spoken of at length in the literature. As described above, this transitional period will precipitate

similar responses to other periods of upheaval, depending on intrapsychic, interpersonal and situational factors. On the interpersonal level, depending on the type of relationship the couple already have, this period of transition will result in either a recommitment, a reawakening of passion, and a growth in the love relationship, or alternatively, a weakening of the bonds and the beginning of the dissolution of the relationship.

The birth of a first child, unlike many other upheavals in life, has a nine month anticipatory period. People or couples may approach the advent of their first child in different ways. There may be no preparation in anticipation of the changes, or alternatively, they may try and find the information relative to helping them cope with the forthcoming changes. Thus one couple may happen on this crisis "suddenly", that is, at the birth, as a fait accomplit, and without any preparation. This couple will attempt to fit this rather different style of life into their prevailing schemata, often with quite traumatic results. Alternatively a couple, through both conscious and subconscious preparation, will go through a slow process of multiple accommodations over the course of the time preceding the birth, and thus would anticipate and begin to make, the required changes.

Pregnancy is often referred to as a time of "preparation" for parenthood. It is certainly preparation at this level as well as preparation at other levels that is assumed.

Erikson, describes this very succinctly.

> "A baby's presence exerts a consistent and persistent domination over the outer and inner lives of every member of a household. Because these members must reorient themselves to accommodate his presence, they must also grow as individuals and as a group. It is as true to say that babies control and bring up their families as it is to say the converse. A family can bring up a baby only by being brought up by him. His growth consists of a series of challenges to them to serve his newly developing potentialities for social interactions.
>
> (1959, P. 57)

A model of successful and unsuccessful adaptations to change is presented on the following page:

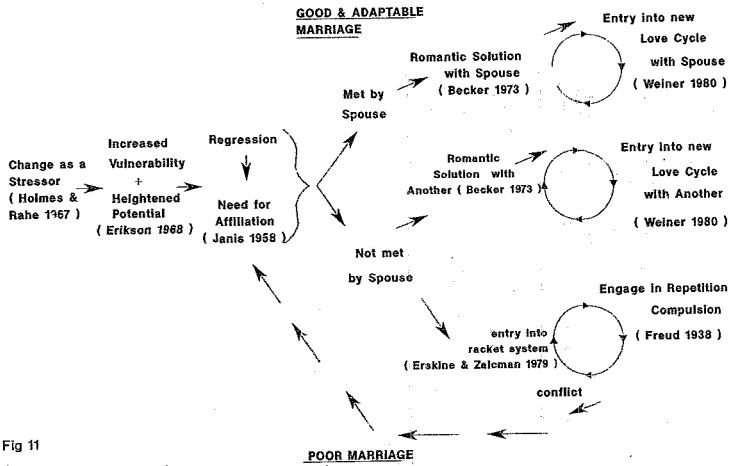

Fig 11

Model of Successful and

Unsuccessful Adaptation to Change.

Change as a stressor, produces increased vulnerability and heightened potential. This results in regression and a concomitant need for affiliation. In a good, adaptable and committed marriage, which is an open system, this will result in a further commitment to the marriage, a romantic solution, and the start of another love cycle. In a poor marriage, on the other hand, that functions as a closed system, this stress will also produce a regression and the need for affiliation, but because that early need is not being met by the partner, the partners will both get locked in their interlocking rackets; the repetition compulsion. Thus it results in the weakening of the bonds of the marriage and the stronger possibility of those affiliation needs being met outside of the relationship.

The different types of relationships, as described in Appendix A will each respond differently to the advent of change in general and to the birth of a first child in particular. The differences will be described in terms of the three aspects of the transitional spaces within which the relationships exist.

Boundary: The capacity for contact. This is of relevance with the addition of a child. With flexible/permeable boundaries there will be the joy of intimacy. At the other extreme, with impermeable/rigid boundaries, there will be extreme difficulty in relating to a baby.

Size: In terms of ego development, people at higher levels of ego development are more able to tolerate conflict and paradoxical relationships and so will adapt more easily to the difficulties inherent in the birth of a first child.

Content: Different kinds of identities will obviously accomodate differently to this change. However, looking at it simply from the perspective of the resolution of identity, the four statuses will represent different ways of dealing with change:

The different types of identity crisis resolution will also result in difference responses to the change in general, and to the birth of the first child in particular.

Identity Achieved: These people may have some problems giving up the identity that they have forged for themselves, to become a parent. Parenthood may however be part of the identity itself.

Foreclosed Identity: These individuals will have problems if parenthood is not written into the foreclosed identity structure.

Diffuse: There is actually no identity, so they will drift into parenthood without major problems.

Negative Identity: This will most probably be problematic as this is a rigid structure, with parenthood probably not part of it.

Appendix C consists of a table describing the main types of marital relationships derived from the construct of the Transitional Space. Each description is followed by a brief and simple comment as to the projected capacity of that relationship to cope with the birth of the first child.

What is evident from the descriptions of different marital configurations is that adaptability and response to change, particularly the change from the birth of a first child, is dependent upon the personal histories of the couple, their relationship and their environment, and will be different for different couples. As difficult as it is to address all these different aspects of the lives of the couples and their marriages, basic assumptions have been made and tested about the general dynamics of stress and coping techniques.

5.4 Accommodation to change

Understanding the process of change and different responses to both change and stressful situations are helpful in the anticipation of such occurrences However, there is research which demonstrates that interventions prior to the changes or stress can be of value in easing the passage through the changes

Research into the the value of adequate preparation for stress is quite extensive. Amongst the most well known work is that of Janis (1958), and Maichenbaum (1977).

Janis writes that,

> The relationship between the level of anticipatory fear and subsequent emotional reaction to stress is a modifiable one, implying a causal sequence of intervening processes that can be directly influenced by social communication or by other environmental events during the threat phase.
>
> (p.262)

He also asserts that a person's capacity to assimilate a stressful event without developing residual emotional disturbances depends upon the degree to which he has mentally rehearsed the situation in advance, and worked out reassuring thoughts and measures that can function effectively to counteract the feelings of helplessness.

Strategies that make for successful adaptation are also described by White (1977). He suggests that the individual must,

> (a) keep securing adequate information about the environment,
> (b) maintain satisfactory internal conditions both for action and for processing information, and
> (c) maintain its autonomy or freedom to use its repertoire in a flexible fashion.
>
> (p. 34)

Independently, although supportive of the position taken by Janis, White also contends that securing adequate information about the environment is an obvious necessity for adaptive behaviour.

In considering the transition to parenthood, with the increase in the popularity of antenatal education, couples are prepared for the actual childbirth and there is often some

preparation for aspects of child care. However there is little, if any preparation and information that is passed on to the couple, as to the changes that will take place in their individual lives, their relationship as a couple, their identities, and all other aspects of their lives that must necessarily change with the advent of a "family".

What is clear from the work on interventions, is that interventions can be extremely valuable in helping individuals cope during periods of change or stress. Also, that any intervention that is aimed at increasing ability to cope with the stresses involved in the birth of the first child, must include information; must be aimed at creating or maintaining satisfactory internal conditions; and must aim at maintaining autonomy. Thus, an intervention needs to address the affective, behavioural, and cognitive aspects of the individuals (Erskine, 1975). Despite this, when examining the different types of relationships and their adaptability to change, it appears that those who will adjust well to change anyway, are those who will benefit most from the intervention, while those who have difficulties in their relationships may also have difficulties integrating and using the material from the intervention.

On the basis of the "obvious necessity for information" for adaptation (White, 1977), couples embarking on the road to parenthood without information will be less equipped to deal with the changes than those who have, and can use the

information.

It is thus necessary to understand what information is important to impart, and how best to impart it. Thus the following chapters on the transition to parenthood, and the conceptualization of the intervention.

CHAPTER 6

TRANSITION TO PARENTHOOD

THE BIRTH OF A FIRST CHILD

The study of the birth of the first child and its effects on the parents is of fairly recent interest. Until such time as the myth of parenthood began to be seriously questioned in the work of Le Masters (1957), an idealized image of pregnancy, childbirth and parenthood reigned. This myth was reinforced by the conspiracy of silence around aspects of this period, particularly the labour and delivery itself. Young, romantic, unsuspecting women and men were cast into the mire of potential difficulties of the perinatal period. In terms of this myth, a loving couple, who desire to extend and share their loving relationship, decide to have a baby. The myth continues, in that this wanted pregnancy is undertaken joyfully, and that the excitement and pleasure generated by this lyrical and enchanting pregnancy will culminate in an equally uncomplicated delivery. After a short period, where the major problem is one of disturbed nights, the family will settle down to enjoy the growth and development of a sweet smelling, gurgling and delightful baby, the caring for, and enjoyment of which will enrich their relationship.

Unfortunately, the face of reality made a forced intrusion into this fairy tale world. On the one hand, the disturbingly

high divorce rate, that continues to increase, compels the search for the point at which the seeds of discontent are sown in what start out as "happy" marriages. On the other hand researchers searching for areas to study, begin to remove the veil of secrecy from aspects of marital life.

In summary, the early series of studies on the transition to parenthood attempted to ascertain whether the transition to parenthood is a crisis (LeMaters, 1957; Dyer, 1963; Hobbs, 1965). In the years following, the interest changed from establishing whether it was a crisis or not, to describing the changes and the effects of those changes on the couple and on their relationship (Leifer, 1977; Falicov, 1971; Grossman et al, 1980). The description of the process of change has also stimulated the interest of sociologists, (LaRossa, 1977; La Rossa and LaRossa, 1981), who criticize the "individualistic" approach and emphasize the holistic and sociologically based research.

Finally, a number of researchers have reported on interventions conducted during the perinatal period to prepare couples for the changes and help them negotiate the changes involved in the transition to parenthood. (Cowan and Cowan et al, 1978; Clulow, 1982; Houde, 1987),

At the outset, in embarking on a review of the literature with respect to the transition to parenthood, it should be noted that the research into this area has taken place in different countries of the world, and thus in different sociocultural settings. An equally important constraint is the fact that

these studies have taken place over the past thirty years, during which time there have been significant changes, both in the relationship between the sexes, and in the institution of marriage, as well as in the wider context of societies, technology and in the rate of change itself. Finally, many of the studies on the transition to parenthood, because of the interest in in-depth, intrapsychic, rather than statistical information, have been carried out with small and unrepresented samples. Thus it is with the understanding of these variations that care and reticence should be exercised in the drawing of any firm conclusions.

6.1 Transition to Parenthood and Crisis

The early work of LeMasters (1957) described the transition to Parenthood as a crisis. This article stimulated a great deal of interest and was followed by, amongst others, the work of Dyer (1963), Hobbs (1965, 1968), Russell (1974), Hobbs and Cole (1976), Leifer (1977) and Hobbs and Wimbish (1977). The common and principle question in all the aforementioned studies was the question as to whether the transition to parenthood constitutes a crisis. The results of the studies were varied. LeMasters (1957), Dyer, (1963), Leifer (1977), Falicov (1971) and Grossman et al, (1980) found strong evidence for viewing the transition to parenthood as a crisis.

> As we have seen at every point in this study, for primiparous women and their husbands, pregnancy and early parenthood are indeed a crisis of considerable proportions

> wherein many of their resources - psychological, sociocultural, physiological and marital - are called into play. Those couples with significant problems in any of these areas seem handicapped in their capacity to navigate successfully the enormously complex tasks involved in having a first child.
>
> (Grossman et al, 1980).

The period of transition to parenthood has also been termed one of stress, certainly in terms of the new mother (Leifer, 1977; Benedek, 1959); but also with respect to the father (Howels, 1972; Coleman, 1969) and the relationship between the husband and wife (Cohen, 1966; Melges, 1968; Yalom et al., 1968).

In terms of systems theory , the birth of a first child is also considered a crisis, both for the family as a system and for the individuals who make up that system (Minuchin, 1974; Friedman and Shmukler, 1985).

There is, therefore, a fairly large body of both theory and research that views the birth of the first child to be a crisis or stressful event in the development of the family and its members.

The "crisis" perspective has been seriously questioned by the findings of Hobbs (1968) and Hobbs and Cole (1976) and the reports of numerous parents who did not find this a difficult period in their lives (Belsky, 1985).

The other major approach to the transition to parenthood is the developmental approach. The developmental approach is represented in the perspectives of Deutsch (1945), Benedek (1959), Bibring (1959) and Caplan (1960). From this

perspective, pregnancy and the perinatal period in general, is viewed as a period of developmental crisis characterized by a psychological disequilibrium which is experienced as stress. The disequilibrium provides the maturational potential for new and more adaptive solutions to earlier conflicts. [These views echo and strongly support the Eriksonian perspective that provides the theoretical basis for the current work].

Rossi (1968) strongly recommended dropping the use of the term crisis, even though it referred to a normative crisis. She suggested that the term transition to and impact of parenthood, rather than "crisis" be used, as the implication of normative crisis is successful outcome, and this is not necessarily the case with the transition to parenthood.

> "If the transition is achieved and if a successful reintegration of personality or social roles occurs, then crisis is a misnomer.
> (Rossi, 1967. p. 230)

In the resolution to the problem of conceptualizing this transition, Rossi (1967) emphasizes the importance of a conceptual system that addresses both positive and negative outcomes. She suggests that the stage-task concepts of Erikson, viewing parenthood as a developmental stage would be the most successful perspective. Erikso himself, (1973) terms the movement into, and dealing with the problems of each developmental stage, a crisis. As discussed previously (Chapter 5) tha use of the term "crisis" from the Eriksonian perspective, asserts that it is accepted "in a developmental

sense to connote not a threat of catastrophe, but a turning point, a crucial period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential" (p. 96, 1968). Thus despite the birth of a first child constituting the transition to parenthood from Rossi's perspective, the understanding of crisis in Eriksonian terms still qualifies for it to be termed a developmental crisis, if not a crisis in the sense of catastrophe.

Rossi's extremely influential article, although published in 1968, still appears in the majority of texts on adult development. This article apparently did have the impact intended by Rossi; that of moving the transition to parenthood out of the crisis literature, and into the developmental arena. It was on the basis of the argument that the conceptualization of the transition to parenthood needs to address the possibility of both positive and negative outcomes, that the term "developmental changepoint" (Erskine 1980) was adopted in the present dissertation. It allows for the option of change in either a forward or regressive direction (Leifer 1977). It also reflects this point, of transition to parenthood, as part of an ongoing process of development and adaptation (White 1977) within the individuals and their relationship, rather than a clear-cut transition from one state to another.

Whether one views the transition to parenthood as a crisis, a developmental crisis or simply a transition, what is clear to all is that the perinatal period, and the transition to parenthood in particular, is a time of enormous change in a

marriage, and for individuals in that marriage. This experience is well expressed in an excerpt from a novel by Nora Ephron,

> After Sam was born, I remember thinking that no one had ever told me how much I would love my child; now of course, I realized something else no one tells you: that a child is a grenade. When you have a baby, you set off an explosion in your marriage, and when the dust settles, your marriage is different from what it was. Not better necessarily, not worse, necessarily, but different.
> (p. 158)

In his book, Conflict and Power in Marriage, LaRossa (1977) taking the change one step further, concludes,

> Perhaps the most significant contribution which this book makes is that it exposes a myth. Marriage and the transition to parenthood are not - indeed cannot be - conflict free. The notion that these experiences are - or could be - void of conflict may, more than anything else, be at the root of dissatisfaction and breakdown in marriage and family systems. We may, in effect, be victims of our own ideals."
> (p. 151)

In his search for concepts and hypotheses to explain the transition to parenthood, LaRossa, proposes a model. He calls this model a Conflict Sociological Model of the Transition to Parenthood which is based in a conflict orientation (Sprey, 1979). The diagram of the model is illustrated below:

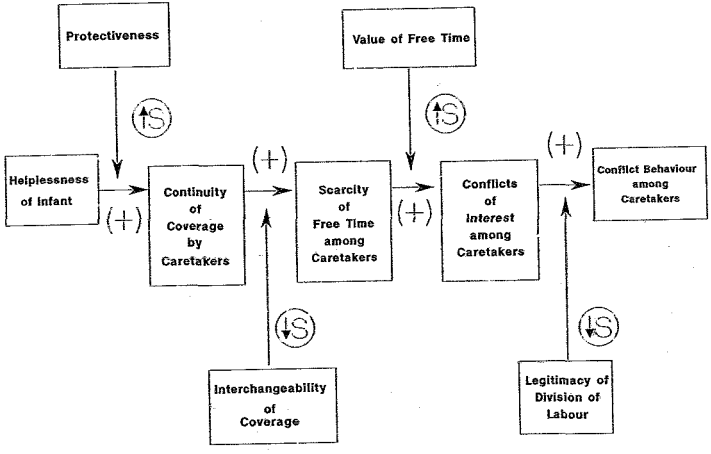

Fig 12
A Conflict Sociological Model of the Transition to Parenthood.
(LaRossa and LaRossa 1981)

LaRossa (1981) follows the diagramming conventions proposed by Burr et al., (1979b) and Reiss and Miller (1974), where the causal propositions are represented by the chain of variables linked together by plus signs, while the contingency propositions are represented by the bisecting lines with circled notations. Plus signs denote positive causal relationships and negative signs denote negative causal relationships. Contingency propositions denotes that there exists a variable that specifies conditions under which causal relationships are altered. The use of a small arrow, facing either up or down, followed by the letter S, denotes the *qualifying* effect of the contingency variable; up arrow/s means that as the contingency variable increases, the causal relationship that it bisects becomes stronger; down arrow/s means that as the contingency variable decreases, the causal relationship that it bisects becomes stronger.

For the sake of clarity, the two kinds of contingency variables are also denoted by whether they are above or below the chain.

The value and the perceived shortcomings of this model will be discussed in a further chapter.

6.2 The Effects of Pregnancy and the Birth of the First Child

A number of studies have found that the period of pregnancy is for the pregnant woman, one of emotional disequilibrium (Bibring, 1959; Coleman, 1969; Grimm, 1969 Newton, 1963), while others have questioned that *finding* (Hooks and Marks, 1963; Jessner et al, 1970). Other studies, examining the early postpartum period, have reported mood swings, feelings of anxiety and depression, distractibility, prolonged crying episodes, fatigue and hypersensitivity to possible rejection (Dalton, 1971; Gordon et al,1965; Kane and Harmon, 1968; Melges, 1968; Williams, 1985; Leifer, 1977). Fatigue, was found by Leifer (1977) to be the most commonly reported symptom postpartum. She continues to *note* that for most women, irrespective of the degree of symptomatology, their physical discomforts were great contributors to the emotional stress of the period. She also found that in the postpartum period more women felt negatively about their appearance than at any other time during the pregnancy.

A comprehensive study investigating the intrapsychic changes that occur during the first pregnancy and the early months of motherhood, was conducted by Leifer (1977). *Using* a sample of 19 primigravidas who came to the private patient clini. of the Chicago Lying-in Hospital for prenatal care, Leifer reported on five major areas of change in affective life commonly experienced during pregnancy. These are: an increase in anxiety; increased self-preoccupation and a corresponding

decline of emotional investment in the external world; intensified need for succourance; increased emotional lability; and finally despite the increase in psychological stress, an intensified sense of well-being.

It is the paradoxical coexistence of so many opposing and contradictory feelings that is a significant aspect of the transition to parenthood. In the same study, the postpartum period was found by Leifer (1977) to be characterized by the paradox of euphoria and elation, strongly predominant in the very early life of the baby, and depression and anxiety, that began to set in later. Satisfaction and accomplishment alternated with feelings of depression, isolation, dissatisfaction and boredom with the childcaring activities. Leifer found in her group that for most of the women, the early phases of parenthood were experienced as a period of crisis, frequently exceeding that of pregnancy. The changes that the majority of the women experienced as stressful were: lack of help in caring for the baby and home; curtailment of personal freedom; changes in marital relationships; and adaptations to the demands of the baby. Again, despite all these difficulties, most women experienced a sense of growth and expansion of the self, as well as of a greater completeness or wholeness as a person.

Falicov (1970), working jointly on the same sample as Leifer (1977), developed and extended the interest to describe interactional aspects of the women with husbands, parents, peers

and obstetrical staff. Falicov found that during the pregnancy, there were intense needs to rely on their mothers, even though these intense needs were often accompanied by rejection of the mother's teaching or advice.

Many of the studies, describing the effects of the transition to parenthood, have found the advent of the first child to be the beginning of a long-lasting decrease in marital satisfaction (Feldman, 1967; Hill, 1967; Falicov, 1971; Grossman et al 1980; Rollins and Galligan, 1978). Although some studies show no change, (Ryder, 1973), and some even show an increase in marital satisfaction, (Hobbs and Cole, 1976; Meyerowitz and Feldman, 1966; Russell, 1974), the majority of longitudinal studies have found highly reliable, but small decreases in marital satisfaction (Belsky et al., 1983; Cowan and Cowan, 1983; Feldman and Rogoff, 1968; Miller and Sollie, 1980).

Reasons that have been proposed to explain the decrease in marital satisfaction, include: lack of adequate preparation (Rossi, 1967; Sollie 1980; Clulow 1982); romanticization of parenthood (LeMasters, 1957); because of their propensity for other changes at this time, such as a new home or job, the difficulty of making other major adjustments (Grossman et al (1980; Falicov, 1971); new parental roles in conflict with their other roles, such as occupational commitment; the lack of adequate guidelines for adjusting to this period resulting in concentration on the baby at the expense of devoting more time

to each other (Falicov, 1971).

Failure to accurately anticipate the nature of the baby's influence, but more particularly the tendency to overestimate the positive effects of this event, were associated with negative change in the marital relationship as evaluated by women. (Belsky et al., 1985).

Falicov also notes that the experience of parenthood as a crisis, may be the paradoxical result of the fact that most of these couples had had close intimate and empathic relationships. She relates this finding to the invariability of the frustration of opportunities for psychological intimacy, companionship and sexual fulfillment, during early parenthood, which result in an experience of the impoverishment of the marital relationship. With respect to the woman's assessment of their marriages, Grossman et al (1980), made similar observations, yet from a different perspective, namely; that despite the marriages being one of the strongest predictors of later psychological and maternal adaptation, for most of the first time mothers and fathers, the birth of the child displaced the marriage as a focal source of gratification. They found that even though the marriage retained its position of being the central source of support for the women, it lost its place as the central issue during the early months of motherhood. Although by one year the marriage had regained some of its importance, it never was quite the same.

It appears, from the majority of the studies, that the decline in marital satisfaction is more severe for the women than for their husbands (Grossman, 1980; Belsky et al., 1983; Belsky et al., 1985; Waldran and Routh, 1981; Miller and Sollie, 1980). In fact Belsky et al., (1985) found that even though husbands and wives started off rating their marriages differently, with the wives rating their marriages much higher than men initially, over the year in which they were followed the wives experienced much greater change, and by the end of the year, men and woman made similar appraisals of their marriage.

The observation that women are more involved in the marital relationship than their husbands, has led to a large body of research, confirming this observation. In addition it has been found that this involvement constitutes a source of psychological stress for women during different periods of the life cycle, (Bernard, 1973; Hawkins et al., 1980; Assor and Assor, 1985). Assor and Assor, (1985) found that wives were more inclined to seek affection from their spouses and it was more important to them to receive support, than to nurture their husbands. Lack of support and attention from their husbands has been found to be distressing to new mothers (Ryder, 1973; Miller and Sollie (1980). Husbands' mode of being-in-the-marriage is, in general, suggested by Laws (1971), to be fixed and unresponsive to changes and stresses in the family life. The implication of the above findings with respect to a new mother's dependency, implies that the less dependent she is on her husband for getting her needs met, and the more independent she

is, the better the prognosis for her adaptation to early parenthood. This perspective is, in a sense, confirmed by Breen (1975), who found that one criterion for successful adaptation to motherhood was the capacity of parents to tolerate differentiation in their partnership after birth.

Feldman (1974) differentiated between companionate marriages, where the major satisfaction comes from activities within the marriages, and differentiated marriages, where the major satisfaction comes from separate activities. As marriages become more traditionalized after the birth of the first child (LaRossa 1977) there will be a crisis of differentiation for the companionate marriages.

In another longitudinal study on the transition to parenthood, Miller and Sollie (1980) found that new mothers reported higher stress in their marriages after the baby had been born than before, and even higher marital stress by the time the baby was eight months old. In contrast, new fathers' marital stress scores remained essentially the same across the year of the study.

A relevant finding by Belsky et al., (1985) was that the extent to which spouses characterized their marriage as a friendship and as a romance decreased over time, while the extent to which they viewed their relationship as a partnership increased. For both romance and partnership this change was most pronounced for the period from the prenatal to three months postnatal. However, the one aspect that did not follow the general trends, was that for wives, romance actually increased

from three to nine months postnatally.

It would appear, therefore, that in those marriages where there is a great deal of closeness between husband and wife, strong dependency on the husband to meet their needs, and there is an unrealistic expectation that the relationship will continue unchanged, there is a greater chance of a decrease in marital satisfaction than if the spouses get more of their needs met outside of the relationship. This will be particularly true for the women, as it is they who have the major life change at the time of the birth of their first child. The distress will be further exacerbated for women who have a career which they suspend or terminate at childbirth, as these women were getting many needs met outside of the relationship, and are now forced to focus all dependency needs in the relationship, which is not accustomed to supporting such a large load to which is added the very demanding needs of a young infant.

There has been an increasing recognition of the value of seeing the marriage as a system (Falicov, 1970 [1]; Grossman et al 1980) and thus understanding the interconnectedness of the husband and wife on levels of affect, thinking and particularly behaviour (Friedman and Shmukler, 1986; Falicov, 1970). In fact, Grossman et al (1980) argue that the woman's reactions to childbirth are a reflection and magnification of the couple's history of interaction and behaviour; and Belsky et al.,(1983), and Belsky et al., (1985) document that individual differences are strikingly stable across the transition to parenthood.

Despite the difficulties of dealing with this transition there are numerous benefits. One of the major features of a developmental crisis, from Erikson's perspective (1973), is that it has the potential for growth as well as regression. After tabulating 109 couples' positive and negative qualitative responses to open ended questions, Sollie and Miller (1980) described the most apparent responses. Positive themes expressed by the couples were: emotional benefits, self enrichment and development, family cohesiveness, and identification with the child.

The four most common negative experiences were physical demands, strains on the husband-wife relationship, emotional costs, and opportunity costs and restrictions.

6.3 Predictors of the Outcome of the Transition to Parenthood

It is not simply the husband and wife in the relationship that are important to the outcome, it is the quality of the relationship itself. There is evidence in the literature that it is the interpersonal relationship between husband and wife itself that may well be the most important context within which the baby is born and the relationships develop. (Dyer, 1963; Wenner and Cohen, 1968; Grossman et al 1980)

> ... aspects of the marital dimension proved to be among the strongest predictors of the woman's psychological adaptation throughout the study. Women who felt more positively about their marriages felt less anxious and depressed in late pregnancy, at two months, and at one year postpartum. They had fewer symptoms during the pregnancy and were substantially better adapted to the time of childbirth than

> women less pleased with their marriages. In fact the quality of the marriage emerged as one of the two strongest predictors of the women's psychological adaptation.
> (Grossman et al, 1980 p. 246)

As discussed previously, perhaps at the time of the transition to parenthood, satisfaction with marriage may have more to do with satisfying dependency needs than any other aspect of marital satisfaction. This view is confirmed by the findings of Tietjen and Bradley (1985) and Leung (1985). They found that support from husbands was associated with good adjustment in all areas during pregnancy and with good postpartum marital adjustment.

A similar proposition by [illegible]1), but with the inclusion of the husbands, was that [illegible] is an equilibrium of dependency needs, in which giving and receiving are intensified and constantly interplayed between husband and wife. She further suggests

> that marital compatibility of "fit" and reciprocity or complementarity of needs, regardless of depth of interaction is an important determinant of the degree and manner to which couples are able to reorganize their usual modes of giving and receiving and to extend their giving to a child while enhancing the unity of the marital pair. Satisfaction of the wife's and the husband's dependency needs seems to be conducive to unitary family integration and nurturance toward the newborn.
> (p. 237)

Anxiety is another aspect that has been clearly linked to the successful management of pregnancy, labour and the postnatal period (Friedman, 1979; Grossman et al 1980). Throughout the

perinatal period, up till at least one year post partum, for the men as well as for the women, the individual's level of anxiety was one of the strongest predictors of *his or her* health, behaviour and adjustment (Grossman et al 1980).

Grossman et al (1980) report that two of the strongest predictors of the woman's adaptation to labour and delivery were their husband's previous anxiety level and satisfaction with their marriages. The anxiety measures continue to be predictive of adaptation postpartum.

Grossman et al., (1980) conclude,

> It is clear that women rely enormously on continuing support and reassurance *from their husbands* for their sustained capacity to deliver and nurture a newborn and respond to its needs without experiencing overwhelming anxiety. By one year postpartum, the lines of interconnectedness in our data between mother and father were inextricably intertwined; nonetheless we can isolate the man's anxiety level, their degree of identification with a nurturantly perceived mother, and their adaptation to their wives and new infants in the early postpartum period - all strongly interacted with the woman's psychological health at one year and the quality of their relationships with their babies.
>
> (p. 248)

The factor of the importance of dependency *needs of* the husband and the wife are emphasized many times in this study (Grossman, 1980). Falicov (1971) notes that the concern over the lack of time alone with the husband was very high and was seen as the most painful aspect of parenthood. She notes alternating periods of regression and the needs for succourance on the parts of both husband and wife.

> The potential dangers of the inability to relinquish the infantile position for either husband or wife and to make room for the baby seem to be gaining recognition by some practitioners in the field of obstetrics.
> (Falicov, 1971. p. 238)

In summary then, it is clear that some of the changes resulting from the birth of the first child are perceived as stressful, particularly those to do with diminishing contact and intimacy between husband and wife and the regression and dependency needs that ensue.

The above literature describing the course of unmet dependency needs in the husband and wife provide support for the model proposed in chapter 5.

6.4 Calls for Interventions

The most striking feature amongst the women who experienced most difficulties in the transition to motherhood, was found by Breen (1975) to be the split between a very idealized picture of what they felt a mother should be like (often opposed to the bad mothering they felt they had received), and the way in which they saw themselves after the birth of the baby. The same process of idealization was at times present in well adjusted women during the pregnancy, however they generally modified their picture of the good mother after the birth of the baby, to a more realistic one with which they were no longer at odds.

There have been many calls in the literature for some level of preparation for parenthood; preparation to help couples deal with the effects that the transition to parenthood

will have, on them as individuals, and on their marriage (Rossi, 1968; Mace and Mace, 1980). Many of such calls have been based on the clinical and empirical studies supporting the incorporation of negative as well as positive elements into what makes for a good preparation for experience. This perspective was originally based on the work of Janis (1958), who found that patients with a particularly high or particularly low degree of anticipatory anxiety, recovered less well postoperatively than those who were moderately anxious. Those who experienced moderate anxiety, could do, what he termed "the work of worry," and thus provide themselves with an "inoculation" for the difficulties ahead. In support of this perspective, Breen (1975) found that women who managed well in childbearing showed more feelings of insecurity and anxiety during pregnancy than those who experienced difficulties, and Friedman (1979) found that those women who coped well during labour were those who, amongst other things, had had a moderate degree of anxiety, and had acquired and assimilated a reasonable degree of knowledge about childbirth.

Amongst those who have called strongly for interventions both during pregnancy and after the birth of the baby, are Sollie and Miller (1980). They estimate that the value of preparation would be for adequate and accurate information about the physiological processes and most especially about aspects like changes in the sexual relationship, feelings that new parents may have difficulty with, and for providing parents with

group support -- thus setting up more realistic expectations. In support of the argument for inoculation, they suggest that if new parents are aware of some of the things they are likely to experience, they will be better prepared to adjust.

The advantages they saw of continuing parenthood classes through the first year include:

1. Outlet for feelings.
2. Chance to watch other parents; knowledge and ideas about interaction.
3. Opportunity to participate; foster feelings of togetherness.
4. Sharing ideas with others on adjusting to the changed marital relationship, and the changed role of the wife if she has stopped work.

Another call for preparation comes from Mace and Mace (1980). They note that all marriages which are in trouble find themselves in such a position because no help was given to them when they were not in trouble; they suggest that something could have been done earlier to keep them out of trouble. That something, they recommend to be preventative service, "the best way to develop effective family strength" (p. 94).

Although the transition to parenthood has been targeted as providing a window of opportunity for preventative intervention (Wolkind, 1981), Markman and Kadushin (1986) note that there are no widely available interventions specifically designed to

prepare couples for becoming parents.

In terms of most preventative or therapeutic work, there has always been the problem that wives are more accessible and also more willing to attend courses or groups than husbands. This is compounded by the perspective that until fairly recently, pregnancy, childbirth and parenting were "woman's work", and viewed as set clearly within the domain of the woman. As a result, most preventative and therapeutic work has been aimed at the wives. The practice, of therapy for the individual has been severely criticized by Napier (1980), as individual therapy is aimed at strengthening the independence and the autonomy of the individual. This process both separates the individual from his family and does not take into account the needs of the family from which that person has come. Clearly, when the aim is the development of a healthy marriage and family, the aim of any intervention must be to involve both the husband and wife.

Finally, in his statement about the value of intervention, Clulow (1982 early) stated that it is not just information that is required by new parents, but the encouragement or provision of the opportunity in which the highly personal task of reconciling oneself to a changed world can be attempted and sufficiently achieved.

Thus, the calls for intervention are concerned with the well-being of the couple and ultimately the family, in the birth pangs of the transition to parenthood.

6.5 Reports on Interventions

There have been several reports of interventions conducted during the pregnancy and after birth. Systematic instruction of pregnant women to prevent emotional difficulties after birth, was designed by Gordon and Gordon (1960). The course consisted of formal lectures with advice on: reducing outside interests, resting, to be less concerned with appearances, and how and where to get outside support. He claimed considerable success with this scheme. Interventions based less on formal information and more on dealing with intrapsychic and interpersonal aspects have also claimed successes. One was run by Wilson (1968). He set up groups, where his role as group leader was to interpret the material produced by the mothers.

In another, run by Chertok (1969), it was found that the interpersonal support gained from the intervention was as important as the advice.

An intervention for couples that covered information as well as psychological aspects, and which continued to run after the birth of the baby, was run by Cowan and Cowan et al (1978). A detailed description of the study by Cowan and Cowan will be presented, as this appears to be the single study that covers most of the necessary areas of the transition to parenthood. Cowan and Cowan began their groups in the third trimester of pregnancy, met weekly, and continued until the babies were about four months old. A "discussion" group was compared with first time parents who were not in a discussion group, and compared with a second control group in which the

couples had no children and the women were not pregnant

Cowan and Cowan reported on the value of having the opportunity to work with the couples during the transition, and how it allows partners to make their expectations explicit to one another, to explore the actual experience of change, and to come back to evaluate already discussed aspects of their lives once the fantasized family has become real. They also reported on the importance of the group experience, particularly as people in the United States are so often far from their extended families. Cowan and Cowan suggest that by providing other couples' experiences of this transition, the groups may have helped to normalize and defuse the intensity of distress with oneself or one's spouse. They also found great value in working with the couples as couples, rather than with one member.

In the study by Cowan and Cowan, part of the psychologist's roles as facilitators was helping participants appreciate both the enjoyable and threatening experiences they were *having* as a couple during pregnancy, and to consider what they would do if new family relationships and household responsibilities did not work out the way they had expected.

The outcome of this study showed that almost [illegible] (92%) of the couples reported, that they were arguing more than before the baby was born. Overall satisfaction with the marriage dropped suddenly among both groups of couples when their babies were born. However, the researchers found that for the

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