THE NATURE, FUNCTIONS AND PROBLEMS OF THE THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP IN COUNSELLING - WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PASTORAL COUNSELLING.

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Bibliography.
One of my chief motives in undertaking this study for my M.Th. Degree was in order to become more acquainted with an area of research and practice which has a direct and immediate bearing on my work as a minister. This practical concern underlies the form and presentation of the final dissertation.

Chapter One

After recognizing the increasing emphasis laid on the centrality of the therapeutic relationship in modern psychotherapy and counselling, I then proceed to define the term 'relationship' and to examine how the therapeutic relationship is regarded in several related areas of psychotherapy and counselling: classical psycho-analysis, psychiatry, counselling (non-medical) and behaviour therapy.

I then seek to determine the several reasons that account for the present increased emphasis on the value of the therapeutic relationship in psychotherapy and counselling.

Finally, the extent to which the pastor's role in a religious community influences his counselling functions is examined.

Chapter Two

This chapter is essentially devoted to examining the main characteristics of the therapeutic relationship, what particular functions they serve, and how their use in pastoral counselling is informed by theological insights.

The main substance of the chapter is considered under the three headings:

(a) Permissive
(b) Acceptance
(c) Non-judgmental.
Chapter Three

This chapter considers the main methods and techniques employed by the pastor in counselling.

(a) Rapport
(b) Internal Frame of Reference
(c) Empathy
(d) Listening
(e) Reflection
(f) Interpretation

"What is the technique?" "How is it employed?" "What is its function?" are questions constantly asked and answered. The limitations of time, training and resources of the pastor are recognized as specially important in applying these techniques.

Chapter Four

The therapeutic relationship is 'a human interaction'. If it is to achieve its purpose in full, then certain factors which would limit its usefulness must be removed or at least controlled. This is done by the process of structuring. The nature and functions of this process are examined.

Difficulties in achieving the end of counselling can arise in the process of counselling in the client or the counsellor.

The phenomena of transference and countertransference are examined, and also ways of restricting their more negative influence.

The closing end sub-section of chapter four is devoted to an examination of the pastor's alleged authoritarian and judgmental attitudes.

Whilst studying for and writing this dissertation, my duties took me for extensive periods to Malaya, Singapore, Gibraltar, Morocco and twice to Northern Ireland. I wish to record my indebtedness to Prof. J. Blackie, New College, for his quiet confidence and reassurance that the final word would be written.
CHAPTER ONE.

An Examination of the Place and Function of the Therapeutic Relationship in Psychotherapy and Counselling.

A significant characteristic of post-war literature in the field of psychotherapy and counselling is the deliberate emphasis that is laid on the vital benefits that result from a genuine inter-personal relationship which is marked by trust and acceptance. Such a relationship is considered as being the corner-stone of therapy and counselling. The first concern of all who would deal with personal problems is to establish such a relationship. Carl R. Rogers maintains that the relationship itself, apart from the skills and methods of the counsellor, is 'a growth experience'. Throughout the literature of different schools, this emphasis on the fundamental importance of the relationship is a recurring theme.

In his book, "The Healing Partnership", Bernard Steinsor writes that amid the many methods and systems vying for allegiance, a growing number of psychologists are seeking the basis of treatment in the intense relationship between the patients and themselves. Again: "Whenever we meet a person there is psychotherapy" Harry Guntrip's verdict could not be more explicit. "Thus, in psychotherapy, the therapist - patient relationship is the key to the nature and success of the treatment". These two psychotherapists regard the personal contact between therapist and patient as the basis of treatment. If we want to understand the process and goal of treatment, we have to analyse the nature of the encounter between the participants.

We find the same emphasis on the fundamental importance of the relationship in case-work.

1. C.R. Rogers, 'Counselling and Psychotherapy', Ch. IV & also cf. K. Heasman, 'An Introduction to Pastoral Counselling' pp20-36

marriage guidance, and pastoral counselling. Writers in these separate fields are agreed that the initial and necessary step of a counsellor must be to create a relationship which, by its mutual warmth and acceptance, provides a context in which the professional help can be offered and accepted. When for any reason such a relationship fails to develop, then a vital factor in counselling is absent.

Biestek defines the relationship as the constructive new environment in which the caseworker carries out his function. The relationship between the caseworker and the client is the medium through which the knowledge of human nature and of the individual is used; knowledge alone, without skill in relationship, is inadequate. The relationship is also the channel of the entire casework process; through it flow the mobilization of the capacities of the individual, and the mobilization of community resources; through it also flow the skills in interviewing, study, diagnosis, and treatment. The aim of the caseworker, when meeting people who are in trouble, is to convey to them, through the warmth with which they are received, that they are in the presence of someone who is prepared to listen to their difficulties carefully and with sympathy, so that their problems can be unfolded without fear of blame or misunderstanding.

In this way a relationship can come into being that enables them to feel free to tell their story in their own manner and at their own pace. A relationship that gives this sense of freedom often provides a new and welcome environment to those who are in distress, and forms the beginning of the helping process. J.H. Wellis, a counsellor with considerable experience in Marriage Guidance, gives it as his considered verdict that the essence of counselling is that it can only work helpfully where there is a natural and sincere relationship between

1. J.A. Wallis, 'Counselling and Social Welfare'
2. H.J. Clinebell, 'Basic Types of Pastoral Counselling,' pp59-64.
3. F.P. Biestek, OP.CIT., p.4.
the counsellor and his client. To be an adequate counsellor, a person has not got to be an immaculate word-perfect technician but a person who cares greatly, and can enter into genuine relationships with those who are in need. Wallis tells us that counselling is not a technique but a practical skill. This practical skill is not a matter of following someone else's method, trying to do as teacher says, but the capacity to understand what the situation means to the client; to be sensitive to nuances of feelings, and to listen to the client's communications without reacting along the lines of one's own problems and experiences, of which one may be reminded, perhaps in a disturbing way.¹

In the latest writing on pastoral counselling, the relationship is given similar emphasis. As we are going to be concerned with the therapeutic relationship in pastoral counselling for the greater part of this dissertation, all that need be done at present is to acknowledge that in this matter pastoral counselling is in agreement with other forms of counselling. 'Counselling consists of the establishment and subsequent utilization of a relationship, the quality of which can be described as therapeutic (healing), maieutic (facilitating birth), or reconciling (restoring of ruptured relationships). This is the psychological environment in which healing, growth and successful coping can occur. Such a relationship is the sine qua non of counselling. Counselling procedures and techniques are helpful only within such a context.²' Much of the literature reflects the influence of interpersonal psychiatry,³ and, to a greater degree, the influence of client-centred therapy upon pastoral counselling⁴.

1. J.H. Wallis, OP.CIT., and also cf. F. Fromm-Reichmann, 'Principles of Intensive Psychotherapy,'Ch. 11.
3. H.S. Sullivan, 'The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry'.
4. C.R. Rogers, 'Client-Centred Therapy'.
What I intend to do in the remaining part of this chapter is to

1. give a definition of the term 'relationship';
2. examine the character and function of the relationship in classical psycho-analysis, psychiatry, counselling (non-medical) and behaviour therapy;
3. determine the reasons for the present emphasis on the therapeutic relationship in the several areas under discussion;
4. and, finally, as a preamble to the other chapters, elucidate the practical consequences for the pastor's work as counsellor that follow from his status as a leader of a religious community.

1. Definition of the term 'Relationship'

Inter-personal relationships remain a permanent characteristic of human life, from the cradle to the grave. We sometimes speak of a man's private life, and the phrase stands for a precious truth. If the citadel of his personal being is not respected as something sacred and inviolable; if he is not an end in himself but a mere thoroughfare for others to trample, his manhood is being exploited and denied. But, on the other hand, there is, strictly speaking, no such thing as a man's private life. There is nothing really private, that is, utterly isolated, in a universe where things exist only in relation to all other things.

Indeed, the most private act that any man can perform is to die, to go out of life. As long as he is alive at all, he cannot and does not live unto himself. Personality is mutual in its very being. For all its sovereign individuality, the self exists only in a community of selves. Our inter-personal relationships are possibly the principal and exclusive source of real
happiness and unhappiness. Only through relating with others in relationships of mutual trust and understanding does a person discover self-identity and self-worth. Again, if a person's relations with others are crippled by suspicion, anxiety, and misunderstanding, his life becomes burdened by a sense of futility and frustration which destroy creativity and divest life of any joy.

Our many possible inter-personal relationships have generic similarities, but each has its specific features. Biestek\(^1\) and Rogers\(^2\) state that we can distinguish between our various relationships by asking a number of distinct questions.

(a) what is the purpose of the relationship?

If we have a clearly defined purpose in any particular relationship that purpose will largely determine its nature and quality. In our friendships we can afford to be relaxed and open because such friendships are built on a basis of mutual regard and benefit. When our friendships don't serve such an end, they wither and die.

The relationship the probation officer has with his probationers must finally be determined by the sanctions and requirements of the court - in this case, the rehabilitation of the delinquent. At no stage is either side free to change the general limits of the relationship.

Interestingly, this matter of a relationship, which is created and maintained by legal sanctions, has been a major topic in discussions on prison reforms. It has long been recognized that prison warders have a positive role to play in rehabilitation. However, it is now being questioned whether the custodial and remedial functions can be reconciled. One of the main obstacles is that the image of the warder is associated with dark, dingy, and overcrowded prisons. All this, coupled with popular

2. C.R. Rogers, 'Counselling and Psychotherapy', pp.85-86.
demand for harsher punishments and stricter prison regimes, makes it extremely difficult to allow a more positive role to warders in relation to prisoners.¹

(b) Are both parties on terms of equality, and do they receive mutual benefits from the relationship?

In western society, marriage is considered an association of mutual benefit and equality. However, such is not the case in the doctor/patient or counsellor/client relationship. In the latter, both the patient and client are dependent on the training, skill and understanding of the doctor and counsellor, and normally are the sole recipients of any benefit from the relationship.

(c) Is there an emotional element in the relationship?

Clearly, there is a deep emotional component in the child/parent relationship, which is absent from the bus driver/passenger relationship. As we shall see there is an emotional element in the counsellor/client relationship, but this emotional element is strictly controlled.

(d) Is it a professional relationship such as exists between counsellor/client, or is it unprofessional, as between friends?

The professional relationship can be defined as to its terms and limits by law or, by an institution, such as the church, or by a social agency.

(e) What is the duration of the relationship?

The professional relationship comes to an end once it has served its specific purpose. Of course, its duration varies considerably from profession to profession. In classical psycho-analysis, for instance, the relationship could last a number of years. In pastoral care it is of an unspecified duration.

¹. Ibid., pp.108-128.
We are now in a position to offer a definition of the term 'relationship' as used in the professions of psychotherapy and counselling:

(a) It has a clearly defined purpose: to improve a person's mental integration and social functioning.
(b) Parties in the relationship are not on terms of equality.
(c) There is an emotional element, but this effective component is contained and controlled by the goal of the relationship.
(d) It is not a social engagement, but is maintained until its set function has been reached.

Definition:

This kind of interpersonal relationship is a controlled and dynamic interaction between two individuals, with the explicit purpose of assisting one member to desire and achieve the fullest solution possible to his problem.

(a) **A Controlled Interaction**

The material of the relationship is the problem, liabilities, assets and progress of the patient/client, and the resources, skills and time of the psychotherapist/counsellor. These two sets of factors define and limit the interaction. For example the offering of interpretation must be partly controlled by the patient's/client's readiness to accept the interpretation. A mistimed interpretation is likely to create anxiety which could severely retard further progress.  

(b) **A Dynamic Interaction**

The core of the relationship is this dynamic interaction. It results from the interplay of perceiving, thinking and feeling personalities which constantly act and react to each other's questions, answers, facial expressions, manners and even dress. The dynamic interaction is the sum total of all that happens between the participants - all the words spoken, all the feelings, attitudes and thoughts expressed - in fact everything that both parties do together. overt, and covert.  

1. Ibid., pp.205-206.
Because the interaction is a dynamic movement, it can change pace, direction or quality as a result of a number of factors. For instance, anxiety, fear or embarrassment on the part of the client or patient can be a real obstacle to progress.

The interaction moves at least in three main directions:

(a) From client to counsellor.

When a client comes for help, he is often assailed by feelings of inadequacy, shame or aggression, or any combination of these feelings. He will be concerned about what kind of reception he will get; whether he will be accepted with sensitivity, warmth, and understanding, or whether his self-hating and rejection will only be confirmed.

(b) From the counsellor to the client.

The counsellor will be concerned to give the client the impression that he is accepted on his own terms. It is here that Carl Rogers's insights are most valid and relevant. He writes that "the counsellor must genuinely feel the feelings he expresses to the client. If there is a contradiction between what he really feels and what he overtly expresses, the client will sense it, and progress will be blocked. It is found that personal change is facilitated when the psychotherapist is what he is, when in his relationship with his client, he is genuinely without front or facade, openly being the feelings and attitudes which at that moment are flowing in him. We have coined the term "congruence" to try and describe this condition. By this we mean that the feelings the therapist is experiencing are available to him, available to his awareness, and he is able to live those feelings, be them, and able to communicate them, if appropriate. No one fully achieves this condition; yet the more the therapist is able to listen acceptantly to what is going on within himself, and the more he is able to be like the
complexity of his feelings, without fear, the higher the degree of congruence. 1
(c) From Client to Counsellor

As the client senses the counsellor's genuine acceptance, he gains freedom and courage to explore his problem in greater depth. He is released from the anxiety of his self-concern, and gains confidence to face the dynamics of his problem.

How the client perceives the counsellor is of vital importance. Only as he perceives the counsellor as warm, concerned, dependable and consistent, will he undertake the often painful process of self-examination.

Equally important is how the client perceives the relationship. Here is the environment in which he deals with his problem. If the atmosphere of this environment is relaxed, and without threat or intimidation, he will relax his defences, and increasingly respond to the counsellor's approaches.

Before leaving this discussion of the definition of the relationship as understood in psychotherapy and counselling, we must look at the important matter of attitudes and their pervasive influence on the relationship.

Allport defines an attitude as 'a neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to objects and situations with which it is related.' 2 Again, Krech and Crutchfield define an attitude as 'an enduring organization of motivational, emotional, perceptual and cognitive processes with respect to some aspect of the individual's world.' 3

2. G.W. Allport, 'Attitudes', in 'Handbook of Social Psychology'.

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These two definitions serve to highlight two aspects of attitudes which are important for our understanding of therapeutic relationships.

(a) Our attitudes influence not only how we feel about people, things and situations, but also our behaviour towards them. We all have set attitudes to religion, politics, the opposite sex, superiors etc; and our behaviour towards them is determined by our attitudes. We may not be consciously aware of the influence of certain attitudes on our behaviour, but they are none the less powerful for being outside our awareness. It is at this point I find myself in disagreement with Biestek's definition of an attitude. 'An attitude', he writes, 'is a volitional direction based upon an intellectual conviction, and in some instances coloured with an emotion'.

1 It is fairly well agreed today that many of our basic attitudes are formed in childhood, before we have developed our intellectual capacity to weigh competing claims, or to form 'a volitional response'. Anyway, it would be extremely difficult to show that our attitudes to our most vital concerns are wholly 'based upon an intellectual conviction'.

Our attitudes come to be tied together into 'frames of reference'. In 'Persuasion and Healing' Frank calls these 'frames of reference' our 'assumptive world' by which we impose order and regularity on the welter of experiences impinging on us. 2 Each one of us perceives the world and its people through his own attitudes, and he cannot always distinguish between what elements in his perception are his own, and those which are given by the outside world. A perception is really a complex structure, partly supplied by what the world gives, and partly by our own attitudes to things and people.

3. G.A. Miller, 'Psychology', Ch. VII.
In counselling our attitudes are expressed by verbal and non-verbal communications. To be successful in counselling the counsellor should be aware of the attitudes which are implemented by the responses he makes and the psychological climate they are likely to create. There can be no substitute for honest self-awareness.

The Nature and Function of the Therapeutic Relationship in Classical Psycho-analysis.

In classical psycho-analysis the relationship between the therapist and the patient is less personal and social than in other forms of psychiatry. In psycho-analysis the therapist remains relatively neutral, and stays within his disciplined and well circumscribed role. A personal meeting or encounter between therapist and patient is discouraged. Freud himself insisted that "abstinence" is the emotional approach best suited to analytic therapy. 'At the actual session the patient carries on his free associations while lying on a couch, at the head of which the analyst sits out of direct vision, interrupting or interpreting as little as possible...... an orthodox analyst will adopt a strictly neutral attitude'.

Though this was the orthodox Freudian position, it was not unchallenged, even at the beginning of psycho-analysis. Sandor Ferenczi was one of Freud's earliest and ablest supporters. He advocated that the therapist should enter into a positive and giving relationship with his patient. He recognised that a patient needs, first and foremost, primal, absolute and unconditional loving. It was Ferenczi who was the first in psycho-analytic circles to teach the doctrine that 'the physician's love heals the patient'.

3. S. Ferenczi, 'Further Contributions to the Theory and Technique of Psycho-analysis' and also cf. I.D. Suttie 'The Origins of Love and Hate', Ch. IIV.
We need to ask, however, why such emphasis was laid on the relative passivity of the therapist in classical psycho-analysis.

(a) Freud recognised the positive value of distress and anxiety in motivating the patient to remain in therapy, and so work through his fundamental problems. Support from the therapist in the form of affection or reassurance might only serve to diminish the patient's distress without any improvement in his condition.

(b) Again, Freud feared that the patient might make 'a flight into health' that would only be temporary, if the therapist were to show any positive feelings. The patient would simulate a spurious recovery to please the therapist, or to escape from a situation which was becoming too demanding.

(c) These were only the peripheral reasons behind the emphasis on therapist neutrality in analysis. The basic reason is found in Freud's understanding of neurotic illness and of the dynamics of therapy. Perhaps the most basic premise of analytical theory, as related to psychotherapy and personality structure, is that present tensions and difficulties are related to past events. This means in effect that all neuroses, maladjustments and psychological distresses have bases in the past. Analytical psychotherapy deals primarily with the relief of present psychological distress through recognition of the influence of the past.¹

Now, if the therapist were to take an active part in the therapy, there is a very real danger that his personality would hinder and distract the patient from the task of gaining insight into himself and his repressions. The analyst on the whole will avoid

¹ J.A.C. Brown, Op.Cit., Ch.11.
expressions of pleasure or displeasure, or any sort of comments about progress which might influence the patient's attitudes; his aim is to be as unobtrusive as possible and to provide, as it were, a screen upon which attitudes are projected without his own personality distorting them. The aim is to allow the patient to enter into a relationship or series of relationships with the analyst. The patient casts the analyst in a number of roles and transfers to him feelings which originated in other situations. This is Freud's theory of transference, and is the means whereby the patient can gain insight into the unconscious factors underlying his trouble. In the psycho-analytic view, it is the deliberate neutrality and lack of overt participation on the part of the therapist which help these ambivalent, archaic feelings to arise.

When the therapist is required to interfere, usually it is with the purpose of communicating some scientific observation or interpretation.

It is fairly well accepted in psychotherapy and counselling that a certain degree of ambiguity in counselling has positive therapeutic implications.

'ambiguity serves the function of allowing the client to project his feelings into the ambiguous counselling situation. This is done easily, since humans tend to handle ambiguous stimuli in terms of their own projected, unique responses. This process of projecting feelings aids the client to become aware and concerned about his feelings, thus enabling the counsellor to deal with them through counselling techniques.'

1. Ibid., p.33.
This same point is made as regards the role of the counsellor. 'There is some danger to the relationship if the counsellor is too definite a personality to the client or he becomes too intimately known as a person by the client. This moderate personal ambiguity is necessary so that the client can project any role he wishes on the counsellor.....it is necessary to point out that the less the client knows about the counsellor's personal feelings and private life, the easier it is for him to play an effective therapeutic role.' ¹

2. (B) Relationship Therapy in Psychotherapy

A number of leading psycho-therapists — commonly called the Neo-Freudians — question whether the pure gold of analysis has proved itself as effective and relevant as the early psycho-analysts were wont to believe. Some patients in psycho-analysis have achieved profound personality change without attaining self-knowledge or appreciation of emotional factors which underlie their neurosis. Others, again, who have undergone intensive psycho-analysis, have not experienced personality change, even though they have gained a deep awareness of factors in their life history of which they had had little previous awareness.

In the early stages of the psycho-analytic movement, it was held that any therapist, who was fully trained in the use of therapeutic techniques, emotionally mature, and professionally responsible, could be expected to treat patients, regardless of their respective personalities. It is increasingly recognised that

1. Ibid., p.148.
interpersonal factors are very important in the treatment, especially the quality of the relationship between the therapist and the patient.

The Features of Relationship Therapy

(a) In Relationship Therapy the therapist is no longer content to remain a neutral observer. Sullivan describes the new role of the therapist as that of a "participant - observer". The relationship is one for which therapist and client are equally responsible. The therapist accepts and responds to the patient's approaches. His personal contribution to the relationship is not restricted to the offering of scientific information and interpretation. He is not required to bar all responsive reactions of spontaneity, or to conceal his own characteristics and identities in order to remain as anonymous as possible. He responds as a full person.

(b) The therapist communicates certain attitudes to the client which the 'orthodox' psycho-analyst would acknowledge only indirectly, and rarely share with the patient except by implication. Karl Menninger stresses the fact that the constructive aspects of the analyst's personality play a direct part in the therapy. The example of the psycho-analyst himself - his poise, his patience, his fairness, his consistency, his rationality, his kindness, in short - his real love for the patient - plays an important function in the therapy. In full relationship therapy the therapist's personality and his actual feelings for the client are active ingredients in the cure. 'The crux of the matter is that love is expressed in all counselling; the counsellors now say that it must be expressed, if counselling is to make a

2. L.J. Brammer and E.L. Shostro, Op. Cit., Ch.VI.
difference to the patient.\(^1\)

\(c\) The relationship is regarded as a miniature community. In this environment the patient receives support from the unqualified solicitousness of the therapist; and gains not only intellectual but emotional feedback from his fellow-participant. The psychotherapist must give the patient a perfectly real relationship which remains the one stable factor through all the patient's fluctuating moods. It must be a relationship in which the patient feels a genuine and not a simulated sympathy, which sequels the kind of patience and persistence which enables the patient to discover that after each emotional crisis, however difficult it has been, the relationship is still there as the enduring foundation of his hope of a cure.\(^2\)

\(2\) The Nature and Function of the Therapeutic Relationship in Counselling

We owe much of our present knowledge of the nature and function of the therapeutic relationship in counselling to client-centred therapy, and especially to the writings of Carl R. Rogers.\(^3\) He maintains that much well-intentioned counselling fails because a genuine inter-personal relationship is not created in the first instance. Without such a relationship there is no foundation on which counselling can build.

In their book, 'Therapeutic Psychology: Fundamentals of Counselling and Psychotherapy', the authors declare, 'The heart of the therapeutic process is the relationship established between the counsellor and the client'. Rogers regards the therapeutic relationship as a social bond which differs fundamentally from any the client has hitherto experienced. He finds these differentiae of the therapeutic relationship in its qualities of freedom from coercion, permissiveness, disinterested acceptance of the client, and warm responsiveness.

Because such a relationship is the sine qua non of counselling, and is the direct product of the interplay of two different personalities, counselling theory is increasingly stressing the importance of emotional maturity on the part of the counsellor. Since the therapeutic effectiveness depends so largely on the quality of the relationship, the personality, attitudes, and traits of the counsellor are highly significant. The personal qualities often stressed include honesty, sincerity, warmth, flexibility and self-acceptance.

Functions of the Relationship

(a) The psychological climate of the therapeutic relationship has important implications for the client's self-evaluation. If he meets with genuine regard and acceptance in the counsellor, he will be confirmed in his sense of personal dignity and human worth. He will feel understood because of the counsellor's respect for him as an individual with rights and needs. On the other hand, if he senses that he is being rejected or

2. C.R. Rogers, 'Counselling and Psychotherapy', Ch. IV.
condemned, his negative feelings about himself will be reinforced. His conviction of worth remains closely linked with the counsellor's regard for him.

(b) The relationship is the medium 'for eliciting, recognizing, and handling significant feelings and ideas which are aimed at changing the client's behaviour.' As the client feels free from threat or rejection, he will undertake the painful process of self-understanding. 'An opportunity for free expression enables the client to explore his situation more adequately than, in most instances, he has ever done before. Even where emotional factors are at a minimum, talking about one's own problem in an atmosphere calculated to make defensiveness unnecessary, tends to clarify the adjustments which must be made, to give a more clear-cut picture of problems and difficulties, to give possible choices their true value in terms of one's own feelings.'

(D) The Nature and Function of the Therapeutic Relationship in Behaviour Therapy.

The psychoanalytic approach to personality and behaviour stresses the importance of the maturational process (psychosexual development) the influence of instinctive impulses, a life energy (libido), the influence of early experience on the later personality of the individual, and the irrationality and unconscious sources of much of human behaviour.

The behavioural group concentrates on the objective study of human behaviour and the learning process in particular. Since the emphasis of this group is on behaviour, their primary concern is to discover how the behaviour was acquired, and how it can be changed. They assume that most of human behaviour is learned; and that human neurotic behaviour is understood in terms of the basic laws of learning.

A great deal of this therapy is the product of the immense understanding of behaviour - both animal and human - which has been garnered over the last half-century in the field of Experimental Psychology. Consequently, many of the terms used in behaviour therapy are derived from the technical vocabulary of learning theorists such as Pavlov, Watson, and Skinner.

For an understanding of this particular approach to personal difficulties, it is necessary to give a schematic account of its main units.

a. Learning

Behaviour therapy attempts to maintain a strictly scientific orientation. Its main model for understanding human personality is the Stimulus-Response Theory of Experimental Psychology. Actually, there is no single S-R theory, but rather a cluster of theories resembling each other more or less; but at the same time each possessing certain distinctive qualities.

but through social learning a vast hierarchy of secondary motives is acquired. These drives and motives direct the individual towards set goals.

Another basic idea in learning theory is that of 'expectancy'. From past experience the individual learns that if he acts in a certain way he will achieve his goals.

A stimulus or cue sets off a response or sequence of responses which propel the individual towards his goal. The individual learns from past experience how to discriminate between the tremendous variety of stimulation (internal and external) to which he is exposed.

(b) Reinforcement.

A key concept of the behaviour approach is that of reinforcement. 'Strengthening: in discussion of conditioning, a reinforcement is any outcome of an act that tends to increase the likelihood of that act under similar circumstances in the future'. In other words, it is a rewarding condition which occurs when an S-R sequence has been completed. The S-R pattern tends to be repeated under similar circumstances, and generalizes to other conditions which are similar to the learned pattern. Also, response patterns which are not periodically reinforced tend to be extinguished. The process of substituting one stimulus for another to get the same response, or of getting a different response for the same stimulus, is called reconditioning.

The learning theorist strives to state his concepts and hypotheses in terms which have behaviour correlates and which can be observed and studied under laboratory conditions.

2. C.S. Hall and G. Lindzey, Op.Cit., Ch.XI.
c. Application to Therapy

Learning can be defined as a general term which describes any change in behaviour that is the result of past experience. In general, we can say that learning has taken place only when the change has been in a specific direction. These changes in behaviour may be favourable or unfavourable. Much of what has been described as neurotic behaviour derives, on this view, from unfavourable learning experiences.

The concern of the behaviour therapist is to encourage the client to experiment with new behaviour which will not create anxiety but will create personal satisfaction. After loosening the client's rigid perception of his situation, expectancies are built up which anticipate satisfying rewards. The need of the client is to increase his freedom of movement so that he is aware of, and can engage in, more activities which lead to satisfaction.

The counsellor, by being accepting and encouraging, creates a climate in which the client can learn new expectancies which bring positive reinforcements.

Behaviour therapists, no doubt because of their strictly scientific allegiances, are hesitant to use such terms as love, communion or even 'relationship', because such terms have not yet been subjected to scientific scrutiny. The influence of such an attitude pervades, H.J. Eysenck's book, 'Behaviour Therapy and the Neuroses'. One of the contributors writes, 'when fundamental psychotherapeutic effects are obtained in neuroses - no matter by what therapist - these effects are nearly always really a consequence of the occurrence of reciprocal inhibition of neurotic anxiety responses, that is, the complete or partial suppression of the anxiety responses as a consequence of the simultaneous evocation of other
responses physiologically antagonistic to anxiety'. ¹

Nevertheless, throughout the whole volume of 'Behaviour Therapy and the Neuroses', paper after paper records the need for 'support', 'sympathy', and so on, and contains reservations such as, 'it is not claimed that the approach based on learning theory is solely responsible for the patient no longer suffering from her original very distressing symptoms...'

One suspects that behind the behaviour therapist's protestations of strict professionalism and scientific there is an unacknowledged affirmation of the power of love in the counselling relationship. ²

3. **An Assessment of the reasons for the emphasis on the Therapeutic Relationship in Psychotherapy and Counselling.**

(a) The vital significance of early life relationships

In 'Child care and the Growth of Love' Bowlby writes '....for the moment it is sufficient to say that what is believed to be essential for mental life is that an infant and young child should experience a warm, intimate, and continuous relationship (or permanent mother substitute - one person who steadily mothers him), in which both find satisfaction and enjoyment. It is this complex, rich and rewarding relationship with the mother in early years ....that psychiatrists and many others now believe to underlie the development of character and of mental health'. ³

Studies carried out among children with character disorders and among young delinquents, appear to confirm that anxieties arising from unsatisfactory relationships in early life, predispose children to anti-social behaviour in later life.

Considerable studies have been carried out, here and overseas, to discover whether there is a direct causal connection between "a broken home" and failure to establish satisfying personal relationships and to adjust to life's complex demands. These studies show fairly conclusively that when a child is deprived of dependable maternal care and love, his development can be seriously arrested.

After studying the findings of research in various countries, Bowbly concludes, 'Prolonged breaks (in the mother/child relationship) during the first three years of life, leave a characteristic impression on the child's personality. Such children appear emotionally withdrawn and isolated. They fail to develop loving ties with other children or with adults, and consequently have no friendships worth the name'.

It is in the mother - (or surrogate mother-) child relationship that the child is first introduced to love and trust. 'All the cuddling and playing, the intimacies of suckling by which a child learns the comfort of his mother's body, the rituals of washing and dressing by which through her pride and tenderness towards his little limbs, he learns the value of his own.... His mother's love and pleasure in him are his spiritual nourishment'.

1. Ibid., p.39.
2. Ibid., p.18.
Confirmation of these findings has come from studies in animal psychology. Infant monkeys separated from their mothers almost immediately after birth are reared with two different types of 'surrogate mothers'. One, which can be termed 'the hard mother', is a sloping cylinder of wire netting with a nipple from which the infant may feed. The other, which can be termed 'the soft mother', is also made in the same way, but in this instance is covered with soft terry-cloth, and has no nipple.

This experiment proves that though the infant gets all his food from 'the hard mother' he clearly and increasingly prefers 'the soft mother'. Motion pictures show that he definitely relates to this object, playing with it, finding security in clinging to it when strangers are near, and using that security as a home base for venturing out into the frightening world.

Some psychologists maintain that monkeys reared exclusively with a 'soft or hard surrogate mother find difficulty in attaining maturity. As the youngsters grow up, it becomes increasingly apparent that they are all very unhappy, asocial, aggressive, maladjusted monkeys. The most significant biological handicap they suffer from is that they are unable to copulate.¹

The one significant conclusion we can draw from all this is that the development of an infant to maturity depends in great measure on the quality of its relations with significant adults - especially the mother. Deprivation at this early stage can have serious repercussions in the development of emotional maturity and in acquiring interpersonal skills.

It is generally accepted, to-day, in psychotherapy and counselling that most, if not all, of those who seek help for their emotional problems do so because of their incapacity to form satisfying inter-personal relationships.

It is this lack that both psychotherapists and counsellors seek to remedy.

(b) The Relationship as the primary healing and growth stimulating factor

'We are becoming more and more convinced that the relationship in psychotherapy and counselling is a curative agent in its own right'. Writing of the healing and reconciling quality of the relationship, Clinebell states, "Experiencing this quality of relationship is in itself healing and growth stimulating". The therapeutic contact is itself a growth experience. Here the individual learns to understand himself, to make significant independent choices, to relate himself successfully to another person in adult fashion.

It is the personal qualities of the relationship that make it a 'psychological environment in which healing, growth, and successful coping can occur'. Counselling procedures and techniques are helpful only within such a context; and the mainstay of the relationship is the positive regard and love of the counsellor for his client. Ian Suttie gave explicit elaboration of Sandor Ferenczi's dictum that 'it is the physician's love that heals the patient'. Throughout the counselling professions the

4. I.D. Suttie, Op. Cit., Ch. XIV.
green light for a patient and loving parental care, as a psychotherapeutic device has now been given. In a word, therapy and counselling offer a human relationship in which the false front is no longer necessary.

(c) Counselling influenced by social and psychological changes.

The emphasis on the importance of the therapeutic relationship in counselling may be due to changes in society, and the kind of problems brought to the consulting rooms. Many therapist/counsellors feel that a deep personal relationship is fundamental to treating individuals who live in our rootless, alienated society.

Alan Wheelis has observed that classical analysis was successful with patients who live in a more stable and moralistic society and suffered from specific troubles which could be diagnosed with relative ease. 'The conflict is less likely to manifest itself in the form of specific symptoms, or to have the quality of a syndrome, but is vague and amorphous, pervading the entire personality'. Eric H. Erikson, a psychoanalyst, states, 'the patient of today suffers most under the problem of what he should believe in and who he should or indeed might become, while the patient, of early psycho-analysis suffered most under inhibitions which prevented him from being what and who he thought he knew he was'. William Glasser holds that every person requiring psychiatric help suffers from one basic inadequacy - the inability to fulfill his essential personality needs. Glasser maintains that persons have

2. A. Wheelis, 'The Quest for Identity,' p. 41.
3. E.H. Erikson, 'Childhood and Society'.
only two essential personality needs - to love and be loved, and to feel that one is worthwhile to oneself and others. The symptoms and distresses that bring persons to the psychiatric clinics and consulting rooms include ennui, purposelessness, no sense of belonging to any kind of community, be it church or society, or of being bound by any kind of ethic of loyalty.

(d) The Social Component in Personality

The theories of personality formulated by Freud and Jung were nurtured by the same positivistic climate that shaped the course of nineteenth century physics and biology. "Man was regarded primarily as a complex energy system which maintained itself by means of transactions with the external world. The ultimate purposes of these transactions are individual survival, propagation of the species, and an on-going evolutionary development."

There were other trends, however, which were finally to question and largely to replace the self-contained bio-physical conception of man. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, sociology and anthropology were emerging as independent disciplines. Together they showed that man is not only the product of his innate biological nature, but is also the product of his cast, his institutions and folkways. According to these new social sciences, man is chiefly a product of the society in which he lives. His personality is social rather than biological.

1. W. Glasser, 'Reality Therapy' p.5.
These advances in the social sciences had far-reaching repercussions in classical psycho-analytic theory. Innovations were made which led in the end to the formation of independent 'schools of thought'\(^1\).

Among those who provided psycho-analytic theory with the twentieth century look of social psychology are Alfred Adler, Karen Horney, Erich Fromm and Harry Stack Sullivan. They are usually referred to as the Neo-Freudians; and all show evidence of having been profoundly influenced by anthropology and social psychology.

They have modified some of the basic Freudian tenets considerably, since they regard social and cultural, rather than biological, factors as crucial in our understanding of personality and human nature.

(a) The instinct and libido theories are outdated. The oedipus complex and the formation of the superego are regarded as cultural and non-universal traits.

(b) The Freudian understanding of human development in terms of certain stages - oral, anal, phallic and genital - is elaborated so as to allow a greater cultural component in their determination.

(c) And, what is of greater relevance to our present concern, emphasis is placed upon interpersonal relationships\(^+\) in the formation of character, and in the production of anxiety and neurosis.\(^2\)

All these factors have played a part in creating the present emphasis on the interpersonal relationship as an essential part of psychotherapy and counselling.

2. Ibid., passim.
4. The Pastor's Role as a Counsellor vis-a-vis his status as a leader of a Religious Community.

What are the practical consequences that result from the pastor's status as a leader of a religious community, and that influence his role as a counsellor - especially in comparison with other non-religious counsellors?

(a) His responsibility to his total congregation sets practical limits to the amount of time he can spend with any one individual, irrespective of his training as a counsellor. The pastor must invest his time and energies in a variety of functions which are essential to his total ministry. This limitation on formal counselling necessitates that the pastor develops skills in short-term counselling.

'The pastor and other religious workers... can never become so professional in their picture of themselves that they underestimate the importance of informal relationships, both as powerful ministrations in themselves, and as points of vital contact for beginning more formal counselling relationships'.

The pastor's position allows him to reach and help many who will not come for formal counselling. He must develop skill to utilize the host of unstructured, informal counselling opportunities which come in the normal course of his pastoral work.

Clinebell, stressing the vital importance of this type of informal counselling, writes that it 'happens in the context of some other relationship not identified as counselling e.g. a chance encounter, a pastoral call, a hospital visit, following a

1. W.E. Oates, 'Protestant Pastoral Counselling' p.69
meeting, or Sunday Service\(^1\). '..... the minister's ability to go to people, make himself emotionally available, establish non-labeled, informal counselling relationships, and perhaps motivate them to accept formal counselling, is a priceless professional asset which he should use to the full\(^2\).

The pastor must be on the alert for any tendency to continue a formal counselling relationship to the point where it is interfering with his other work. A pastor's reluctance to terminate formal counselling, or to refer his parishioner, may indicate that he himself is deriving some benefit from the relationship, or has yielded to the viles of a manipulative parishioner.

(b) A pastor's freedom to choose or select whom he will counsel is limited.

Rogers recognised that client-centred therapy is not suitable for all types of problems. Among the disqualifying factors, he included lack of motivation for therapy; inability to exercise some degree of control over environment; a lack of independence emotionally or spatially on family; insufficient intelligence to deal adequately with life situations, and also a poor environment.\(^3\) It is being increasingly recognised that the personality of the counsellor can also be a limiting factor.

In pastoral counselling, two factors must be present before counselling can even begin: (a) a degree of awareness of a problem on the parishioner's part; and (b) a desire for help from the pastor. However, we must note that the pastor is here in a special position. The vows he takes at ordination and induction require him to accept pastoral responsibility for the

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2. Ibid., p.81.
members of his parish. He is obliged to deal with a wide range of problems and personalities. Of course, he can resort to referral when there is a particularly specialised problem; but he will often have to counsel many who are not prepared to be referred. Consequently, the clergyman must have a wider repertoire of counselling skills than the average counsellor.

(c) His leadership of a religious community puts him in touch with problems and situations which would be considered 'normal' by other counsellors, but which nevertheless are difficulties to those directly involved.

These problems and situations include:

Religious conflicts, doubts and questions; the search for meaning and a religious dimension in life.

Ethical Problems: Persons who are troubled over sins come to the Pastor, as a representative of religion, to find God's pardon.

Vocational Concerns: Young people who are concerned over what God wants them to do seek out the pastor for his guidance.

Marital Concerns: Questions about mixed marriage, choice of partner, and marital tensions are often regarded as the minister's special province.

(d) The pastor is less free than other counsellors to terminate his counselling relationship with his parishioners because he remains related to them as members of his congregation and parish.

In other forms of counselling it is a general practice not to have any relation with clients outside the counselling hour. It is felt that it is difficult for a person to act as counsellor and friend. Involvement in the client's life outside counselling may colour the
counsellor's perceptions of his client, and so destroy his objectivity. There is also the added danger that the client may use the claims of friendship to restrict and escape the full consequences of the counselling.
CHAPTER 2

The General Characteristics of the Therapeutic Relationship in Pastoral Counselling.

Throughout the literature in the field of pastoral counselling, stress is laid on the interpersonal relationship between pastor and parishioner as the focal point in pastoral counselling. 'The relationship is the essential therapeutic element in pastoral counselling as in all pastoral work.'

'Counselling may be defined as - a relationship in which one person seeks to help another......'

'Counselling consists of the establishment and subsequent utilization of a relationship......'

Counselling is an activity, not a profession. It is a process of relationship between one who seeks and one who gives help....

One of the significant emphases here is the understanding of the therapeutic relationship as 'a genuine human relationship'.

'Counselling is a genuine human relationship, not an artificial one. It does have a special purpose, and for that reason will differ from other human relationships; but one must never consider it merely as a technique or a collection of techniques, for that would divest it of its genuineness..... it may be better to speak of method or approach rather than technique.....acquiring a method of counselling should consist in making one's own appropriate means for communicating one's real attitudes to the client and for contributing to the client's search for solutions and growth'

1. C.A. Wise, 'Pastoral Counselling. Its Theory and Practice'
2. P.E. Johnson, 'Person and Counsellor' p.17
3. H.J. Clinebell, 'Basic Types of Pastoral Counselling', p.59
4. J.A. Wallis, 'Counselling and Social Welfare',
5. M.J. O'Brien, 'An Introduction to Pastoral Counselling', p.95
As in all other forms of counselling, pastoral counselling has its own distinctive body of skills, and also a number of skills which it has taken over from psychotherapy. Primarily, however, the pastoral counsellor depends upon inter-personal relations, for he finds in them the source of growth into a fuller life. The practical usefulness of any counselling technique is dependent on the imaginative sensitivity, real artistry, scientific understanding, subliminal interpretations and intuitions of the pastor. Any technique or method which injures the natural but unique atmosphere of the counselling relationship should be discarded. Too often counsellors have placed too much conscious emphasis on techniques and tools, and thus forgotten that it is the counsellor himself, as an individual, that is his most valuable asset. In helping another human being to deal with his intimate personal problems, there are no stereotyped methods or infallible guide-lines available.

There are three main factors in counselling which will always defeat any attempt to apply standard methods, indiscriminately.

a. Diversity of clients.

Johnson in his book, 'Person and Counsellor' writes that each client who enters counselling does so presenting himself in his own distinctive style of life, confessing his dilemmas and disappointments; examining his behaviour in relation to the people who concern him, and wrestling with destiny the best he can. Some are hopeful and others more despairing; one attacks himself, and another tends to blame others; one feels inadequate and dependent, while another resists authority, and strives to be independent; one is sensitive to feelings; while another puts trust in reason; one accommodates to the conditions of life around him, while another strikes
out aggressively to change the conditions of life.

The difference between individual clients accounts for the differences in the way they present their problems. One finds it comparatively easy to trust others, and so does not find it too difficult to disclose intimate details in his personal life. Another is ashamed of his feelings and inadequacies, and consequently finds it a painful experience to reveal himself in the presence of another person. Again, there is the type of client who is so burdened by his own problems that he will respond to the first sign of interested concern. Of course there is also the type of client who is the victim of ambivalent feelings and attitudes. One moment he is communicative and open, the next he is sullen and silent. From being responsive and trustful he becomes resentful of his dependency.

Even this limited sample of client behaviour in counselling is sufficient to show that the pastoral counsellor must depend not only on his formal training in counselling, but must also use his common sense, versatility and experience.

But the pastor must not rest his practice on utilitarian expediency and practical necessity. Pastoral counselling must be continuously Christian. The Christian faith is not incidental to pastoral counselling, but its very lifeblood. Our practice must be sensitive not only to developments in psychotherapy but also to the requirements and insights of the Gospel.

Pastoral counselling is much in debt to the contribution made by psychotherapy to our understanding of personality and psychodynamics and psychopathology. We have been made aware of the psychodynamic process of growth from infancy to manhood; of how personality is systematically linked to dynamic events that took place in the past; and that development is an orderly and consistent process, accountable in terms of a single set of principles.

All this the pastor welcomes, but he must also recognise the limitations of the purely psychological approach to personality. 'Seen as an organism, man cannot be anything else but a complex of things, or its, and the processes that ultimately comprise an organism are it-processes. There is a common illusion that one somehow increases one's understanding of a person if one can translate a personal understanding of him into the impersonal terms of a sequence or system of it-processes'. The warning in these words is timely. For the pastoral counsellor the individual is a unique existent, distinct from every other being, related to every level of creation and to the creator - but not to be subsumed under any of all the processes in which he participates. In the vast web of physical, biological, psychological and sociological patterns in which he is caught up, man may be described in strict scientific terms of 'it-processes'. But none of these, or all of them together, denote man's essential and distinctive being. To be a human being means to live in memory, faith, freedom - and never to be subsumed fully within the causal order.

1. R.D. Laing, 'The Divided Self', p.22.
No two counselling sessions can be the same; each is a new experience in dealing with the problems of a unique human personality.

(b) The Diversity of Problems

The pastor because of his status as a leader of a congregation and his role as a representative of the Christian community, has to deal with a wider range of human problems than other counsellors.

The pastor must be always sensitive to the unique elements - personal meanings and implications - in each individual's trouble. Just as there are no standard solutions or answers in this area of human pain and need, so there is no surer way to disaster than to offer to the troubled parishioner a 'ready-made' answer.

The troubles the pastor deals with can be divided into broad general groups - marital problems, religious problems, family problems. But what he is primarily concerned to do is to be sensitive to the distinctive and often subtle nuances of meaning and implication which an experience of trouble has for an individual. Until he has done so, the pastor cannot make his own distinctive contribution to finding a solution.

That the pastor's methods and techniques must be, in part, determined by the parishioner's perception of his problem is particularly highlighted in counselling the dying. Dying has a distinct meaning for each individual. For one it may come as a welcome release from pain; for another it means the rupture of personal bonds which gave life its meaning and joy; for yet a third death may only be the last futile act in a life characterised by boredom and meaninglessness. Only after the pastor has realised what dying means to the individual can he make the resources of the Gospel available by counselling.
(c) Diversity of Counsellors

In the last analysis, counselling is an expression of the counsellor's personality and of his basic attitudes to life and people. Each counsellor will develop basic techniques on which he relies heavily. The counsellor is a unique personality and may have unique philosophies. His techniques will be outgrowths of his personality and philosophies.

The main danger for the counsellor in thinking that counselling is a technique, even though in a theoretical sense it is, is that he will attempt to copy someone else's methods, and so attempt to restrict his counselling within limits which are a hindrance to the expression of his own personality.

The main instruments in the pastoral counsellor's repertoire are his personal qualities. Every counsellor who offers to serve in the area of human relations, must himself be well related. For it is his work to enter sustaining relationships with lonely and distraught persons, seeking a living community. Counselling is the inter-personal vocation; not turning away but towards persons, not passing by but meeting face to face, where time and place have been reserved to work through the stresses and searchings of personal life. The counsellor is there to listen to these searchings, to accept the person more fully, to see the complexity of life and to consider its meaning together. The counsellor responds to fear and doubt with basic trust and honest truth. He does not use a knife, a ruler, or a hammer as other workmen do. He refrains from every effort to push or to manipulate. He simply offers himself as one who cares enough to listen and join in the search for meanings.\(^1\)

In counselling, the pastor does not just offer his expertise in techniques — important though they be — but he offers himself, in the powers, strengths and weaknesses of his personal being. Techniques can be used by the insecure pastoral counsellor as a screen to escape a deep encounter with his client. The optimal helping relationship is the kind of relationship created by the person who is psychologically mature. Or, to put it another way, the degree to which I can create relationships which facilitate the growth of others as separate persons, is a measure of the growth I have achieved myself.¹

The central emphasis for the pastoral counsellor must be, therefore, a development of a core of valid techniques, along with a flexibility of learning new ideas, and of discarding old approaches which no longer seem to apply. Pastoral counselling should not be guided primarily by a 'school of thought' but rather must be the dynamic interplay of a unique existential relationship between two personalities.

2. There are three terms which keep recurring regularly in counselling literature — and they are, 'permissive', 'accepting' and 'non-judgmental'. They are employed to describe the atmosphere of the counselling relationship. Pastoral counselling has borrowed the terms from the field of psychotherapy and case-work; and no study of the nature of the relationship in pastoral counselling can avoid a study of these terms. That these terms come from the field of psychotherapy need not give us any undue concern. 'In every historic epoch, pastoring has utilized and by utilizing has helped to advance and transform — the psychology or psychologies current in that period. Those who would object that modern pastoral use of contemporaneous psychology betrays

¹ C.R. Rogers, 'On Becoming a Person'.
the Christian tradition are, in fact, themselves the innovators. Nowhere in history has Christianity adumbrated solely from its own lore a distinct psychology, either theoretically or popularly understood. To appreciate traditional pastoring is to stand ready to adopt current psychological insights and applications without abdicating the distinctly pastoral role. Though this is finely put, it is not wholly convincing that our use of psychological insights in pastoral counselling 'has helped to advance and transform the psychology or psychologies current....'

In the remaining part of this chapter I want to examine the terms 'permissive', 'accepting', and 'non-judgmental' as used in pastoral counselling, and also to examine how the pastor's use of these terms must be ultimately controlled by his theological understanding of the functions of pastoral counselling, and by his own status as a representative Christian person.

A. The Permissive Quality of the Relationship

The relationship in pastoral counselling is a means for carrying out function. It is not an end in itself, but must remain incidental to this function. The relationship is the means by which the parishioner is enabled to state his problem and to seek a solution. This can be called the final function of the relationship.

The relationship can also serve a number of more immediate functions. For example, it provides an environment in which the client feels he can state his problem without feeling embarrassed or threatened. Or, again, it can help the client to retain his sense of personal worth and dignity. Or, yet again, it can

give the parishioner support and reassurance during a particularly difficult stage in counselling.  

One who comes to the clergyman for help with a personal problem benefits from an atmosphere considerably different from the atmosphere that is suitable for decision-making. Not all personal problems are embarrassing in the usual sense; but they do always cause tension. The parishioner is likely to be ashamed that he has been unable to handle his own difficulties. Those who are overcome by personal problems have suffered a blow to pride and to their confidence in themselves. Most of them regard coming for help as an admission of failure, and so the immediate purpose of the relationship is to dissipate the anxieties and the embarrassment of the parishioner.

What do we actually mean when we say that the relationship in pastoral counselling has a permissive quality? The parishioner is given freedom to express himself in his own way, and at his own speed. There is no pressure from the pastor's side to speed up the process, or to force the parishioner to discuss what he is reluctant to face and explore. The pastor must constantly avoid exerting pressure on the parishioner in the mistaken belief that he knows better what is wrong and what requires to be discussed. Pressure of this kind only forces the parishioner to go on the defensive, and increasing anxiety may in the end force him to leave counselling altogether.

The permissive atmosphere also means that the parishioner is allowed to arrive at his own solution to his problem. In personal-problem counselling the best help does not seem to come through the counsellor robbing the client of his self-confidence, by assuming the role

of a benefactor. Little good is likely to come from a method which emphasises the ability of the counsellor to establish causes and to offer advice and direction, to the end that self-direction is thwarted. In the first place, the handling of the entire counselling chore should aim at helping the individual to become more self-supporting, and giving him confidence in approaching future difficulties. This is best accomplished by having the client feel at the end of the counselling task, whether it consists of one or many counselling sessions, that he has really solved his own problems, and that he did not have to rely on the support of someone older, wiser and more gifted than he.¹

The function of 'permissiveness' in the counselling relationship can be examined in two directions - (a) in relation to the parishioner and (b) in relation to the pastor.

In relation to the parishioner

a 1. In the permissive atmosphere of the relationship the parishioner is encouraged to express his feelings. In the counselling literature this expression of feeling is called catharsis. Often counselling provides the first opportunity a client has had to pour out, openly and freely, his pent-up feelings. Catharsis is often experienced by the parishioner in discussing his problem, whether it is solved or not.

This free expression of feelings has a positive value in counselling.

¹ L.E. Moser, 'Counselling. A Modern Emphasis in Religion', p. 108
a.2 To express one's deep and often threatening feelings in a permissive atmosphere gives release from painful tensions, and creates a sense of emotional release. This is primarily due to having verbalized feelings which the client has refused to face and has kept at bay by a great effort of self-control.

a.3 It is likely that he will also experience a deep sense of satisfaction and confidence because he has squarely faced feelings which he had sternly refused to accept as part of himself. In addition, he may enjoy a sense of freedom from being constantly on the alert against threatening feelings in himself.

a.4 Positive counselling can often begin after catharsis. The efforts that once were invested in the negative task of keeping threatening feelings under control can now be reinvested in facing and solving his problems.

a.5 It is often overlooked that catharsis prevents 'acting-out' one's feelings. For example, instead of directing his aggressive feelings against others, the client releases his pent-up feelings through verbalization.

Limitations of Catharsis

a.6 After the initial release from burdensome feelings and tensions, the parishioner may feel so good that he may question the necessity of any further sessions. This phenomenon is called "flight into health", and does not indicate a fundamental change.

The pastor must ensure that his sessions with certain parishioners do not develop into no more than regular cathartic outlets. There is no substitute for facing the real source of the parishioner's problem, and catharsis should not be allowed to dissipate the motivation required for that search.
Catharsis should not be used by the parishioner to pass his burdens onto the pastor. The primary aim of the catharsis is to remove the inner blocks which hinder the real work in counselling. The counsellor endeavours to create a releasing atmosphere in which the individual may express himself. The client finds that expression leads also to the releasing of new forces within himself, forces which heretofore have been utilized in maintaining defensive reactions.\(^1\)

A common misconception arising from an emphasis on feeling is that the expression and identification of feelings have in themselves some intrinsic merit. The caution voiced by Brammer and Shostrom is worth quoting: "The conclusion often drawn is that feelings are more important than intellectualizations. Expression of feelings is encouraged......its effectiveness, however, seems to reside in the idea that the expression of feeling is a means and not an end in counselling.....The expression of feeling, therefore, is to make possible the discovery of the idea which underlies or is attached to the feelings....... Feelings do not possess evaluational quality; they are not "right" or "wrong". Ideas, however, possess truth or falsity. But evaluation of thought is only possible after feelings have been clarified... The counsellor is interested in helping the client to change his behaviour or his undesirable ways of acting. The route to these changes, however, seems to be through the individual's feelings\(^2\).

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1. C.R. Rogers, 'Counselling and Psychotherapy', Ch. IV and VI.
2. L.M. Brammer and E.L. Shostrom, 'Therapeutic Psychology', p.175
In relation to the Pastor.

b.1. By simply listening to the parishioner's expression of feeling, the pastor gives real support. The parishioner feels that he is no longer on his own, but has shared his problem with someone who understands. Carl Rogers has persistently emphasized in his writings that the acceptance of a client's burden of feelings is the most supportive thing a counsellor can do. This is part of the sustaining function of a pastor. (The sustaining function of the cure of souls in our day continues to be a crucially important helping ministry.)

'Everywhere, to-day, busy pastors are called upon to sustain troubled persons in, through, and beyond a plethora of hurts that brook no direct restoration.... Tightly knit communities once furnished friends and neighbours that could stand by in moments of shock, whereas in a society on wheels, the task of providing such sustenance to urban and suburban people falls heavily on the clergy.'

b.2. The expression of feelings in the permissive atmosphere helps the pastor to understand how the problem looks to the parishioner, and what are his particular strengths and weaknesses. As the pastor encourages by his permissive attitude expression of feelings, he becomes aware of certain patterns or motifs in the person's problems, feelings and relationships. These give clues to the underlying inadequacies in his relationships, of which the presenting problem may be only one manifestation.

b. 3  The pastor can use expression of feeling to deepen the relationship, and to encourage the parishioner to go deeper and so express feelings which are intimate and embarrassing, and often highly charged with affect. This requires considerable skill and sensitivity on the part of the pastor. If the permissive atmosphere is maintained, and the pastor is patient, the parishioner will move on to deeper levels of his problem. The pastor must not push or coerce the parishioner to discuss what is beyond his awareness, or too painful as yet to face.

Often parishioners will not know all the factors underlying their problems. These factors may be unconscious or blocked out of awareness. The chief goal of counselling, at least in the early stages, is to support the parishioner in the search for the underlying causes of his problem.

How does the pastor convey to the parishioner that it is safe for him to express his feelings?

c 1  The pastor should deliberately avoid a lot of detailed questions, at least in the early stages. Questions tend to block expression of feelings, and to convey the impression that the pastor has a predetermined plan in his mind to which his parishioner should conform. The most serious objection to questions is that they can prevent the parishioner from raising the matters he considers important.

When questions have to be asked, they should be non-threatening in character. Questions create anxiety when they probe too deeply into aspects of the parishioner's problem of which he is not ready to face, as yet.

Questions should, as much as possible, relate only to matters the parishioner has raised already, or is obviously on the point of raising.
c. 2 Comments should be directed at the feelings tones of the parishioner's statements rather than at the content of his statements. This helps the parishioner to concentrate on his feelings.

c. 3. The pastor should be sensitive to the emotionally charged words and phrases used by the parishioner, and should reflect back the parishioner's dominant feelings.

c. 4. At times it will be necessary to tell the parishioner that it is common for people to have ambivalent feelings towards significant persons in their lives, and that such feelings do not amount to any abnormality.

c. 5. A sensitive awareness of the parishioner's progress will prevent the pastor from retarding or forcing the process of counselling. As the parishioner begins to explore his problem in depth, he will express more effect, and the pastor can encourage this exploration by his verbal and non-verbal responses.

c. 6. Reassurance, especially at the beginning, can have a blocking effect on the freedom of expression. The parishioner may well feel that he cannot verbalize feelings which contradict the pastor's optimism.

c. 7. The pastor should be sensitive to non-verbal clues which indicate the parishioner's emotional state. Rate of speech, posture, use of hands, and hesitations serve to communicate evidence of feeling-states. There are a number of factors which control the permissive atmosphere in counselling.
d. 1. Because of the limitations of his training and time, the pastor should not encourage exploration of feelings with which he is not competent to deal. The limitations of his time, training, and multiple role, consign him to deal in counselling mainly with current problems in living, and with conscious and pre-conscious (out of awareness but recallable) material.\(^1\)

d. 2. If the pastor is too permissive, he could be extremely cruel to the parishioner who is vulnerable to anxiety. He must not allow the parishioner to flounder without direction. 'A completely laissez-faire attitude, however, would operate to the disadvantage of the client, since the relationship would be too ambiguous. If allowed too much free expression, the client may fear loss of emotional control and suffer anxiety. . . . too free an expression of feelings may serve to erode the client's defensive structure to the point where he is at the mercy of his feelings and may move towards a psychose.'\(^2\)

The pastor must not allow the parishioner to indulge in an orgy of self-pity, or to ramble through his inner world, without helping him to begin to see a pattern in what he is experiencing.

One main issue remains to be examined: is the creation of a truly permissive atmosphere in counselling obstructed, wholly or in part, by the pastor's religious commitments? This vital question will concern us here and in the next two sub-sections, which will deal with the accepting and non-judgmental character of the relationship.

e. 1. The line of thought presented above concerning the nature and function of the permissive atmosphere in pastoral counselling has come from psychological research, and has been used extensively in psychological counselling.

It is often assumed that it is extremely difficult for the pastor to create a truly permissive atmosphere because of his personal commitment to a particular philosophy of life, and his interest in communicating his convictions. 'There is no doubt that this frame of reference is foreign to the thinking of many religious workers. These workers feel a commitment to instruct folk in the ways of righteousness and in the manners of life deemed desirable by society in general, and their church group in particular.'

e. 2. It would be most foolhardy to suppose that techniques and methods which have been found useful in psychological counselling can be transposed to pastoral counselling without variation. With the rise of client-centred therapy, pastors were so impressed by the non-directive method that they were quick to seize upon this approach as a means for effective pastoral care, and sought to show its affinity to the Christian faith.

The profound influence which the client-centred method has had on the development of contemporary pastoral counselling has been salutary, helping to rescue it from a legacy of overdirectiveness. It was (and, indeed is) particularly needed by clergymen to alert them to the twin professional hazards of facile verbalizing and playing god in the lives of their parishioners.

But the full client-centred approach has tended to make the pastor feel that he should strenuously avoid the use of his authority - i.e. he should not advise, direct, inspire or teach in his counselling. This approach is being strongly questioned in recent books and articles in pastoral counselling. ... it is often constructive, even essential, for the pastor to use his authority selectively in sustaining, guiding, feeding (emotionally), inspiring, confronting, teaching, and encouraging persons to function responsibly. The authority derived from the minister's knowledge, skill, and role is an invaluable asset in counselling, provided he knows how to use it appropriately. The pastoral counsellor acts as a collaborator with the client in his strivings for solutions and growth. He collaborates in such a way as not to detract from the exercise of personal responsibility by the parishioner. He brings to the service of the parishioner his own expertise. Responsibility for the application of that expertise and for decisions, rests with the parishioner. The counsellor offers; he does not impose. The client is the active seeker and learner in a joint enterprise.

e. 3. Much of the debate over whether the pastor's religious faith and interest in communicating that faith are inimical to the creation of a truly permissive atmosphere in counselling, rests upon a misunderstanding as to the nature and function of pastoral counselling, 'The Christian confession of faith becomes an essential ingredient in the helping act of pastoring, for the pastor is, or is taken to be, a representative person who confesses Christian faith, and brings Christian meanings to bear upon human troubles.' Those who

approach a clergyman for counselling expect the counselling to have a religious orientation. The pastor is a 'representative Christian person' - representative of the life, fellowship and traditions of the church - and he brings Christian meanings to bear upon human troubles. Whether or not the pastor chooses to use explicit religious practices or symbols in his counselling relationships, the fact that he represents the wisdom, resources, and authority of the Christian faith influences his counselling profoundly.

'Pastoral care begins when an individual person recognizes or feels that his trouble is insoluble in the context of his own private resources, and when he becomes willing, however subconsciously, to carry his hurt and confusion to a person who represents to him, however vaguely, the resources and wisdom and authority of religion'.

The permissive atmosphere in pastoral counselling - or in any form of counselling, for that matter - is not the creation of the neutral, amoral stance of the pastor. Rather does it result from the mutual regard, the freedom from coercion, and the genuine respect for individuality which characterise the collaborative process we call counselling.

1. Ibid., p. 5.
B. Acceptance.

One of the main tenets in modern counselling theory is that attitudes are changed little, if any, by advice, persuasion, or threats; but that major changes, however, are effected by the basic dispositions of the counsellor.

The major factor in creating an atmosphere which frees the client to engage in the painful process of self-examination and discovery is the accepting quality of the counselling relationship.

The person who goes to a counsellor for help normally feels a sense of failure, and fears rejection from the counsellor. He will probably resent what he considers as his dependence on another person. The counsellor will need to recognize the person's ambivalent feelings, and offer an environment which, because of its absence of threat or rejection, will make it safe for the client to move from behind his defences.

I am going to examine "acceptance" under the following 'heads'.

(a) What is "acceptance"?
(b) What is the purpose of "acceptance"?
(c) What special methods are used to demonstrate "acceptance"?
(d) What is the relation between "acceptance" and the Christian faith?

What is acceptance?

a. P.E. Biesiek, in his book, "The Casework Relationship", states that the acceptance offered by the caseworker to the client is a professional attitude and that it contains two essential ingredients: (1) the caseworker must feel a genuine warmth towards the client, and (2) this regard is demonstrated openly. 'It means acceptance of the client as he actually is, with his strengths and weaknesses, his potentialities and limitations, his congenial and uncongenial attitudes.
his positive and negative feelings, his acceptable and unacceptable behaviour ...(the caseworker) seeing the client's negatives realistically, maintains an equally real respect for him.

According to Biestek there are three steps in the action of acceptance: 1. perceiving; the caseworker must first see and see objectively what he is accepting; 2. therapeutic understanding; the caseworker must see the object of acceptance in relation to the causes which brought about the object, in relation to what it means to this person, and in relation to the purpose of the casework process in each individual case; and (3) acknowledging it as a pertinent reality.

Acceptance, as used in the counselling literature, describes an attitude, relatively passive, which encourages someone in need to communicate, in full, his feelings, thoughts and attitudes to another. It is the result of the desire to help, and though, as we shall see later, there are skills for directly manifesting acceptance, the counsellor primarily shows his acceptance through his patience, willingness to listen, and by not being censorious of the client. The counsellor must establish the counselling relationship with the client as he is, and not as he would wish him to be.

This acceptance is a genuine acceptance, not an assumed attitude. Kathleen Heasman in her book, 'An Introduction to Pastoral Counselling', writes, that the 'continuous and dynamic backwards and forwards relationship between the counsellor and the person he is helping is only possible when the value of the person is recognised and when the counsellor meets him on equal terms. This implies a respect for him and an acceptance

2. Ibid., p.70
of the 'whole' person. The counsellor sees the person as he really is and yet he maintains all the time a sense of the person's innate dignity and personal worth.

b.1. What is the purpose of acceptance?

Carl Jung wrote of this subject in the following words: 'Certain patients' confessions are hard even for a doctor to swallow. Yet the patient does not feel himself accepted unless the very worst in him is accepted too'. Jung adds, 'we cannot change anything unless we accept it'. These quotations underlie the basic purpose of acceptance in counselling: it creates a security in which the client is able to admit to awareness and to acknowledge certain feelings or aspects of himself which hitherto have been repressed or unacknowledged, and whose repression was proving a danger to health and well-being. As the counsellor accepts the client and his disclosures about himself, the counsellor becomes a companion-guide in a warm, human relationship, which helps the person find courage to face his situation, bear his load, or go on the often frightening journey into the unexplored areas of his personhood.

How is the acceptance of the counsellor therapeutic in its effect upon the client? The client, when he feels the acceptance of the counsellor, begins to accept himself. Writing on this very point, Rogers states, 'actually it is only the experience of a relationship in which he is loved (something very close I believe, to the theologian's agape) that the individual can begin to feel a dawning respect for, and acceptance of, and finally even fondness for himself. It is as

1. K. Hessman, 'An Introduction to Pastoral Counselling' p.60.
2. C.G. Jung, 'Modern Man in search of a Soul.'
3. Ibid.
he can thus begin to sense himself as lovable and worthwhile, in spite of his mistakes, that he can begin to feel love, and tenderness for others.

In counselling it is absolutely essential that the person does not feel that the counsellor is losing respect for him because of his behaviour, or because of something he has disclosed. If this does happen, the person begins to lose his sense of dignity and worth. Acceptance helps to give the client the impetus to take positive creative action to deal with his problems. The result of this accepting attitude on the part of the counsellor is to make it possible for the person to become freer from his tension and anxiety, and so make it less necessary for him to protect himself from acknowledging his deeper feelings and attitudes and the value they have for him. This, of course, will not remove them, but help him to face them more constructively. He will express what he really thinks and feels, without thought of what the counsellor wants to hear, and the security of this relationship will permit him to reveal himself with his limitations and mistakes without detriment to his inner sense of dignity. Freed from the necessity of being defensive in the counselling relationship, the client has an opportunity — often for the first time — to take a frank look at himself, to go behind the front and make a true evaluation. In place of anxiety and worry and feelings of inadequacy, the client develops an acceptance of his strengths and weaknesses as being a realistic and comfortable point of departure for progress in maturity.

1. C.R. Rogers in a review of Reinhold Niebuhr’s 'The self and the Dramas of History'.
2. K. Heisman, Op. Cit., Ch. 11 and 1V.
b. 2. Acceptance has also the valuable function of giving the counsellor an understanding of all the empirical particularity of a certain situation. Regard for the client and genuine interest in him spur the counsellor to strive to understand him as a unique individual. The good counsellor is an understanding person in the sense of wanting to know and share the client's experience of himself and of the world. The communication of the counsellor's acceptance not only stimulates the client to achieve a greater self-understanding, but a greater openness to others. He gains confidence to disclose his feelings and attitudes without fear of being condemned or rejected; and this greater openness makes it possible for the counsellor to gain a deeper understanding of the client's needs.

c. What special methods does the counsellor adopt to convey his acceptance to the Client?

Before examining the various skills used to convey acceptance, I want to discuss an element in acceptance which has received a fairly detailed treatment in the writings of C.R. Rogers. This element Rogers calls 'congruence'; and by 'congruence' Rogers means inner genuineness, integration and openness to oneself and others. The most basic learning for anyone who hopes to establish any kind of helping relationship is that it is safe to be transparently real. 'It is found that personal change is facilitated when the psychotherapist is what he is, when in his relationship with the client he is genuine and without 'front' or façade, openly being the feelings and attitudes which at that moment are flowing in him.... the feelings the therapist is

experiencing are available to him, available to his awareness, and he is able to live those feelings, be them, and able to communicate them, if appropriate... the more the therapist is able to listen acceptingly to what is going on within himself, and the more he is able to be the complexity of his feelings without fear, the higher the degree of congruence.

By 'accepting techniques' is meant the techniques adopted by the counsellor to convey his acceptance of the client, and, as Rogers emphasized in the quotations given above, this acceptance must be the expression of a genuine attitude of regard. These 'acceptance-techniques' are employed in the early stages of counselling when much content and narrative material is being produced. In the early stages, the client needs to be constantly reassured that he is being accepted as he is.

These techniques are also employed in the later stages of counselling when the client is dealing with emotionally significant material.

The 'accepting-techniques' can be divided into two types - verbal and non-verbal.

c.l. **Verbal-accepting techniques**

These are normally short verbal responses which imply an attitude of acceptance. Examples of such simple accepting responses are expressions such as 'Yes', 'Uh-huh', 'I see', 'm-hm', 'do go on', etc. Such expressions may look rather prosaic in a typescript, but they can be very effective in conveying one's interest when that interest is genuine.

1. Ibid, p.61.
Such responses appear to be effective for three main reasons -

1. They serve to verbalize the counsellor's acceptance.

2. They serve as 'reinforcers' of the present line of thought. Recent studies by psychologists have demonstrated how a person's speech can be influenced by faint cues of approval or disapproval given by the listener.

3. They also serve as 'transitional-bridges' between ideas, which give a smooth, forward-moving flow to the discussion.

c.2. Non-verbal accepting-techniques.

The counsellor can convey acceptance in a number of non-verbal ways - nodding of the head, expression on his face, and by his posture. Clients are often hyper-sensitive to cues which can be construed as indicating lack of interest or rejection on the counsellor's part. Crossing and recrossing of legs, yawning, fidgeting, surreptitious glances at the watch, are examples of negative cues which can seriously hinder progress.

d. What is the relation between acceptance as employed in counselling and the Christian faith?

Rogers has emphasized that the basic approach for the counsellor to his work is 'unconditional positive regard for the client'. This implies a prizing of the individual, not merely in an abstract, theoretical manner, but concretely, here and now. It is not so much the result of some analytical choice as a spontaneous expression of the counsellor's attitude towards an individual human being of worth. It does not flow merely from a rational apprehension of the worth of an individual human being, but from a conviction about people in general and about the person whom one is counselling, in particular.

1. Ibid., pp39-69.
The pastor finds himself in sympathy with a great deal of what has been written, in the last half-century or so, about acceptance by psychotherapists and counsellors. They have borne witness to the creative power of love in human life; how much of man's trouble comes from a lack of love; and how only in experiencing love does man find health and fulfilment.

The fundamental motif in psychotherapy and counselling is respect for persons; and the large majority of psychotherapists and counsellors are motivated by a high level of human concern for their patients as persons in their own unique individuality and importance. The most crucial factor in therapy is the quality of the inter-personal relation between therapist and patient/client. The chief prerequisite for such a relationship is a sincere and affirmative concern for persons, which is neither sentimental nor professional. The Christian minister can learn a great deal from the 'non-religious' therapist about this all-important matter of inter-personal relations. We need to learn more fully what is actually required of us to make our avowed respect for persons authentic and productive.

A great deal of what has been examined under the term 'acceptance' is common to most, if not all, 'schools of thought'. But the pastor must relate his practice to his theology - his understanding of God and man and of the relation that exists between God and man. There is a danger for pastoral counselling to become severed from its roots in the theology of the church. The pastor, as counsellor, must find his inspiration not only in the Behaviour Sciences but also in the faith of the church.
I want to relate what was said above about acceptance to the doctrines of the church, especially the Doctrine of Reconciliation, and I take as my starting point the following statement:

The pastor's self-acceptance is the source of his acceptance of his parishioner.

To be able to offer acceptance to another person requires energy, for it means an investment in the other person. The therapist invests care and concern in his client, but he does not expect anything in return. The therapist is fully present to his client when he is propelled out of his professional detachment and private inertia by a concern for his client that is real and controlled. This concern of the therapist for his client is analogous to the concern of the parent for his child — it is solicitous and protective.

But where does the therapist derive his energy to give such disinterested acceptance to his client? The modern psychologist emphasizes the value and importance of the self-concept in our relations with others. The way one experiences oneself has a crucial influence on the way one experiences others; for one tends to perceive and act in ways which are consistent with this experience of oneself.

The therapist is able to give acceptance to his client because he has accepted himself first of all. He has a firm conviction of self-worth, which forms the basis of his acceptance of the client. This firm conviction of self-worth is able to stand up to the admission of negative attributes and limitations, for it is derived from a realistic assessment of oneself. This self-knowledge frees one from distorted and unwarranted conceptions of one's prowess and weaknesses. The way towards this goal (self-realization)
is an ever increasing awareness and understanding of ourselves. Self-knowledge, then, is not an end in itself, but a means of liberating the forces of spontaneous growth. Whether for ourselves or others, the ideal is the liberation and cultivation of forces which lead to self-realization.

With much of this the pastor finds himself in agreement. Theologians have always reasoned that our estrangement from others is in part the result of our self-estrangement. 'Man is split within himself. We are wont to condemn self-love; but what we really mean to condemn is contrary to self-love. It is that mixture of selfishness and self-hate that permanently pursues us, and prevents us from loving others. 'He who is able to love himself is able to love others also; he who has learned to overcome self-contempt has overcome his contempt for others.'

But the pastor must ask whether man is capable of such self-acceptance and of a great and merciful divine love toward ourselves. On the contrary, in each of us there is a power of self-destruction. In our tendency to abuse and destroy others, there is an open or hidden tendency to abuse and destroy ourselves. Cruelty toward others is also cruelty toward ourselves.

The pastor readily agrees with the therapist about the supremacy of love among the virtues, and the power of true love to order life to its true and highest possibilities. But the Christian cannot find the source and sanction of such love in nature or society, however generously construed. Man can no more generate true self-acceptance by his own powers than he can have generated his own true being. It comes to us as a gift, just as life itself. Human love remains forever human, is forever set within the boundaries of finite existence. Human love which

1. P. Tillich in 'You are Accepted' from 'The Shaking of The Foundations'.
is not response to divine love is, therefore, a self-referring, self-interested love which enlightenment can direct but not transform. Man cannot, by and for himself, affirm his own true worth. Only his Creator can do that. It is God who affirms us rightly. It is in His love for us that we can find and accept our true evaluation and true self-estimate. Valid self-respect grows from man's assurance of God's righteous love and concern for all men and their worth. 'And in the light of this grace we perceive the power of grace in relation to ourselves. We experience moments in which we accept ourselves, because we feel we have been accepted by that which is greater than we ...... For it is such moments that make us love our life, that make us accept ourselves, not in our goodness and self-complacency, but in our certainty of the eternal meaning of our life. We cannot force ourselves to accept ourselves. We cannot compel anyone to accept himself. But sometimes it happens that we receive the power to say 'Yes' to ourselves, that peace enters into us and makes us whole, that self-hate and self-contempt disappear, and that our life is reunited with itself. Then we say that grace has come upon us.1.

But we must ask how this self-acceptance, which for the pastor is grounded in the love of God, includes our acceptance of the other.

1. Ibid, p.164.
Modern psychotherapy is developing a wide and deep concern for moral values, and a high and noble vision of men's ethical being. The amoral drives and impulses which man shares with his brute cousins must be controlled. It is agreed that life may be ordered to good ends which enrich and fulfill personal and communal life. The power and form of this control must come from within, and must be based upon valid self-knowledge, self-acceptance, self-affirmation, and it must be directed toward interpersonal relations chiefly characterized by mutuality and love. It is this power of control and direction of instinctual forces which separates man most distinctively from his natural inheritance. So the aim of human life is the conquest of our biological drives by reason and conscious purpose.

However, when we ask how 'self-knowledge, self-acceptance and self-affirmation' generate the power necessary for the creation of interpersonal relations, characterized by mutuality and love, the psychotherapist's answer is somewhat muted. Freud, as is well known, was pessimistic about the prospects of the transformation of the savage forces of the unconscious. Others have argued that the more men can analyze and estimate themselves and their interpersonal relations in the light of friendly reason, instinctual drives become less irresistible and arbitrary.

This is the teaching of the 18th Century 'Enlightenment' in a modern garb. It embodies the three basic assumptions made about man by that tremendous secular revolution against Christianity as it had developed in European civilization up to that time:
1. Man is not natively depraved;
2. Man is capable, guided solely by the light of reason and experience, of perfecting the good life on earth;
3. The first and essential condition of the good life on earth is the freeing of men's minds from the bonds of ignorance and superstitions.

The pastor rejects this view as a superficial reading of the human quandary. He sees the human possibility as radically dependent upon the grace and power of God in Christ, 'reconciling the world unto Himself'.

The pastor accepts the other, not because the other 'represents a process which is deeply worthy of respect, both as he is and with regard to his potentialities,' but because he and the other have been accepted by God. 'Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another'. He knows himself as well-beloved and reconciled. 'In the light of this grace we perceive the power of grace in relation to others and to ourselves. We experience the grace of being able to look frankly into the eyes of another, the miraculous grace of reunion of life with life... We experience the grace of being able to accept the life of another, even if it be hostile and harmful to us, for, through grace, we know that it belongs to the same ground to which we belong, and by which we have been accepted. We experience the grace which is able to overcome the tragic separation of the sexes, of the generations, of the nations, of the races, and even the utter strangeness

1. 1 John, Ch.IV, v.11.
between man and nature. Sometimes grace appears in all these separations to reconcile us with those to whom we belong.  

C. Non-Judgmental

The self-concept — the way a person experiences himself — has come to be one of the basic tenets in modern counselling. The way a person experiences himself has a great influence on the way he perceives the world and others, and so also on his behaviour, for he tends to act in ways which are consistent with this experience. In its beginnings the self-concept is formed largely from an individual's perception of how others react to him. If others treat him as having little social competence or worth, he will tend to regard himself as such, and indeed to behave in accordance with such an assessment. This not only applies to individuals but also to groups within society. Past treatment of the mentally ill is a very good example. The usual reaction to the mentally ill was horror and fear. Such a reaction from society served to reinforce the mental patient's sense of his own inadequacy and worthlessness. 'If psychotic patients are regarded as people without social meaning, except in terms of menace, if they are treated as people insensitive to their surroundings, so that they only need a greatly simplified life stripped of the subtlety and complexity of ordinary living, they become socially emptied. Continuous anonymity turns people into thin shadows of the personalities they once were.'

Once the self-concept has been formed there is an inertia to any change. The person has invested so much personal meaning in his self-concept that he will resist any pressure that threatens the security he derives from his self-identity. This is relevant to our following discussion.

c.1. **What is the non-judgmental quality of the counselling relationship?**

Most people who seek counselling fear being judged as weak and inadequate for asking for help. So long as he fears being judged, he will not feel free to talk about his real problem, but will remain defensive.

The non-judgmental quality of the relationship gives the client freedom to discuss whatever he feels is personally important. This non-judgmental quality is created by the non-critical and accepting attitude of the counsellor. He says to the client, in effect, "You may discuss here anything you wish, without fear of being condemned".

There are no magic formulae, tricks or pat-phrases for creating the non-judgmental atmosphere; it is the direct effect of the personal qualities of the counsellor.

c.2. **Purpose of the non-judgmental atmosphere.**

Unless fear or threat of judgment is removed from the counselling relationship, the client will not be completely open about his problem. He may very well conceal those aspects which he considers blameworthy. The non-judgmental atmosphere makes such stratagems unnecessary. He finds confidence to face the full implications of his need.
Again, the client feels free to express his feelings. Sometimes these are deep ambivalences, sometimes they are feelings of hostility, sometimes they are feelings of inadequacy. Whatever they are, the counsellor endeavours by what he says and what he does to create an atmosphere in which the client can come to recognize that he has these negative feelings, and can accept them as part of himself, instead of projecting them onto others or hiding them behind defence mechanisms. 'By the counsellor's acceptance of his statements, by the complete lack of moralistic and judgmental attitudes, by the understanding attitude which pervades the interview, the client comes to feel that all feelings and attitudes can be expressed. In this major way the counselling relationship differs from other relationships of life: nothing need be kept back from expression'.

The client not only gains confidence to look at himself objectively but also to do what is necessary for a constructive change. With a firm conviction of his own worth, the individual has the capacity for a true love of himself. He can come to assert himself and his values and discover more clearly the great potential he has for growth as a human being, and as a child of God. He is able to accept himself, to take hold of himself, and to direct himself.

This matter of the non-judgmental quality of the counselling relationship will occupy our attention again in the final chapter when the special problems of the relationship will be under examination. It will suffice here to note that it is often assumed that

1. C.R. Rogers, 'Counselling and Psychotherapy', p.88
the requirement of being non-judgmental presents the pastor with peculiar difficulties because of his status and function as a representative of the Christian community.
CHAPTER THREE

The Techniques of the Relationship in Pastoral Counselling.

There are a number of fundamental motifs of thought and practice which can be observed in all the schools of psychotherapy and which are particularly relevant to the Christian "care of souls".

(a) The understanding of human growth as a psychodynamic development from birth to maturity.

The human infant does not pass automatically through all the stages on the journey from birth to maturity. The full personality is the product of a dynamic interaction between the organism and its environment, and especially the interaction between it and the significant individuals in the environment. Maturity is the end-product of an incredibly complex process of growth. Personality distortions arise when the individual's progress from one stage to the other becomes seriously arrested. The self retains immature patterns of feelings which create a defective development.

This dynamic understanding of human growth and personality is relevant to the pastor in his counselling. For instance, it highlights the point that there is no stage at which growth and readjustment have been completed. In his counselling the pastor aims to realise the fullest development of personality that is possible; and modern progress in understanding the laws of personality growth should serve to encourage this guest.

(b) The strong emphasis on the close and intricate relation between the personal and sub-personal aspects of human life.

Psychotherapy, especially in its psycho-analytic
forms, has reminded the pastor of the ubiquitous intrusion of our physical needs and appetites upon our concerns; and that neurotic behaviour can be the direct result of man's failure to adjust satisfactorily to the biological substrata we share with all living things.

(c) The idea that human behaviour can be interpreted according to certain laws, and that the behaviour of the disturbed person is not meaningless but is amenable to a reasonable explanation.

The meaning of conduct can only be understood if we look at conscious awareness and at the deeper levels which influence personality and affect its actions, but are not ordinarily recognised in consciousness. In other words, conduct has meaning only if seen in the light of both conscious and unconscious or sub-surface aspects of personality.

All this is particularly relevant to behaviour which does not fit the 'normal' pattern. It is here that the dynamic understanding of behaviour is especially applicable. Oulter, writing of the contribution psychotherapy has made to our understanding of psychodynamics and psychopathology, states that it helps us 'to see that neurotic behaviour has its own rationale; that it is an effort at communication as well as concealment, which may be bizarre or obscure because of the protective distortions developed as compensation for 'normal' intra-personal and inter-personal stability. The neurotic has long since lost the power to be candid with others, to be - himself.'
His security system is under pressure and threat - he fears rejection, disapprobation, non-support. Thus the growth line has been skewed and substitute patterns have come to regulate his communication with other persons, aimed at both disguise and disclosure. Psychotherapy is learning to make sense out of no-sense, in human words and actions, and to unravel the tangled skein of real reasons which make a neurotic pattern intelligible and, therefore, open to the kinds of insight which heal and restore.

Two Types of Understanding.

In counselling literature there is a fruitful distinction made between diagnostic and therapeutic understanding.

(a) Diagnostic Understanding.

This type of understanding refers to the insight gained into the client's personality and behaviour by the use of mental, personality and aptitude tests and by case-history compilation. The purpose behind this approach to counselling is to reduce the practice of counselling from a system of guesswork and intuitive diagnosis to a procedure which is solidly based on a scientific, objective appraisal of all the factors involved in a client's life situation. The collection of this kind of material enables the counsellor to describe, interpret, and predict the client's behaviour.

Adequate preparation for the use of such clinical tools, whether at the 'depth' or 'surface' level, requires considerable training and expertise, not normally possessed by the pastor. But there is value in the pastor having some knowledge of such methods, if he is to co-operate fruitfully with counsellors working in the fields of education, clinical psychology, and career counselling.

(b) **Therapeutic Understanding**

What is therapeutic understanding? Therapeutic understanding refers to the feeling reactions on the part of the counsellor. It means seeing the client as he actually is and as he sees himself. This understanding on the part of the counsellor enables the client to feel that he is understood and accepted.

Therapeutic understanding is not only a vital factor in establishing the counselling relationship, but also in determining the outcome of counselling. Studies in America appear to confirm that it is not the counsellor's theoretical orientation but his ability to establish and maintain a warm, accepting relationship with his client that is the crucial factor in counselling.

In the remaining part of this chapter I want to examine the various techniques that are used extensively in counselling to create and maintain the counselling relationship, and to achieve what we have called 'therapeutic understanding'.
These techniques are common elements in all types of counselling:

(a) Rapport.
(b) Internal Frame of Reference.
(c) Empathy.
(d) Listening.
(e) Reflection.
(f) Interpretation.
A. Rapport.

A great deal of thought has of late been devoted to discovering what influence our self-evaluative attitudes have on our behaviour. Self-evaluative attitudes are those 'attitudes regarding the worth, competence, capability, guilt, adequacy, or other such evaluation of one's self as a person'. Self-evaluative attitudes we acquire in the course of growing up and living with other people. They are acquired characteristics.

The pastor must create a psychological climate which does not reinforce his client's negative self-evaluations. As has already been noted the client often has a sense of inadequacy and failure in asking for help; so the pastor must be sensitive to these negative self-evaluative attitudes.

It is unusual for the pastor to meet his client for the first time when he comes for counselling. He will know the client in other spheres; and the client will have had some opportunity to know the pastor. This has important implications for 'rapport-building' in religious counselling. Since both pastor and client are likely to have at least some knowledge of each other before counselling begins, and since it is highly probable that the client will already have confidence in the pastor, rapport is already present, even if only in a rudimentary form.

a.1. What is rapport?

Rapport is a mutual feeling of warmth, comradeship and trust between two individuals. It is not established once and for all, but is the product of a continuous sensitivity, on the part of the pastor, for the client.

The creation of rapport is not simply a matter of technique. It is more related to the sensitivity, imagination and artistry of the pastor. He establishes rapport by revealing his attitude of acceptance and interest in the client and his problems. The essential beginning of any treatment is the establishment of a permissive situation in which the person knows himself to be free to be himself, and to be accepted and dealt with as himself. Rapport cannot be contrived; it must be achieved, and its chief prerequisite is a sincere and affirmative concern for persons, which is neither sentimental nor professional. But this requires that the therapist shall have come to be relatively secure in his own self-knowledge and self-respect; that he be capable of non-exploitative regard for the patient. This means that sincere respect for others is not possible without self-respect and vice versa. The therapeutic process gets under way only when the situation is free enough to stir the residues of freedom in the patient, and candid enough to prompt him to self-revelations. It is the personal qualities of the counsellor that are the real creators of rapport. It is not consciously and deliberately created, but comes into being when the client senses the friendliness, concern, and trustworthiness of the counsellor.

The immediate aim of rapport is to encourage the client to express and explore his problem as freely as possible. There is general agreement among counsellors that unless the client can bring himself both to express and explore his problem, there is little chance that he will achieve the help which he seeks, no matter how clear the problem may be to the counsellor.

2. C.R. Rogers, 'Client-Centered Therapy', with special reference to Ch. 111.
(a. 2) Rapport Building.

How can the pastor decide how much rapport-building is required? The pastor must be sufficiently perceptive to decide from the client's demeanours, his expression and his actions just how much rapport-building is required.

**Greeting**

Ordinary courtesy can go a long way to building rapport. A warm, friendly greeting helps to put the client at his ease. A relaxed, confident approach can be of great value in allaying his anxiety.

If the pastor has had pre-warning of the client's arrival, he should take a few minutes preparing for the meeting. He can do this by either checking on all available details about the client, if it is the first meeting, or on the records of previous sessions. This procedure has a double value; it serves to focus the pastor's attention on the client; and it gives the client an impression of the pastor's interest and concern.

**Sitting Arrangements.**

From my experience of counselling in an army setting, I can vouch for the importance of paying close attention to the sitting arrangements. At first, I had a sitting arrangement which took the form of having the client sitting in a chair on the other side of my desk (Fig. A).

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         O       O
Counsellor       Client
          A
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I soon discovered the chief disadvantage of this arrangement. This is the normal sitting arrangement for an interview in an authority-centred structure-like the army, for instance. It is a definite barrier to a relaxed atmosphere.

![Diagram B]

The sitting arrangement in fig. B emphasizes the equality and mutuality of counselling; but its intimate character can be a source of anxiety, especially in the early stages of counselling.

![Diagram C]

The arrangement in fig. C is the most suitable. The desk is not a communication barrier; and yet provides a measure of security for the client.

As the counselling progresses, the desk can be dispensed with altogether.
The Client's Comforts.

Attention to small details of the client's comfort indicates the pastor's concern and sensitivity. The removal of a coat and the placing of an ash tray within easy reach, gives an impression of calm and relaxation.

Opening Conversation.

As a general rule, the pastor should relieve the client from the burden of making the first conversation. Counselling generally deals with problems that are personal and intimate, hence loaded with anxiety. It is often difficult to face these problems squarely and immediately, especially in the presence of a strange person. The counsellor must resolve the client's fear and restraint, which is natural in a new setting, by making him moderately comfortable.

For the pastor this does not present any real difficulty as he can select church-related topics for his conversation. The 'conversation-pieces' should not be allowed, however, to dominate or delay discussing the real object of the meeting. Delay in discussing the client's problem, once rapport has been achieved, could give the client the impression that his problem is too serious for the counsellor to handle.

The pastor should at all costs avoid telling humorous stories. The client may be too distressed to find such stories amusing, and if he is forced to laugh, in order to appear polite, he may well find it difficult to raise his problem. The bouncy, light-hearted approach has the added danger of making the client feel guilty in having a problem at all.
There is one other professional hazard which the pastor should scrupulously avoid when counselling: talking about his own busy schedule. This makes the client feel an intruder and discourages him from revealing his own problem.

B. Internal Frame of Reference

One of the main contributions made by Rogers, and other counsellors of the 'non-directive' orientation, to the theory and practice of counselling is the light they have thrown on the distinction between the external and internal frames of reference. What is the external frame of reference?

The traditional clinical methods utilize an external frame of reference. The counsellor, who adopts this approach, studies and evaluates his clients through case-histories and psychological tests. He applies his systematic learnings to his clients, and arrives at his diagnosis on the basis of generalized understanding of human behaviour, gained from studying humanity en masse. And so the external frame of reference describes the client in terms of symptoms, traumata, ego-structure, etc. This approach to understanding the client is by way of the counsellor's theoretical framework, clinical experience, and learnings.

Here we note that for the pastor this approach cannot be the primary method on account of limitations in his training, time, and particularly on account of the types of problems he normally deals with in counselling.

b.1. The Internal Frame of Reference.

This concept is defined as 'the attempt by the counsellor to perceive the client and his world as perceived by the client'. It means the attempt to get inside the client's skin so as to appreciate what he thinks and feels. It represents the attempt to think with rather than for or about the client.

No counsellor has done more than Rogers to elucidate the practical value of the internal frame of reference in counselling. 'To be of assistance to you I will put aside myself - the self of ordinary interaction - and enter into your world of perception as completely as I am able. I will become, in a sense, another self for you - an alter ego of your own attitudes and feelings, a safe opportunity for you to discern yourself more clearly, to experience yourself more truly and deeply, to choose more significantly'.

The personal emotional problems which come to the pastor are the result of an upset in the balance between the objective demand made by circumstances and the subjective strengths and weaknesses, character and outlook of the individual. Counselling is the art of recognizing and responding to the person's needs; and the first step to this end is to see what life means to him, how he views his circumstances and himself in relation to these circumstances. In other words, when the counsellor adopts the internal frame of reference, he tries to make his perceptual framework match that of the client. Temporarily, he attempts to think and feel the way the client does.

Rogers in his essay, "The Characteristics of a Helping Relationship", views the ability to take the internal frame of reference, as fundamentally important in achieving a relationship in depth. 'Can I let myself enter fully into the world of his feelings and personal meanings and see these as he does? Can I step into his private world so completely that I lose all desire to evaluate or judge it? Can I enter it so sensitively that I can move about it freely, without trampling on meanings which are precious to him? Can I sense it so accurately that I can catch not only the meanings of his experience which are obvious to him, but those meanings which are only implicit, which he sees only dimly or as confusion? Can I extend this understanding without limit?'

C. Empathy.

The pastor when counselling must be an understanding person in the sense of wanting to know and to share the client's experience of himself and of the world. His primary concern is to achieve the maximum degree of 'empathic understanding' of the person's inner world. Regard for the client, and genuine interest in him, spur the pastor to understand him as a unique individual.

It is this kind of understanding which creates a relationship which gives the client confidence to explore and readjust his world. The pastor who tries to understand his client in terms of intellectualized, formal categories will not succeed in coming to know his uniqueness, nor will he manifest sensitive appreciation of his individuality.

What is Empathy?

(c.1.) Social Psychology.

In Social psychology empathy is regarded as having an adaptive function. In order to be able to relate to others in his society, man must be capable of anticipating the behaviour of others and of adopting his own behaviour to the expectations of his fellows. The individual achieves this end by imaginatively taking the role of other individuals in his group or society. This role-taking is the medium by which the individual is socialized. It is the preliminary step towards realistic and appropriate behaviour: for in taking another's role the individual becomes acquainted with the way he is regarded and how his behaviour is being assessed by others. He learns to anticipate the behaviour of others, and to increase his repertoire of self-adjustments by the double process of taking the role of others, and by experimenting with the likely responses they might make to his contemplated actions.

(c.2.) Sociology.

It is fairly well accepted that empathy is dependent on similarity between individuals. This feeling of similarity is partly derived from our biological endowment; but it also owes a great deal to the fact that members of the same group share common traditions, experiences and interests. This is confirmed when we consider the difficulties we encounter in empathizing with members of a different society.

Sociology regards empathy as the sense of mutual understanding which exists between members of the same group.
Psychotherapy and Counselling.

In psychotherapy empathy is regarded as an index of the mental and emotional status of the client. It means to feel ourselves into the private and personal environment of others. Counsellors and psychotherapists in general cultivate the practice of empathy to a degree that is rare in other professions, because they require an intimate appreciation of inner experiences, conflicts and attitudes. For them empathy is often a strategic factor in making diagnosis, and it is often a decisive factor in the establishment of a helping relationship. They use empathy deliberately and ingeniously as a refined and sophisticated technique.

It is maintained that the skill of the therapist depends essentially on his ability to put himself in the client's shoes, and to obtain in this way an inside knowledge that is almost first hand. The immediate comprehension of the client's problems which is achieved through empathy is regarded as in many ways superior to the intellectual variety of understanding. If we seek to understand an individual intellectually and logically, an immediate and direct grasp of the inner core of the person is likely to elude us. We are unable to appreciate the subtleties and manners of his emotions. When we experience empathy, we feel as if we were experiencing someone else's feelings as our own. In the act of empathy the social distance between the subject and the object is reduced, so that deliberately and temporarily the counsellor feels within himself what actually belongs to the other.

Value of Empathy in Counselling.

In his book, 'Therapeutic Counselling' E.H. Porter states that empathy is the open sesame to the client's inner world. 'Psychotherapy is a process
within the client not within the counsellor. We are forced to deal with the reality the client holds no matter how much insight as counsellors we may have into the errors of perception the client makes. It is the meanings which the client has come to learn from the experience his life has held for him which constitute the reality to which he responds. It is toward a re-valuation of these meanings which is more complete, more nearly correct, and less denying that therapy attempts to help the client1. Through his capacity for empathy the counsellor responds to the client's inner world of perceptions and meanings.

The failure to communicate and relate to others is at the heart of many problems which need counselling, and this is especially true in pastoral counselling. This twofold failure creates a sense of inner isolation which generates anxiety. Unable to communicate with himself and others, he senses an inner discomfort. A need that is basic to his existence is not being met adequately, and so he becomes lonely for himself and others. When his feelings of isolation become intolerable, he turns to a counsellor.

Empathy breaks through the client's isolation and conveys the reassurance that he is being understood and accepted by the counsellor. It is important that the client feels that not only his words are being understood, but that the person behind the words is being appreciated for the particular kind of person he is.

A third value of empathy relates to the process of counselling. The individual by himself does not get far in an attempt to evaluate his experiences. He is prone to get caught in his own biases with little or no re-valuation forthcoming. Psychological conflicts arise in connection with dynamic, emotional relationships with other persons. Therefore, the most direct way of removing them involves replacing condemnatory, confining and artificial relationships with a form of human fellowship which embodies the opposite characteristics.

In ordinary life, the person who has an emotional problem is usually isolated, no matter how many relatives and acquaintances he has, in the sense that he knows no one to whom he can communicate the nature of his difficulty. Counselling puts an end to such isolation; it also offers a situation in which a person can be completely honest with himself and with a fellow human being. It provides a situation in which he can discover how much he has deceived himself hitherto; the manner in which his ideal picture of himself, his unrecognized needs, and his special way of trying to make the universe conform to his private demands, have caused him to distort reality.

The aim in using empathy as a technique in counselling is not merely to experience another's feelings or to enter his personal environment - important as these aims are - but to understand how the client perceives himself and his world. This understanding the counsellor conveys to the client in the safety of the counselling relationship.

(c.5.) Empathy and Sympathy.

There is a close connection between empathy and sympathy. The old name for empathy was sympathetic understanding. The basic similarity between the two experiences is that in both our feelings and imaginations become evoked and activated by contemplating the experience of someone else. There are, however, fundamental differences in the focus and intention of both experiences.

Focus.

When we sympathize our attention is focused on the assumed duality or parallel between our feelings and the feelings of the other person. What gives sympathy intensity is not so much the objective reality and character of the other person's situation as the sharpness of similarity or dissimilarity between his experience and ours.

Now, in empathy the focus of attention is the other person's experience and reactions. In so far as our own feelings are concerned, they are involved with the explicit purpose of learning more about what actually belongs to the other person. Empathy is object-centred, whereas sympathy is ego-centred.

Intention.

When we sympathize we are primarily aware of our own state of mind, and our own needs. When we try to achieve empathic understanding we cannot completely escape our own needs; but we purposely discipline our feelings in order that they can be used as the means to gain knowledge of the other person's experience. Sympathy throws us back on ourselves and makes us aware of our own condition.
empathy leads to understanding of the other. 'You get to know what it feels like to be your client. This is probably the most important single element in the success of pastoral care. It is easy enough to feel sympathy for someone in trouble, to desire to help them, to share and relieve them of their anxieties and fears. To get inside them and live in them; to feel the tensions tearing them apart; to experience the reality of their fears, that is, to have empathy with them, is much more difficult. It requires understanding, and it demands identification with them, which enables the pastor to think and feel with his client while at the same time retaining his identity.1'

D. Listening.

'What, then, are the basic requirements as to the personality and professional abilities of a psychiatrist? If I were asked to answer this question in one sentence, I would reply, "The psychotherapist must be able to listen." The emphasis on the central importance of listening is equally stressed in pastoral counselling literature. 'An essential part of any counselling interview is to be able to listen, and this is perhaps one of the greatest arts and the most difficult to learn. It is the way in which the counsellor listens and the atmosphere which he creates for the person in so doing that really counts. But such listening is not merely passive, it is a very active part of the counselling process. The counsellor needs both the will and the ability to listen.'2


3. K. Heasman, 'An Introduction to Pastoral Counselling',p.73.
The examination of the technique of listening can be subsumed under three heads:-(d.1) Disciplined listening; (d.2) listening in depth; and (d.3) listening to non-verbal cues.

d.1. Disciplined Listening.

For the pastor listening is not just a matter of passivity. Even in ordinary conversation, we look at the person we are talking to and depend on his obvious interest, his smile, his responses, as an essential element in interpersonal conversation. So the pastor's listening should convey his attentive interest and concern. He can do that by his verbal responses, facial expression and his physical posture.

But there is more to disciplined listening than just conveying to the client the pastor's interest and concern. Listening has a vital function in the counselling process. Disciplined listening on the part of the pastor serves to prevent the client from rambling confusedly through his inner world; Clinebell states that the following aims are served by disciplined listening - 'focusing on what seems to have the most meaning and significance. By centering attention on significant points, summarizing what is being communicated, and occasionally asking a question for clarification, the counsellor helps the person begin to organize his confused inner world. Thus he gradually comes to understand his problems more clearly'.

In listening the pastor should give the impression that the client and his problems are all important. Interruptions should be avoided as they tend to create the impression that the counsellor's attention is divided. A client who has taken ten to fifteen minutes to settle down, and is about to talk openly and frankly about his problem may, if he is

interrupted, find it difficult to return to his former relaxed mood. He may feel it is incongruous that the counsellor can turn his attention away from what seems to him his all demanding problem.

(d.2.) **Listening in Depth.**

'The client wants and needs someone who will listen to him, not just in a friendly way, but in a competent professional way. This means that the worker is expected, not only to listen, but to hear'. Listening in depth is an art, not an impersonal skill, because it comes from an inner attitude of mind. Carl Rogers in his essay, 'Dealing with breakdowns in Communication - Interpersonal and Intergroup', maintains that the main obstacles to listening in depth is our tendency to judge, evaluate, to approve or disapprove. According to Rogers, real communication is only achieved when we listen in depth to the other person and so with understanding. 'It means to see the expressed idea and attitude from the other person's point of view, to sense how it feels to him, to achieve his frame of reference in regard to the thing he is talking about... If I can listen to what he can tell me, if I can understand how it seems to him, if I can see its personal meaning for him, if I can sense the emotional flavour it has for him, then I will be releasing potent forces of change in him'.

d.3. **Listening to non-verbal cues.**

The most vital concerns of the client may not be expressed loudly, explicitly, and formally, but softly, hesitatingly, and possibly hidden subtly. Only careful listening to what the client is saying and not saying, results in hearing the pertinent material.

We are tempted to believe that verbal expressions are the favoured instruments for communicating the depths of personal meaning. Yet verbal communication is one among many devices for communication. In many ways, it is the most inadequate of all. Ruesch argues that because the methods used in modern psychotherapy favour the verbally articulate and practically minded patient, the incommunicative, introverted patient is at a great disadvantage. According to Ruesch, the reason for this emphasis on verbal communication is due to therapists, from different theoretical orientations, basing their diagnosis and treatment on the verbal communications of patients. This approach works to the disadvantage of the introvert. 'The introverted person is often inaccessible to external judgment because of his inability to express himself'. His verbal communications fail to convey the full range and richness of his inner experience. This being so, 'the therapist has to feel gradually his way into the patient's mode of living and experiencing. If the therapist can understand the patient's inner experience, he begins to reduce the gap that separates him from the patient.'

This is relevant to the pastor's counselling. He should be sensitive to non-verbal communications; he can gain fruitful glimpses of the client's inner world of experience through his posture, demeanour, movements of hands, his speech hesitations and his manner.

2. Ibid., p.117.
3. Ibid., p.118.
(E) Reflection.

It is accepted as axiomatic that the main concern of the counsellor, at least in the early stages, is to get the client to talk about his problem. The counsellor achieves this end in two ways: (a) by making the client aware of his interest; and (b) by conveying to the client empathic understanding of his problems. It is with the latter that we are directly concerned here.

(e.1.) What is Reflection?

Reflection is defined as the attempt by the counsellor to express in fresh words the internal experience which is embedded in the client's words. It's the counsellor's empathic understanding of the client's communications that is reflected in the counsellor's response. No counsellor has done more than Rogers in clarifying this basic technique, and much of what follows owes a great deal to the contribution of the 'client-centred school'.

(e.2.) Purpose of Reflection.

Although there are facts and information which the counsellor can supply, the only means by which a person can come to understand himself and his problem is by expressing his feelings and attitudes towards himself, his fellows and his environment.

Certainly one of the significant goals of any counselling experience is to bring into the open those thoughts and attitudes, those feelings and emotionally charged impulses, which centre around the problems and conflicts of the individual. The aim is complicated by the fact that the superficial attitudes, and those easily expressed, are not always the significant and motivating attitudes. Consequently,

the counsellor must be skilled indeed in providing release for the client in order to bring about an adequate expression of the basic issues in the situation'.

By reflection the counsellor mirrors the client's feelings and attitudes for his better self-understanding. Basic to the practice of reflection is the assumption that the client can eventually solve his own problem, once he has sufficient understanding of himself and the facts which underlie his difficulty.

(e.3) Selection of Material for Reflection.

In the 40's of this century, 'reflection' was regarded as the main instrument of the 'non-directive' therapists as against the 'directive' therapists who apparently employed persuasive, supportive, and controlling approaches. A superficial examination of the technique suggested that since the therapist limited himself to reflecting only those feelings and attitudes expressed by the client, he was being 'non-directive'. This clear-cut division between 'directive' and 'non-directive' approaches is no longer tenable. Now the question relates to whether a counsellor is consciously or unconsciously directive. 'A closer scrutiny of this technique reveals, however, that any reflection requires that the counsellor choose from the verbalizations of the client those elements that he feels have greatest quality of feeling and are in greatest need of clarification. This means, in a sense, that the counsellor is highly directive in using this technique, since every time he reflects he must choose from the variety of material presented to him by the client'.

This verdict is confirmed by results in the field of verbal operant conditioning. It has been verified, for instance, that a person can influence the verbalizations of another by the means of a variety of verbal and non-verbal cues which are so slight that they do not come to the centre of awareness.

Furthermore, counsellors tend to approve or disapprove of statements from clients which are related to their own personality characteristics. Such approval or disapproval need only be implicit to influence the client's verbalizations.

Common Errors in Reflection.


(e. g.) Content.

Reflecting is not simply a matter of repeating back to the client his communications in the same or essentially the same words. 'In a counselling situation, words are used to communicate the internal experience of the client. There is no effective check on the counsellor's understanding of this internal experience if he merely repeats back to the client the very words the client used..... the counsellor has to reformulate what has been said to communicate to the client his understanding or his attempt to understand the internal experience. A mere repetition of words is not a positive reflection of an understanding of what the words were meant to express. Reformulation provides a check on the accuracy of the counsellor's understanding.

1. J.D. Frank, 'Persuasion and Healing' p.228ff and also Cf J. Deese, 'Principles of Psychology', Ch.11; C.S. Hall and G. Lindzey, 'Theories of Personality', Ch.XI.

or, at least, communicates to the client his desire to understand accurately'. The counsellor's reflection should convey understanding of the client to the client.

(e.5.) **Depth**

The counsellor's reflection should match the intensity and depth of feeling in the client's communication. From studies in case material, it has been shown that a counsellor may have a tendency to be either consistently too shallow or consistently too deep in his reflections.

This requirement of reflecting to the depth and intensity of the client's communication is important in confronting the client with the meaning of his experience. Counsellors may be tempted to believe that they can get clients to think more positively by deliberately reducing the emotional tone of their expressions. This hardly ever happens. The more likely effect is that the client feels misunderstood. The only way a client can deal positively with his problem is by facing the intensity of his feelings; and the counsellor's less intense reflection may only serve to deflect him from his task. The same negative result is likely to accrue if the counsellor attempts to increase, in his reflection, the intensity of feeling in the client's expression.

Many clients have bitter experience of being misunderstood, before entering counselling, and are particularly sensitive to signs of misunderstanding in the counsellor.

It is also important that the counsellor in his reflection match the meaning of the client's communication\(^1\). It is quite possible for a counsellor to match the emotional intensity in a client's expression and still miss its exact meaning. He may add or omit meaning. 'If possible the counsellor should try to reflect the meaning of the most generalized experience in what the client expresses. It is true that the client can express more than one experience at one time, but often there is a general underlying feeling or attitude involved. It is more important for the counsellor to pick up the generalized experience than to enumerate carefully all the partial experiences which are but manifestations of the more general.

At times, a counsellor will be so intent on not missing any experience that he misses entirely the experience which ties them all together, and which contains the real meaning of what the client has related\(^2\).

When the counsellor misses entirely the meaning of what the client has said, this blocks progress by giving the client the feeling that the counsellor is unable to apprehend his experience.

Reflection of part of the meaning may divert the client's attention from important parts of his experience. 'Partial reflection may be communicated to the client as partial understanding, and may hinder further consideration or pondering of that part of his experience apparently not understood by his counsellor\(^3\).'

3. Ibid., p.103.
Language.

It is an established rule in counselling that the counsellor should use the language that is appropriate to the occasion. A counsellor who uses technical or abstract language hinders effective communication. Simple, direct and concrete language helps the client to understand and so to face his problem.

Interpretation.

Interpretation belongs to what is commonly called the collaborative stage of counselling. At this stage the counsellor works more actively with the client than is normally done in earlier stages. The counsellor should not begin this stage unless he is confident that the counselling relationship is on a firm basis of mutual confidence and trust. If it is entered prematurely, the client may feel that he is no longer being accepted unconditionally, and that he is being deprived of his personal responsibility for the counselling progress.

Interpretative methods are used by therapists and counsellors of most theoretical orientations. The only exceptions are those of the 'client-centred school'. Counsellors of the 'client-centred school' have questioned the value of interpretation, and have even argued that it creates resistance in the client and consequently hinders progress. 'The reorientation and reorganisation of the self.....is certainly the major aim and goal of counselling. It is natural that it should be asked as to how the counsellor can promote this increased self-understanding, this orientation around new goals. The answer is bound to be a disappointing one to the over eager. The primary techniques which leads to insight on the part of the client is one which demands the utmost self-restraint on the counsellor's part, rather
than the utmost in action. The primary technique is to encourage the expression of attitudes and feelings... until insightful understanding appears spontaneously. Insight is often delayed, and sometimes made impossible, by efforts of the counsellor to create or bring it about. It is probably not delayed, and certainly never made impossible by those interviewing approaches which encourage full expression of attitudes.....The main aim of the counsellor is to assist the client to drop any defensiveness, any feelings that attitudes should not be brought into the open, any concern that the counsellor may criticize or suggest or order1.

Rogers explains why such self-restraint is required of the counsellor. 'As the client reveals himself more and more fully in the counselling interviews, the counsellor begins to develop, insight into client's problem.....There is the greatest temptation to most counsellors..... to inform the client as to his patterns, to interpret his actions, and his personality to him..... The more accurate the interpretation, the more likely it is to encounter defensive resistance. The counsellor and his interpretations become something to be feared. To resist this temptation to interpret too quickly, to recognize that insight is an experience which is achieved not an experience which is imposed, is an important step in progress for the counsellor2.'

In his explanation as to how the main aim of counseling is achieved, Rogers concedes that it is legitimate and proper for the counsellor to 'interpret to the client some of the material he has been revealing'. This interpretation is not simply a matter of reflecting or clarifying the material. It includes such diverse elements as 'recognition of feeling which has been

2. Ibid., p.195ff.
expressed earlier in the interview\textsuperscript{1}; 'a clearer interpretation of the fact that the client is facing a choice, with satisfaction resulting from either decision\textsuperscript{2}', 'reformulating insight already achieved, by clarifying the new understandings at which the client has arrived\textsuperscript{3}', 'assistance in helping the client to explore and recognize the choices, the possible courses of action which lie before him\textsuperscript{4}'; 'suggestion of relationships or patterns of reaction which seem to be evident in the material which the client has freely stated\textsuperscript{5}'. Rogers adds the significant remark: 'to the extent that these patterns or relationships are accepted and re-applied by the client they no doubt represent added elements of insight\textsuperscript{6}'. However, he equally stresses the limitations on these suggestions. 'The counsellor will do well to refrain, however, from giving interpretations of the client's behaviour, the elements of which are based, not on the client's expressed feelings, but on the counsellor's judgment of the situation. Such interpretations tend to be resisted and may delay the achievement of genuine insight\textsuperscript{7}'.

Rogers's position seems to be that a counsellor's interpretation should consist of presenting the client with hypotheses regarding relationships and patterns of meaning in his communications. He rejects the type of interpretation that attempts to impart meaning to the client's communications, in the sense that the counsellor implies in some way what the client might or ought to think.

1. Ibid., p.200.  
2. Ibid., p.200.  
3. Ibid., p.204.  
4. Ibid., p.204.  
5. Ibid., p.204.  
6. Ibid., p.204 ff.  
7. Ibid., p.205.
Here interpretation is defined in a general sense, to denote those methods by which the counsellor clarifies or explains what the client has actually said.

**Summarizing**

Summarizing can take two forms - General Summarizing and Selective Summarizing.

(f.1.) General Summarizing.

General summarizing can be used at the end of an interview in order to draw together into a coherent picture the dominant aspects and themes of a session. The summarizing should underline the relationships and patterns of meaning in what has been discussed during the session.

General summarizing may also be used in the course of an interview to draw together several strands of meaning in order to highlight their essential relatedness.

(f.2.) Selective Summarizing.

This type of summarizing requires a more active intervention on the part of the counsellor. It entails placing in conjunction a number of the client's experiences which, in the counsellor's opinion, are inter-connected. Usually the events are grouped together on account of their similarity of cause or effect. The similarity gives justification in inferring that there is some relationship between them; and having them presented in a group gives the client an opportunity to detect their relationship.

If the counsellor is very sure of the strength of the relationship, he may become more 'directive', and not only present the events in a group but also enquire as to whether there is a relationship between them - e.g. 'I wonder whether in some way these events are related and how they might be related?'
Probing

Probing aims at helping the client to develop a fuller picture of his problem and to discover a solution. There are various ways of probing, and they are all designed to encourage the client to develop or explore various aspects of his problem and to discuss possible relationships and alternatives not already examined.

(f.3.) Selective Probing

This normally involves reflecting one or more aspects of the client's experience while failing to reflect others. This is done in order to stimulate the client to explore more fully what has been reflected.

Another way of selective probing is by use of statements. Such a statement may concern a matter already raised by the client - e.g. 'You did mention how upset you were when you were not promoted'. This kind of probing may be sufficient to encourage the client to investigate the implications in his former statements, and to explore its relation to other matters.

Again, the counsellor's remark may be about a matter the client has failed to raise - e.g. 'You haven't yet mentioned how you feel about being passed over for promotion'.

(f.4.) Direct Probing

Direct probing consists of questions. Questions should be framed in such a way that the client's responsibility is respected. 'Do you think it would be profitable to go into this more fully?' is the kind of question that leaves the choice with the client.
After the relationship has been firmly established, the counsellor need not be so cautious. By then the counsellor has learned that he is free, and so the more direct question poses no threat—e.g. 'Would you explore that more fully?'

Questions, however, have a number of distinct disadvantages. For instance, the frequent use of questions can build in the client the expectation that the counsellor will provide a solution after he has had all his questions answered.

Again, questions can create anxiety in the client—especially in the early stages of counselling. The more significant the emotional content of the material he is being asked to discuss the more likely it is that direct questions will arouse anxiety.

(f.5.) Labelling.

Often the client is able to express his feelings without being able to name them. He can be helped toward self-understanding by having his feelings placed in a particular class. For example, a client may talk about how his feelings for his friend have changed since the friend was promoted. A simple statement by the counsellor like, 'I wonder whether it could be that you are jealous?' may help to clarify considerably the nature of his feelings.

This is what is called labelling. It should not be used in the early stages of counselling for it could be threatening to a client who had not yet developed sufficient confidence to face the implications of his feelings.
A great deal of the interpretation done by the pastoral counsellor in collaborative counselling may consist in supplying a more accurate term to fit what the client has expressed. This labelling may almost seem superfluous, but in reality it may clarify matters, since a client may avoid the full meaning of his feelings until they are directly named.¹

CHAPTER 4

Special Relationship Problems

The relationship established between client and counsellor is the basis of counselling. It offers an environment in which the client is supported by another person in his crisis; from which he gains a new perspective on his problem; and through which he grows in self-understanding and ability to follow a responsible course of action which best fulfils his sense of values and purpose in community with the fellow beings of his world.

This relationship is a real meeting of personalities and not an artificially contrived encounter. The aim of psychotherapy (and this applies also to all forms of counselling) could be defined as the development of a relationship which in its open-hearted readiness to discuss the ambiguities and uncertainties of hope, faith, love and indignation makes it desirable and feasible for the patient to act in the world with others. 'Personal life emerges in the encounter of person with person, and in no other way... (Here) he experiences the limits which stops him in his unstructured running from 'One here and now' to the next and throws him back on himself'.

The counsellor should keep two sets of questions constantly in mind. The first set of questions relates to the client and the second to himself as a person and counsellor.

1. P. Tillich, 'Systematic Theology', 111 pp40 and 58
The counsellor should keep in the forefront of his mind such questions as, "What is the client trying to communicate, and what are his problems in communicating effectively?". The relationship serves as the medium through which the counsellor sees and hears the problems and feelings of his client. As the client relates to the counsellor, he reveals his difficulties in relating to and communicating with others. He may be dependent, demanding, defensive, aggressive or truculent. These are overt evidence of his failure to find satisfaction in his interpersonal relationships. In the counselling relationship, the client reveals his anxieties, immaturities and distortions in his perceptions. In other words, the counselling situation reproduces the client's behaviour outside counselling.

The counsellor must be sensitive to the client's total communication. He must keep asking what the client's overt behaviour means as to his feelings and needs, his attitudes and values. The way the client relates to the counsellor reveals how he relates or fails to relate to others. This could be called the diagnostic function, of the relationship in counselling. Frieda Fromm-Reichmann's careful analysis of the diagnostic function of the relationship in psychotherapy is also relevant to pastoral counselling. 'We can only understand human personality in terms of interpersonal relationships. There is no way to know about human personality other than by means of what one person conveys to another, that is, in terms of his relationships with him. Moreover, the private mental and emotional experiences, his covert inner thought,
and reverie processes are also in terms of interpersonal experience. The writer regards emotional problems in general and the symptomatology of a mental patient in particular as primarily due to difficulties in interpersonal relationships. Consequently, the therapist must be particularly sensitive to the way the patient relates to him in the interview. 'How does the psychiatrist form an opinion regarding a prospective patient's condition and treatment necessities during and after the initial interviews?... While consulting with the patient, the psychiatrist should, of course, not only listen to what the patient has to say, but also pay attention to the way in which the information is given. Does the prospective patient show despair or apathy? Does he speak diffidently? Does he display discomfort, fear or anxiety, unhappiness or grief, etc? Such observations will help the psychiatrist in his evaluation of the patient's actual feelings. They will also allow conclusions about the impression the patient wishes to make on the psychiatrist, and, to a certain extent, regarding the expectations the patient has about the thoughts and feelings of the psychiatrist. This, in turn, will contribute to the therapist's understanding of the patient's personality. The therapist with the aid of such cues, builds a picture of the patient's relationships outside counselling, and of the factors which contribute to his maladjustment.

Of course, in pastoral counselling the pastor's concern is not to reach back into the unconscious dynamics of his client's behaviour, but to discover in what ways the client fails to create and sustain satisfying relationships with others. To achieve this end, the relationship between pastor and client can serve a vital function.

2. Ibid., p.49.
(b) **Counsellor Problems in Communicating**

The second set of questions the counsellor should keep in mind is this: "What am I communicating to this person, and what should I communicate to him? What are my problems in communicating something helpful?"

It is equally important to realize that the relationship is also something for which the counsellor is responsible. How is he to respond? To respond is to be fully alive, and alert, to listen, and to answer back in reply to the client. It is by accepting and attentive listening that the client is invited to speak, in confidence, more freely and fully. The counsellor must be responsive to every mood, feeling and attitude expressed. Yet his aim is not just to accept and reflect feelings and attitudes, but to give himself in a total response to the whole being of the other person. This response of the counsellor reveals his distinctive style of responding to life situations, in and out of counselling. In other words 'the personal equation' is a vital factor also on the counsellor's side.

Some schools of psychotherapy have tried to eliminate the unpredictable element in the counsellor's response, by requiring their members to undergo a long and penetrating analysis. The intention is not to remove the 'personal element', but to make the therapist aware of its ubiquitous influence, and thereby bring it under control. Of course, for the average clergyman this is not a practicable solution to the 'personal equation'. Even in the field of psychotherapy, personal analysis is not regarded as the exclusive qualification for practice. What the pastor requires is critical self-awareness of his own responses, and how these responses are coloured by the extent to which he has solved or failed to solve his own problems; by his
attitudes towards other people and their problems; by his ethical, philosophical and theological orientation; and by his understanding of his role and function as a pastor. The more awareness the pastor has of the intrusive influence of these factors, the more he is able to prevent them from exercising a negative control on the counselling process.
Outline of Plan

(A) Formal Structuring.
(B) Client Problems in the Relationship.
(C) Counsellor Problems in the Relationship.
(D) An examination of the pastor's alleged authoritarian and judgmental attitudes.

(A) Formal Structuring

(a.1.) What is Structuring?

Once the client has stated his problem in outline, most counsellors are likely to engage in structuring the counselling process. This involves explaining to the client the nature, limits and goals of counselling, and, specifically, to explain the nature, limits and goal of the immediate counselling relationship. 'Structuring simply means acquainting the counsellor with the nature of counselling and how it goes on, and offering him this kind of relationship'.

Structuring is not done once and for all. It may be necessary to structure more than once. For instance, the counsellor may find it necessary to structure different aspects of counselling at different times. He may, for example, clarify the way of proceeding in counselling at one time, and at another time explain the client's responsibility for decision making.

In brief, structuring is a simple explanation of what counselling entails for both client and counsellor.

(a.2.) The Purpose of Structuring

The counselling relationship is structured in relation to the client and also in relation to the counsellor.

(e.2.1.) Purpose of Structuring in relation to the Client.

Most clients when they first enter counselling are unfamiliar with the methods and goals of counselling. They may be dubious of the value of verbalization, or have misconceptions about the process of counselling. The following list gives some of the more common misconceptions:

- fast help; magical cures; single causes; smooth sailing; inevitability of cure or solution.

Structuring provides the client with a framework or orientation for counselling. He then feels that counselling has a rational plan. The client should know who the counsellor is, where he is, and why he is there. If the counsellor fails to provide an adequate structuring of the relationship, the client begins to feel that his task is unorganized and formless, and that there are no rules. Then he experiences a feeling of helplessness and dissatisfaction. It is as though the counsellor did not care what he talked about, or how he spoke of it. Structuring serves the very important function of enhancing the security of the relationship for the client. It ensures that he knows how to proceed, what is required of him, and what he may reasonably expect to derive from the counselling.

(a.2.2) Purpose of Structuring in relation to the Counsellor.

This section can be divided under two headings:

- Structuring defines the counsellor's responsibility to the client.

R.S. Lee in his book, 'Principles of Pastoral Counselling', states the matter thus: 'You become reliable for the limited field of your professional responsibility'. Many of the professions that use

1. R.S. Lee, loc. cit., p. 68.
counselling as a method have clearly defined fields of responsibility. In many ways the clergy have clearly defined fields of responsibility, e.g. conduct of worship. But in their pastoral care work their responsibilities are often diffuse and unlimited. The clergyman must constantly ask himself what are his responsibilities for those he counsels, and his answer must take into account the matter of his total responsibility for his parish and members. The clergyman must be on guard against accepting responsibility in counselling which entails time and resources which conflict with his other duties.

The pastor, as he listens to the client discussing his problem, begins to form an assessment of the nature, depth and complexity of his difficulty. He detects recurring motifs and underlying patterns in the person's feelings and relationships. The pastor should then ask himself whether he has sufficient time, resources and training to deal adequately, or whether he should advise the client to approach a counsellor more able to deal with his particular problem. Now, whatever the answer, the pastor must structure the counselling. If he feels competent to deal with the problem, he will explain to the client the benefit likely to be received from counselling, and the methods to be adopted. If the problem is beyond his competence, he will structure the interview by explaining to the client that his problem requires a form of counselling he is not able to provide. This type of structuring requires considerable skill to prevent the client from feeling rejected.

1. H.J. Clinebell, 'Basic Types of Pastoral Counselling', pp. 52-56 and see also Ch. XV.
Structuring defines the Counsellor's role in Counselling.

This is an issue which is clouded in confusion in the pastoral counselling literature. Most of the literature assumes that there is a basic conflict between what can be called the pastor's public roles and his role as counsellor.

The multiple roles of the pastor in society are regarded by some commentators as being a major disqualification from his ever being able to fit satisfactorily into the role of counsellor. He is so strongly associated, in his own mind and that of his clients, with his public roles that he cannot become properly adjusted to the private and intimate role of the counsellor. R.S. Lee, for instance, argues that the average pastor finds it very difficult, if not practically impossible, to divest himself of the authoritarian attitude in counselling.¹ Gates writes of 'the tension the pastor feels between the permissive attitude suggested by research and counselling and the authority that he carries as an administrator of his flock. The pastor cannot cease to feel the tension between authority and permissiveness.....This tension is intrinsic to being a pastor²'. In his discussion of personal-problem counselling Moser highlights the area of tension. 'Thus, the religious counsellor needs to accept the client as he has been, as he is now, and as he wishes to be in the future.....There is no doubt that this frame of reference is foreign to the thinking of many religious workers. These workers feel a commitment to instruct folk in the ways of righteousness and in the manner of life deemed desirable by society in general and their church group in particular.

A difference must be considered between the instructing which the religious worker does from the pulpit, in Bible class, and in youth organizations, and the counselling in face-to-face encounter with the individual. The religious worker can hardly be true to himself or his congregation, if he fails to instruct when instructing, is called for. But if he is to be successful as he attempts to counsel, he will need to be accepting and non-judgmental.¹

In addition to all this, it is maintained that because clients see the clergy in so many roles, they come to counselling with set expectations as to what the counsellor will say, do, and think. They expect a pastor to teach, guide, express approval or disapproval of certain types of behaviour, and to hold particular attitudes to life and people. These expectations add to the pastor’s difficulty in creating a truly accepting and permissive atmosphere.

But how real is this apparent conflict between the various 'public' roles of the pastor and his role as counsellor? If there is a conflict, it must either be resolved or honestly and openly accepted as insoluble; it cannot be ignored as unimportant.

There are preliminary remarks to be made. First of all, when the pastor counsels, he does not relinquish his role as pastor and become solely and simply a counsellor, or a psychotherapist or a caseworker; he remains a pastor; and his counselling is an aspect or part of pastoral care. All this may appear very elementary, but surprisingly enough all too often writers in this field give the impression that their primary concern is to reconcile pastoral

counselling with psychotherapy and social casework. Psychotherapy has made a major contribution to our understanding of human behaviour, and pastoral counselling has been permanently enriched from this fruitful source. But after acknowledging our indebtedness to psychotherapy, we must also emphasize that psychotherapy and pastoral counselling are not synonymous. 'The uniqueness of pastoral counselling emerges when we define it as a spiritual conversation that involves both a meeting of two persons in the context of the Christian faith, and a dialogue between them concerning (1) 'their way of life in times past', (2) 'the decisive turnings in the living present' and (3) 'the consideration of the outcome of their life'. And so in counselling the pastor carries out a Christian function.

Again, when a person comes to a pastor for counselling, he will expect to participate in an experience which has at least religious overtones. The very setting of the counselling will typify the counselling effort as religious, in as much as those who seek out pastors in religious settings usually expect a counselling process which has religious orientations. In all kinds of religious counselling, the Christian faith is not incidental or irrelevant, but is its very heart and meaning.

The pastor has both formal relationships as pastor to persons in the community and informal relationships as friend and neighbour. To superimpose either of these upon the other leads to confused relationships, which are filled with misunderstanding, anxiety and distortions. Spiritual conversation takes place under responsibly intimate and emotionally

healthy conditions. Otherwise, real hindrances to a genuine 'meeting of minds' arise between pastor and the person who needs his understanding concerning his 'conversation' of life. Structuring entails communicating simply to the client the exact nature of his responsibilities as a pastor. This means clarifying his responsibilities in terms of basic principles, and not simply in terms of techniques and means.
s.3. How the Relationship is Structured.

In his book 'Client-centred Therapy', Rogers casts severe doubts on the value of structuring the therapeutic relationship. In the chapter dealing with 'The Relationship as Experienced by the Client' he states, 'It would appear that real progress or movement in therapy is greatly facilitated when both client and counsellor are perceiving the relationship in similar fashion. How this is achieved is the question that must be continually raised. Our experience is clear on one point. The perception does not come by telling the client how he ought to experience the relationship. Meaningful perception is a matter of direct sensory experience, and it not only does not help but may hinder a unified perception if the therapist attempts to describe, intellectually, the character of the relationship or of the process'.

Now, a number of points can be made in answer to Rogers's low estimate of the positive value of structuring. For one thing, structuring does not entail 'telling the client how he ought to experience the relationship'. Structuring entails defining and explaining the helping situation. The client is made aware that the counsellor does not have the answer, but that the counselling situation does provide a setting where the client, with assistance, can work out his personal solution to his problems. The client is under no compulsion, but can use the situation as he wishes. Of course, intellectual explanation is not enough; the whole conduct and atmosphere of the counselling must reinforce this idea until the client

feels that it is a situation in which he is free to work out the solutions that he needs.

Again, Rogers overlooks the important function structuring serves in relation to the counsellor himself. It provides the counsellor with a framework within which he can feel free and secure. For example, if the counsellor fails to define clearly his own role and function within counselling, the result could be that a client's exorbitant demands could force him to become defensive, lest his desire to help should ensure him in the toils of a manipulative client.

It is more than doubtful whether the average client will so easily appreciate the aims, methods and limits of counselling as Rogers seems to imply. Indeed, it has been maintained that Rogers's depreciation of the value of structuring is the result of his counselling mainly among students. In such a setting, it is not so necessary to structure the relationship verbally; the client "gets the idea" as he participates in the process. However, this is not necessarily the case in other counselling settings. Most clients come into counselling with only vague ideas as to what it actually entails, and without some explanation they might very well find counselling confusing.

In structuring, it is not necessary for the counsellor to go into lengthy or detailed explanation of counselling methods. He should explain only those matters which are basic to the creation and maintenance of the relationship. Too thorough a structuring may encourage the client to become critical of the process and of the counsellor's methods.

No stereotyped method of structuring the relationship exists. There is a great need for the counsellor to remain sensitive to the progress of the client. In the early stages, structuring should be
used with caution. There is a danger of giving the client the impression that the counsellor has a rigid pre-determined plan which the client must follow.¹

(a.3.1) **Types of Structuring**

If we can regard the counselling relationship as a social situation in miniature, then the client must accept the limitations such a situation entails. These limitations are not detrimental to the progress of counselling, but are an essential and indispensable part of the process. We make a great mistake if we suppose that limits are a hindrance to counselling. They are one of the vital elements which make the therapeutic situation a microcosm in which the client can meet all the basic aspects which characterize life as a whole, where he can face them openly, and adapt himself to their constraint.

**Time Limits**

The counsellor's concern should be to encourage the client to use his interview time as positively as possible; and it has been generally proved that one way to do this is to limit the time available to the client.

**Time Limits of each Interview.**

The client is free to miss his appointment, waste it in idle talk, or use it to deal constructively with his problem. There is, however, one limitation which he must accept; he cannot gain extra time. Clients will often try to gain extra time by various stratagems. One favourite way is for a client to talk trivially for most of the interview, and then before the interview is over to raise a matter of obvious concern. Often, this is a bid for the counsellor's attention, or a testing of the counsellor's interest. There is a temptation here for the counsellor to give further time, either because of the point raised, or so as

not to disappoint the client. However, it cannot be too strongly stressed that to yield at this point may create greater difficulties later on, when, for example, requests for extra interview time become commoner and more insistent.

To maintain a limit on the time of each interview is to encourage the client to make the best possible use of each session.

**Time Limits of the total duration of Counselling**

It is difficult for the pastor to make long-range time commitments. Many of his counselling sessions are unplanned. To insist that all counselling be done on an appointment basis may cause parishioners to feel that a pastor is unapproachable. Again, to schedule his counselling may impose severe restrictions on the time available to meet his other duties.

It is better if the pastor arranges to meet his client for a definite number of sessions. He can offer to meet the client for a definite length of time each week for three weeks. He can make his offer in a form similar to the following: "I'll be pleased to see you for half-an-hour each week for three weeks to help you with your problem. At the end of that period, we'll see how things are getting along. I'm free at ..... Would that suit you?"

(a.3.2) **Role Limits**

Pastoral counselling takes place within the context of the Christian fellowship. The pastor is related to his people, not only as a representative of God, but also as a symbolic personification of the corporate intention of the church towards the individual.
The pastor performs his ministry of reconciliation, not only of man with God, but also of man with the body corporate of the specifically defined community, which is the church. The interacting field of the responsible Christian fellowship, therefore, gives pastoral counselling its meaning as the work of the body of Christ. The pastor of a church through his counselling activates the whole purpose of the church, which is 'the increase among men of the love of God and neighbour'. But more than that, it is the proclamation of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In a very real sense, the church is the counsellor. The minister, by reason of the role conferred upon him by the church, implements the purpose of the church.

These foregoing statements are necessary to emphasize that in his several roles—preacher, teacher, celebrant of the sacraments, and pastoral counsellor—the pastor is not serving several functions but one—'the building up of the body of Christ'. This can be called the implicit structure of the counselling relationship. As the representative counsellor of the Christian community, the pastor seeks to help his clients to progress in reaching toward 'the measure of the fulness of the stature of Christ'. It is this twofold context—the church and the Christian faith—which defines and sets the limits of pastoral counselling. If this had been borne in mind, we would have been spared the debate about the pastor's competence to counsel; about whether the pastoral counsellor can honestly use the techniques of modern psychotherapy, and especially the debate about how best to answer the strictures laid on pastors as counsellors, by caseworkers, psychotherapists, and others.

1. Ephesians, 4, 13.
If the pastor wishes to make explicit this basic element in his counselling, he must not do so in such a way that he surrenders its distinctiveness. His concern is not primarily to reconcile his counselling with other types of counselling, but to allow his own counselling to be informed by the apostolic witness to Jesus Christ. His key concepts must be God, sin, salvation, redemption and Christian fellowship.

But because pastors have several interrelated roles in the life of a parishioner, he must formally structure the counselling relationship. There are two main reasons for this requirement. First, the methods and procedures suitable in one role cannot be used indiscriminately in others. A good example of this is the contrast between the techniques of preaching and counselling. In preaching verbalization is the standard norm; in counselling, verbalizing by the pastor is strictly controlled. Secondly, clients require to be informed that the procedures of one role cannot be transferred unmodified to another role. 

The pastor's role as a counsellor is often confused and undefined because of his involvement with his counsellors as neighbour and brotherly in both the informal and formal relationships of the pastoral community. The pastor has a certain role in the person's life that may or may not be clear to him when that person, in the exigency of a moment, calls upon him for counselling help. This role is undefined in the confused and anxious mind of the counsellor. The pastoral counsellor must develop a great deal of canniness in clearly understanding himself and in communicating simply to the counsellor the exact nature of his responsibilities,
as a pastor at any given moment. Therefore, a pastor needs to know when and when not to activate the more formal dimensions of his task as a minister, particularly at the point of structuring or defining a counselling relationship. When he does this well, he demonstrates skill in clarifying, both in his own mind, and in that of his parishioner, the exact character of their relationship. Often failures in communication between pastor and parishioner, pastor and church, and pastor and the other professional people in the community are caused by the pastor's lack of clarity as to his own identity as a counsellor.

(a.3.3) Procedural or Process Limits

If counselling is to succeed, the client must understand and accept the nature and limits of the process of counselling.

The Limits of a Professional Relationship

Since the counselling relationship is professional in character, there is a limit to the extent to which a counsellor can become emotionally involved with the client. The counsellor tries to the best of his ability to give the help the client has asked for, and he respects the rights of others who may be involved, e.g. probation officer. But there is a strict limit to the amount of affection the counsellor can give to the client. He has to accept that he is a subjective object in the client's life, while at the same time keeping both feet on the ground. This is one of the most demanding aspects of pastoral care. The pastor, because he is inevitably an authority figure, will encounter it in all his work, and it is usually intensified in situations requiring counselling.

2. Ibid., p.155.
The love the pastor gives in response is comprised of interest and concern for the client as a person.

Ingham and Love give a number of process values which should be conveyed to the client in the verbal structuring remarks, and also exemplified in the attitudes of the counsellor.

'......that it is appropriate and good to investigate ourselves'. This process value suggests that we need not be at the mercy of our impulses, and that an investigation of the springs of our behaviour can increase our self-awareness and rational control of our actions.

'......that it is better to investigate than to blame'. This process value emphasizes that the counsellor does not moralize about the client's communication. In the accepting atmosphere of the counselling relationship, the client does not need to be defensive or assign false values to his feelings and actions. 'To regard emotion as a real and important thing'. The aim of this value is to encourage the client to see his feelings as the source of his actions.

'...... that there must be relatively complete freedom of expression'. The counsellor does not coerce the client to talk about particular subjects. No subject is taboo; for it is the emotional significance of a subject, and not its social acceptability, which should determine the client's choice. '..the use of investigation of the past in developing an understanding of the present'. Because of the real limitation on his time and training, the pastoral counsellor deliberately deals with current problems in living and with conscious
and preconscious material. Though he does not, however, deal directly with unconscious factors, awareness of such determinants of behaviour can be very useful.

Usually the client's assets are mentioned in structuring. These assets include his experience, his ability to help himself, his capacity, though frustrated, to form need-satisfying relationships.

(B) Client Problems in the Relationship

Apart from Group Counselling, counselling is an interaction between two individuals; and the relationship is the sum total of all that happens between client and counsellor - all the verbal and non-verbal communication of attitudes, thoughts, and feelings - everything in fact that both contribute to the relationship, whether overt, or covert, or devious.

In this section the intention is to examine the client's contribution to the relationship, and in particular to isolate for examination those elements which influence, and often control, his contribution. These elements arise either within the counsellor himself or are indigenous to the counselling situation. Of course, these two sets of factors are in reality inseparable, and constantly influence each other in counselling. 'The counsellor may apply counselling techniques with all the wisdom and skill at his command; but he must recognize that certain phenomena, indigenous to the counselling process, occasionally limit his efforts'. Those phenomena on the client's side which exert this restraint on the counselling progress are referred to as transference and resistance. These concepts are not only central to psychotherapy, but are also of considerable consequence in all counselling, and so to pastoral counselling as well.

Definition of Transference.
(b.1.) In Psycho-analysis

According to Freud transference is the sine qua non of therapy. It is supposed to be an active element in all interpersonal relationships, and in

analysis it is directed by the patient towards the person of the therapist. By transference is meant a striking peculiarity of neurotics. They develop towards their physician emotional relations, both of an affectionate and hostile character, which are not based upon the actual situation, but are derived from their relations towards their parents (Oedipus complex)\(^1\). Classical psycho-analysis regards transference as a proof that adults have not overcome their former childish dependence; and it is only by making use of it that the physician is enabled to induce the patient to overcome his internal resistances, and do away with his repressions. The patient enters actively into a relationship or series of relationships with the therapist. He casts the therapist in a number of roles, often transferring to him a number of responses and attitudes that originated in other situations. This casting of the therapist in several roles is possible because of his symbolic character as an authority figure and 'healer'. The therapist uses these transference reactions as a means to help the patient to gain insight into his maladjustments\(^2\).

The basic Freudian understanding of transference has been somewhat modified by the neo-Freudians. In particular Freud's teaching that all our relationships with other people, and in particular the doctor/patient relationships, are determined and patterned by our early relationships with significant people in our environment has been significantly elaborated. 'It is true that the patterns of our later interpersonal relationships are formed in our early lives, repeated in our later lives, and can be understood through the medium of

2. J.A.C. Brown, 'Freud and the Post-Freudians', Ch.1-2; and also C.F. Menninger, 'Theory of Psychoanalytic Technique', pp.77-84.
their repetition with people in general and through the mutual aspects of the doctor/patient relationship in particular. There is, however, a danger in carrying this insight too far." Fromm-Reichmann gives the following elaboration of the 'orthodox' position on transference in classical psycho-analysis:

'The study of past relationships should not lead the psychiatrist to neglect the significance of the vicissitudes of the doctor-patient relationship. To study just the 'repetitional' characteristics of this relationship is to overlook the pertinent facts of the actual experience between therapist and patient.'

It is now generally accepted that the reactions of the patient may not be 'repetitional' but based on the actual relationship between doctor and patient. '....if the oedipus complex is not considered universal, and if the unresolved oedipus constellation is not an ubiquitous etiological factor in the pathology of mental disorders, then it follows that there is no reason always to find oedipal love and hatred for the psychiatrist in the interpretative picture'. '....... the wish for closeness and tenderness with the beloved parent, and the envious resentment of the authoritative power of the hated one, both without recognizable sexual roots, constitute a more frequent finding in childhood histories of healthy, neurotic and psychotic people, than do their sexual oedipal entanglements with the parents of their childhood.'

2. Ibid., p. 97ff.
3. Ibid., p. 99.
4. Ibid., p. 99.
In Rogerian or 'Non-directive' Therapy

Rogers in 'Client-Centred Therapy' states 'as we examine our clinical experience in client-centred therapy, and our recorded cases, it would appear correct to say that strong attitudes, of a transference nature, occur in a relatively small minority of cases, but that such attitudes occur in some degree in a majority of cases. With many clients the attitudes towards the counsellor are mild and of a reality, rather than transference, nature. Thus such a client may feel somewhat apprehensive about first meeting the counsellor; may feel annoyed in early interviews that he does not receive the guidance he expected; may feel a warm rapport with the counsellor as he works through his own attitudes; leaves therapy with gratitude to the counsellor for having provided him with the opportunity to work out things for himself, but not with a dependent or strong gratitude, and can meet the counsellor socially or professionally, during or after therapy, with little affect beyond what is normally involved in the immediate reality of their relationship. This would seem to describe for many, perhaps for a majority of our clients, the affect that is directed towards the counsellor. If one's definition of transference includes all affect towards others, then this is transference: if the definition being used is the transfer of infantile attitudes to a present relationship, then very little, if any, transference is present. Rogers maintains that transference feelings only develop when the client perceives that the counsellor understands him better than he understands himself. Thus transference, whether in the form of hostility or dependence, depends on the degree of threat involved for the client in the relationship.

In Pastoral Counselling

Whether one accepts the fully psycho-analytic position on the nature of transference or not, transference, understood as unrealistic and inappropriate behaviour directed to another person, does occur in pastoral counselling. It does occur in everyday life, but usually not in such an intense or pronounced form as sometimes happens in a person-to-person helping relationship. In pastoral counselling, transference can be defined as the projection of the client’s past or present unresolved and unrecognised attitudes towards authority and love figures; in this instance, towards the counsellor.

In pastoral counselling, transference can be used to describe how the client views the counsellor, his role, and the counselling process. The probability of therapeutic movement in a particular case depends primarily not upon the counsellor’s personality, nor upon his techniques, nor even upon his attitudes, but upon the way all these are experienced by the client in the relationship. The way the client experiences the relationship, is largely determined by his expectations. He may expect the pastor to be a parental figure who will take over the guidance of his life; or he may expect him to be an advice-giver, and this advice may be genuinely and dependently desired, or it may be desired in order that the client can prove it wrong. Again, he may expect, and indeed want, the counsellor to be a moralizer who will castigate him for his alleged moral lapses. The pastor is unique among counsellors in his socially defined role....

those who seek his help perceive him as a religious authority figure, the leader of a religious community,

and a symbolic representative of the values and beliefs of his traditions. This means that he is a religious 'transference figure' i.e. one whose symbolic role stirs up in persons a rich variety of early life feelings and associations. In his presence, people may experience a welter of these feelings, including feelings about such matters as parents, God, heaven, hell.....

Here should be added the caveat that the client's reactions to the counsellor and his institutional role might be very normal, social reactions to what the counsellor is, says, or does.

(b.3) Types of Transference.

In counselling literature, three types of transference feelings are distinguished.

Positive Transference

Here the client's previous experience with 'authority figures' and the counsellor's symbolic role are the key factors. Positive transference may make the client submissive, ingratiating, co-operative, affectionate, or dependent.

Negative Transference

If the counsellor appears as rejecting, judgmental, or a domineering 'figure', the client may react with aggressive, critical or unco-operative feelings.

Ambivalent Transference

According to Freud, in all transference there are negative and positive elements. The pastor should be aware that any feeling may be accompanied by its opposite - though repressed. For example, depth psychology has shown that dependent clients resent their dependence.2

1. H.J. Clinebell, 'Basic Types of Pastoral Counselling', p. 50.
(b.4) Methods for dealing with Transference.

In psycho-analysis, dealing with the 'transference neurosis' (its resolution) is the main objective of the therapy. The patient transfers his intra-psychic conflicts into the inter-personal relationship between himself and the therapist, in such a way that it repeats his other neurotic relationships past and present. The transference is used as a medium of therapy.

In client-centred therapy, the counsellor deals with transference feelings in the way he deals with all reactions of the client: he tries to understand and accept. 'It would seem that what occurs is exactly parallel to all other unrealistically hostile, fearful, loving attitudes which the client brings out. In this relationship the experience of the client seems to be, "This is the way I have perceived and interpreted reality; but in this relationship, where I have no need of defending this interpretation, I can recognize that there are other sensory evidences which I have not admitted into consciousness, or have admitted but interpreted inaccurately". By re-perceiving his experience more accurately and fully the client finds that his previous perceptions were distorted, and so his 'transference attitudes' disappear because they are now meaningless.

In view of the fact that transference feelings develop in all counselling, the pastor must be particularly careful that he does not allow a deep transference relationship to develop. 'Either positive or negative 'transference' attachments can be emotionally demanding, even if they are not jeopardising to the minister's reputation'. This applies in particular in counselling

those who hold a prominent place in the power structure of the church.

The pastor is particularly dependent on a relationship of mutual trust and acceptance. His effectiveness as a counsellor can be considerably undermined by strong transference feelings. He does not depend on transference feelings in his work, yet he must be sensitive to their presence, and also know how to deal with their 'interference'.

Transference arises because of a failure to develop, and because the present is being distorted by past experience. The pastor's concern is to help the client to mature, and the best way to do so is to help the client to see what is actually happening in the present relationship. 'Going back to early life—roots of problems usually is not essential (even if possible) in order to increase the constructiveness of relationships. Those aspects of the past which are important are not really past. They are observable to the trained eye in the way that they distort here-and-now relationships. If necessary, the still living past can be dealt with as it is projected on the screen of current relationships'.

There are two methods which are very useful in dealing with 'transference feelings': reflection of feeling and acceptance. By means of these approaches, the client comes to perceive that the real source of these feelings resides within himself, and that they arise because his perception of the present relationship is distorted by his own attitudes.

Structuring serves to prevent reinforcement of transference attitudes. The dependent client will try to hand over decisions to the counsellor; the manipulative client will try to gain 'overtime;' the hostile client will try to remain aloof and unco-operative.

1. Ibid., pp.35-36.
By structuring the relationship, the counsellor encourages the client to become involved in his problems, and to face his need for gaining a new perspective on his relationship.¹

Resistance has not yet received the independent consideration in the literature dealing with pastoral counselling that its importance deserves. Much of the phenomena of resistance is discussed under such subjects as client perception of the counselling relationship, acceptance, and the permissive, non-judgmental atmosphere in counselling.

In psycho-analysis

In psycho-analysis resistance is a dynamic process, and is defined as 'the reactivation outside of the patient's awareness, of the motivating powers which were responsible for the mental patient's original pathogenic, dissociative and repressive processes. This resistance manifests itself in the course of the psychotherapeutic process as reluctance against relevant communication, and against interpretative clarifications or its possible concomitant therapeutic changes. The same source which motivated the patient's original dissociative and repressive processes, that is, his anxiety, is also the main reason for their resistance'. In psycho-analysis, resistance is a protective device.

In Client-Centred Therapy

This type of therapy does not regard resistance as an inevitable part of therapy, nor indeed a desirable part, but that it grows primarily out of poor techniques of handling the client's expression of his problem and feelings. More specifically, it grows out of unwise attempts on the part of the counsellor to short-cut the therapeutic process by bringing into the discussion emotionalized attitudes which the client is not yet ready to face.

In Pastoral Counselling

One of the principal realities in building and maintaining an effective counselling relationship which must be dealt with is resistance. It can be defined as a characteristic of the client's defence system which opposes the purposes of counselling.

Unlike psycho-analysis, pastoral counselling regards resistance as an obstacle to progress. These obstacles are within the client himself, but their presence may be due to either internal or external factors.

Internal Factors

Certain internal factors create resistance in the client because they are perceived as threatening. He may not be prepared, as yet, to face painful experiences, to explore the possible consequences of a course of action, or to make a decision which entails changes. In our culture, many find it difficult to express sexual feelings of affection and attachment, or feelings of anger and hostility. The reasons for this reluctance seem to be determined by our cultural standards. To go against our internalized standards creates guilt, fear of rejection, and anxiety.

External Factors

How the client perceives the counsellor and the process and context of counselling is a vital factor in creating resistance. The client is unable to view the counsellor objectively and interpret his motives, action, and character as they really are. He distorts what the pastor says and does, so as to fit this subjective picture of him and is constantly seeking motives in him which are not there.
counselling is not ordinarily a matter of building a relationship from scratch on the part of people who have not seen each other before and will not do so again. Instead, it is a matter of creating, out of a previous general pastor-parishioner relationship, a special temporary, helping relationship, with the recognition that, upon the conclusion of the special and temporary relationship, the general relationship will be resumed. The fact that clients see their pastors in non-counselling roles may make them reluctant, for instance, to reveal embarrassing problems. They may fear that the pastor will be disappointed or condemn them for 'their revelations'.

The pastor's final aim is the 'total redemption' of the 'total person'. But he must accept certain limitations. He cannot accept full responsibility for another's life. Again, he must accept the limitations of his time and training.

Clients may well want him 'to play God' in their lives; to take over their decisions, and to solve their problems. The pastor must resist this demand. This self-imposed limitation may create resistance in the client when his wishes go unmet. Again, faulty methods and techniques on the part of the counsellor can create resistance. Examples of these include missing the full range of the client's verbal and non-verbal communications; forcing the client to face emotionally significant problems before he is ready to do so; or giving premature interpretations which create anxiety.

(b.9) Types of Resistance

Resistance can take many forms. The following list gives a sample of the more common forms:

Negative Types:
(a) Intellectual discussion of the problem;
(b) introducing irrelevant material into the discussion;
(c) criticizing the counsellor and counselling;
(d) terminating counselling prematurely.

Positive Types:
(a) maintaining a detached attitude to the problem; (b) readiness to accept counsellor’s suggestions and interpretation; (c) attempting to make counsellor wholly responsible for progress.

(b.10) Counsellor’s Methods for dealing with Resistance

When resistance is not interfering seriously with counselling, it can be safely disregarded. This would apply to resistance in the early stages of counselling. Resistance at all stages, however, is an indication of client anxiety, and should serve as a warning to the counsellor to 'highlight' the positive, safe, non-threatening aspects of the counselling relationship.

As resistance can be the direct result of faulty methods on the part of the counsellor, he should maintain a constant watch over his methods and over the client’s reactions.

The pastor’s concern is to give the client a safe environment in which he can face and deal with his problem. If it is agreed that resistance is caused by client anxiety, then he should be offered acceptance. Acceptance is the most supporting thing.

the counsellor can offer, since it creates a sense of security, as the client realises that his feelings are not rejected as shameful or threatening.

The Counsellor can also explain to the client the nature and function of his resistance. But as the pastor is not concerned to interpret deep, unconscious material, his explanation should be based on what the client has actually communicated.

Ex.

Cl: I just can't talk about it.

C: You feel it is too painful for you to face. Perhaps you can see you are avoiding it for some reason.

Cl: Yes - perhaps we'll come back to it later. ¹

¹. Ibid., pp.236-239.
(C) Countertransference.

If we define counselling as 'the interpersonal vocation', it follows that the counsellor's contribution to the relationship can be distorted by his emotional immaturities, frustrations, anxieties and conflicts. In his counselling, the counsellor is not a 'neutral observer'. He brings to his task not only his own distinctive contribution of personal qualities of maturity, insight and integrity, but also his personal immaturities. The relationship in counselling is a 'transferential relationship'; and the psychological needs of the pastoral counsellor, as well as the needs of the client, can contribute to the overall 'transferential' aspects of the counselling. The counsellor too can act unrealistically and inappropriately in the relationship.

In the counselling literature, such unrealistic and inappropriate responses on the part of the counsellor are called 'counter-transferences'.

(c.l.) What is countertransference?

The term has no standard, uniform meaning. Freud was the first to note that the phenomenon of countertransference arises in the physician as a result of the patient's influence on his (the analyst's) unconscious feelings. We have noted that every counsellor's achievement is limited by what his own complexes and resistances permit.\(^1\)

Karl Menninger refers to counter transference as the 'adventitious, unintentional and involuntary participations'\(^2\) made by the therapist in therapy. He warns that the psycho-analyst himself has an unconscious and that he, too, has a persistent temptation

to indulge in infantile techniques and objectives, magical thinking and the like.

Alexander and French regard countertransference as including all attitudes towards the client. Winnicott in an article in the International Journal of Psychoanalysis gives the term a meaning which is at the opposite end of the scale to the classical Freudian definition. He regards countertransference as the normal reactions of the therapist to the bizarre and anti-social behaviour of his patient. Brammer and Shostrom define the phenomenon of countertransference as 'the conscious and unconscious attitudes of the counsellor towards real or imagined client attitudes or overt behaviour.'

In pastoral counselling countertransference can be defined as 'unrealistic and inappropriate responses directed to the client by the counsellor'. These responses are made to the client as a result of the unresolved problems, anxieties, and frustrations of the counsellor. The counsellor uses the communications of the client as a means of self-referral. Consequently, the pastor relates to the client in terms of his own life experience.

(c.2) Signs of Countertransference.

The client's communications may create fear and anxiety in the counsellor. Because the pastoral counsellor finds his own negative feelings reverberating to those of his client, he may give premature reassurance to the client, change the subject or take control of the interview.

1. Ibid., p.84.
2. F. Alexander and T.M. French, 'Psychoanalytic Therapy.'
The pastor may find a client a source of personal satisfaction. He may find emotional satisfaction in a client's life story of success and prestige, marital contentment or other forms of personal fulfilment. Of course, countertransference may also appear when the client relates a life-story of defeat and disappointment.

Domination of the client by the counsellor is also evidence of the operation of countertransference. We are speaking of the manipulation of the client by the counsellor through a taking over of his power for self-direction. The counsellor may make the client dependent on him, or may ask that the client consult him before he does anything of importance, whatsoever. Outwardly, there may be a great show of giving himself over to the service of the client. In reality, the client is prevented from achieving growth, because he is being used by the counsellor to satisfy his need to dominate.

These are some of the ways in which countertransference may be manifested in counselling. They have one factor in common: the counsellor responds to the client in terms of his own needs, rather than in terms of the needs of the client.¹

(c.3) Results of Countertransference.

Countertransference prevents empathic listening and understanding of the client. The counsellor's listening is determined by his own needs, and so he misses many of the cues provided by the client.

experience is being interpreted in terms which are alien to his own feelings.  

(c.4) **Dealing with Countertransference.**  

Being able to form a helping relationship with another depends on forming a 'helping relationship with myself'. Rogers repeatedly emphasizes the fundamental importance of inner maturity in the counsellor, if he is to help others in counselling. 'The degree to which I can create relationships which facilitate the growth of others as separate persons, is a measure of the growth I have achieved myself'. Countertransference tendencies are operative in all relationships. The fundamental issue is whether they are allowed to control the counsellor's response or not. A certain degree of maturity in the counsellor is a protection against the unfavourable influence of countertransference on the progress of counselling. Countertransference tendencies can be operative in the relatively mature counsellor as well as in the immature. Humility and rugged honesty work for the counsellor's awareness of such tendencies in himself. Awareness must be followed by control of the tendencies, if they are not to interfere with the counselling relationship. If the counsellor finds it difficult to control such tendencies, he should consult a psychotherapist. Consultation can help him to deal with them adequately. If after consultation they still continue to interfere, then the pastor should resort to referral for the welfare of the client.

A quotation from Frieda Fromm-Reichmann will serve as an admirable conclusion to this discussion of countertransference. 'If it is true that the therapist must avoid reacting to the patient's data in terms of his own life-experience, this means that he must have enough sources of satisfaction and security in his non-professional life to forgo the temptation of using his patients for the pursuit of personal satisfaction and security. If he has not been successful in securing the personal fulfilsments in his life which he wanted and needs, he should realise this. His attitude towards the sources of dissatisfaction and unhappiness in his life must then be clarified and integrated to the extent that they do not interfere with his emotional stability, and with his ability to concentrate upon listening to the patient.'

D.

There remain two matters which require a fairly detailed examination under the subject of countertransference: (1) the alleged authoritarian and (2) judgmental attitudes of the pastor. One finds it taken for granted in a great deal of counselling literature that the pastor will find it particularly difficult to divest himself of the authoritarian and judgmental attitudes in his counselling. This view has led some commentators to the conclusion that the pastor cannot be a successful counsellor in any significant sense. It has been found from much experience that the successful counsellor must dissociate himself from authoritarianism whether of an official or functional kind; and since the pastor has to appear as an authority in many of his roles and functions, this is thought by some — including religious writers1 — to debar him from becoming a good counsellor. The same reasoning is also used to disqualify the pastor from the ranks of good counsellors, on account of his judgmental attitudes.

These issues will be examined under the following 'heads'.

(d.1) The Conflict between the Authoritative and
Authoritarian conception of the Pastor's Office
and the non-Authoritarian Approach in Counselling.

(d.2) The Conflict between the Judgmental Attitude
and the Permissive Attitude required in Counselling.

(d.1) The Authoritative and Authoritarian Approach

against the Non-Authoritarian

The word 'authority' has a number of meanings, and it is easy to slip unwittingly from one meaning to

1. F.S. Lee, 'Principles of Pastoral Counselling',
the other. For our purpose, it is better to examine the various ways the pastor can be called 'an authority'.

(d.1.1) He is 'an authority' on account of his Office in the Church and Society.

The Minister is an authority figure because he is duly appointed to carry out certain functions and duties. These include preaching, teaching, conducting worship, and pastoral care of a parish and congregation. We should also recognize that the authority conferred by this functional role derives not only from his status within a local parish and congregation, but also from his official, functional and representational role within his communion. In all his duties he speaks as a representative of the church that calls and ordains him to the ministry.

But there is another aspect to his authority as a functionary of the Church. The pastor is appointed to his office by the laws and customs accepted by his Church. However, this act of appointment is also the making effective of his calling by God to this office. This two-fold aspect of the pastor's office must be kept in mind when considering his authority which derives from his appointment as an official or functionary of the church.

Now, some writers maintain that this functional role, if considered the essence of his ministry, comes into conflict with his work as a counsellor. This is so, they argue, because in his functional role he is an impersonal, authoritative representative, whereas in his counselling he is required to create a warm, personal relationship between himself and his clients. There is also the added difficulty that he cannot be divested in the eyes of his clients of his authoritative role.
The most explicit statement of this position is found in R.S. Lee's book, 'Principles of Pastoral Counselling'. The following quote is a fairly extensive passage from this book, dealing with the pastor as confessor: "The confessor is a functionary or agent in virtue of his office as a minister of the church. He also acts as the agent of God in the same office. He is, therefore, particularly in the eyes of the client, both an authoritative and authority figure. He is also an individual person, but usually what he is as a person is irrelevant to the declaration of forgiveness to the penitent......his attitude of love, understanding, and compassion has a marked healing effect upon the penitent, but even this he exercises as belonging to his office. He strives to be impersonal. The counsellor, on the other hand, acts as a person and enters into a personal, not impersonal, relationship with his client.....It is true also that the client is likely to see the counsellor as an authority figure, a parental substitute, but this is an unconscious attitude, part of his immaturity, which should be dissolved if the counselling develops successfully.....there are movements in all churches to make liturgical confession a more personal relationship and to associate it more closely with counselling.1"

There are a number of questions which this paragraph raises. For instance, we must ask whether the pastor's personal qualities are irrelevant to his declaration of forgiveness. Lee himself gives an emphatic 'no' in an earlier passage. 'The second way in which the practice of confession is beneficial is that the penitent is brought into an environment of

love, understanding, and acceptance. This is manifested in the confessor first of all, and his love reflects and conveys the love of God. Thus by this encounter the penitent is given two things he needs: first a human relationship in which he is accepted with love and second the assurance of God's love. This passage makes it clear that the confessor, though an authoritative and authority figure, can enter into a warmly loving and accepting relationship with the penitent. The pastor's position of authority in the church and the lives of members of his congregation does not prevent him from creating human relationships which provide an environment in which people can experience the love of God. Thus there is the closest possible links between what the pastor and his office as a minister of the church. A fundamental contradiction at this point would destroy the effectiveness of his work as a pastor. We would agree with Lee that the pastor exercises his personal qualities of love, understanding and compassion as a functionary and agent of the church; but these qualities are not the fruits of the office, but the necessary qualification for admission to the office of the ministry.

Again, Lee states that a client may regard the counsellor as an authority figure, a parent substitute, but that this is a sign of his immaturity. Granted; but what about the penitent's attitude to his confessor as an authoritative and authority figure? Are there no immature elements in the penitent's attitude? "When he comes to the pastor the adult

1. Ibid., p.116.
in him will present the case in terms of the problem which has precipitated his need, but his emotional attitudes to the pastor will be dominated by the infantile aspect of the personality. He will tend to treat the pastor as a parent surrogate, and adopt towards him the attitudes of a young child to his parents, dependence and love, fear and rebelliousness. He will unconsciously seek from the pastor the satisfaction he failed to get from his parents.

How is the pastor to foster the abandonment of such infantile attitudes? ... 'the pastor will treat each of them as an individual person in need of his help, and establish with each the healing, personal relationship which it is within his power to give and which is his function as pastor.' Here we find Lee emphasizing again the importance of the pastor's personal qualities in his work, and also the pastor's special qualifications and obligation, as a representative of God and the church, to offer such help. In other words, in his work the pastor remains an authority figure by virtue of his calling and qualifications.

Earlier in the book, Lee writes, '.....the successful counsellor has to divest himself of authoritarainism, whether of an official or functional character....' and speaking of pastors, he writes, 'He may become so skilled that he can completely divest himself of authoritarainism, if counselling seems to be needed. Better still, he may find that he can free himself in all his work from the authoritarainist attitude.....' It is significant that the pastor is not recommended to cease to be an

1. Ibid., pp.31-32.
2. Ibid., p.60.
3. Ibid., p.9.
4. Ibid., p.10.
authority figure, but to divest himself of authoritarianism in all his work. Some psychotherapists charge that religion and pastors often foster emotional immaturity, childish dependency, and lack of inner freedom by making conformity to a theological and ethical 'party-line' the all-exclusive goal. The individual is deprived of the possibility of growth, through working out his own salvation.

Unfortunately, this is a valid accusation when applied to religious approaches which are based on irrational authority. Authoritarianism, in whatever form, develops fear, submissiveness, dependence and guilt. But the antidote to authoritarianism is not for the pastor to divest himself of his legitimate authority, but to ensure that in all his dealings with others, his exercise of authority is based on competence, understanding and compassion. The fundamental weakness in Lee's book is that he does not allow that the pastor can remain an authority figure in counselling without destroying the essential human qualities of the relationship.

(d.1.2) Sapiental Authority

Sapiental authority is the authority derived from the pastor's training and experience. His training and subsequent experience should give him knowledge and wisdom to qualify him in those areas proper to his work. To some extent, the pastor is unique among the counsellors in his training. Unlike most counsellors, he is trained in theology, philosophy, and psychology of religious experience. This training should equip him to be of special help to those whose problems lie in an unsuccessful search for a philosophy of life which could give meaning to their existence; and should also equip him to develop expertise in facilitating growth in inter-personal relationships.
One of the jagged-edged problems that cuts its way into much discussion on pastoral counselling concerns the competence of the pastor, especially regarding his equipment and training as counsellor. Much of the criticism of his qualifications is based on criteria that are external to the ministry itself. The tacit assumption is that a full training in psychology and sociology would qualify him to work as a pastoral counsellor, and to meet the needs which are presented to the pastor. But in essence, the demand that the pastor qualify in another profession is begging the question of the adequacy of his own education as a minister. His training should equip him to implement his explicit role as a minister. The minister's insecurity lies not so much in his lack of preparation in other disciplines, such as psychology and sociology, as in his lack of clarity of, and respect for, his own identity as a minister. Obviously the challenge here for the pastoral counsellor is to develop an understanding of counselling that is intrinsic to the distinctive principles of our faith, and that will issue in a clear and confident sense of his own identity as a man of God in Christ.

Pastoral counselling has been greatly influenced by the Rogerian client-centred approach to counselling. Here the emphasis is on the concepts of passivity, acceptance, and permissiveness. Adopting these techniques often uncritically has meant that clergy have felt obliged to conceal their special training and knowledge in order not to appear authoritarian. Pastors were not to direct, advise or inspire in their counselling. It is now generally accepted 'that it is often constructive, even essential, for the pastor to use his authority selectively in
sustaining, guiding, inspiring, confronting, teaching, encouraging persons to function responsibly. The authority derived from the minister's knowledge, skill and role is an invaluable asset in counselling, provided he knows how to use it appropriately.

The distinction drawn by Erich Fromm between rational and irrational authority is valid here. All of us need rational authority, that is, authority based on knowledge and competence. This was the authority with which Jesus spoke. His competence in spiritual matters was self-evident. His grasp of the truth was unmistakably authentic. This was in sharp contrast to the irrational authority of the scribes and pharisees. Theirs was an authority based on status and power over others.

d.1.3 Moral and Spiritual Authority

The pastor carries out his counselling in the context of his work in a parish and congregation. Like the family doctor, but unlike most professional counsellors, the minister normally has a wealth of ongoing, established relationships. In many cases these provide a solid foundation for counselling, allowing progress to be made by the person in much less time than would be required to 'start from scratch' in a counselling relationship. The pastor's ongoing, day-to-day relationships with members of his congregation of all ages, in light and shadow, in sickness and health, through times of adversity and times of success, are a major advantage over other counsellors, which he should use to the full. As he carries out his pastoral duties, as individuals and families benefit from his guidance, advice and ministry, he earns the warm trust and affection of his congregation.

This is an aspect of the pastor's authority in counselling which is often overlooked. Parishioners come to their ministers for counselling because they have previously proved themselves understanding and receptive in other relationships.1

The Conflict between the Judgemental attitude and the Permissive Attitude in Counselling.

'From a psychological point of view, one may judge the client to be immature, because of the complete lack of social feeling, and the absence of any interest in, or regard for, the personality of his partner. From a moralistic point of view, one may evaluate the client as amoral in his attitudes and unconventional or even antisocial in his behaviour. But from a therapeutic point of view, such evaluations and judgments are not made. It is the therapist's function not to pass judgment, but to clarify and objectify the client's basic attitudes, in order that the client himself may decide whether they are in line with his own life goals. To take such an approach involves a deep respect for the autonomy and integrity of the individual. It involves a belief in the right of each individual to self-determination.2' The views expressed in this passage from Rogers' book, 'Counselling and Psychotherapy', have had a deep and pervasive influence on all 'schools of counselling', including pastoral counselling. Although, as we shall see later, the extreme Rogerian or client-centred position on the non-judgmental attitude required of the counsellor has undergone considerable revision, nevertheless it served the counselling

fraternity well in showing the deleterious effects of the judgmental or moralistic attitudes on the process of counselling.

The judgmental or moralistic attitude is the product of an authoritarian conscience. It manifests itself particularly in concern over ethical trivia, feelings and impulses which are taboo in one's culture, and also in applying rigid moral standards to the complexity of behaviour. Its concern is not to understand behaviour but to judge its rightness or wrongness. By making an idol of conformity to a set of ethical strictures, it creates guilt, resentment, and blocks growth to maturity.

Having recognized the real dangers created by the judgmental attitude, are we then in full agreement with the position explained by Rogers in our quotation at the beginning of this section? By no means: for one of the significant developments in recent psychotherapy and counselling is the recognition given to the positive contribution made in therapy by the values of the therapist. Counsellors now advocate the technique of rejecting the client's irresponsible behaviour, and of facing him with the consequences of his unrealistic actions.¹ This is not the old authoritarian and judgmental attitudes in a new guise. Alongside this new emphasis on confrontation, there is found an uncompromising rejection of vertical authoritarianism, moralistic preachments and hostile attacks indulged in under the cloak of 'righteous indignation'. 'The therapist must reject the behaviour which is unrealistic but still accept the patient and

still maintain his involvement with him¹.

There appear to be three basic reasons for this new approach. One reason is the recognition that unqualified permissiveness, rather than express the counsellor's regard for his client, may well express his indifference. It may convey the impression that the counsellor does not expect much of the client. To love a person implies to care, and to feel responsible for his life, not only for his physical existence but for the growth and development of all his human powers.²

Another reason is the conviction that 'morals, standards, values, or right and wrong behaviour are all intimately related to the fulfilment of our need for self-worth'³. Self respect comes through self-discipline and loving care for others.

Again, it is now increasingly realised that the transmission of human values is unavoidable in the close human relationship of counselling. Sullivan even went so far as to claim that the therapist's personal values and attitudes towards life influence his professional work as much as his skills and training⁴. And Karl Menninger wrote, 'We cannot ignore the fact that what the psycho-analyst believes, what he lives for, what he loves, what he considers to be good and what he considers to be evil, become known to the patient, and influence him enormously not as 'suggestion' but as inspiration⁵.

4. H.S. Sullivan, 'Psychiatric Interview';
When we turn to pastoral counselling, we find a similar emphasis on the values of confrontation in counselling. 'If his acceptance of their feelings is mistakenly seen by them as condoning their person hurting behaviour, they will be confused and let down by him. The minister should never be timid in counselling about what he regards as right'.

'The pastoral counsellor's mood then is one of patience, not indifference. His own permissiveness gushes forth from the depth of his own specific, clear and conscious memory of having been justified by faith, and that without deserving it himself. His law is neither the forensic meditations of canonical lawyers through the ages, nor a perfectly restored sacred canon. His passion is to fulfil the law of Christ by restoring gently the one overtaken in a fault, looking to himself, lest he he also be tempted. He can be kind and tender-hearted, forgiving the brother because God, for Christ's sake, forgave him.'

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