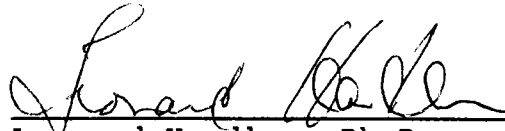


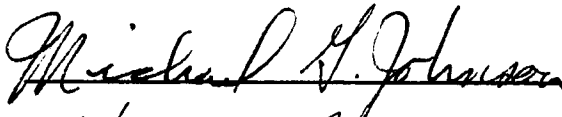
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Ronald Steven Harrist entitled "A Phenomenological Investigation of the Experience of Ambivalence." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Psychology.

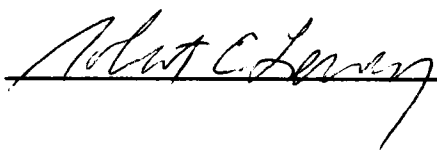


Leonard Handler, Ph.D.
Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:







Accepted for the Council:



Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of the Graduate School

A Phenomenological Investigation
of the
Experience of Ambivalence

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Ronald Steven Harrist

August, 1991

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents

Ronald B. Harrist

and

Linda S. Reagan

for their love and support

and to my wife

Amanda W. Harrist

for believing in me.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my major professor, Dr. Leonard Handler, for his encouragement and support throughout the course of this project. I would especially like to express my gratitude to Dr. Howard Pollio for his invaluable guidance and the members of his research team who provided insight and enthusiasm in the times when it was most needed. I would also like to thank the other committee members, Dr. Michael Johnson, Dr. Robert Levey and Dr. David Linge for their comments and assistance regarding this work. I also want to express my gratitude to my wife Amanda for sharing with me the challenges this project represents and our parents who have given generously of their time, money and of themselves.

ABSTRACT

Results obtained from analyzing interviews with eight research co-participants who described experiences of having more than one feeling at a time were discussed. Three major categories of experience emerged from the descriptions of ambivalence provided by the interviewees. Using the specific language of research co-participants, these categories of experience were labeled: imbalance, weigh, and outweigh. These category labels communicate a kinesthetic sense of the experience that conveys the multiple layers of meaning regarding various facets of the experience including: bodily, emotional, cognitive and interpersonal themes salient in the experience of ambivalence. Minor themes and their relation to the essential themes are also elaborated as is the relationship of these categories to broader existential themes. The relevance of ambivalence to psychopathology and psychotherapy are also considered. A phenomenological understanding of the experience of ambivalence provides an overview of the landscape of the world as multiple feelings lead to experiences of being out of balance, weighing, and rebalancing and may allow one to orient oneself in the world when it is experienced ambivalently.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The language individuals use to describe their every day experience of the world includes many common expressions that refer to experiences of ambivalence. "Bitter-sweet," "a love-hate relationship," and "feeling torn between two things" are common expressions that communicate experiences of having more than one feeling at a time. There are many examples of experiences of ambivalence in literature. For example, Hamlet's fatal flaw of hesitation is embedded in his experience of multiple feelings. His love and loyalty to his father conflict with his reluctance to accuse his mother and murder his uncle. Hamlet's ambivalence about what action he should take provides a dramatic example of experiences that may occur in everyone's daily life.

Experiences of ambivalence range from the dramatic to the mundane, from emotions felt when trying to decide which restaurant to go to or which movie to watch, to the many feelings one may have when deciding how to live one's life. For example, it is not uncommon to have many feelings, even seemingly contradictory feelings, about important figures in our lives: Our mothers, fathers, siblings, spouses, children and authority figures all have numerous feelings associated with them.

Ways of experiencing ambivalence and ways of avoiding the experience of ambivalence, have been discussed in the psychological literature (e.g. Akhtar & Byrne, 1983; Braverman, 1987; and Meerloo, 1954). For someone with an obsessive personality style, ambivalence may be experienced most or all of the time. The obsessive individual constantly moves between the poles of ambivalence and appears to have difficulty finding or accepting resolutions. In contrast to the obsessive personality, individuals who rely on the defense mechanism of splitting, for example, avoid experiencing ambivalence by making objects either "all good" or "all bad". Thus, gray areas are not acknowledged and experiences of ambivalence averted.

If one takes a naive point of view regarding the notion of ambivalence, some interesting conceptual problems are raised. How can one experience or be two different feelings simultaneously? How is it possible for a person to be aware of two contradictory and seemingly mutually exclusive feelings at the same time? What are the implications of ambivalence for one's sense of identity? What role does ambivalence play in psychopathology?

The difficulty of conceptualizing the experience of ambivalence is illustrated by a study conducted by Harter and Buddin (1987). In this study, they asked children questions about the possibility of having simultaneous

emotions. Young children, ages 4 and 5, sometimes firmly denied having the experience of having more than one emotion at a time. For example, one child stated, "There is no way that two feelings can go together." Comments from other children included: "There is no way you could have two feelings at the same time since you only have one mind!", "You can't make your mouth go up and down at the same time!", and "You'd have to be two different people to have feelings at the very same time!" (p. 398). Although adults commonly describe experiencing two or more feelings simultaneously, statements made by children point to the fact that there is something paradoxical about the experience of ambivalence.

The phenomenon of ambivalence has been of interest to philosophers, psychological theorists, and psychotherapists because of its relationship to important phenomena such as conflict, anxiety, decision-making, and the development of identity. According to Meerloo (1954), the use of the term ambivalence in psychiatry and psychology was first introduced by Bleuler in 1908, in his work Dementia Praecox or the Group of Schizophrenias. According to Shapiro (1985), Freud adopted the term ambivalence from Bleuler, modifying and restricting its meaning. Although conceptions of ambivalence have varied from researcher to researcher, ambivalence has had a well defined place in the theories of Bleuler, Freud, and investigators who followed

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them. For some psychologists (e.g. Schachtel, 1959) ambivalence has been an implicit rather than an explicit cornerstone of theory construction.

The purpose of this work is to bring into focus the various facets of the experience of ambivalence and to present a psychological interpretation of its meaning. The first task in discussing the meaning of ambivalence will be to trace the history of this concept in the psychological literature. A second purpose of this paper will be to advance an understanding of ambivalence beyond the current psychological literature by presenting results of obtained in the present study. Before discussing present research, however, it will be important to examine the choice of a specific research approach for this investigation and to outline the rationale for this approach.

Giorgi (1970) has pointed out the necessity for dialogue between method and content in psychological research. Although the relationship between method and content is often not addressed explicitly, the content or subject being researched should dictate the procedures to be followed in the research. More than one approach to the psychological investigation of ambivalence is possible. Thus, in choosing a method of research, it is of utmost importance to keep in view what is of primary interest to the researcher. References to common experiences of ambivalence were made at the beginning of this chapter.

These experiences are derived from the lived world of particular individuals. Thus, the individual's experience of the phenomenon is a good starting point for a more rigorous and detailed investigation.

The topic of interest in the current study is ambivalence as it is experienced in the lived world. In the present study, the term ambivalence is taken in its broadest sense, rather than in a more narrowly defined psychological sense, so as not to restrict the horizon of inquiry at the outset of the investigation. Therefore "ambivalence" is rendered literally: "ambi-" meaning "both" and "valence," meaning "to be strong or to be worth" (Morris, 1978). For the present, therefore, ambivalence will be construed as meaning both sides are strong or both sides have their own worth. An interest in the nuances and qualitative aspects of the experience of ambivalence in the broadest sense is best pursued using a methodology that does not limit the horizons of the research beforehand and a method which can address the topic of human experience. A phenomenological approach to psychological research appears to meet these criteria and, therefore, seems best suited for an investigation of the phenomenon of the experience of ambivalence.

Although Shapiro (1985) has studied ambivalence using a phenomenological approach, his study is limited in that it is a single-subject, introspective study of his own

experiences of ambivalence. The current study proposes to extend Shapiro's work, using a phenomenological approach, by interviewing a number of research participants to broaden the horizon of understanding. The general research method and the specific procedures used in the current investigation will be discussed. The results of the study, in the form of ontological categories of meaning, will be presented, with illustrative examples of research co-participants' experiences of ambivalence. Finally, results of the study will be discussed and related both to overarching existential concerns and to implications for psychopathology and psychotherapy.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Hate and love are infinitely closer to each other than to indifference.

(Bleuler, 1908/1950, p. 375)

Ambivalence has been viewed as important by many psychologists and psychiatrists, both in normal development and in the development of psychopathology. As noted in the previous chapter, Bleuler was the first to have used the term ambivalence to refer to a psychological phenomenon and Freud later adopted and modified the term for his own purposes (Shapiro, 1985). Psychologists and psychiatrists following Bleuler and Freud have addressed the concept of ambivalence and have construed its meaning in different ways. Some authors, like Holder (1975), have addressed the topic of ambivalence very specifically, arguing, for example, for a return to Freud's more restricted use of the term which refers specifically to feelings of love and hate directed at the same object. Other authors, such as Baumeister, Shapiro, and Tice (1985) and Schachtel (1959), have not addressed the topic of ambivalence as such, but make use of it as an implicit aspect of their thinking. The purpose of this chapter is to trace the history of the concept of ambivalence. From Bleuler and Freud in the

psychoanalytic literature to the more recent developmental and humanistic literatures.

History of the concept of ambivalence in clinical psychology

Bleuler (1908/1950) originally distinguished among three types of ambivalence: affective, volitional and intellectual. Affective ambivalence is characterized by loving and hating the same object. Volitional ambivalence, on the other hand, involves a conflict over doing or not doing something. In describing volitional ambivalence, Bleuler cites the example of a hospitalized patient who sincerely assured Bleuler that he would not try to escape from the hospital again because of the numerous disadvantages it caused him. Bleuler described his reaction upon hearing this: "Thereupon, I warn the attendant that the patient is going to try to escape, which promptly occurs as I predicted" (p. 375). Intellectual ambivalence, in Bleuler's view, simply means simultaneously interpreting something in a negative and a positive light. In intellectual ambivalence, as in affective ambivalence, opposites are more akin to each other than are unrelated concepts. Young children, for example, frequently present instances of the close relationships between opposites. "Many of them use the phrase, 'Close the door,' when they actually want the door to be opened" (p. 376). In

Bleuler's view, the various types of ambivalence are experiences shared by both "healthy" individuals and schizophrenics. In schizophrenia, however, weakened "associative linkings" between concepts result in a failure to integrate ambivalent volitions, affects and thoughts.

In Totem and Taboo, Freud (1913/1950) states that "taboo" is "an ambivalent word" and that many more words with double meanings once existed in primitive languages such that slight modifications in the pronunciation of these "primal words" made it possible to express contrary ideas which were originally combined in them. According to him, "taboo" originally had the double meaning of "unclean" and "sacred." The development of ambivalence in relation to a taboo object is seen as resulting from repression of the desire to touch the object due to pressure from societal prohibitions.

Freud elucidates the connections between the development of ambivalence ("both a wish and a counter-wish") toward a taboo object and the development of obsessional neurosis. Both the taboo and the prohibitions subscribed to by the obsessional personality seem unmotivated, are of unknown origin, and are maintained by fear of punishment or disaster. Despite repression, both the instinct and the prohibition still exist; the person constantly wishes to perform the act of touching, yet detests the act and knows it cannot be performed. "The

principal characteristic of the psychological constellation which becomes fixed in this way is what might be described as the subject's ambivalent attitude towards a single object" (p. 29). Freud concludes that the prohibitions of taboo are consequences of emotional ambivalence. He states further that the development of conscience (i.e., "the internal perception of the rejection of a particular wish operating within us", p. 69) arises from emotional ambivalence regarding specific human relationships associated with the ambivalence.

In The Problem of Anxiety (1936), Freud discusses ambivalence in the case of "Little Hans." For Freud, ambivalence is closely related to intrapsychic conflict and anxiety, two cornerstones of the theory. Freud states that the psychic conflict in Hans sprang from his ambivalent attitude toward his father. Hans loved his father, but he also found himself "in the jealous and hostile Oedipus attitude to his father" (p. 42). Hans' phobia was said to be a compromise between hating and loving his father that represented his attempt to resolve the conflict and to end the experience of ambivalence. Hans is viewed as having equated, through magical thinking, the horse and his father. Both were envied for their size and strength; both also were feared as potentially dangerous. Hans' phobia developed as he substituted the horse for the feared aspect of his father, thus the conflict of ambivalence was not

worked out with his father. Freud suggests that the substitution (and compromise) of the phobia had two advantages: it avoided the conflict due to ambivalent feelings toward the father, and it allowed the ego to prevent further development of anxiety.

Freud's concept of intrapsychic conflict is a defining characteristic of his psychology and of the dynamic psychologies that have developed from his theories. Freud explained intrapsychic conflict by conceptualizing subparts of the self that embodied the polarity of the conflicting intentions. One pole, the Id, was driven by the instinctual pressures of biological needs; another pole, the superego, was the embodiment of the rules and strictures of society handed down by the individual's parents. Once a division of the person into constituent parts is accepted, the paradox of conflicting intentions seems to disappear because there are entities to which each of the intentions can be attached.

Freud views the ambivalence from which psychic conflicts grow as being quite common. He states that reaction formation is a typical outcome of the attempt to resolve ambivalence. Reaction formation occurs when two impulses are contending with one another and the more socially acceptable of the two becomes exaggerated while the less socially acceptable is displaced. The compulsiveness and excessiveness of an act of tenderness,

for example, indicated to Freud that an opposite impulse was also present, though unexpressed. In Freud's view, phobias and reaction formations are just two of many ways of escaping from "ambivalency conflict."

One of the tendencies of the ego, in Freud's view, is to move toward synthesis as a means of resolving ambivalence. In this model, the function of the ego is to fend off the intrusion of unconscious fantasies and the expression of ambivalent strivings. Freud found that in many cases patient symptoms acquired a meaning that was the exact opposite of its original meaning, as in reaction formation. He took this transformation of meaning as evidence of the power of ambivalence (and its concomitant anxiety), which he viewed as playing a large role in neurosis.

Freud viewed anxiety as a response to either an external or an internal threat. Symptoms are created, as in the case of Hans, to rescue the ego from danger. According to Fischer (1970), Freud's view of anxiety can only be understood in terms of the relationships between the ego, superego, id, and the external world. These are four fundamentally different, but related matrices. Fischer views the ego as an organized system of verbally mediated meanings which must sustain its own organization in the face of demands from the id and superego. The id, on the other hand, is an irrational and inconsistently

organized array of meanings which reflect the bodily condition of the individual and which continually demand expression. The superego is the matrix of internalized social and familial strictures, and the external world is the final source of demands, expectations, limits, and boundaries. Ambivalence arises from the conflict between the ego and the other matrices, which in turn gives rise to a sense of inconsistency or meaninglessness. The inconsistency is experienced as anxiety until the ego is able to create a synthesis that will restore a coherent sense of meaning.

Fischer describes the three forms of anxiety identified by Freud which correspond to the structure with which the ego is in conflict. Reality anxiety is a reaction to a threat from the external world, such as the loss of an object. Moral anxiety is a reaction to a threat from the superego, which is experienced as shame or guilt. Neurotic anxiety is a reaction to a threat from the id to act in an impulsive or asocial manner. Ambivalence and anxiety are coped with successfully when the ego is able to sustain the already existing structure of meanings or when a new logical synthesis is constructed to take its place. The organization of the ego is accomplished primarily by consolidating connections and boundaries through repression or other defensive tactics. Conversely, ineffective coping with ambivalence, and its ensuing anxiety, mean that the

ego has not found a way to sustain organization or has a split organization. A splitting of ego organization creates isolated systems that are expressed as compromises (or symptoms). Thus, anxiety is a sign of a difficulty in ego functioning which reflects a disruption in the individual's realistic relations with and to the world.

Fischer discusses ambivalence as a key aspect of anxiety. He describes anxiety as the experience of being impelled to actualize something when one's ability to do so is uncertain. A particular identity must be realized in a context both of relations with others and with one's goals. Anxiety is experienced when one's network of relationships and goals threatens to collapse. Thus, the desire to maintain the structure of the network is felt to be an imperative or a necessity. It appears to the one experiencing the anxiety as if there are no alternatives, or rather that the alternatives all involve not being oneself. Projects, goals, and future relationships are always approached with uncertainty. All of the ambivalence and uncertainty of milestones yet to be achieved have implications for the person's being. There is never certainty about success or failure in the future, for when there is certainty there can be no anxiety. When one is faced with a loss of familiarity in the network of relationships and goals, one is faced with the threat of becoming someone unknown. Thus, the personal sense of

uncertain ability or competence is essential to the experience of anxiety.

Sullivan and other theorists have departed from Freud's view of ambivalence, conflict, and anxiety. For Sullivan (1953), anxiety is exclusively a function of relationships with other people. He views development as being aimed at achieving a sense of humanness by being affirmed by others as acceptable and worthwhile. Anxiety is a reaction having its basis the anticipation of, or actual experience of, condemnation by others. The anticipation of condemnation from others suggests that a sense of ambivalence and conflict between two contending impulses exist, giving rise to uncertainty about how to act. The anxiety associated with the ambivalence is a disorienting experience that is difficult to anticipate and prevent. The degree of anxiety is determined by the significance of the other, and the severity of the disapproval.

Meerloo (1954) discusses the development of ambivalence in orthodox Freudian terms. He traces the roots of the development of ambivalence from birth and describes pathological outcomes associated with the psychosexual stages of development. "Ambivalence starts with the reaction to being born, the first ambiguous experience. An ego that remains weak is not able to control contradictory feelings. Manic-depressives and

compulsives live mostly in such a continually ambivalent world" (p. 165).

In the oral stage of development, ambivalence may develop as a result of the first traumatic feeding experiences of the infant. The nipple or bottle is at the same time a source of nourishment and satisfaction as well as a source of frustration. This dual aspect of the experience of feeding epitomizes the root of ambivalence in the oral stage. Similarly, in the anal stage, "the child begins to struggle with discipline and the automatic rule from the outside" and "the world of the parents, with its previously permissive attitude toward his eliminative functions" (p. 171) is completely changed. In the genital stage, sexual identity confusion, penis envy, and paradoxical female and male identifications are seen as roots of ambivalence. For Meerloo,

Experiencing reality is an ambivalent function.

It is the repetition of old patterns of experience, and it is at the same time an attempt to verify and imprint something new. (p. 162)

Ambivalence, therefore, is viewed as a normal aspect of human experience, unless it becomes a "persisting ambivalence" that interferes with healthy psychological functioning, as in the compulsive personality. The development of chronic ambivalence, in his view, results from psychological trauma occurring at critical junctures

of development before the ambivalent feelings in that stage can be integrated.

Although he acknowledges Bleuler's rather broad definition of ambivalence and the fact that Freud used the term in different ways at different times, one of Holder's (1975) chief concerns in writing about ambivalence is that the term loses its clarity when the definition is not restricted. His view is that ambivalence only refers to "object-directed feelings of a contradictory nature" (p. 207). Holder emphasizes that ambivalent feelings may be the cause of severe conflicts and psychopathology, but that not all conflict is due to ambivalence. He does not equate conflict with ambivalence and states that "the existence of ambivalence in an object relationship is in itself no indication of pathology" (p.208).

Schachtel's (1959) view of ambivalence and anxiety is a radical departure from earlier theorists. He criticizes Freud and others for attending to the tendency for tension-reduction to the exclusion of the tendency for stimulus seeking. In Schachtel's view, development involves a process he calls "emergence from embeddedness." Emergence refers to the individual's continuing and expanding interest in and orientation to the world. Embeddedness, on the other hand, refers to the individual's need for safety, security, and familiarity in various contexts: with others, with objects in the world, with one's self.

According to Schachtel, first Kierkegaard, then Freud and Heidegger, tried to show that anxiety is the fundamental category of human existence. Anxiety is such a fundamental experience because it is said to be inherent in the process of emergence from embeddedness. In Schachtel's view, the individual seeks both embeddedness and emergence from embeddedness. Conflicts result from the individual's need to realize capacities and potentials, while at the same time preserving safety and familiarity with self and world. Ambivalence arises when the individual feels impelled toward both goals which at times, are competing or mutually exclusive. Thus the ambivalence and the attendant anxiety manifest in the conflict between striving for growth and clinging to embeddedness are inherent in development and fundamental to human experiences.

For Schachtel, fear and anxiety are differentiated on the basis of what is known. Fear is an affective response to a known danger whereas anxiety is a response to an unknown danger. Here again it is clear that the phenomena of anxiety and ambivalence are closely related. Uncertainty and doubt -- key aspects of ambivalence -- are, also defining characteristics of anxiety. Anxiety, in Schachtel's view, is a response to the individual's sense of danger regarding a loss of embeddedness (i.e., no longer feeling secure and safe in a situation). Anxiety entails a sense of helplessness which either stems from an inability

to sustain a high level of relatedness to the world or from a sense of impotence in the face of that which is new and unfamiliar. Thus, the potential for ambivalence is inherent in every human activity because human activity necessarily entails the tension between the movement away from embeddedness, safety, and familiarity, and the movement toward growth and differentiation.

Recently, theorists and researchers have begun to re-examine the concept of ambivalence. Sloan (1986) discusses ambivalence as the experience of being lost in consideration of various complex possibilities. In his view, the experience of ambivalence has implications for personal identity because identity is a possibility that is never fully realized; it is always aiming at a horizon just ahead. In other words, we are always ambivalent to some extent because we are always in the process of becoming. All decisions are made with some doubt, and some decisions entail changes that affect identity. Some decisions, however, are made simply to escape the anxiety of uncertainty.

Rychlak (1988) has examined a number a psychological theories and reinterpreted them in terms of dialectical process with the aim of accounting for human agency or free will. Ambivalence is implicit in the notion of dialectic because of the inherent oscillation between two or more poles. Although his primary interest lies in the

implications dialectical thinking has for agency rather than for the experience of ambivalence, Rychlak's analysis illustrates what a basic psychological experience ambivalence is.

Rychlak reinterprets Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance in dialectical terms. In this view, cognition is seen as a process of fitting elements of knowledge together and dissonance is said to ensue when the elements of knowledge are logically inconsistent. Festinger proposes that dissonance is a psychologically uncomfortable state individuals are motivated to remedy. Festinger's notion of dissonance is an experience somewhat akin to what psychoanalytic writers have called anxiety. Rychlak reinterprets Festinger's suggestion that human beings have a drive to reduce dissonance. He suggests, rather, that people, because they are dialectical reasoners, are able to reconcile contradictory predications through various conceptual maneuvers. Although Rychlak does not attempt to describe the process of reconciling contradictory predications, clearly this process involves an experience of ambivalence.

Rychlak provides a similar analysis of Brehm's reactance theory. The reactance state is described as a state of arousal that occurs when people feel their freedom to make a choice is threatened. Rychlak sees reactance as another way of referring to the tendency of people to

reason dialectically and therefore to see the opposite of whatever is "input." He believes that dialectical reasoning is not simply an option people have available to them as one way of thinking; rather, it is a basic and inherent aspect of the thinking process itself. He goes further, saying that a dialectical process is not only involved in formal reasoning, but it is also the way we make affective assessments. Affective assessment is the judgment of the meanings of one's concepts and premises and the characterization of them as either positive or negative (i.e., the two poles of the dialectic). "Because the assessment is dialectical, there is no indifference point on the dimension of affective assessment, although there may be ambivalence" (p. 423).

Ambivalence and developmental processes

Harter and Buddin (1987) have proposed a developmental model for the understanding of mixed emotions. In this work, they developed a task to assess children's understanding of their emotions, and then tested them at ages 4 through 12 years old. They emphasize that their assessment does not evaluate whether or not a child can experience two emotions at the same time; conceptual understanding of emotions is not necessarily simultaneously. It is possible for a child to experience two emotions simultaneously, but the child may not be able

to reconstruct such an experience cognitively and express it verbally. Thus the authors' goal was to assess the child's degree of understanding of his or her own emotions rather than the occurrence of the emotions per se.

Harter and Buddin describe a developmental process which they believe consists of five levels, which account for two dimensions of children's responses to queries about their emotional experiences. The first dimension is the valence of the emotion (whether it is positive or negative). Emotions are rated as being of the same or opposite valences. For example, same valence pairs might include "happy" and "proud" or "mad" and "sad." Opposite valence pairs are exemplified in the response: "I was happy my grandmother was visiting but mad because she didn't bring me a present." The target of the emotion was the second dimension. Two emotions might be directed at the same target, as in the previous example: the grandmother. In some responses, however, the emotions were directed at different targets. For example, "I was bored because there was nothing to do, but mad because my mom punished me" (Harter & Buddin, 1987, p.389).

In their clinical work, Harter and Buddin (1987) found that young children were not capable of appreciating the fact that one can experience opposing emotional reactions simultaneously. Young children typically respond in an all or none fashion, becoming angry, for example, when provoked

or sad at the departure of a grandparent. At the first level of understanding of simultaneous emotions they found that children either placed the two emotions in a temporal order or denied their co-existence. Although the child, at this level, had developed concepts for separate emotions, they could not differentiate or integrate the two concepts. The inability to integrate two emotions is seen as analogous to Piaget's observation of the child's inability to integrate two physical dimensions, such as height and width.

At the second level, children begin to develop more sophisticated and differentiated notions of emotions. They are able to differentiate emotions of the same emotional valence (e.g. happy and excited). At this stage, however, they are not sufficiently differentiated to enable the child to describe directing them at different targets at the same time. The child is also not capable of integrating positive and negative emotions.

The third level of development is characterized by the ability to describe directing one emotion to one aspect of a situation and also directing a same-valence emotion at a different target. The child moves to a fourth level of development when he or she is able simultaneously to describe the experience of two emotions of opposite valences. At this stage, however, the opposite valence emotions can only be directed at different targets.

Finally, the fifth level of development is marked by the child's ability to acknowledge an experience of opposite-valence emotions directed at the same target. This level of understanding requires the greatest amount of differentiation and integration of emotional experiences.

Donaldson and Westerman (1986) also view the child's ability to coordinate contradictory feelings and understand ambivalence as an important developmental achievement. From their more psychoanalytic perspective, the ability to integrate positive and negative feelings plays a critical role in developing the capacity for maintaining stable relationships. From the perspective of developmental social cognition, the ability to evaluate relationships in terms of good and bad is a major organizing construct. Research in this area suggests that the ability to understand ambivalence may be considerably more difficult than suggested by psychoanalytic theory.

Donaldson and Westerman (1986) defined understanding of ambivalence as an ability that includes: (a) recognition that two contradictory feelings can exist at the same time and can be directed at the same person or object, (b) awareness that the conflicting feelings interact and modify each other, and (c) ability to coordinate feelings provoked by the immediate situation and with internal processes, such as feelings related to memories or perceptions of enduring traits of the target.

The second aspect of their definition evolves from the "conflict" orientation inherent in psychoanalytic theory. The third aspect of their definition stems from the observation that children gradually come to understand that feelings are not directly evoked by situations; rather, the significance a given situation has for an individual is mediated by that person's internal state. Both of these changes provide examples of a general shift from an external to an internal orientation in which the separation of events and emotions is an important component in understanding ambivalence. The authors suggest that children may be highly motivated to understand ambivalence in order to make sense of their fluctuating feelings. For example, understanding ambivalence may protect the individual against the disconcerting loss of positive feelings when negative feelings are experienced simultaneously.

Although many authors seem to assume that ambivalence and conflict are one and the same thing, Whitesell and Harter (1989) address the question of whether or not the experience of opposite-value emotions always entails conflict or ambivalence. Their findings suggest that one cannot assume the coexistence of even positive and negative feelings produces an experience of intrapsychic conflict. They found that in only about half of situations involving the coincidence of happy and angry feelings or happy and

sad feelings did older children report an experience of conflict. Conflict was most often described by children as tension between feelings in which the feelings were described as battling for control. Harmony, on the other hand, usually referred to the absence of such a struggle.

Conflict occurs most often when the emotional balance was reported to be either primarily negative or about even, rather than predominantly positive (Whitesell & Harter, 1989). Strong feelings of happiness, for example, might overcome weaker feelings of anger or sadness. The authors suggest that another source of conflict may be the tension between what the children feel and what they believe is acceptable for them to express. As a result, in addition to the conflict between the feelings themselves, children may feel conflict between their anger or sadness and cultural proscriptions regarding these emotions. Another factor involved in the perception of emotional conflict, in addition to the relative intensity of the simultaneous emotions, is the degree to which the emotions are similar. Conflict was reported more often when emotions were perceived to be dissimilar. When, for instance, happiness and anger or sadness were reported to be opposites, conflict was likely. When the feelings were both of a positive valence, conflict was reported less often.

Ambivalence and identity development

Waterman (1982) traces thinking in psychology about identity from the writings of Erik Erikson. Erikson, in turn, used William James' distinction between those who retain the sense of identity formed in childhood and those who go through a later crisis which shapes their identity. Those who retain the sense of identity formed in childhood translate their childhood identifications into adult experience. Those who go through a "crisis" experience conflict or doubt, which leads (except in the case of identity diffusion) to adult commitments which are formed as an act of personal choice. "Crisis" is said to refer to a struggle to arrive at such aspects of identity as vocation and ideological beliefs. "Commitment" involves the dedication to and implementation or application of these aspects of identity.

Waterman (1982), following Erikson, discusses the four potential resolutions to the crisis of identity. Identity achievement is the status in which an individual has passed through a period of crisis and has developed firm commitments. Moratorium is a state of identity crisis in which the individual is actively seeking among alternative identities. Foreclosure is the identity status of those who have never allowed themselves to experience an identity crisis. Identity diffusion is a state in which the

individual lacks firm commitments, yet is not actively engaged in trying to form them.

Identity statuses may be distinguished from each other on the basis of how the individual experiences ambivalence, and what he or she does in response to that ambivalence. At one extreme of this dimension, foreclosure status means that the individual has accepted someone else's (usually the parent's) resolution of the problem of ambivalence. At the other extreme, the diffusion status reflects an inability to resolve ambivalence by choosing between alternatives and making commitments. In the moratorium status, the individual is actively engaged in attempting to resolve ambivalence, while the achievement status reflects success in finding or creating a personal resolution of the problem of ambivalence.

Baumeister, Shapiro and Tice (1985) discuss two different types of identity crises. The identity deficit or motivation crisis is distinguished from the identity conflict, also known as the legitimation crisis. Aspects of both types of identity crises are marked by ambivalence in one way or another. It is suggested that ambivalence is generally an important aspect of identity crisis and that an understanding of ambivalence may elucidate identity issues.

In the case of the identity deficit, Baumeister, Shapiro, and Tice suggest that an identity crisis may grow out of ambivalence in the individual's relationship with parents. The known antecedents of the adolescent identity crisis usually concern ambivalence in parental relationships, which appears to be more common in identity deficit than in identity conflict. The identity deficit refers to an inadequately defined self which is marked by a lack of commitment to goals and values, leaving the individual without a consistent basis for making choices and decisions.

An identity crisis is the individual's struggle to make such commitments. When individuals lack commitments to goals and values, but do not engage in the struggle for commitments, they are said to be in a state of identity diffusion. The identity crisis involving a search for new commitments often takes place during adolescence and sometimes at mid-life. Although some authors have described the identity deficit as involving conflict, it is distinguished from the identity conflict on the basis of whether or not commitments to a vocation or to long-term relationships, for example, have been made. The identity deficit may involve having conflicting attractions to incompatible possibilities, whereas the identity conflict involves conflict between existing commitments. In identity conflict (legitimation crisis) the crisis is

characterized by a self whose multiple definitions are incompatible. In the identity conflict, the individual experiences severe difficulty in the demands of diverse commitments so that the person is unable to choose and act consistently with goals and values. A common example in recent years has been the professional woman who is faced with the challenge of meeting the demands of both a career and a family.

Waterman (1982) found that sons who have resolved identity crises tended to perceive their parents as ambivalent. The parents' ambivalence was manifest in being alternately accepting and rejecting. On the other hand, persons described as having foreclosure status -- those who never experienced an identity crisis -- were close to their parents and perceived them to be consistently supportive. Individuals with authoritarian parents typically take two divergent paths: they either accept parental expectations and establish a foreclosure status or they go through an identity crisis of dramatic proportions. Persons whose parents were permissive, neglectful, or rejecting were most often described as having a diffuse identity status. Tension within the family seems to be related to ambivalence on the part of both parents and child regarding the child's movement toward individuation.

Psychoanalytic theory and clinical case studies are consistent with the notion that parental ambivalence is an influence in the development of an identity crisis (e.g., Baumeister, Shapiro & Tice, 1985). Several clinical case studies have reported relationships in which the father had conflicting feelings about the son. Feelings of admiration, for instance, conflicted with feelings of envy and enjoyment of the son's failures as consolation for the father's inadequacies. Mothers often were supportive, but intrusive and demanding of appreciation in ways that were rejected by the sons. Baumeister, Shapiro, and Tice (1985) state that these findings are consistent with Erikson's observations that clingy, intrusive mothers and ambivalent fathers tend to have sons who experience identity deficit crises.

Schafer (1973) holds that the identity deficit crisis grows out of the son's ambivalence toward his parents, particularly in regard to his tendency to view his parents in terms of his grandiose infantile conceptions of them and his fear of his own regressive desires to merge with them. Another view is that in the face of choices demanded by circumstances, the adolescent often must face the dilemma of choosing between incompatible future identities (Baumeister, Shapiro, & Tice, 1985). Choosing one identity necessitates giving up other potential outcomes, although the individual's ambivalence makes this choice feel as if

it is impossible to make. The reluctance to give up one's potential identities may result in a reluctance to commit oneself to particular goals and values. The reluctance to give up future possibilities, coupled with a simultaneously strong desire to become committed, are the defining characteristics of the "identity deficit crisis." The more traditional psychoanalytic view, which stresses parent child relations, and the view which stresses situational demands are not mutually exclusive; both place a great deal of emphasis on the importance of ambivalence in the development of identity.

The subjective experience of an individual identity deficit crisis may change from day to day, but recurrent themes seem to be vacillation and confusion about values, with periodic feelings of vagueness, malaise, discouragement, or emptiness (Baumeister, Shapiro & Tice, 1985). Individuals also experience preoccupation with great, unresolvable questions or ruminate about the implications of their actions. Tension, anxiety and self-consciousness are common. These authors suggest that the prospect of giving up one's options may be a source of existential guilt or ontological anxiety. As a result of being preoccupied with unresolved questions about identity issues, some individuals may feel detached, aloof, or a lack of interest in what are felt to be mundane concerns of daily life.

Another common theme is a tendency to be dissatisfied and hostile toward authority figures, including parents. Baumeister, Shapiro, and Tice (1985) suggest that the conflict between the strong desire for commitment and the reluctance to give up potential identities underlies all of these diverse experiences. Thus, the subjective experience of the identity deficit crisis is linked to a basic state of ambivalence.

Interestingly, the bulk of research shows that individuals who experience an identity crisis and resolve it successfully have advantages over individuals who never experienced one and retain either foreclosure status or diffusion status (Baumeister, Shapiro, & Tice, 1985). Individuals who have successfully negotiated an identity crisis tend to be superior to individuals with foreclosure and diffusion status on measures of academic achievement, achievement motivation, and interpersonal intimacy (for males).

In contrast to people who at some point experience an identity crisis, individuals with identity foreclosure apparently accept the values and goals of their parents in a rather unquestioning way. Individuals with identity foreclosure describe their relationship with their parents as very close, and parents are perceived to be completely supportive. Thus, a lack of ambivalence may play a formative role in the development of their identities. At

the other end of the spectrum, it may be that those individuals who experience too much ambivalence typically fall into the identity diffusion category. They are characterized by a lack of commitment to values and goals, but unlike individuals who struggle to establish commitments, they never engage in such a struggle. In the case of identity diffusion, the individual's sense of ambivalence is apparently too great to make commitments feasible. In reviewing these categories of identity status, the extent to which ambivalence plays a part in identity formation becomes clear.

Ambivalence and creativity

Various writers have discussed the relationships between ambivalence and important psychological concepts such as psychic conflict, anxiety and the development of identity. Another view suggests that creativity may be born out of the ambivalence. Hare (1982) suggests that creativity involves a "creative shift" of perception where the boundaries of "old categories" of perception become blurred. When old categories of perception are anchored by strong emotions, then the insight required for a creative solution may entail a shifting of feelings as well as perceptions. Thus, by blurring one's perceptions and remaining open to ambivalence, it is possible to see "the forms of nature in a new relationship" (p. 159). From this

perspective, ambivalence may be viewed as the ground out of which the possible is realized. In dialectical terms, it is the ground out of which the conflict between the thesis and antithesis arise to create a new synthesis.

Ambivalence may exist at the cusp between the known and the unknown, the feared and that which is wished for, the past and the future, being and becoming.

Summary

A review of the place of the concept of ambivalence in the psychological literature has indicated various ways the concept has been construed in psychology. First, the experience of having conflicting feelings and ambivalence has long been recognized by researchers and theorists as important in both normal and abnormal development. Many have speculated about the child's experience of ambivalence, and important new information provided by researchers in developmental psychology has added to our understanding of the cognitive aspects of this experience. The ability to recognize and understand and report one's mixed feelings in a given situation is clearly an important aspect of psychological development. Another developmental issue related to ambivalence concerns the development of a characteristic style of coping with it. The different styles of coping with ambivalence are represented in the various identity statuses attained by individuals. It is

thought that parental ambivalence, or lack of ambivalence in the parent-child relationship, may be the greatest influence on the development of a style of coping with ambivalence in children, typically manifest first in relation to the parents and later in establishing commitments which define identity.

Various theorists such as Bleuler, Freud, Fischer, and Waterman (via Erikson) have discussed the relationships between ambivalence and important psychological concepts such as psychic conflict, anxiety, and the development of identity. The aim of the current study is to extend our understanding of the experience of ambivalence beyond the current psychological literature. The following chapter will outline the philosophical basis for a phenomenological approach to research in psychology before describing the specific method used in the current investigation.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

The principle of experience contains the immensely important element that in order to accept a content as true, the man himself must be present or, more precisely, he must find the content in unity and combined with the certainty of himself. The concept of experience means precisely this, that this kind of unity with oneself is first established.

(Gadamer, 1975, p. 318)

Rationale for a Phenomenological Approach in Psychology

The developing field of psychology, perhaps more than many other fields, has suffered throughout its relatively short existence from an identity crisis. In establishing itself as an important and respected field separate and apart from philosophy, psychology adopted the attitude and methods of study of the natural sciences. In many respects, adopting the methods of natural science has engendered the prominence psychology enjoys today. There has been some dispute, however, about how to apply these principles in psychology and whether natural science principles are appropriate for the psychological study of human beings. One purpose of this chapter will be to outline some of the reasons for dissatisfaction with the methods of natural science as they are applied to psychology. A second aim will be to outline a foundation

for a different approach to psychology in the form of phenomenology.

The system of understanding developed by Descartes is based on an epistemology of such great power and success that it is generally taken for granted in Western culture as the only legitimate way of apprehending truth. Its philosophical presuppositions, therefore, are rarely questioned. An exception to this rule is found in Heidegger's Being and Time (1962) which is not only a critique of some basic assumptions in science, but also offers psychology an alternative to the traditional scientific view of understanding.

One of the basic tenets of natural science in Western culture is that truth can only be known in "objective" terms. Understanding phenomena objectively, in this view, necessitates the elimination of subjectivity. This requires stripping phenomena of their context including the experience of the observer. As Heidegger states, "The elimination of subjectivity is derived from Descartes who set up extensio as the presupposition for every definite characteristic of res corporea" (p. 134). In other words, the elimination of subjectivity is accomplished by measuring only that which is observable and measurable. The difficulty with this strict Cartesian approach in psychology is that it cannot account for, describe or even recognize the human experiences of existential phenomena,

the Being of entities, and Dasein. A narrowly defined scientific approach is not invalid, but it is incomplete in so far as it rejects human experience as a legitimate area of study in psychology and philosophy.

The view that we can only understand phenomena as "external" and "objective" is problematic in several important ways. First, the dualism implied by the distinction between object and subject championed by Descartes makes it difficult to understand how we understand. How is it possible to apprehend things that are "external" to us? Descartes uses extensio as the only legitimate criterion for truth. Dasein, in contrast, is a way of Being-in-space which we call "insideness." The question of the kind of Being which belongs to a knowing subject and the problem of how this knowing subject comes out of its "inner" sphere into one which is other and external to apprehend an object remains unasked in a natural science approach to psychology. This is a difficult epistemological problem which Descartes' view is incapable of addressing adequately.

This problematic view arises from an unexamined, yet questionable philosophical assumption:

Not until we understand Being-in-the-world as an essential structure of Dasein can we have any insight into Dasein's existential spatiality. Such an insight will keep us from failing to see

this structure or from previously canceling it out -- a procedure motivated not ontologically but rather metaphysically by the naive supposition that man is in the first instance, a spiritual Thing which subsequently gets misplaced into "a space" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 83).

Heidegger avoids Descartes' epistemological position by rejecting the dualism of the subject/object dichotomy. Dasein is viewed as inseparable from its world. When Dasein is viewed as an entity which is 'in-the-world', the question is raised: "Is 'world' perhaps a characteristic of Dasein's Being? And in that case, does every Dasein 'proximally' have its world? Does not 'world' become something 'subjective'?" (p. 92). The answer to each of these rhetorical questions posed by Heidegger is an emphatic "Yes." Dasein is always already in-the-world; Dasein always exists in a particular context. The alternative view offered by Heidegger solves, or rather prevents, the epistemological problem Descartes engendered because subject and object are not viewed as separate and apart from each other. They are both "in-the-world." Therefore, there is no need for an internal consciousness to mysteriously transcend itself and apprehend something external to it.

The removal of context demanded by natural science occurs only in abstraction and scientific theory. Giorgi (1983) has argued that in taking nature as its point of departure, natural science forgets that this "nature" is a transformed through the method of science, of a more primary experience of the world. Although the ontical characteristics of entities may be studied on the basis of abstraction and objectification, it is important not to mistake the "objective" view of entities as the truth about them, especially when they have been artificially removed from the contexts in which they are embedded.

Not only does the traditional scientific view present a difficult epistemological problem, it is unable to provide a framework for a phenomenal understanding of the world. Heidegger (1962) argues that if extensio is taken as the presupposition for every characteristic of res corporea, the only criterion by which truth is to be judged is inadequate for understanding Being. Psychology, following the lead of the natural sciences in this regard, has generally accepted Descartes' standard for judging truth. According to Colaizzi (1978), one of the primary methods or tools adopted from the natural science model by psychology in its attempt to attain "objectivity" is the operational definition which is used as a means of defining a phenomenon in terms of measurable, observable and replicable operations with as little reference to human

experience as possible so as to eliminate subjective opinions. The attempt to be "objective," has, however, restricted the field of study in psychology. The senses, in Descartes' view, for example, do not allow us to cognize any entity in its Being and Descartes ". . . understands neither hardness or resistance in a phenomenal sense" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 138). The rejection of a phenomenal understanding of entities as a legitimate subject of study has been adopted in psychology and certain difficulties have arisen as a result.

As noted earlier, operational definitions limit the field of one's inquiry to that which is observable, replicable, measurable, and seems to eliminate experience as a valid area of study for the science of psychology. Colaizzi (1978) illustrates the paradox that arises when operational definitions are taken to be the only proper way for proceeding with the investigation of psychological phenomena. For example, an investigator setting out to study the phenomenon of hunger has an understanding of the meaning of the word "hunger," as do all who have experienced being hungry. The experimenter's method dictates ahead of time, however, that the subject of investigation must be objectified in order to be universally understood in a very specific way. Hunger, for example, might be operationally defined as the length of time an animal is deprived of food (length of time and

amount of food both being measurable and observable). It is not that there is no merit in such a study, but it is important to recognize that the meaning of "hunger" used in this experimental study is not the same as the meaning of "hunger" as it was understood when the investigator began researching the phenomenon. In fact, a different phenomenon is the subject of the investigation once a term like "hunger" is operationally defined. The question remains as to what was originally communicated by the word "hunger" as it is understood in ordinary conversation. This original meaning is the phenomenal meaning of the term "hunger," and is rooted in the every-day human experience of the "life-world." It is evident that the phenomenal meanings of words, rooted as they are in human experience, are existentially significant and of the utmost importance for psychological understanding. Yet the methods of traditional scientific psychology have restricted psychology from attaining this phenomenal understanding.

The experience of being hungry provides an example of a phenomenal experience of the life-world. It precedes and stands in sharp contrast to the operational definition of hunger. The experience of hunger precedes the operational definition of hunger in the sense that any concern we may have derives from a basic familiarity with the world (Heidegger, 1962). Clearly, when we eliminate consciousness and experience from our inquiries, we, like

Descartes, are unable to achieve the phenomenal understanding of hunger as it originally held meaning for us.

We may ordinarily think of science as providing a basis for the only valid way of knowing the world. Philosophers like Husserl and Heidegger, however, view scientific knowledge as derived knowledge which has a more fundamental or primordial foundation. Husserl's interest in returning to the "things in themselves" -- as opposed to the world as it is interpreted and thus created by scientific fact and theory -- provides a new focus for philosophical and psychological investigation (Valle & King, 1978). That which is of interest to Husserl and Heidegger is the world as it is given in direct and immediate experience; the "life-world." The life-world is the world of every-day experience as expressed in ordinary language. Hypotheses, theories, and the causal thinking on which they are based, therefore, are not the subject matter which constitute the life-world as they are not given in direct and immediate experience. They are higher order and derived notions; that is, they are (like all ideas) derived from the life-world.

In contrast to the natural science model of psychology, the starting point for existential-phenomenology is the direct experience of the life-world. Experience is objectively real for the individual and for

others in the world. In fact, to deny experience is not to be objective (Coward & Royce, 1981). Experience is not an internal state, but a mode of presence to the world: experience is always already in-the-world, because the observer is always already directed toward and involved in the world. Rather than experiencing internal states, the observer experiences existence as thrusting itself into the world. Experience is a mode of presence that is existentially significant and a legitimate and necessary subject for human psychology. If objectivity is defined as remaining faithful to the phenomenon, then objectivity may be construed as a refusal to dictate a priori what the phenomenon is to be.

The elimination of consciousness and experience from inquiry through the methods of science, according to Heidegger, also restricts our understanding of the ontical aspects of entities and prevents our apprehension of their Being. Restricting our understanding to the ontic limits our understanding of entities in the life-world. "For Descartes, the senses do not enable us to cognize any entity in its Being; they merely serve to announce the ways in which 'external' things within-the-world are useful or harmful for human creatures encumbered with human bodies; they tell us nothing about entities in their being" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 60).

Heidegger, however, offers an alternative: A phenomenological description of "the world" will mean exhibiting the Being of entities and anchoring this description in concepts that are categorical. The epistemological basis of a phenomenological perspective has been described by Coward and Royce (1981) as a shift from the natural science view of knowledge based on signs to a knowledge based on symbol. Things reveal themselves, for example, in their being "ready-to-hand;" this is how they fit into our projects and find meaning (Heidegger, 1962). According to Heidegger, readiness-to-hand is the way in which entities as they are in themselves are defined ontologically, categorically.

When an entity within-the-world has already been freed for its Being, that Being is its involvement. The fact that it has such an involvement is ontologically definitive for the Being of such an entity and is not an ontical assertion about it. That in which it is involved is the "towards-which" of serviceability and the "for-which-of-usability" which is for a possibility of Dasein's Being (Heidegger, 1962, p. 115).

Although we are able to gain ontical knowledge through the methods of natural science, we can have no insight into our own being separate and apart from our Being-in-the-

world because such Being-in-the-world is an essential structure of Dasein. Dasein is already in-the-world and alongside entities in-the-world, and the phenomenon of knowing itself is one of Dasein's modes of Being-in-the-world. Heidegger goes on to say that the world is a characteristic of Dasein's Being. Dasein reveals the world in its Being and the world has no being apart from Dasein.

We have stated, then, that experience is a proper subject for study in psychology and it is the focus of concern for phenomenological psychology. The question then arises: What is meant more specifically when it is said that experience is the subject of an investigation? Giorgi (1983) states that based on naive, everyday descriptions it can be said that persons have the ability to bring about "presences" in memory, expectation, perception, and imagination. The problem for phenomenological psychology is not to account for realities, but to account for realities as they are experienced by people. For example, it is not so important, in this view, to account for the accuracy of a particular memory in the objective terms required by a natural science approach as it is to understand the person's memory as it is experienced. Rather than taking things as "realities in themselves," and then attempting to relate them to experiencing persons conceptualized as physical organisms, a phenomenological approach conceives of things as already related to an

experiencing person. In addressing itself to the experience of the person rather than remaining limited to physical realities, phenomenology seeks to avoid the constant difficulty of speaking of things in materialistic terms. Thus all spontaneously acknowledged psychological processes (imagining, remembering, anticipating, etc.) can be addressed by phenomenology, while they remain problematic for the approach of natural science.

According to Gadamer (1975), the quest for objectivity in science can be understood as the global demand of the Enlightenment to overcome prejudice. This demand, however, is itself a prejudice which fails to recognize our finitude "which dominates not only our humanity, but also our historical consciousness" (p. 244). Prejudices can never be entirely eliminated but, even if it were possible, it would be undesirable to do so. For prejudices, or anticipatory ideas, are the only possible starting points for understanding. The aim of a phenomenological approach is not to eliminate prejudice but to make it conscious so it can be set aside to open the way for new experiences that may run counter to expectation. "Our first, last and constant task is never to allow our fore-having, foresight, and fore-conception to be presented to us by fancies and popular conceptions, but rather to make the scientific theme secure by working out these fore-structures in terms of the things themselves" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 153).

Phenomenological hermeneutics, in its recognition of prejudice as an inescapable fact, is strikingly different from the method of natural science which attempts to attain objectivity through the elimination of prejudice. In contrast, phenomenology's goal is the recognition of prejudice as a way of calling assumptions into question and of opening the way to new insight.

The Hermeneutic Circle describes the process of understanding in phenomenological hermeneutics. It involves projecting beforehand an expectation of meaning of the whole (a prejudice influenced by the identity and limits of the observer are at a given moment in history) which is modified as a result of experiencing particulars that run counter to expectation. "Thus the movement of understanding is constantly from the whole to the part and back to the whole. Our task is to extend in concentric circles the unity of the understanding of meaning. The harmony of all the details with the whole is the criterion of correct understanding" (Gadamer, 1975, p. 259).

Thus, the heart of the hermeneutic problem is that of the relationship between the whole and the particular, and understanding is the application of something universal to a particular case. According to Gadamer, an understanding via the hermeneutic circle remains permanently determined by the anticipatory movement of the foreunderstanding (or prejudice). "The circle of the whole and the part is not

dissolved in perfect understanding but, on the contrary, is fully realized" (p. 261). Hermeneutics is not a method or procedure of understanding; rather, it is a description or a clarification of the conditions in which understanding occurs.

According to Gadamer, one aspect of the hermeneutic approach involves making conscious the prejudices influencing its understanding by maintaining a historical consciousness ". . . because only temporal distance allows us to distinguish the true prejudices, by which we understand, from the false ones by which we misunderstand" (p. 266). A historical perspective allows the fundamental suspension of our own prejudices. The suspension of all judgments and prejudices has the logical structure of a question, and questioning is the beginning of understanding. The fundamental importance of the question as the beginning of understanding is seen in Gadamer's observation that ". . . historical objectivism resembles statistics, which are such an excellent means of propaganda because they let the facts speak and hence simulate an objectivity that in reality depends on the legitimacy of the questions asked" (p. 268). The power of history over finite human consciousness is that it prevails even where faith in method leads to denial of one's own historicity. A person who imagines that he or she is free of prejudices, basing knowledge on the objectivity of methods and

procedures and denying the influence of historical circumstances, experiences the power of prejudices which may unconsciously dominate them.

Effective-historical-reflection can never be completely achieved because we are historical beings. Historical beings can never have complete self-knowledge because all self-knowledge proceeds from what is historically pregiven. That which is historically pregiven is the basis of all subjective meaning and, therefore, both prescribes and limits every possibility of understanding. Although effective-historical-reflection can never be complete, it is important to strive toward it as a goal. "Aristotle's critique demonstrates that the equation of virtue and knowledge, arete and logos, which is the basis of Plato's and Socrates' theory of virtue, is an exaggeration. Aristotle restores balance by showing that the basis of moral knowledge in man is orexis, striving, and its development into a fixed attitude" (Gadamer, 1975, p. 270).

In hermeneutics, the range of vision which includes everything that can be seen from a particular viewpoint is referred to as the horizon. The achievement of the right horizon of inquiry for the questions evoked by the encounter with tradition is the working out of the hermeneutical situation. Projecting the historical horizon is a phase in the process of understanding, although this

horizon is overtaken by our own present horizon of understanding so that the two fuse. The central problem of hermeneutics, and the task of the effective-historical consciousness, is the conscious act of this fusion of the historical horizon with our own horizon.

The quest for objectivity in the natural science model has required methodological principles that pre-establish and limit the content of psychological inquiry. In doing so, it has failed to recognize experience as a legitimate content for the science of psychology. Phenomenology seeks to correct this shortcoming in science by providing the epistemological basis for studying experience, while the hermeneutic approach provides a description of the process of understanding the meaning of human experience.

Procedure

Now that a rationale for taking a phenomenological approach in psychological research has been discussed in a general sense, it is important to discuss the specific reasons for taking a such an approach in the current study.

As was noted earlier, Giorgi (1970) has addressed the importance of a dialogue between method and content in psychological research. Although the relationship between method and content is often not addressed explicitly, the content or subject being studied determines the method that will be employed in the research. "For example, it is not

accidental that the methods of serial anticipation and reproduction were developed in the context of learning, and that the methods of limits and constant-stimuli were developed within the context of psychophysics" (p. 129).

More than one approach to the psychological investigation of ambivalence is possible. It is evident, therefore, that in choosing a method of research, it is of utmost importance to keep what is of essential interest to the researcher in view. For example, a researcher might choose to create a questionnaire about ambivalence, rate responses to the questions, and then perform a statistical analysis of the results. Such an approach, however, would require the development of hypotheses and predetermined categories of meaning thereby limiting the scope of the study and reducing the opportunity for the researcher to be surprised by categories of meaning not yet conceptualized.

The topic of interest in the current study is ambivalence as it is experienced in the lived-world. An interest in the nuances and qualitative aspects of the experience of ambivalence in the broadest sense is best pursued using a method that does not limit the research horizon beforehand and that is able to address experience as experience rather than as an abstract conceptualization of experience. Therefore, a phenomenological approach appears to provide the necessary tools for investigating the phenomenon of the experience of ambivalence.

Pilot study. Pilot interviews were conducted to help develop and clarify the area of interest to be addressed. Initially, interviewees were asked to describe experiences in which they had difficulty making a decision. The intent of this question was to highlight experiences characterized by conflicting feelings as well as the struggle to resolve them. During the pilot study, it was determined that the decision-making process per se was not the theme of central interest. Rather, the state prior to making a decision in which people seemed to experience many different feelings, including anxiety, conflict and even disorientation, became the central focus.

Bracketing. In a phenomenological approach to research in psychology, it is important for the researcher to bracket (i.e., set aside or suspend) prejudices. Rather than imposing preconceived notions of meaning on the phenomenon being studied, bracketing allows categories of meaning to emerge as a phenomenon is investigated. In the natural science approach to psychology:

The essential frame of reference for handling these questions of bias is still one of trying to keep the bias out of the situation, as opposed to . . . getting the bias completely in the situation and then circumscribing the limits within which the biases are fruitful (Giorgi, 1970, p. 220).

Biases are present in any investigation, whether it takes a natural science approach or a phenomenological one. The advantage to the phenomenological approach is that it acknowledges biases, makes them explicit, and attempts to cope with them in a rigorous and systematic way.

In order to make biases explicit in the present case, a bracketing interview of the author was conducted by a fellow phenomenological researcher before interviewing participants in the major study began. The bracketing interview revealed several different aspects of the author's interest in the topic of ambivalence. The researcher's initial interest in the topic of ambivalence grew out of difficulties in making decisions in areas such as choosing a major in college, a clinical internship, and, even, a dissertation topic. As a therapist, the author also had the opportunity to observe and participate in the struggles others have in making life-decisions. These interests extended beyond decision-making to the experience of having mixed or multiple feelings. Therapy sessions in which patients expressed considerable anxiety about having more than one feeling at a time also stimulated interest in the topic of ambivalence. In one remarkable session, a patient appeared particularly relieved when the therapist expressed the belief that it is quite "normal" for people to have more than one feeling about something, that it is a common phenomenon. The degree of relief expressed by the

patient in response to this statement stimulated curiosity about why this acknowledgement of ambivalence appeared to be so significant for him.

In one of the interviews for the pilot study, a co-participant prefaced his seemingly benign description of ambivalent feelings regarding the assumption of the role of "head of the family" after the death of his father with the dramatic disclaimer: "I hope you won't think I am a psychopathic killer or anything . . ." Again, the intensity of feeling and the degree of anxiety associated with ambivalence was intriguing.

Further thought on the subject of ambivalence, from the point of view of a naive observer, led the author to wonder about the development of an ability to be ambivalent, and the ability to integrate conflicting feelings. Thinking about the experience of having two or more feelings at once seemed to raise many interesting questions (and speculation about possible answers) such as: Can emotions actually occur at the same time in an individual or is it more accurate to say that there is a rapid oscillation between emotional states? What happens to the self in a state of ambivalence? Is there a pulling or a splintering that threatens the integrity of the self and is this why ambivalence seems to stimulate so much anxiety in people? How does ambivalence, especially chronic ambivalence, affect identity?

The questions regarding ambivalence outlined above have implicit categories of interpretation that constitute biases. The purpose of the bracketing interview was to increase the author's awareness of both his own experiences of ambivalence and of presuppositions about how ambivalence is usually understood. Awareness of these biases allowed them to be suspended or put aside during the interpretation of the interviews provided by co-participants.

Co-researchers. Choosing a group of research co-participants in psychological research is an important decision. Like the approach and method, the selection of co-researchers influences the outcome of the study. In phenomenological research, the focus of interest is on the individual's experience of particular phenomenon. Thus, choosing co-researchers who have experienced the phenomenon under investigation, who have an interest in the phenomenon and who have the willingness and ability to participate in a dialogue about their experiences is of utmost importance. In the current study, these factors influenced the selection of college students as co-researchers. Criticism has been leveled at psychological researchers for conducting a large number of studies with college students as research subjects, simply because they provide a convenient sample.

Despite several possible objections to selecting college students as research participants, there are a number of reasons why college students were chosen to participate in a phenomenological investigation of the experience of ambivalence. They are in a position, developmentally, that offers abundant possibilities for experiencing ambivalence. Going to college presents students with many challenges such as changes in relationships marked by moving away from home and parents for the first time, as well as the establishment of lifetime friendships and marital relationships. Decisions, ranging from selection of a course of study, to career and lifestyle choices, are faced in college. Students in college are likely to be entering or continuing a crucial phase of the separation-individuation process in which they are confronted with a new level of freedom, with its attendant choices and responsibilities.

According to Waterman (1982), the greatest gains in identity formation occur during the college years. One factor that promotes an identity crisis is the tendency of college experiences to undermine traditional religious beliefs without helping to establish alternative beliefs. College experiences, however, facilitate identity formation in the area of vocational plans. College is a common time for people to experience an identity crisis because they

are faced with new and diverse ideologies and experiences (Baumeister, Shapiro & Tice, 1985).

As research by Harter and Buddin (1987) has demonstrated, the ability to understand and verbalize one's experience of ambivalence is a developmentally acquired ability. Therefore, college level students (as opposed to children in grade school, for example) were selected is because of the expectation that they would have the verbal skills and the insight necessary to describe and articulate experiences of ambivalence in a rich and informative way.

Co-researchers were recruited from undergraduate psychology classes at the University of Tennessee and were offered extra-credit in their class for participation in the study. Six undergraduate women and two undergraduate men participated in the study. One other woman attempted to participate in the study, but withdrew when she and the author agreed she was unable to describe an experience of ambivalence, despite several attempts to do so. Everyone who volunteered to participate in the study was allowed to participate. Research co-participants were given extra-credit points in an undergraduate psychology class for their participation in the study.

The Phenomenological Interview

Interviewing and phenomenological research. In his discussion of the qualitative research interview, Kvale (1983) points out that the interview method has a long-standing and significant history in both psychological research and clinical applications, although the role of the interview as a research tool has rarely been discussed. The purpose of the qualitative research interview, as it is used in phenomenological research, is to collect descriptions of the life-world of interviewees in such a way as to provide material for the interpretation of the meaning of described phenomena. The underlying assumption in using interviews in psychological research has been described by von Eckartsberg (1986): "We rely on the supposition that people in a shared culture and linguistic community, name and identify their experience in a consistent and shared manner" (p. 16). The shared everyday language of a community provides access to the experience of the life-world, which is the subject of the qualitative research interview.

The phenomenological interview employed in the present study is characterized by attributes outlined by Kvale (1983). The method used in the present study sought to obtain interpreted descriptions of the individual's life-world. Its aim was to describe and understand the central themes in the interviewee's life-world with regard to a

focus predetermined by the interviewer. Unlike a clinical interview, the research interview was "theme-oriented" rather than "person-oriented." Although a certain focus for the interview was chosen by the interviewer, the interviewer attempted to avoid bringing predetermined categories of interpretation to the interview.

The method used in the present study is referred to as qualitative because its aim was to obtain as many nuances of meaning in descriptions of the interviewee's life-world as possible (Kvale, 1983). No attempt was made to obtain quantitative information. Rather, the rigor of the method is found in the precision of the description and the stringency of the interpretation. The qualitative research interview attempts to portray specific situations in the life of the interviewee and it was the task of the interviewer to clarify ambiguities and contradictions in order to avoid miscommunication. The nature of the dialogue in the research interview is such that an interviewee may discover new aspects of an experience and change a description or a meaning of a theme.

Interview focusing on ambivalence. Research participants were given the Information and Consent Form (see Appendix A) to read when they met with the author prior to the interview. The Information and Consent Form explains the research topic, the nature of the research interview, and the extent of the co-participants'

involvement in the project. The Information and Consent Form also explained that all identifying information provided by research participants would be held in strictest confidence. The consent form was then reviewed verbally and any questions the research participants had were answered before it was signed and before the interview began.

Following established phenomenological procedures, the qualitative research interview was "semi-structured" in that it employed neither pre-formulated questions (beyond the initial question that focused attention on the subject to be discussed) nor allowed the interviewee to wander from a broadly-defined topic (Kvale, 1983). The interviews opened with the question: "Can you describe a time when you had more than one feeling?" Interviews were audio tape-recorded. Verbatim transcriptions of the tape-recorded interviews provided raw material for interpretation.

Analysis and Interpretation of Interviews

Giorgi (1970) and Wertz (1983) have argued that rather than retain a single method of analysis, a phenomenological approach to psychological research encourages the use of diverse methods developed in response to the unique phenomenon under investigation. The following section will

discuss unique aspects as well as standard aspects of interview analysis used in the current study.

Data reduction. The research interviews ranged from 45 minutes to an hour and one-half in length, with the mean being about an hour long. The first step in analyzing and coming to understand the interviews involved obtaining verbatim transcripts of the tape-recorded interviews. Transcribed versions of the phenomenological interviews ranged from to thirty double-spaced pages in length. After interviews were transcribed, they were read in their entirety as a way of obtaining a holistic view of the data and thereby an appreciation for the contexts in which ambivalence was experienced. During the initial readings of the transcripts, notes were made on points that appeared centrally relevant to ambivalence.

In order to understand the interviews in a meaningful way, it was necessary to reduce this large quantity of data to a manageable amount. Reducing the data involved removing extraneous words and redundancies. Eliminating extraneous words initially involved the removal of colloquialisms and expressions such as "um" and "like" that were viewed as superfluous. As the process of reducing the text continued, however, the author was compelled to make more and more judgments about what could be eliminated without detracting from the overall meaning co-researchers were trying to communicate. Initially it was not difficult

to delete redundant words and phrases and, as the process continued, repetition of larger units of meaning became apparent. These larger redundancies were collapsed into summaries, with an awareness that the repetition of these was an indication of their potential importance.

Next, interviews were summarized following the language of the interviewee as closely as possible. Changes in topic (often bounded by questions posed by the interviewer) were viewed as markers of units of meaning. Sections of interviews with a consistent topic or meaning often ranged from a paragraph to a page in length. These units of meaning were read line by line and summarized with attention to the meaning of the unit as a whole. The summaries retained both the context of the description and the flow of the interview. After an entire interview had been treated in this way, the interview summary was approximately 2 to 4 pages in length.

Emergence of categories of meaning. The interpretation of data in a phenomenological approach to psychological research is the most difficult process to describe for several reasons (Wertz, 1983). First of all, the researcher's attention may be completely absorbed by the content of the findings as they unfold in the investigation, with little attention paid to the way in which understanding occurs. Another reason this phase of the research is difficult to describe is that it tends to

be ambiguous and many-faceted. As a result, it often involves psychological understanding that often comes about through the operations of intuition rather than by following a set of explicit rules. The following section describes the apprehension of the categories of meaning of the experience of ambivalence derived in the present study.

While the process of data reduction was on-going, the author read and analyzed two of the research interviews with the help of a group of fellow phenomenological researchers. These researchers, as a group, went over transcripts one "meaning unit" at a time and discussed what emerged as salient and important for each person. From a natural science perspective, the varying sensitivities and perceptions among individuals in a group interaction of this sort might pose questions regarding the validity and reliability of the study. In a phenomenological approach, however, such dialogue provides advantages. In his response to the problem of "interviewer bias," Kvale (1983) suggests that: "Within a phenomenological-hermeneutical understanding it would rather be an advantage that the interviewers vary in sensitivity; they may be able to obtain a broader and more richly nuanced picture of the themes focused upon" (p. 189). Discussing transcripts as a group yielded a wider picture of the themes of research than could otherwise be obtained. The discussions of the transcripts by a group of phenomenologically trained

researchers also provided assurance that the emerging themes were consensually valid and could be reliably discerned by other investigators.

Qualitative human science in the form of phenomenological research is not and cannot be based upon the same assumptions that underlie research methods in the natural sciences. Therefore, the principles of validity and reliability, as defined in traditional natural science, are not attainable or aspired to in phenomenological research. According to Wertz (1986), reliability and validity cannot be treated separately in qualitative human science research because the intention of such research is to bring what is being studied into focus in its essential meaning. The nature of the research interview is such that new meanings may be created by the dialogue between the investigator and the co-researcher. Because meanings may be changed by the investigative tool, the traditional requirement of scientific method that dictates that data be reproducible may not be able to be fulfilled using the qualitative interview (Kvale, 1983). "The criterion of qualitative reliability is therefore persistence of meaning through the factual variations" (Wertz, 1986, p.200).

After summaries of the various transcripts were completed, co-researchers were contacted in person or by phone and asked to review the summary of their interview and make any additions, deletions or other changes they

felt would communicate more clearly the experiences they described. Few of the co-participants made changes in the interview summaries. Changes that were made were not substantive with regard to the topic of ambivalence.

Next, the inquiry regarding the major themes constituting the experience of ambivalence was begun in a more direct way. The first step in the interpretation involved examining interview summaries in individual interviews to discern relationships between them. The purpose of this step was to find meanings that were related to each other in such a way as to cluster. These clusters of meaning began to serve as a basis for understanding individual interviews as a whole, rather than a paragraph or meaning unit at a time. These clusters of meaning began to form the basis for the emergence of the thematic structure of the experience of ambivalence.

The original plan for interpreting the interviews was to summarize and gain an understanding of the individual interviews before drawing contrasts and comparisons among them. As the summary and interpretation process of individual interviews continued, however, it became natural to make comparisons between interviews. When a theme that had been discovered in one of the interviews thematized early on, it was impossible not to take note of that theme when it emerged again in transcripts analyzed later. Thus, when summaries of each of the individual interviews had

been completed, the process of clustering themes across interviews was already under way. Themes that were repeated within interviews and across interviews were highlighted during this process and tangential events that appeared incidental receded in importance.

As has been noted, the content of interviews can be quite striking. One of the remarkable features of the interviews were the confusion and disorientation apparent for most of the interviewees and their attempts to resolve their ambivalent feelings. The range and intensity of affect expressed by the interviewees was another one of the most prominent aspects of the summaries at the beginning of the data analysis. An initial attempt to categorize meanings along these lines, however, failed to produce a satisfactory pattern for the entire thematic structure of the experience of ambivalence. A critique of this initial analysis (by the group of researchers who had been involved in initial readings of the transcripts) suggested that the thematization to this point had relied too heavily on content analysis as opposed to phenomenological inquiry. Subsequent to this insight, themes relevant to ambivalence that cut across content areas began to emerge. Special attention to metaphors and "bodily reflective modes" (Shapiro, 1985), which seemed to condense several layers of meaning, was crucial to this process.

The emergence of the categories of meaning in this study evolved out of a dialectical process of attempting to understand a particular aspect of the experience of ambivalence, viewing that understanding of the particular situation in light of a preliminary understanding of the whole experience, then reinterpreting the particular in light of the whole, and so on. The dialectical process occurred in the context of the author working individually and in the context of the group of phenomenological investigators working together. The criterion for understanding in this process is the degree of "fit" between the understanding of the particular and the whole.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Descriptions of 19 experiences of ambivalence were obtained in interviews with eight co-researchers. A ninth co-participant attempted to describe an experience of ambivalent feelings, but after a few false starts, withdrew from the study because she was unable to answer the question: "Can you describe a time when you had more than one feeling?" The purpose of this chapter is to give the reader a sense of what the dialogues with the research participants were like and to delineate an organized and meaningful summary description of the experience of ambivalence as communicated by the interviewees.

The scientific method normally employed in psychological studies entails the following steps: (a) create hypotheses based on theory, (b) operationalize hypothetical constructs so they can be measured, (c) collect data in a rigorously controlled experiment, and (d) use statistical tests to weigh the evidence for the confirmation or disconfirmation of the hypotheses. The phenomenological approach taken in the present study differs considerably from the scientific method outlined above. In the phenomenological method, the aim is to approach the data with an awareness of preconceived notions that allows one to bracket prejudices, so that categories

of understanding may emerge from the data rather than be imposed upon it. Thus, neither a psychoanalytic nor a cognitive approach, nor any other theoretical approach will be employed in attempting to understand the descriptions of co-participants in the present study. Rather, the data will be apprehended in an atheoretical way. Results of the study will be presented in approximately the same order in which they emerged as the investigation proceeded.

In presenting the results, an initial approach to the data will describe the interviews in a general way. Next, general themes central to understanding the experience of ambivalence will be explicated. Then, minor themes relevant to the experience of having more than one feeling at a time will be examined. Finally, the relationships among the major themes will be explored in an attempt to develop a model of the essential structure of the experience of ambivalence. The results will be introduced to the reader by providing a detailed look at the narrative of an interview. General impressions of the interview will be followed by a more detailed analysis.

Initial impressions of the interviews

Research interviews usually did not proceed in a linear fashion. The dialogue regarding the individual's experience was more like identifying a general area to be explored, then investigating the perimeter, then gradually

moving in smaller and smaller circles until the experience of having multiple feelings could be expressed. The context in which experiences of ambivalence were imbedded was a crucial element in dialogues with interviewees. Thus it will be important to provide the reader with enough information so that an adequate understanding of these contexts can be obtained. This context and the important themes will be communicated by presenting direct quotes from interviews with the co-researchers. In the interest of being concise and keeping a particular topic or theme in view, however, excerpts from different portions of interviews that illustrate specific themes will be presented together. In the following examples, portions of an interview illustrating the theme of out of balance will be taken from different parts of the dialogue, although enough of the dialogue will be presented so that a contextual understanding of the experience can be apprehended as well (see Appendix B for complete transcript of the interview and Appendix C for a coded version of the interview).

Example 1.

(Researcher: Can you think of a time when you felt more than one feeling at the same time?)

My latest experience of feeling the emotions at the same time, that is when I had a diving accident this summer and the incident was that I'd been training all summer for this meet and I was really excited about it.

And so during the competition it was my 3rd dive and I hit the board and I didn't think I was close or anything, it was really a shock. I hit it and it was like the whole world stopped. I was just laying in the pool and all I could . . . I was all excited before that and then when I hit the board it was like I was so confused because I was like, "Okay, my conscious was saying, okay now you have an excuse to quit." And I'm like I don't want to quit, you know. And it's like I didn't know if I was paralyzed, I mean I didn't think I was, but they had to put a whole body thing where they strap your neck up a board and I was sitting there apologizing to my coach. So here I'm saying I can quit, I'm apologizing to my coach, I'm apologizing to the people for messing up the meet. I didn't know what day it was.

After that, when I got stitches, and I was fine, pretty much, I was just groggy. It was like I didn't know what to think. I didn't know if it was a message from God you know saying, "You don't need to be doing this anymore" or if it was just to test out my will since it was my 2nd accident. I'd never hit the board before that and it just drains you when you're in that type of situation and it's unexpected and it's something you've been working for as in the meet and progressing. It was a prequalifying meet for Nationals. And so I guess I just constantly have to go over that and since that was in August and now it's November and I still question myself . . . I still have that conflict of emotion. I love the sport but I don't like the fear that's involved with having another accident and the potential hazards of it.

(So the different feelings you felt were . . .?)

Anger, confusion, frustration, and it was almost like relief when it first happened. I'm like "I can quit now" and I've never been a quitter. It seems really shocking that I would actually say something like that to myself.

(There was relief because you might be able to not have that commitment, so demanding. And you mentioned confusion?)

You can tell, I still sound kind of confused because I can't really say because there were so many things. I guess the other one was like maybe that meant if I quit I could go home instead of staying in Tennessee, go on back to school in Minnesota so it's all these things kind of rushing around in my head. And now each of them have different emotions. It's hard to do it.

(You talked about a lot of different feelings associated with the accident, feeling sorry and embarrassed. You talked about feeling angry, relief, several different things. How did those go together?)

How did they go together?

(What was the experience? How did you experience having those feelings?)

It was kind of, it is uneasy when you can't really learn from something and walk away. I know it usually takes time but, it is just draining. I guess when you feel everything at once and there's not like "Here's the answer why" or what you're suppose to do when something like that happens.

I mean it seems like I did because I was so drained and so tired. It was just like I don't know, if they became the same feeling. I mean it's hard to . . . makes you always think of how you feel anger, you feel happiness, sadness, grief. It seems like they're constantly there. They all become one and it's like --lost, maybe? I had the word, but that's not exactly what I was going to say. . . lost.

(You mentioned feeling confused.)

Yeah. That kind of ties them together in a way. Seems all the things I was feeling about being confused.

(Sounds like a hard thing to describe.)

I guess it is, that is probably why I am having a hard time thinking describing each and every emotion I felt because they're all together.

There wasn't like a clear line like, "I'm feeling confused right now and now I'm feeling angry." It was just like they were just flowing, all these things. And the laughing that's seems like I was feeling all them at once.

(The laughing?)

I could be crying and then laughing the next second and then sad again. Like when they told me what I was saying, I could still laugh but then I'd be sad and crying.
(You mentioned conflict earlier. Feelings that were conflicting.)

I guess that kind of the conflict feeling kind of flows through my experience at UT. The history of it is kind of like I came here for diving. I could pretty much go to school anywhere. There are only a few places that have a good diving team or whatever, and I wanted to get away from the north and I wanted to grow and I felt Tennessee was the place for me to expand my horizons. And I get here and have this coach and I work hard and then that summer he tells me (everybody knew except for me) but he tells me that he's got a full-time job at N. as diving coach. I mean this is just typical of recruiting, but he had told me that until the day he died he would stay in Tennessee.

I was stuck. I felt like I was stuck, but there was still an option. But I felt inside that I wanted to stay because I had made that commitment. My brother had, like he went to a school and he ended up transferring back home and I did not want to do that.

(And the part that conflicted with that is?)

I am a high achiever and basically it takes a lot to knock me down. It seemed like there was this big, dark cloud over my head.

I could make a choice, I felt. Because my parents never pressured me into it, saying, "You have to dive." They just say, "You are down there to dive; don't sit there and be worried about your boyfriend or whatever. It's just school and diving." And, so I put the pressure on myself to make the decisions and choices.

Example 1 as an exemplar of a phenomenological interview. It may be helpful to note a few general characteristics of these interviews before proceeding with an analysis of themes essential to the experiences of ambivalence related by the interviewees. One notable tendency among co-participants is to describe conflicting, rather intense emotional experiences. This tendency is interesting in light of the fact that the central question of the research interview ("Can you describe a time when you experienced more than one feeling?") does not appear to communicate that such responses are expected. Descriptions of intense conflicting emotions were most often communicated in the first scenario related by interviewees. In the preceding example, the co-participant describes a number of conflicting feelings regarding a major decision in her life, whether to continue with her college athletic career. It may be that these conflicting experiences are more salient and, therefore, more memorable and more readily communicated.

There was often a sense of hesitation at the beginning of the interviews that may not be clearly communicated in the manuscript version of the interviews. This hesitation often seemed to take place after co-participants made an initial attempt to describe the experience, in part, due to the difficulty in answering the question. The difficulty of the task was reflected in statements in Example 1 such

as, "You can tell I'm still confused", "I guess that's probably why I am having a hard time thinking -- describing each and every emotion I felt because they're all together," as well as questions and comments interviewees addressed to the interviewer expressing concern about whether they were "hitting the mark." Concern by the participants regarding their performance and their ability to fulfill the expectations of the interviewer is evidence that they found the task a challenging one. The difficulty of communicating a perplexing experience was also manifested in the structure of the interviews themselves which, at times, appeared disjointed and disorganized.

Another notable characteristic of the interviews was the apparent difficulty individuals had in answering the question in a direct way. Participants appeared not to know in a clear or differentiated way what their experience of having more than one feeling had been. The notion that they were experiencing more than one feeling at a time was often not a figural aspect of the experience of the interviewees in the sense that they had not reflected in a detailed way on their experience. As one participant put it, "I didn't know you could have more than one feeling at a time, but I know I did." As noted in Chapter I, ambivalence in its broadest sense means "both sides have value." Thus, in trying to come to an understanding of the experience, first, it seemed helpful to explore individual

emotions the person expressed as a way of building a larger context in which the whole experience of ambivalence could be understood. After the context of the experience had been surveyed in some detail, it was possible to return to the original question in an attempt to understand ambivalence.

It appeared that another reason interviewees may have had difficulty describing their experience was that their ambivalent feelings often were not resolved at the time of the interview. The fact that the co-researchers may not have experienced a resolution to their sense of ambivalence may be regarded by the phenomenologist as an advantage because it suggests their descriptions are experience-near rather than more distantly reflective in nature. This means that interviewees were able to focus on their "experience as experience," rather than on conceptual constructs regarding that experience.

Categories of Ambivalence

Descriptions of participant experiences of ambivalence appeared to coalesce around three major themes (see Appendix C). Drawing heavily upon the language used by participants, these themes were labeled as: a. out of balance, b. weighing and c. rebalancing. The following section will describe these themes as they relate to the

experience of ambivalence and will illustrate them by excerpts from interviews with participants.

Theme 1: Out of balance. Example 1 (of the diving accident) presents an exemplar of the theme of out of balance in the experience of ambivalence. Implicit in the phrase near the end of Example 1, is a sense of a loss of balance, a sense of disequilibrium and that something is not right for the person describing the experience of having more than one feeling. This theme is reflected in another part of the protocol where the interviewee states:

You feel anger, you feel happiness, sadness, grief. It seems like they're constantly there. They all become one and it's like lost, maybe? I had the word, but that's not exactly what I was going to say . . . lost?

Here again the difficulty involved in describing the experience is evident because inherent in it is a sense of lacking control, of being lost, of being off balance.

Other phrases in Example 1 that communicate a sense that something is not right with the world include: "It seemed like there was this big, dark cloud over my head" and "I hit it and it was like the whole world stopped." These two examples have the world as their focus in describing a sense of being out of balance. The following examples from other interviews indicate a feeling that

something is not right, with the focus being more on the self: "It was kind of uneasy."

The experience is also often described as being uncomfortable in some way: "It's just draining when you feel everything at once." The notion of being out of balance encompasses and captures feelings communicated in the above examples, whether the focus is on the world or on the self. The kinesthetic sense of being out of balance captures the sense that one may be off balance and in danger of falling, as when one tries to step up onto a nonexistent last stair of a staircase, when the top has actually already been reached. It also captures the sense that the world may be out of balance with the individual, as when one is standing on the deck of a boat that is moving wildly up and down on tossing waves.

Other feelings associated with the disconcerting nature of being out of balance are reflected in interviewees' statements about feeling "crazy": "When I stepped back I realized what was going on; that's when I felt that this is nuts, when it felt crazy." The same participant described the disconcerting nature of the ambivalence as feeling like being trapped and powerless: "It felt like a whirlwind, like I was real caught up and there was nothing I could do about it. The feelings circled me, trapped me in."

Another aspect to the experience of being out of balance concerns the experience that something unexpected has happened. In Example 1, the diving accident was not anticipated: "I'd never hit the board before and it just drains you when you're in that type of situation and it's unexpected and it's something you've been working for in the meet and progressing." A sense that the normal flow of events has been interrupted is communicated here. It is as if there has been a breach in the way the world is experienced and the flow of time may feel as if it has been suspended: "And I hit it and it was like the whole world stopped." The feeling that something unexpected has happened was communicated explicitly by individuals. The unexpected was only implicit in the descriptions of some individuals who did not specifically refer to an experience of the unexpected. One implicit experience of something unexpected was present in an interview with a woman who had described the experience of finding out that her mother-in-law had breast cancer.

The experience of something unexpected happening referred to in the previous example points to the occurrence of an unexpected event. Unexpectedness may also refer to psychological reactions or feelings (Example 1):

(So the different feelings you felt were?)

Anger, confusion, frustration, and almost it was like relief when it first happened. I'm like "I

can quit now" and I've never been a quitter. It seems shocking that I would actually say something like that to myself.

The interviewee's sense of unexpectedness or of feeling "shocked" goes beyond the event of the accident and extends to her reactions to the event. The sense of surprise she expressed regarding the relief she felt that the accident may provide an opportunity to quit the sport she has committed so much time and energy to suggests that the ambivalent feelings were not born out of the accident itself. Rather, this reaction suggests that she has had ambivalent feelings about her commitment to diving for some period of time, but that these feelings only became highlighted as the opportunity to quit diving appeared to present itself to her in a new, perhaps more acceptable, way than it had been in the past. In this case at least, the interviewee's ambivalent feelings were not created by an unexpected event, but were made figural by it. This observation is telling because it reveals ambivalent feelings to be a part of the ground of experience which may become salient in new and different ways as events unfold. These feelings may be highlighted particularly by experiencing the unexpected.

Another aspect to the theme of being out of balance reported by a number of interviewees was a sense of confusion. In Example 1, the interviewee describes

feeling confusion that, at first glance, appears to be simply a result of physical trauma: "I didn't know what day it was. After that when I got stitches and I was fine, pretty much, I was just groggy." As she describes her experience in more detail, however, it becomes apparent that her confusion goes beyond disorientation resulting from a head injury. She was also feeling confusion with regard to her physical condition, a perfectly appropriate concern under the circumstances: "I didn't know if I was paralyzed, I mean I didn't think I was, but they had to put a whole body thing where they strap your neck on a board."

Although her physical condition was of concern, and marked by uncertainty for her, there is also a sense of a additional confusion as well: "I didn't know what to think. I didn't know if it was a message from God, you know saying, 'You don't need to be doing this any more' or if it was just to test out my will since it was my second accident." A sense of confusion was often expressed by interviewees in their discussions of experiences of ambivalence. For example, one co-participant stated, "What's it like having all those feelings? -- confusion." At a different point she stated, "When you're unsure about what you want to do it's like different things come into your head all the time."

It is apparent that the experience of being out of balance often includes the perception that one's thoughts

are disorganized and may not be under voluntary control (e.g., "thoughts come into my head"). There is also uncertainty about what to think and believe, which is unsettling or disconcerting.

Another level of confusion is illustrated in Example 1. Emotional confusion was an important aspect of the experience described by the participant:

I guess that's probably why I am having a hard time thinking and describing each and every emotion I felt because they are all together. There wasn't a clear line like 'I'm feeling confused right now and now I'm feeling angry.' It was just like they were flowing, all these things. And the laughing that I could be crying and then laughing the next second and then sad again.. Like when they told me what I was saying, I could still laugh but then I'd be sad and crying.

Later, when asked to elaborate on her sense of confusion, the interviewee stated, "That (confusion) kind of ties them (the feelings) together. Seems all the things I was feeling were about being confused." The rapid transition from one emotion to another, especially those that are typically thought of as opposites (i.e. laughing and crying) are experienced by the interviewee as confusing

on an emotional level and is characteristic of the category of out of balance.

Being out of balance with the world, with others or with oneself appears to be an unsettling experience and the individuals interviewed usually sought some sort of resolution as a way of relieving the discomfort they felt. "Weighing" is a theme related to the tendency to seek relief from the bewilderment of imbalance, unexpectedness and confusion.

Theme 2: Weighing. Weighing is a process of comparing and contrasting different feelings, perceptions, thoughts and judgments as a way of restoring a balance that was somehow lost with onset of feeling out of balance. The following excerpt from an interview with a woman struggling to decide what she wants to do with her life illustrates various aspects of the experience of weighing ambivalent feelings. Again, the excerpt from the interview illustrates not only the theme, weighing, but it also communicates the context in which the theme is embedded.

Example 2.

(Can you think of a time when you have more than one feeling?)

Well, deciding my major and feeling what I want to do with my life, whether I want to commit to 6 more years of college or feeling of being out and be making money.

(Tell me about some of the feelings involved.)

Well, sometimes I do feel like that I do want to go on and start on my education and get a Ph.D. and everything because I think it would be more beneficial in the long run, but then sometimes I think, "Well, do I really want to do that?" And I think that if I stop, then start, it I could be getting more experience in a job field, whatever that might be.

(If you stopped and started working?)

If I stopped going to school and started in a job area, you know, I could be gaining experience and everything, even though I would have to start on the bottom. Anyway, when I think about what I want to do with my life I have two feelings.

When you are unsure about what you want to do it is like different things come into your head all the time about would this be good or that be good which is best, but you never know until . . . you look at your different options and you think, "Okay, this one would be good and this one would be bad." And I guess you just try to weigh them to make sure the one you pick is the best. But you don't really know that until you get there.

(Good or bad, or best in what sense?)

Well, I guess whatever is best for me. You know, in my case I want what am I going to be best happy with doing my whole life. I have had to weigh my - for example - my major because I want to be a psychology major. Would I be happy with that for my whole life? See, I'm uncertain about that right now. I don't know - would I like doing that - all those years? Would I like being something else? I guess right now I'm trying to seek for all the different options and seeing which ones I like. It's scary because you don't know. I mean, because I could think right now that psychology is for sure the thing I want to do and then I could get into it and not like it. I guess it is the feeling of uncertainty.

(What's it like to have that feeling?)

Scary. A scary feeling, I guess. I don't know - sometimes it's a good feeling because you - when you're uncertain you feel that you can explore all the options and start studying the things and finding out new things about the area, you know.

I don't know. It can be a good feeling because it's bringing new things in and while you're unsure there is a feeling of intrigue or something trying to get into it.

Feeling just a little bit sometimes, I feel really insecure because I've had people ask me my major and I'm still trying to decide and one thing I'm thinking about over here and another thing - 10 other things pop into my head. Then I talk to my friends who know exactly that they are going to be doctors and they are going to go to school this many years. And then my other friends are already on their way to their degree and all that stuff. Then I look at myself and I feel stupid because I don't know what I want. And it makes you feel insecure because like you don't have a total grasp on your future.

I mean, I know I'm going to have that grasp someday, but it's just that I don't have that now and other people do. And that sometimes makes me want to rush in to making the decision faster because I mean, one time I got so tired of people asking me "What's your major? What do you want to do?" that I would just make something up. I was just going to sit there one day and think "Okay, I'm going to decide right now what I am going to be and that will be it and I'm not going to change." But I can't do that.

(What else about feeling insecure?)

I mean, like maybe insecure, but just about your future and what it holds. And like are you going to have a way to make a living? Are you going to have a house to live in? Is this thing you are studying for 6 years or whatever is it really going to work out for you?

Well, I try to remember a time when I've just been totally unconfused about what I wanted to do because I have no extremely strong interest in one area. And so it's not like one area is pulling like a magnet saying "This is really what I want to do." And because this is my strongest interest out of all the areas. So, to me it's confusing because there are so many different

options out there. And it's confusing also because I don't know.

(There is not one pulling you like a magnet. What is it like not being pulled.)

It is good and bad because, I mean, well you know like I was talking about being relaxed. You know, if you are not being pulled by this one thing, I guess you don't feel like . . . sometimes I feel real relaxed with the feeling that I haven't made a decision about my major, but then other times I wish that I did have a magnet pulling me saying "This is what you want to do."

(Anything else about having all those feelings?)

It's like I see an hourglass and all its time is dwindling away. And it's really stupid because I am just a freshman and I have all these years and everything. But I don't know why I think that I don't have any time left to decide, because I do.

(It's almost like you experience time in different ways? Sometimes it feels like it is slipping away quickly and then other times you say "I have all these years. I'm just a freshman.")

But see I think that connects into what we were talking about before of all the different feelings I have. Sometimes I have this big insecurity deal where I'm scared and everything because I don't know. And then other times, I'm all intrigued with all the areas I am studying and I am relaxed and so that is the time I feel like I have all these years to decide and things are cool. But then when I'm in the time that I'm scared and everything I think, "You'd better decide now, better hurry up".

In Example 2, the co-participant describes her experience as ". . . looking at different options, you just try to weigh them to make sure the one you pick is best."

Implicit in the language of the description cited here is the idea that more than one thing is being weighed against another to see how they compare. Options are compared as a way of moving toward a choice that is intended to reduce the level of ambivalence experienced. The experience described here is of not being sure of which direction to take, of ". . . not being pulled by this one thing."

"Being pulled by one thing" would resolve the ambivalence the interviewee is feeling or perhaps make it less salient. The lack of resolution of the ambivalence is illustrated with similar language in another part of Example 2: "I've had to weigh my major -- would I be happy with it for my whole life? . . . would I like doing it for all those years? On the other hand, Do I want into journalism because I know I am a good writer?"

Weighing is illustrated by the following example from another interview: "I was wanting to go out with my girlfriend, but I had cousins coming in from Florida that come in once a year." Weighing often takes the form of statements which juxtapose two things. It is interesting to note the way in which additional weight is added to the scales in this example with the phrase "that come in once a year." Although the weighing process is on-going here, there is a first glimpse at the way in which the scales are beginning to tip. Although the theme, weighing, is often seen when two things are juxtaposed, at other times, one

aspect that is being considered remains unstated and is only implicit in what is said. For example, "I had this one opportunity to do something with them." What remains unstated, yet implicit in this example is, "But I really wanted to go out with my girlfriend." In either case, weighing takes the form, explicitly or implicitly, of a dialectic in which possibilities and their implications are investigated and compared.

In Example 2, the individual had two different experiences of weighing. At times she felt pressure to weigh her options and resolve the ambivalence by making a decision: "I see an hourglass, all its time is dwindling away" and "sometimes the uncertainty is scary." At other times she did not feel pressure to make a decision: ". . . sometimes I feel relaxed that I haven't made a decision about my major. . .when it's relaxation and intrigue, I'm just carefree; I don't care if I decide today or in two years."

One aspect of the experience of weighing described in a number of the interviews was questioning. Questioning is construed as an exploration of the factors involved in the experience of ambivalence. It is an initial attempt to organize and make sense of a perplexing experience: "Do I really want that? Will I have a way to make a living and a house to live in? Right now I am seeking for all the options" (Example 2). Questioning appears as a movement

from a global, diffuse sense of confusion to a clearer and more differentiated experience of multiple feelings.

Another aspect of the category weighing described by participants is judging. Judging is characterized by moral interpretations about right and wrong, assessments of blame and responsibility, and conclusions about appropriateness. Judgments regarding ambivalent feelings themselves were often described by the interviewees. For example, "I felt like it was not okay for me to feel sad and angry because it wasn't my mother; it was my husband's mother who had a lump in her breast." The excerpt from the following interview illustrates the judging as it pertains to the theme weighing: "I wondered what I should be feeling and it seemed like if I could figure out which ones were right and which ones were wrong, then you would know what to do." Further along in the judging process: "You can see what you are thinking and you can judge yourself." Judging involves the attainment of greater clarity regarding the feelings of ambivalence and can be the beginning of movement from the category weighing to the category rebalancing.

Theme 3: Rebalancing. The theme, weighing, is characterized by a movement from the diffuse, confused feeling that "something is not right" in the theme out of balance, to a clearer more differentiated understanding of what is wrong. As it becomes clearer what is out of balance, various factors emerge and are compared with each

other. As the weighing process continues, some feelings may begin to outweigh others. The theme, rebalancing, is characterized by continued acting toward resolving ambivalent feelings. The following excerpt exemplifies the theme rebalancing:

Example 3.

(Can you think of a time when you had more than one feeling?)

Friday night I went out with my dad and he and I have been on a 3-month non-speaking binge. He is the person in my family that I'm least close to and more than one feeling would be that, "Yes, of course you love your father and your parents, but I'm very much at odds with him." He is the one person that I can think of that makes me feel the least intelligent and the least put together. Despite that fact that I have a 3.6 in my college curriculum and I've been elected to an executive office in my sorority. I have done very well in school. I've always done well in school, better than my brothers ever did. Those would be the two feelings combined when I'm around him. The feeling of inferiority and then the feeling, of course, love for one's parent.

(Go back a little bit to the time you said you were feeling love for him and also the inferiority.)

The most recent situation of that I can think of was when he bailed me out and my mother out of this car wreck situation because it was my mother's name on the car; it wasn't mine I don't think. You know, he didn't have to do that and he did. And you know he bought me another car which he didn't have to do and I mean these were all things that let me know that he loved me but through money is the only way that he knows how to handle that.

He's a wealthy man. And my mother, since the divorce, is not. She doesn't know how to live within her means. I feel, I always get, not always, but I used to get real angry because he has so much and she has so little. But this was the first time that I realized all the times that my brothers tried to explain to me . . . Well see, he kept paying child support for 3 children when it was just me and the house and he didn't have to do that. You know, he really isn't that bad of a guy and I realize that. Yes, I do love him. He's taken care of me. He bailed me out of this car situation and for the first time I thought my mom wasn't who she represented to be.

You know, divorce is a tough thing because your parents are trying not to put you at odds with the other parent, but it ends up happening. I felt love for him, of course, because he had taken care of me, he helped my mother out, and it's a lot of money and he did not have to do it. He could have made me pay for it out of my trust fund. Bought me another car and then the inferiority comes from the fact that he blames me for being 19 years old and not knowing I didn't have any insurance. I felt inferior that he blames me and he also, my brothers have had, my family has a history of car wrecks at a young age. Nothing bad has ever happened, but they cost a lot of money. You know, I tried to explain to my dad, "Do you not see a difference in my wrecks and their wrecks and the fact that I wasn't drinking and driving, that I wasn't speeding and acting like an idiot, that I just was simply on a road that I wasn't familiar with and I made a mistake". And my dad makes the statement, "Well, if you weren't drinking and driving well does that mean you just can't drive?"

(What was it like feeling both of those feelings?)

I think, I mean for me, it was really easy because the inferiority far outweighed the feeling of love at that time. That was probably how I protected myself about it. You know, I thought for the longest time that I was going to

have a nervous breakdown because I cried every night for 2 weeks.

At times, the theme of rebalancing is characterized by a resolution of ambivalence and associated feelings of relief. Although it encompasses resolution of ambivalent feelings, the meaning of rebalancing is broader than resolution. In Example 3, the theme rebalancing is manifest in the phrase, ". . . the feeling of inferiority far outweighed the feeling of love at that time." A similar example is noted in the statement: "My love for him was just outweighed by the pain he caused me." These examples illustrate that the theme rebalancing does not imply that the ambivalence expressed by the individual has been completely resolved and that mixed feelings have ceased to exist. In the example above, despite the fact that one feeling outweighs another, the interviewee communicates feelings of both love and pain. Thus it is apparent that more than one feeling is extant in the aspect of the experience of ambivalence designated rebalancing.

In another interview, the interviewee describes a situation in which some feelings outweighed others. During an argument with her husband she became so angry that she left their apartment and got in the car to leave. At that point she describes feeling that ". . . the anger overrode everything." Just as she was about to drive away, she changed her mind and stayed because as she said, "No matter all the things I was angry with him about, it was not okay,

but I still loved him." In this example, after the initial feelings of anger "overrode everything" there was a change so that in the end her feelings of love predominated over the anger.

In contrast to weighing where feelings are being explored, investigated and compared to each other, the theme rebalancing is characterized by one feeling overshadowing other feelings. Rebalancing is marked by movement toward resolution of ambivalence, the sense that there is less uncertainty and confusion as it becomes clearer which of the feelings may predominate. As one feeling comes to outweigh other feelings to a significant extent, it is not necessarily the case that other feelings disappear. Resolution of ambivalence may mean instead that they may recede into the ground of the individual's experience and become less figural and therefore less salient.

It is important to note that the theme of rebalancing was the only one of the major themes that was not discussed by every interviewee. It is not assumed that the experience of ambivalence always leads to a resolution or even to the removal of the ambivalent feelings from the figure to the ground of experience. Ambivalence at times may be characterized by imbalance or weighing alone, without ever progressing to a state where one feeling predominates over others. Despite the fact that not every

co-participant described instances of some feelings outweighing others, the category, rebalancing, is still regarded as an essential aspect of the experience of ambivalence because both out of balance and weighing are characterized by discomfort or pressure that moves the person toward resolution. Rebalancing is an essential aspect of ambivalence because both of the other essential themes, out of balance and weighing, are in many respects oriented toward rebalancing. Whether someone actually experiences one feeling outweighing another, striving for resolution of ambivalence means that the theme rebalancing influences the structural relationships of out of balance and weighing.

Change and choice are subordinate themes of rebalancing. Several of the study's participants described changes and choices in the context of describing one feeling outweighing other feelings. The subtheme change often entails a change of perspective, often an experience that allows one to move from weighing to rebalancing. In Example 1, the participant states: ". . . my perspective has changed . . . the accident helped me see; I see the light. . ." Later in the interview, her change in perspective is illustrated by her sense that the experience she has gone through is part of a developmental process: "I guess it could be a part of growing up." Another participant described the change of perspective he

experienced in the following way: ". . . after I stepped out and looked at myself I just laughed about it and it lifted -- the tension was gone." The theme rebalancing may be characterized by relief from tension as the ambivalent feelings are resolved.

Other co-participants mentioned times when they felt a change must occur before a choice could be made satisfactorily. Change refers to an aspect of the experience of rebalancing that is not under the control of the individual. Until there is the sense that one feeling outweighs another, choices that are made are somehow arbitrary and unsatisfactory: They do not fit. Rebalancing may take the form of making a choice; the sense denoted by the subtheme of change is that choices cannot be forced. A particular change often experienced by interviewees was a perception that they had options that did not exist or had not been available to them during experiences of imbalance and weighing. As noted previously, the theme out of balance often carries with it a sense of being trapped or without options and a sense of powerlessness. Change associated with the theme, rebalancing, often entailed a new sense of having choices and options after all. In Example 1, the co-researcher stated: "but there was still an option," and later, "I could make a choice, I felt."

The fact that being able to make a choice may result in a feeling of relief and a new sense of freedom is reflected in the following description by a male college student who could not tolerate living in his mother's home any longer: "I really went out on a limb. I did it (left home) myself. It felt so good like shackles had fallen off of me. I was a free man and those feelings carried me through, kept me going, kept me charged."

At another point in the same interview, he stated:

It was a powerful experience. It solidified a lot of things for me. It made me think: 'I have a choice in my life. I am in control of my life. No one is out there pushing buttons on me.' There were a lot of mixed feelings coming up to that point, but I did it on my own and it sure didn't feel bad.

This excerpt illustrates how change and choice may appear together and complement one another. A new sense of having options and a new freedom is, in turn, associated with feelings of efficacy and power: "I had the sensation that I was taking charge, it was like being charged, electrified and those feelings were giving me energy to feed off of." This statement not only conveys the intensity of emotion the participants described in the interviews about ambivalent feelings, but it also illustrates the subtheme of choice as it relates to the experience of rebalancing.

Relationships between essential themes

It is apparent that the themes of ambivalence overlap and interact with each other in various ways. It is also apparent that the themes are neither mutually exclusive (i.e., ambivalence can be experienced in each of these ways in a given situation), nor is it the case that each theme is present in every experience of ambivalence. For example, the interviewee who described his experience of leaving his mother's home only conveyed the theme rebalancing in one of three situations he described (see Appendix D for a frequency summary of the major and minor themes).

Figure 1 (see Appendix E) is intended to represent the structural relationship among the major themes expressed by participants in describing their experiences of ambivalence. It is assumed that the boundaries around these themes are permeable and that movement between themes is fluid. No assumptions are made regarding the temporal sequences or directions of movements between particular themes.

The relationship among the themes is seen in the movement of an individual's experiences among themes. In Example 3 there appears to be a movement back and forth among themes. Not only does the participant describe a sense of confusion and of being out of balance in her relationship with her father, but the dialogue itself is

characterized by confusion. As she attempts to make sense of the predicament she finds herself in, of loving and feeling alienated from her father, she weighs numerous factors: her high grade point average versus her feelings of inferiority; car accident as compared to her brother's car accidents. The theme rebalancing is observed when she describes her love for her father as not being worth the pain she suffers on his account.

Although the interview unfolds in roughly the order delineated in this chapter, it would be misleading to suggest that the themes described correspond to a sequence of stages that one goes through in a rigid order. Rather, there appears to be a fluidity of experience in which different themes predominate at different times. The experience of weighing may lead either to a sense that one feeling outweighs others or it may lead to greater confusion and, therefore, greater imbalance. Similarly, when one feeling outweighs another, what initially is resolution may lead to an unexpected experience which leads to being out of balance.

It is not difficult to understand why there is a fluidity of movement in which different themes dominate at different times when one realizes that the individual is describing an experience of ambivalence in her relationship with her father which is neither insignificant nor fleeting. The experience of ambivalence she describes is

representative of a relationship which is itself ambivalent. The history of her relationship with her father suggests that she struggles to make sense of the contradictory feelings she has toward her father, she realizes that her relationship is "deviant" (or out of balance) as compared with those of her roommates, and she attempts to protect herself in the relationship by increasing the distance between herself and her father.

Spatial and temporal metaphors have been used in the preceding paragraph to describe the relationships among themes of the experience of ambivalence. These metaphors are helpful in gaining a phenomenological understanding of the experience in many respects. These metaphors are appropriate as the embodied nature of the themes connote spatiality and the experiences described by research co-participants over time.

The figure/ground metaphor discussed by Gestalt psychologists is another metaphor that sheds light on the relationships among categories of the experience of ambivalence. From this perspective the ground of experience is a sense of balance in the unfolding events of everyday life. An unexpected event is figural as it stands out from the background of ordinary experience and may lead to confusion and imbalance. The global, undifferentiated discomfort of being out of balance may be clarified through questioning, judging and weighing various aspects of the

experience. One aspect of the experience may come to outweigh others through change or choice or both. As one aspect of ambivalence outweighs others, it becomes figural and other feelings recede into the ground of ordinary experience and a sense of balance may be restored.

Summary Integration of Major and Minor Themes

The structural relationships among the major categories of the experience of ambivalence have been outlined and presented in graphic form above. It is now possible to integrate the more minor themes related to the experience of ambivalence into a more general structural model. Figure 2 (see Appendix E) illustrates the relationships among the major and minor themes in the experience of ambivalence.

Out of balance. The themes unexpected and confusion are aspects of the experience of feeling out of balance. Often research participants described the ground of their everyday experience as being affected by something unexpected (e.g., an accident, a divorce, a problem in a relationship, the death of a person they were close to). The sense that something unexpected happened leads to a sense of confusion regarding the event. Confusion may be cognitive, emotional or both. It denotes an undifferentiated feeling that life or the world is out of balance. The perception that something unexpected has

happened and the presence of confused feelings are both aspects of out of balance in the way in which one's life typically unfolds. The experience of having more than one feeling at a time often experienced as if one is out of balance and that something needs to be set right to recover a balanced ground of ordinary experience.

Weighing. Questioning is an aspect of weighing in which one attempts to emerge from confusion and regain one's balance with regard to the unexpected. Questioning is a process of differentiating perceptions, emotions, judgments and possibilities from the initial state of undifferentiated turmoil, confusion or chaos. Weighing is a process of examining opposing, conflicting or different feelings. It is distinguished from questioning in that feelings, perceptions, and judgments are distinct from each other and can be compared and weighed against each other as a way of moving toward resolution of ambivalent feelings. These processes are fluid and the boundaries between them are fluid. Questions and comparisons may also lead to something unexpected and to confusion and thus back to a sense of imbalance.

Rebalancing. This theme does not necessarily denote the removal of all mixed feelings, although it involves a sense that one feeling outweighs or overrides another and the sense that balance has replaced a feeling of out of balance. One aspect of this theme is change, which may

involve a change in perceptions, attitude or emotion. It may simply involve a new awareness that one feeling outweighs another feeling. Change also may entail a sense of resolution or acceptance of mixed feelings.

It also may allow an openness to the possibility of choice. In choice, a decision may be made that resolves the ambivalence of a situation, or perhaps refocuses the situation and leads to a new sense of ambivalence.

Rebalancing is not necessarily an end state; it may lead to further confusion, feeling off balance or to further questioning and weighing. On the other hand, when one feeling outweighs other feelings which then recede from figure to ground, a rebalancing of ambivalent feelings may be said to have taken place.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The language individuals use to describe their every consideration, this leaning toward and away, this quick succession of attraction and repulsion toward the same object; this "on the one hand . . . but on the other."

(Shapiro, 1985, p. 171)

In the previous chapter, results obtained from the analysis of interviews with eight research participants who described experiences of ambivalence were discussed. A primary purpose of the present chapter is to examine the relationship of these themes to broader existential aspects of lived experience. In addition, the relevance of ambivalence to psychopathology and psychotherapy also will be discussed.

Major Findings

Three major themes emerged from descriptions of ambivalence provided by research participants in this study. Following the language of the co-participants, these categories or themes were labeled: out of balance, weighing, and rebalancing. The categories present a kinesthetic sense of the experience that conveys multiple layers of meaning, including bodily, emotional, cognitive, and interpersonal aspects salient in the experience of ambivalence. Minor themes and their relationships to the

essential themes were also elaborated. Minor themes are those which constitute significant motifs in the experience of ambivalence, but were judged, by themselves, not to be essential aspects of the experience.

Out of balance. The notion of being out of balance encompasses and communicates feelings such as surprise, confusion, insecurity, weirdness, craziness, discomfort, powerlessness, disorientation and disequilibrium associated with one aspect of the experience of ambivalence. Feelings associated with the disconcerting nature of being out of balance are reflected in interviewees' statements about feeling crazy: "When I stepped back I realized what was going on -- that's when I felt that this is nuts, when it felt crazy." The same participant described the disconcerting nature of the ambivalence as feeling like being trapped and powerless. "It felt like a whirlwind, like I was real caught up and there was nothing I could do about it; I don't know; the feelings circled me, trapped me in." Or again, "there was nothing I could do about it."

Interestingly, Shapiro's (1985) description of his own phenomenal experience parallels what has been discovered in the present study regarding being out of balance. He reflects on bodily sensations associated with ambivalence:

My body assumes a sense of mild disorientation, of being unanchored. As I stay with it, it is a sense of 'neither here nor there.' When I enact

the movement implicit in this bodily sense, which is inseparable from this peculiar relation to the notes, I find myself forming a space that is not oriented to that original object (pp.180-181).

The kinesthetic sense of being out of balance captures the sense that something is amiss with the way in which the flow of events is ordinarily experienced. Shapiro describes himself as "not oriented" with regard to the object of his ambivalence. In other words, the experience is of being disoriented, not aligned, not in balance. The focus of awareness in this theme highlights various aspects of the experience. Possible experiences of imbalance include bodily sensations of disorientation, a cognitive or emotional sense of confusion, a feeling that something is wrong with me (e.g., feeling crazy), and a perception that something is wrong with the world (e.g., the whole world stopped).

Weighing. The second major theme discussed by interviewees was labeled as weighing. Interestingly, Shapiro (1985) uses the word "weighing" in describing his own ambivalence in the quote in the opening of this chapter: "I know well this weighing of considerations . . ." (p. 171). Weighing is a process of comparing and contrasting different feelings, perceptions, thoughts and judgments as a way of attempting to restore a sense of balance or equilibrium that has been lost. Shapiro (1985)

describes aspects of his experience of weighing in similar terms. He discusses a sense of control that is found in developing both sides of his ambivalence symmetrically so they are equally weighted. At other times, there is a sense of being "stuck" when there is no sense of movement toward resolution.

An interviewee in the present study illustrated various aspects of the experience of weighing ambivalent feeling as she described her struggle to decide what to do with her life. Her experience involves ". . . looking at different options -- you just try to weigh them to make sure the one you pick is best." Implicit in their description is the idea that more than one thing is being weighed to see how they measure up against each other. Options are compared as a way of moving toward a reduction in the level of imbalance being experienced. The experience described here is one of not being sure of which direction to take, of ". . . not being pulled by this one thing." Being "pulled by one thing" would resolve the ambivalence the interviewee is feeling, or perhaps make it recede from figure back to the ground of her experience so that it is less salient. The lack of resolution is illustrated in similar language in another part of the protocol: "I've had to weigh my major -- would I be happy with it for my whole life? Shapiro (1985) captures an

embodied perception of weighing when he describes ". . . a sense of no leanings" (p. 203).

Rebalancing. The third theme, rebalancing, does not imply that the ambivalence expressed by the individual has resolved, if by resolution one means the discontinuation of all but a single feeling. The description of the theme in Example 3 involved a description that communicates both love and pain. Thus, it is seen that more than one feeling may be present in the experience of outweigh.

One possible variation on this theme is an acceptance of the dialectical process present in the theme weighing. As acceptance of the dialectical process in the theme weighing proceeds, acceptance of the process may come to outweigh the feelings of discomfort and pressure of being out of balance and weighing. Shapiro (1985) describes his experience of accepting multiple feelings as a dialectical "living-in" the different worlds presented by the ambivalence. For him, an acceptance and comfort with the back and forth movement between the poles of ambivalence opens the way to resolution of ambivalence by "living through" both possibilities so that he is able to reach a point of being able to make a satisfactory choice between the two. The acceptance of the dialectical process is a type of resolution that does not involve the elimination of mixed feelings.

Findings in the present study extend and elucidate Shapiro's analysis, as well as contributing a broader understanding of the theme rebalancing and additional possibilities for resolution. In contrast to the theme of weighing, where feelings are being explored, investigated and compared to each other, the theme of rebalancing is typically characterized by one feeling overshadowing other feelings. The experience of rebalancing is marked by a movement toward the resolution of ambivalence, the sense that there is less uncertainty and confusion as it becomes clearer which of the feelings may predominate. Ambivalence, in the broad sense in which it was defined in the beginning of the current study, implies both sides are strong or of value. The resolution of ambivalence present in the theme of rebalancing means that one side has become stronger or of more value than the other. As one feeling comes to "outweigh" other feelings to a significant extent, it is not necessarily the case that other feelings simply disappear. Rather, they may recede into the ground of the individual's experience and become less figural and therefore less significant.

Summary integration of themes

The boundaries between the themes characterizing the experience of ambivalence are permeable and movement among them may be fluid, although it was not uncommon for participants to report to feeling stuck in one mode and without the ability to experience readily other categories of meaning. No assumptions are warranted regarding the temporal sequence or direction of movement among particular themes. The relationship among the themes is seen in the movement of individuals' experiences among themes. In Example 3, there appears to be movement back and forth among themes: Not only does the participant describe a sense of confusion and of being out of balance in her relationship with her father, but the dialogue itself is characterized by confusion. As she attempts to make sense of the predicament in which she finds herself -- of loving yet feeling alienated from her father -- she weighs numerous factors. She experiences rebalancing when she describes her love for her father as not being worth the pain she suffers on his account.

There appears to be a fluidity of experience in which different themes predominate at different times. The essential categories of ambivalence are all present in the dialogue about her relationship with her father. The experience of ambivalence she describes is characteristic of a relationship which is itself ambivalent. Spatial,

temporal metaphors together with the concept of figure/ground relationships all portray, in different ways, relationships among the themes of ambivalence. These metaphors are helpful in gaining an understanding of the phenomenon of ambivalence.

Existential themes

This section will highlight existential themes embedded in the experiences of ambivalence described by participants. Although the scope of the experiences described by interviewees permits the elaboration of numerous important existential themes, the present discussion will be limited to topics that appear most often and seem most salient for them. These themes include: "body," "self," "other," "world" and "time." The rationale for elaborating themes of "self," "other" and "world" is based on the concept promulgated by some phenomenological researchers that the "self-world-others" structure is involved in every psychological reality (Wertz, 1983). The theme of "time" is elaborated because it recurs frequently in the interviewees' descriptions of their experiences of ambivalence. The theme body is discussed because it provided illumination that was crucial to the development of the major findings in the study.

Body. The embodied aspects of the experience of ambivalence are addressed first because the major themes of the experience are derived from descriptions of embodied phenomena. The themes of out of balance, weighing, and rebalancing all have kinesthetic or bodily connotations and have already been addressed. However, these themes provide a convenient structure for organizing a presentation of examples of bodily modes of experiencing ambivalence.

The examples of embodied experiences of ambivalence presented below illustrate the range of experiences with this common theme. One of the most common themes mentioned by interviewees describing their experiences of being out of balance was that of feeling pressure, generally pressure to resolve ambivalent feelings. Another commonly expressed feeling was of being tired or drained, as if experiencing a number of feelings saps one of energy. In Example 2, the participants described feeling ". . . this pressure on me. I feel like I really need to make a decision." The pressure was experienced as coming both from her parents and from herself. The bodily experience of pressure was also projected into the future as she anticipated feeling that "It would take a lot off my shoulders, if I knew which direction I was going in." Other embodied feelings related to the theme of being out of balance include feeling charged or energized, feeling tension, or feeling uncomfortable and uprooted.

Embodied metaphors seemed to convey interviewees' sense of imbalance readily. For example, one individual said, "It (having more than one feeling) was odd having that pull in me." Another person said, "I wish I did have a magnet pulling me," as she felt this would help resolve the ambivalence. Bodily themes also are a rich source for understanding the experiences of weighing. For one person, the exploring aspect of weighing provided relief from the tension of being out of balance: "When it's the relaxation and intrigue, I'm just carefree; and I really don't care if I decide today or in two years." More than one person described weighing commitments or factors involved in making decisions. Outweighing was often associated with being able to gain new perspective and was experienced bodily: "When I stepped back, I realized what was going on." Even more often than weighing, rebalancing was associated with a feeling of relief: ". . .it felt so good, like shackles had fallen off of me." The descriptions of bodily experiences of ambivalence, presented above, communicate a richer, fuller, phenomenal understanding of the experience ambivalence than could be attained without them.

Others. It is interesting to note the extent to which the interviews tended to revolve around significant relationships with other people. Four co-participants described experiences in which relationships with others

were of central concern. Issues such as closeness and distance, separation and individuation, boundaries, images of self and other, and fulfillment versus hurt and anger were salient and predominant themes for the co-participants.

The fact that these issues regarding other people arose is not at all surprising given that other was a central issue about which the interviewees were ambivalent. Even in descriptions in which ambivalence about a relationship with another person were not the explicit focus of the ambivalence, the theme of other was often present. In Example 2, family members and friends at school were discussed, even though the focus of the ambivalence was on deciding on a major and what this woman's life would be like in the future. In Example 1, physical injury resulting from the diving accident and decisions about continuing with the sport were the focus of numerous feelings, yet people at the diving meet, the interviewee's parents, her brothers and her coach were all discussed as important in the experience of ambivalent feelings.

World. As noted previously, the sensation of imbalance may have as its focus either the self or the world. One may feel a disequilibrium that results from losing one's sense of balance. At other times, it is felt that it is the world itself that is somehow not as it

should be. Several metaphors communicate the latter sense, that something is not right with the world. One of the most powerful metaphors was communicated in Example 1 where the participant stated that her experience of having all of the feelings included the sense that ". . . there was a big dark cloud over me." In an other example, a different participant described the confusion associated with multiple feelings as feeling like a whirlwind: "When it was all going on it felt like a whirlwind. . . I was caught up in this whirlwind and I did not know what to do." Both examples illustrate extraordinary experiences of the world.

In contrast to the experience of being out of balance, Shapiro (1985) describes the way in which the world may be experienced when the theme weighing predominates. Shapiro describes this aspect of his experience of ambivalence in the following way:

From this position I find myself exploring each (of the possibilities). Again, I do so through any number of modalities -- doing, imagining, thinking, inquiring of other people's experiences. Aspects, attributes, associations, eventualities, risks attendant to each appear as horizons which taken up themselves constitute complex and ultimately opaque regions. Taking these together, I begin to constitute respective worlds out of each of the two objects; and, in

that each is also a prospective place and way I might live, I constitute a prospective self or identity (p. 193).

Shapiro's description fits nicely with and elaborates the participant's description, in Example 2, of feeling relaxed and intrigued when she was able to explore different options for the future. Participants in this study tended not to provide descriptions of their experience of the world when the theme of rebalancing predominated. It is possible that these themes were not discussed because in the theme, rebalancing, the world is experienced as ordinary (or perhaps as not problematic) and therefore is not generally a salient experience.

Time. The various interviews contain a number of references to the experience of time. Time as past and future, patterns in time and unusual experiences of time are exemplified in the interviews. In Example 2, the interviewee expresses having more than one experience of the future in relation to the difficulty of choosing an area of study: "I see an hourglass, all its time is dwindling away," then, ". . . it's really stupid; I'm just a freshman. . . I have all these years." In this example, time is experienced differently depending on whether her ambivalence is experienced as being out of balance or as weighing. When being out of balance is the predominant experience, it feels as if time for making a decision is

running out. When the ambivalence is experienced in a mode of weighing, she feels as if she has all the time she needs to make a decision.

Ambivalence is often experienced as being oriented toward the future, compared with the modes of being such as uncertainty, questioning, exploring, weighing, and choosing are all orientated toward the future. An orientation toward the future reflects the common meaning of wanting to move away from ambivalence, toward resolution. The focus of ambivalence is often on the future, it is also strongly grounded in past. Interviewees frequently went to great lengths to explain the historical context of their ambivalent feelings. One individual referred to the history of her ambivalence very explicitly: "That conflict runs throughout my history (emphasis added) here at college." Four of the interviews contain histories of divorce in their families of origin that are a significant part of the contextual background for their present feelings of ambivalence.

A theme that overlaps the temporal ground provided by history and the future is that of temporal patterns. Example 3, is one of several examples of patterns of ambivalence that span months or years. In Example 3, the participant described a back and forth movement in her relationship with her father. Periods of distance and estrangement are punctuated by periods of greater

interpersonal closeness. The interview, which is marked by confusion and indecision, is a reflection of the ambivalence inherent in the relationship between father and daughter. Here the participant is not simply describing past ambivalence about a relationship; she is describing and living in a relationship which is itself ambivalent.

The descriptions of the experience of ambivalence provided by the co-researchers include numerous significant existential themes. Some of these themes include: other, time, body, world. Table 2 provides illustrative examples of the interviewees' experiences at the intersections of the categories of meaning of ambivalence and existential themes.

The fact that important existential themes pervade the dialogues about the experience of having more than one feeling at a time suggests that the experience of ambivalence is related to issues of central concern to the individuals interviewed. This fact highlights the psychological importance of ambivalence as it is experienced and justifies it as a legitimate and meaningful topic for psychological research.

Table 2: Essential Categories of the Experience of Ambivalence and Related Existential Themes

<u>Out of balance</u>	<u>Weighing</u>	<u>Rebalancing</u>
<u>Body</u>		
* knocked me down	* weigh options	* charged, energized
* pressure, tension	* relaxed when	* felt as if shackles
* tired, drained	intrigued	fell off
* caught up, stuck	* sat down	* took away burden
* lost		
<u>Self</u>		
* scared, insecure	* rules in my head	* sadness over-
* uncertain	* message from God	powered happiness
* powerless	* my head was just	* I was more me than
* felt like nervous	going, trying to	child of my parents
breakdown, crazy	figure it out	* I stepped back and
		looked at myself
<u>World</u>		
* dark cloud over	* explore options	* one area is pulling
my head	* life isn't	me like a magnet
* whirlwind	perfect	
* world stopped		
<u>Other</u>		
* at odds with him	* hate her for	* love was outweighed
* can't be angry	lying, love her	by pain he caused
at person I adore	being there	* being with him is
* Do others see me	* love him, but	not worth it
differently than	despise him	* wasn't ok, but I
I thought?	* weighing commit-	still loved him
	ment to him	
<u>Time</u>		
* time dwindling	* the history of it	* feelings were
away	* if we waited	pushed aside, but
* rush to decide	longer we would	not gone forever
* future uncertain	have time to look	* to be able to
	at the feelings	learn takes time

Ambivalence and Psychopathology

One way to conceptualize ambivalence as it relates to psychopathology is in terms of a dimension that ranges from the experience of an overwhelming amount of ambivalence at one extreme to experience of little or no ambivalence at the other. An overwhelming degree of ambivalence is associated with feeling "stuck," with feeling powerless and with feeling an inability to make decisions and to move on with one's life. Failure to resolve ambivalence may be reflected in reliance on defense mechanisms, such as obsessiveness, which are characterized by an inability to make decisions. Chronic ambivalence may be associated with developmental outcomes, such as identity diffusion, which are characterized by an inability to move beyond a focus on ambivalence and make commitments.

At the other end of the spectrum of is a lack of acceptance of ambivalence or an inability to tolerate ambivalence reflected in two different defense mechanisms, denial and splitting. One strategy for dealing with the discomfort associated with ambivalence is to deny that the ambivalence exists. A different tactic for avoiding ambivalence is reflected in the defense mechanism of splitting. In this case, ambivalence is avoided by perceiving the world in black and white terms, as all-good versus all-bad.

Braverman (1987) has studied the role ambivalence plays in mental health problems. She defines ambivalence as a simultaneous attraction toward and repulsion from an object, person or action. She describes the experience of feeling these contradictory pulls as ranging from discomfort to anguish. Behaviorally, ambivalence is manifest as hesitation or an inability to make decisions. Braverman believes that ambivalence becomes a prominent problem for individuals who, as children, were rewarded for dependency, and in whom initiative was punished by a threat of abandonment by the parent. The author describes chronic ambivalence as a disorder of the self. Ambivalence may also lead to severe problems in marriages where partners play opposite roles. Although neither individual in the marriage appears ambivalent, the overall relationship is characterized by ambivalence.

Other researchers have described psychopathology in terms of ambivalence. Wolf and Kutash (1985), for example, see ambivalence as being the central feature of a condition term "di-egophrenia". This term derives from the notion that the typical patient suffering from this disorder was thought to be suffering from a "split" ego. Such patients seem to think and act in contradictory ways, leading to intense ambivalence and marked oscillations. For example, a person suffering this syndrome might be both overtly submissive, and passively oppositional; conforming and

rebellious; inwardly empty but also grandiose; or the person might be idealizing, yet denigrating of everyone, hostile and yet dependent.

According to Wolf and Kutash, "di-egophrenic maneuvers" are a part of normal psychological life, but these maneuvers are relied upon to a much greater extent in di-egophrenia. In severe cases, the ambivalence becomes compulsive and all-consuming. This condition is thought to develop in families where a controlling and domineering parent experiences the child's strivings for autonomy as threatening and consequently demands conformity. The child is forced into a position of denying their own perceptions and feelings. To the extent that the child is compelled to deny his or her own experience, he or she also repeatedly and compulsively rebels against this tendency. Eventually, the oscillation between complying and rebelling saps time and energy that otherwise would be invested in the individual's own perceptions, feelings, judgments and creativity (Wolf & Kutash, 1985).

Kernberg (1986) discusses the role of ambivalence in the treatment of the narcissistic character. He feels that as treatment progresses, the narcissistic character develops an intensely ambivalent and frightening transference with the therapist. Initially, narcissistic defenses protect the patient against the intensity of narcissistic rage, intense feelings of unworthiness, the

frightening view of the world as devoid of nurturance and love, and against his image of himself as the ". . . hungry wolf out to kill, eat, and survive" (p. 257). As the patient begins to rely on the therapist, they become uncertain whether the need for love will survive aggressive attacks upon the therapist. An important aspect of treatment, in Kernberg's view, is the working through of this intensely ambivalent and frightening transference relationship.

Interestingly, a lack of ambivalence or an inability to experience ambivalence has also been viewed as an important psychological problem. Akhtar and Byrne (1983) argue that the psychological defense mechanism of splitting is essentially an inability to tolerate the experience of ambivalence. They cite Freud's early formulation of splitting within the ego as a defense against the coexistence of contradictory mental attitudes as a recognition of the significance of ambivalence. The separation of good and bad experiences, and the emotions that characterize splitting, are viewed as attempts to avoid the anxiety associated with ambivalence. Splitting divides objects into "all good" and "all bad" categories, thus preventing the possibility of viewing people in a more integrated and more realistic way. The inability to view objects as having both good and bad aspects may, in some cases, interfere with and severely limit reality testing.

The inability to tolerate the contradictory feelings also has implications for the self: if contradictory feelings are held apart from one another, they cannot be assimilated into a somewhat ambivalent, although more realistic view of the self.

Implications for Psychotherapy

An understanding of the spectrum of psychopathology related to the experience of ambivalence may contribute to ideas about goals for patients in therapy. One characteristic of the degree of pathology exhibited by an individual is the rigidity of the defenses and the extent to which he or she relies on a particular defense mechanism or related set of defense mechanisms. Conversely, greater flexibility in defenses is associated with psychological health. Following this line of reasoning, it is reasonable to suggest that patients in therapy may benefit from greater flexibility in the ways in which they experience and deal with ambivalence.

When defenses are rigidly organized around avoidance of ambivalence, increased tolerance of ambivalence may be associated with positive gains in therapy. For example, with patients who rely heavily on splitting, denial, and other primitive defenses, an increase in tolerance and acceptance of ambivalence may be viewed as a goal in therapy. Shapiro (1985) describes his experience of

accepting multiple feelings as a dialectical "living-in" the different worlds presented by the ambivalence. For him, an acceptance and comfort with back and forth movement between the poles of ambivalence opens the way to resolution of ambivalence by "living through" both possibilities. The experience of "living through" the ambivalence may bring him to the point of being able to make a satisfactory choice between the two possibilities.

The recognition by therapists of themes of ambivalence expressed by patients in therapy may lead naturally to therapeutic interventions. Ambivalence may be manifest in many areas of patients' lives including relationships, major life decisions. It also may be manifest in feelings of being stuck and helpless to move out of being out of balance toward resolution of ambivalence. Commitment to therapy itself and the desire for change also may be characterized by ambivalence. When the patient's experience is focused on imbalance, for example, an intervention that helps clarify the patient's feelings may help him or her move from being out of balance and disorientation toward weighing. Thus the confusion and disorientation of being out of balance may give way to more gratifying modes of questioning, exploring and being intrigued. These experiences can provide new possibilities and creativity and perhaps may lead to a desire for change that outweighs the resistance to progress in therapy.

One can also become stuck in the mode of weighing; it can become an avoidance tactic, as in the case of the obsessive personality. Thus, there may be times when the discomfort of imbalance is an appropriate feeling as it can serve as a motive for positive change. Conversely, the mode of outweighing may provide an unsatisfactory resolution to ambivalence, and the patient may be "stuck" in a particular way of being that is claustrophobic or impedes development. In this case, ambivalence may be introduced by the therapist as a means of destabilizing the system the person is living in and re-opening the path to new possibilities and change.

Future studies focusing on ambivalence may be able to shed light on the validity of the hypotheses regarding ambivalence and the psychotherapeutic process outlined above. In the meantime, it is felt that a phenomenological understanding of the experience of ambivalence broadens psychology's understanding of lived phenomena and will assist clinicians in apprehending experiences communicated by patients in therapy. A phenomenological understanding of the experience of ambivalence provides one with an overview of the landscape of the world as multiple feelings lead to experiences of being out of balance, weighing, and rebalancing. The categories of meaning of elaborated in this study are signposts that allow one to orient oneself in the world when it is experienced ambivalently.

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Appendix A

*

INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

I am conducting my doctoral research in clinical psychology. The purpose of my research is to investigate the ways in which different people experience having more than one feeling at a time.

The study consists of two parts:

First you will be interviewed for an hour to an hour-and-one-half. The interview will be tape-recorded to eliminate the need for taking notes.

Second, you will be contacted at a later date for a follow-up interview which will last approximately 15 minutes. During the follow-up interview, I will provide feedback about your participation in the study and will ask you if you have anything to change, delete or add to the information you provided in the original interview.

The risks involved in participating in this study are minimal and the information obtained in the interviews will be held in strict confidence. No record of names or other identifying information will be made public nor kept beyond the completion of the project. All audiotapes will be destroyed following the completion of the project.

If you agree to participate in the project, please understand that you are free to withdraw your consent at any time, without questions or penalty. If you have questions at this point, or at any point later on in the study, please do not hesitate to ask.

Steve Harrist, Doctoral
Student, Psychology
University of Tennessee
301E, Austin-Peay Bldg.
ph. 974-6060

I have read the above information and consent form and I agree to participate in this research project.

Signature

Date

Appendix B

Transcript of Interview with Co-Participant 6

(Can you think of a time when you felt more than one feeling at the same time?) ✓

My latest experience of feeling the emotions at the same time, that is when I had a diving accident this summer and the incident was that I'd been training all summer for this meet and I was really excited about it and I guess I . . . I should also mention that 6 months prior to that I hit the board and had surgery on my thumb. I was really pumped up for this competition because it had been awhile since I'd been in one.

And so during the competition it was my 3rd dive and I hit the board and I didn't think I was close or anything, it was really a shock. I hit it and it was like the whole world stopped. I was just laying in the pool and all I could . . . I was all excited before that and then when I hit the board it was like I was so confused because I was like, "Okay, my conscious was saying, okay now you have an excuse to quit." And I'm like I don't want to quit, you know. And it's like I didn't know if I was paralyzed, I mean I didn't think I was, but they had to put a whole body thing where they strap your neck up a board and I was sitting there apologizing to my coach. So here I'm saying I can quit, I'm apologizing to my coach, I'm apologizing to the people for messing up the meet. I didn't know what day it was.

After that, when I got stitches, and I was fine, pretty much, I was just groggy. It was like I didn't know what to think. I didn't know if it was a message from God you know saying, "You don't need to be doing this anymore" or if it was just to test out my will since it was my 2nd accident. I'd never hit the board before that and it just drains you when you're in that type of situation and it's unexpected and it's something you've been working for as in the meet and progressing. It was a prequalifying meet for Nationals. And so I guess I just constantly have to go over that and since that was in August and now it's November and I still question myself . . . I still have that conflict of emotion. I love the sport but I don't like the fear that's involved with having another accident and the potential hazards of it.

(So the different feelings you felt were . . .?)

Anger, confusion, frustration, and it was almost like relief when it first happened. I'm like "I can quit now" and I've never been a quitter. It seems really shocking that I would actually say something like that to myself.

(What was the relief was about?)

That I could quit and it would over.

(There was relief because you might be able to not have that commitment, so demanding. And you mentioned confusion?)

Not knowing if this was a test of my commitment to my sport and what I was made out of, how much could I take before I stop doing it. Or, should I just make confusion to be like I was suppose to be more aware of something in my approach, which is part of the diving. Just be more aware of my technique. Instead of getting so nervous during a meet. I was just . . . you can tell, I still sound kind of confused because I can't really say because there were so many things. I guess the other one was like maybe that meant if I quit I could go home instead of staying in Tennessee, go on back to school in Minnesota so it's all these things kind of rushing around in my head. And now each of them have different emotions. It's hard to do it.

(And you mentioned anger as another feeling?)

My anger was because of all the time and commitment that I had put into the training and then hitting the board and feeling foolish and mad at myself. And mad at my coach for not telling me that I'd been close previously and I hadn't been, but maybe he could have seen something. I'm not going to totally blame him. It's not his fault, it's my fault. But it's just that I wanted. . . I knew I was doing better than I . . . I was doing what I needed to do to qualify, to be . . . I was like scoring the points on my other 2 dives. It was a tough meet and I was angry because I'd made plans and to go on to the next meet, that I was trying to qualify for. And then it was all over. I could not because my coach didn't want me to dive because it was not the olympics or anything. So, anger.

(You talked about a lot of different feelings associated with the accident, feeling sorry and embarrassed. You talked about feeling angry, relief, several different things. How did those go together?)

How did they go together?

(What was the experience? How did you experience having those feelings?)

How did I experience them feeling all the different feelings? It was like, I remember I couldn't get to sleep that night even though I was really tired, totally exhausted and all those physiological things. It was kind of, it is uneasy when you can't really learn from something and walk away. I know it usually takes time but, it is just draining. I guess when you feel everything at once and there's not like "Here's the answer why" or what you're suppose to do when something like that happens.

(Was it your sense that you were feeling these separate things at once?)

You mean like simultaneously? It seems like I was feeling all of them at the same time. I mean it seems like I did because I was so drained and so tired. It was just like I don't know, if they became the same feeling. I mean it's hard to . . . makes you always think of how you feel anger, you feel happiness, sadness, grief. It seems like they're constantly there. They all become one and it's like -- lost, maybe? I had the word, but that's not exactly what I was going to say. Lost. . . um,

(You mentioned feeling confused.)

Yeah. That kinda ties them together in a way. Seems all the things I was feeling about being confused.

(Sounds like a hard thing to describe.)

I guess it is, that is probably why I am having a hard time thinking describing each and every emotion I felt because they're all together. There wasn't like a clear line like "I'm feeling confused right now and now I'm feeling angry". It was just like they were just flowing, all these things. And the laughing that's seems like I was feeling all them at once.

(The laughing?)

I could be crying and then laughing the next second and then sad again. Like when they told me what I was saying, I could still laugh but then I'd be sad and crying.

(You mentioned conflict earlier. Feelings that were conflicting. The relief that maybe you don't have to dive anymore, but then you were thinking "But wait a minute, I like to do this".)

I guess that kind of the conflict feeling kind of flows through my experience at UT. The history of it is kind of like I came here for diving. I could pretty much go to school anywhere. There are only a few places that have a good diving team or whatever, and I wanted to get away from the north and I wanted to grow and I felt Tennessee was the place for me to expand my horizons. And I get here and have this coach and I work hard and then that summer he tells me (everybody knew except for me) but he tells me that he's got a full-time job at G. as diving coach. I mean this is just typical of recruiting, but he had told me that until the day he died he would stay in Tennessee.

I was stuck. I felt like I was stuck, but there was still an option. But I felt inside that I wanted to stay because I had made that commitment. My brother had, like he went to a school and he ended up transferring back home and I did not want to do that. So, my head swim coach said, "If you stick it out another year, I'll release you." So that was like, like usually when you transfer to another school you can't dive for a year or swim or whatever your sport is. So I stuck it out here and I worked hard. And something, there was a problem with, my scholarship got changed and there was like some big confusion with that.

So, here I am, like I am taking all this stuff on myself. I'm adapting to a new coach (which was terrible) and I was suppose to have the coach I have now. But the relief was, here I was going through all these things, coaching changes, scholarship being changed to less (which is not good because the other coach told me, "If you just do this and in some "C" s you will get more money") and I still, even though I had the bad coach the next year, I did better than I did the year before. And I still I did not get any more money and it is a big burden on my parents and I felt bad because I mean, they do not need that. I feel it is my responsibility since I'm putting so much time into diving that I should be able to do something. And I guess I felt that since they were doing all these things for me that it would be a relief for me to get out of it. So that's what I felt.

I guess another thing the reason I felt that I should be able to get not be such a burden on my parents for money because I'll just tuition. The last couple 2-3 summers they sent me down to this camp in Florida where I'd always

improved but every time I've come back now it is like . . .
. Well, the first time I went to the nationals, but the second time I had the coaching problem, and this time like last time I went to camp and then I hit the board. It's like in order to firmly establish recognition in the diving community you have to go to nationals. And sure, I do need to go on these, but that will just italicize my ability as a diver, to support our team to get more money. So the relief was just like you just I won't have to do it; I can go home and be a normal person.

(And the part that conflicted with that is?)

I am a high achiever and basically it takes a lot to knock me down. It seemed like there was this big, dark cloud over my head and there was finally a lake that I could dive into. I could make a choice, I felt. Because my parents never pressured me into it, saying, "You have to dive." They just say, "You are down there to dive; don't sit there and be worried about your boyfriend or whatever. It's just school and diving." And, so I put the pressure on myself to make the decisions and choices. But like, in the spring time, like when training has been so hard, I started bike racing down here and doing like running and doing these little triathelons. Basically what I'm trying to say is -- I set goals and I try to achieve them and I keep active. Like for school, if I say I'm going to get a 3.0, I know I have to do certain things and I block off my time and make sure I'm taking steps to get there. I try to sacrifice that aren't going to help me achieve.

(And so the feeling of relief conflicted with "I'm a person who has goals and meets those goals and sacrifices in order to move on.")

And I felt like I was being a loser if I quit. Because I've never quit anything besides a job because I had to go to school or something.

(But not because of the failing.)

Right. That's exactly what it is.

(Anything else about the accident and your feelings?)

Well, I guess now it's really interesting to me that I mean, I said that earlier before about just over realizing more so that diving is not always going to be there and academics are very important. I've always realized that but I've never really . . . I don't know what the word is . . . you've gotta . . . if I - ah confusion -

(Brought home to you in a new way after the accident?)

Brought home to me? Is that what you said? Ah, well I guess what . . . I'll start over. After the accident now like doing the dive and I've overcome that, it still brings on fear but it's really frustrating that I'm not the same type of aggressive, sacrifice, alot of things - well my diving, really competitive. I'm still competitive but not as you can tell after the meets, that I'm angry with myself. Usually before I'm really focused before a meet. Like I try not to do any studying and now like for instance before the last couple of meets, I studied right up to before I left. Usually I'm just clearing my mind, relaxing myself, taking deep breaths, and just trying to stay calm and focused on what I need to do in my performance. And because it kind of scares me that I'm still I'm putting all this energy . . . like time-wise commitment of physical training, into this sport and then I go and I compete and I don't even . . . I just pretend it's practice, like you're competing. But I guess my heart wasn't in this last meet. And that's my fault. It's just interesting to me that I'm not . . . that I'm doing a lot more academics that athletics. So, it's kinda weird.

(So after having this experience it's kind of traumatic for you, it was physically traumatic but then had all these different feelings associated with it. There's been a change in your attitude when . . . something about you that's come out.)

Yeah.

(A change in priorities?)

Yeah. A change in priorities, that's what it is. It's like hard for me to say everything . . . like that was exactly what I was thinking. And I had told somebody earlier that my priorities have changed and I'm captain on the team and I'm suppose to be a leader and I can't really go to them and say how I'm feeling. They're younger than me and I'm suppose to be the leader, so who do I ask? Myself and my parents. When I'm coming from, like last night I told my mom "Yeah mom, I think I'm going to quit". I kinda said that. I know, and she . . . we both know I'd be unhappy if I did. She just told me to put my priorities on straight and that this is my last year and if I quit now, which I know I won't it's just like a head game I guess, that I would be very upset for a long time when I looked back on this situation because of all the time I had put into. Just dropping it because it's ticking because there's only 4 years and I've done 3-1/2. So . . .

(Can you think of another time when you had more than one feeling?)

Yeah. This is with my parents, who are divorced, and . . . I guess, I guess this is really personal but my mom told me that when she was pregnant with my little brother, my dad I guess was seeing someone else. I'm the only one in my family that knows this. My dad doesn't know that I know. My brothers don't know that I know. But here I love my dad and I just totally despise him for that type of thing. I really cannot believe that anybody would do that. I'm glad that I feel that way in that . . . because I'll never do anything like that once I'm married. But the type of things that he did to my mom like that and I, not even setting time for us kids to go see him on holidays . . .

(Not setting time?)

Right. And like, he got remarried and he always put time for . . . he always made us so busy seeing her side of the family and all my step-relatives that were not blood related and that . . . and didn't designate time for us kids to see him. He always made it really hard for her to like bring over our presents or whatever when we were younger. And here, all along it was his fault because he was the one who was dating . . . seeing someone else. Like what I'm trying to say about my mom is my didn't go out of her way to wreck the marriage. Maybe all along it was lack of communication but he didn't have to go date someone else. That's not . . . it's improper. So that's love and hate. What do you do?

(What about the love part?)

Like how do I define? Why do I love my dad?

(What's that feeling?)

Well, I love him for, I guess, the other things . . . because he's me. I'm part of him and he's my dad and he has nurtured me, he's done alot of good things for me. He just hasn't done them in . . . he hasn't done some things in the right way. But life isn't perfect. Human beings aren't perfect, but he has sacrificed alot. He does alot of things for me. And I . . . my school, and supports me in what I want to do. My diving or my biking, my studying or whatever. Whatever it may be. As long as it's not being a dope addict or something. Something stupid. That's why I love him. Now do I have to describe the other one?

I see the hurt he did to a person I love, and that's my mom and it's against my morals and . . . it's just doesn't' . . . he seems, I can't picture him doing that now. Now that he's remarried. I don't know, I'm pretty sure it's the lady - my step-mom - who he started dating. And what's funny is that I kinda asked her once how she met my dad and I'm almost positive it was her. And she told me a different story and my mom, it's just kind of a big mix-up. And I knew she was lying to me. And I just . . . it seems weird that they pulled the wool over my eyes and I know pretty much what went on and here . . . I hate her for that, but I love her for being there when I was growing up. It wasn't perfect but . . . I had food, clothing, shelter, basic needs.

(What's it like having those two feelings at the same time?)

I guess I feel like I want to say "bitter" because it's not like it's not hard-core hate. It's bitter things, not . . . you take this big lemon and it's in your mouth and you're like "yuck" and you take some water, which is pure and wash it out and it's okay. And so, it kinda describes . . . I don't know how clear it is. Feelings . . . lots of them. I guess those feelings make me question things a lot and I think of what I'm doing in my life and my lifestyle and I try to gear them not towards things that I've seen in them that I haven't liked. Now, you say you grow up to be like your parents and I don't think . . . people do have the ability to stop that pattern. And I feel I do since I've been aware of it for so long. Because I think that in those instances when you have . . . you have your base, your base meaning your family, is changed when you're younger . . . it's interrupted like here, like my boyfriend he's not really aware of what it's like to have a broken home, when you have a divorce. And here I'm always constantly analyzing you know "Well, I think we should communicate" and all this and I'm uneasy about commitments. Like feeling I'm going to get hurt or something. Not overly paranoid but very aware and so I think that's how my feelings carry into my life. How, in different situations.

(It makes you aware of new things and being careful about somethings you might like?)

Because if I had never known I'd probably . . . maybe I would be more to jump into relationships and "Oh, yeah sure, let's get married, yeah" and now I just don't really look into it especially with the rates of divorce are so high. People aren't thinking before and plus with the option of divorce, people are like "Well, if it doesn't work out we can have a divorce". And getting married, I

think that's totally against the Bible and I don't stand for a divorce. So I want to make sure it's right.

(You mentioned the lemon and then the water . . . say more about that.)

The bitterness? Like other feelings that . . . Bitter, like it'll go away in a little while. Like it'll be. . . it can be really strong, like that's all you're thinking about.

(Like feeling hate or feeling spite.)

Somewhat. Yeah, that it can go away. Having a glass of water was like getting a hug, or "I'm sorry", things didn't work out between mom, or you go to bed and don't think about it, it's a new day. Kind of clears the way for a little while. That's what I mean by the water. I'm praying that I hope things will get better. Having saying something will. And . . .

(That's like water too?)

I think . . . I just had another thought about my dad. I think that he, he's a good . . . , he need, needs, or needed more commitment to God, I think. I think that was important to him, I think. And being away from my home environment in Minnesota, my two families divorced, remarried and all that -I've come to know myself and I always liked to go to church and learn about the Bible and God, that's another thing I just thought of right now. That's the thing I did on my own. We always prayed at meals and stuff but it's following through with this whole daily life on the surface. How did I get sidetracked?

(You were talking about . . .)

Bitterness and the water . . .

(I don't think that's sidetracked.)

Good.

(Anything else about your experience of feeling two different feelings about that situation or more than one feeling?)

No. I know it's something I can't change how they are, but I can change how I am. And I know that I can't dwell on it. It's there life, and I have to take care of myself. I know that I have to accept them as they are. That they have had their mistakes and I've had mine, their's are just alot different than mine. So that's what I feel. That's

how I adapt. I have adapted to the situation. It's almost like I have a fake attitude almost like . . . it's kinda like when I see my step-relatives I always play up to them, do the little step-niece thing - I accept them for it, I respect them because I respect my - I'm suppose to respect my step-mom because my dad wants me to and it kinda all goes hand-in-hand. But I still . . . I've accepted my step-mom as a person so . . . and I still love her even though what happened and how it happened. It's just kinda weird that I play up to them - the step-relatives. I'm nice to them and I'm going to say mean things to them, because that's my responsibility as an adult. You just don't go up to them "I don't think you're very nice" and if they said something. I guess one time my aunt said something to me and I told her how I felt but I . . . as a whole I go over there and I don't say stuff about how they are or what they are. That's clear. So, that's kind of interesting.

(So is it like the water and how the feeling of bitterness can go away sometimes and that it gets taken away by the feelings of love you have for your family? And then you've done some things yourself to try and get rid of some of the bitterness like praying and having faith . . . and that sort of . . . and a step beyond that though it's like . . . like you'd like to have more of the water but at some point you can't . . . it become a little bit fakey. But there's still some lemon there and it would be nice to say "No this is all just water" and sometimes you pretend that it is, but it's still . . .)

Yeah, like I say maybe it's lemon water and not say it water. It's like just get through the situation. I don't know how good or bad that is. It may be good for one person but maybe it's not good for me because I feel angry inside so usually I release anger praying, exercising. I don't know. I don't like to hold in my anger. I don't like to yell at people.

(So those feelings still go together. Before you talked about biting the lemon and taking the water and now you're talking about lemon water. They're still . . .)

Yeah. It's like whenever . . . I just keep on thinking about how I used to go out on my bike and ride for like 3 hours and just think. And it's just such a good time to place my thoughts and look at where I am and how I feel and what's going on in my life and . . . that's trying to get the water clear again. Is that good?

(Any other time that you can think of?)

Of bitterness? Two emotions at once?

(Emotions . . .)

It's not as powerful as the two I've described. Just little ones, like studying hard for a test and thinking you did good and you got a "C". You could sit there and think you got an "A". Whatever. . . .

(What are the two feelings there?)

"Gosh, what did I do?" I guess they end up to be "I guess I'll study harder for the next one" and then you start outlining and you write it down so you see it everyday. Feelings . . . I mean, it's hard to say because they're not as powerful. Just small things. Then you just make the correction - study harder. I like try to, yeah just correct my mistakes. I don't feel like a failure because I know I gave it all . . . if I had got an "F" I would have had a heart attack, but learn from my mistake. So . . . my other experiences . . . can't think of any right now. I'm just weighing my commitment with David, my boyfriend. Having to make choices, if I want to stay in Minnesota or stay in Knoxville with him and it kind of goes back to the divorce thing. My feelings there and how it really makes me almost eery or weird about the things that happen with the commitment such as marriage and you have to have all the elements, maybe a whole communication, love and understanding, lots of things. So I guess I have lots of feelings about that but it kind of goes back to what I said about the divorce.

(What are the different feelings involved in the relationship?)

I guess I'm not as there - I just get bitter if he tries to change me. It's just not going to happen in long-term, maybe short-term. But in the long run my personality is going to stay the same. I mean, I'm willing to change habits like maybe doing the laundry once a week instead of every two weeks. Um, I mean when I think about that situation I guess I feel unhappy or I'd laugh about it, but when I think about the divorce I don't laugh. So there are two different feelings. So they're not all depressing when I think of David and our commitment and what would be in the future. It's just kinda of scary. The unknown is scary, so that's why that feeling is involved in that too.

(Scary, thinking back what happened with your parents and what might happen. . .)

And not wanting to . . . and not knowing the unknown. Trying to make sure you have all the ingredients for a good marriage. You can love him but if you don't have what it takes usually you're in trouble. If you start off on the left foot, you're usually in trouble or you're more prone to it. But if you're already in a marriage - if you're in it and you start having trouble then you have to work through it. That's your responsibility. Beforehand you have the option to if you're going to commit or not commit.

(Anything else on the subject of having more than one feeling?)

None that I can think of right now. Is that okay

(That's fine.)

Appendix C

Ambivalence Categories
Participant 1
Episode 1

Out of balance

- * Uncertainty -- when you're unsure what the future holds
- * it's scary because you don't know...I could think right now that this is what I want to do, then get into it and not like it...feeling of uncertainty
- * It's scary to think you could pick something you just thought would make you happy
- * sometimes I feel insecure...people have asked me my major and I'm still trying to decide
- * my friends know exactly that they're going to be a doctor; then I look at myself and feel stupid, insecure because I don't have a grasp on the future
- * I don't have a grasp on the future and other people do -- sometimes makes me want to rush in and make a decision and not change it, but I can't do that
- * other times I wish I did have a magnet pulling me because it would take a lot off my shoulders if I knew which direction I was going in
- * sometimes I get this pressure on me -- I feel like I really need to make a decision
- * pressure (to decide) put on me by parents, friends mostly
- * most of the pressure is put on by myself for my own peace of mind

confusion

- * when you're unsure about what you want to do it's like different things come into your head all the time...which is best , but you never know until you know
- * when I think what I want to do with my life I have 2 feelings
- * I'm thinking about one thing over here -- 10 other things pop into my head
- * what's it like having all those feelings? . . . confusion
- * you have all these feelings about what you want to do and all these extra feelings about what your parents want you to do -- expectations -- confusion
- * if I picked a major right now I wouldn't even know why; I've enjoyed the 2 classes I've taken so far, but that's not enough reason to base your whole life on

Weighing

- * whether to commit to 6 more yrs of college or being out making money
- * s.t. want to go on -- get Ph.D. (beneficial in long run) or get more experience in a job field
- * you look at different options...you just try to weigh them to make sure one you pick is best
- * I've had to weigh my major -- would I be happy with it for my whole life? ...would I like doing it all those years?
- * do I want into journalism because know I'm a good writer?
- * if you're not being pulled by this one thing...sometimes I feel relaxed that I haven't made a decision about my major
- * I see an hourglass, all its time is dwindling away; it's really stupid...I'm just freshman...I have all these years

questioning

- * will you have way to make living and house to live in?
- * feeling what to do with my life
- * do I really want to do that?
- * right now I'm seeking for all the different options
- * sometimes the uncertainty is scary; sometimes it's a good feeling -- you feel you can explore all options and find out new things...there is a feeling of intrigue
- * when it's the relaxation and intrigue, I'm just carefree; and I really don't care if I decide today or in two years

judging

- * look at different options and think this one would be good and this one would be bad

Rebalancing

- * like one area is pulling me like a magnet saying "this is really what I want to do"

choice

- * when I choose a major, I will concentrate most of my efforts on that
- * want the satisfaction of knowing I've made a decision
- * if I knew what I was going to do, would take weight off my shoulders...think I would feel better

Participant 1
Episode 2

Out of balance

- * it's so weird to have those feelings at the same time (devastation/joy)...I would go from just bawling and crying to thinking she's not on machine with all those tubes any more and she'd have to be so much happier
- * this whole feeling of joy came over me and at the same time I'm sitting there crying -- it was weird
- * there are 5 million feelings when someone dies -- it's scary
- * How in the world am I going to live every day without her here?
- * How am I going to go on?
- * one extreme is here and one extreme is here and how can they combine -- your stomach is upset and you feel like you are going to throw up the whole time and then the ultimate feeling of being happy, like falling in love (I could visualize her being happy) and your heart is so excited; and then to have these feelings come together is weird because it's a compromise

unexpected

- * I've never felt that way before; I never thought you could feel totally opposite feelings at the same time
- * before you think everything is black and white, think you are either happy or sad or you think you can't be happy and sad at the same time. It just doesn't seem right.

Weighing

- * grandmother died after long illness; so sad, but at same time we felt like she's in better place, not suffering
- * feelings of devastation, but at same time...she's better off -- she's in a wonderful place
- * She was never going to get better; this was the best possible thing to happen -- to stop her suffering

questioning

- * Why are we so upset because she's happier than we are now?

judging

- * why are we upset she's gone? ...sort of selfish; it's just that she's not going to be here for us anymore
- * It's weird; I've always felt it's selfish to cry
- * I looked over at my parents totally destroyed, and I thought I shouldn't be happy, but I was

Rebalancing

- * I felt good and bad at the same time, but it was so extreme because I felt really, really bad
- * My sadness definitely overpowered my happiness...the loss of a person dear to me creates a sadness that is indescribable, but still the happiness was there

change

- * and you catch yourself...I caught myself being happy and guilty about it

Participant 1
Episode 3

Out of balance

- * it's weird because I felt so mad at him (boyfriend) sometimes, but I loved him to...those are two opposite feelings you can have
- * you're sitting there going: "I can't be this angry at this person I adore", but you are

unexpected

- * when we moved here, angry at dad for uprooting me, but love my dad...just the way he did it -- he gave me a whole week...one day he just said we're leaving
- * thinking how can someone I love so much make me so angry because you're not used to being angry at this person... it's a different feeling
- * it's a totally strange feeling to feel something other than love for him

Weighing

- * angry at my dad, but love him more than all my friends combined
- * when we moved I was thinking, I'm going to miss my friends so much, but then thought of all new people I would meet

Rebalancing

- * I was angry with him, but loved him more than all my friends combined
- * he's the most important thing in my life
- * when you're really angry with someone you love, subconsciously you think, "How long am I going to stay angry because I know that eventually the love will overcome this anger I feel"
- * not like while I was angry at dad I stopped loving him; just anger was overpowering for awhile

change

- * I was mad but I knew I wasn't going to hold it against him the rest of his life or anything
- * I knew eventually that I was going to get over it and not be mad at him any more
- * after awhile I got tired of being angry at my dad; it took too much out of me and so I just quit it

Ambivalence Categories
Participant 2
Episode 1

Out of balance

- * I was very angry without any way to get rid of the tension and yet being very, very scared I would have to move out, incredibly frightening
- * you say if things don't change I'm going to leave and know the whole time that things aren't going to change and there was nothing I could do about that
- * I felt like in order for me to keep on going, to make something of myself, that things were going to have to change or I was going to have to get out of there
- * I remember that day as if I were sitting on top of the house watching myself; I don't remember it as being me
- * the anger was simply I wanted to get out of the situation and I wanted to do it through my aggression; I knew I could kill him; I knew what I was capable of but it frightened me; fear of losing my own control, losing what control I have over myself, over my environment

unexpected

- * I didn't know what to expect moving in with my father

confusion

- * I hadn't been speaking to my father for years, but I knew I would have to move in with him; I was confused, I didn't know what he would say
- * I was scared to death but I was so angry I wanted to do it; I was so confused -- I had to go somewhere
- * the confusion was like what do I say/do?
- * I guess the confusion came from a lack of knowledge of what's going to happen to me, the future
- * I don't know why I put up with it for so long or why I suddenly woke up one day and said, "I've got to get out of here;" I guess that was part of my confusion

Weighing

- * my mother's boyfriend was a fairly nice man, but he was a real loser -- on drugs and everything
- * my brother and sister and I all left the house, so I don't feel so all alone
- * I was young, I had no transportation, no money, I wanted to stay in school, but I had to get out of that house

questioning

- * I know it hurt my mother when I moved in with my father, but it was something I needed to do, all of the compulsion; you start to question things and wonder why and change the way you think

judging

- * she always told me my father was a great ogre, evil and a madman -- none of which is true
- * I don't want to pick a right or wrong in the situation

Rebalancing

- * I felt like I was being forced, I didn't feel like I had another choice
- * the feelings told me what to do; it was like a guidebook or a compass in you head; no matter how uncomfortable it got to hold that compass, no matter how hot it got you keep holding on because you knew that compass is going to take you where you need to go
- * I was aggressive towards them and I felt scared sometimes that I was going to hurt them; feeling angry and scared like a message saying: "You really need to go"
- * I was feeling anger and fear and for a moment there, anger took over
- * by the time I had all those feelings at once I was: "This is the way things are and this is the way things will be and nobody can stop that"
- * there was fear, yeah there was anger, frustration, but the overall sense of accomplishment of taking charge of dealing with those things in the manner I could deal with them

change

- * it was sad because I knew I could never go back; I could never let myself be humiliated in any way,
- * moving in with my father was one of the best experiences of my life -- getting the idea of the ogre out of my head
- * when I look back on it, I can never think back on it like it was even remotely as me; I look back and see somebody else
- * the feelings kept me aware of who I was and what I was trying to do; I was me more than I was the child of my parents; it was like a realization of self, no longer being my mother's child; it was being me

choice

- * I was angry and scared and I started making plans to move out
- * the boyfriend smoking pot in the house; I refused to live live there
- * I felt like once I made my decision, there was no going back
- * neither one of my parents ever talked about custody because I made all my own decisions
- * I had the sensation that I was taking charge, it was like being charged, electrified and those feelings were giving me energy to feed off of

- * all the power was in my court, I was in control because I was doing something
- * I really went out on a limb; I did it myself (left home); it felt so good, like shackles had fallen off of me; I was a free man and those feelings carried me through, kept me going, kept me charged
- * there were a lot of mixed feelings coming up to that point, but I did it on my own and it sure didn't feel bad
- * I knew I could do that, so that's what I chose to do
- * it was a powerful experience; it solidified a lot of things for me; it made me think I have a choice in my life -- I am in control of my life -- no one is out there pushing buttons on me

Participant 2
Episode 2

Out of balance

- * I made the decision to stay, but I felt kind of lost
- * I never had all those feelings together before (I've had them separately -- it's like not just being alone, but being alone in the world, being outside

unexpected

- * I felt so unhappy, lonely; I suddenly missed my family which is rare, extremely rare
- * I suddenly missed being with all of them at once, which is even more rare; I missed Thanksgiving dinner; I felt upset
- * my family had Thanksgiving together -- it was the first time where we had really split up
- * at least now I know what I am in for -- I know I better have something on a grand scale to do
- * the experience was unique in that it was my first -- now I will know what to expect

confusion

- * I was up here all alone and I didn't know what to do

Weighing

- * my mother asked me to come for Thanksgiving, but I'm like I need the money, I need to work
- * I did need the money, but don't know if I need it that bad
- * I went home for Christmas, so now I feel like next holiday I can stay up here and work -- I need the money desperately to stay in school and spring break would be a wonderful opportunity to make money -- but I know if I stay it will be terrible, a horrible experience
- * I'm going to hate it and I still might do it anyway

questioning

- * why did I do this? why didn't they talk me out of this?
- * they told me it was going to be like this -- why didn't I listen to them?

judging

- * I felt upset; I didn't want to say it was my fault
- * the feelings I had were being lonely, being outside; wanting to blame someone else when it was all my fault

Rebalancing

- * I felt pretty bleak; it was extremely debilitating -- all friends were gone, everyone was at home for Thanksgiving
- * I went and ate Thanksgiving dinner with my sister who lives in Knoxville and then I felt like a sense of, a partial sense of belonging -- it felt fulfilling

- * that's scary; being lonely is almost always scary because loneliness doesn't have a time sensation to it; you don't say: " I'm only going to be lonely for a little while; it doesn't go away; you are lonely, you are lonely; your mind says: "Oh my God, this is going to be an eternity; when you're lonely time stretches out
- * like that 6 hrs. I spent with my sister was gone in 15 minutes; I ate in 3 minutes, sat and watched tv for 5 minutes, talked to my sister for another 7 or 8, petted the cat for a minute and then I was gone
- * having the feelings together was far more intense -- you can occupy loneliness with other things (e.g. work, friends, etc.); but that day I didn't feel like I was myself than I was the child of my parents like when I left home -- I felt like I was only myself, sense of separateness
- * physical necessity is starting to outweigh the emotional aspect
- * you know that some responsibilities outweigh your needs, your emotional needs

change

- * I never really felt all those; I've never had the same feelings though; I'm going home for Christmas though -- after Thanksgiving I changed my plans completely
- * the next time I am going to have a sense of dread

choice

- * wanting to blame someone else, knowing it was my fault, knowing I had made this decision, that I could have gone home, if I had done something
- * I felt guilty about all the decisions I made -- about not being with my parents
- * it's not like I'm being forced to watch something terrible happen and not be able to do anything about it

Ambivalence Categories
Participant 3
Episode 1

Out of balance

- * I love my father, but I'm very much at odds with him
- * he is the person that makes me feel the least intelligent and the least put together
- * he'll tell other people he is proud of me, but won't express that emotion to me
- * we are either so much alike or so much at odds
- * instead of getting angry mother he would make jabs at me
- * about me having the car wreck: it wasn't, are you ok? it was, who's going to pay for this?
- * instead of taking it out on her, he took it out on me helped me
- * he bailed me out and bought me another car -- all these things were to tell me he loved me, but through his money is the only way he knows how to handle that
- * I used to get real angry because he had so much and she had so little
- * I thought I was going to have a nervous breakdown because I cried every night for 2 weeks
- * this is bizarre -- I write my dad thank you notes when he takes me to the ballet; that's what I do with M.'s dad

unexpected

- * when my mother had financial trouble, he bailed her out -- I never expected to see that
- * he bailed her out and I was really surprised; I couldn't believe it happened
- * he cried when he said he was going to do it; I'd never seen him cry
- * seeing him giving that way was really different and it made me surprised
- * I can really depend on him if I have to; I never had before
- * I never realized how deviant our relationship was
- * for the first time I thought my mom isn't who she represented to be
- * I thought when I moved up here that things would be different with him (father)
- * before he didn't have the opportunity to be involved in my life, but now it's come to my realization that he just really isn't interested

Weighing

- * he makes me feel unintelligent despite the fact that I have a 3.6 GPA and have been elected to executive office
- * I have done better in school than my brothers ever did
- * he's always pushing for me to work in a radio station
- * I love him but the feelings of not meeting up to his demands of being inferior were there
- * I think I can handle it if there is not a relationship there because it's not something I know about
- * all their fathers helped them move into the apartment and set up; it was my mother and boyfriend who
- * I do love him, he's taken care of me, he bailed me out of the car wreck; he really isn't that bad of a guy
- * I've had a 3.0 since I've been in college; my brothers never made those kind of grades

questioning

- * it makes you wonder why you have a relationship that is different from everyone else's

judging

- * he's not very good at giving praise
- * I live with 3 other girls and they all have normal relationships with their fathers and they just think my father is a beast
- * it makes you wonder what you did to make it (the relationship) different, then you go "I didn't do anything"

Rebalancing

- * I knew dad was there for me, but the price of him being there when I needed him -- I'm not sure was worth it
- * we had this big blow up and he hung up on me and went out of town leaving it like this for two weeks; I had a formal coming up and needed money; the dollar was most important in my mind and I was going to make up with him
- * I cannot take letting go of my self-esteem one more time to get his acceptance and it's not working
- * the feeling of inferiority far outweighed the feeling of love at that time
- * love for him was just outweighed by the pain he caused me
- * feelings of having let him down and the fact that I had taken care of the car totally overrode feelings of love
- * I'll go with him because it's a free meal, not for the joy of his company -- it's almost not worth it, not worth the hassle

change

- * subconsciously I knew why -- I cheated on my boyfriend before he could cheat on me -- I was not going to be my blind mother
- * yeah, it's affected me; I found the most stable boyfriend I could find -- he's the other end of the spectrum from my father

choice

- * I'm finally at the point where I don't just let it wash over; I said we're not going to talk about that and that's all there is to it
- * he didn't return my call, so I said I cannot let my self-esteem be flat down another time -- I'm not going to call
- * he's either going to have to give or there won't be a relationship there
- * I'm just going to concentrate on my future: reaching goals
- * the result of all those feelings together is that I have pushed myself back from doing stuff with him

Participant 3
Episode 2

Out of balance

- * she told me that she was giving me her complete support and I felt like they fed me a bunch of bull
- * it made my self worth go down having all those feelings at once
- * having more than one feeling made me doubt my peer group; it made me uncomfortable with my peer group

unexpected

- * What if I've had this misconception of what they think about me?
- * Did other people see me different than the way I think they did?

Weighing

- * I know I can handle this job and I'm still going to run for it
- * no one said anything bad about me; it's just that another girl was adamant about her roommate being chosen
- * when it came to the popular vote -- I got the job -- that helped my self-confidence
- * the rejection part of it was painful, but then you buck yourself up and think "that was only 7 people, not the whole group"

questioning

- * I wonder if that's the way people really look at me
- * What if they don't like me?
- * Did I choose the wrong thing? Am I not suited for this job?

judging

- * feeling like I'm being judged in a split second

Rebalancing

choice

- * I chose not to run for office because I would have to give up another honor
- * I was going to keep trying until I knew for sure I wasn't going to get the job

Participant 3
Episode 3

Out of balance

- * I was so happy to have a niece, but I was so jealous that my dad's attention and enthusiasm would be spent on her
- * the only thing I can say about having more than one feeling is that it leads to a lot of stress
- * sometimes I can't sleep at night because my mind is just going-going-going

Weighing

- * I go back and forth from one feeling to another: I shouldn't be so jealous, I'm being silly, I feel guilty

judging

- * it made me feel like I was being selfish and ridiculous

Rebalancing

choice

- * there's nothing you can do about it

Ambivalence Categories
Participant 4
Episode 1

Out of balance

- * I felt I'm not allowed to feel the way I feel
- * I was taking it all on
- * I felt like it was being done to me -- that she might die and I would lose her out of my life
- * I remember thinking -- I've got to be strong for him, I can't let him see how this is upsetting me
- * I was really scared because there wasn't anything I could do -- I couldn't fix it
- * I felt powerless
- * there was nothing I could do or say to make it better
- * I felt really scared because it was totally out of my hands and everybody else's as to what was going to happen
- * it was overwhelming; I felt really tired, really drained
- * I felt guilty because I couldn't imagine feeling that way over my own mother -- I'm not close to her
- * when it was all going on it felt like a whirlwind
- * there wasn't anything I could do to stop it from happening -- I was just there
- * I remember thinking: I'm acting crazy; I'm acting like a lunatic; I remember feeling like I was just nuts

confusion

- * feeling all these feelings at one time and I didn't know what to feel
- * I didn't know what was ok to feel; I just didn't know
- * these messages come in all the time and before I know it I'm confused because I don't know what's right for me
- * I couldn't say anything when I talked to her on the phone; I think that had to do with the confusion of not knowing what to do, I didn't know what to feel, what was ok
- * I was real caught up in this whirlwind and I didn't know what to do
- * I was feeling caught up in the middle of all this stuff -- like oh my God what am I going to do and I cried and cried
- * I don't know what am I supposed to be feeling, what to do

Weighing

- * I felt so sad that she was sick, I cried, but I felt like I had to be strong for him
- * I have these rules in my head that say I have to be strong
- * I have to do certain things, there are certain things I can't (not supposed) feel or do; I was taught those things in my family
- * I had these messages in my head that said it's not ok, you're not allowed to feel that
- * I felt guilty because it was happening to her not to me

- * in situations where there are feelings like fear and anger my mom taught me to be strong and supportive of other people, don't think about yourself -- then maybe when you're alone, like alone in a closet, then it's ok
- * I had all these feelings at once, but once I sat down I was able to separate them; I would work from one feeling to another
- * I'd think about a feeling and it would pass and then I was going through another feeling
- * I was able to separate them and try to figure out where they were coming from, what they meant and what I needed to do
- * into evening I had pretty much gone through all of them
- * my grandmother died of breast cancer; I thought about that

questioning

- * I felt angry at God because she had just come into my life 2 years ago; I remember saying to God, "How can you do this to me?"
- * I felt real anxious, my head was just going: How am I going to get the money to get there? If it is cancer, what are we going to do?
- * what's going to happen to my husband?
- * how am I going to make all of this better?
- * how am I going to handle all this?

judging

- * felt guilty for feeling angry; you're not supposed to feel bad -- she's not your mother
- * I felt like it wasn't ok for me to feel sad and angry because it wasn't my mother; it was my husband's mother who had a lump in her breast
- * I felt real guilty because I felt selfish
- * I felt so overwhelmed I felt like I had to break it down to try and figure out what was going on with me

Rebalancing

change

- * I went through and talked to everybody that I needed to and it dissipated
- * I went from one to the next feeling individually -- I don't think I figured anything out, but I felt I acknowledged it
- * when I broke it down and acknowledged it, it was easier to handle; it wasn't pleasant, but it was easier to handle
- * when I stepped back I realized what was going on -- that's when I felt that this is nuts, when it felt crazy
- * I was able to step back and look at myself and my husband; saying things I didn't mean but like I couldn't stop myself from saying them

choice

- * I was trying to make sure it was ok for him, so instead of letting him see me cry I went in bathroom and turned on the water and cried
- * I was trying to take care of him and make sure he didn't feel any of that (fear, anger, etc.)
- * I was trying to figure out a way to get to her
- * I realized what I needed to do -- be honest with husband
- * told him what had happened to me and that I didn't want to protect him -- that was his job not mine

Participant 4

Episode 2

Out of balance

- * I was so angry with my husband that I hated him and everything he stood for and at the same time I remember thinking I love him; it was really intense, so intense
- * I was so angry but at the same time it was like I love him and there wasn't anything I could do about that
- * I wanted to leave; I don't like this; I'm over it -- I don't want to be married anymore -- I wanted with all my heart not to feel love for him, so I wouldn't have to go through all the adjusting
- * I would have liked to say: I don't like this, let's call it quits, but there wasn't anything I could do about it
- * it was real hard for me because all the stuff I had to deal with because of this other person and their feelings
- * I wanted so bad to get out of it but yet I wanted so bad to be in it
- * it felt like a whirlwind, like I was real caught up and there was nothing I could do about all the stuff going on around me; I couldn't stop it, I don't know; the feelings circled me, trapped me in
- * like I'm bombarded with feelings; I was caught up in all these different things, right in the middle; I couldn't handle it -- I was so overwhelmed

confusion

- * rage and love and wanting to leave; I was scared I didn't know what to do or how to be there
- * I didn't know what it (being married) was supposed to be like
- * having those different feelings made me confused
- * it felt like a whirlwind, like I was real caught up and there was nothing

Weighing

- * I was real angry about being married, adjusting -- I was married so he was the one I was supposed to be angry at
- * the love was there and there wasn't anything I could do about it, just like the anger

questioning

- * Why did I get married? -- I hate this person
- * I was sitting in my car yelling at him, "I'm leaving you" and I thought this is crazy, why am I doing this?

judging

- * I was angry about being married because I had to break down those walls, but it hurts and it's your fault

Rebalancing

- * no matter all the things I was angry with him about -- it wasn't ok, but I still loved him
- * the anger overrode everything; it wasn't till later that I realized that you're not just angry

change

- * it seemed ok to make a choice to feel all that; I felt before I left that I didn't have a choice -- there wasn't anything I could do about it

choice

- * the adjusting was the hurt that I feel when I have to open up and be vulnerable -- its like breaking down those walls and forcing myself to be closer to him
- * I could deny it if I wanted to, but it's there (love for him)
- * if I wanted to be married, then I had to go through all this stuff (feelings and adjusting)
- * (re. whirlwind) the only thing I needed to do was leave to make it stop
- * reason I wanted to leave was to make all the feelings stop; I knew that consciously as I was driving off; I don't know if that's why I came back, but I immediately turned around and came back; I made a choice -- it seemed
- * when I left and decided to come back, I choose to go through it and feel whatever I had to feel; I didn't feel powerless; I didn't feel overwhelmed
- * I felt like choosing to do it took away the added burden -- I mean it took away the blaming somebody else for the way I felt; that made it my responsibility

Ambivalence Categories
Participant 5
Episode 1

Out of Balance

- * it was weird having all those feelings because it was a hard decision to make
- * it was odd having that pull in me, all the different things
- * it was frustrating having all those feelings going through my head
- * that was the problem: I wanted to do the wrong thing

unexpected

- * it's not all that common; one emotion was pulling me this way and one (emotion) wanting me, well having to, do something else

Weighing

- * I was wanting to go out with my girlfriend, but I had cousins coming in from Florida that come in once a year
- * my aunt, their mother, died and they kind of detached a little from my side of the family
- * I had this one opportunity to do something with them
- * I don't have anything in common with my cousins, d/k them
- * they are so much different than me
- * I used to see them a lot, but since their mother died they have been different; they act weird toward my grandparents
- * I really didn't have any desire to do anything with them
- * my girlfriend and I are very close and we hadn't been out for awhile because she had been out of town
- * when I graduated, my cousin sent me \$50, which is pretty good, you know
- * I knew it would hurt my cousin; I felt if I didn't she would be upset with me; I didn't want to disappoint her
- * I felt sorry for her because her mother died; my cousin took it hard -- she was in the hospital, she was disturbed
- * I wanted to have a good time, enjoy myself; had plans
- * my girlfriend was mad at me

questioning

- * wondering what I should do

judging

- * my girlfriend probably shouldn't have been mad at me
- * it was the right thing to do, definitely so

Rebalancing

- * I had already made plans to go out with my girlfriend; I didn't want to but I went out with cousins instead
- * we (girlfriend and I) wanted to do something, but that was one chance to go out with cousins, so I did that
- * I did it because she wanted to go out kind of bad; it was to satisfy my cousin plus for my conscience -- I didn't want to feel bad
- * I did what I thought was right
- * everybody, my relatives, wanted me to take her out; it was instilled in my mind it was the thing I should do

change

- * after I stepped out and looked at myself I just laughed about it and it lifted -- the tension was gone

choice

- * I didn't want to go out with them, but I chose to anyway
- * I'd much prefer to see a movie with my girlfriend, but I chose to go with my cousin -- I didn't want to feel bad -- I didn't want to have a guilty conscience for not going out with them
- * picking the right thing to do, choosing between my options

Participant 5
Episode 2

Out of balance

- * I needed to study, yet I wanted to see the basketball game
- * I was mad because I shouldn't go and I really wanted to
- * I was real tense and I couldn't really read and study

Weighing

- * I was tired from trying to decide between my options
- * I'm the biggest sports fan, but I had a test coming up and I had a lot of reading to do for it
- * feeling jealousy at people who went to the game judging
- * you can see what you are thinking and you can judge self

Rebalancing

- * I had no choice if I wanted to make a good grade
- * I wasn't jealous after I stepped outside myself and realized how dumb it was
- * after I realized how I was being, it cleared my mind and it made it easier to study

change

- * I could step out of myself and laugh at me for being jealous; it was a weird feeling; pretty funny when I looked at it
- * it's weird when you step outside of yourself -- you see yourself differently; instead of just thinking, you see what you are thinking
- * it's weird to step out and look at yourself because you don't really realize it; you see it from someone else's perspective -- a whole different way of looking at it

choice

- * I was disappointed at not being able to go to the game and not too high on having to study; I'm sure there are lots of things that I have to choose between

Participant 5
Episode 3

Out of balance

- * while we were broken up I'd be mad at her, mad at myself missing her, feeling sad at the same time
- * being mad and being sad at the same time (about breaking up) it didn't seem like that fit
- * it was odd; it made me want to figure out what to do quicker so it would be resolved -- there wouldn't be a clash any more -- so I'd have one feeling that was my own feeling that I did feel
- * it was a burden having all those feelings, it weighs you down; they are heavy on your mind all the time; weighing down against each other, keeping pressure on you until you figure out which way you should do it
- * anything that requires thought is harder with all those pressures on you, those emotions; because they are opposite feelings really
- * looking at it and saying there is something wrong because it happens so much (breaking up)

unexpected

- * it was odd -- it doesn't happen every day

confusion

- * that was weird -- I didn't know what to do
- * it kept me real indecisive about should I call her; that was kind of weird, made me uncomfortable
- * I wanted to get my head cleared; sort it out one way or the other as quickly as I could

Weighing

- * maybe we should break up for more than a few days and take a break from each other; it was too weird -- when we got along, we got along too well and the we'd fight over something stupid and break up
- * maybe we should step back and look at our relationship and decide what is wrong with it
- * if we waited longer before getting back together, we'd have time to look at those feelings questioning
- * what would be the right thing to do?
- * wonder what you should be feeling

judging

- * if I thought I was right I would resent her
- * maybe resenting her because she was right and I was wrong
- * I wondered what should I be feeling and seemed like if you could figure out which ones were right and which ones were wrong then you would know what to do

Rebalancing

- * just pushing the feelings out of the way temporarily was the easy way out
- * feelings from breaking up were pushed aside, but weren't gone forever

choice

- * I wanted to have a decision one way or the other

Ambivalence Categories
Participant 6
Episode 1

Out of balance

- * it takes a lot to knock me down
- * it's like they (the feelings) all become 1 feeling and you feel lost (I had it -- that's not exactly the word I wanted to use)
- * it's uneasy when can't learn from something and walk away
- * it's draining when you feel everything at once
- * I feel like I did (feel them all at once) b/c I was so drained and so tired
- * there was a big dark cloud over my head
- * I felt like I was stuck
- * I hit it and it was like the whole world stopped

unexpected

- * I hit it, I didn't think I was close; it was really a shock; it's unexpected
- * it seems shocking that I would say something like that ("I can quit now")

confusion

- * I was so confused
- * I didn't know what to think
- * all these things rushing around in my head and each of them have different emotions
- * I still sound kind of confused
- * there was not a clear line, like I'm confused and now I am feeling angry; they were just flowing; I could be crying, then laughing and the next second sad again

Weighing

- * it was almost like relief when it (the accident) first happened -- like "I can quit now" (I've never been a quitter)
- * it's my responsibility since spending so much time
- * I'm a high achiever
- * my parents didn't pressure me
- * it's (the money) a big burden on my parents
- * I felt I was being a loser if I quit
- * I'm not going to totally blame him
- * it's not his fault; it's my fault
- * I still have conflict of emotion: love the sport, but I don't like the fear questioning
- * d/k if like a message from God saying: you don't have to do this any more
- * d/k if accident happened to test out my will
- * I still question myself
- * not knowing if this was a test if my commitment -- to see what I was made of

Rebalancing

- * I know I have to do certain things to achieve
- * I sacrifice things that aren't going to help me achieve
- * I put pressure on myself to make choices
- * my priorities have changed (grades better now)
- * to be able to learn and walk away usually takes time

choice

- * I could make a choice I felt
- * but there was still an option (go home)
- * subconscious was saying: now have excuse to quit

change

- * my perspective has changed (I know it (sport) won't be here forever)
- * accident helped me see; I can see the light
- * could be part of growing up

Participant 6
Episode 2

Out of balance

- * when your base meaning, your family, is interrupted, changed when you are younger, it makes you aware
- * if you start off on left foot (in marriage), then you are usually in trouble
- * I'm uneasy about commitments
- * it's like lemon water
- * weird that I play up to step-relatives, almost a fake attitude
- * my feelings make me eerie or weird with things like commitment or marriage
- * the unknown is scary

unexpected

- * studying hard for test, thinking did well, then get a "C"
- * he never set time for us kids; he always had time for . . . made us see her (step-mo's) side of family

confusion

- * it's a big mix-up
- * they pulled the wool over my eyes
- * I d/k how clear it is
- * Gosh, what did I do? (re. "C")

Weighing

- * I'm weighing my commitment to my boyfriend
- * I love him b/c he's part of me -- I'm part of him
- * he's my dad; he nurtured me
- * he's done lots of good things; hasn't done s.t. right
- * life isn't perfect
- * I see the hurt he did to someone I love
- * it's not hardcore hate, I want to say bitter
- * respect step-mo b/c dad wants me to
- * nice to them b/c my responsibility as an adult
- * I love my dad, but I despise him for that
- * hate her for lying to me, but love her for being there while I was growing up
- * he made it hard for mother
- * all along it was his fault
- * mom didn't wreck marriage
- * its against my morals -- it's improper
- * I don't stand for divorce; it's totally against Bible
- * dad needs more commitment to God
- * they've made mistakes
- * I've made mistakes

questioning

- * what do you do?
- * lots of feelings, makes me question things a lot
- * I'm constantly analyzing - I'm very aware
- * I just try to make it through situation; I don't know if that's bad or good

Rebalancing

- * their (dad & stepmother) mistakes are different
- * used to ride bike for 3 hrs & think, look at where I am, what's going on in my life -- that's trying to get the water (lemon-water) clear again
- * don't feel like failure b/c gave it my all

change

- * the bitterness can be strong, but can go away
- * I can't change how they are
- * I've adapted to the situation

choice

- * I'm glad I feel it in a way; I'll never do that when I'm married
- * they say you grow up like your parents, but you do have the ability to stop that pattern
- * going to church, reading the Bible, I did that on my own
- * I have the ability to stop the pattern (of parents) since I have been aware of it for so long
- * beforehand, you have the option to commit or not
- * I can change how I am
- * I just like to correct my mistakes (study harder)

Ambivalence Themes
Participant 7
Episode 1

Out of balance

- * Being sure that He doesn't exist and then being kind of scared to be so confident in it
- * it's like a turmoil
- * I mean it would be nice if I could be blind and not think . . . not think out of that pattern; I mean, that would be nice if you didn't have to go out of your little mode
- * kind of feel different than a lot of people

unexpected

- * You're scared. You're like "Oh, Second Coming, I guess I was wrong"

confusion

- * (So what would be some of the feelings involved?) Well, confusion
- * when you're confused but sure; it's like I'm sure there's no God, but there's this little part, it's like "You know, I shouldn't say that it's kind of cocky."

Weighing

- * I don't believe in God; but then it's like what a thing to be wrong about
- * there are so many people that do believe in God, you kind of think "Well, I think . . . yes I do." It's kind of like you're almost scared not to
- * there's always that other part of where you've been brought up to think a certain way

questioning

- * that little part that makes you wonder if you're wrong

judging

- * I don't like religious people; it seems like a lot of them are hypocritical; and I don't see a whole lot of good coming out of it
- * Almost being angry at people who do or waste so much time believing; you could be doing something better than wasting your time in church

Rebalancing

- * it seems like you would be settled, settled in your way of thinking
- * those are the strongest feelings I have, not believing in God; and, so that's what I'm going to convey to people

Participant 7
Episode 2

Out of balance

- * the relationship I have with my mother, it was really strange
- * I guess she wasn't in reality anymore . . . psychosis
- * it's like we changed roles and I would start taking care of her when she would go through an episode of crying and acting like a little kid
- * it was like she would look to me to help her; I was 15 so it was strange; and we kind of switched roles like that for good
- * you just get hurt because it's never, it never resolves; it just goes on and on and on; you can't get out of the role that you end up playing
- * turmoil; I don't think I'll be very settled in my life
- * it's like just kind of helpless; another one feeling, helpless
- * like a roller-coaster; like you're on a roller coaster and you can't get off
- * it's like you're stuck on this ride and have no control over it what so ever

Weighing

- * it's like I'm mad at her because she's not there; but then I feel sorry for her questioning
- * but it's kind of wierd, after she goes through one of her moods, she'll act normal and makes you kind of wonder if any of it happened; like "God, did I imagine it? Or did it happen?"
- * is there something wrong with her or wrong with me?

judging

- * I kind of feel responsible; and I'm not doing anything either, so I feel bad about that

Ambivalence Themes
Participant 8
Episode 1

Out of balance

- * I wanted to leave because the band wasn't showing up and it was kind of like I wanted to stay; kind of conflicting feelings
- * part of me was just like real excited and really getting into what was going on and then part of me just wanted to hold back
- * kind of two opposite sides of me, it was kind of weird
- * I wasn't fully concentrating on the game

unexpected

- * it turned out I didn't get what I'd expected; it was kind of like a disappointment in a way
- * I guess I could use the word "uncomfortable"

confusion

- * I was hesitating or something; wasn't exactly sure what I wanted to do
- * because you feel two different ways that are exactly opposite: just didn't make a lot of sense
- * just didn't make sense to me how I could be so excited one moment and then like the next one thinking about leaving
- * they (the feelings) just seemed kind of strange
- * just kind of felt like confusing I guess . . . thoughts were kind of conflicting and I didn't really know what to do; losing track of what was going on
- * I just like to feel like I know what to do and have got everything, you know, under control; and think that I know things like I do; in this situation I don't know what's going on, you know
- * that's kind of mixed up

Weighing

- * like I didn't measure up to what he had; it didn't seem as good as he was; all this stuff going through my head questioning
- * wondering how long it was going to take, and if I really wanted to wait
- * I was kind of wondering if I was locked in . . . wondering if I really wanted to be drinking and all

judging

- * I know what my thoughts should be

Appendix D

**Table 1: Frequency of Occurance of Major and Minor Themes
in Participant Descriptions**

	P-1	P-2	P-3	P-4	P-5	P-6	P-7	P-8
Out of Balance	3/3	2/2	3/3	2/2	3/3	2/2	2/2	1/1
unexpected	2/3	2/2	3/3	0/2	2/3	2/2	1/2	1/1
confusion	1/3	2/2	0/3	2/2	1/3	2/2	1/2	1/1
Weighing	3/3	2/2	3/3	2/2	3/3	2/2	2/2	1/1
questioning	2/3	2/2	2/3	2/2	2/3	2/2	2/2	1/1
judging	2/3	2/2	3/3	2/2	3/3	0/2	2/2	1/1
Rebalancing	3/3	2/2	1/3	2/2	3/3	2/2	1/2	0/1
change	2/3	2/2	1/3	2/2	2/3	2/2	0/2	0/1
choice	1/3	2/2	3/3	2/2	3/3	2/2	0/2	0/1

Note. P = participant, ratios indicate number of episodes coded for a theme per number of episodes described by a participant

Appendix E

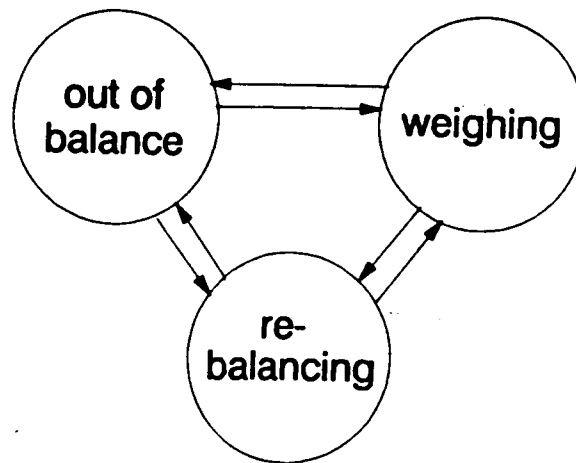


Figure 1. Structural relationships of the essential categories of the experience of ambivalence.

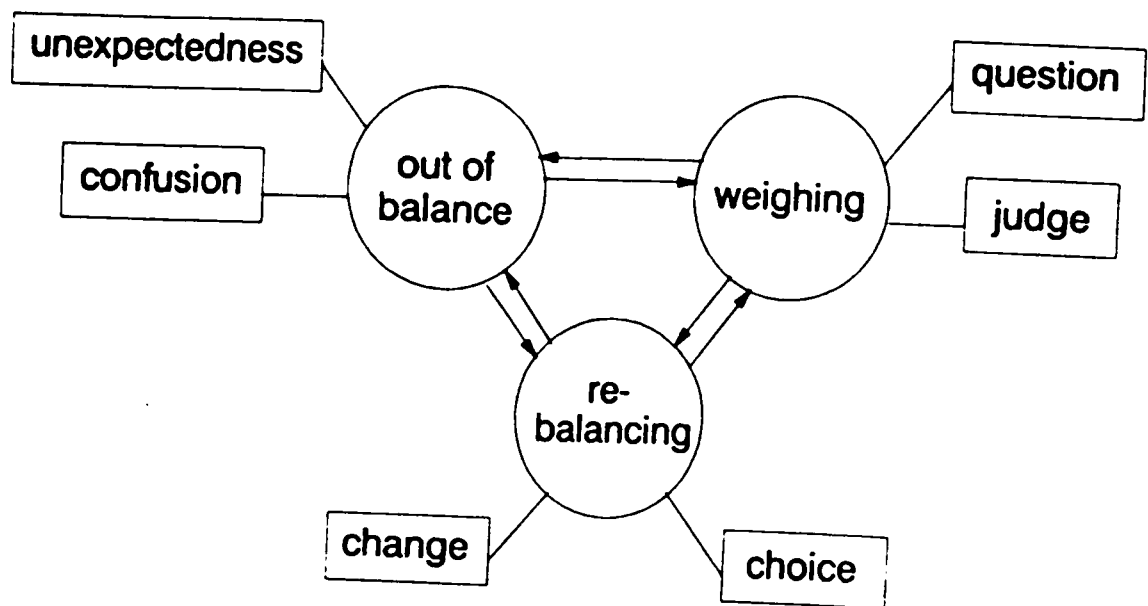


Figure 2. Relations of major and minor themes in the experience of ambivalence.

VITA

Ronald Steven Harrist was born in Lubbock, Texas, April 10, 1960. He entered the University of Houston in September, 1978. The following semester he spent travelling in Europe and resumed his undergraduate studies in the fall. In 1980, he transferred to the University of Texas at Austin, where he received his Bachelor of Arts in English, with a minor in biology. He received his Masters degree in school psychology from Trinity University in San Antonio in 1986. He began a doctoral program in clinical psychology in the fall of 1986 at the University of Tennessee. He completed a pre-doctoral internship training program at the Vanderbilt-Veterans Administration Hospital Consortium in Nashville, Tennessee, in the summer of 1990, and received his Ph.D in the summer of 1991.

Currently, Dr. Harrist is a post-doctoral research fellow at Vanderbilt University and visiting scholar at the University of Texas at Austin.