

A CASE STUDY OF THE APPLICATION OF PLAY THERAPY
IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL SETTING TO A GRADE 3 STUDENT
WITH EMOTIONAL DIFFICULTIES

by

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B. A., San Diego State College, 1970

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS (EDUCATION)
in the Faculty
of
Education



David Todtman, 1984
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

February, 1984

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Degree: Master of Arts (Education)
Title of Thesis: A Case Study of the Application of Play
Therapy in a Public School Setting to a
Grade 3 Student with Emotional
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A Case Study of the Application of Play Therapy in a Public School

Setting to a Grade 3 Student with Emotional Difficulties

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ABSTRACT

A CASE STUDY OF THE APPLICATION OF PLAY THERAPY IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL SETTING TO A GRADE 3 STUDENT WITH EMOTIONAL DIFFICULTIES

The purpose of this study was to demonstrate through a case study approach, how certain counselling interventions were applied in a regular public school, outside of the classroom, to a primary grade child experiencing emotional difficulties.

The counselling approach involved play and play materials applied within a conceptual framework adapted from Erik Erikson's psychosocial model of development and Robert Carhuff's model of the counselling process. This investigation made use of the case study approach to demonstrate by extended example the application of clinical theory to counselling practice in the area of educational psychology.

The participant for the investigation was selected on the basis of the following criteria: (a) manifestations of behavior that was symptomatic of emotional difficulties; (b) academic performance considered to be below the child's capabilities; (c) the above conditions (a and b) were historical in nature, that is they had been ongoing through the child's previous academic career; (d) the difficulties (symptoms) were not derived from a primary physical cause of a type that would suggest medical treatment; (e) the child was nine years of age or

under, and (f) previous attempts to assist the child to overcome the difficulties appeared to have been ineffective.

After the child was selected his behavior was examined within the framework of Erik Erikson's model of psychosocial development. A diagnosis was generated which reflected the difficulties at each stage of psychosocial development. The diagnosis led to the formulation of a treatment plan. The treatment was carried on over a five-month period of time. Anecdotal records were kept of the application of both the treatment interventions and observations of the child's behavior.

Behavioral change was measured through pre-and post-observations of academic performance and manifested symptoms. The findings showed that the child made gains in academic achievement levels and work habits. Socially, the child developed peer affiliations and showed a decrease in aggressiveness. Other findings indicated that the application of play therapy within a public school setting required some adjustments to traditional play therapy procedures to allay the concerns of non-involved school personnel. Although it was found that the child's school behavior improved, there were no gains reported in the child's home behavior. These findings led the investigator to conclude that a theoretical model for dealing with childrens' emotional difficulties ought to be expanded to include the child's primary social systems (e.g. his/her family) rather than the child alone, as the unit of treatment.

Do not mistake the
child for his symptom

Erik Erikson

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to acknowledge the assistance, encouragement, and faith given to me by my teachers, official and otherwise, in the preparation of this work.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this investigation was to demonstrate through a case study how certain counselling strategies were applied in a regular public school, outside of the classroom, to a primary grade child experiencing emotional difficulties.

To the sensitive observer of the children in a typical primary grade classroom, a wide range of behavior patterns and emotional states may be observed. If the educational environment provided by the teacher and the school is high quality, then in all probability the majority of the students might be seen to be coping well with the challenges of the classroom by meeting and putting to good use the intellectual and social opportunities that are present there.

In these same classrooms, however, there may be seen children who do not appear to fare as well. Through their behavior it may be presumed that some are struggling with emotional difficulties. Blackham (1967) writes about these youngsters: "children who are burdened with anxiety and self-doubt cannot devote themselves wholeheartedly to learning but must exhaust their energies in fighting the private battle that rages within themselves" (p. 2).

Blackham's main idea, that emotionally distressed

youngsters have difficulty committing themselves to learning, is important because it relates to underachievement. The research and clinical evidence on underachievement show that "much delayed and slow learning is caused by pupil's emotional and social problems" (Ketcham, 1965, p. 190). Furthermore, there is data that suggest that the underachievement patterns that do arise in individual children in the earlier grades will, if left unchecked, tend to continue throughout the later school experience (Shaw and McCuen, 1960, p. 107).

Although it may be important to consider the cost that these children pay in terms of their own personal distress, these issues might also be fruitfully viewed from the vantage point of the classroom as a whole. Through behavior, the emotionally troubled child "demands to be heard and consequently effects the entire classroom" (Blackham, 1967, p. 2). The effect of the demands is that the teacher must often spend disproportionately large amounts of time, both management and instructional, dealing with such a child, thus raising the possibility that other children may be shortchanged as a result.

When these costs are added up, educators often feel urged by the facts to take action. Frequently, however, the school's interventions may turn out to be custodial, i.e. primarily geared toward containing inappropriate behavior on a day-to-day basis. This sort of approach may not reduce the staggering costs that the children and the schools pay for the continuation of the emotional distress. Action that is geared toward understanding the distress and providing opportunities for growth

could make a difference.

As the evidence suggests that the distress and under-achievement patterns that are manifest in the primary grade child will persist throughout later years, it seems that there may be benefits if counselling efforts were focused on this younger group. However, if effective understanding and communication between the child and school counsellor is to take place then perhaps it ought to be in children's terms--in terms that are consistent with the manner in which children experience the world. Erikson (1963) pointed out "...that the child's play is the infantile form of the human ability to deal with experience" (p. 222). For the troubled child, the potential exists that in play the child may have the opportunity to work out and solve the thorny issues of his or her life (Hartley, 1976, p.22). Play and its media may very well aid the school counsellor in reaching the important counselling goals of developing a relationship, communicating with and formulating action oriented strategies that can make a difference in the life of a troubled primary grade child.

I. THE PURPOSE OF THE INVESTIGATION

The purpose of this investigation was to demonstrate through a case study how certain counselling strategies were applied in a regular public school, outside of the classroom, to a primary grade child experiencing emotional difficulties.

How might play, an important medium of childhood expression, be incorporated into an elementary school counselling situation? It was hoped that this investigation might aid in

answering this question. Once having been raised, this question also suggests a number of associated issues that need to be addressed if the greater question is to have an opportunity to receive full consideration:

1. What sort of children comprise the group who might benefit therapeutically from a counselling program utilizing play?
2. Which theoretical considerations must be addressed by the counsellor in order to make use of play and its media in the counselling situation?
3. What are the physical requirements that would be necessary in order to conduct such a program?
4. And, finally, might a selected primary grade child manifest positive gains as a consequence of such a program?

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Emotional problems--behavior which cannot, after investigation, be attributed to a primary physical cause, and which is extreme and persistent, interfering with the child's ability to learn.

They may work too hard or they may be unable to work at all. They may be exceedingly tense and irritable, or they may be disinterested and apathetic. They may be exceedingly shy and sensitive. They may act out their feelings by being argumentative, destructive, and completely lacking in concern for the rights of other people, or they may be so precise and careful so as to appear to be model children. (Farnsworth, 1965, p. 185)

Play therapy--a method of treatment for children experiencing emotional difficulties which uses play and its media as a means to assist expression and communication between a child and therapist.

III. THE CASE STUDY

In the field, case studies are widely used as "tools

in many professions. The fields of social work, psychiatry, and clinical psychology rely heavily upon case reports for recording and communicating descriptions of individual patients" (Schontz, 1965, p. 66).

In addition to serving the day-to-day recording and communication requirements of field agencies, the case study method may also be used by the scientific investigator. This method "can be a very valuable tool in research" (Robinson, 1976, p. 162).

As a research tool, the case study method offers several features which make it useful and advantageous. Erickson (1963) suggested that the case study possessed the potential to enable the observer to view the interrelatedness of various significant influences that may be affecting the life of a subject (chap. 1). These influences under scrutiny by the researcher might be current, or as Sears (1964) pointed out, the case study may possess a longitudinal aspect, thus allowing the investigator the opportunity to observe a subject's long-term change and development (p. 6). Further, because the case study enables the investigator to take a broad, overall focus, it has at times proven to be a fruitful methodological source for hypothesis building (Frey, 1978, p. 264).

Some criticism has occasionally been leveled at laboratory research, suggesting that the strict laboratory setting can often involve "situations that are unfamiliar, artificial, short-lived and call for unusual behaviors that are difficult to generalize in the real world" (Bronfenbrenner, 1976, p. 2).

A case study has the advantage of being able to be conducted in the naturalistic setting. It can both draw its data on the real world from the original source, and make direct inferences about the original source, thus avoiding the above criticism while at the same time offering a high degree of relevance to daily life.

Insights drawn from a case study of one child in a real life setting may have significance for other children for the above reasons, but there are two more important points that Shontz (1965) makes regarding the case study as a scientific method. First, the case study method can be used to demonstrate technique. Shontz noted, for example, that clinical interview procedures are invariably presented via case study. The second point has to do with the ability of the case study to illustrate concepts which, without benefit of grounding in a concrete setting, would be otherwise difficult to properly convey (pp. 70-71).

It is hoped that through the case study that follows, important concepts about children can be made available to counsellors who assist those children who are in the midst of emotional difficulties.

IV. BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

1. The case study, as a research method, can provide a structure within which the development of a child in an elementary school counselling situation can be examined.
2. Students who experience emotional difficulties are also prone to experience difficulty learning in the academic setting.

3. School counsellors have responsibility in assisting in the development of the child who experiences emotional difficulties .

4. The school counsellor can assist the child who experiences emotional difficulties to improve his or her social functioning and academic achievement.

V. DELIMITATIONS

1. The case study was carried out between December, 1980 and June, 1981, in a regular public elementary school in Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

2. The investigator met with the child in the school, but outside the classroom, twice a week for the duration of the study.

3. The counselling strategies referred to as play therapy were applied by the investigator during the bi-weekly meetings.

4. Procedures for counselling interventions were carried out within a conceptual framework derived from Erik Erikson's psychosocial model of development, and Robert Carkhuff's model of the counselling process.

5. Criteria for the selection of the subject included the following:

- a. The subject should manifest problem behaviors commonly seen in the public school classrooms.
- b. The subject should show academic underachievement.
- c. The subject should have a history of behavior problems and academic underachievement.

- d. The subject's behavioral and academic difficulties should not be related to organic causes.
- e. There should have been no previous effective remediation of the subject's presenting problems.

6. The criteria for assessment of the subject's behavior before and after the application of the counselling strategies included the following:

- a. Observations made of the subject's classroom behavior by the classroom teacher.
- b. Observations made of the subject's academic achievement made by the classroom teacher.
- c. Observations made by the investigator of the subject's behavior in the counselling setting.

7. Observational data about the subject's classroom behavior was collected by the subject's classroom teacher and conveyed to the investigator on a weekly basis.

8. Observational data about the subject, within the counselling situation, was collected by the investigator during the counselling sessions.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The theoretical framework within which the procedures in this study were applied are set out in this chapter under the following headings:

- A. The role of play in the process of child development.
- B. The problem and the identification of the emotionally troubled child in the public school.
- C. A model for the diagnosis of children who show emotionally troubled behavior.
- D. A model of helping relationships.
- E. Play therapy as a means of assisting adjustment in emotionally disturbed children.

I. THE ROLE OF PLAY IN THE PROCESS OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Although play theorists differ in the emphasis they place on certain functions of play, they all highlight the fundamental importance of play for a child's growth and maturation.... [Therefore] a basic insight into the nature of play....seems essential for the clinician (Shaefer, 1976, p. 16).

This has implications as well for the school counsellor who would aspire to make effective use of play in helping children deal with difficulties. Accordingly, this section will first attempt a definition of play. This will be followed by a survey of various theories of play with an emphasis on certain aspects of Piaget's understandings of symbolic play. This

section will close with a discussion of some issues pertaining to play and its relationship to childhood emotional difficulties.

Definition of Play

It may not be surprising that Roberts and Baird (1971) found the most frequent activity that North American, white, middle-class children (ages 6 to 11 years) engage in outside of school hours, was playing. Play is not only the most frequent "free-time" activity that children engage in, it is also deeply embedded within the typical child's day-to-day activities in such a way as to render the task of separating play out from the other activities very difficult. Some researchers (Slobin, 1964; Sutton-Smith, 1967) have dealt with this problem by accepting the various commonly agreed to definitions of play, e.g. play is any activity engaged in for the purpose of pleasure. Miller (1973) pointed out that it had been possible by that approach to engage in "fruitful" research of the functions of play. However, the lack of a clearly defined picture of play had left this category of human activity open to be critically labeled as a "wastebasket category of miscellaneous behavior" (p. 87).

In his attempts to define play, Miller reviewed 42,000 feet of unedited film of baboons in a natural setting in Kenya. As a result he concluded that there are characteristics that differentiate play from non-play: (1) The motor patterns of primate play are similar to the motor patterns found in other specific contexts. That is, the movements are "borrowed" from other contexts such as aggression, sex, feeding

and grooming.

(2) The motor patterns can be performed in novel sequences...seldom possible in the non-play contexts in which the behaviors also occur. (3) A particularly prevalent...pattern is repetition. Playing animals (and humans) are almost always seen to perform various sequences over and over again (4) The motor activity is often exaggerated or 'uneconomic' in comparison with the form it takes in non-play contexts. (5) These motor patterns occur independently of the types of motivation that elicit them in non-play contexts (p. 89).

That is, the motor patterns of eating for example, are liable to occur when the playing animal is not hungry and not around desirable food. In addition, "play is largely (but not exclusively) an activity of protected juveniles and infants" *
(Ibid.).

What begins to emerge here, is that play for Miller is process not context. That is, it does not matter what particular activity the child (or adult) engages in, but how. If the how, or process of a particular activity conforms to the patterns that Miller has noticed, then as he suggested, we may be justified in labeling the particular activity as play * (p. 89). What this means in practice is that if a child is constructing a tent in the back yard from old bedcovers, for example, so long as the goal assumes no importance to that child's survival, then we may properly call the activity play. * If the chess game that the adult engages in is to remain "just a game" then the end goal--checkmate--must remain ancillary to the playing of the game. If the goal assumes importance in a survival sense then the game becomes more closely akin to work *
(Ibid.).

Some Historical Background

According to Millar (1974), play as a topic of interest and study received only passing interest throughout the ages until the natural science of the mid- and late-nineteenth century embraced evolutionary theory. It was during this era that play was first to receive legitimacy as a relevant and important object of study. Under the influence of evolutionary theory, play was looked at as (a) serving some adaptive function and (b) as recapitulating some lower order (phylogenetically speaking) behaviors. To the evolutionist, the ten year-old boy climbing on playground bars might be strengthening his muscles to better enable him to do physically productive labour while at the same time mirroring the typical behavior of apes. With this latter idea children, through play, became a missing link instinctively connecting human adults to their more primitive cousins (pp. 16-18).

As the current century grew, evolutionary theory gave way to the influence of Freud who offered what is "probably the most influential theory of play" (Pulaski, 1974, p. 27). Based on the mechanisms of wish fulfillment and catharsis, Freud (1962, p. 42), suggested that the creative process begins in early childhood with the infant fantasizing those objects that s/he both needs and is deprived of. The hungry baby will create a mental image of a breast and act out this mental image (e.g. he/she may suck her fingers) while s/he waits for the breast, thus functioning to make the delay more endurable, thereby providing mastery over an unpleasant experience.

Piaget and Play

Another "influential" theorist who addressed play was Piaget (Schaefer, 1976, p. 15). He too believed that "a principal function of play is adaptive--i.e. to help the young child gradually assimilate" and gain control over his or her experiences "(Ibid)".

Piaget is most often thought of as having focused on cognitive development. However, imbedded within the results of his research into cognition, one may find enough references to play and emotions to be able to construct a systematic account of play (Millar, 1974, p. 50) that goes beyond what Freud offered both in completeness and depth (Pulaski, 1976, p. 28).

Although it has been put forward that "everything that the child does is play" (Lefrancois, 1977, p. 261), Piaget's view was different. His view was that there are two ways that a young child attempts to adapt to the world. The first way Piaget called the process of accommodation. Accommodation is fundamentally adaptive and in its purest form it is simple imitation (Pulaski, 1974, p. 7). Young children will attempt to reproduce the words and actions of significant adults the child has close contact with. Thus, the child comes to fit into the family more and more closely.

Although to Piaget this process was not play, it was intimately related to the process that he did label as play--assimilation. As the child learns to adjust to the demands of the environment through imitation, the other process, assimi-

tion is developing in a complementary fashion. In its purest form assimilation is to be seen in the fantasy or imaginative play of children. "Unlike objective thought, which seeks to adapt itself to the requirements of external reality, imaginative play is a symbolic transposition which subjects things to the child's activity without rules or limitations [imposed by the external world]. It is therefore, almost pure assimilation, i.e. thought polarized by preoccupation with individual satisfaction" (Piaget, 1962, p. 87).

Piaget appears to be saying that the form of activity which he labels symbolic play, is composed of the representing of "absent objects" (Piaget, 1962, p. 111) by substitutes. These substitutes, or symbols, become dependent upon the child's desires, without relation to externally imposed rules. An example of this can be observed in the case of the seven year-old boy who declares: "This puppet is my mom and I'm putting her to bed without supper, right now!" The puppet has been called upon to act as a symbol (for his mother). The child has made the puppet/symbol part of his own activity and has not gone by the usual rules of that family in which the children have frequently been sent to bed without supper, as punishment. In his symbolic play, this child changed the family to better suit his own internal needs.

Commenting on one of the functions of this type of symbolic play, Piaget stated that it allows the child "to assimilate the whole of reality, i.e. to integrate it in order to re-live it, to dominate it, or to compensate for it" (Ibid.).

Symbolic play, thus seems to be important for the child's emotional well being, enabling the child, when necessary to (1) re-live important past experiences, (2) to control those past experiences which were overwhelming, or (3) to make up for those past experiences which, for the child, were impoverished.

Millar (1974) has developed a model of play in which she described and listed the functions of four types of play. Although there are similarities between her treatment of play and Piaget's, her systematic approach may be a valuable adjunct to the previous material.

First, according to Millar, exploring and movement play is the original form of play and occurs in new-born infants. This type of play is said to be ongoing as the child engages in an action and is bent on perceiving the effects that the action has. We can see this sort of play in the youngster who engages in different actions "trying them out systematically for the sake of different results" (p. 131).

Functionally, this sort of play has an interesting role: self-regulation. As the child engages in this sort of play s/he is seen by Millar to be practicing self-control. The infant who repeatedly bangs a rattle on her crib is engaging in an early form of the sort of impulse control and self-modulation that will be necessary later in life (p. 130-1).

The child's imitations are that child's attempts to impersonate or to be like others around him/her. The function for Millar of this type of play is that it permits the child whose power in the world is minimal, to adapt obligingly

through reproducing the actions of those around him/her whom the child perceives as being more powerful (p. 158).

Fantasy, feeling, and make-believe play is the name Millar gives to that category of play that Piaget called symbolic play. Perhaps this is no coincidence, as Millar made use of Piaget's studies in stating that his "notion of symbolic play as 'assimilation' of events in symbolic form, probably sums up best the exploring, manipulating, repeating, varying, confirming, and classifying of impressions, events and feelings which can be observed in children's make-believe play" (p. 156). The symbols themselves have significance that reflects the child's emotional point of view. The child's thinking during symbolic play is "pre-logical, based on affective rather than logical links between aspects of objects and events" (Ibid. p. 152).

Millar indicated that the young child playing symbolically is not intellectually aware of how s/he feels and thinks--s/he would need the logical skills of the older child or adult to have that intellectual awareness (Ibid.).

Millar has outlined three functions of fantasy, feeling, and make-believe play. First, this form of play is a vehicle through which emotions may be explored. Just as a child (or adult for that matter) may explore a new house or toy, children often engage in fantasy around a new emotion. They will concoct situations or simply replay real life situations until the new emotions associated with the situations have been rendered familiar and are no longer new.

It sometimes occurs that children re-enact events or re-create situations, not in the way they actually perceive them but in the way they would like them to be (Ibid., p. 154-5). This author's daughter, an only child, announced that her stuffed monkey was "really a real chimpanzee" and that she was going to care for it "even though it would be a lot of hard work." Presumably, this play is wishful and compensatory and quite likely related to her frequently stated desire for a baby sister or brother.

A third function is that symbolic play may serve to make concrete events or actions to which the child has no real life access (Ibid., p. 155). The five year-old daughter of a logger might pick up a piece of firewood and play "chain-saw" with it. Through reproducing the sounds and actions, which can only be viewed by her from a distance her father's daily activity becomes available, immediate, and tangible to her.

Millar agreed with Piaget that social play (her fourth type) only begins to develop in earnest after age eight (p. 179). Millar pointed out that the organized games and socializing of older children are the context within which children develop cooperative and interactive skills that will be necessary for adult social functioning (Ibid. p. 180).

Emotions and Play

So far, this discussion of play has been concerned with the play of normal children. As was discussed early in this chapter, many non-play aspects of the behavior of emotionally disturbed children are different from that of

normal children. As might be expected, the play activities of emotionally disturbed children are different too--play behavior reflects the "dynamics of development" (Hartley, 1952, p. 79) of the child, and if the dynamics of development have been disturbed, then the child's play will reflect this (Ibid). Erikson (1940), who analyzed the adaptive value of play, drew a similar conclusion. He suggested that children who have been burdened with the overwhelming "defeats, sufferings and frustrations" (p. 561) will use play to compensate for those experiences (Ibid).

What does this compensatory play look like? Hetherington, Cox and Cox (1979) observed the free play activities of children, who were characterized as having undergone psychological stress during the process of the divorce of their parents. The results suggest that one major distinguishing characteristic of these troubled children was that they showed a marked rigidity in their symbolic play (pp. 37-38).

Elsewhere, Hetherington and Parke (1979), have summarized the results from the same study in the following way:

[These children] have fewer different characters involved in their fantasies, less frequently make different uses of the same objects in play, and are more bound to objects in play. They are less able to free themselves from reality. They need a stick to be a sword or a chair to be a castle. They rarely fantasize completely imaginary objects or people. They also show less reversibility in play. Once a stick is a sword it is not subsequently transformed into a witch's broomstick or a magic wand or a horse. In addition, they show less diversity in both themes and affect. Another characteristic which is revealed in their play is one which is frequently reported in disturbed children: a preoccupation with aggression and an inability to assume the role of providing or caring for others in imaginative play. In addition, they

seem to have great difficulty in moving from "I" to the assumption of another's role in fantasy play, in moving out of the self (p. 484).

Pfeffer (1979) looked at another group of troubled children. Children in this group of six to twelve year-olds had been hospitalized for suicidal behavior. She found that when compared to non-suicidal children, several aspects of the play of the suicidal children were distinct to that group. There were differences in content, intensity and frequency of certain play themes: a) their play was heavily loaded with fantasies of separation and loss; b) the play involved more frequent reckless behavior; c) it showed repeated aggressive misuse and destruction of toys; and d) there was a higher frequency of the acting out of omnipotent fantasies.

Biblow (1973) approached this issue from a different direction. Using inkblot responses he separated ten year-olds based on their inkblot responses into groups characterized by high-imaginativeness and low-imaginativeness. Biblow then induced frustration in a play situation and then noted the consequent play behavior. "The differences between high- and low-fantasy children... [were] strongly revealed in their play" (p. 123). In sum, the low-fantasy children tended to act out aggression directly and explicitly, as opposed to the implicit or symbolic expression of aggression. Additionally, and consistent with previously mentioned research, the play itself showed lower variety in the low-fantasy group (Ibid).

It appears worth mentioning Biblow's findings with respect to the high-fantasy group. They seemed to show fewer

signs of disturbance after exposure to the frustrating experience. Biblow suggested that these children may have dealt with the frustrating experience through their greater ability to use fantasy or symbolic play (p. 12). Erikson (1940) would seem to have agreed: "to play it out is the most autotherapeutic measure childhood offers" (p. 561).

Sylva, Bruner and Genova (1974) have put forward an explanation of the therapeutic effect of play for young children. In a study of problem solving with three to five-year-olds, it was found that the group of children who had the opportunity to engage in previous free play with certain materials were better prepared to solve the subsequent problem that the experimentors presented to them than were the groups of children who were a) allowed to handle (but not play with) the materials or b) were only shown the principle underlying the solution by an adult (pp. 247-255). It was believed that the children who were allowed to play before attempting problem-solving were more successful for the following reasons:

- (1) Solving problems required self-initiation and our playing children were the only ones in the experiment whose actions were self-initiated.
- (2) Tool invention (like other forms of problem solving) requires serial ordering of the constituent acts involved. The players were the only ones who had an opportunity to explore alternative serial orders.
- (3) Play reduces the stress of anticipating success or failure. Our players, less stressed, were able to proceed with less frustration and fear of failure--they were more goal directed. They could benefit from hints and could approach the solution more gradually without breaking off (p. 256).

It was concluded that "the effect of prior play seems to be not only in the...practice, but also in shifting emphasis in a task

from ends to means, from product to process" (Ibid.).

Elsewhere, on the importance of play, Bruner (1966) related the remark of the physicist "Niels Bohr to one of his graduate students who complained of the seeming unseriousness, the amount of horseplay and joking around in Bohr's laboratory: 'But there are some things [Bohr said] so important that one can only joke about them' " (p. 135). A playful ✓ attitude, is therefore an essential component of the creative process and has the potential of giving a child who faces a seemingly untenable emotionally stressful situation, the opportunity to try out, or shop around so to speak for new patterns of behavior that may have a greater adaptive value than the old, more familiar pattern (Brunner, 1972, p. 708).

Now that some definitions of play have been explored, it is possible to move to the next section which will deal with emotionally troubled children in the public school.

II. THE PROBLEM AND IDENTIFICATION OF THE EMOTIONALLY TROUBLED CHILD IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Emotional difficulties play a role in the make-up of society-at-large. The public school classroom, being a segment of society-at-large, is also burdened with a share of children who experience emotional difficulties. That this may be so is not surprising as childhood is "a period of dependency and change in which the world and its demands are new and often confusing, conflicting, and frustrating" (Long, Morse, and Newman, 1971, p. 4).

How large a share of emotionally disturbed children does the public school classroom contain? A common answer to this question given by experienced classroom teachers is that approximately two or three students are expected to be emotionally troubled in the typical classroom of 25: "five to ten percent of the children in an average classroom have emotional or adjustment problems" (Blackhorn, 1967, p. i). In a study of the school population of Santa Barbara County, California, Clancy and Smitter (1953) used teachers' reports of pupil behavior to study emotional development and adjustment. Most of the disturbed behavior that the teachers reported, fell into the following categories: withdrawn, poor peer relations, aggressive, immature, excessively nervous, and short attention span. It was found that 11% of the students from kindergarten through grade eight showed enough of these disturbed behaviors to prompt the authors of the study to label the students as emotionally disturbed. More recently and closer to home, Vancouver psychiatrist Hamish Nicol, in an unpublished study made available to Leycock (1969, p. 162), discovered through a survey of classroom teachers that approximately 6.2% of Vancouver's public school students in kindergarten through grade nine were considered emotionally disturbed and in need of help. Swift and Spivak (1975) reviewed a wide sample of studies from diverse communities and concluded that there was a "remarkable consistency in the data [which] suggest that in the average class of 25 to 30 students there could be three youngsters be-

tween six and ten years of age who are severely maladaptating and whose behavioral adjustment is of sufficient concern to warrant some kind of special attention" (p. 3).

At this juncture it may be important to look at the outward behavioral signs of emotional disturbance. These signs are varied according to Farnsworth (1965) who relates that these pupils:

may work too hard, or they may be unable to work at all. They may be exceedingly tense and irritable or they may be disinterested and apathetic. They may be very aggressive and make a nuisance of themselves to others or they may be exceedingly shy and sensitive. They may act out their feelings by being argumentative, destructive and completely lacking in concern for the rights of other people or they may be so precise and careful as to appear to be model children (p. 182).

With respect to the specific problem of identifying for the purpose of remediation, troubled children in the larger population of public school children, Rath (1972) has compiled a systematic list of the behavioral results of emotional disturbance in school children. Children whose behavior persistently fits into one or more of the categories on the list were reliably found by Rath to have unmet emotional needs (p. 19). Rath's list includes (1) aggression, (2) withdrawing from social relationships, (3) submissiveness, (4) psychosomatic disturbance, and (5) regressive behavior.

Aggression

Aggression may be typically the most easily and frequently recognized of the five behaviors on Rath's list. By its very nature, aggression tends to be more audible, more visible and more easily detectable kinesthetically for an adult

(e.g. it hurts to be kicked in the shins by an angry nine-year-old) than are the other behaviors listed by Raths. By way of definition, aggression may be considered to be "behavior which has the capacity to hurt or injure or damage, regardless of intent" (Caldwell, 1977, p. 6). Further, a formal distinction may be made between instrumental aggression, which is goal oriented and aimed at securing an object, territory, or privilege and hostile aggression which is directed at another, following a perceived personal threat (Ibid., p. 6).

Caldwell also pointed out that aggression arises out of attempts by children to meet "self based needs" (p. 7). This latter is not to say that all aggressive behavior in school children is a manifestation of underlying emotional distress; it is sufficient to point out that much aggression has its roots in the sort of emotional distress that we are focusing on here (Redl, 1978, p. 34).

As for content, it is easy enough to bring to mind the sort of aggressive acts which stand out most readily on the playground or in the schoolroom. The child who frequently engages in fist fights, or who kicks and shoves his classmates or who throws objects at them is obviously showing aggressive behavior as is also the youngster who often breaks or destroys school property, or property belonging to his or her peers. Aggression is also almost as easily recognized in the child who is often engaged in loud threats or "put-down" type verbalizations such as "You're a dummie!", etc.

Withdrawal

A less obvious manifestation of emotional distress is Raths' (1972, p. 31-33) second category--withdrawing from social relationships. Raths described these children as tending to conduct their activities apart from others. They characteristically choose to play and work by themselves. We may notice that these children usually enter into the classroom alone, and in keeping with their solitary style, will proceed to their own desk without pausing along the way to chat with other students. While other students will spontaneously discuss important topics with each other--school assignments, playground activities, current movies, etc.--the withdrawn child will typically remain solitary, sometimes to the point of resisting the attempts that other children make to draw him/her into social contact.

Submission

A related, but separate category of behavior which may indicate underlying emotional distress is submissiveness (Raths, 1972, p. 28-31). A submissive child may at times appear to avoid social contact, however, this is not the overriding quality which denotes behavior that belongs within this category. What is predominant about the submissive child's behavior is that he/she will be unusually compliant in regard to the wishes of others. One way that this manifests itself is that this child often offers no resistance to an aggressive act by another. A youngster who is sub-

missive typically will not protest, for example, if a classmate usurps a favoured place at a table.

In addition to unusual compliance in the face of aggression, these children are also prone to be observed going out of their way to be agreeable with those around them. "He ...rarely, if ever, disagrees with group opinion" (Raths, 1972, p. 29).

Psychosomatic Illness

When an emotional distress presents itself in the form of symptoms of physical illness with no clear physiological cause, the distress is said to be a psychosomatic illness (Kanner, 1966, p. 5). For the purpose of gaining a greater understanding of what is meant here, it might be helpful to refer to Pelletier's (1977) outline of the emotional process that underlies the development of a psychosomatic illness:

An individual is confronted with a stressful situation which is extremely difficult for him (or her) to resolve. This situation becomes overwhelming, and he sees no respite from it. As a result, he makes an unconscious choice which allows him a means of coping with this irresolvable situation. One means of resolution is to develop a headache which affects him so severely that he is incapacitated and released from the responsibilities which weigh so heavily upon him. These symptoms allow an individual to remove himself from an untenable situation when he cannot extricate himself by any other means (p. 15).

What is pertinent for our understanding is that it is the presence of stress, emotional stress that precedes the development of the observed physical symptoms. This pattern of emotional distress preceding physical symptoms, is the same

pattern that has been mentioned in connection with each of the five behavior categories where the emotional distress precedes, not the physical symptoms of a medical illness but other behavioral symptoms such as aggression or withdrawal, for example.

Since it is known that an important segment of the public school population are subject to emotional distress it might be reasonable to assume that this would result in a certain portion of the children showing symptoms of psychosomatic illness. Perhaps an even larger percentage of the physical illnesses seen in the classroom have psychosomatic components than is fully realized, since "most standard medical texts attribute anywhere from 50 to 80 percent of all disease to psychosomatic or stress related origins" (Pelletier, 1977, p. 7). The list of illness that standard medical texts classify as psychosomatic is extensive and need not be presented entirely but includes many illnesses which are apt to be present in young school children, e.g. abdominal cramps, atopic dermatitis (eczema, etc.), bronchial asthma, enuresis, hay fever, hypertension, migrain and lesser forms of headache, and peptic ulcer (Fleming, 1965, p. 64; Pelletier, 1977, p. 7; Simmons, 1977, p. 197).

Even with this list, school personnel will have difficulties in differentiating between those students presenting illnesses which have a physical base, and those which are related to emotional distress since only a medical doctor can do so (Clarizo and McCoy, 1970, p. 108). This is not

to say, however, that school personnel play no part in the identification and treatment of children who have this type of emotional problem. It is indeed often the case that the school teacher or counsellor will notice that a child's chronic physical complaint has associated with it some attributes which suggest a psychosomatic component. When this is the case, it is suggested that the parents be contacted and that a thorough physical exam of the child be undertaken to resolve that there is no underlying organic pathology (Simmons, 1977, p. 197; Raths, 1977, p. 35).

Regressive Behavior

It happens sometimes that a child reverts to the status of a much younger child by affecting "behavior which would have been 'normal' a few years before but at the moment is not in keeping with the behavior profile of his age" (Kanner, 1966, p. 47). This is regression. It has been pointed out that all children may, from time to time, show temporary regression in response to normal life stress (Price, 1978, p. 54-5; Rutter, 1975, p. 162). "As a matter of fact, temporary regressions are a normal aspect of transitions" as the child moves throughout developmental stages (Menninger Foundation, 1969, p. 91). There are, however, children who experience stresses that are either too great and/or exist for too long, with the result that the regression becomes habitual and pathological (Shaw, 1966, p. 140). With respect to denoting abnormal regressive behavior Kanner (1966) points out that:

every phase of childhood has its own characteristic behavior profile. The successive phases flow into each other gradually, imperceptably, through constant evolution, not in shifts through step-by-step transitions. But the behavior of the three-year-old, the six-year-old and the nine-year-old is conspicuously different, while the behavior profiles of any number of children of the same age bear unmistakable resemblances. This pertains equally to socially accepted behavior. If a child holds his breath at one year, throws himself on the floor at four, and angrily slams doors at nine he presents problematic behavior, to be sure, but still in doing so, "he acts his age." This is how children at these age periods are known to react to frustration and resentment, if they do react strongly. But if a child holds his breath at five or throws himself on the floor at nine, he no longer acts in accordance with his age. He has remained or regressed to a more infantile, less mature mode of reaction. Baby talk at two is not at all uncommon; at six or seven it is a regressive phenomenon (p. 46).

In the preceding section data were reviewed that pertain to the frequency of children with emotional difficulties in the elementary public school classroom. Additionally, the Raths' theory of unmet emotional needs and behavior was presented. This theory which clusters difficult behavior into five categories is useful for identifying, for the purpose of remediation, emotionally disturbed children.

III. A MODEL FOR THE DIAGNOSIS OF CHILDREN WHO SHOW EMOTIONALLY TROUBLED BEHAVIOR

Once a child has been identified as showing signs of emotional disturbance, it becomes necessary, if treatment is to take place, to proceed beyond the identification phase to diagnosis.

A diagnosis is considered to be a process in which data about the troubled child are combined with a conceptual framework or model of human functioning that has the capacity to gather the seemingly diverse pieces of information and organize them in such a way as to permit an economy of thought which explains the child's past and present functioning. A proper diagnosis has the added aspect of being able to "help [the therapist] formulate a well-considered treatment strategy" (Wynne, 1965, p. 292).

For the purpose of this investigation, a specific conceptual framework has been generated from several sources. The two most important sources are Erik Erikson's (1963) psychosocial model and Carl Rogers' (1959) phenomenological model.

Erikson's Model

Freud considered that personality developed as a consequence of the child's attempts to derive sexual pleasure from different body zones at different ages. Erikson's position was a modification of the Freudian view. Erikson de-emphasized the importance of sexuality by focusing on the child's development of mastery over his/her organs and objects in the environment. Another modification by Erikson was his position that the child's mastery of these body organs and outside objects occurred within social contexts. That is, young children who are in the process of mastering the incorporative organs

(e.g., oral) and eliminative organs (e.g., anal), do so in the social context of the family. Older children, for example, master certain cognitive capacities within the broader social contexts of school and workplace. Erikson's emphasis on the social aspects of personality development highlighted the concept of social mutuality: "whatever reaction patterns are given biologically and whatever schedule is predetermined developmentally must be considered to be a series of potentialities for changing patterns of mutual regulation" (1963, p. 69). Or, put another way: "babies control and bring up their families as much as they are controlled by them" (Ibid.).

Erikson described a progression of psychosocial stages in which the child faced a broadening range of human relationships as s/he developed. The child had specific biologically predetermined personal and social problems to master at each of these stages and personality was a reflection of how well the child and the pertinent social institution (i.e., family, school, etc.) mastered the specific problems. Psychopathology and symptoms result when the child and the social institution meet the developmentally predetermined problem situation improperly. "Fruitless, painful, and destructive attempts at controlling one another" (p. 68) become the symptoms or presenting problems that identify a child as troubled.

Trust vs mistrust. The first developmental task for the child and family to meet and master is the development of basic trust. The child whose mother nurtures with "consistency, continuity, and sameness" is experiencing conditions

that Erikson wrote of as being important in the development of basic trust. Another condition that Erikson outlined as important for the infant was to come to "trust...[his/her] own organs to cope with urges" and last, that the infant's interactions with the mother need to leave the child with a sense that s/he is "trustworthy enough so that the providers will not need to be on guard lest they be" (p. 248) hurt in some way by the infant.

When these conditions are not met to a sufficient degree, the infant's experience of him/herself is one of mis-trust--the child's experiences leaves him/her feeling not "all right" as a person. In an extreme case of basic mis-trust, the associated symptomology may likely be childhood schizophrenia. In a less extreme case, a chronic "depressive undertone" to the child's functioning may be the expected behavioral outcome.

Autonomy vs. shame and doubt. As the child passes into toddlerhood (at approximately 12 months of age), a new set of realities comes into play that provides the basis for the second psychosocial task. The prerequisite to the successful negotiation of this and each succeeding stage depends upon the child having mastered the preceding stage(s) successfully. The child who has not acquired a sense of basic trust will, nevertheless, be biologically propelled forward to confront the issue of autonomy vs. shame and doubt. Unfortunately, without the sense that s/he is "all right", the child cannot acquire a full sense of autonomy (p. 78).

A properly developing child at this stage will have acquired enough body control to be clearly able to act independently of his/her parents. Many of the child's independent acts will be transgressions in the eyes of the parents. The child who has pulled all of the pots and pans out of the cupboard for the umpteenth time in one day, will usually be told "no" when s/he makes another move toward the cupboard. Erikson points out that the "no" response is important because its "firmness...[will] protect...[the child] against the potential anarchy of his yet untrained sense of discrimination" (p. 252). The firmness, however, needs to be coupled with reassurance so that the end result is that the child will learn control "without loss of self-esteem" (p. 254). Thus * the child develops autonomy. Trouble arises if the parents (a) do not curb the untrained anarchist, or (b) if they consistently curb the untrained anarchist without the reassurance that they do not reject him/her. The trouble is that instead of a sense of autonomy (self-control coupled with self-regard) the child may thus develop an inflated sense of shame and doubt. The behavioral symptoms of this failure to meet the challenges of this stage are manifested by the child who is over-controlled or over-controlling. This child is likely to engage in power struggles with him/herself or others.*

Initiative vs. guilt. The next task that a child and his/her family must negotiate is the development of initiative. "Initiative adds to autonomy the quality of undertaking, planning and attacking a task for the sake of being active and

on the move, where before self-will, more often than not, inspired acts of...independence" (p. 255). This era in the developing child's growth (ages two to five) challenges the family to assist the pre-schooler who is in "possession of a surplus of energy" (p. 255) to go beyond merely asserting independence, to beginning and carrying along self-contemplated tasks of a longer duration. The child's play reflects this increased capacity in its symbolic play.

Parents (and pre-schools) support this growth in the pre-schooler by providing opportunities for the child to exercise "new locomotor and mental power" (p. 255). This is the era in which manipulative materials are typically provided to the child, who in turn delights in their creative use. Trouble, however, occurs when the child in his/her "exuberant enjoyment" (p. 255) goes too far. The parent or teacher will need to respond to the child who has not only cut up the scrap-paper provided for play, but has also tried out his/her new scissors on the curtains. How does the parent respond to the situation in a way that will support the child, yet protect the parents' possessions from the newly acquired skills of the child? The danger here is that in correcting the child's actions, the parent may induce excessive guilt * and that the child may thus develop a pervading feeling that s/he is "bad" when taking initiative and striking out on projects of his/her own. In the extreme case the troubled child who has not been able to meet this challenge will be likely to display symptoms of the following in nature: "they develop

an over-obedience more literal than the one that the parents * have wished to enact; or...they develop deep regressions" * (p. 257). Another possibility is that the child may develop and rigidly adhere to "fantasies of being a giant...[or super-hero like Spiderman] but in his dreams he runs in terror for * dear life" (p. 256).

Industry vs. inferiority. The next stage in the child's growth provides the opportunity for the child to develop a sense of industry. Here the child, now school age but pre-puberty (ages five to eleven), enters school where s/he "must forget past hopes and wishes while his exuberant imagination is tamed and harnessed to" (p. 258) the world of work. This world of work is peopled by teachers (and parents, too, in the properly functioning family) who expect that the child will apply him/herself to the manufacture of products which will be judged as up to standard, or not. Successful negotiation of this gradual transition from fantasy and exploratory play to industrial activity will leave the healthy child an "eager and absorbed unit of a productive situation" (p. 257).

The threat to this child's development at this stage rests in the possibility that s/he may develop a sense of inferiority. If his parents and or his school have labeled him/her as incapable of making an adequate product, then the likelihood exists that the child will "despair of his...[abilities] and consider himself doomed to mediocrity or inadequacy" (p. 261).

The extremely despairing child will likely manifest symptoms associated with a great sense of inferiority. For example, this child is likely to show under-achievement which is discrepant with his innate capacities. Another possibility Erikson suggests, is that this child might attempt to compensate for the sense of inferiority by over-achievement: "if he accepts...[his/her product] as his only criterion of worthiness, he may become...[a workaholic]" (p. 261).

From a biological perspective, childhood ends at the onset of puberty. This point then marks another transition for the developing child and his/her family, and social institutions. The adjustments made at this point in conjunction with the adjustments made at the preceding points, together prepare (or leave unprepared) the adolescent for the next transitional tasks leading to adulthood and beyond. These tasks, however, are outside of the scope of the present discussion and will be left undeveloped here.

What will come next is a brief presentation of relevant portions of Carl Rogers' perspective on personality.

Rogers' Model

Rogers (1959) believed personality was best defined in terms of conscious experience (p. 197) in contrast to Freud whose focus was on the unconscious. Conscious experience, although subjective in nature, represented to Rogers a person's reality. Rogers added to this phenomenological perspective the concept of actualization: "the tendency of the organism to develop all its capacities in ways which serve

to maintain or enhance the organism" (p. 196). This tendency to grow includes the ability to create a personal sense of self. This personal sense of self, or self-concept was developed from the infant's relationships with his/her parents (Ibid).

It is the way in which the parents value or regard the young child that is important, for if the regard is positive, then the child takes on a positive self-concept. The child with a positive self-concept would be able to experience the world around him/her with the underlying belief that s/he is a worthwhile and capable person. To the child with this strong belief "a new experience is valued or not, depending on its effectiveness in maintaining or enhancing" (p. 210) the child's life. Children were not considered by Rogers to be totally free to "value or not" every new experience, however, because of the need for parental love. Often a parent may feel threatened by a child's behavior. This parent might signal that a possible loss of love (loss of positive regard) is eminent. This child would then need to alter his/her behavior to suit the parent. In this situation, the child's behavior has been guided "not by the degree to which an experience maintains or enhances the organism, but by the likelihood of...[losing] maternal love" (p. 225). Thus, a condition of worth is said to have been created.

If there are many conditions of worth a situation may develop in which the child becomes estranged from his/her feelings: "he has not been true to himself, to his own nat-

ural organismic valuing of experience, but for the sake of perceiving the positive regard of others has now come to falsify some of the values he experiences and to perceive them only in terms based upon their values to others" (p. 226).
 The child thus experiences conditional self-regard. The effects on behavior of conditions of worth are profound because the anxiety from the threat they pose forces the child into the position of needing to rectify somehow the incongruence between his/her experience and the conditions of worth. The child must deal with the incongruence by distorting his/her experience in order to remain loved. These distortions are the defense mechanisms of denial, rationalization, fantasy projection, etc. When a child is subject to too numerous conditions of worth, so called neurotic behavior results. The child is then thought of as troubled.

IV. A MODEL OF HELPING RELATIONSHIPS

In order for the process of defense to be reversed... there must be a decrease in the conditions of worth... [and]...an increase in unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1959, p. 230).

Robert Carkhuff, building on Rogers' work, developed a model of counselling which offered a set of interactional techniques found to be useful for meeting the requirement of a decrease in conditions of worth and an increase in unconditional positive regard.

Carkhuff (1969, Vol. I) demonstrated that effective counselling can be attributed to the relationship between the counsellor and the person being helped. He found that in re-

relationships in which there were numerous aspects which could be characterized as facilitative, the product would be personal growth (pp. 21-22). Stated another way, a troubled child in a relationship with, for example, a school counsellor who is able to provide these facilitative aspects would thus likely show a reduction in the behavioral indicators of emotional disturbance:

In such a [facilitating] relationship the individual becomes more integrated and more effective. He shows fewer of the characteristics which are usually termed neurotic or psychotic, and more of the characteristics of the healthy, well-functioning person, (Rogers, 1961, p. 36)

The facilitative conditions which the counsellor may bring to the relationship have been indentified by Carkhuff (1969, Vol. I) as:

1. Accurate empathy is the counsellor's capacity to
 - a) understand in depth the troubled person's phenomenological field and
 - b) communicate or meaningfully feed back this understanding.
 "Empathy is the key ingredient of helping. Without an empathic understanding of the helpee's world and his difficulties as he sees them there is no basis for helping" (Ibid, p. 173).

This key ingredient of the counselling process is an interactive process in which the counsellor engages. In its most basic operational form, this process consists of the counsellor reflecting to the counsellee, the same affect and meaning (or, in other words the same feelings and content) that the counsellee has shown. For example, if a counsellee showed downcast eyes, drooped shoulders and in a slow, low voice

said: "This task sure gets me down at times," a basic empathic response might include the counsellor reflecting the voice tones, body posture, and saying: "There are times when you feel weighted by the task."

Often in the counselling process it may be pertinent for the counsellor to reflect to the counsellee more than just the counsellee's surface message. For example, a child in play therapy for the first time might stand stiffly against the wall and say in a shakey voice to the counsellor: "Tell me what I'm supposed to do in here." An empathic reply might be: "This is new for you and you're a bit nervous about it; and you may be a bit nervous or afraid of me." In this example the counsellor's response contains reference to elements of the child's experience (i.e. the child's nervousness and fear) that were not clearly obvious on the surface of the child's message (p. 173-176).

2. Respect is present when the counsellor communicates an attitude of deep regard and caring for the person being counselled. Respect "means not making judgments [and expressing] an outgoing and positive feeling of caring for the client" (Rogers, 1967, p. 91). In responding with respect, a counsellor's communication contains the message: "With me you are free to be who you are" (Carkhuff, 1969, Vol. II, p. 86).

There is considerable overlap between the dimensions of respect and empathy:

Respect...is most often found in other communications, frequently those involving empathic understanding or genuineness. It deserves separate attention because sometimes even low-level empathy or genuineness in communications contain high levels of respect (Carkhuff, 1969, Vol. I, p. 180).

Cissna and Sieburg (1981) have arranged behaviors which fit the category of respect into three clusters: recognition, acknowledgement, and endorsement.

Recognition is expressed by looking at the other, making frequent eye contact, touching, speaking directly to the person and allowing the other the opportunity to respond without being interrupted or having to force his or her way into an ongoing monologue (p. 269).

Next, at a verbal level acknowledgement of another is demonstrated by a relevant and direct response to his or her communication. This does not require praise or even agreement but simple conjunction (pp. 269-270). Finally, the endorsement

cluster includes any responses that express acceptance of the other's feelings as being true, accurate and 'okay'. In general, it means simply letting the other be, without blame, praise, analysis, justification, modification, or denial (p. 270).

In a counselling situation, a child might, in speaking about another child, say with anger: "I'm gonna smash his face!" A counsellor's response showing respect might be to look at the child and say: "I can tell that you'd really like to do that."

It may be important to note that the expression of respect does not preclude setting limits. If the child in the above example were to move toward the act of hitting the other child, a counsellor's actions which prevented the violence

would still express respect if the counsellor were to have set the limit in the context of affection and concern (Cissna and Sieburg, 1981, p. 259).

3. Genuineness is that capacity of the counsellor to come across to the counsellee as real, sincere or fully believable (Carkhuff, p. 185). In operation this means that the "messages carried by his various output channels (body posture, movements, voice tempo, voice tonality and words)... fit together to convey a single message" (Grinder and Bandler, 1976, Vol. II, p. 31).

Fitting together the various output channels to convey a single "real" message is based, according to Rogers (1967), in the counsellor being aware of his or her behavior, feelings and thoughts--"flow of experience" (p. 71).

A child in play therapy may deliberately break a toy and then ask the counsellor if s/he is angry. A genuine response would include the counsellor checking his/her inner experience (i.e. "yes, I feel angry" or "no, I'm not angry") and then expressing the words with matching body language. For example, the counsellor who does not feel angry might say "No, I'm not angry," accompanied by a soft voice and a relaxed expression on his face. A phoney or non-genuine response might include those same words accompanied by a harsh vocal tone, a knit brow, and clenched fists. Such a communication containing contradictory messages would likely be, at best, confusing to the child with the consequence of "a restrictive

or destructive effect upon the expressions and behaviors of [the person being counselled]" (Carkhuff, 1969, Vol.II, p. 86).

This section presented a model for the counselling interactions that are necessary for "the process of defense to be reversed" (Rogers, 1959, p. 230). The interactions that have been operationally defined here reflect a great deal of what goes on in the minute-to-minute unfolding of a counselling session. With younger children, the broader context of counselling sessions often involves play and the use of play materials. How might play and its materials provide the context for the therapeutic interventions that are necessary for change to take place? The next section addresses this question by presenting play therapy--its historical roots, the Structured Approach, the Relationship Approach, and the Client-centered Approach.

V. PLAY THERAPY AS A MEANS OF ASSISTING ADJUSTMENT

IN EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED CHILDREN

Historical Developments

The history of the therapeutic use of play in treating children's emotional problems began perhaps with Freud in the case of Little Hans, which was first presented in 1906 (S. Freud, 1955). In that case, Freud did not work with the troubled child directly, but consulted with the father who recorded for Freud descriptions of the child's dreams, utterances, behavior and play activities. Based on these descriptions, Freud generated psychoanalytic interpretations which

the father then carried back and presented to the child.

Freud was not a child therapist (Rychlak, 1973, p. 77) and his use of play in this one case was incidental; however, it did "represent the first application of psychoanalysis to the problems of children and hence gave impetus to a lively interest in child analysis" (Clarizo & McCoy, 1970, p. 360).

It appears that the first to make direct use of play as a technique in psychoanalysis was Hug-Hellmuth (Kanner, 1957, p. 231). Her contribution was the idea that the child analyst could share in a child's ongoing play activities. The analyst would thus be in the most strategically appropriate location from which to translate or interpret the symbolic material represented in the play, to the child (Ibid).

Melanie Klein and Anna Freud were responsible for further developments in the use of play in the psychoanalysis of children. Their original thinking influenced much of what was to come later in the use of play as a therapeutic technique (Charizo & McCoy, 1970, p. 360).

Like Freud and Hug-Mellmuth, Klein combined the psychoanalytic tool of interpretation with children's play. She writes:

In interpreting not only the child's words but his activities with his toys, I applied this basic principle to the mind of the child, whose play and varied activities, in fact his whole behavior are means of expressing what the adult expresses predominately by words (Klein, 1955, p. 224).

She felt that spontaneous play corresponded directly to the

verbal free association used by Freud in the treatment of adults. By interpreting the child's form of free association (i.e., play), she was able to accomplish the main task of psychoanalytic treatment, which was exploration of the unconscious. One important factor that made the exploration possible was the process of transference, which in psychoanalysis is the idea that the patient directs onto the therapist, without justification in real life, feelings and expectations that arise out of his/her relations to other people, particularly parents. This transference is a main source of difficulty for the patient (Rychlak, 1973, p. 71) and Klein's belief was that the therapist's job was to make the child aware of this, by interpreting the child's play to him/her.

Klein's experience with children led her to conclusions about materials and strategies that were useful for therapy with children. She typically used miniatures, including "little wooden men and women--usually in two sizes--cars, wheelbarrows, swings, animals, houses,...chalks or paints, plasticine and string" (Klein, 1955, p. 227). She also suggested that therapists make water play available to their patients. It was her position that the qualities of the materials be such that the child would be able "to express a wide range of fantasies and ideas" (Ibid.).

With respect to strategies, Klein suggested that it was important to allow aggressive acting-out of impulses when they arose in a patient. By channeling a child's aggression into the materials or into verbalizations she was able to

avoid physical attacks on herself. For the child who would not play in the presence of the therapist she suggested that the therapist should patiently interpret the non-action to the child. This would usually stimulate the child to produce material, which in turn could be interpreted to the child (Ibid., p. 233-234).

Kelin has been criticized for over-devotion to the technique of interpretation. One critic (Kanner, 1967) suggested that it is fallacious to conclude as Klein did

that the same performance has the same meaning to every child, that the patient's participation is not needed in interpreting his activities, and that merely telling him what his play symbolized to the interpreter constituted somehow a significant therapeutic procedure (p. 231-232).

Anna Freud (1955) also advocated a psychoanalytic orientation. Although she acknowledged and used many of the contributions that the Klein play techniques had made to the treatment of children, she objected to Klein's idea that all of the child's play can be construed as representative of deep unconscious conflicts. Anna Freud suggested that a more simple explanation, derived from the child's current living experiences could be offered to a child's particular play action, and would often be more therapeutically appropriate than a deep analytic interpretation of the same action (p. 143).

She also differed from Klein's approach in her view of the nature of the transference that ought to occur between the child and the therapist. Her position was that the tra-

ditional approach with adults, in which the therapist maintained a neutral stance in order to facilitate correct transference, must be modified for child treatment. She suggested that successful treatment of a child depended on the child being positively attached to the therapist. This "affectionate tie" was to her, a prerequisite for "the really fruitful work" because a child will only "believe the loved person, and it will only accomplish something to please that person" (p. 144).

To Anna Freud, being believed by the child in treatment was important for reasons other than that the child needed to accept the therapist's interpretations of his or her behavior. She believed that the therapist played an educational role. Part of the therapist's job was to influence the child directly, so that where appropriate, the child would know "very well just what seems to the analyst desirable or undesirable, and what he sanctions or disapproves of" (p. 147).

These orientations to the treatment of troubled children marked the beginnings of play therapy techniques. A number of different approaches to play therapy evolved from the work of these pioneers. James (1977) has captioned current approaches into the following categories: 1) psychoanalytic, 2) structured, 3) relationship, and 3) client-centered (p. vii). Examples of approaches which fall within each of these categories (excluding the psychoanalytic which

has been described above), will be offered on the following pages.

The Structured Approach

In searching for an answer to the question of how best to treat children with emotional difficulties, David Levy (1939) took a step beyond the psychoanalytic procedures that were current in his era. Beginning with the assumption that a child with emotional difficulties had experienced anxiety-generating events or situations that could account for the neurotic symptoms, Levy stated that .

the problem in therapy became well defined--how to develop a method whereby the event could be restored in the child's play and thereby release the anxiety that the child had been unable to release by himself (p. 713).

The method that developed was in essence one in which the therapist "recreates in dramatic play an event, situation or conflict which, he suspects precipitated or now maintains the child's illness" (Hambridge, 1955, p. 606).

The therapist must ascertain that the therapeutic relationship had developed to a sufficient degree so that "there will be neither anxiety nor acting out to an extent disruptive to treatment" (Ibid.). The criteria for choosing the situation that was to be acted out by the child included the need to match the inherent anxiety potential of any particular role play to the ability of the child to assimilate that role play. For example, plays that are allegorical to sibling rivalry are "generally less threatening, while others, such as genital difference play, are more threatening" (Ibid.,

p. 607).

When conducting a structured play therapy session, the therapist was urged to avoid entering into the play itself. The rationale for this caveat was that the child's defensiveness might draw the therapist into the play and thus the role play might proceed in a direction that was of the therapist's choosing, yet irrelevant to the child; or more worrisome, go too far beyond the child's ability to assimilate the material without undo anxiety (Ibid., p. 609).

Interspersed between the two or three role plays in a single session were periods of free play that would aid in assimilating the therapist-introduced material and help to maintain the child's interest by allowing the child to introduce his/her own material to a session. The therapist would monitor the free play for indications pertaining to the status of the progression of therapeutic change and incorporate pertinent child-introduced material that would make the role plays conform more accurately to the child's individual experience (Ibid., p. 609-610).

The Relationship Approach

As might be deduced from its name, this approach views the essence of therapy as residing within the relationship between the therapist and the child. Again, being considered the child's natural language, play was a principle component of the therapeutic process; although it was not entirely necessary (Moustakas, 1966, p. 9).

What was necessary for therapy to proceed, was that the therapist express to the troubled child an attitude of acceptance and trust. This meant that the therapist endeavored to learn the "attitudes, concepts, beliefs and values of the child as they are perceived by him" (Moustakas, 1966, p. 30). The therapist related this understanding to the troubled child in such a way as to be devoid of evaluation, diagnosis or interpretation, for to do so would be to treat him/her as an object and interfere with the establishment of a therapeutic relationship (Ibid.).

In practice, the child in therapy would be allowed to make his/her own decisions. The therapist would not present role plays, choose toys for the child to play with, or present interpretations to the child. As the child engaged in self-determined play the therapist's task was to reflect accurate empathy and to encourage the child to explore his or her own thoughts and feelings (Moustakas, 1959, p. 112).

Moustakas' position was that the therapist take an active role with respect to playing with the child if the child so wished. Moustakas also advocated that the therapist be prepared to go further than this in his engagement with the child, by being prepared to disclose his own feelings and thoughts to the child. Disclosure, even confrontation, was appropriate so long as the child perceived that the therapist recognized the legitimacy of the child's experience:

paradoxical as this seems, only when persons can openly disagree, if this is the reality of their experience, is it possible for them to establish genuine bonds (Moustakas, 1966, p. 23).

The Client-Centered Approach

Virginia Axline was a student of Carl Rogers' theory of personality and therapeutic change. Subscribing to the notion that play is the natural language of the child, she translated Rogers' work into a form suitable for therapists who wished to engage children in client-centered play therapy (James, 1977, p. 21).

Her position was that a child is constantly striving to grow emotionally. The quality of growth for a child is a reflection of the child's experiences; particularly those experiences that take place in the presence of the important adults in the child's life. The degree to which a child's parents, for example, were able through their interactions with the child to confirm the child's strivings to be a worthwhile and effective person would be the degree to which the child would grow up devoid of the conflicts that are associated with emotional distress (Axline, 1947, pp. 9-14).

Axline provided a list of eight basic principles which she believed were the guidelines from which a non-directive play therapist worked:

1. The therapist must develop a warm, friendly relationship with the child, in which good rapport is established as soon as possible.
2. The therapist accepts the child exactly as he is.
3. The therapist establishes a feeling of permissiveness in the relationship so that the child feels free to express his feelings completely.
4. The therapist is alert to recognize the feelings the child is expressing and reflects those feelings back to him in such a manner that he gains insight into his behavior.

5. The therapist maintains a deep respect for the child's ability to solve his own problems if given an opportunity to do so. The responsibility to make choices and to institute change is the child's.
6. The therapist does not attempt to direct the child's actions or conversation in any manner. The child leads the way; the therapist follows.
7. The therapist does not attempt to hurry the therapy along. It is a gradual process and is recognized as such by the therapist.
8. The therapist establishes only those limitations that are necessary to anchor the therapy to the world of reality and to make the child aware of his responsibility in the relationship (Ibid., pp. 73-74).

By the application of these principles it was felt that a troubled child could be free to express his/her feelings, giving vent to those which had been suppressed by the demands of the environment. When free expression was permitted in the presence of a therapist it was felt that the child

becomes emotionally relaxed. Then it seems that the groundwork for more constructive behavior has been laid. He has gotten rid of the old feelings; he is ready for new ones. The experience brings to the child insight into his own behavior. He understands himself a little better. He has gained confidence in himself. He is more capable of solving his own problems. He knows by experience that he can work things out for himself (Ibid., p. 95).

With respect to the facilities that are needed to conduct play therapy, Axline suggested that it was advantageous to have a soundproof room large enough to contain the equipment including provisions for water play, a sand table, storage for the numerous play materials and room enough to permit varied play activities with the materials. If, however, this sort of room was not available, she pointed out that one might make do quite well, if the venue for the play therapy happened to be the corner of a school classroom

(Ibid., p. 53)

In the same vein, she pointed out that a therapist may make do with a limited number of materials so long as the basic list included a doll family, some furniture to scale, paper, scissors, crayons, a few cars and puppets. A more extensive list would include:

nursing bottles; a doll house with furniture, toy soldiers and army equipment; toy animals, playhouse materials, including table, chairs, cot, doll bed, stove, tin dishes, pans, spoon, doll clothes, clothesline, clothespins, and clothes basket, a didee doll; a large rag doll; a puppet screen; clay, finger paints, toy guns, peg-pounding sets, wooden mallet, paper dolls, little cars; airplanes, a table; an easel; an enamel-top table for finger painting and clay work; toy telephone; shelves; small broom, mop, rags, pictures of people, houses, animals and other objects (Ibid., p. 52).

This chapter has presented a review of the literature pertinent to the procedures applied in this study. Literature has been surveyed regarding the role of play in child development, and issues relating to emotionally troubled children including identification, diagnosis, and treatment.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

It was the purpose of this investigation to demonstrate through a case study approach how certain counselling interventions were applied in a normal public school to a selected Grade 3 student with emotional difficulties. What follows is an account of procedures leading up to and including the counselling interventions with the selected student. This chapter will include the following:

1. The criteria for selection of the subject
2. Raymond--initial description
3. An assessment of the subject with respect to the selection criteria
4. Family background
5. Diagnosis
6. Setting up for play therapy--certain practical considerations
7. An account of how the counselling interventions were applied--the anecdotal record

I. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF THE SUBJECT

In order to select the subject for the case study, certain criteria were identified. These criteria were: (a) The subject's behavior should be symptomatic of emotional difficulties; (b) The subject's academic performance should be considered to be below the subject's capabilities; (c) The

above conditions (a and b) should be historical in nature, that is, they should be ongoing through the subject's previous academic experience; (d) The subject's difficulties (symptoms) should not be derived from a primary physical cause of a type that would suggest medical treatment; (e) The subject should be nine years of age or under and; (f) Previous attempts to assist the subject with his/her difficulties should have been perceived as ineffective.

II. RAYMOND--INITIAL DESCRIPTION

Through an acquaintance, the investigator was introduced to the principal of a Vancouver public school. Upon hearing of the intended investigation, the principal agreed to permit the investigator to proceed in his school with a search for a child who might fit the selection criteria. The principal suggested the investigator contact a particular teacher in the school whom he believed was teaching such a child. Upon being contacted, the teacher responded positively to the investigator's proposal, and agreed that the child in question ("Raymond") might fit the selection criteria. (The name "Raymond" has been chosen to protect the identity of the child).

Raymond's classroom was in an east-side Vancouver school. The twenty-four students in the classroom were about equally divided between Grades 3 and 4. The teacher was a male--Mr. P., with five years of teaching experience.

Raymond was of average height and weight, 8 years of age, and in Grade 3 during 1980/81, the year in which this

study was conducted. His dark brown hair hung thick and straight, framing his Chinese face.

On a late November, 1980 morning, Raymond's teacher had given the whole class a set of oral instructions for a reading comprehension task. Raymond was outstanding among the pupils, in that he was the only child who did not participate as per the teacher's instructions. During the time Mr. P. was speaking to the class and the period immediately following in which the students began to copy and then answer a set of questions that had been written on the chalkboard, Raymond was occupied in a seemingly irrelevant search through his workbooks and texts. Although he looked up from his desk, his low-affect expression did not change when Mr. P. prompted him with the reminder that for the assignment he did not need any of his workbooks and should, therefore, leave them in his desk. Mr. P. continued to address Raymond specifically and repeated the instructions for him. While he had been individually attended to, Raymond had stopped the search through his workbook and regarded Mr. P. with the same low-affect expression. Mr. P. elicited a verbal affirmation from Raymond that he understood what he was to do. When Mr. P. began to assist another student, Raymond began anew his aimless search through the workbooks. As the others in the class worked on the assignment, Raymond's activity next expanded to other items in his desk which he took out one-by-one, examined briefly and exchanged for another. His search ended after a few minutes when he

brought out his crayons and paper, and began to draw. He drew for the remainder of the twenty minute period and had to be prompted by Mr. P. to stop and follow the rest of the class out to the schoolyard for recess. On his desk he had left an elaborately detailed pencil and crayon drawing of a Star Wars-type space ship. He had not done any of the assigned work.

A few days later, in early December, Mr. P. stood before the class again. This time he told the children that he had been given special powers by a wizard at a chance encounter on his way to school that morning. He was empowered to give each student five free wishes. What was required, he said, was that the students list their wishes on paper with at least one sentence per wish plus an explanation of why they wanted the wish. Raymond again showed a low-affect expression. This time he stared at his desk top. His reaction contrasted notably with the reactions of the other children who showed great enthusiasm for the idea. When they excitedly commenced to compile their lists, Raymond continued to stare at his desk top where a blank piece of foolscap lay.

I walked over to him with the intention of encouraging him to participate in the activity. He smiled at me as I approached. I had been introduced to the class the week before as someone who would be spending occasional time there. Mr. P. had again on this day noted my presence, but I introduced myself to Raymond personally by reminding him of my name. I asked him if he could tell me what the other child-

ren in the class were doing. He smiled pleasantly but said that he did not know. As I told him what Mr. P. had said, I thought that Raymond began to catch some of the excitement of the others because his eyes opened up a bit and he looked toward the ceiling as if he was formulating a picture in his mind. "How about putting your first wish right here?" I said, pointing to a spot on the paper laying on his desk. "I don't have one" he replied. "What would you wish for if you could wish?" I said, backing up a bit. This did not work either: "Nothing." I asked him what it was that he'd "really like to have, that you don't have now?" This time he replied decisively: "A snake." "So", I said, "you really like snakes." "Well", he paused as if to think, "sort of" came the rest of his reply. I followed: "Well, you kind of like them then." His response was again decisive: "No, oh no, you see I'm scared of snakes, actually." "Do you like snakes?" I asked. "No," came his reply.

Dismissing snakes as a possibility, I asked him if there was anything else he wished he had. He told me he would like a spaceship. "A person could go off in a spaceship," I suggested with carefully measured enthusiasm. He agreed. I wondered out loud if he could put that down as a wish. He told me that he could not, because he did not actually want a spaceship. Our conversation continued in the same manner, covering different wish possibilities until the end of the period when the bell rang and the children all left for recess. Raymond had not written down one wish dur-

ing our fifteen minutes together.

Mr. P. told me later that Raymond's behavior during my observation the previous week, and his response to my attempts to assist him with the "wish" assignment were typical.

He further stated:

Raymond does not apply himself to his work; particularly reading, language arts and to a lesser extent, math. He won't work unless I push him and demand that he work. Then I have to supervise him all along the way. Otherwise, he will stop and daydream or wander around the room.

Mr. P. told me that Raymond's academic achievement was not at the Grade 3 level and that his work assignments were rarely completed.

When asked to comment on Raymond's peer relations,

Mr. P. said:

He doesn't have any friends. He bugs other kids. At least 3 or 4 times a day I'll see him pass another kid's desk and bump it or purposely knock something off. The other kid will get mad but it's as if Raymond doesn't notice [the other's reaction].

Mr. P. told me that Raymond had on occasion gotten into fights or been pushed around harshly by bigger boys whom he had bugged, but that he did not seem to have been deterred by that consequence. Many of the children in the classroom appeared to have learned to tolerate him with annoyance when he interfered with them, rather than retaliate physically. On the playground and during free time in the classroom he rarely joined other children for more than a few minutes. Mr. P. told me that one of the Grade 3 boys had attempted to play with Raymond a number of times, but that it had not worked

out well. Raymond did not respond. It was as if he did not know how to relate in a more appropriate mode.

Commenting on Raymond's moods, Mr. P. related that: "He seems to be far away, daydreaming much of the time. He doesn't seem sad and he doesn't seem to be happy either. 'Flat' is the best word to sum up his usual mood."

Raymond apparently got along relatively well with his teacher despite the close supervision that Mr. P. believed was necessary to get him to produce academically. He rarely reacted with open defiance when Mr. P. pushed him to work, but Mr. P. reported that Raymond had to be severely reprimanded on a couple occasions for "lipping off" for no apparent reason to the soft spoken and deferential teacher's aid who came into the classroom for six hours a week.

The scope of Raymond's interests were narrow. He liked to draw. The subjects of his drawings were typically either Star Wars-type space ships, or animals. Mr. P. said that although he showed artistic talent that was recognized by the other children in the class, Raymond did not like to have his pictures praised--especially the animal drawings which he frequently destroyed whether they had been praised or not, saying, for example: "A whale doesn't look like this. This is crummy."

Raymond had several obvious rash-like patches on his neck. When he was asked to comment on the condition he said the cause was that he ate "too much junk food." When asked how he had arrived at that conclusion he mumbled a

sentence which contained the word "doctor" but would elaborate no further. Mr. P. recalled that the rash had been present on Raymond's neck throughout most of the fall. He added that the rash did not appear to make Raymond uncomfortable, although he did scratch himself occasionally and there had been some bleeding at times as a result.

III. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE SUBJECT
WITH RESPECT TO THE SELECTION CRITERIA

A. Symptomatic Behaviors

In the initial reports of Raymond, there are many behavioral indicators that suggest underlying emotional difficulties. For example, the reports indicate that Raymond typically showed little, if any awareness of the ongoings of the classroom. His teacher usually needed to make a special effort to "push" Raymond to pay attention. Otherwise Raymond seemed to "wander" aimlessly or "daydream." The reports also suggest that Raymond did not have any friends and that he usually played by himself even though he had been approached in a friendly way by another child on certain occasions.

Raymond's affect was characterized as "flat" by his teacher. That is, the range of his emotional displays was narrow and typically did not reflect such feelings as happiness, excitement, anger or disappointment when he was in a context that could be counted on to elicit these feelings as other children normally do.

His emotional neutrality did give way, however, at

times when he expressed displeasure at his own artistic ability. His self put-downs in this area, appeared inappropriate as he was regarded by Mr. P. and his peers as the most artistically talented child in the class. Aside from drawing, he showed little interest in other areas. According to Raths (1972, pp. 31-35) these behaviors are characteristic of the child who is withdrawn and thus symptomatic of a child who is emotionally troubled. In a different vein, there were reports of several fights that Raymond had been involved in. Further, he frequently carried the displeasure of his classmates by bumping, tripping them or knocking items off of their desks. Mr. P. also told of Raymond's unprovoked verbal aggression toward the teacher's aid. These behaviors are symptomatic and reflect characteristics of aggression (Ibid., pp. 19-24).

There was another category of troubled behaviors that Raymond showed. Specifically, Raymond rarely completed assignments on his own. Mr. P. believed that this may have been connected to the phenomenon seen by the investigator in his attempt to assist Raymond to begin the "five wishes" task. This phenomenon is a transactional pattern that could be described as follows: the teacher would ask Raymond a question that had a definite, personal referent that was readily available to his cognitive faculty (e.g., "Raymond, what would you like to have?"). Raymond might reply with the answer (e.g., "a snake") which the teacher would confirm: "So, you'd like a snake." His typical reply would disconfirm his previous statement:

"No, actually, I don't like snakes." For Raymond to have allowed the teacher's second response ("So, you'd like a snake") to stand, would be to have committed himself, which Raymond apparently was not able to do. Mr. P. suggested that "I think that it makes him nervous to answer questions."

According to Shapiro (1965) "sometimes the difficulty and discomfort that these people experience when a decision is in prospect is explained as a reflection of their ambivalence" (p. 46). The "people" that Shapiro was referring to showed signs consistent with a category of symptomatic behavior that Shapiro designated as neurotic obsessive-compulsive. He continued, "but what distinguishes obsessional people in the face of a decision is not their mixed feelings but rather the fact that those feelings are always so marvellously and perfectly balanced" (Ibid.). This fit a chronic pattern in Raymond's behavior.

In sum, Raymond showed aggressive and withdrawn behavior. He also engaged in a pattern that is also seen in a neurotic character-type. Raymond's behavior therefore met the first criterion. It was symptomatic of emotional difficulties.

B. Academic Performance

From the data presented above, particularly the information that he frequently did not complete assigned work and that he showed difficulties attending to the teacher, it might be assumed that his achievement levels were low. The assumption is correct. Mr. P. had not given Raymond achieve-

ment tests, but concluded from his in-class performance that Raymond's achievement levels were as follows:

TABLE 1

Teacher Assessment of Raymond's Academic Achievement Grade Levels, December, 1980	
Subject	Grade Level
Math	2.5
Vocabulary	2.0
Reading	1.5
Phonics	1.5
Spelling	1.5

No test data were found on Raymond's intelligence. Mr. P. stated, however, that Raymond was a "smart boy who showed signs of being able to do much better." The school counsellor who had observed and worked with Raymond individually in the 1979/80 school year agreed with Mr. P.'s appraisal as did his second-grade teacher. Further, the principal at Raymond's school who was familiar with Raymond, noted that his underachievement could not be explained by a lack of intellectual ability.

C. History of the Difficulties

In checking with Raymond's Grade 2 teacher, it was found that she had observed many of the same behavior difficulties that were seen in Raymond in Grade 3. She noted low achievement levels coupled with an inability to complete assigned work. She noted that his peer relations were poor;

that he frequently "poked and prodded" other children and that he would often "tune out" the children when they protested that treatment. She recalled that he also had difficulty paying attention to her instructions.

The school counsellor was called in to consult on those difficulties in the same school year. He brought Raymond into a counselling group to work on "self-concept skills." In addition to confirming many of the observations of the Grade 2 teacher, he characterized Raymond as an "emotional cripple", elaborating that Raymond could express little, if any understanding of the feelings of himself or others.

Raymond's principal had knowledge of Raymond from the previous year. He stated that his Grade 2 teacher had experienced many problems with Raymond and that she had sent him to the office on a number of occasions in the spring of 1980 because he would not be controlled. He said Raymond had been referred to him twice because he had bitten another child. Evidently, Raymond had also frequently been verbally aggressive and hostile toward his teacher that year.

These data suggested that Raymond's difficulties had existed earlier.

D. Physical Health

In a December meeting, Raymond's father indicated that the child had been recently taken to visit a physician because there was concern over the rash on his neck. According to Raymond's father the doctor had said that the rash was

eczema and caused by Raymond being "frustrated." It did not have an organic antecedent. Otherwise, the doctor had told Raymond's father that the child was in normal health. The assumption was made that the rash was psychosomatic (Pelletier, 1977, p. 279) and taken as a further indication that Raymond showed symptoms of emotional difficulties.

E. Age

Raymond was 8 years old at the time of the study. His age appeared to place him in a category that seemed appropriate for symbolic play and therefore play therapy.

F. Previous Attempts at Remediation

Raymond had been sent to the principal's office several times during his Grade 2 career. The principal had several conversations with him at these times regarding his behavior. The principal had attempted to reason with Raymond and suggested alternative behaviors to the ones which had got him in trouble. The principal did not believe that his efforts at remediation were successful, but he did believe that separating Raymond from the classroom and making him sit in the office prevented further escalation when Raymond appeared to be going out of control.

The school counsellor, who saw Raymond in approximately 6 "self-concept" groups, reported that he did not see change or improvement in Raymond's behavior as a consequence of the child's participation. He also had conversations with Raymond's mother, but that did not seem to help either.

Mr. P. felt that there were perhaps fewer fights and

other aggressive behaviors seen in Raymond in the fall of 1980, but attributed that improvement to his own ability as a teacher to control Raymond. He indicated that he felt he could not leave Raymond with the teacher's aid, lest there be recurrences of "lipping off." Mr. P. also said that Raymond had been listed by substitutes earlier in the fall as an incorrigible child.

It appeared that "normal" school intervention had not been helpful to Raymond, as his difficult behavior persevered. With respect to each of the selection criteria, Raymond was considered an appropriate subject.

IV. FAMILY INFORMATION

Raymond's father, Mr. Chuang (pseudonym) was born in China. When he was on the cusp leading to his teenage years his family emigrated to Vancouver, Canada with the aid of relatives already here. The values that Mr. Chuang was exposed to as a youngster were traditionally Chinese. Accordingly, when he sought to marry he was attracted to Mrs. Chuang who was also a product of a traditional Chinese family. Mrs. Chuang, however, had been born in Canada and because her family had been living in Vancouver for a longer period of time than her husband's family, her upbringing reflected a greater exposure to Western culture.

At the time of the study, Mr. and Mrs. Chuang were both in their mid-thirties. They had been married for eleven years and had, in addition to Raymond, a daughter Lucy, who was two years older than Raymond and in grade five at the

same neighbourhood school. The Chuang family's home was a plain stucco, three bedroom bungalow. Once past the neat yard one entered the house and was met by furnishings that were elaborately Chinese. There seemed to be just enough room for each of the people living there which included in addition to those already noted, Raymond's maternal grandmother.

An interview with Roger Low, a Chinese-Canadian with several years of experience with the Ministry of Human Resources in youth and family work, provided some insights into traditional Chinese family structure. It was pointed out that the network of relationships in Chinese families are different in certain respects from the manner in which Western families are typically organized. First, Low said the presence of a grandmother was very common, because in Chinese culture it was expected that grown children would care for the elders in their old age. A grandmother's function was typically active. She would aid in the day-to-day household operations, including childcare. Tradition stipulated that on certain household and child-care decisions, the wife (in this case Raymond's mother) would defer to the older woman, but that they would both cooperate in the execution of domestic functions.

The eldest son in a family held a position of great importance. It would be he who would take on the responsibility of caring for the parents in their old age. As a child, he would be made aware of this role and would be groomed for his future by being given extra responsibilities. Along with

his extra responsibilities would come certain special privileges that none of the other children in his family, including an older sister, could expect to have. In a family with only one boy, his position as most favoured would be even more important because if he were to die, then the parents might have grave difficulties surviving in their old age when they could no longer work. Furthermore, the only son would be the sole person who could carry on that particular family's lineage, and his death would be a disaster in that respect.

Even though an only son held a special position, he was duty bound to obey his mother, grandmother and especially his father. Failure to show obedience would bring shame upon the family which would rest most heavily on the shoulders of the father.

A daughter's role would be to help with the house-keeping. In the China of old, she would be expected to learn her domestic chores well and demonstrate obedience; a girl showing these qualities could expect to marry young and cease to be a financial burden to the family. In a case in which she was older than an only son, she might be asked to look after him. At these times, her authority was vested in her by her elders and the son would obey his older sister as a means of obeying his elders.

In a household with no grandfather, the ultimate authority would rest with the father. His word is final in all respects and he could overrule decisions made by others

in the family. He is also considered to be the prime breadwinner, and in situations in which his ability to provide was in question, he would feel shame.

Low stated that most Chinese families in Vancouver had been influenced greatly by Western culture and had needed to make adjustments. "Chinese culture is strong in its resiliency," he said, "and most families can tolerate Western influence [but they inevitably] experience conflicts around this."

It may be noticed in the following discussion that the Chuang family exemplified in several respects the traditional values and the conflicts that Low spoke of.

In an interview, Mr. Chuang presented himself formally and politely. He was small and soft spoken. His command of English was not quite fluent and not fluid. One had the impression that he would have preferred to be interviewed in his own language.

Raymond's teacher had related information that Mr. Chuang might be "too hard on Raymond." When asked to comment on problems that the family was experiencing with the boy, Mr. Chuang said that he felt worried about his son because, when left with unstructured free time, Raymond usually engaged in "foolish daydreaming", fighting with his sister, or disobedience. To prevent these problematic activities and to insure that Raymond was engaged in something productive, Mr. Chuang said that he made certain that his son was busy at all times. Mr. Chuang explained that each day after public school, Ray-

mond and Lucy traveled downtown by bus to attend Chinese School where they were instructed in the reading and writing of Chinese characters. After their return home, one child would do public school homework while the other would practice piano. When the first child had finished piano practice, the two children would switch activities. Neither Raymond's teacher Mr. P. nor Lucy's teacher gave much homework and so Lucy was usually free to go on to other activities. Raymond, however, was not allowed the free time. Mr. Chuang said that he devised extra school work for his son, particularly math which he felt was one of Raymond's poorest subjects, but important for a boy who would be expected later on in life to support a family. As he spoke, Mr. Chuang showed a genuine and unmistakable concern for his son.

With respect to his own employment, Mr. Chuang worked as a commercial artist/designer. Although he had always previously worked for established firms in the Chinese community, he had decided (in the year before this study began) to branch out on his own. His one-person art design and graphics operation was young and struggling, but according to Mr. Chuang, it was recently becoming more viable financially. He indicated that if business continued to improve his wife might be able to quit the job that she held.

Mr. Chuang explained that unfortunately Raymond would not obey either his mother or grandmother; indeed grandmother was an old and frail woman and had even "become ill as a consequence of Raymond's disobedience". Therefore, even though he

had a small office in the Chinese business district, Mr. Chuang had been making a practice of doing much of his professional work at home so that he could take charge of Raymond when the boy came home for lunch and after school.

In the spring of the school year preceding this study the school counsellor had met with Raymond's mother to discuss Raymond's lack of academic progress and poor peer relations. At that meeting the counsellor noticed that Mrs. Chuang seemed concerned but distant. She indicated that she felt powerless to manage Raymond's behavior.. These concerns were repeated again in a contact this investigator had with her. She explained calmly and with a show of flat affect that she had given up attempts to control Raymond. She described her son as frequently nervous. She believed that the cause of his nervousness was that he was a "perfectionist" and that he "always tried to get everything right."

In her grade-5 classroom, Lucy Chuang was not considered outstanding in any respect except that she was thought of as a little shy. Her teacher reported that her academic skills were progressing adequately and she had a circle of friends that she got along well with. In a conversation with the investigator she related that her relationship with her brother was "not good because he bugs me." She also related that he would not obey his grandmother. Her expression was one of concern and she acknowledged that she was worried about the situation.

V. THE WORKING DIAGNOSIS

Based upon the theoretical considerations necessary for diagnosis presented in Chapter II, (pp. 29-38) it is now possible to use these in making the diagnosis for Raymond Chuang.

The observational data gathered included information suggesting that Raymond showed chronic withdrawal combined with a dampened affect. Symptoms of this nature suggest the possibility that the child has not had the opportunity to develop basic trust. Since this psychosocial task is typically negotiated during infancy when the mother is usually the principal caregiver, it is important to consider the quality of the mother's relationship with the child at that stage. Although those data are not available in this study, it is known from reports by both parents that Mrs. Chuang had, at the time the study began, been playing a peripheral role in the parental subsystem of the family. It was also noted that Raymond had been "uncontrollable" by both his mother and grandmother and that this issue was a source of anxiety, discomfort, and possible shame in the family from the perspective of Chinese culture. It is possible to speculate that Raymond's mother was not able during his infancy to provide the consistency and presence that Erikson noted as needed for the development of basic trust. Speculation aside, the data suggest that Raymond was blamed for Mrs. Chuang's failure to control him, and he was also blamed for the illness of his grandmother. This condition suggests that the

two women perceived that they had been ill treated by the child, and were on guard against him as a consequence. This mode of interacting with Raymond would be likely to induce a sense of mistrust in Raymond.

By having failed to successfully negotiate the first psychosocial stage, Raymond and his family were ill prepared to adequately traverse the succeeding stages and his behavior manifested symptoms accordingly. Raymond's aggressiveness, which typically came out in the form of bugging others is reminiscent of a child in search of autonomy. It appeared, however, that this child had instead found shame and doubt as a consequence of his poking to stir up the fire in others. Perhaps the most striking symptoms were associated with his lack of school progress. He appeared to be unable to attend to tasks and was able to skillfully disqualify any assertion that a teacher could induce him to make. In addition, the information that Mr. Chuang supplied about the quantity and nature of the after-school work that Raymond was given, leads the focus here to the psychosocial task of industry. It appeared that Raymond despaired of his abilities. In short, he had a sense of inferiority that left him unable to generate a product (schoolwork) on his own--he had to be pushed by an "other."

The issues outlined above represent numerous conditions of worth. This child was apparently unable to assert himself as an autonomous individual with his mother or grandmother lest he risk losing their love. Further, his

father's love appeared to be conditional upon Raymond meeting his father's exacting demands.

With respect to the directions that a school counsellor's interventions might take, it appeared that Raymond would likely benefit most from being prized, as he was, for who he was, with as much consistency as possible. Further, it appeared that he might be in need of support that would counteract the sense of inferiority that he felt. If he could gain a sense of industry based on some of his own innate capacities, he might be able to generate a product, independent from the conditions of worth that seemed to affect much of his school career.

IV. SETTING UP FOR PLAY THERAPY--

CERTAIN PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

With an initial diagnosis completed, there arose the need to establish various parameters for the counselling interventions. In this regard, three fundamental issues were considered: (1) the playroom--a counselling room or space in a room with certain physical attributes had to be located and secured for use on a regular basis; (2) play-media--a selection of toys and materials had to be gathered and made ready for use in the play sessions and; (3) meeting schedule--the questions of the frequency and duration of the play sessions had to be addressed.

The Playroom

The typical public school has several functions. These functions may include academic instruction, socializa-

tion, and minimal health care of the children. These functions are reflected in the physical structure of the school buildings themselves. The planners who have created the layouts of public school buildings have typically not considered a play therapy room to be of high priority (Landrith & Hendricks, 1977, p. 63). Therefore, the ideal playroom of the ideal size, which is private, soundproofed, equipped with running water, easily washable walls and floor, shelves for permanent display and storage of toys, a one-way mirror for observation was not available at Raymond's school. Axline (1947) points out that if nothing more desirable was available for a playroom, a corner of a school classroom could be used (p. 53). Ginott (1961, p. 64) however, advises against such an arrangement. He states that the attribute of size is important. A playroom of 150 to 200 square feet would be of optimal size because "a [too] big room invites wild running and rough play in aggressive children and permits withdrawn children to avoid contact with the therapist" (p. 64).

Keeping Ginott's advice in mind, the investigator consulted with Mr. P. who had taught in Raymond's school for several years and consequently knew the buildings well. Several playroom attributes, with special priority on the importance of a room of the size recommended by Ginott, were identified as crucial. Of the three rooms available, the nurse's office appeared upon inspection to have the most favourable attributes for play therapy. This room was located in a far corner of the building, away from the classroom area and

bounded only by the principal's office. This location was relatively private. As for size, the room was 10 ft. x 15 ft., thus meeting the standard set by Ginott. In addition, the room had a small washroom attached to it with toilet and sink, which meant that running water would be available for potential play. There was also a small armless sofa at one end of the room, and in another corner, the nurse's desk. These last two features were plusses as they opened up many possibilities for symbolic play. On the minus side, was the unlocked cabinet of nursing supplies which contained such items as cotton balls, tongue depressors and bandages. Raymond would have to be constrained from interfering with these and there was some concern that there might be difficulties in the process. Another detracting aspect of this room was that, although washable, the tile floor in combination with the room's very small and high windows imparted a certain dark coldness. An attempt to offset this was made by supplying a small bright throw-rug for the floor.

The nurse's office was apparently little used. The nurse was itinerant; she was responsible for several schools in the area, and therefore spent only short periods of time using the office at Raymond's school. Scheduling for use of that room was handled informally by the school secretary who worked in the adjoining office. Arrangements were made with her for use of the room on a schedule that would not interfere with the nurse's visits. The secretary, however, did point out that a conflict might arise occasionally because children

who become ill at school are asked to wait in the nurse's office for their parents to pick them up. Since there appeared to be no other alternative for these children, alternate arrangements for counselling on those occasions would have to be made.

Meeting Schedule

Nickerson (1973) suggests that play therapy sessions in a school setting should be scheduled to end at the beginning of a break in the school day, such as recess, lunch, or dismissal. This arrangement was suggested because in her experience, after a session in the playroom, children could be too "noisy and boisterous to return to class" (p. 363). With respect to this consideration, Raymond's teacher was consulted. Mr. P. felt that the period preceeding the lunch break would be the best schedule choice. It was then that Raymond would be least likely to miss productive instructional time. Furthermore, if Raymond were to show boisterousness after a play session, the lunch break would offer a more accepting environment for him than would a classroom.

The literature, unfortunately, appears to be unclear as to the matter of the optimal frequency of contact between a counsellor and child in play therapy sessions. Axline (1947), Moustakas (1959), Ginott (1961) and others (e.g., Alexander, 1964; Waterland, 1970; Nelson, 1967; Campanelle, 1971; Jernburg, 1979) do not appear to have discussed the issue directly. Instead, when reviewing their writing the picture that emerges--one session per week--is derived from the frequencies

mentioned incidentally in the case presentations by these writers. Still others (Nickerson, 1973, p. 363; Kranz, 1972, p. 73; Andronico & Blake, 1971, p. 377) have mentioned frequencies of twice a week but again, these writers unfortunately seem to have omitted a rationale that could explain that choice.

After consideration, it was decided to schedule Raymond for two play sessions per week. This decision was taken because of the relatively short (6 month) treatment period, in which to effect therapeutic change. By scheduling sessions two times per week, there might be a greater chance for the possibility of therapeutic change.

Play Media

The list of play media, or toys and materials that might be used profitably in play therapy can be quite expensive (Axline, 1947, pp. 52-55). In this investigation, however, there were constraints that resulted in a restricted play media list. First, there was no permanent and secure storage space available for use in the nurse's office. This meant that the quantity or volume of media that might be available for Raymond in the counselling sessions was, of necessity, limited to what could be carried to the nurse's office for each session. There was also the matter of budget. Toys can be expensive. For example, the lowest priced (but still sturdy) baby doll offered by Sears during the time that toys were assembled for this investigation was priced at \$12.99. Considering that several dolls, enough to make up

a family, were to be acquired, prices of this nature limited the number of purchases that could be made. It was possible to make use of the resources available at Raymond's school, and thus, crayons, paints, paper and other supplies from the classroom were added. It was not possible, however, to augment the list of toys because toys were generally non-existent in the school. As for larger and desirable items, such as a sand table or water-play table, it was unfortunate that circumstances did not appear to favour the smooth shifting of these pieces into and out of the nurse's office for each session. Another consideration with respect to these large items was the "mess potential". Sand and water play are often accompanied by much exuberant spreading around of these materials by a child in play therapy. The concern about having to set strict limits on materials' use, and the possible consequence of Raymond's mess militated against the inclusion of these larger materials, in spite of their attractive play-use potential.

These and other limits demonstrate that the physical set-up for the play therapy aspect of this investigation was less than ideal. Fortunately, direction for school counselors has been provided by several writers (Landreth & Hendricks, 1977, p. 63; Waterland, 1970, p. 181) including Axline (1947) who suggested that if it was "not possible to secure all the suggested materials...[a scaled down list] packed in a suitcase and carried about with the therapist" (p. 54) would not unduly limit the effectiveness of the counselling.

Instead of a suitcase, an extremely sturdy commercial cardboard carton (42"x24"x12") designed for long distance shipping of frozen food was used. In addition to being sturdy, the carton was unlike the typical supermarket box in that it did not use flaps for closing but employed a slip-over type lid that was counted on to provide security for the contents. This "playbox" was stocked with the following items:

1. A doll family--father, mother, boy and girl,
2. Three hand puppets,
3. Several small animal figures,
4. Three sauce pans of various sizes,
5. A set of plastic dishes, cups and spoons,
6. Plastic containers,
7. Crayons and felt markers,
8. Paper,
9. Scissors,
10. Masking tape,
11. Plasticine,
12. Building blocks,
13. One half dozen assorted small cars,
14. Odd scraps of cardboard and paper tubes.

Most of these items were purchased second-hand at considerable savings over new items. By making the rounds of several second-hand stores and garage sales, where used toys and household goods such as dishes and cooking utensils are usually present in abundance, it was found that the "playbox" could be stocked for approximately \$25.00. Cheap prices

also translated into a degree of expendability. For example, a used aluminum sauce pot could be replaced for less than \$1.00 if it was damaged during play. When selecting used toys, however, it may be advisable to be alert to items which have been damaged or weakened through the play of its previous owner. Once the play therapy sessions began, it was necessary to discard several items of this nature that fell apart in the early play sessions even though they had not been handled roughly by Raymond.

VII. THE ANECDOTAL RECORD

Procedure for Collecting Data

Anecdotal records were kept of each counselling session. Records were also made of Raymond's classroom behavior throughout the interval during which the counselling strategies were being applied. Specifically, these records were collected in the following ways:

1. The investigator made notes of events and conversations during each counselling session. After each session, these notes were expanded to (a) fill in the details that were not possible to record during the session and (b) provide conceptualizations about the counselling process.

2. The investigator met with Mr. P., Raymond's teacher, weekly to discuss Raymond's classroom behavior. Notes were kept of these meetings.

What follows is an anecdotal account of the application of certain counselling strategies and of some of Raymond's classroom behavior during the six-month treatment period. The

description of events is often followed by an interpretation. These interpretations are designated by numbers within parentheses and are found directly following the descriptions of the session. Since this is a personal record of events, the personal pronoun is used in place of the more formal and unwieldy term, "the investigator."

First Counselling Meeting-January 20

As was to be standard for each counselling contact with Raymond, I came to his classroom in order to walk him down to the "playroom" in the nurse's office. While walking toward the playroom, Raymond steered our conversation to the large carton that I was carrying: "I wonder what's in the box, Mr. Todtman?" I replied: "Maybe there is some interesting stuff in there. You might want to see it when we get to the playroom." He looked at me and grinned. We were silent for the rest of our short walk.

When we reached the playroom I placed the box down in the middle of the floor. Raymond surveyed the room but paused as I began to speak to him. "Raymond, this is called 'the playroom'." In here I'm not a teacher and you're not in a classroom where you've got work you have to do. Here, you choose what goes on." He did not reply immediately but instead stood stiffly and grinned in the same way he had done on our walk over from his classroom. (1) Finally, Raymond said: "I don't know what to do." I re-emphasized, "In here you choose what to do," then added, "but you don't know what to choose." Looking at the box, he then told me with a plead-

ing voice, "There's so many things to choose." My reply was, "You can't figure which one to start on." (2)

I sat down on the floor a short distance (3 ft.) away from the playbox and waited for his reply. When it came, it was again to tell me that he didn't know what to do. I simply reflected this back to him, adding, "And that makes you feel uncomfortable." He grinned and said nothing. (3)

The next ten minutes were punctuated by similar exchanges, separated by long silent gaps. Then, Raymond told me that he was bored. As he spoke these words, I noticed that he was wincing as if he was experiencing some pain. I responded by telling him that in the playroom, he was allowed to choose what to do. I continued with a softer and encouraging voice, "If you want to choose to be bored, that's okay with me." (4)

Hearing this, he looked at the box and for the second time wondered out loud what was in it. I reflected his statement back to him, "You wonder what's in the box." He responded by again repeating his wondering out loud. We repeated this sequence two more times until I said, "Raymond, your 'wondering' sounds like you are asking permission to open the box, and not just wondering." (5) He immediately replied with, "Yes." "Oh," was my way to acknowledge that I had heard his last word. "Well, can I?" he asked. "You want me to give you permission, even though you're supposed to choose what to do," I reflected. After a short pause in which he had stood still looking at the box, he declared that he would open it. (6)

Setting the lid aside, he made a quick visual inspection of the playbox and removed some drawing paper and crayons. He sat on the floor and drew quietly. After drawing an ocean scene with a submarine, he put the paper aside and began to tell me a series of stories that involved him and his sister destroying each other's toys. (7) In each story, his sister stepped on or twisted apart one of Raymond's toys such as an airplane or watercolour paint set. Each time she acted this way, he retaliated: "Well, next I wrecked one of her dolls, but she got another one." I reflected to him that their toys seemed to get wrecked but that his sister's dolls seemed to be replaced each time one was broken. He acknowledged this and added that there was one of his toys that had not befallen such an unhappy end. This toy was a model aircraft carrier: "I keep it on top of the T.V. Once, my sister tried to wreck it, but I told my father and she got in trouble from him." (8)

I informed Raymond that five minutes remained in the session. On hearing this, he turned back to the playbox and began to make a more thorough search of its contents. He removed a set of small toy cars that were still in the plastic bag from the second-hand store. As with the playbox itself, he wondered out loud if he could open the bag which was closed tightly with staples. "You wonder if it's okay to open the bag," I said. He looked at me and declared with a grin: "I'm gonna." (9)

Raymond opened the bag and played with its contents

for the remaining time until I informed him that the time was up. His reaction to this information prompted me to reflect to him that he seemed disappointed. He replied, "Yes." As I was putting the play materials away, I told Raymond that I would return on Friday for the next play session. He pretended not to hear me and replied, "Wednesday." "You don't want to wait until Friday; you want to do this again tomorrow" I said to him. He agreed. (10) I told him that I would see him again on Friday; and thus the first session was ended.

- (1) Raymond was anxious during this session. Although he and I had several previous contacts, including one in which I had briefly tried to prepare him for the beginning of the play sessions, he was in a new situation on this day and showed his discomfort with a wide grin that filled his face so much that his eyes squinted.
- (2) Raymond had clearly been told that he was to choose what to do, and his curiosity seemed to be directing him to find out what was in the box. Raymond, however, was in a conflict in that it appeared to be too risky for him to commit himself to any direct action regarding the box, even though he was intensely curious. He was uncomfortable in this conflict, and sought pleadingly to have me extricate him by telling him what to do.
- (3) Raymond was not used to discussing feelings and I believe that my reference to how he felt may have frightened him.
- (4) By this time I was bored too, but had been filling in the gaps by daydreaming. I had thought that I could continue on that way quite comfortably for the rest of the session if need be. It was okay with me that he had chosen to "be bored" and I endeavored to make this clear to him as well as to be as supportive as I could.
- (5) By offering this comment, I hoped to assist Raymond to clarify what he seemed to be saying--i.e., he wanted me to tell him to open the playbox.
- (6) It seems that Raymond did some thinking about his sit-

uation during this pause. What his thoughts were, I don't know, but the effect of what had transpired up to this point in the session was that Raymond himself opened the playbox without me urging him to do so as it seemed he would have liked. It was advantageous that events unfolded this way because I was able to support several of the treatment goals that had been set--most particularly the goal of facilitating and valuing autonomous action by Raymond.

- (7) It seemed to me that these stories were fantasies. They also seemed to offer some preliminary indications with respect to the relationship between Raymond and his sister.
- (8) I guessed that Raymond was expressing that he felt powerless in relation to his sister. He also seemed to be expressing a wish that he could expect his father to show support of him on certain matters.
- (9) He appeared again to be concerned with getting an explicit instruction from me. This time, however, he found it easier to act on his own.
- (10) In some quarters, this sort of transaction might be labeled as an "attempt by Raymond to manipulate." Manipulation is typically connoted negatively as "bad behavior" on the part of the child. It would seem that the only alternative for a counsellor who is confronted with bad behavior is to correct the bad behavior. I preferred, however, to view these situations as "attempts to influence." This perspective governed my response to Raymond. It seemed that he liked the session enough to try to influence me to return on the following day, Wednesday, rather than wait three days for Friday to arrive.

Counselling Meeting--January 23

When I arrived at Raymond's classroom, Mr. P. told me that Raymond had been unusually cheerful and alert throughout the morning, in contrast to his typical "flat" affect. Raymond had asked Mr. P. if I was going to "be at the school today." When Mr. P. gave him an affirmative answer, Raymond asked him if he was sure. Although Mr. P. did not inquire as to how he felt about the first meeting it appeared to Mr. P. that

these behaviors indicated that Raymond had enjoyed it and was looking forward to the second one with enthusiasm.

Upon arriving at the playroom, I placed the playbox on the floor and sat down as I had done at the previous meeting. Raymond grinned shyly, looked at the ceiling and said, "I wonder if I should open the box." "Raymond," began my reply, "you wonder, don't know if you should open the box." He nodded, and then asked "Can I?" I told him that he seemed to want permission from me to open the box; to which he replied, "Yes, can I?" (1) I then told him that to open the box was his decision to make and I added, "You would probably feel more comfortable if I made the decision about what happens to the box." He agreed with this and I then told him that I would not make that decision. After considering this for a moment, Raymond sat down and removed the lid and surveyed the toys. (2)

He did not remove any of the items in the playbox. Instead, he launched into a narrative concerning dragons. Raymond told me that one Saturday he and several of his friends (3) had been in Vancouver's Chinatown. Looking up into the sky, they saw a dragon flying around.(4) He described several of the dragon's features, which included a long flowing tail, menacing claws and, of course, a mouth that breathed fire.

He told me that he and his friends directed the dragon to stop a speeding car. The dragon did just that by breathing fire on the tires. The people who emerged from the "wrecked" car were angry, he said, "But it was their fault for speed-

ing."

Raymond next proceeded to relate that his sister was afraid of the dragon. He told a story in which the dragon menaced Lucy in several ways. For example, he told me that Lucy tried to sneak up on him and his friends "to spy on what we were playing." The dragon chased her away by flying after her and breathing fire. He told this with a smile of enjoyment on his face. (5) "Lucy got scared and ran where my father was," he said. I commented that she would be protected by their father. This comment had a notable effect. Upon hearing it, he stopped his narrative, the pleasure that he had been showing passed, and he immediately turned to the playbox. (6)

For a few moments he rummaged around in the box. He removed a bright yellow mouse puppet and a larger dog puppet. The mouse began to hit the dog, inflicting pain that Raymond expressed by the liberal use of sound effects: "Ouch! ugh! ah!." After a few moments, the action changed when the dog puppet turned toward me to deliver a series of insults: "Dummie, stupid!" followed by a bite on the arm. Speaking to the dog puppet I said: "You seem to be angry with me." (7) Raymond carried on as if I had said nothing. I then asked the dog puppet point blank: "Are you mad at me?" to which came the reply, "No, it's just a game, this." (8)

I dropped the tack of commenting on the anger that was apparently being expressed toward me, in favour of commenting on the pattern that had emerged: "Oh," I said, "so the little guy (the yellow puppet) beats up on the bigger guy (the dog

puppet) and then you," speaking to the dog puppet, "do stuff to me." Raymond seemed to like this, as he showed a smile and put the puppets down with an air of satisfaction as the session ended. (9)

- (1) Raymond appeared to be confused. He was not quite sure if I was merely reflecting what he had expressed, or if I was acknowledging that I was prepared to do as he wished which was to give him explicit permission to open the playbox.
- (2) In comparison with the previous session, Raymond showed little distress over the decision to open the playbox.
- (3) Raymond was reputed to not have playmates.
- (4) The image of the dragon plays an important part in Chinese mythology. As a symbol, it functions to protect people against ill-fortune and evil spirits (Yu, 1981).
- (5) He appeared to relish the thought of being afraid of the dragon which he controlled.
- (6) I believe that my comment caused Raymond to confront the idea that his father would protect Lucy against his pranks. This reality was not welcomed by Raymond, as it burst the bubble that his fantasy had created.
- (7) My words, "You seem to be angry with me," were a comment on the hostility that the puppet seemed to show toward me. I realized hostility was being expressed, but it was not until I had a chance to review my notes after the meeting that I made the connection between the hostility and my comment about his father protecting Lucy.
- (8) Perplexed by the seemingly unconnected hostility, I was fishing. Raymond was not about to grasp my line. Indeed, the ramifications of anger were too great for him to deal with openly and so he rejected my frame of hostility in favour of a less contentious one, "It's just a game."
- (9) He was pleased and perhaps relieved that the rules of his game were recognized. It is interesting to note that in the game, if "A" expressed conflict toward "B", "B" then turned toward "C". If "C", however, turned

toward "B", as I had done in my comment and question about anger, then a rule had been broken. Raymond took steps to deal with the broken rule. In the first instance his step was to ignore me. In the second case his step was to dismiss the idea of conflict--thus his game was preserved.

Counselling Meeting--January 27

Raymond and Mr. P. were standing outside of the classroom door when I arrived. Raymond was receiving a "dressing down," as Mr. P. later described it, for some inappropriate behavior that had just occurred. Mr. P.'s voice and demeanor were stern and Raymond appeared to be listening. As I passed by them, on my way to enter the classroom, their conversation ended when Raymond agreed not to repeat the misbehavior in question.

Raymond was quiet on the way to the playroom, commenting only briefly on my remark about how warm and sunny the day had become. He did not comment on, nor did I inquire about his encounter with Mr. P..

At the playroom we found the school board audiologist setting up her equipment. She would be testing children's hearing in the nurse's office which would therefore not be available to us as a playroom on that day. Raymond and I left the building to find a sunny spot. I opened a conversation by asking Raymond what he thought we should do, given that the playroom was occupied. He grinned nervously and told me that he did not know what we should do. Before I could reply, however, he launched into a monologue on snakes. (1) The monologue made it obvious to me that Raymond was a knowledgeable naturalist. He detailed how and why snakes shed their skin,

how they acquire body heat and how some species are able to swallow extraordinarily large prey by unhinging their jaw bone.

(2) I asked Raymond where he had acquired this information and was told, "We got an encyclopedia at home." He told me that sometimes he was able to get his father to read the more difficult sections to him.

- (1) This was Raymond's way of making a decision--by action rather than by a verbal commitment.
- (2) It was surprising how much this child knew about snakes. I recalled the stalled conversation that I'd had with him in early December, 1980, in which snakes as pets had come up as a topic. At that time I had no inkling that he had such interest in, or knowledge of snakes. Mr. P. was also surprised when I later informed him of Raymond's expertise.

Conversation with Mr. P.--January 27

After my meeting with Raymond, I spoke with Mr. P. who told me that Raymond had "lipped off" to the teacher's aide shortly before I had arrived, and that the most effective means of dealing with this form of misbehavior from Raymond was a rather formal dressing down. Although he did not use this discipline method frequently, Mr. P. felt that the method helped Raymond when he appeared to be losing control of himself.

Mr. P. was not previously aware of Raymond's knowledge about snakes. He was surprised that Raymond had so much detailed information on the topic. Mr. P. wondered how Raymond could have acquired this information from an encyclopedia given that he was such a poor reader. Mr. P. acknowledged that Raymond's father helped Raymond with the encyclopedia, but speculated that it might be possible that Raymond had reading skills that had not yet been shown in the classroom.

Counselling Meeting--January 30

Raymond opened the playbox and removed some coloured pencils and a large sheet of paper. He quickly became absorbed in a rendition of an antique car. After almost 15 minutes of sustained concentration in which he added fine details not often seen in the artwork of a child his age, he declared that the picture was "no good." He also said that he was a "crummy drawer." (1) I asked him to tell me "Who is a good drawer?" Raymond was silent and still, following this question. (2)

When he moved again, it was to remove the yellow puppet and the cloth doll from the playbox. He labeled the puppet as the mother and the cloth doll became the boy.(3)

In the ensuing play, the "mother" took up some building blocks which she declared to be food. She stuffed food into the boy, whose whimpering protests went unnoticed. Next, the mother puppet dropped the unfortunate child into a plastic juice container. She then stuffed the container with the toy blocks, which symbolized food. "Here," said the mother as she pushed a block into the container "is some carrots. Here's some meat. Here's some bread." On she went until the plastic was distorted by the overload of blocks. The hapless boy whimpered each time a new piece of food was pushed on top of him. I remarked to Raymond that the boy didn't "seem to want all that food. But, he can't do anything about stopping it." (4) Raymond agreed with me. The mother in the story then proceeded to throw food at the boy doll. The food exploded amid shrieks of pain by the boy. I remarked on the worsened situa-

tion, "That boy is really getting it now." "Yes," came Raymond's reply, "but he has a plan."

The plan, Raymond told me, was to "trick" the mother by "feeding her grenades without her knowing that the food she was eating was explosive." The mother was not to be tricked, though. Indeed, it was the boy who was tricked. He allowed the "mother" to quietly cover him with a pile of grenades disguised as food. When the pile was completed, it exploded.

The "mother" responded to this event by declaring that the child had been injured and must therefore go visit the doctor. The "mother" picked up the injured boy and threw him across the playroom to where the medical scale stood beside the nurse's desk. This rough handling of the injured boy continued through an examination by a doctor. Raymond played the doctor. He poked and prodded the boy; he shouted medical questions at him; he jammed the boy doll in the mechanism of the scale and finally left him hanging by his shirt from the upright post of the weigh scale. "There," said Raymond in a rough voice, "you're all fixed up." "The boy got handled pretty rough by the doctor," I said. "Yeah" was his reply. "He must have felt pretty bad," I said. Raymond looked sad but replied, "No, it didn't matter."

(5)

- (1) Raymond's assessment of his artistic talent was interesting in that it contrasted with the general belief of the children that Raymond was the best artist in Mr. P.'s class.
- (2) I was curious about Raymond's relationship with his father in this regard. It was my belief that Raymond expected his art work to be equal to his father's, and that Raymond was critical of himself because his work

did not compare to his father's.

- (3) This was the first time that Raymond applied personal pronouns to a puppet. I took this as a positive indication that he was feeling safer in the playroom.
- (4) Was there a struggle going on in Raymond's home around food? This story seemed to indicate that there was and that Raymond felt assaulted by his mother and the food that she offered him.
- (5) Feeding and doctoring were likely labeled publically in Raymond's family as positive experiences. Raymond seemed to show in his symbolic play that his inner experience of this "caregiving" was negative. For Raymond to deny the public label assigned to the caregiver might have resulted in outright rejection by his mother. So, Raymond seemed caught in an incongruency between the public label and his inner experience. A pseudo resolution to the incongruent bind he was in was for Raymond to disassociate himself from the feelings. Hence, "it didn't matter."

Counselling Meeting--February 3

Raymond rummaged in the playbox. He pulled out a plastic baby doll. Holding it up in front of me by his thumb and forefinger he turned up his nose and said, "Yuck." The baby doll was dropped back into the playbox.

Next, Raymond removed the plasticine from the playbox with the remark, "I used to be good at this." (1) His hands became busy and when he paused with an object completed, he peered at my face with a quizzical look in his eyes. "You wonder if it's okay with me what you made," I said, referring to the plasticine penis he held in his hands. (2)

He didn't say anything in reply but began to fashion what turned out to be an octopus. The playbox contained a small plastic figure of the cartoon character Snoopy in Red Baron garb. There was also a plastic likeness of Snoopy's doghouse. It was the latter that the plasticine octopus stole

while Snoopy was not watching. When Snoopy noticed his loss, he began to wail, "Oh, my house is gone, what will I do, what will I do?" Then Snoopy began to act angry. Snoopy's helmet was constructed of two parts which snapped onto his head. Raymond removed these parts and declared the helmet to be broken. "The helmet is broken," I reflected. Making Snoopy's voice, Raymond ended the play: "That stupid octopus wrecked my helmet." "Oh, Snoopy's mad now," I said.

Raymond began the same play over again. He snapped the helmet back on Snoopy's head and placed Snoopy's doghouse next to Snoopy. Again, the octopus stole the house, again Snoopy wailed at his loss, and again Snoopy angrily broke his own helmet. Raymond repeated the story a third time but this time at the end I commented on the pattern that I had noticed: "Snoopy gets mad at the octopus and then Snoopy breaks his own stuff." Raymond looked at me, smiled softly and said, "I know." (3)

- (1) By using the past tense, he seemed to offer me an opportunity to think positively about his modeling skills without my expecting too much of him in the present.
- (2) He seemed to have been testing my limits of acceptability.
- (3) Prevented from expressing anger at his tormentor, the anger was turned onto himself. My last comment appeared to have touched a resonant note in Raymond.

Conversation With Mr. P.--February 6

Mr. P. remarked today that "Raymond seemed over the last few days to be out to get my goat," by playing what Raymond called "tricks" on him. The "tricks" included pinching

and attempts to trip Mr. P.. Mr. P. felt angry when Raymond accosted him in these ways and he confronted Raymond. When confronted, Raymond had steadfastly insisted that he hadn't meant any harm and he was "just kidding with jokes." Mr. P. was concerned because Raymond did not seem to comprehend when Mr. P. told him that he did not like the jokes.

Mr. P. decided to insist that Raymond cease this form of joke. He also decided to tell Raymond that in a real joke the fun was shared by both people involved and since the recent "jokes" seem to be fun only for Raymond, they weren't real jokes. Mr. P. also decided to suggest to Raymond that by practicing, he would be able to get better at making real jokes and consequently be responsible for helping people have fun with him. (1)

- (1) I believed that Raymond was expressing hostility toward Mr. P. Confusion resulted, however, because Raymond insisted that his acts were jokes. It felt appropriate that Mr. P. insisted that to him (Mr. P.) the acts were not jokes. What struck home in retrospect was that in the previous two sessions, Raymond appeared to be exploring the idea of hostility. In both sessions, the central character experienced the hostility of others. In the "food bomb" session (January 30) the central character attempted to fight back with a trick. Raymond's "tricks" on Mr. P. appeared to be related.

Counseling Meeting--February 6

Once in the playroom, Raymond described to me how his sister interfered with his piano practice. As he spoke of his frustrations over this he dropped his usual squinty smile. What replaced the smile was a serious expression that evolved into the first genuine show of anger that I'd seen from Ray-

mond. Raymond's account of his piano troubles was culminated by the declaration that his sister was a "stinker." "Your sister really seems to make you angry when she does that," I said. "Yes!" he replied. (1)

He turned to the playbox and removed a packet of large felt pens. The pens became bombs which Raymond dropped onto the floor where they exploded. He did not say what was being blown up.

Raymond signaled a change of topic by sitting down and beginning to tell me a story. The story took place at one of the underground shopping centres downtown. He held up one of the felt pens and told me: "This is my wagon." He described how last Saturday he had been playing at the shopping centre with his wagon when a group of boys "started calling me names and bugging me." He then fashioned several plasticine wagons to represent the boys who bugged him. "So, I said to them, 'You want to have a race?'" he continued. The boys agreed and Raymond set up various objects on the floor to act as the hallways and store fronts in the shopping centre. Raymond then described a game of chase in which he lead the boys at high speed throughout the shopping centre just missing the store windows and brushing past customers, whose arms were laden with packages. Just when it looked like Raymond might loose the race, he told me that he tricked the boys by leading them into a store where, "The owner got mad at them and kicked them out of the shopping centre." He repeated this story several times, altering the content slightly each time. In one

version, to Raymond's great delight, he described how he'd tricked the boys into taking a wrong turn which led them into the woman's restroom where amid the women's shrieks and embarrassment, the boys were forced to retreat. Raymond seemed to show delight as he described their anger toward him: "Boy, were those guys mad at me then."

I said to Raymond, "Your tricks get those guys into trouble a lot." Raymond agreed, "Yeah." I asked Raymond, "Do you trick those guys because they aren't your friends?" "Yeah," he said, "I get mad at them and I trick them." I commented, "Sometimes they get mad at you all over again because you trick them" He paused for a moment to consider this and replied, "I know." (2)

Raymond fell into silence. He spent the last ten minutes of the meeting moulding a rather elaborate wagon of plasticine. His quietness was broken only by his occasional and softly spoken comments on the quality of his handiwork, e.g., "That's no good." (3)

Notes on Counselling Meeting--February 6

- (1) On previous occasions when Raymond had shown an angry affect, he had denied feeling angry when I'd suggested that feeling to him. On other occasions when he had brought up feeling angry, he had always smiled as he spoke. On this occasion there was congruency between his affect and his words. I took this as a sign of growth for Raymond.
- (2) Raymond explored the area of his troubled peer relations. He seemed to have confronted two aspects: (a) his feelings of rejection and (b) the effect that his tricks had on others.
- (3) At the time, I wondered if Raymond was referring to his plasticine work or to the effects of his tricks.

Counselling Meeting--February 10

Raymond immediately pulled plasticine out of the playbox. He lifted it above his head and brought it down onto the hard tile floor of the playroom with a smash. As he repeated this he appeared to grow increasingly angry. A bit out of breath he seized an aluminum sauce pot from the playbox and hammered the plasticine, distorting the saucepot in the process. During one of his pauses I said, "You're sure smashing that plasticine." (1) (2) Without looking up he replied: "I'm making a monster."

After continuing this for a short while, he stopped abruptly and launched into a story. In the story Raymond described how he once had an Akido suit on. He described this martial arts uniform to me. The uniform in his description was similar to the costume of Darth Vader in the Star Wars film: a black robe and shiny black mask for his face and head. Raymond then told me how he destroyed an opponent who was similarly dressed: "I shot the suit with my lazer gun and blew it up." He then told me that he "pressed a button" which caused the pieces of the suit to reconstruct. (3)

Raymond turned to face me where I sat on the floor. He looked worried. "You know all those stories I've told you?" he said. "Well, they are all lies." He continued to look into my face. I reflected, "You're worried that I think you are bad because those stories aren't true." (4)

He had been sitting on the floor about 2½ feet away. He slid along the floor and pressed up against me. (5) I was

told another story. This time Raymond related a trip that his family took to an amusement park (the P.N.E.). Raymond told me that his father made him wear one of his sister's shirts. Raymond talked about the embarrassment that he felt. He also spoke of how he had felt powerless to do anything about it.

(6) (7)

- (1) I had not seen such a great volume of aggression by Raymond before.
- (2) I needed to be careful not to reflect too much of what I noticed to him. If, for example, I had said: "You seem angry as you smash that pot down," it is likely that he would have denied having that feeling.
- (3) It was notable that: (a) the suit was not described as having a person in it and (b) he reconstructed the destroyed suit. Raymond had difficulty being responsible for direct aggressive acts against people.
- (4) Much of our relationship up to this point was built upon the almost constant stream of stories that Raymond told me. I was not much concerned whether the stories were "real" or not. I had taken them to be symbolic of his life experiences and thus I had felt that they were legitimate. In my response, I wanted to note his concern while at the same time I wished to reassure him that I was able to accept his form of expressing himself. In one sense, his projections were his projects and he was experiencing guilt in conjunction with his projects.
- (5) He seemed to feel safer after the above exchange.
- (6) It seemed that Raymond was still wrestling with the notion of "truth". It is likely that he had resolved not to tell any more stories that were lies and so he offered this one up as a "true" story.
- (7) It was unusual for Raymond to be so candid, in such a direct way.

Counselling Meeting--February 13

Raymond announced: "I'll paint today." As he readied the watercolors and paper, Raymond told me that he was a better

artist than his sister. He informed me that Lucy thought highly of his artistic abilities and had even asked him to teach her.

As this story about his sister's artistic deficits and admiration for him continued, a picture of a bird was taking shape on the paper. He leaned back when he had finished, studied his work and declared with disgust, "No good!" Raymond contrasted the quality of the painting with the quality of the car that he had drawn several weeks before (January 30). The car was good, he said, while the painting was not. "The wings are too crooked."

"Gee, Raymond," I said, "that's interesting because when you drew the car you said that it was no good and now you say it's good." He paused, then told me in reply that he sometimes changed his mind.

On another piece of paper, he painted a series of dinosaurs. He was silent throughout this work, except to occasionally inform me with a serious tone that, "I won't do a good job on the next one." (1) "I shouldn't hope that you'll do a good job," I said. Raymond quietly painted on. "Do you think I might be mad at you if you didn't do a good job?" I asked. He did not acknowledge my response (2)

He worked on another painting, an airplane. "Ow," he said. After a pause, "Another mistake," he declared with a tone of resignation and dejection. He then looked over at me with a brighter look on his face and said, "But it doesn't matter, 'cuz it doesn't count." (3) "So," I said, "you figure

that if the painting doesn't count, the mistakes don't matter."

Raymond did not seem to hear my words. He had transformed into a wild-eyed, mad artist. With wide eyes, a stiffened face and tight shoulders and arms, he began a series of paintings. He worked feverishly and each succeeding painting became more "sloppy" (his word) than the previous painting.

(4) "It doesn't matter that they are sloppy because they don't count," I commented when he finished. (5)

- (1) What a bind! He wanted to paint, but he needed to paint perfectly. These two intentions were in collision because he knew that he could not paint with perfection. In his world, an imperfect painting reflected negatively on his self-esteem. By informing himself, and me, of impending imperfection he neatly preempted criticism of his work.
- (2) My statement was perhaps too close to home for him to respond to. If he had recognized this dynamic (that I might reject him if he drew imperfectly), then he might have had to apply this recognition with his father. It is likely that it was too threatening for him to deal consciously with the idea that his father acted in a rejecting way towards Raymond's imperfect products.
- (3) This was the first indication that there was room for imperfection in Raymond's universe. In the past, imperfection had been a deadly serious matter, but at this point he appeared comfortable, even proud of the insight that "it doesn't count."
- (4) It appeared that he was on the edge of losing control over his impulses.
- (5) He did not lose control. In retrospect the most plausible description for what happened here was that (a) the new insight was both anxiety producing and energizing, and (b) in order to consolidate the new learning he needed to practice the concept "it doesn't count." The practice necessitated wildness.

Counselling Meeting--February 17

Raymond began a story about his father and his sister. Both, he said, tried to spell the word "phone." They could not spell it correctly and had written "fone." Raymond explained to them that they were not correct, and he gave them the proper spelling. They would not believe him he said, until finally his father admitted with embarrassment that Raymond was right. (1)

Raymond grinned broadly as he described the subsequent tongue-lashing that Lucy got from their father for misspelling the word. "You like your sister to get into trouble," I commented. He replied, "I know, I always throw her pick-up sticks around when she plays piano. She has to stop playing to pick them up and gets into trouble."

He paused and then began, "My dad won't let me watch TV for a month because my eyes are red." He showed me the skin around his eyes. Indeed, there was some redness--it appeared to be a rash. (2) "You don't get to watch your programs," I noted. "Yeah, the others watch but I play with my games," Raymond replied. "You must be kind of sad," I tried. "No, because I get to play with my games." "Oh, I see, it's okay because you have got your games to be with," I reflected. (3)

Raymond moved to the plasticine. He spent a few minutes fashioning a likeness of an owl. He smiled and then laughed genuinely. "Boy, you like that!" I said. "Yeah," he said. I continued, "You made it, and you looked at it, and

you liked it." "Yeah, I do," he said as he continued to smile broadly with admiration at the owl that he had made. (4)

- (1) It was as if he is saying: "They are imperfect too, it's not just me!"
- (2) This appeared to be the same rash that the school nurse had diagnosed in the fall as eczema.
- (3) Raymond appeared sad as he spoke. Most likely the ramifications of consciously recognizing the sadness were too risky for him.
- (4) There was genuine pride from Raymond. This was the first time that he spoke positively about something that he had just done.

Conversation with Mr. P.--February 23

Mr. P. reported that Raymond had begun to make friendly overtures to a boy in the class. Mr. P. characterized Raymond's method as awkward and stilted. Raymond stood in front of Sean (not his real name) as he worked at his desk. After a short pause, Raymond bumped Sean's desk or otherwise bugged Sean. Raymond then waited for some response from Sean. Mr. P. felt that Sean's response was unusual for Sean. Sean, Mr. P. said, was a rather boisterous and rough and tumble sort of fellow. Sean was also quite verbal and Mr. P. would have predicted that his response to Raymond's attention would have been to tell him to "Bug-off!"; but he didn't. Instead, each time this happened, Sean would strike up a short and friendly conversation with Raymond. Mr. P. said that Sean likely felt that Raymond was seeking friendship and was thus willing to be tolerant.

Counselling Meeting--February 23

During the above conversation which took place in the classroom, Raymond approached us. He wished to know when I

would be ready to take him over to the playroom. Mr. P. told Raymond to go on ahead, and that I would be along shortly. When I arrived at the playroom, Raymond was there and had obviously been waiting. Once I had settled myself onto the floor, Raymond announced that he had to leave for a moment but that I should wait because he would be right back. He left, and this time I waited! He came back in a few minutes. He did not offer an explanation, nor did I ask for one. (1)

He showed me a wad of hockey cards that he pulled from his pants pocket. We had a discussion about sports cards, and I explained that I had baseball cards, instead of hockey cards, when I was his age. With great seriousness, he launched into a story about how hockey cards are purchased: one needs to get permission from a special office which looks after those matters, and then with the permission slip in hand, one travels to the only store in Vancouver where the cards are available. Raymond would help get me some hockey cards if I wanted. I declined the offer, with thanks for his thoughtfulness. He told me, "Oh, that's okay; anyways they're all lies." "The story about the hockey cards is made-up," I said. "Yeah, you can get them at lots of corner stores," said Raymond. "But, you wanted to do something nice for me," I replied. "Yeah," was his reply.

He began a story with two puppets. One puppet arrived at the scene where another puppet was playing with hockey cards. The new arrival pushed the other puppet out of the way: "Hey, I'm going to play with the hockey cards too." The two

puppets played together, but after a short period the "nice puppet" hid the hockey cards from the "bad puppet," as Raymond had called it, left the scene at this point and the good puppet played on with the cards for a short while. I pointed to the "bad puppet" and said, "I think sometimes that he wants to make friends but he hasn't quite figured out how to do it yet." "Yeah," Raymond replied, "he acts so great and the kids get mad at him." "I'll bet he feels bad right now, lonely," I said. "Maybe," said Raymond, signaling the end of the discussion. (2) Raymond spent the rest of the session playing the schoolyard game of flipping hockey cards against the wall.

- (1) I believe that Raymond was offended that he had been made to wait. Being unable to express this directly he found an opportunity to act out, toward me, what had happened to him.
- (2) Raymond was still working in the area of making friends.

Counselling Meeting--February 27

When I arrived at Raymond's classroom, I found that a substitute teacher was with the class for that day: The substitute told me briefly that Raymond had been "mean to some of the kids and made them cry."

At the playroom I noticed that he appeared to be particularly agitated. This contrasted with his relatively calm state during the last two sessions.

I opened with: "I understand that you're having trouble with kids today." "Yes" he said. "I wonder how come," I replied. "No, I'm not!" End of subject. Raymond was angry.

(1)

At this point, from outside on the sidewalk, we heard a dog bark loudly. Raymond turned to me and said, "We're afraid." I pointed out to the fearful Raymond that the dog had a loud bark but that it would not harm us, as we were inside. At this he relaxed somewhat and we both looked out of the window as the man who had two dogs on leashes, carried on, down the block away from us.

Raymond went to the playbox and removed some broken pieces of a two inch plastic cube that had been broken in a previous session. He tried to fit the broken pieces back together. (2) He said, "Mr. Todtman, I don't understand why you don't tell me what to do." "They always tell you what to do," was my reply. "Yeah," he said with the question still on his face. "Well, I think that there are times when a kid should figure out for himself what to do", I replied. (3)

He removed more pieces of those broken plastic blocks, and tried unsuccessfully to repair them, while at the same time giving me a remarkable account of the social organization of bee colonies.

- (1) I had pressed too hard. I had not attended to his feelings or other perceptions but had endeavored to begin problem solving.
- (2) I suspect that he was upset with himself for shouting at me. Perhaps he could make up for being angry at me by repairing one of my toys that he had broken.
- (3) In addition to the above, he seemed to recognize that there was something different about the way that I treated him. Sometimes the absence of familiar directions can lead to anxiety--e.g., "Am I doing it right?" If this has been his primary source of affirmation, the absence of this might produce stress which he seems to have alluded to here.

Counselling Meeting--March 3

The sun was shining and the day was very warm. I suggested to Raymond that we meet outside. There was a secluded and cozy spot of blacktop behind the far end of the portable classroom where Raymond attended school. We were unlikely to be disturbed there and could take advantage of the fine weather.

I had purchased a set of new plastic farm animal figures and placed them in the playbox. Raymond was delighted at discovering something new there. With the new figures he began immediately to put on a play. In the play, Raymond became a giant who repeatedly tossed the rabbit into the air. "Woah," cried the rabbit, each time it went up into the air. Then, the rabbit did not come down. It had landed on the roof of the portable classroom and was stuck there, out of sight.

Raymond was stunned. He stood still, watching me intently, searching for a clue to my reaction. We both spoke at once. Raymond apologized for losing the toy. "The rabbit is gone," were my words. (1) He apologized again, this time his visage of shock had given way to an agitated desperation. "You're really upset that the rabbit is gone," was my response. I also tried to reassure him: "You're probably worried about me being upset over my rabbit going on the roof, but it's okay with me." (2)

This did not seem to reassure him. In a desperate voice he told me that the school custodian could go onto the

roof in order to retrieve the lost toy. At his request, I allowed Raymond to go see the custodian over this. Raymond returned shortly, saying that he had not been able to convince the custodian to help. He was still agitated.

I tried another tack: "You made it go away and it was your fault." (3) Raymond looked at me with shock, and I repeated the statement. He offered, "Well, maybe the wind will blow it off." "But it probably won't," I said, "It's probably gone away forever, and I think that makes you scared." "Yes, my Grandma died two weeks ago. She was in the hospital. I made her sick from being bad," was his reply. (4)

Raymond told me that his grandmother had been sick in the hospital for quite some time. When asked how he knew that he had made her sick, he related to me that his father had told him when Grandma had entered the hospital that his misbehavior, which amounted to not obeying, had made her sick. Raymond concluded that her death was his responsibility. (5)(6)

Raymond and I discussed the aging process in general terms. "What makes an old book different from a brand new one?" I asked. "They just get worn out from being used a lot," was one conclusion that he drew. We then discussed how old his grandmother was. Her teeth were "gone and some were black," he said. "They must have got used for chewing a lot of food. That must have made them break," I pointed out. "When you get old your stuff breaks," was the wisdom that Raymond seemed to derive from the conversation. (7)

Referring back to the lost rabbit I said, "You wish

there was some way to change what happened. You wish that it wasn't gone for good." "Yeah," he said sadly. Brightening somewhat, he had a thought, "If we check [the blacktop] around here maybe the wind will blow it off." "You hope that it will come back somehow," I reflected. "Yeah," he said quietly.

- (1) I was surprised by Raymond's extreme reaction. Other items from the playbox had been broken before and Raymond did not seem to have been upset to this degree.
- (2) Because he was so deeply upset I felt it best at this point to reassure him that I was not upset by the loss.
- (3) Reassurance did not seem to be effective. I tried another tack.
- (4) In some important ways, the loss of the rabbit was related to the death of his grandmother. Perhaps this explains how he could have been so very upset at the rabbit's loss, despite my reassurance.
- (5) I questioned Raymond on his belief that he was responsible for the death of his grandmother. However, I felt that I could not challenge this idea directly for two reasons: (a) it did not seem ethical to challenge outright something that his father had told him, and (b) his belief seemed so firm that to challenge it directly would likely have been blocked by Raymond anyway. So, I felt it best to take a "side-door" approach and discuss aging and death in general.
- (7) We were ostensibly discussing the rabbit but at another level, the issue of his grandmother's death was the topic.

Counselling Meeting--March 10

Raymond interrupted his explanation of how airplanes fly to tell me about an argument that he had with Jimmy (not his real name). Jimmy was in Raymond's classroom. He and Sean, the boy Raymond was attempting to befriend were pals.

Raymond complained that he (Raymond) had got into trouble from Mr. P. for bugging Jimmy. Raymond then told me that he and Sean had been playing together and had worked jointly on a class project. Raymond lapsed into silence, however, when I said that it seemed to me he was trying to have Jimmy for a friend too. I wondered out loud, how long it might take to be able to play with Jimmy without fighting all of the time. (1)

Later in the counselling meeting, Raymond told me about a project that was underway in his classroom. The children were experimenting with designs, decorations and flying methods for paper airplanes. One could not help but notice evidence of this project everywhere in and around Raymond's classroom. He had brought several examples of his handiwork to the meeting and showed them to me. He was particularly proud of the elaborate and colorful decorations that he had drawn onto one of his airplanes. "You seem to think you decorated this airplane really well. You like what you did," I told him. "Yes, and the other kids," said Raymond. "So, the others like it too," I replied. "Some of them, they want me to draw theirs too," he said. "You are doing it for other kids. They must like your drawing for them. I think you like it for them to ask you to draw," I said. "Well," he paused to think. He turned to me with his squinty smile and said, "I'm a pretty good drawer." (2)

(1) It seemed most likely that Raymond was resentful of Jimmy's friendship with Sean. It was also likely

that a part of Raymond wished to be friends with Jimmy. It was this part that I appealed to when I suggested that he was interested in Jimmy's friendship. It seemed important to emphasize the desire and potential for friendship that Raymond had, rather than to emphasize the public myth that Raymond bugged other kids and as a consequence did not have friends.

- (2) Raymond's squinty smile was usually an indication of embarrassment. Embarrassment notwithstanding, Raymond was at this point making more and more positive references to his artistic abilities.

Counselling Meeting--March 13

"I'm better than my sister at Roman writing," he said, referring to the Roman numerals that his class was studying at the time. "So, you're better than she at some things," I said. "Yeah, I was showing her how to write them but she couldn't figure it out," he replied. A little later in the conversation: "So, Raymond, it's a good thing," I said, "that you are smarter than her because if you were dumber on some things, then I think you might feel bad." "Yeah, well it's all lies", he replied. (1) When asked what was "all lies," Raymond changed the subject in his own special way, by beginning an enthusiastic discourse on something he had noticed about the body structure of ants. (2) Later I said, "You know, sometimes people, like you and me, like to say that we're great so that people will like us. But really, we're scared that we're not so great and that people don't like us." Raymond told me that his sister Lucy was like that. (3)

- (1) Raymond had implied that his sister felt bad because she could not understand "Roman writing." He himself had difficulty coping with his own similar feelings. His defense against the feeling was to claim super intelligence, but when I threw up his claim for him

to see ("It's a good thing," I said, that you are smarter than her."), the discrepancy between his public claim and the private feelings that he had was too great to ignore. He resolved the discrepancy by noting that the public claim was "all lies."

- (2) An oblique reference to falseness of his public face of superiority over his sister was all that he felt safe showing at that time. This issue was made more complex because Raymond was concerned about telling lies. What a bind!
- (3) The children at Raymond's school used the word "great" in reference to bragging, i.e., a child might say, "Oh Raymond, he thinks he's great," as a means of saying, "Raymond brags about himself." So here when I suggest that bragging is associated with a fear of rejection, Raymond found it impossible to apply the concept to himself publically. What seems important however, is that he did project it onto Lucy which suggests that the concept was resonant with his inner experience. I suspect that Raymond was conscious of this concept and therefore he could not ignore it. Even though he was conscious of it, he was not comfortable enough around this issue of lying to enable him to apply the concept to himself, hence he projected it onto Lucy.

Counselling Meeting--March 17

Raymond was lying down on the floor of the counselling room. He had been quiet for a few minutes. "I'm lying," he said. "You're lying," I repeated. "I love to lie." (1) He said; "Wanna hear a true story now?" "You'd like to tell me a true story now," I said. "Really, this is true," he said as he launched into a story about him and his sister. The story began with a simple conflict between him and his sister and quickly evolved into a laser gun war between the two siblings. Neither of them was injured or even hit but numerous objects, particularly his sister's playthings were vaporized into oblivion by Raymond and his trusty laser gun.

- (1) In the last session Raymond seemed to be expressing

anxiety and perhaps guilt regarding what he considered to be lies. It is interesting to note that here he deliberately and playfully made use of a homonym. It is suspected that this play is associated with at least some coming to terms with the conflict around the issue of the "truthfulness" of his stories, i.e., one suspected that he was at least a bit more adjusted to the enormous volumes of fiction that his mind produced.

Counselling Meeting--March 20

Raymond told me that his sister had "a starling that she keeps in this cage." He said, "I opened the cage door when she wasn't watching and I let it go." He added, "My dad told me to let it go." "You played a trick on Lucy, but it was okay because your dad said to do it," I commented. We would go no further on this topic--Raymond signaled this by assembling the cooking pots from the playbox into a set of drums and working out on them, bongo style. (1)

Later, he fashioned an airplane with plasticine. This he tossed high up into the air allowing it to plop down onto the ground. We were outside again on this day, at the spot behind the portable classroom. The airplane rose into the air again, but this time it came precariously close to the roof where the rabbit had been lost several weeks earlier. The airplane did not stay up and fell back to the earth with a thud. Raymond stared at me with a wide-eyed look frozen onto his face. "It almost went on the roof, like the rabbit," he said. "You almost made the airplane go onto the roof too, and that kind of scares you," I suggested. "Yeah, I don't wanna' lose your stuff," he told me. "You're right, it's my stuff. But, it's supposed to be used by kids, and if it gets

lost or wrecked I just probably wouldn't be able to get more so quickly and you wouldn't be able to play with it--you'd probably miss it," I said. "Kids shouldn't wreck your stuff," he told me with a note of seriousness. "What might happen if a kid did wreck my stuff?" I asked. "My grandma washed 20 of my hockey cards," he stated as he began to rummage through the playbox. (2)

In class that morning the children and their teacher had set aside a period to engage in a thorough straightening up of their desks and their book shelves. Raymond repeated this with the playbox. He removed everything from the box. He sorted the toys and materials into piles and then carefully replaced the items into the box designating specific areas for the various classes of items. "This is so we can find everything," he told me with a tone of responsible seriousness. (3)

- (1) The same theme of conflict between him and his sister. This time the conflict had the dimension of a coalition between Raymond and his dad against Lucy.
- (2) Here he referred to his grandmother having washed some hockey cards that were in a pocket of his pants. I am not sure what the connection was between my question and Raymond's answer, but I speculate that he was disappointed at the loss of his hockey cards and was suggesting that the same feeling would happen if my play "stuff" got wrecked. It was unfortunate that I did not make that connection at the time because Raymond and I thus lost an opportunity to approach the serious issue of loss that had plagued Raymond when his grandmother had gotten sick and died.
- (3) Raymond's tone indicated that he wished to make the box neat and orderly as a means of being helpful to me. He took pains to display an air of responsibility and industriousness. He did not appear to be seeking my approval but exercising a skill--indus-

triousness. This sort of action had not been part of his repertoire in the past and I took it as a positive sign.

Counselling Meeting--April 3

Raymond looked up from the sorting and classifying task that he'd been doing with the building blocks to say, "Oh yeah, I'm gonna' do something this afternoon. I'm gonna' go to Lion's Gate Bridge with my dad. Have some fun. Wanna' come?" Ignoring the invitation, I said, "Sounds like a good thing to have fun with your dad." "Yeah," came his reply which was framed by a broad and satisfied smile on his face, "last weekend we went to the Second Narrow's [Bridge]. We wanna know how it's built." (1)

I noticed that the rash on Raymond's face and neck was much diminished. (2)

- (1) Both in his words and in his affect, Raymond suggested that he found the trip to the Second Narrow's Bridge enjoyable and that he was looking forward to the Lion's Gate trip. His words and affect also suggested that two previous relationship forms did not seem to be in force in these trips to view bridges. That is, when Raymond reported (either through fantasy stories or through accounts of actual events) on his relationship with his father, the reports typically showed that: (a) their relationship took a coalitional form in which Raymond and his father lined up against his sister Lucy or, (b) their relationship took a form devoid of mutuality in which Raymond appeared to need to submit unwillingly to his father's demands.
- (2) Mr. P. had also noted that the skin condition on Raymond's face and neck seemed to have diminished. Mr. P. said that Raymond appeared to be "less twitchy, more self-confident, and more open to talking about himself." I could not help but think that there was a connection between these changes and the change implied by Raymond's report of the trips to the bridges.

Counselling Meeting--April 7

The blocks that Raymond had stacked into a "castle" tumbled over as he carefully placed another piece in place. "Frustrating when it falls," I noted. "That's the way it is with blocks," he informed me with a serious tone laced with maturity. He stood back and with a ball, attempted to bowl the rest of the structure down. The ball stopped at the base of his castle without fulfilling it's intended purpose. I spoke, "Sometimes you want something to work your way but..." He cut me off to finish the sentence: "It doesn't always work that way; drives you off the wall." (1)

- (1) In the past "it didn't matter" to Raymond if his efforts did not seem to bear fruit, but here he talked about feeling frustrated.

Counselling Meeting--April 14

As we were leaving the classroom to go to the playroom, Raymond showed Mr. P. a plasticine dinosaur that he had modeled during free time that morning. Mr. P. complimented Raymond, who smiled with pride. The dinosaur, however, growled at Mr. P. menacingly, and Raymond explained that the dinosaur was sticking out his tongue at the teacher. I said, "You're proud for Mr. P. to like your dinosaur but he," I said speaking of the dinosaur, "stuck his tongue out at him." "Yeah," Raymond explained, "I'm proud, but he doesn't want you to say things about him." "He gets embarrassed, huh, when Mr. P. says that he likes him?" I asked. "Yeah," Raymond answered. (1)

Later, in the playroom, he removed a lump of plasticine from the shoebox he carried. He explained that the lump

used to be a "Godzilla". Raymond complained that one of the older boys in the classroom wrecked it. Indeed, one could see that the lump had once been an elaborately detailed model. I wondered after he had finished explaining, "How come you don't play a trick on Gino, because he wrecked your Godzilla?" "Naw, that's no good!" he said wrinkling his nose. (2)

- (1) Here, two parts of Raymond are seen operating. One part found pride in Mr. P.'s compliment while the other part likely felt threatened. This threatened part acted out aggressively through the dinosaur. Raymond usually found difficulty in expressing negative feelings directly.
- (2) He looked at me as if I had suggested something crazy. His stories which used to be constantly punctuated with "tricks" against other children were now told with infrequent references to "tricks."

Counselling Meeting--April 28

An exchange similar to the one reported in the April 14 meeting took place at this meeting. Raymond spent some time quietly repairing several plasticine figures of dinosaurs. When he spoke, he said, "When I seen them I was really mad. I wanted to know who's responsible." I asked, "How did it happen?" "Oh," he replied, "the janitor he had to clean up the room and figured he'd mush my stuff." A little later he offered: "I think that they should just wash the floor and not mess with little kid's stuff that they don't know nothing about." "How could you let the janitor know that?" I asked. "Oh," he thought for a while and said, "I am not going to bother him because he didn't know." (1)

Raymond brought up the topic of piano practice. We talked for a few minutes and Raymond capped the discussion with

this chant: "The more I study/the more I know./ The more I know/the more I forget./ The more I forget/the more I study--so, why study?" When he had finished chanting this a second time I said, "It can get to be a drag. Do you have to study a lot?" "Yeah, the piano every day," he answered crinkling up his face. "Ever talk to dad about it? Ever ask him why it's so important to him?" I asked. "No, you want to know how come?" he asked me. "Yeah," I said. "Cuz, if I ask him anything," Raymond told me, "he gets mad." (2)

- (1) He was angry but he did not feel that he had experienced a personal affront.
- (2) At this point in the counselling process, I was interested in influencing Raymond to confront problematic situations with others in a proactive way, i.e., I wished to influence him to discuss his conflicts more openly and in a problem solving mode. At this point, it appeared that he had dropped tricks in favour of a sense of fate ("what is, is") and I felt that he could benefit from an active problem solving approach. Here he explains how he seems to have this avenue with his father blocked by his father's angry response.

Counselling Meeting--May 1

I told Raymond that due to an obligation I would not be able to attend the next meeting as scheduled. He seemed relieved when I told him that I would arrange an alternative time. We discussed his feelings around this. I then opened the subject of the separation that would take place between us in June. I told him that summer would soon be here and that he would say goodby to Mr. P. and the children in his classroom. We would say goodby to each other, too. "Oh well," he said, "you win some and you lose some." I replied, "Sometimes

you lose someone that you really like." He added: "You miss someone when they're gone." "What, is it like for you," I asked, "when you're missing someone?" "I don't know. You feel bad." (1)

- (1) In increasing frequency since the beginning of April, I had been touching on the subject of separation. The method I had employed was primarily metaphorical, that is, I had told Raymond stories that had separation as a theme. Lately, I had made some self-disclosures on the topic. This was the first direct approach I had made.

Counselling Meeting--May 5

Unusual circumstances had forced a very close friend of mine to leave Vancouver with her family on a very short notice. I told Raymond that I was feeling sad as a consequence of this unexpected leave-taking. He said, "Yeah, like when my grandma passed away in the hospital. What did you do with your friend?" I told Raymond that I had worked with the friend. "Well," he looked up at the sky, "things happen" he said philosophically. I asked, "Stuff goes on?" "Yeah," he told me. "Yeah," I said, "things change and people go out of your life."

Counselling Meeting--May 15

Raymond and Sean had continued to develop a friendship. Lately, according to Mr. P., they had been "palling around" with each other. It, therefore, came as no surprise to me when Raymond suggested that Sean be included in a playroom session. I agreed to include Sean on the grounds that he would not attend every meeting and that I would have the final say regarding his inclusion in particular meetings.

Raymond ordered Sean to "Open the box!" Sean dutifully complied but when the playbox was open, Raymond pulled it over beside him and with a serious look on his face, showed the contents of the box to Sean. The look on Sean's face now seemed to be embarrassment. "I think this is a new situation for you and you don't quite know what to do about what's going on," I commented to the blushing Sean. (1) Raymond told Sean, "This playroom is more fun without you." Sean continued to blush, but said nothing. Raymond added, "But I'll share the toys with you," with the same seriousness which let Sean know that Raymond was in charge. (2)

Raymond and Sean played, but Raymond's controlling efforts continued until, "Ow!" "Raymond hit you on the head pretty hard and you're hurt," I said to Sean as he sat hunched over holding onto his head. "Yes, it hurt," he replied. "And you didn't like it one bit," I reflected. "No," he did not like it. His feelings seemed to be hurt. "Maybe you think when someone hits you like that they don't like you," I noted. Raymond, hearing this interjected with an invitation for play to resume. Sean was interested again and they continued. Raymond was then able to play with Sean on a basis of mutuality. (3)

- (1) Sean must have felt a little like Alice in Wonderland--confused because the typical school rules did not seem to apply.
- (2) Raymond jealously marked his territory for Sean.
- (3) I suspect that when given the choice of reserving his territory or preserving his friendship, he chose friendship.

Counselling Meeting--May 22

Raymond removed each puppet and doll from the playbox. He poked a doll aggressively. "Oh, it wailed in pain. Then, springing into action, the doll attacked Raymond. The beating was horrible. Raymond wailed, much more miserably than the doll had. The doll then ran away. I said nothing as the second doll was set up for a carbon copy repeat of the same interaction. (1) As Raymond continued with each figure, in series, I formulated a response: "Gee, I think that Sean..." but Raymond interrupted me to finish my thought, "He could beat me up and [then] run away." (2)

He told me that he would make a monster stew. He put several of the small plastic animal figures into a saucepot and cooked them over "the hottest heat possible." "Done!" said Raymond, "Our stew is done." "Now, I'm gonna..." and he served us both up a meal of monster stew. Raymond ate his meal with gusto. He put on an air of culinary sophistication: "Yum, good. Sure do taste good." "Your stew," I said briefly. "Mine," he replied. After a pause I spoke again: "You cooked it, then ate it, and now it's part of you." "Yeah, yum, good; I ate them now, but I usta'couldn't eat hot food like this." "Maybe you didn't know how to cook your own stew before," I said. "Yeah," he replied and then launched into a short dissertation on blubber. (3) The monsters had been boiled in seal oil and it was pertinent to Raymond to share various aspects of blubber-lore with me. (4)

A few minutes before the meeting closed, I picked up

two figures--a small lion and a small tiger. With these, I told Raymond a story. The story began when the tiger taunted two other small plastic figures--a gorilla and a camel--who had been playing together. The tiger was attacked by the gorilla and the camel. When the short battle was over the tiger was left alone. He looked around but could see no other animals and he was sad. The sadness continued until a lion came along. The lion did not attack the tiger when the tiger shouted taunts. Instead, the lion reflected: "Gee, mostly people think that you don't like them when you bug them like that. But, I know different, you just want to be friends." "Yeah," said the tiger with a sigh of relief.

They played together, the tiger and the lion, but then the lion had to go away. Again the tiger was sad. He missed the lion and he was alone. Before the lion had left, he wondered when the tiger would find another friend, and now the tiger wondered too. Time passed, and a new scene opened with the tiger playing with a new friend that he had found. Raymond made no comment, but he had listened to this story intently. On the way back to the classroom, Raymond said to me, "I won't come to school when summertime comes and you'll take your playbox home with you." "That's true," I replied. Then, he said that thinking of that made him feel "kinda bad." "Yeah, me too," I told him. "I think I'll miss doing this with you."

(5)

- (1) This was interesting, but I did not know how to respond, and so I waited.

- (2) We had both associated the doll play with what had occurred between Raymond and Sean at the May 15th counselling meeting.
- (3) I suspect that Raymond was expressing his new found feeling of being in charge of some aspects of his life.
- (4) As usual, his understanding of the topic was rich.
- (5) The story, of course, related to the impending end of our meetings. I attempted to relate what I saw as the salient features of the work that Raymond and I had done together. Evidently, the story induced some feelings in Raymond.

Counselling Meeting--May 28

A spider crawling across the ground became the object of Raymond's substantial observational powers. In answer to my question, he drew the conclusion that a spider needed long legs to enable it to walk over "little bumps and stuff on the ground--Hey!" he said, signaling a change in topic. He told me that he had a babysitter. This information was a jumping-off spot for a long and extremely complicated story that included himself and small "whiffs" of the babysitter, imbedded within various segments of the movies, Star Wars, Battlestar Galactica, The Black Hole and perhaps others of that genre.

I could not discover a pattern to the story Raymond told me. I had experienced this phenomenon before and, as in the past, he spoke so rapidly that I could not get a word in edgewise. (1)

He stopped abruptly, and commented to me that, "I'd rather live in Space Year, because I could be happier and do more on my own." No response to this was possible because he immediately returned to "Space Year." I did not attempt

to reflect or offer a new angle to Raymond for the remainder of the meeting.

- (1) The effect of the rapid speech and instantaneous and seemingly unrelated shifts in the story line was that I was prevented from formulating a therapeutic response. Perhaps Raymond needed control and this was his way of protecting against "therapeutic" intrusions, which at this point (so close to the end of the counselling term) were too threatening

Counselling Meeting--June 5

I waited at the door of his classroom while Raymond went back in to speak to Sean. After a few moments of quiet conversation, Sean reached into his desk and handed Raymond a plastic bag of "army men", as Raymond called them. "Sean lent them to me," he explained as we headed toward the playroom. "Do you think he'd lend them to other kids?" I asked. "No, because Gino bugs him" Raymond answered. "Do you still bug Sean?" I asked. "No, not as much," he answered. "Lending you some army men is a way of saying that he likes you; I wonder which of the things about you that he likes the best," I commented. Raymond did not answer this question, but told me that he would "never lend anything" to his sister because "She bugs me." He then related a story that was typical of the form of other stories dealing with him and his sister--she bugged him and he destroyed some of her possessions. (1)

- (1) I hoped to cement the idea that he had likable qualities with this sort of comment. Hopefully, the information that this sort of comment put forth to him, would help him in the future.

Counselling Meeting--June 12

Raymond's class was working on a time capsule. Ray-

mond explained that, "A time capsule is so the new kids next year could know about what we did." The children were collecting samples and descriptions of the projects they had worked on during the school year. The samples and descriptions were to be sealed into a box which was to be opened by the children who would attend the classroom the following year.

I suggested to Raymond that he might wish to continue working on the project instead of going to the playroom with me. He decided to work on the project. (1)

Jimmy was Raymond's partner that day. Together they were assembling information about a puppet project that they had worked on as a pair a few weeks before. Raymond explained to me matter of factly that he was a good partner on projects, because he was good at drawing: "It's always good to have a good drawer on your projects." "Yes," I agreed, it is good to have a good drawer on your projects." (2)

- (1) I had made similar suggestions recently and he had occasionally chosen to miss a counseling meeting in favour of staying in the classroom.
- (2) Another opportunity for me to reinforce positive self-esteem.

Counselling Meeting--June 19

The class was to view films during the time scheduled for playroom. Raymond decided that he would watch the films. In the fifteen minutes before the films began, Raymond and I mused about our times together. We both recalled some of the memories that seemed to be important to us. When I thanked him for "telling me all those stories," he said: "Yeah, some-

times my sister tells me to stop being such a liar but they're just what's in my brain; so I don't tell her [stories] no more."

The films were beginning and so he reminded me that I had agreed to visit him a couple of times at the school in the following year. We said goodbye, hugged and I left.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS

It was the purpose of this investigation to demonstrate through a case study approach how certain counselling strategies were applied to a primary grade child experiencing emotional difficulties, in a regular public school, outside of the classroom.

In order to fulfill this purpose, a student was selected according to specific criteria. Data were collected on the subject's classroom behavior, his previous school experiences, and his family background. Using theoretical constructs of Erikson and Rogers, a diagnosis was generated in the form of a working hypothesis. Then, the investigator, in the role of a school counsellor, employed play therapy strategies developed in conjunction with the diagnosis. This was done over a six-month period. Anecdotal records were kept of the subject's behavior and the administration of these strategies.

This chapter will present the findings, conclusions and the implications of the study.

I. FINDINGS

As this study was descriptive rather than experimental, no statistical hypothesis was tested. It was the intention of this study to discover what could be observed from an intensive

examination of counselling interventions with one student over an extended period of time.

The findings will be presented in two sections. The first section will focus on those findings which relate to changes in the subject's behavior that occurred during the course of the study. The second section will focus on findings which relate to what was learned about the use of the counselling strategies.

Findings Related to Changes in The Subject's Behavior

Academic Performance: In June, 1981, Mr. P. assessed Raymond's in-class academic performance. These ratings can be seen in Table 2 where they are compared to the initial ratings taken in December, 1980. For each of the subject areas surveyed, there appeared to have been improvements over the course of treatment. Perhaps the most notable improvement, according to Mr. P. was in Raymond's reading performance. In addition to showing the greatest grade level gain in that area, Mr. P. said that Raymond had begun to show a self-motivated interest in reading, whereas before he had typically only read when pressed to do so.

TABLE 2

TEACHER ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Subject	December, 1980	June, 1981
Math	2.5	3.5
Vocabulary	2.0	3.0
Reading	1.5	3.0
Phonics	1.5	2.5
Spelling	1.5	2.0

With respect to work habits, it had been typical that Raymond's teachers had needed to, as Mr. P. put it in December of 1980, "push and demand that he work" and monitor him closely as the only means of assuring that he would be productive. Because in a regular public school classroom a teacher can rarely attend that closely to a student for any length of time Raymond rarely completed assignments, according to Mr. P. (December, 1980). By June, 1981, however, the picture had changed: "Over the last 2½ months, I usually can count on Raymond to complete his work in a more or less independent way without the constant supervision he used to require", said Mr. P. in an interview.

In November, 1980, Mr. P. had said that Raymond had seemed to be "far away, daydreaming much of the time" (see p. 60). When asked to relate that observation to the child's current functioning, Mr. P. said: "He will still drift off like that but it is not so pronounced. For example, his paying more attention means that I don't need to repeat assignments to him like [I used to need to do] before."

The data show that Raymond's academic achievement improved approximately one grade level. His work habits were reported to show that he had begun to complete assignments and to work more independently.

Behavior Related to the Psycho-social Tasks: The diagnosis (see p. 73) suggested that the subject's behaviors of withdrawing and dampened affect indicated difficulties in the psychosocial task of trust vs. mistrust. There were sev-

eral counselling strategies which could be considered to be directly linked to the enhancement of a child's adjustment to this psychosocial task. Erikson (1963) suggests, "consistency" in the adult-child relationship along with a sense that the child is "trustworthy enough so that the adult is not always on guard against the child" (p. 248). Perhaps the most obvious form of consistency throughout the investigation was that the subject could count on the investigator to regularly give him his undivided attention twice a week. The investigator was typically prompt and when circumstances forced a meeting to be missed the investigator was in contact with Raymond beforehand to make alternate arrangements. Another, perhaps less obvious manifestation of consistency was the investigator's use throughout, of the interactional techniques outlined in Chapter II (see pp. 38-43). Raymond could count on, at each meeting, the investigator's efforts to attend to and communicate an understanding of his feelings, thoughts and actions.

There were numerous occasions when Raymond attempted to influence the investigator, as was seen during the last part of the first counselling meeting (see p. 86). There were also times when toys were broken. The investigator endeavored at these times to maintain a stance that would suggest to Raymond that the incident was not perceived as an attack against which the investigator would need to defend himself. This stance satisfies Erikson's point that basic trust is fostered when a child perceived that s/he need not constantly guard against

hurting the adult (Erikson, 1963, p. 248).

It would appear from the observational data supplied by Mr. P. that the withdrawal behavior in particular appeared to have diminished over the course of treatment. The evidence for this is seen in a) the subject's greater ability to pay attention to his teacher's instructions and b) the new capacity of the subject to develop peer affiliations.

At the point of diagnosis it was hypothesized that Raymond manifested difficulties with respect to negotiating the psychosocial task of developing autonomy (see p. 74). Children with this difficulty often show aggressiveness (Erikson, 1963, p. 254). The theme of aggressiveness in peer relations wove its way throughout the course of the counselling contact. Raymond believed he played "tricks" on other children; he seemed to derive a sense of delight from several aspects of these incidents. The main counselling strategy with respect to this problematic behavior was to reflect to Raymond descriptions of his tricks along with the ensuing consequences (see p. 99). Raymond also played tricks on Mr. P. (see pp. 96-97) and on his sister (p. 104).

Erikson points to the need for a child to have his/her aggressions curbed in a context of non-rejection (Ibid). Toward the goal of curbing Raymond's aggressiveness against peers, the investigator frequently reflected descriptions of his aggressions along with the apparent consequences (see p. 85 & p. 122). Because the investigator's reflections tended to be non-judgmental , i.e. non-rejecting, Raymond was often

able, without defensiveness, to confront the unfortunate results of his behavior. Perhaps it was because he was able to thus see the painful results of his behavior more clearly that this behavior began to diminish. In practical terms, over the course of counselling, Raymond came to "bug" other children less and less as well as developing one strong friendship and a few other peer affiliations.

With respect to Raymond's aggressiveness toward his sister, it appears that the counselling strategies did not effect an observable change. Evidence for this is seen in a review of the anecdotal record which indicates that as the counselling period was ending he still manifested fantasies and images of aggressive acts against his sister (see p. 126). Furthermore, in a conversation (June 5, 1981), Raymond's father told the investigator that he had not noticed a diminution in the conflict between the two siblings: "He still bugs his sister too much--not changed."

Another source of related interventions involved Raymond's relationship with his teacher. At one point (see p. 97) Raymond showed relatively direct aggression against Mr. P. The investigator's aim, when discussing these incidents with Mr. P. was to influence the teacher to be both firm and non-rejecting. This period of relatively direct aggression against Mr. P. dissolved approximately four weeks after it was first noticed. Mr. P. reported that there were no further similar incidents throughout the remainder of the school year.

The initial diagnosis suggested that Raymond reflected difficulties with respect to the psychosocial task of initiative vs. guilt. Erikson (1963) suggests that a child who has been unable to successfully negotiate this task may adhere to "fantasies of being a giant" (p. 252). When the initial diagnosis was developed, the investigator could observe no acute indications of excesses in this behavior, or other indicators (e.g., over-obedience or deep regressions) of trouble with this task. The assumption was made, however, that since there were clear behavioral indicators that this child had difficulties with the subsequent task--industry vs. inferiority--that there must indeed be difficulties connected with the task of initiative vs. guilt. This assumption was made because the theory stipulates that difficulties in a preceding task precludes successful negotiation of later tasks (Ibid., p. 78).

As the counselling progressed, it became clear that Raymond harbored many elaborate fantasies of his own super-hero status (see p. 88 & p. 100). The danger here, Erikson suggests, is that in correcting the child's actions excessive guilt may be induced and the child may thus develop a broad feeling that s/he is "bad" when engaged in projects (or projections) of his/her own (Ibid.). Raymond's stories were indeed his own projects. That he experienced guilt in connection with the sharing of the fantasies became clear (see p. 100) in the course of counselling.

In so far as technique was concerned, empathy was

typically employed when dealing with these issues. Additionally, this investigator's interest and attention to the stories could have had a positively reinforcing effect of the frequency of their verbal expression as well as reducing associated anxiety. Indeed, it should be noted that play therapy as a counselling mode is primarily aimed at encouraging and supportively assisting the child to take the initiative for the events within sessions (Axline, 1947, p. 74).

It appears that Raymond evolved a sense of greater comfort for his initiative acts (see p. 118) although this finding appears to be less conclusive than others.

As mentioned above, the diagnosis suggested that Raymond's difficulties included problems related to the psychosocial task of industry vs. inferiority. The behavioral indicators included patterns of underachievement and/or overachievement. Raymond's behavior showed both patterns. With regard to most public school academic situations he was functioning well below expected levels. Ironically, he appeared to over-function or work too hard in his endeavors at the Chinese School that he and his sister attended together. Raymond reported that his achievements in that setting were superior to those of his sister's. His father confirmed this report, adding that he was concerned because his son seemed to show excessive effort and worry in relations to his Chinese academics. With respect to his artwork, Raymond appeared to despair, that despite evidence to the contrary from his classmates and teacher, his artistic abilities were "no good."

He was a perfectionist in this regard.

Erikson (1963) points to the need for the developing child to receive recognition for his/her production abilities. Proper recognition instills a sense of industriousness in the child. The counselling strategy that was likely to provide recognition for Raymond's production capacities was the investigator's interest and attention to Raymond's abilities as he expressed them. Although the investigator did not intentionally praise Raymond, it was possible to point out Raymond's need for recognition and praise to Mr. P.. Mr. P., as a consequence, endeavored to praise whatever Raymond could do. It was notable that Mr. P. was particularly praiseful of Raymond's scientific efforts. Mr. P. also facilitated situations in class that would put Raymond's artistic capabilities in the limelight. That these efforts met with success was manifested in the counselling situation, where the investigator was able to reflect Raymond's positive experiences back to him (see p.127) In addition, Raymond showed a burst of academic achievement in which his ability to produce was characterized by his teacher. The Spring, 1981 report card showed "a dramatic improvement in Raymond's attitude...he really works hard to get...[his assignments] in on time...and he seems to be taking great pride in his work."

The data show that with respect to behaviors associated with the psychosocial tasks, Raymond appeared to have become less withdrawn, less aggressive with respect to his classmates and more industrious.

Findings Related to the Application of the Counselling Strategies

One of the primary purposes of this study was to discover what could be learned from examining the process of a school counsellor's attempts to assist an emotionally troubled pupil. To fulfill this purpose, the recorded data were examined with the aim of discerning issues that have not been heretofore considered. These findings are presented under the following headings:

1. The problem of support from school personnel.
2. Problems associated with the counsellor's personal feelings.
3. Problems arising from an individual perspective.

The Problem of Support From School Personnel: At the outset, this investigator had discussed the use of play counselling techniques with Raymond's teacher. In addition, this investigator discussed the topic with the principal at Raymond's school who had many questions and some concerns about the use of play therapy in his school. The concerns that the principal expressed were, in the main, in relation to limit-setting. The investigator explained that his position was that limits on a child's behavior in play therapy must be as broad as possible, yet firm and clear. When reassured that physical attacks on myself and/or school property would not be permitted, the principal was willing to give his solid support for the project.

Problems arose, however, after the counselling pro-

gram had been underway for a number of weeks. The school secretary, whose office was next to the nurse's office where the counselling sessions were initially conducted, became concerned about the quality and volume of the noise emanating from the playroom. Although the principal was not concerned, she could not be reassured, and lest she (and perhaps others in the school) become alienated from the project, the investigator needed to set limits to the volume of noise that was permitted in the playroom. This was a limit to the counselling program to be sure, and while this bind did not apparently retard the process of therapeutic change, it was a necessary limit if the project was to survive. The lesson to be learned, perhaps is that the misunderstandings and fears of some school personnel must be taken into consideration and adjusted to, when necessary, for the survival of the program.

Problems Associated With The Counsellor's Personal

Feelings: Difficulties sometimes arose in the efforts to employ the strategies and interventions due to the investigator's tendency at times to "rush things along." The investigator's desire to successfully rid this child of his problems was frequently behind such behaviors. The efforts to "overcure" were usually manifested in the form of questions or statements from the investigator which Raymond could not relate to on a surface level because the investigator's responses were either inappropriate or were "accurate", but touched the child on a level that was at that time too sensitive. When such an in-

appropriate response was attempted, Raymond was seen to react with a defensive maneuver of some sort. These incidents may have reduced the effectiveness and ironically, the rapidity of the counselling process. It would seem that the key to diminishing such effects is the counsellor's ability to remain sensitive insofar as possible to the defensive reactions of the person being counselled. When noticed, defensive reactions to a counsellor's attempts at intervention should point the counsellor inward to assess his/her own feelings, thoughts, and intentions. The results of this assessment should then be used to guide the counsellor in formulating further strategies.

Problems Arising From An Individual Perspective:

Montalvo and Haley (1973) have suggested that counsellors attending to children may be constrained in their effectiveness by a delimiting perspective. The handicapping perspective suggests the hypothesis that symptomatic behaviors arise out of a problem within the child. The therapeutic consequence of adhering to this perspective is that the counsellor is led to take the "child's communicative behavior, [including symptoms], only as a report about his inner nature rather than a report about his social situation" (p. 242). The therapist will then assume that the child's "parents and other relatives are a stress factor rather than a unit with the problem" (p. 228) and thus the unit of treatment.

Although Raymond made gains, particularly in certain academic areas and in peer relations, there appeared to have

been minimal change in Raymond's relations within his family. In an interview in June, 1981 and again in October of 1981 Raymond's father reported that although he was pleased with his son's improved school performance, he had noticed (a) no improvements in his capacity to "mind" (i.e., obey) his mother or grandmother, (b) no improvement in his troubled relationship with his sister, and (c) no improvement in his ability to concentrate on the extra schoolwork that he had his son engage in.

These results further support Montalvo and Haley's hypothesis and leads to the question: could deeper and more wide-ranging changes for Raymond have been effected if the unit of treatment would have been conceptually expanded to include the child's social system?

CONCLUSIONS

- A. As the counselling procedure, play therapy, was employed the subject was observed to have changed positively in a number of ways:
1. He showed improvements in his academic work habits; that is, he showed an increased ability to work independently and complete school assignments.
 2. He showed an increase in academic achievement of one grade level in five school subjects in a period of six months, according to his teacher's assessments.
 3. He developed improved relations with peers including the establishment of one close friend.
 4. He showed less aggressiveness.

5. The subject became less withdrawn.
- C. In order to insure a good working relationship with various school personnel, adjustments had to be made to traditional play therapy procedures. It was found that the adjustments did not prevent therapeutic change from occurring.
- D. The investigator found that continuous monitoring of the defensive behaviors of the subject in conjunction with his own subjective state was necessary in order to avoid the detrimental effects of "rushing" the counselling process.
- E. It was observed that the counselling perspective employed herein in which the child's family was considered to be a stress factor in relation to the child's problematic behavior and not the unit with the problem, contributed to limiting the investigator's capacity to conceptualize and act, both diagnostically and interventively.

IMPLICATIONS

Attention To The Unit With The Problem

Schools have traditionally viewed the emotional problems of students as being contained within the student. When the student's family is taken into consideration by the traditional view, it may be seen as either a factor in or the cause of the problem which is still considered to reside within the student. A broader perspective, in which the troubled student plus his/her family is considered to be

the unit with the problem will likely generate broader and more effective counselling changes.

The Need For a New Perspective on Emotional Problems

The above implication leads in the direction of the area of the mission of the public school in society at large. If the troubled child plus his/her family is the appropriate unit of change, then a major reorientation in the epistemology, or way of thinking about difficulties will need to take place before a widespread application of this viewpoint can be made in the day-to-day activities of the school counsellor. Without this change in the way that emotional problems are perceived, the mission of the public school will likely continue to fix the child as an isolated entity, cut off from his/her social system.

Counsellor Training

Much of counsellor training focuses on interventive techniques and procedures that are derived from the perspective of the "problem" residing within the troubled child. In order for a more encompassing perspective to be broadly recognized and adopted throughout the public school system it seems necessary that the counsellors themselves and trainers of counsellors first adopt, and then encourage among other professionals, such an epistemological shift.

Implications For Further Study

1. To what extent can we be certain that the reported changes in the subject over the course of this investigation, are a result of the interventions des-

cribed in the study? This question is difficult to answer given the design employed in the investigation. The issue, however, may be pertinent enough to warrant further study designed in such a way as to shed light on the question.

2. Since the advocates of a social systems approach (Montalvo & Haley, 1973) promise increased treatment effectiveness from that perspective, it seems that further investigation, designed to test the promise of that perspective, is warranted by public school counsellors who wish to improve their efforts to assist troubled children to overcome their difficulties.

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