

## **Co-Counselling Manual**

**John Heron 1974, 1979, third and revised edition 1998**

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### **Foreword**

This manual is offered as an aide-memoire only. It is given to participants in basic training courses in co-counselling, and it presupposes experience of such a course.

### **Introduction**

Co-counselling is a method of personal development through mutual support for persons of all ages and both sexes including, with suitable modifications, children. It is not for those who are too emotionally distressed to give attention to a fellow human on a reciprocal basis. It is a tool for living for those who are already managing their lives acceptably by conventional standards, but wish significantly to enhance their sense of personal identity and personal effectiveness. It is part of a continuing education for living which affirms the peer principle.

### **Theory**

My formulation of the theory on which the practice of co-counselling rests is as follows. All persons are differentially stressed by virtue of their immersion in the human condition which has at least the following sources of stress: the separation trauma of birth and death; the tension between physical survival and personal development; the relative inscrutability or apparent meaninglessness of many phenomena; the intractability of matter; the inherent instability of unprogrammed and probably unlimited human potential; the presence of other stressed humans.

On the one hand such stressors can be enabling, providing the shock of awakening that promotes personal development and cultural achievement. On the other hand they can be

overwhelming and disabling so that personal and interpersonal behaviour becomes distorted and persons interfere with each other, either unawarely or deliberately and maliciously. There are thus two sources of distress: the primary source in the human condition, the secondary and derivative source in the interference of other people. The latter is what co-counselling is most obviously and immediately concerned with.

Human infants have remarkable though undeveloped capacities for love, understanding and choice but lack the information, skill and experience with which to actualise them. They await wise and loving education, but are also highly vulnerable to interference by others – the blocking, frustration, rejection or neglect of their deep human potential. The result of such interference is a line of distress in the mind-body, the emotional pain of grief, fear, anger, shame or embarrassment, together with correlated physical, often muscular tension. The effect of such distress is to suspend the effective response of human capacities – of love, understanding and choice – so that the child is left with an indiscriminating recording of the traumatic interfering interaction, including the child's own maladaptive response. These distress recordings can become ingrained and extensive through cumulative repetition of interference from parental and other sources. There is invariably a double interference, firstly with the deep human potential, and secondly with the child's attempt to find a way of dealing with the pain of this through catharsis: hence the double negative message – “Your human capacities are no good, and the pain you feel at their suppression is no good”.

In our emotionally repressive society, distress recordings acquire a dynamic functional autonomy, often unidentified and unacknowledged. They are the source of unaware, compulsive, maladaptive and rigid behaviour patterns. Some of these patterns are periodic, triggered by particular types of situation that significantly resemble the early interference situations: for example, when rational behaviour breaks down in the presence of someone seen as an authority figure. Others are endemic or chronic, a persistent distorted way of feeling and thinking and doing that infects behaviour in a wide range of situations: for example, a chronic self-deprecatory attitude. Here the trigger is being in the world at all – which has become associated with a deeply ingrained distress recording.

When triggered in later life, the distress recording unawarely plays itself out., either the child's end or the parent's end of the recording being reproduced in behaviour and attitude, depending upon the situation. Or both may be reproduced at the same time as in a chronic internal pattern of self-condemnation. Typical recordings, which can combine and interact in various ways, are those of:

- The victim: the compulsion to be trampled on and abused, to give power away, to feel worthless.
- The oppressor: the compulsion to dominate, to control, to manipulate, to denigrate and despise.
- The rebel: the compulsion to oppose authority figures, to resist and fight the established system
- The rescuer: the compulsion to be responsible for, to solve others' problems for them, to take on their burdens.

Such patterns may be acted out, in interactions with other people; or they may be acted in, in internal transactions within the self. In either case they are, for the adult, maladaptive. For the child they have some survival value – the trauma and pain become encoded as a ritual distortion that at least enables the person to continue on without total breakdown and disruption. But they restrict and constrain a mature, flexible and innovative response to changing circumstances in the adult.

Co-counselling theory also holds that catharsis is a way of releasing distress from the mind-body. Keeping some attention in the place of the aware adult in present time, the client in co-counselling reaches down into the hidden place of the hurt child, honours and experiences the pain, and releases it:

- Grief in tears and sobbing,
- Fear in trembling,
- Anger in loud sound and storming movement,
- Certain core or primal pains in screaming,
- False shame and embarrassment in laughter.

This is a healing of the hidden painful memories, a reintegration of the occluded past. The effects of sustained catharsis are:

- Spontaneous insight: the traumatic past is seen in a new light, re-evaluated, perceived with a truly discriminating awareness for the first time. Its connection with current distortions is understood in a way that illuminates.
- The break-up of patterns, of rigid distorted behaviour and attitude: the tension of contained distress that sustains them has been released.
- The liberation of frozen needs and capacities: love is freed from its distorted childhood fixation, intelligence can function flexibly instead of in a stereotypic and dogmatic way, choice is released from the illusion of powerlessness.

The person can thus live more creatively and awarely in response to what is going on now.

Finally, the way of regression, catharsis and reintegration of the distressed past is complemented and indeed consummated by the way of celebration – the joyful affirmation of felt strengths, of experiences and projects that are worthwhile, enjoyable and creatively rewarding.

## **Method**

Co-counselling is a two-way process among peers, each taking a turn as client and counsellor (or worker and helper). It typically involves a two-hour session with each person taking an hour in each role. Client and counsellor exercise appropriate skills, acquired on a basic training course of at least 40 hours, with on-going groups, intensive workshops and advanced workshops for systematic follow-up.

Co-counselling is not simply client-centred, it is client-directed. The client is the person who is taking her turn, working on the way of regression and catharsis, and the way of celebration and affirmation. The basic techniques are primarily for the client to work with on herself, with the aware supportive attention of the counsellor. This is particularly important in the early stages so that the client does not become strongly dependent on counsellor interventions.

The counsellor does not interpret, analyse, criticise or advise on problems, but only acts within a contract indicated by the client. This contract may ask for non-verbal attention only; for occasional interventions when it seems to the counsellor that the client is missing her own cues, is getting lost in her own defenses; or, at a later stage when the counsellor has acquired the requisite skill, for interventions which work intensively with client cues and which focus in on areas of primary material. The counsellor's interventions are always in the form of a practical suggestion about what the client may say or do. The rationale of the suggestion is not verbalized; and the client is in principle free to reject the intervention.

On the way of regression and catharsis, the client is trained to take charge of the discharge process by always keeping a focus of attention in the place of the aware, mature adult outside the distress of the child within, and to work with accessible and available distress, with what is on top. This ensures that the healing of the memories occurs in a relatively undistruptive way, in a sequence and at a pace which the client can readily handle. The client works not only upon childhood experiences but also on more recent and present relationships, both personal and professional, and also on future expectations and on political and institutional tensions. Some of the introductory techniques the client uses, and which the counsellor recommends when she intervenes, are:

- Literal, evocative description of early events, rather than analytic talk about them.
- Repetition of words and phrases that carry an emotional charge or loading.
- Association: catching emergent thoughts, images, memories, insights that occur spontaneously.
- Psychodrama: becoming oneself in the early scene and expressing directly the negative or positive feelings that were suppressed at the time;
- Contradiction: verbally and non-verbally putting energy in the opposite direction to the constraints of the negative self-image.

Many other techniques are used, and co-counselling at its various stages of development can accommodate the four primary ways of managing catharsis: active imagination, passive imagination, active body work and passive body work. Transpersonal co-counselling is an important development for working on the repression of, and for transforming one's being by, the sublime and archetypal; and for addressing some of the primary sources of tension in the human condition, mentioned in the theory section above. Fundamental throughout is the validation, affirmation and celebration of the inalienable worth of humans and their capacities.

### **History and Organisation.**

Co-counselling was developed out of other sources by Harvey Jackins in Seattle, USA in the 1950's and 1960's. Under his auspices it spread through the USA and Europe in the late 60's and early 70's, and thereafter to other parts of the world. Networks of co-counsellors were organized under the title of Re-evaluation Counselling Communities. This organization early on became theoretically rigid and internally authoritarian. In 1974 Co-counselling International was formed as an alternative network. It federates entirely independent communities of co-counsellors in several countries. These communities develop their own decision-making procedures consonant with the peer principle, and their

own approach to the training, assessment and accreditation of teachers of the method. International workshops are held regularly in the USA, Europe and New Zealand.

Co-counselling as a practice primarily occurs in people's own homes on the basis of one-to-one informal arrangements. The purpose of a network or community is to provide up-to-date address lists of trained co-counsellors, and to provide a continuous programme of groups and workshops for follow-up, group support, intensive co-counselling, refresher course advanced training, teacher training and social change activity.

## **Basic Principles of Method**

**Role of client** The client is in charge, is self-directed, decides what to work on, how to work on it, how long to work on it. It is her time. She is free to accept or reject the counsellor's suggestions. She is concerned with the liberation of her own potential. Her working options include, among others:

- Discharge of past distress followed by spontaneous insight.
- Creative thinking and problem-solving.
- Goal-setting and action-planning.
- Extending the reach of awareness.

She deals with what's on top, with what she can handle and needs to work on at the time, with whatever combination of methods seems to her appropriate.

**Role of counsellor** Each partner takes a turn as both counsellor and client.

- The counsellor gives supportive, expectant free attention; she is present for the client.
- She does not interpret, analyze, criticize, give advice, etc.
- She has a contract to intervene when the client appears to have lost her way, to be blocking, to be 'in pattern', to be missing her own cues. This is a normal contract (see below).
- Her interventions are in the form of suggestions about what the client may say or do, based on verbal and non-verbal cues and a tentative mental guess about what is going on in the client.

**Free attention** All available attention that is not:

- Distracted by events in the environment .
- Sucked into / swamped by internal distress. Free attention is the facilitating energy of awareness. Giving free attention is an intense activity, a fundamental validation of the person to whom it is given.

**Contracts** The client needs to make it clear at the start of a session what kind of contract she wants.

- **Free attention contract** The counsellor gives free attention only. No interventions.
- **Normal contract** The counsellor intervenes when the client appears to have lost her way, to be blocking, to be 'in pattern', to be missing her own cues. There is a co-operative balance between client self-direction and counsellor suggestions. Occasional interventions.

- **Intensive contract** The counsellor works intensively with client cues, making as many interventions as seem necessary to enable her to deepen and sustain her process. This may include leading a client in working areas being omitted or avoided. Frequent interventions.

**Discharge** Facility in discharge of past distress is one of the early goals of the client. Discharge sooner or later elicits spontaneous insight, fresh recall, a reappraisal of the area being worked on. It is to be distinguished from dramatization or pseudo-discharge, which is to act out distress without discharging it (e.g. pseudo-grief or pseudo-anger).

**Balance of attention** The client can only discharge when she has enough free attention outside the distress and when her attention is balanced between the distress material within and what her free attention is engaged with outside it, such as the supportive presence of the counsellor, the technique she is currently using.

### **Present Time Techniques**

These techniques are for you as client (1) to get your attention out, to release your free attention, at the start of a session, so that you may have attention available for maintaining a balance of attention when working; (2) to restore your free attention if you get shut down in the middle of your session; (3) to bring you back fully into present time after working on past events.

- **Good news** Relate your current good news, what is going well in your life at present, what agreeable events have occurred.
- **Present description** Describe the immediate environment, give a literal account of what you can see and hear and touch around you. Describe your counsellor, give a literal description of the appearance of your counsellor.
- **Future promise** Relate what you are looking forward to doing over the next few days.
- **Simple pleasures** Relate any simple pleasures of your life that come to mind; or your favourite colours, smells, tastes, sounds, textures, etc.
- **Micro upsets** Describe very trivial little upsets you have had recently.
- **Reverse calculation** Say the eight times table backwards: 8×12 is...8×11 is...etc.
- **Movement** Move around slowly in the environment, noticing changes of view and perspective. Or move in an agile way, leaping, jumping, dancing, etc.
- **Change the environment** Rearrange items on the table, on a shelf, in the room
- **There and now**
- **Describe in imagination the scene beyond your visual field.** Then expand this to describe more and more of the planet.
- **Describe what you imagine is going on in a particular place you know well .**
- **Out of the body view** Describe yourself now from a position outside yourself .

### **Control Loosening Techniques**

To loosen up embarrassment and the denial and repression barriers:

- **Facial expression** Describe in detail your last meal, exercising all the muscles on the face in every possible direction.

- **Gesture** Describe a house and garden of your childhood, with elaborate gestures at shoulder height and above.
- **Tone of voice** Express your present state of mind and feeling in glossolalia (jabbertalk), or have a conversation with your counsellor in glossolalia.
- **Act into laughter** Sustain a loud, very vigorous artificial laugh.
- **Act into fear** Stand, press your finger-tips lightly but firmly into your counsellor's back and tremble all over (hands, arms, shoulder, head, neck, jaw and knees), hyperventilate, let some sound out.
- **Act into anger** Kneel in front of your counsellor, pound the air with your fists beside his head, and yell 'No' very loud into his eyes. Or the same on a cushion on the floor.
- **Mad dog** Shake an imagined mad dog vigorously off your left leg and yell. Repeat with your right leg.
- **Body shake** Shake each limb, then head and trunk.
- **Rapid breath** Breathe in and out very quickly saying 'Oh' on the out breath.

### **Basic Working Techniques**

These are for you as client to use in a self-directed way to dislodge control patterns and to facilitate discharge of stored distress and tension, and subsequent release of insight.

- **Literal description** Describe and evoke the sensory texture of a traumatic event, the sights, sounds, smells, behaviours, the exact dialogue used. Don't analyze the event, but be literal and detailed; and repeat the description.
- **Repetition** Repeat several times words and phrases that contain a hint of distress, some charge of emotion. Try repeating them louder, exaggerating the posture or gesture that accompanies them.
- **Amplification** Exaggerate and repeat any sudden distress-charged movements of hands, arms, feet, legs, plevis, head and neck. Find the sound that goes with the amplified movement, then the words. Who are you saying them to, and about what? For tight, rigid body postures, exaggerate them extremely, find the sound that goes with this, then the words, then develop the psychodrama. Or use body-rigidity contradiction (see below).
- **Psychodrama** Play yourself in an early traumatic scene. Let the counsellor be the other person in that scene. Say, and repeat to her several times, things that you never said at the time, but which express and help discharge the distressful feelings. Combine with acting into.
- **Acting into** Act into fear or anger, when appropriate, during repetition and when saying things in a psychodrama. This means simulating vigorously, and purely physically, the movements and sounds of fear or anger discharge. It often helps the real discharge come through, and sometimes it may be different from the acted emotion.
- **Free association** Let deeper levels of your mind work spontaneously.
- **Catch the thought** Verbalize any idea or image that suddenly presents itself during literal description, repetition, role-play, acting into, etc, and work with it, using any of the basic working techniques, as appropriate.

- Re-evaluation Verbalize any insights, new connections, thoughts or images that present themselves after discharge. Give them voice or work with them.
- Move around the pile Follow associations from event to event around the pile of distress to find an emotionally charged memory, the working area for your session.
- Start with what's on top Relax, take up the attention of your counsellor and wait until what is on top presents itself whether thought, feeling, memory or whatever. Then work on it, or move around the pile.
- Silent free association Relax, take up the attention of your counsellor in silence and allow the stream of consciousness to flow freely without control or interference, notice the whirlpool patterns, compulsive flows, restrictions and blockages in it.
- Spoken free association Relax, take up the attention of your counsellor and start talking quickly, loudly and non-stop, without control or censorship.
- Conscious dreaming Relax, take up your counsellor's attention, close your eyes, imagine a meadow of free attention and describe it. Then imagine a house of patterns on the edge of meadow. Invite a pattern out into the meadow, describe it, ask it what its message is, use this as a basis for a direction for working.
- Phantasize occluded material For operations under general anaesthetic, buried traumatic memories, imagine/phantasize what happened and work on the content of phantasy as if it were a memory.
- Phantasize on recall Let your imagination go on actual events and work on the content of the phantasy interwoven with reality.
- Contradiction Outwit your control-patterns of self-deprecation by saying and doing things that contradict the pattern, by putting energy or attention in the opposite direction. This releases discharge of the underlying distress. The art of the light direction. You use this when you feel put down, or when you find yourself putting yourself down in some major or minor way.
  - Full self-appreciation You affirm yourself in every way, contradicting any hint of self-invalidation in:
    - What you say.
    - Your tone of voice.
    - Your facial expression.
    - Your gesture and posture.
  - Partial contradiction What you say is self-deprecating, but your tone of voice, facial expression, gesture and posture are entirely positive.
  - Double negative You strongly exaggerate, in a theatrical way, the negativity in every way: in what you say, in your tone of voice, in your facial expression, and in your gesture and posture.
- Body- rigidity contradiction For shallow, restricted, taut breathing, use hyperventilation, with increasing sound on the outbreath. For rigid gestures and body postures, contradict them with wide open, freeing up gestures and postures. Find the sound that goes with these, then the words, and thence into a psychodrama.
- Contradiction about the other You can use positive, affirmative statements that contradict the negative feelings and thoughts about someone you are counselling



on. This will often release discharge of the emotional distress associated with that person.

- **Direction-holding** A direction is a well-aimed statement or word that releases discharge on a chronic pattern. To hold a direction is to work by repeating the statement or word, in order to release discharge. The repetition of the direction levers off the pattern and lets the discharge out. This is for the more experienced client, but beginners need to start building up the skill. Direction-holding deals with a great chunk of congealed history and distress. It is complementary to working on particular memories.
- **Scanning** You choose one major category of distress experience and one by one scan the memories that come to mind within that category. You briefly sketch in each memory and move on to the next. The idea is to loosen up a whole chain of linked experience, and thereby any primary underlying traumatic events that holds it in place. Here are some options:
  - Scan forwards in time from the earliest available memory.
  - Scan backwards in time from the present.
  - Choose a very general category, such as food, sex, money, religion or relationship, and scan the painful memories that arise within it.
  - Choose a specific negative category, such as times you have been rejected, missed opportunities, etc.
- **Identification check** You do this when co-counselling for the first time with anyone, in order to find out whether there are any unconscious projections at work. There are four steps:
- **Counsel on blocks in counselling** Always counsel on blocks in a session, that is, when you are stuck as client. Work on being stuck, for example, with contradiction.
- **Calling up fear** You may need to yell, shout, scream, call out and hyperventilate to pull up fear and start the fear discharge. You need to relax immediately after the shout, to let the fear roll off. Try the finger-tip grip: dig the tips of your fingers firmly but lightly into small of counsellor's back to help the fear discharge.
- **Night-dreams** Work on night-dreams exactly as you do on real-life events, i.e. use literal description, repetition, psychodrama, acting into, etc. Or try monodrama, which means you speak as each of the different key images in the dream.
- **Playing the other end of the distress recording** The client may sometimes find it helpful to start work on a distressful incident by role-playing the behaviour of the person who hurt her.

## **Celebration and Empowerment**

These are techniques for celebrating and exercising your personal strengths and powers. They affirm and manifest the real you, the empowered person, in charge of self-creation, social change and ministry to the planet. They consummate discharge techniques and manifest the potential released by healing the memories. They also go beyond the healing, affirming strengths you have had for years, and potentials never blocked yet still uncovered. They can be used in part of, or for the whole of, a session. It is quite a good idea to use them for the last part of a discharge session as a way coming back into present time and into the fulness of your personhood. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Celebration** Affirm your presence in the world, your potent embodied and embedded relationship with other presences in the world. Celebrate your personal power, your capacities, developed abilities, achievements. Celebrate your passionate engagement with people and places, your interests, interactions, friendships, intimacies. And so on.
- **Openness** Affirm your openness to wider reaches of being which embrace this world, and to the immanent, interior depths within you. See transpersonal expression below.
- **Creative thinking** Think aloud on the frontiers of your thinking on any topic which fascinates and engages you.
- **Problem solving** Address a challenging issue which confronts you, with the excellence of your resourceful intelligence.
- **Project\_the future** Boldly imagine and express positive possibilities for yourself and the world in 5, 10, or 15 years' time. Imagine extraordinary possibilities for the world in 200, 500 or 1000 years' time.
- **Life-style analysis** Creatively consider the various domains and social roles in your life, the relations between them, envision potentially fruitful developments and changes, then set some realizable goals and plan relevant actions to achieve them.

### **Starting a Session**

As client, make clear the kind of contract you want. Then your working options, among many others, include:

- Present-time techniques.
- Control-loosening techniques.
- Identification check (with a new partner).
- Start with what's on top and free associate around the pile of memories to find the charged working area for that session.
- Chronological scanning.
- Direction-holding.
- Unfinished business from a previous session, etc.

### **Finishing a Session**

As client, this means you are coming back into present time. Options include:

- End the work by verbalizing the insights you have gained.
- Affirm a positive direction for future living.
- Do some goal-setting and action-planning.
- Celebrate yourself, your capacities and powers.
- Use any of the present-time techniques.

### **Counsellor's Tool Kit**

For the person whose turn it is to be counsellor.

- **Free attention** Give supportive, sustained, expectant, totally aware and alert free attention, always wider and deeper than the content of your client's speech.
- Remember the distinction between the person and the pattern: it is the basic rationale of giving free attention.

- Clarify the contract If your client forgets to specify the contract, prompt her to state clearly what kind of a contract she wants.
- Identification-check Remember to remind a new client about this.
- Interventions On a normal or intensive contract, make practical prompts, based on client cues, about what your client may say or do to facilitate discharge.
- All the following items presuppose there is a normal or intensive contract
- Client cues Work with cues your client provides: slips of the tongue, sudden phrases that show a hint of discharge, negative statements that need contradiction, distress-charged body cues, and so on.
- Accept your client's rejection of your suggestion. Don't be attached to your interventions.
- Always interrupt a pattern Always intervene with a suggestion when your client is talking or behaving compulsively, in pattern.
- Interrupt premature closure Clients often tend to avoid further discharge in some area by coming out too soon. With a normal or intensive contract, encourage your client to open up the area again with more description, repetition, psychodrama, acting-into, etc.
- Help gear change Be alert to cues that suggest your client's need to change from literal description to a psychodrama, from the discharge of anger to the discharge of fear, from grief to anger, etc., and intervene to help the change.
- Validation of your client Affirm your client, when appropriate, during discharge (thus you may say 'You really are loved' while she is discharging on rejection); by touching/holding/supporting during discharge; by verbal encouragements; at the end of the session.
- Interrupt withdrawal from fear Client unaccustomed to fear-discharge may curl up, withdraw, run away; so reach out and hold them supportively, encourage them.
- Light techniques to switch levels Be a master of light directions to help the client switch to a lighter level of discharge when her attention gets sunk, swamped by too much distress.
- Mimicry Take over the client's control pattern in facial expression, tone of voice, gesture, posture, in what she says. This is very effective tool if it is used while giving totally supportive free attention.
- Counterpartal psychodrama Play negative figures that client is discharging on, and use triggering phrases, facial expression, tone of voice, gesture.
- Look for bodily rigidities Encourage your client to contradict them.
- Watch for dramatization Allow for some dramatization since it may lead into discharge, but interrupt persistent dramatization by suggesting a phrase or an action that gets authentic discharge going.
- Help your client back Remember to bring the client to insight gathering, positive directions, and to present time at the end of the session.

### **Some More Techniques**

For you as client to use when you have a good grasp of basic working techniques and can discharge freely.

- Take charge now You assume you are distress-free now and give a non-stop account of how you will take charge of your life in all respects and transform it. This may lead to copious discharge.
- Non- verbal Work for a whole session or part of a session using non-verbal directions: sounds, gesture, posture, gaze, moving to and from your counsellor. No speech is used. Contradict the control patterns built into your normal use of speech by working without speech.
- Body contact Work standing or kneeling in your counsellor's arms or kneeling with head and shoulders lowered on her lap.
- Bad parent – good parent When you are in touch with deep infantile rage, kill the bad parent (attack a cushion, etc.) with blows and cries while your counsellor acts out the parent dying with cries and moans, falling about, etc. When the parent is dead, the counsellor becomes the good (ideal) parent, holding you, giving love and support, while you express positive feelings to the good parent.
- Regression positions Assume infantile positions, e.g. lie on your back, knees in the air (as if in your cot); suck your thumb; play peeka-boo with your counsellor; suck your mother's breast (your counsellor's elbow); act into infantile screaming and rage (lie on your back, kicking and screaming). And so on.
- Primal When well into early material, hyperventilate, act into screaming (e.g. cry out for Mummy/Daddy), let full autonomic discharge occur with fine trembling, 'streaming', primal cries; let it continue until it works itself out; give space for the flow of insight afterwards.
- Birth work When in touch with natal material, as for example in a foetal position feeling pressures or tensions in your head, neck shoulders, buttocks, etc. invite your counsellor to externalize these pressures with cushions, then allow the feelings behind the tensions to surface and discharge. Allow plenty of space for rest, and hyperventilation to contradict controls on deeply occluded material. Training in client and counsellor skills is recommended and available in workshops on birth re-enactment.

## **Transpersonal Expression**

This is a form of celebration and empowerment whose primary purpose is stated in the first item below. The other secondary and supportive, discharge-oriented purposes presuppose some facility with discharge and a grasp of the basic working techniques.

- To celebrate and expressively manifest you as a spiritual presence in a unitive relation with other presences in our world. A transpersonal expression is a declaration like 'I am open to Being', 'I feel the presence of the whole', 'I manifest divine life', 'I am a galactic citizen', 'I abide in the free attention of the universe', but it is in your words, in your terms, in language that awakens you to your spiritual identity. Explore the declarations standing, with fulness of voice, posture and gestures.
- To discharge the fear that walls off wider forms of awareness.
- To discharge the embarrassment and fear that hides your spiritual identity from other people.
- To discharge the grief, fear and anger laid in by religious oppression and trauma.

- To release primary distress, the tensions of the human condition.

## **Compact Co-Counselling Manual**

There are three ways in which the client can work: The Way of Celebration

- Verbal celebration of you in relation in your world.
- Expressive celebration in movement, in song, in various forms of art.
- Transpersonal expression.
- Present-time exercises.

The Way of Regression and Catharsis

- Choosing to work on X.
- Scanning incidents of a certain type.
- Working on a particular traumatic incident by a combination of: literal description; repetition; amplification; association; psychodrama; acting into; contradiction.
- Direction-holding.
- Verbalising insights that accompany and follow discharge.
- Choosing to let X come up
- Work with what's now on top, then work by association down the pile.
- Focus on recent good experiences until work comes relentlessly into relief.
- Enter reverie, relaxation: let work float up.
- Meditate: let work emerge.
- Symbolic daydream: see what emerges.
- Active body work: hyperventilate, vocalize, shake/loosen/ thrash, do self-massage heavy or light. See what is released.
- Passive body work: have counsellor use pressure points, work on tense muscle, use light or heavy massage. See what is released.
- The Way of Action
- Problem-solving by creative thinking.
- Cultivating awareness of emergent goals.
- Goal-setting, short-term and long-term.
- Action-planning for specific goals.

Basic Polarities in the Client's Work

- Going the way of celebration or the way of regression and catharsis.
- If going the way of regression and catharsis then choosing to work on a known X or choosing to let an unknown X, whatever it may be, come up.
- Working on a particular incident or on a pattern (i.e. a whole lump of distress).
- Working in a light way with light discharge to get attention up and out, or work in a deeper way for heavier discharge, when there is ample attention to sustain it.
- Going by the route of imagery (memory, imagination) or by body work. Four routes to catharsis: active imagination, passive imagination, active body work, passive body work.

## **Follow Up and Community Building**

- Confidentiality What you as client work on in a session or group is confidential to that session or group.
- Sexual attraction between those who first meet as co-counsellors. Make it verbally explicit, counsel on it and discharge on it, rather than act on it.
- Reaching out Who may need attention and a session but be too distressed and shutdown to ask?
- Possible activities for a local community
  - Regular co-counselling.
  - On-going groups.
  - Intensive co-counselling workshops.
  - Rotating client marathons.
  - Specialist workshops: transpersonal, couples, families, sex, creativity, etc.
  - Community counselling centres.
- Co-counselling International is a federation of independent co-counselling communities worldwide, with international workshops held regularly in the USA, Europe and New Zealand.