



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

The author of this thesis has granted the University of Calgary a non-exclusive license to reproduce and distribute copies of this thesis to users of the University of Calgary Archives.

Copyright remains with the author.

Theses and dissertations available in the University of Calgary Institutional Repository are solely for the purpose of private study and research. They may not be copied or reproduced, except as permitted by copyright laws, without written authority of the copyright owner. Any commercial use or publication is strictly prohibited.

The original Partial Copyright License attesting to these terms and signed by the author of this thesis may be found in the original print version of the thesis, held by the University of Calgary Archives.

The thesis approval page signed by the examining committee may also be found in the original print version of the thesis held in the University of Calgary Archives.

Please contact the University of Calgary Archives for further information,

E-mail: uarc@ucalgary.ca

Telephone: (403) 220-7271

Website: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/archives/>

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Exploring Self-Help Literature: Promoter or Preventer of Authentic Growth?

by

Colette Marie Prager

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

CALGARY, ALBERTA

DECEMBER, 2001

© Colette Marie Prager 2001

ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to explore self-help literature with a view to determining whether certain exemplary texts promote or prevent "authentic growth." The thesis includes the following elements:

1. Preliminary exploration of scholarship on various aspects of self-help literature.
2. Development of a concept of authentic growth by way of a critical analysis of humanistic psychological growth theories (i.e., Maslow, Rogers, Fromm).
3. Development of a tentative theory of growth emerging from weaknesses found in the aforementioned theories.
4. Application of this new tentative theory (Growth Model) as an interpretive tool directed towards assessing three exemplary self-help texts (Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking*, Dr. Wayne Dyer's *Your Erroneous Zones*, and Anthony Robbins' *Unlimited Power*) with a view to determining whether these three texts promote or prevent authentic growth.
5. Discussion of the cultural implications of the findings towards understanding the place and views of growth in popular culture.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to my Supervisor, Dr. Ron Glasberg. This thesis would not exist were it not for his support, patience, faith, and commitment to this undertaking. Ron's faith in me and my ideas gave me the courage and confidence to go forward with this project. Thank you.

I would like to give special thanks to Christine Sopczak, Lorraine Bergh, and Professor Geoff Cragg for generously giving of their time to read this thesis and offer constructive criticism. I and this thesis benefited immeasurably from their honest critique. I cannot thank them enough.

I would like to thank Professor Christine Sutherland for her friendship, support, and encouragement over the course of both my undergraduate and graduate degrees. Christine is not only a knowledgeable professor, she is a personable, approachable person who is always ready to listen and give honest advice. I would also like to thank Christine for agreeing to be a member of my Oral Examination Committee. Based on my prior experiences, I knew she would give an honest assessment of my work.

I would like to thank the other two members of my Oral Examination Committee, Dr. David Marshall and Dr. Morny Joy. I would like to thank them both for their contributions to my graduate course work. Dr. Marshall enthusiastically undertook a Directed Reading course with me and, together, we became more knowledgeable in the history and roots of the self-help movement in North America. Dr. Joy's course provided background information on hermeneutics.

I would like to thank Dr. David Taras for backing my original application to do a Special Case Master of Arts. Without his support, this master's would not exist. I would also like to thank Sylvia Mills and Marion Hillier for their help over the past few years. Their eager willingness to answer questions and provide information is truly appreciated.

I would like to thank the Faculty of Graduate Studies for their generous financial support received in the form of Province of Alberta Graduate Scholarships and Dean's Special Master's Scholarships.

Finally, I would like to thank the myriad friends and family members who supported me over the past few years. Their love, faith and support made this journey much more enjoyable than it would have otherwise been. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart!

To Dr. Ron Glasberg:

For his never-ending support, encouragement, faith, and commitment.

To Professor Christine Sutherland:

For her generous friendship and kind support over the years.

To Lorraine Bergh:

For her amazing and candid friendship, her dependable support throughout this journey,
and her willingness to brave the thick of this thesis
to provide an honest assessment of its content.

To my wonderful family and friends:

For their patience and their tireless support and encouragement.

Thank you.

I love you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval Page	ii
Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements.	iv
Dedication.	vi
Table of Contents.	vii
List of Tables.	x
List of Figures.	xi
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION.	12
Introduction	14
Caveat: Glossary.	14
Justification for the Centrality of Authentic Growth and Theories of Growth ..	14
Self-Help Books as Theories of Growth	16
Objects of Study.	16
Purpose of Thesis and Research Question.	17
Layout of This Thesis	18
Chapter 1: Introduction	19
Chapter 2: Literature Review.	19
Chapter 3: The "Experts".	19
Chapter 4: An Alternative Theory of Growth and Growth Model.	19
Chapter 5: Analysis and Reply to Research Question.	20
Chapter 6: Concluding Remarks.	20
Conclusion	20
CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW.	21
Introduction	21
General Discussion of Self-Help.	22
The Roots and Cultural Context of Self-Help Literature.	28
Self-Help Literature.	36
Conclusion	45
CHAPTER 3 -THE "EXPERTS".	47
Justification for Selection of the "Experts".	47
Caveats	48
Organizing Structure: Telos and Process.	49
Envisioned Telos: Abraham Maslow (1908-1970).	50
Envisioned Telos: Carl Rogers (1902-1987).	52
Envisioned Telos: Erich Fromm (1900-1980).	55
Envisioned Process: Abraham Maslow (1908-1970).	57
Envisioned Process: Carl Rogers (1902-1987).	62
Envisioned Process: Erich Fromm (1900-1980).	69

Critique of the "Experts"	76
Telos	76
Process	80
Conclusion	83
CHAPTER 4 - AN ALTERNATIVE THEORY OF GROWTH AND GROWTH MODEL	85
Introduction	85
A Tentative Alternative Theory of Growth	85
Growth Model: Envisioned Telos	86
Characteristics of Authentic Growth Derived from Telos	88
Justification for Trans-Human Telos	93
Growth Model: Envisioned Process	93
Growth Model Explained	94
Structure or Layout	95
Alienation, Intimacy and the Alienation-Intimacy Complex	96
Positive Alienation	100
Negative Alienation	101
Positive Intimacy	102
Negative Intimacy	103
Relationship Among the Elements	105
Summary of Alienation-Intimacy Complex	107
Environment: Love / Fear Dialectic	108
Authentic Growth	112
Inauthentic Growth	114
Conclusion	116
CHAPTER 5 - ANALYSIS AND REPLY TO RESEARCH QUESTION	118
Introduction	118
Justification for Book Selection	118
The Authors	121
Interpretive Tool: The Growth Model	122
Analysis: Norman Vincent Peale, <i>The Power of Positive Thinking</i>	123
Telos	123
Process	125
Analysis: Dr. Wayne Dyer, <i>Your Erroneous Zones</i>	127
Telos	127
Process	129
Analysis: Anthony Robbins, <i>Unlimited Power</i>	132
Telos	132
Process	134

Critique of Self-help Authors' Theories of Growth	139
Telos	139
Process	145
Peale	146
Dyer	149
Robbins	150
Summary	154
Reply to Research Question	157
CHAPTER 6 - CONCLUDING REMARKS: CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS, CRITIQUE, AND PERSONAL REFLECTIONS	162
Introduction	162
Cultural Implications	162
Critique of This Thesis	169
Generalizability of the Growth Model	172
Future or Further Research	173
Personal Reflections	175
ENDNOTES	177
GLOSSARY	196
REFERENCES	203
APPENDIX A: Humanism and Humanistic Psychology	213
APPENDIX B: Justification for This Tentative Theory of Growth	215
APPENDED C: Additional Aspects of the Growth Model	217
APPENDIX D: Robbins' Basic Theoretical Schema	222
APPENDIX E: Summary Table for Theories of Growth	223

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1 - A Closer Look at Alienation and Intimacy. 99

TABLE 2 - Robbins' Basic Theoretical Schema 222

TABLE 3 - Summary Table for Theories of Growth. 223

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1 - Maslow's Need Hierarchy.	58
FIGURE 2 - Rogerian Model of the Process of Self-Actualization.	66
FIGURE 3 - Growth Model.	95

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Self-help books constitute an eclectic, popular, pervasive, and powerful phenomenon in North America. They form an inexpensive, easily accessible, common source of "advice" on virtually any aspect of life that many people seek out when looking for "answers," guidance, insight, and so forth. As Starker (1989) so eloquently explains, self-help literature is the new Delphic "oracle"-humanity's "oracle at the supermarket." This new "oracle" is a multibillion-dollar-a-year industry which churns out over 2,000 new books a year, many of which reach best-seller status (Marrs, 1995, p.843). Moreover, past best-sellers in this genre remain popular well past their first appearance on the market. This cheering squad, fount of advice, and source of pep talks exists to provide people with the wisdom of the "experts," with insight, support, and encouragement. Regardless of what one's "problem" might be, a book seems to exist to address it-better yet, to "fix" it.

The popularity, pervasiveness, and power of this eclectic genre seems indisputable. Rarely can one find anyone who has not heard of self-help literature at all or who has not known at least *someone* who has read some of it. And, often, one has read some of it oneself. In fact, I, like many North Americans living in this alienated, competitive, conformist, consumer-based mass culture, have wrestled (and continue to wrestle) with various intrapersonal, interpersonal, and existential issues. And, I, like many North Americans, have at various times in my life, turned to self-help literature for "help"-sometimes in the hope of finding understanding, other times of finding direction; sometimes in the hope of finding clarity, other times of finding solutions; sometimes simply out of curiosity about a topic, other times, possibly unconsciously, in the hope of escaping responsibility. Regardless of my motivation for approaching a text, the result was generally disappointing. Rarely did I finish a text and rarely did I undertake the exercises or techniques proposed. At best, I accepted tiny portions of the texts; at worst, I rejected the entire book. In the mid-range, I felt anything from an ambivalence towards

the text to feelings of anger and disgust. There is an old adage that claims that when the student is ready the teacher will appear. Perhaps my difficulties and my unwillingness to follow the proposed "techniques" were simply evidence of not being ready to hear the teachers, the books' messages. Or, possibly, on some critical yet unconscious level, I sensed that the messages being propounded were detrimental or, possibly, unrealistic. But is this the case?

Because this genre is a popular, pervasive, powerful, easily acquired, cheaply-and-frequently-purchased, commonly-consulted source of wisdom, it is important to determine whether the advice proffered by these books is helpful or harmful, beneficial or detrimental to its followers. After all, Fromm (1955) warns that mass popularity and mass acceptance of something by mass culture does not automatically make it "good" for the masses. Moreover, if, as Vitz (1977) suggests, psychology has become a substitute for religion-people's new religion-then readers should look closely at its "doctrine." This thesis provides me with an opportunity to *consciously* read self-help texts and to examine their beneficence or detriment in at least one area of interest. Specifically, this thesis attempts to look closely at the efficacy of some texts' **growth** "doctrine" through close, critical, analytical reading. It is worth noting that another form of research could include interviewing consumers to obtain their opinions on the efficacy of this genre; however, for now, this thesis begins with personal analysis through critical reading. Additionally, one could question how many consumers read these texts in the close, critical, analytic style that is crucial.

This thesis analyses certain self-help texts' growth "doctrine" for two major reasons: (1) because authentic growth (explained later or check the glossary) is believed to be a, if not *the*, central goal of life; and (2) because self-help books can be read as **theories of growth**, telling people how best to grow and what best to grow towards. If authentic growth is indeed a, if not *the*, main goal of life, as proposed herein, then it is imperative that one assess the efficacy of following the dictates of the theories of growth put forth in certain self-help books.

Caveat: Glossary

A glossary of pertinent terms has been provided at the back of the thesis. However, it is important to realize that because this thesis attempts to deal with profound and complex topics, such as growth and a transcendent or trans-human reality, certain terms are difficult to circumscribe. This thesis has attempted to capture the essence of the terms used; however, it acknowledges that many terms, which aim to be inclusive rather than reductive, are inherently difficult, effusive and "fuzzy" in nature and, thus, are difficult to capture completely. Terms found in the glossary are emboldened the first time they appear in context in the thesis.

Justification for the Centrality of Authentic Growth and Theories of Growth

This thesis believes that the goal of life is growth or, more accurately, that life *is* growth. While one grows both physically and nonphysically, this thesis is not concerned with physical growth. Instead, it attempts to comprehend nonphysical growth. Why are we here? What is humanity's ultimate purpose on Earth? What constitutes *really* living or optimum living-the "good life"? The answer to such existential questions appears to be the following: Human beings live in order to "grow up." But what does that look like? While this might sound simple and straightforward, it is not. "Growing up" is much more difficult and complex than is often believed. Too often, nonphysical maturation is considered a "given," something that comes automatically with age, much as puberty is considered a physical "given" that comes automatically with age. While it seems likely that a certain degree of nonphysical maturity is attained unconsciously over the course of one's life, this thesis doubts that this "automatic"-i.e., unconscious-growth is the only type, let alone the best type, of growth there is. It seems that different forms of growth exist. For example, detrimental forms of growth, such as false or substitute growth (growth which appears positive, but is actually destructive in some way), or non-growth (e.g., stagnation), or reverse growth (e.g., regression) seem to exist, as do beneficial forms of growth.

More specifically, then, this thesis proposes that human beings exist, not simply to *grow*, which could be haphazard, unconscious, limited, and/or detrimental, but to grow in a particular way or in a particular direction or towards a particular destination or experience. That is, people live in order to experience a particular type of growth. Although key terms can only be explained later, this thesis proposes that the goal of life is to experience what will be called *authentic* (i.e., positive, beneficial) growth as opposed to *inauthentic* (i.e., negative, detrimental) **forms of growth**. Concomitantly, this thesis proposes that false or substitute growth, non-growth (stagnation),¹ and reverse growth (all explained later, in Chapter 4) comprise *inauthentic* forms of growth and are, in the long run, detrimental, inadequate, and unfulfilling to the individual. Despite potential appearances to the contrary, none of these inauthentic forms constitutes the type of growth which results in *really* living. In contrast, *really* living-the "good life"-consists of experiencing or achieving ***authentic growth***.

Built into the concept of growth is the notion of direction. Generally, when one thinks of growth, one thinks of it as forward movement towards some envisioned goal or destination. If this is truly the case, then one needs to know two pieces of information when considering growth: (1) Where is one growing to or what is one growing towards? and (2) How can one best get there from here? For the purposes of this thesis, these two aspects are called *telos*² and *process*, respectively. If the goal of life is to grow in a particular way or towards a particular destination (to grow *authentically*), then one must know where one is growing to (*telos*) and how best to get there (*process*) in order that one may judge one's progress and adjust one's methods along the way.

In the end, this thesis is interested in theories of growth because such theories, whether formal or informal, appear to entail both aspects, *telos* and *process*. Theories of growth envision an ideal goal to which human beings *should* grow, and they provide ideas on how best to achieve that *telos*. Together, these two components, *telos* and *process*, reveal what each theorist believes constitutes authentic (positive, beneficial) growth.

Self-Help Books as Theories of Growth

Self-help books on personal growth and development appear to sell their readers explicit and implicit theories of growth. These books provide their readers with ideas on what they *should* be growing towards (telos) and how best to reach that goal (process)-provided readers follow the authors' prescriptions *exactly*. But here is the key: Is the type of growth that self-help texts market truly *authentic*? That is, if consumers follow the dictates (the advice, techniques, philosophies, ideas and so forth) of these books, would they experience *authentic* growth? Or, would following the dictates of these books lead people to experience various forms of false growth and/or varying degrees of disillusionment or dissatisfaction with themselves? Or, would the effects or benefits of reading these books fall somewhere in between? This thesis attempts to answer such questions.

Objects of Study

The area of focus or objects of study are general, non-gendered, psychological self-help books on personal growth and development. "General" means books that are fairly comprehensive in scope. Unlike most self-help books, which tend to zero in on one small aspect of life and offer self-improvement techniques for that one specific area, such as books on self-esteem, assertiveness training, anger management, coping with loss, or heterosexual relationships, this writer tried to choose books which were more holistic in scope and offered advice on one's life as a whole, or on optimum living. Surprisingly, these were more difficult to find than expected. Specialization seems much more common than generalization, though general advice books in the self-help genre do exist. This thesis analyses books which focus on *general* personal growth and development. "Non-gendered" means books that are not specifically written for either men or women. Many books, especially books on improving self-esteem or relationships, explicitly or implicitly target women. (According to Ebben (1995), women emerge as the primary target and primary consumers of self-help books and women account for 75-85% of total sales.) Although there might be a gender bias in these "non-gendered" books, books purporting

to offer advice to the general population were chosen. "Psychological" self-help books means books that focus on improving one's personal (emotional, mental, possibly, spiritual) well-being. These books are worth studying in their own right because, besides being specifically geared to personal areas of interest (authentic growth and optimum living), they are written with the largest audience in mind (mass culture from the perspective of men and women interested in their overall general psychological well-being), and are holistic in their approach to psychological health (i.e., they focus on one's overall life, not simply one aspect of it). It stands to reason that these books' messages and their efficacy be questioned.

Caveat emptor (buyer beware) simply will not do. Individuals, as "mature," intelligent, conscious consumers, are best served by finding out whether that which they are buying—that is, self-help books, in general—is beneficial or detrimental, helpful or harmful to them. Unfortunately, a close reading of every self-help book is impossible due to the vast array of topics and titles falling under the rubric "self-help literature." As will be seen in the Literature Review presented in Chapter 2, research on books focusing on personal growth, in particular, is virtually nonexistent. By focusing on this sub-genre, this thesis hopes to partially fill that gap.

Purpose of Thesis and Research Question

The purpose of this thesis is to determine whether following the growth advice given in a particular type of self-help book would lead the reader to experience authentic growth as defined in this thesis. Specifically, this thesis asks: **If readers follow the ideas, advice, and procedures put forth in these general, non-gendered, psychological self-help books on personal growth and development, would they experience authentic growth as defined in this thesis?** This question is answered by establishing criteria for *authentic* growth (Chapter 4) and by approaching the self-help books that are analysed as theories of growth. Through critical reading, one can extract the texts' *teloi* and *processes* and compare them against the criteria established in order to assess the efficacy of these texts for generating experiences of authentic growth in their readers (Chapter 5).

After completing a review of the extant research on self-help literature (Chapter 2), it became apparent that, in order to answer this research question, other sources would have to be explored in order to gain a better understanding of what is meant by the concept "authentic growth." The theories of three psychologists, hereafter called the "experts," are explored in order to gain an understanding of their ideas on authentic growth. Specifically, this thesis examines the theories of Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, and Erich Fromm. This thesis contends that one can interpret these theorists' works as theories of growth and, hence, can extrapolate each theory's *telos*, proposed *process*, and conception of authentic growth.

After presenting and analysing the ideas of these exemplary psychologists, Maslow, Rogers, and Fromm, who have put forth well-known, oft-cited theories of growth, a working model (**Growth Model**) of what constitutes authentic growth for this thesis is created—a model designed to build upon the ideas put forth by these "experts." This Model puts forth a *tentative* vision of the ultimate telos for human growth and development in one's life and suggests a process by which to achieve that goal. Based on this working model of authentic growth, three self-help books (believed to fit the category of general, non-gendered, psychological self-help books) are analysed in order to determine whether following the dictates of these texts is efficacious in producing or experiencing authentic growth as defined in this thesis. The three self-help books which are analysed are Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking*, Dr. Wayne Dyer's *Your Erroneous Zones*, and Anthony Robbins' *Unlimited Power*. Ultimately, each book's telos is most crucial because there might be multiple paths one can take in order to reach the envisioned destination.

Layout of This Thesis

This section provides a structured overview of the layout of this thesis and provides a brief description of that which each chapter aims to accomplish.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduces the objects of study (self-help books) and explains reasons for studying self-help literature; provides justification for the centrality of growth; introduces the structural or organizational component or focus of the thesis-theories of growth (telos and process); describes the purpose of this thesis; presents the thesis question; provides a layout of the entire thesis.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Provides an extensive overview of the academic research that has been done on self-help literature to date; highlights that which is pertinent to this thesis; situates this study/thesis in the existing body of literature; directs attention as to where to focus in order to be able to complete this thesis (to focus on the "experts"-Maslow, Rogers, and Fromm-for visions of authentic growth).

Chapter 3: The "Experts"

Presents and analyses the theories of growth belonging to psychologists Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, and Erich Fromm-the "experts;" distills, presents, and critiques their ideas pertaining to authentic growth (telos and process); proposes areas worth further consideration.

Chapter 4: An Alternative Theory of Growth and Growth Model

Creates a link between the "experts'" theories of growth and alternative ideas to produce a preliminary and tentative, more complete telos and process (theory of growth); presents a Growth Model against which one can assess other theories of growth; describes more fully what constitutes authentic growth, thereby establishing criteria (for authentic growth) against which to measure the efficacy of the ideas presented in the three self-help books to be analysed; describes more fully what constitutes inauthentic growth.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Reply to Research Question

Justifies selection of the three self-help texts to be analysed-Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking*, Dr. Wayne Dyer's *Your Erroneous Zones*, and Anthony Robbins' *Unlimited Power*; analyses the theories of growth presented in these three texts; critiques the self-help theories of growth (telos and process) against the criteria gleaned from the Growth Model developed in Chapter 4; answers the research question regarding the efficacy of these theories for generating experiences of authentic growth as defined in this thesis.

Chapter 6: Concluding Remarks: Cultural Implications, Critique, and Personal Reflections

Considers cultural implications based on the findings in Chapter 5; critiques this thesis; discusses "generalizability" of the Growth Model developed in Chapter 4; speculates on further research that might prove beneficial to this overall subject; offers personal reflections.

Conclusion

General, non-gendered, psychological self-help books focusing on personal growth and development are the objects of analysis; developing a model of growth and applying criteria derived from this Model is the method of analysis. Through close reading of three self-help books, this thesis expects to be able to extract the self-help authors' respective theories of growth-teloi and processes. After extracting these aspects, one can compare their ideas on authentic growth (telos and process) with those of the Growth Model. By comparing the self-help authors' ideas to the new criteria, one can answer the thesis question. One can determine whether following the dictates of these self-help books would, indeed, lead to experiencing authentic growth as defined in this thesis.

CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

After an extensive review of the existing body of scholarship on self-help literature, it became apparent that much of this research was not going to provide what was needed for this thesis. That is, it would not provide guidance towards developing a useful working definition of "authentic growth" nor would it help produce a working tool or the criteria with which to measure growth. Instead, it became apparent that one would have to go a step further back and look to the "experts" for guidance. In this case, the "experts" are the humanistic psychologists upon whose work much psychological personal development/personal growth self-help literature appears to be based. The "experts"-Abraham Maslow, Erich Fromm, and Carl Rogers-their theories, and their relevance are discussed in Chapter 3. Nevertheless, the research on extant scholarship regarding self-help literature was hardly for naught. This chapter constitutes a summary of the findings regarding the viability of self-help literature with a distinct focus on what is helpful or pertinent to this thesis. Before continuing any further, however, it is important to stress that research was limited to sources pertaining to self-help in North America as it was felt that this area would be large enough in its own right. A comparison between the popularity, pervasiveness, and power of self-help in North America with other cultures would be a valuable and interesting enterprise, but it is outside the scope of this paper.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section is quite general in nature and offers information on various aspects of self-help, on the approach used or way this literature review is classified or organized, and on general findings. The second and third sections are more specific and focus on the roots of self-help literature and on studies pertaining to self-help literature respectively. These two sections zero in on what was found to be pertinent or useful in the general findings as well as discuss the insights gleaned from specific studies. Although a fairly thorough review of the research pertaining to self-help literature was completed, hardly any of it was directly useful to this

thesis. Instead, it became clear that the area of research in this thesis is unique and unstudied to date.

General Discussion of Self-Help

According to Reeb (1999), the term "self-help" was adopted from Ralph Waldo Emerson and his thoughts on the individual as the "designer and engineer" of his or her own life (p. 12). The term, however, is problematic. "Self-help" is extremely broad. It exists in a variety of formats and each format covers a wide range of behaviours. In fact, "self-help" is so broad that virtually no one and nothing—that is, no area of personal existence—is left untouched by this phenomenon. "Self-help" formats include a plethora of self-help groups (or group therapies), a large portion of which are 12-Step programs based on the original 12-Step program, Alcoholics Anonymous. These diverse self-help groups address virtually every area of life, including abuse, addiction, bereavement, caregiving, crime, disabilities, economics, physical, mental and emotional health, parenting, relationships and much more.³

"Self-help" is also presented or disseminated to people in other ways, such as courses, seminars, workshops, and conferences as well as self-help talk shows (such as Oprah and Montel, to name just a couple) and television and radio call-in shows (such as "Sex with Sue" and "Dr. Laura"). Some radio stations even dedicate themselves entirely or, at least, partially to self-help.⁴ "Self-help" even comes through movies (such as "Stuart Saves His Family") and greeting cards (apparently Hallmark has a line of greeting cards for people involved in recovery programs (Mastronardi, 1995)).

The "self-help" format of most interest here is self-help literature. When one considers this genre, the problematic nature of the breadth of the term "self-help" becomes especially salient. This category is eclectic, encompassing myriad books, magazines (for example, *Bonkers*), audio-cassettes, and videocassettes. Starker (1989) even speaks of the existence of self-help software, and the sources available on the Internet are too numerous to count. Self-help books alone are extremely diverse. The genre "self-help literature" can *technically* be thought to include the gamut of "how-to" manuals, ranging

from how to build a deck to how to save a marriage, from how to fix a leaky faucet to how to find instant financial success or happiness. Starker (1989) states that some scholars even question where to place the Bible and cookbooks as they, too, can *technically* be labelled self-help literature. Even if this genre is limited, the diversity is still impressive. As Starker (1989) writes: "Even when we exclude those [self-help books] concerned with home improvement, cooking, hobbies, and such, we are left with a truly impressive bulk of literature" (p. 157).

Some studies circumvent the problem of self-help's breadth or scope by offering concise definitions of the type of self-help literature they are researching. The type of self-help book studied most frequently is often simply called a "psychological self-help book." In his own research and that which he co-authors (as well as in research by his graduate students, such as Saper (1990)), Forest (1987, 1988, 1990, 1991, 1997, 1998) consistently provides a definition of what constitutes the type of self-help book he is studying. A few others, such as Pardeck (1993), Johnson and Johnson (1998), and Quartaro (1993), also provide definitions. As expected, the definitions share similarities. For example, Forest (1991) defines a self-help book as "any book which made at least one promise on preliminary pages (e.g., front or back cover) to help readers improve themselves on some personal (e.g., self-esteem) or social behaviour (e.g., communication);" he continues: "Books with a religious, medical, financial, occult, or parent-child orientation were not included" (p.588). Scholz (1992) adds the notion that self-help books are "*commercial publications*" [emphasis added] (p. 17). His definition is the most comprehensive:

Self-help books are commercial publications that are produced for the advertised purpose of changing some undesirable aspect of an individual's personal or social life....The books are mass produced and sold through bookstores and newsstands. They are based heavily on the author describing in detail a problem and then providing a solution....Behavioral techniques are employed in some books..., as in behavioral bibliotherapy, but humanistic therapy, psychoanalysis, gestalt analysis, rational emotive therapy..., transactional analysis..., religion..., and hypnosis... are also common, as are many other therapeutic approaches....Self-help books are not necessarily prescribed but rather tend to be selected by individual consumers. Instead of having a therapist guide them through the therapy, readers must diagnose their own problems, select and apply the appropriate technique, and assess their own progress. (Scholz, 1992, p. 17-18)

Scholz's definition captures many aspects of self-help literature, including the fact that, in most cases, individuals self-diagnose and select and apply the books' ideas or techniques based on that self-diagnosis.

Starker (1989) expands Scholz's (1992) definition even further by considering *intended audience* and *presumed utility*. Starker (1989) states that the self-help book is clearly addressed to the lay reader and attempts to communicate in a lively, interesting, readable and simplified manner appropriate to a wide readership, making few demands upon prior knowledge or scholarship. As to its usefulness, the book purports to be of immediate and practical use to the reader, offering instruction in some aspect of living (Starker, 1989).⁵

Quartaro (1993) limits her working definition of self-help books to those written by mental health professionals, such as psychologists, psychiatrists, medical doctors, and social workers; however, it is worth noting that although many psychological self-help books are written by such professionals, many others are not. Authors of self-help books can be professionals, quasi-professionals (such as clergy) or nonprofessionals (such as journalists or lay people). Quartaro also agrees with Starker (1989) that these books are usually written for the general reader, rather than for other therapists, and that the books' authors assume no special background. However, Quartaro also acknowledges that sometimes a book not intended for the general reader proves to have wide appeal and is used for self-help. For example, Quartaro claims that Carl Rogers wrote of his surprise at discovering that his 1961 psychological book, *On Becoming a Person*, written for fellow psychologists, had a wider readership than he had expected or intended.

Although virtually all the researchers agree explicitly or implicitly that self-help books are mass produced for a mass audience, only one author provides a definition of the term "popular:" "that which is available to the ordinary audience, written to appeal to their tastes, and deliberately produced to fulfill a market demand" (cited in Schmidt, 1993, p.7). On their parts, Rosen (1987) and Kaminer (1992) are two of the few researchers who

directly address the potential influence of greed on the marketing and commercialization of psychotherapy.

In the end, although the number of definitions is sparse, the few that exist have proven useful in helping create a working definition of the type of books examined in this thesis. As explained in Chapter 1, this thesis studies mass-produced, mass-marketed, general, non-gendered, popular best-seller psychological self-help books which focus on personal growth and personal development.

Although the above-mentioned scholars provided definitions of their objects of study (psychological self-help books) in their research, it is worth noting that, overall, comparatively few scholars do so. It is as if the scholars assume that the reader already *knows* what constitutes a self-help book or already *knows* what type of self-help book the researcher is referring to in his or her study. One could argue that this presumed self-evidence or transparency attests to the current popularity and pervasiveness of "self-help"-its terminology, concepts, ideas, and ideologies-in current North American culture and in personal psyches. In fact, Irvine (1996) claims that she takes it as a rule of thumb "that once a phenomenon has a large enough following to have generated jokes, it has become a permanent fixture on the cultural landscape" (p.721).⁶ Although Irvine is speaking specifically about "codependency"-defined by Melody Beattie as being affected by someone else's behaviour and obsessed with controlling it (Kaminer, 1992) and described by Loulan as "woman[-]hating big business" (cited in Schmidt, 1993, p.3)-one could argue that codependency, as well as most aspects of self-help, can easily be considered to be "a permanent fixture on the cultural landscape" (Irvine, 1996, p.721), especially when one considers the fact that self-help, in one form or another, has existed in North America since the arrival of the first settlers. (See the next section on Roots of Self-Help Literature for the longevity of this phenomenon.)

Because of personal interest in whatever has been said about self-help literature, the topic was researched in virtually every field and database available, including medicine, psychology, psychiatry, sociology, religion, communications studies, feminist research, literature, and philosophy. Research was also expanded to include *anything* pertaining to

or amounting to an assessment or critique of self-help literature. Interestingly, besides feminist scholarship (which emerged as the best journal-based source and critique), some of the best sources providing both an analysis and critique of various aspects of this genre came in the form of books, master's theses and doctoral dissertations. Paul C. Vitz's (1977) book, *Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship*, made salient the importance of Maslow, Rogers and Fromm when considering theories of personal growth; Steven Starker's (1989) book, *Oracle at the Supermarket: The American Preoccupation With Self-Help Books*, provided the most comprehensive overview of the cultural roots of and influences on self-help literature, much of it supporting personal findings produced for a graduate level term paper. Nina E. Woods' (1995) thesis, *Women's Self-Help: A Feminist Critique*, provided a succinct summary of personal research findings regarding feminist critiques of self-help. By presenting a potential model on why readers approach self-help and how they incorporate or assimilate the new knowledge to reestablish their equilibrium, Georgia Quartaro's (1993) doctoral dissertation, *The Use of Self-Help Books: A Grounded Theory Approach*, turned out to be the piece of research closest in form to this thesis.

Based on the research examined, "self-help" can be divided into three major areas: (1) research on general and specific roots (i.e., the history) of self-help literature;⁷ (2) research on self-help groups and mutual aid;⁸ and (3) research on self-help literature in general.⁹ Although there is extensive research on self-help groups and mutual aid, this research is not included as it is not relevant to this topic.¹⁰ Although beyond the scope of this thesis, it is interesting to note that while self-help groups have spawned their own literature, such as the "big book" for Alcoholics Anonymous, no research specifically analysing or addressing self-help group literature was found.

Understandably, much of the scholarship on self-help literature has been done in the field of Psychology. Other disciplines, such as Sociology and Communications Studies are also represented; however, feminist scholars appear to be the most prolific and critical researchers of "self-help literature." While "feminist scholarship" is not a discipline, per se, considering feminist scholars exist in every scholastic discipline, journals and databases

dedicated specifically to "feminist" scholarship exist, thereby presenting feminist work like a self-contained "discipline." When one considers who (which discipline) does how much research on this topic, an imbalance in the scales occurs if one considers "feminist" scholarship to be a self-contained "discipline." Feminist scholarship provides the most abundant research bank. Moreover, feminist scholars are more apt to consider cultural factors and criticize self-help literature's individualistic, apolitical stance towards whatever problem or issue the book is addressing than other scholars.

The pronounced focus on self-help literature by feminists might be due to the fact that women are both the primary target and primary consumers of self-help literature. According to publishing industry analysts, women account for 75-85% of total sales in self-help books (Ebben, 1995). Readers themselves even see the genre as existing primarily for women (Grodin, 1995). One can speculate on possible reasons for this scenario. For example, one can easily blame or credit socialization. Traditionally, women have been (and, to a large degree, continue to be) socialized to be the main caregivers in relationships. Women have been and, according to feminist researchers, continue to be held responsible for the success or failure of their relationships. In addition, traditional conceptions of "femininity" are alive, well, and thriving in self-help books, as women continue to be considered better equipped-'naturally' (as in, biologically determined)-to experience, deal with, and express emotions than men. Socialization of women into "natural" caregivers might also render women more willing to look externally to self-help (books and groups) for help and advice when things are not going as they would like.¹¹

Initially, there appeared to be few sources on "self-help literature" as most of the database searches only presented studies pertaining to "self-help groups." Part of the difficulty in finding research is due to the fact that, as mentioned earlier, the term "self-help" is problematic. The term is extremely broad and is dispersed under several synonymous, comparable, or related terms. Related terms include bibliotherapy, personal growth, personal development, self-actualization, self-realization, self-acceptance, and self-esteem. (In the end, "bibliotherapy" emerged as the most extensively researched area within the category of self-help literature.) Despite the breadth and scope of self-help, it is

believed that this literature review captures a representative cross-section of studies on self-help literature.

"While the chapter, up to this point, has provided a general overview of research findings as well as general discussions on self-help, the remainder is dedicated to a more specific analysis of findings. The first section, **The Roots of Self-Help Literature**, describes in more detail the insights gained from reading material pertaining to the origins of this phenomenon. The remaining section, **Self-Help Literature**, summarizes the areas of research undertaken by scholars to date, situates the research in this thesis into the extant body of research, and elaborates on insights that have been extrapolated from these findings.

The Roots and Cultural Context of Self-Help Literature

Three major pieces of information emerged from previous personal research on the roots of self-help and from undertaking this current literature review. The three areas are inextricably intertwined. First, the current literature review supports personal findings that self-help literature has a long history in North America. Second, research supports personal claims that self-help has several disparate roots, all of which have contributed to the evolution of the genre into its current form. Lastly, this literature review enlightens people as to the importance of taking cultural context into consideration when analysing or assessing any aspect(s) of self-help literature. Exploring the roots of self-help is a fascinating topic in its own right; however, this section focuses only on those aspects that shed some light on this thesis.

"Self-help," be it groups or literature, is not a recent phenomenon. The emergence of self-help literature began in North America with the arrival of the first settlers in the seventeenth century. The genre's current eclectic form, while specific to current times, results from years of adaptation and evolution and has been shaped and informed by many disparate forces. As Starker (1989) points out, the earliest American self-help books date all the way back to the seventeenth century and have their roots among the traditions and

values of Protestant New England, in Puritan theology. While the genre's initial roots were religious in nature, other more secular forces quickly began to inform the genre.

By the eighteenth century, self-help books in America were becoming more secular. This change is epitomized in the works of Benjamin Franklin. Franklin showed little concern for heavenly rewards and preferred more material and immediate ones. Starker (1989) writes: "The self-help book, already recognized as a source of moral guidance, became increasingly established in the eighteenth century as a repository of useful and practical knowledge" (p. 15). Though the books became more secular in content, they remained within the framework of the Protestant Ethic. Religious and secular texts did not conflict greatly as the "success" being offered in the secular texts was still "holistic;" "moral character was [still] seen as the road to all of life's benefits, not merely to wealth" (Starker, 1989, p. 15).

The nineteenth century emerges as being especially pivotal in the shaping of self-help literature. Three factors—the religious, the secular or cultural, and the psychological—seemed to intertwine inextricably to generate changes that gradually led to the development of the current format of self-help literature. Increasing industrialization and urbanization, growing "technologization," and rising consumerism contributed greatly to the changing face of self-help in the nineteenth century. For example, the dizzying pace of change and the increased poverty and social problems coterminous with growing urbanization led to increased concern for the morality of those moving to impersonal, highly populated cities as well as led to an increased desire to regain control of oneself and one's life. There was a sharp rise in the individual's desire to make oneself feel better, to compensate for feelings of nervousness ("neurasthenia"), weakness, displacement—in short, to compensate for increased feelings of alienation. The search for "cures"—be they mind cure, New Thought, Christian Science, hydropathy, Grahamism, or spiritualism¹²—can be seen as early forms of searches for self-help solutions. The ideas of Freud (psychoanalysis) and Watson (behaviourism) began to make their way into "self-help" solutions, often co-mingling with the less "scientific" ideas of the mesmerists¹³ and spiritualists. Starker (1989) also suggests that mind-cure literature arose, in part, to

counter the extreme and often dangerous medical practices of the time. The turmoil experienced at the closing of the nineteenth century, be it medical, social, or religious, led to the emergence of what can be considered one of the most powerful self-help traditions in the genre's history-the emergence of New Thought and mind cure. Feelings of alienation, loss of control, and the discovery of the unconscious led to the development of these quasi-religious forms of self-help which can be thought of as the direct precursors of modern versions of self-help. In the 1950s, Norman Vincent Peale popularized many ideas propounded by New Thought and mind cure and, today, many of these are still presented as "proven" techniques for finding happiness and peace in one's life (Peale, 1996). For example, the techniques of relaxation, meditation, affirmations, and positive thinking are well known to many self-help readers today and any or all can be found in various types of self-help books.

In addition, changing secular ideologies stemming from diverse sources also contributed dramatically to changes in the content of self-help literature. Modern science, modern medicine-especially the rise of psychology-and literary criticism influenced and helped transform existing self-help literature as well as existing religious practices and beliefs. For example, literary criticism led to questioning the validity of the Bible and the existence of Hell. Images of God began to change, seeing God as a more loving, supportive force in one's life. The God of hellfire and brimstone was gradually replaced by the God of love.

In the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the increased importance of the corporate process, greater access to higher education, and growing social affluence or increased standards of living all promised opportunities for financial success. These factors, combined with changes in religious ideas, resulted in an even greater desire to succeed financially as Puritan morality slowly began to give way. The desire for worldly success spawned the growth of "success" literature geared to teaching men (and, to a lesser extent, women) how to thrive in the burgeoning urban milieu. Horatio Alger-like "rags-to-riches" stories based on real figures, such as Andrew Carnegie, promised young men techniques that would make them rich. Today, financial success books are still a

popular subgenre and continue to be best-sellers. These aforementioned factors and changes were but earlier links in the evolutionary chain towards the more recent phenomenon of the search for self-fulfillment, self-realization, and self-connection.

This cursory overview obviously omits many factors contributing to the evolution of the current shape of self-help, especially considering that the twentieth century saw the mutation, expansion, and diversification of self-help topics that carried over from the nineteenth century. For example, the invention and spread of modern technologies like telephones, radios, and, later, televisions, which connected the entire nation, helped develop nation-wide "fads;" World War I led to widespread disillusionment regarding the nature of man, thereby making psychology seem like a valid place to turn for guidance in the hopes of preventing any such reoccurrence; boom times, be it post World War I or II, affected self-help in other ways, sometimes spurring a return to religion and sometimes generating a deep interest in material gain (Starker, 1989).¹⁴

Bearing in mind that this overview lacks fullness, it is hoped that the presentation of *some* of the forces shaping self-help can shed light on a few ideas worth noting. First, the overview shows that the shape of self-help literature today is an outgrowth from the forms that have come before. The best example is Norman Vincent Peale. His popular best-seller *The Power of Positive Thinking* (originally published in 1952) popularized many of the central tenets of mind cure. In fact, he popularized it to such a degree that his book continues to sell today and his ideas continue to surface in new self-help texts.

Secondly, the focus on contributing social or cultural factors—be they religious, secular, or psychological—shows that events occurring in the culture at large shape what is thought to need "improvement" or shapes what is thought to be important to the self-help consumer. Cultural factors influence the mind set of the author, thereby affecting what goes into a self-help text. For example, the rise of the corporation and the desire to be successful and wealthy in this new corporate environment led to the development of literature presenting techniques for successfully selling oneself (that is, for building a "successful," but not necessarily "moral," character). Certain behaviours were consciously proposed and undertaken for an express purpose—to obtain others' cooperation and to

turn oneself into a highly prized and desired commodity. Dale Carnegie's (1936) best-seller *How to Win Friends and Influence People* is a prime example of such literature and is still popular today, both as a book and as the foundation of public speaking and sales courses.¹⁸ Of success literature, Starker (1989) writes:

The self-help literature of success has long been with us in America, and shows little sign of disappearing. Its particular manifestations, however, vary with the cultural values and needs of the moment. In the 1980s, for example, readers suddenly became fascinated with 'excellence,' flocking to such works as *In Search of Excellence* (1982) by Thomas J. Peters....The sudden devotion to excellence, no doubt, was partly a reaction by the American business community to the widespread perception that it had been badly outclassed by the Japanese, (p. 144)

(If success literature continues to thrive, then it would be worthwhile to discover its "buzzword" or goal for this new millennium.)

Lastly, this overview shows that self-help literature is often a reaction or response to something major occurring in society at large. For example, on this third point, Starker (1989) claims that the "selfist" "me-generation" self-help literature of the 1960s and 1970s was a direct response to the high degree of status consciousness and materialism that emerged with the post World War II economic boom. He also believes that the development and popularity since the late 1970s of self-help literature pertaining to mid-life topics, to maintaining physical fitness, and to eating right are direct reflections of the fact that the "baby boomers" are aging. Starker (1989) argues that one can take any piece of self-help literature from any point in history and, by analysing the content of that text, gain an understanding of what was important in the culture at that time.

In short, self-help literature does not exist in a vacuum. More importantly, if, as scholars such as H. A. Douglas (1979) and Starker (1989) point out, self-help literature is both a reflection of the existing cultural milieu and is a contributor to the shape of that very milieu, one must take culture into consideration when analysing self-help books, regardless of the psychological topic. Exploring the roots of self-help literature convinces a reader that this genre is both shaped by and shapes culture.

This last point is crucial to consider. In Foucaultian terms, self-help literature is a "cultural discourse"- "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (cited in Rimke, 1997, p.63). That is, self-help is a discourse that both informs and is informed by other existing (dominant) cultural discourses. Some authors, such as Rimke (1997), go so far as to explore self-help literature as a contemporary project of moral regulation which incites a governance of the self by the self. She argues that self-help can be conceived of as a program of moral and ethical self-reformation intrinsically linked with the governmental rationalities and technologies of power in advanced liberal societies. Her argument is extremely convincing. Even more prominently than Starker (1989) and others who simply comment fairly obliquely on the genre's ability to affect cultural values, Rimke shows that self-help is powerful because consumers regulate themselves and reform themselves into the type of individual that best suits liberal society. Although a covert conspiracy to shape people does not exist, the power might be in the fact that the shaping occurs so imperceptibly and so willingly on people's parts. Rimke writes: "As a social discourse, self-help serves to provide standards for psychological health, normality and morality and thus forms and informs modern templates for the organization and regulation of the self through self-subjectification and individualization" (p.58). Rimke also speaks of the "increasing power of the 'psy' complex" (p.50) and concludes her discussion of discourse by writing: "The power of self-help literature, by presenting truths on human being, is insidious because its concealed but productive intercession in everyday life is obscured by narratives of emancipation, discourses of liberation, and the largely accepted moral and intellectual leadership and authority of the 'psy' complex" (p.68). If individuals are unconsciously complicit in their own regulation based at least to some degree on the content of self-help books, then people should determine whether that content is worthy of such compliance. In its own way, this thesis attempts to analyse the content of personal growth literature in order to determine whether its content/techniques are worthy of people's adherence.

In her work, Reeb (1999) explores one book and reveals "the cultural and historical meanings taken for granted within the explicit text *Men are from Mars, Women*

are from Venus" (p. 3). Reeb's general conclusion is that such a text "is not merely a popular text, not only a representation of a current cultural trend, nor just a symbol to be interpreted, but the means by which an ideology becomes the way people think and act" (p.72). If this finding can be paraphrased and expanded to include other subgenres of self-help literature, that is, if Reeb's thesis can be taken as a cautionary tale for other subgenres, such as for general self-improvement/personal growth literature, then readers should be aware that the content of personal growth and development books shapes people's image of what "authentic growth" *should* look like. Books on personal growth tell people how the authors (representing society) think individuals should be growing and what individuals should be striving towards with or through that growth. That is, according to Reeb's findings, individuals' notions of healthy growth would be directly, even if unconsciously, influenced by personal development texts. Thinking of a book as a cultural discourse—a force that not only reflects but creates—makes it worthwhile to consider the pervasiveness of this genre. If self-help texts are a cultural discourse and not simply a cultural object, then self-help literature has the (potential) power to influence cultural ideas on growth. Through its content, the genre not only reflects but informs our individual psyches, goals, wants, and needs. The text emerges as a dynamic entity, shaping readers and society as well as being shaped by both.

Although, as will be seen in the next section of this chapter, the effect of self-help literature on the reader has not been confirmed or verified to any great degree, if at all, authors like Reeb (1999), Rimke (1997), Starker (1989) and many others, especially feminist scholars, convince readers that self-help is indeed an agent of socialization. In addition, Reeb points out that print carries weight. If it is in print, people often assume it to be true. This means that self-help books carry an authority beyond their actual content; their very form carries authoritative weight. Reeb writes:

[T]he public respects anything in print. If it is in print, it is assumed that it must contain at the least a modicum of truth. This assumption grows with the degree to which the source, or the writer, is revered or respected. Psychologists, or persons believed to be members of the psychology profession, are seen as a trustworthy and prestigious source of information, (p. 17-18)

Many self-help books are written by people from the psychology profession or by medical doctors-two "credible" sources in Western society.

In short, several scholars suggest that the books' contents mirror, and to some extent, inform dominant cultural values and these values have changed over time. This suggests that the telos of authentic growth in self-help books today is likely to be different from books' teloi in previous times. That is, what individuals should ultimately be striving for (telos) is possibly context specific (i.e., reflective of the current cultural milieu). In contrast to this view, this thesis suggests that the telos of authentic growth is a universal goal¹⁶; however, the steps one can take towards this destination can differ.

In summary, the literature review on the roots of self-help has made apparent the fact that the genre of self-help literature is a longstanding tradition which has adapted and evolved since the arrival of the first settlers in the seventeenth century. This indicates the degree to which self-help is dynamic, adaptive, resourceful, and accepted by North Americans, in general. Research indicates that there is an American mind set that predisposes Americans to accept self-help solutions. Americans value individualism, free will, choice and self-reliance; they revere notions of personal and social limitlessness; and they continue to believe in the "American myth of success" (Starker, 1989, p. 170). About the American myth of success Starker writes: "Whether absolutely valid or not, it is a **belief held** by many millions, and rooted in American history and religious practice. Hence the urging of American popular literature, both early and late, that readers improve, advance, actualize, become better and more successful human beings. It is an essential part of the American Dream" (Starker, 1989, p. 170). All of these factors contribute to the acceptance and support of self-help literature as a viable source for moral, physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and financial guidance. This research also made salient the fact that disparate roots have affected and informed the genre over time, making it a dynamic, adaptive format that always seems to have just the right answers for whatever ails a person. The research also suggests that that which is considered important (valued) changes over time and that that which is considered important at any given time is both a reflection of and an influence on the current cultural milieu.

Self-Help Literature

Self-help literature is a multi-billion-dollar-a-year industry with an estimated two thousand new books published each year (Marrs, 1995). Moreover, self-help publications are staples for publishers as they continue to sell steadily over the years. Few go out of print (Voorhees, 1984). These statistics are impressive. What is also amazing is that an abysmally small amount of research on self-help literature exists compared to the vast number of self-help books that exist on the market and that continue to be generated yearly.

While the extant research is fairly small, that which exists is also quite disparate. Very few areas of research have generated enough studies to provide findings in which one can place any degree of confidence. The areas of research specifically pertaining to self-help literature are diverse and include the following: studies on what makes a best-seller, which measures the relevance of self-help words (for example, Forest, 1997; Forest, 1998); uses of self-help books by professionals (for example, Apfel, 1996; Starker, 1988); and uses of self-help books by explicitly religious practitioners (for example, Johnson & Johnson, 1998). Other studies look at the genre, as a whole, as an agent of socialization or as narratives of culture (for example, H. A. Douglas, 1979; Gemin, 1997; Reeb, 1999; Rimke, 1997; and Starker, 1989-see previous section). Others analyse specific aspects of self-help, such as codependency (for example, Cavanagh, 1998; Gemin, 1997; and Schmidt, 1993). Interestingly, comparatively few studies focus on the reader. A few, however, consider the readers' responses to reading the texts, uses of self-help texts from the readers' perspectives, and how readers read self-help texts (for example, Lichterman, 1992; Quartaro, 1993; and Simonds, 1992). Several scholars research various aspects of self-help from a feminist perspective. These studies range from analysis of the texts themselves to studies on the image of women presented in the texts to the texts' views on women in general and women in relationships (for example, Cavanagh, 1998; Champagne, 1990; DeFrancisco & O'Connor, 1995; Ebben, 1995; Grodin, 1995; Rapping, 1997; and Woods, 1995).

The last area of research to discuss can be termed "efficacy" research or research on the effectiveness of self-help books and is the area of greatest importance and interest to this thesis. Research on various areas of effectiveness of this genre is valuable because this thesis falls into this research type. This thesis attempts to assess the potential efficacy of general, non-gendered, psychological self-help literature on personal growth and development by determining whether the techniques and advice provided in such books would lead a person to achieve or experience authentic growth as opposed to experiencing inauthentic forms of growth, such as self-centred, egocentric growth which focuses only on the individual or growth at the expense of others. (See Chapter 4 for an explication of these concepts.)

There is definitely a place in the existing literature for this thesis because the most common critique or most consistent complaint in most studies reviewed is that there is little existing research of any kind on the efficacy of self-help books. Moreover, none of the extant research studies this thesis' specific area of interest- efficacy of self-help books in generating *authentic growth* as defined in this thesis- and little to none of the existing research discusses books' goals (teloi). (Voorhees' (1984) analysis of the helpfulness or harm of fifteen self-help books, discussed shortly, comes closest, but is a stretch.) The largest body of efficacy research pertains to bibliotherapy¹⁷-the use of literary material in the treatment of physical or psychological problems (Saper & Forest, 1987)-which includes three types of therapy: behavioural (which uses behavioural manuals and a therapist), traditional (which uses novels, biographies, fiction, poems and other such materials and a therapist to at least some degree), and self-help bibliotherapy (which is usually self-directed-that is, generally has no therapist involvement-and uses self-help books that are generally self-selected). Even within the realm of efficacy research on bibliotherapy, researchers complain repeatedly that, with the exception of behavioural bibliotherapy, little research has been carried out on the utility of books in therapy and, moreover, there is no theory which might explain the mechanism by which bibliotherapy operates (Saper & Forest, 1987). In addition, within the existing efficacy research, be it specifically termed bibliotherapy research or otherwise, findings are often ambiguous

and/or put forward only tentatively, wrapped in strong cautionary statements. For example, Marrs (1995) produces a meta-analysis of bibliotherapy studies-"a procedure that uses existing studies as its data-to examine the efficacy of bibliotherapy" (p.849). After a rather extensive review, Marrs concludes that bibliotherapy appears to have a "*moderate* degree of effectiveness" [emphasis added] (p.861). He also cautions: 'The current meta-analysis provides some limited evidence for the effectiveness of bibliotherapy. However, this analysis has also identified some holes in our database that must be filled before we can know more specifically for whom and under what conditions bibliotherapy does and does not work' (Marrs, 1995, p.865). Marrs' study reflects the cautious, tentative nature of efficacy findings.

Some efficacy research is specifically termed bibliotherapy research and will be labelled as such. Studies that make no reference to bibliotherapy are treated simply as general efficacy research.

Within the field of self-help bibliotherapy, a few studies have been conducted. For example, Scholz (1992) and Scholz and Forest (1997) conducted studies to measure the effects of fictional and autobiographical (traditional bibliotherapy) texts and self-help literature (self-help bibliotherapy) on personality measures. Scholz further took into consideration reading conditions (controlled and uncontrolled) in his thesis. It is worth noting that no book produced scores significantly different from those for the control condition; however, there were differences between the scores of students reading different books (Scholz & Forest, 1997, p.96). In his thesis on this topic, Scholz (1992) tentatively proposes that while reading one of these books will not significantly increase or decrease personality scores relative to a no-reading control group, the type of book a reader selects can significantly increase or decrease self-actualization scores relative to another type of book. That is, self-reported self-actualization scores were higher for those who read a self-help book over the fictional and autobiographical books (Scholz, 1992, p.78).

Regarding the topic of self-actualization as measured by personality scores, Forest was involved, either alone or with co-researchers, in several studies attempting to measure

whether self-help books could change an individual's personality, as measured by personality tests. In the end, Forest (1987, 1988, 1991) was unable to find a strong connection between the self-help authors' claims and empirical measures of psychological change. His results were inconclusive. In 1987, Forest discovered that subjects who read a self-help book scored higher on measures of self-actualization than those subjects who did not read the book; however, a second study (Forest, 1988) using different books and different personality tests, failed to replicate these findings. Lastly, a third study (Forest, 1991) measured the effects of interest and attitude towards a book on personality scores. The subject was assigned either a high-interest or a low-interest book based on the subjects own ratings and, again, the findings were inconclusive (cited in Scholz, 1992, p. 19-20). Other general efficacy studies included efficacy of type of instruction-didactic, example, and practice problems-on the solution of psychological self-help problems (Saper & Forest, 1992) and the effects of personality on interest in self-help books (Saper & Forest, 1987). In the end, the efficacy of psychological self-help books remains weak or questionable, at best, and unsubstantiated, at worst. There might not even be a direct correlation between the perceived efficacy of a book and the readers' reasons for choosing it. Forest (1991) writes: "the personal appeal of a self-help book to the buyer may have little relation to its therapeutic value for the individual" (p.591).

Other efficacy studies include attempting to assess the amount of information retained after reading a self-help book (Lubusko & Forest, 1989) and analysing the efficacy of mental simulation on problem solving (Taylor, Pham, Rivkin, & Armor, 1998). Lubusko's and Forest's (1989) findings are unimpressive. As for Taylor et al. (1998), they claim that self-help books promote *outcome simulation*-the type of mental simulation which is tantamount to wishful thinking; outcome simulation claims that actively focusing on the outcome to be achieved will help bring it about. In contrast, these scholars argue that *process simulation*, which enlists the two aspects necessary for problem-solving activities-planning and regulating emotional states-is much more effective (Taylor et al., 1998).

As mentioned, the area of efficacy research of this thesis has not yet been explored. Moreover, no research was found specifically assessing personal development literature. A couple of studies included such books in their assessments (for example, Voorhees, 1984); however, no one focuses exclusively on this topic. In fact, the concept of "personal development" or "personal growth" is often thrown out as a catchall phrase, is never defined or operationalized, and is generally simply touched upon or glossed over in a vague sort of way. In comparison, most studies focus on narrower, more easily defined concepts, such as self-esteem (for example, Champagne, 1990), heterosexual relationships (for example, Reeb, 1999) or codependency (for example, Cavanagh, 1998).

Having said all this, a few efficacy research studies are worth looking at more closely and are worth commenting upon. For example, there are a few efficacy studies measuring self-actualization. As mentioned earlier, studies by Forest (1987, 1988, 1991) and Scholz (1992) measured changes in self-reported personality measures resulting from reading self-help books. While the findings were quite inconclusive and sometimes outright contradictory, the one measure that indicated a positive change in self-actualization scores as measured on personality tests was worth closer consideration. Unfortunately, self-actualization was simply one trait measured among several on a general personality questionnaire; the concept of self-actualization is not measured on its own nor is it operationalized in depth. In fact, one study (Peoples, 1981) complains that the results should be interpreted with some caution because she felt that the definition and aspects of the category "self-actualization" did not adequately capture or measure what was truly meant by "self-actualization." In the end, there was, at best, moderate support for the positive effects of reading self-help books on self-actualization; however, the findings can only be seen as preliminary.¹⁸

Quartaro's (1993) doctoral dissertation is another study of particular interest. Quartaro dealt with readers directly in an attempt to develop a grounded theory regarding the use of self-help books. She interviewed eight readers in depth to determine why the readers sought out the books they read, how they used the books, and the perceived potential benefit, if any, they felt they received. Her grounded theory is very interesting in

its own right; however, Quartaro goes on to compare her theory with existing theories of adult development. Her discussion and use of Piaget's notion of equilibration is noteworthy.¹⁹ According to Quartaro, readers approach self-help literature when they experience a crisis. The readers experience a sense of loss of control, partially due to the realization that their old, habitual coping style is no longer working. They then, unconsciously, find a book that is similar to their coping style, read it, and implement enough techniques to regain a sense of control. Once a sense of control is regained, readers generally return to their old, but now slightly modified, coping style. That is, using Piaget's terminology, readers assimilate some of the new information into their old mental/coping framework resulting in a newfound sense of equilibrium. None of the eight moved to what Piaget calls a gamma-level change. Instead, the readers only experienced a beta-level change. That is, the readers assimilated *some* new information into their preexisting frameworks. However, once calm was restored, no further change was sought. No one continued learning to the point of experiencing a paradigm shift (gamma-level change). This study, while small in scope and not necessarily generalizable to the larger population, indicates that self-help books might be seen as simply a stop-gap measure, something to help one reestablish equilibrium after a crisis.

When one links Quartaro's (1993) findings with Lichterman's (1992), who proposes a new concept, "thin culture," to describe the process through which readers make self-help books meaningful in their lives, one senses that self-help books are not considered by readers to be a source for deep, long lasting, life-altering change. Lichterman says he names this culture "thin" because it does not support a deep commitment from readers (p.427). While his notion of "thin culture" seems to be broader, more general, or more encompassing than Quartaro's theory on why readers approach self-help texts and how they incorporate them, "thin culture" still appears to complement or even reinforce Quartaro's points. Lichterman describes "thin culture" as follows:

These readers participate in a widely diffused-perhaps nationwide-subculture of popular psychology with but a few norms and a proliferation of discourses. To signify the combination of shared expectations about the books with varied meanings and uses attached to them, I use the term 'thin culture'. By 'thin culture'

I denote the readers' shared understanding that the words and concepts put forth in these books can be read and adopted loosely, tentatively, sometimes interchangeably, without enduring conviction. Readers draw on the books in ongoing relation to portions of more formally elaborated cultural frameworks, and in relation to mass-mediated images of personal life in the US. (p.426-427)

After interviewing fifteen readers in depth, Lichterman believes that educated, middle-class readers approach self-help psychology books *ambivalently*. He believes that they participate in a culture of popular psychology reading that allows them to simultaneously trust and discount the books, all the while maintaining an open-minded, experimental attitude toward new titles as they appear. He argues that the ambivalence stems in part from readers' recognition of the books as commodities and in part from relations with "other points of reference" which readers juggle with their self-help reading as they improvise ways of coping with personal troubles (p.427). These other points of reference can include previous coping strategies, such as those needed by Quartaro's readers in order to adjust to their new situations. Readers seem to share some limited expectations about the value of popular psychological knowledge in book form, but when they discuss their reading with friends, they often interpret the book from surprisingly different angles. Together Quartaro and Lichterman suggest that readers turn ambivalently to self-help as an additional source of insight and advice; however, only that which blends nicely with existing beliefs tends to be assimilated. These theories are beneficial to this thesis to some degree because they represent theories of growth. The end product of reading a self-help book seems to be some form of growth, even if it is simply to become a bit wiser in dealing with a current crisis or with a similar situation, should it reoccur.

Voorhees (1984), who undertakes the content analysis of fifteen books, five each on human relationships, child-rearing, and marital growth, is the only researcher who blatantly asks the question of whether self-help books are helpful or harmful. Ultimately, one could argue that this is the underlying, if unstated, question fuelling much of the research on self-help literature. (This question-is self-help literature helpful or harmful, beneficial or detrimental?-certainly marked the starting point of personal interest in researching this genre.) Voorhees' criteria for measuring helpfulness and harm is

congruency of advice within a book. Voorhees found that this criteria were not especially useful as the information found within most books is quite consistent or congruent from beginning to end. However, he did find that consistency *between* books varied greatly. Voorhees writes: "While there was much potentially beneficial content in each book, the contradictory advice between books was alarming" (p.iii-iv). Often, vastly different techniques or solutions were offered for essentially the same problem. Such disparities might reflect theoretical differences as the books analysed had many contradictory philosophies about truly significant issues, which might reflect the lack of agreement in the field on ways to formulate and solve human problems. In the end, Voorhees' conclusion is ambivalent: the books appear to have the *potential* to be both helpful and harmful. In addition, Voorhees claims the books do not and cannot deliver on their promises because they overpromise results, apart from the fact they rarely substantiate their claims. Reading Voorhees makes one realize that judging a self-help book based on helpfulness or harm is an extremely valid criterion; however, one must choose carefully one's criteria for measuring helpfulness or harm in order for it to be meaningful. Helpfulness and harm might require several criteria before either can be determined with any confidence.

Overall, Paul C. Vitz's book (1977), *Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship*, has been the most crucial text in this literature review. Vitz critiques the "pop psychology" of the 1960s and 1970s. (Starker (1989) also covers much of this era's psychology in his chapter entitled 'The Selfish Years: Pop Psychology and the 'Me' Generation" (p.111-128).) Vitz's critique is in much the same vein as that of other general scholars; however, it is the only one that goes to the root source. That is, Vitz challenges the psychology upon which the self-help ideas are based. He goes back to and critiques or challenges the ideas of the original psychologists before he critiques the popularizations of these ideas.

Reading Vitz (1977) made it clear that in order to create a useful tool or develop meaningful criteria for measuring or analysing authentic growth (in order to determine and understand what authentic growth looks like), this thesis would have to go back one step. It would have to return to the original "experts," the psychologists upon which many

"popular" ideas are based. The insight gained from reading Vitz (1977), coupled with the realization that no research exists on the area of interest explored in this thesis, authentic growth, convinced this writer that she would have to return to the founding fathers, so to speak, of popular psychology in order to gain a working understanding of their theories of personal growth. Only then would one be able to know what to look for and what to assess when analysing psychological self-help books focusing specifically on personal growth and development. Vitz's book offers a Christian-based solution which, while interesting, is still not convincing; nonetheless, his critique alerts a person to potential weaknesses in these "experts'" theories. (In fact, until reading Vitz, this writer would have been prone to seeing only the good in these psychologists' theories.)

When one considers the plethora of diverse psychological self-help books on the market, the set of studies is less than impressive. So many areas and factors remain unexamined. For example, Saper (1990) and Scholz (1992) complain that several factors influencing the effectiveness of books have not yet been researched. These include format, reading level, length, and information content of the books as well as motivation, gender, age differences, reading skills, attitudes toward reading, and level of education. While some of these areas have been touched upon, such as reading level in Champagne (1990) and attitude and interest by Forest (1991), they have not been examined thoroughly. More critically, efficacy research remains inconsistent at best. In the end, much of the "knowledge" that revolves around self-help literature is, in actual fact, based more on intuition, gut feelings, and hunches than on actual findings. Even clinicians and psychologists admit they use self-help bibliotherapy based more on *a feeling* that it is helpful than on concrete evidence to that effect (Marrs, 1995).

After a thorough investigation of the extant research on self-help literature and efficacy research, it becomes apparent that this thesis is a worthwhile and necessary undertaking. Self-help books seem to tell readers how they *should* be, where they should grow to, and how they should get there, yet no research to date appears to acknowledge, address, explore, challenge or critique self-help books' ideas on the topic of growth.

Conclusion

The self-help book seems to be more than just a book. It is an artifact, a commodity, an object simultaneously attractive and repulsive, an oracle, a source of wisdom, yet a source approached ambivalently. Perhaps the power of the self-help book lies in the fact that it can be whatever it is people want it to be. Starker (1989) believes that its power lies in its ability to inspire. Starker (1989) writes:

The particular technology offered is quite secondary to the inspirational message of individualism proffered by the self-help oracle. It is a powerful, motivating message which temporarily makes the reader feel more in control, less helpless, less despairing. It has a definite religious quality, inspiring the individual to keep working, striving, and hoping against all odds....I submit, however, that *inspiration is a major factor in the success of virtually all types of self-help works*. The oracle provides information and technology, certainly, but the prepotent message [is] an inspirational one. [emphasis added] (p. 170)

Starker (1989) goes on to explain that the effects of the messages of self-help literature are maximized "when it is delivered by a recognized and respected 'expert,' and endorsed by a variety of 'important' people" and, as a result, "many in today's society who cannot accept inspirational messages in a religious context accept them easily in a scientific or humanistic context" (p. 170). Starker (1989) goes on to explain that when a particular self-help book becomes "used up" or ceases to fill this valuable inspirational and motivational service, it is simply discarded and replaced (p.171). In keeping with Quartaro's (1993) and Lictherman's (1992) findings, Starker (1989) explains: "Readers become bored or disillusioned with particular self-help works and technologies, but seem to be quite forgiving of the genre. Perhaps the *next* book will provide the answers, the comfort, the cure, the secrets being sought" (p. 171).

After an extensive search of the research on self-help literature, this thesis comes away with a treasure trove of information. Unfortunately, most of it is not directly pertinent to this thesis. Nonetheless, one does not leave empty handed. Three important pieces of knowledge emerge from this literature review. First, one realizes that the area of study central to this thesis, authentic growth, has not been researched at all to date. Secondly, one realizes that the topic of interest-personal growth or personal development

(let alone authentic growth)-is not a well-defined concept in the little existing research that makes reference to it. Instead, the concept is often thrown out as a catchall term or is glossed over as if readers already know what it means or know what it is. Thirdly, and most importantly, it becomes apparent that one must take a step back from self-help literature and return to the founding fathers of popular humanistic psychology in order to garner ideas on what constitutes authentic growth. The ideas put forward by these experts, Erich Fromm, Carl Rogers, and Abraham Maslow (based on Vitz, 1977)²⁰ are discussed in depth in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3 - THE "EXPERTS"

Justification for Selection of the "Experts"

Undertaking the literature review pointed towards the need to explore "experts" in order to obtain pertinent and useful information on authentic growth. The "experts" examined here are exemplary psychologists who articulate ideas on psychological growth and development at an intellectual, academic level as opposed to a popular level. (It is probable that ideas on what constitutes authentic growth at any given time are articulated at the intellectual level by psychologists and then articulated at the popular level by self-help literature.) Psychology is a broad, rich and complex field and many, if not most, psychological theories can be seen as theories of personal growth, at least to some degree. Unfortunately, one cannot focus on them all. Based on information from Vitz's (1977) book, *Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship*, which examines the root source of "pop psychology," this thesis limits its focus to three theorists: Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, and Erich Fromm.²¹ Maslow and Rogers are focused on for many reasons, including the fact that they are representatives of humanistic psychology—a psychological approach which "stresses the notion of self and its striving towards fulfillment" (Reeve, 1992, p.311). (See Appendix A for more information on Humanism and Humanistic Psychology²² as it pertains to this thesis.)

According to general sources on psychology, there are three schools or "forces" of psychology (Cullari, 2000, chap. 12). While there might be self-help books based on the previous two "forces," behaviourism (first force, e.g. John Watson) and psychoanalysis (second force, e.g., Sigmund Freud), or incorporating elements of them, these theories are not considered central to this literature. In contrast, some familiarity with the third school or "force," humanistic psychology, which arose in the late 1950s, appears to be essential. Personal experience in reading self-help literature (and backed by Vitz (1977)) supports the notion that many of the self-help texts on personal growth and development are tied to, if not based on, the ideas inherent in humanistic psychology. For example, Rogers is one of the founders of the Human Potential Movement (cited in Nicolosi, 2001), which is

strongly linked to self-help, and Maslow is generally called the "father" or founder of humanistic psychology (Cullari, 2000, chap. 12). Maslow and Rogers are also touted as the most representative figures of humanist psychology and they remained the movement's "most respected intellectual leaders" for the decades that followed the inception of this third "force" (Association for Humanistic Psychology (AHP), 2001, Carl Rogers, f3).

Erich Fromm is also included because he has occasionally been linked to popularizing what Vitz (1977) calls "selfist" psychology. Fromm is also often considered a transitional figure bridging psychoanalysis and humanistic psychologies (Boeree, 1997b, Discussion, ^[1]). He has a strong humanist bent despite the fact that he appears to be, at least in part, reacting to and expanding upon the ideas of Freud and Marx. As a social psychologist, Fromm also strongly takes into consideration cultural influences on the individual. Based on the literature review, insight into the role of culture on personal growth is important.

Caveats

First, it is extremely important to note that none of the three "experts" specifically presents his theory as a "theory of authentic growth" or even necessarily as a "theory of growth." In psychology courses, these theories are generally presented as "theories of personality." Even as theories of personality, these implicitly include a concept of what constitutes the ideal end product of growth (telos) and how best to achieve it (process). That is, the theorist's vision of the *ideal* personality has inherent in it or is synonymous with a vision of what the *ideal* telos (end goal) of growth and development would be like or look like. Therefore, although Maslow, Rogers, and Fromm do not put forward their theories as theories of authentic growth, these theories can still be interpreted as such.

Secondly, this thesis is not a psychological treatise. This chapter is not intended to be a complete, in-depth look at the intricacies of the theories and ideas of the three figures being explored. Instead, the specific focus is on the two aspects-telos and process-which are central to this thesis. In addition, it is important to realize that these theories (and theorists) are themselves subject to criticisms. For example, Vitz's book (1977),

Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship, offers an in-depth critique of "selfist psychology" from a Christian perspective. Despite such criticisms, these theories continue to be extremely popular and influential both in psychology and popular culture. Many of these theorists' ideas have entered into mainstream culture or the cultural consciousness to such a degree that they have become commonsensical (or have entered what Fromm calls the "social unconscious") and much of their terminology has become common vocabulary, such as self-actualization, ideal self, "real" self, and more. Because of the influence and popularity of these theories, critique on any plane is useful.

Lastly, as Cross and Cross (1998) explain, "there is no single theory of psychology that fully explains the individual and the uniqueness of human experience. Nor does any single theory fully explain growth. Rather, theories are tentative, approximate and complementary explanations" (p.267). Even though this is the case, it does not preclude one from attempting to create a finer, more precise theory.

Organizing Structure: Telos and Process

This thesis treats Maslow's, Rogers' and Fromm's theories as theories of authentic growth. Each theory provides a vision of a desired ultimate ideal telos or end goal for growth, and each theory puts forward ideas as to the best way for an individual to reach this desired telos (process). Although diverse theories might present a similar or the same telos, the processes by which to reach that telos can differ significantly. Theories of growth, then, present a vision of where one should ideally grow to (telos) and how one would ideally or best go about getting there (process).

Based on these ideas regarding theories of growth, Maslow's, Rogers' and Fromm's theories are organized into two sections. The first section presents each theorist's **Envisioned Telos** and the second presents each figure's **Envisioned Process** to achieve that telos. These growth theories also tend to discuss the ramifications of not growing towards the ideal telos as well as mention inauthentic forms of growth (strategies which do not bring one towards the ideal telos). When applicable, these are mentioned; however, the focus is on the optimum or positive growth ideas presented in these theories.

The authors are presented in the order of Maslow, Rogers, and Fromm. Note, within each theory, some overlap might occur between telos and process. This can be expected as it is difficult to artificially separate all the components of what constitutes a coherent whole. The presentation of the "experts'" theories are followed by a critique of their ideas on telos and process.

Envisioned Telos: Abraham Maslow (1908-1970)

If you deliberately plan to be less than you are capable of being, then I warn you that you'll be deeply unhappy for the rest of your life. (Maslow in Fadiman & Frager, 1976, p.343)

Maslow's (1970) envisioned telos is what he calls *self-actualization*, which refers to "man's desire for self-fulfillment, namely, *to the tendency for him to become actualized in what he is potentially*" (p.46). This tendency is described as *"the desire to become more and more what one idiosyncratically is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming"* [emphasis added] (Maslow, 1970, p.46). Maslow (1970) explains: "A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately at peace with himself. What a man *can* be, he *must* be. He must be true to his own nature. This need we may call self-actualization" (p.46). In short, self-actualization entails making "the full use and exploitation of [one's] talents, capacities, and potentialities" (Maslow, 1956, p. 162).

For Maslow (1970), the ultimate end goal for growth is to become self-actualized. While he sees growth as an ongoing lifelong process, Maslow provides a vision of what such an individual would be like. After studying the biographies of several individuals, both living and deceased, whom Maslow considered to be operating at the level of self-actualization, he assembled a list of characteristics which he believes are embodied or exhibited in self-actualizing individuals. (Examples of the healthy, self-actualizing individuals whom he studied include Eleanor Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, Albert Einstein, Goethe and Spinoza (Maslow, 1970, p. 152).) Maslow believes

that these characteristics are exhibited in greater numbers and to greater degrees in self-actualizing individuals than in average people. He acknowledges that his models of self-actualization did not exhibit all of these traits; however, one can extrapolate that Maslow believes that the *ideal* individual who epitomizes maximum self-actualization (authentic growth, for him) would exhibit all of these characteristics to an optimum degree.

According to Maslow (1970), ideal self-actualized individuals embody and exhibit the following characteristics. (See Maslow, 1970, pp. 153-170, for more details on the following traits.) Such individuals have a more efficient perception of reality and more comfortable relations with it; tolerate ambiguity, tentativeness, doubt and the unknown; accept self, others and nature *as is* without complaint or chagrin; are open, spontaneous, and not afraid of making mistakes; are problem-centred, not self-centred or ego-centred; have a need for, like or are comfortable with privacy and solitude and display the quality of detachment; are strong, independent, autonomous, self-governing, active, responsible, self-disciplined agents rather than "determined" by others. Self-actualizers resist enculturation and conformity; exhibit greater freshness of appreciation and richness of emotional reaction; exhibit, in general, *Gemeinschaftsgefühl*-a deep feeling of identification, sympathy, and affection for human beings (as if all were members of a single family); have especially profound, deeply emotional intimate relationships with a few close friends and family members, rather than shallow relationships with many people. They embody democratic attitudes and values and are friendly with "anyone of suitable character regardless of class, education, political belief, race, or color" (p. 167); are creative ("no exception") like the "naive and universal creativeness of unspoiled children" more so than the "special-talent creativeness of the Mozart type" (p. 170-171); discriminate between means and ends; are strongly ethical, have definite moral standards, do right and do not do wrong; exhibit a philosophical, unhostile sense of humour. Lastly, self-actualizers exhibit higher frequency of peak experiences.

In the context of self-actualization, Maslow (1968) describes peak experiences as transient, intensely enjoyable (even ecstatic), unitive or holistic, highly integrative, self-transcending, mystic experiences-'moments of greatest maturity, individuation,

fulfillment-in a word, his healthiest moments" (p.97). Individuals transcend themselves and feel more fully integrated at all levels (Massey, 1981). Maslow (1968) believes that peak experiences are moments of self-actualization and that anyone can experience them at any time in one's life (p.97). He also suggests that self-actualizing individuals experience them more frequently and more deeply than the average person (Fredenburgh, 1971).

For Maslow, the individual embodying the greatest number of the aforementioned traits to the greatest degree exhibits the greatest degree of self-actualization and, therefore, the greatest degree of authentic growth. Theoretically, an individual who reaches Maslow's envisioned telos would embody all of these traits. (Note: Maslow acknowledges that self-actualizers are not perfect and have their own share of faults. Moreover, the above-mentioned traits can be carried too far. For example, detachment can become cold ruthlessness (Maslow, 1956). Nonetheless, these traits are seen as the epitome of authentic growth for Maslow.)

Based on Maslow's ideas, his envisioned telos is self-actualization, and authentic growth would be the ongoing process of realizing one's inherent potentialities or growth in the direction of self-actualization. Peak experiences offer individuals a glimpse of this ideal state of self-actualization. Even though Maslow believes that a paltry one percent of the adult population are actually in the process of actualizing themselves (actualizing their inherent potentialities), he still holds up self-actualization as the ultimate ideal telos or the ultimate goal of growth (Reeve, 1992).

Envisioned Telos: Carl Rogers (1902-1987)

/have...come to believe that in spite of this bewildering horizontal multiplicity, the layer upon layer of vertical complexity, there is perhaps only one problem....[I]t appears that goal the individual most wishes to achieve, the end which he knowingly and unknowingly pursues, is to become himself, [bold added] (Rogers, 1961, p. 108)

Rogers' (1961) envisioned ideal telos is similar in nature to Maslow's. For Rogers, the end goal of authentic growth is to become what he calls a *fully functioning individual*, to become "that self which one truly is" (Kierkegaard cited in Rogers, 1961, p. 166). Self-actualization is, for Rogers, "the deepest responsibility of man" (p. 110), even though the process might be painful and frightening.

As does Maslow, Rogers (1961) provides an ideal vision of what a fully functioning or self-actualizing person would be like. According to Rogers (1956), such individuals embody or exhibit the following four core characteristics:

1. Are open to experience (the opposite of defensiveness; necessary for congruence (see below)). Such individuals are open to and aware of all aspects of their experiences and have no need to deny, distort, or selectively perceive aspects of experiences (Rogers, 1956).
2. Trust in their organism. Such individuals believe that their internal guide (their *organismic valuation process*) is trustworthy and, therefore, such persons trust its sensory and visceral reactions and communications (Rogers, 1956).
3. Have an internal locus of evaluation. Because these individuals trust their organism, they look to themselves for guidance and advice when making decisions and evaluations (Rogers, 1956).
4. Live each moment fully (existential living) and are willing to be a process. Because such individuals are open to experience (without distorting it) and trust their own guidance, such persons realize that they are not rigid, fixed, and unchanging constructs, but are fluid, changing entities. While there might be a relatively stable core at the centre, such persons realize that they are fluidity, flow, and changingness as they continue to experience new things over the course of their lifetime. Fully functioning persons live fully in each moment because who they are "grows out of that moment" (Rogers, 1961, p. 188). Fully functioning persons allow the self and personality to emerge *from* experience rather than try to impose a preformed formulation of self upon experience (Rogers, 1956).²³

Most importantly, for Rogers, these individuals would be *congruent*; they would be *unified in experience, awareness, and communication*. A person's self-concept (perception of oneself) would be synchronized with his or her real (organismic or organic) self. Congruence is the prerequisite for realizing/actualizing one's real, inherent self and, therefore, the fully functioning individual would, by necessity, be congruent. The four core traits either promote or reflect congruence.

Rogers develops his vision of the fully functioning person from his experiences and observations in his Person-Centered Therapy (originally called Client-Centered Therapy). While the above-mentioned traits are the basic or core traits embodied by Rogers' fully functioning individual, he acknowledges that individuals experiencing authentic growth exhibit other traits as well. Many of the additional characteristics are simply variants of the above-mentioned core characteristics and include having positive attitudes, experiencing interpersonal and affectional relationships fully, liking and accepting themselves and others, knowing that the core personality is positive, and being spontaneous or being aware of and expressing (if desired) personal emotional feelings as they occur. This individual is also independent, flexible, relaxed, self-assured, realistic, creative and self-directed. As a "process" (rather than a fixed entity), the fully functioning individual allows himself or herself to be complex in feelings and viewpoints. From the opposite perspective, Rogers finds that his clients become "less dependent, less boastful, less compulsive, less easily upset, better organized, more tolerant, more open to the evidence, behaving in ways that show more concern for the discovery of the facts in the case, more concern for the welfare of all" (Rogers in Massey, 1981, p. 313). Fully functioning individuals take responsibility for themselves and hold themselves, rather than circumstances, "accountable for choices made and outcomes achieved" (Massey, 1981, p.308).

For Rogers, the ultimate goal or telos of authentic growth is to become a fully functioning human being. This means to actualize one's "real" self or one's inherent potentialities, to become "that self which one truly is." The fully functioning person is congruent and exhibits the above-mentioned characteristics to the greatest degree. He or

she is open to experience, able to live in the moment, trusts his or her own organism, expresses feelings freely, acts independently, is creative and lives a rich life-what Rogers (1961) calls the "good life" (p. 187).

Envisioned Telos: Erich Fromm (1900-1980)

Man's main task in life is to give birth to himself, to become what he potentially is. The most important product of his effort is his own personality. (Fromm, 1947, p.237)

Despite Fromm's overall theory being quite different from those of the other two theorists', his ultimate end goal or telos for authentic growth is similar. (Bear in mind that, chronologically, Fromm's ideas emerged before those of the other two theorists.) For Fromm, the envisioned ideal telos of authentic growth is *self-realization*. Fromm (1947) believes that all organisms have an inherent tendency to preserve their existence and that "[t]he first 'duty' of an organism is to be alive" (p. 19). However, mere existence is not sufficient. For Fromm (1947), "the 'duty' to be alive is *the same as the duty to become oneself* [emphasis added] (p.20). Therefore, for Fromm, the ultimate goal of growth is to realize one's true "self," to self-realize (essentially, or closely related to, self-actualization).

Overlapping into process momentarily, it is important to realize that, for Fromm (1947), "man's fate is his character" (p.56) (one's character determines "the way a person acts, feels, and thinks" (p.56)). Fromm believes that human beings *must* relate to the world-to things, via the process of *assimilation*, and to people, via the process of *socialization-and* that the core of one's character is the way one *predominantly* relates to the world. If one *must* relate to the world, then Fromm argues that it makes best sense that one develop the character orientation that will relate best (i.e., in the most productive, useful, healthy way). For Fromm, there is only one way to relate that will lead to self-realization and that is the *productive way*. Fromm calls this the *productive character* or

the *productive orientation*. (In stark contrast, Fromm (1947) details four nonproductive orientations, none of which brings one towards his envisioned telos, self-realization.)

Fromm spends more time describing his nonproductive characters (orientations) than he does the healthy, productive one. This might be because he originally wrote his texts to explain the social genesis of certain pathologies, such as people's pathological desire to escape from freedom. The following attempts to piece together central characteristics found in Fromm's self-realizing individual (productive character). Some appear to foreshadow traits later found in both Maslow's self-actualizing individual and Rogers' fully functioning person. As with Maslow and Rogers, it is presumed that the individual exhibiting or embodying the traits found in this ideal productive character type would epitomize the ultimate "self-realizer."

The productive character is genuine and presents a genuine, transparent self as opposed to a pseudo self (roles, masks, facades). (For Fromm, genuine seems to mean that the thoughts, feelings, and actions originate in the individual and are not imposed or introjected from without.) This individual possesses self-knowledge and exhibits maximum integration of the personality (similar to Rogers' notion of congruence)-that is, who one presents oneself to be is who one really is. Because the individual is genuine, he or she experiences "spontaneous activity," defined as the free activity of the total, integrated personality. That is, the activity originates from one's own free will and expresses what one genuinely feels and thinks (Fromm, 1941). Fromm (1941) states: "there is nothing that gives us greater pride and happiness than to think, to feel, and to say what is ours" (p.261-262). As well as being genuine in thoughts, feelings, and actions, productive persons also have a "proper grasp of the world by reason" (Fromm, 1955, p.37-38), possess an attitude of love (spontaneous affirmation of self and others), and undertake productive work (doing creative work which satisfies inherent desires and abilities, creating in such a way that one unites with nature (Fromm, 1941)). Self-realization entails all three *aspects-productive love, productive work, and spontaneous activity*; together these affirm the individuality of the self while simultaneously uniting the self with humanity and nature. For Fromm, preserving the integrity of the self while

uniting with humanity and nature are foundational criteria for and, therefore, central characteristics of the productive orientation. Fromm (1947) also claims that self-realized individuals experience joy ("a single act") and happiness ("a continuous or integrated experience of joy") because "[h]appiness (joy)...is proof of partial or total success in the 'art of living'" (p.189). Fromm (1947) believes that living is an *art*; therefore, authentic growth is being successful in the *art of living*, defined as "the process of developing into that which one is potentially" (p. 17-18). The degree of happiness one experiences organismically is indicative of the degree of productiveness (self-realization) one is experiencing or exhibiting. Ultimately, the productive character is concerned with "unfolding" his or her own self. Optimally, productive individuals are genuine, rational, realistic, loving, transparent (without masks), self-directing, responsible, and hold themselves accountable. For Fromm, the ultimate telos of growth is self-realization which requires developing this productive character.

Envisioned Process: Abraham Maslow (1908-1970)

[The theory of need gratification is] the most important single principle underlying all healthy human development. The single holistic principle that binds together the multiplicity of human motives is the tendency for a new and higher need to emerge as the lower need fulfills itself by being sufficiently gratified. The child who is fortunate enough to grow normally and well gets satiated and bored with the delights that he has savored sufficiently, and eagerly (without pushing) goes on to higher more complex, delights as they become available to him without danger or threat. (Maslow, 1968, p.55-56)

For Maslow (1968), there is really only one way to grow authentically (or to reach the telos of self-actualization) and that is by meeting or gratifying one's lower needs to a sufficient degree that the highest, most human need-self-actualization-emerges.

Maslow's theory of growth or theory of needs gratification is based on his Hierarchy of Prepotent Needs (See Figure 1, below; taken from Reeve, 1992, p.312). According to Maslow, five clusters of *instinctoid* (instinct-like) human needs exist. These needs emerge hierarchically over the course of one's life with the most basic survival needs being at the

bottom of the hierarchy (hence, emerging early on in one's life), and with the most fulfilling, most uniquely human need being at the apex of the hierarchy.

Maslow's Need Hierarchy

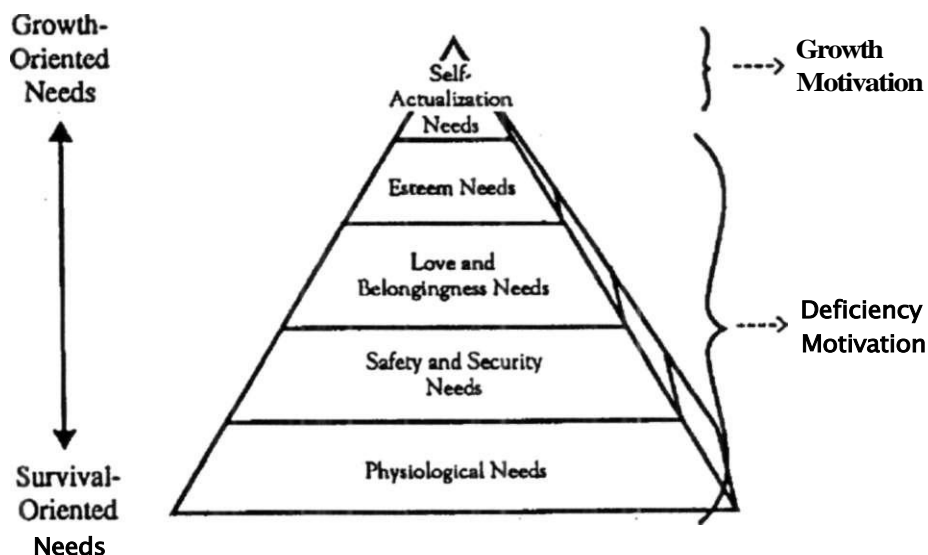


Figure 1

The five needs clusters are *physiological needs, safety and security needs, love and belongingness needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization (growth) needs*. The needs are *prepotent* because each need on the hierarchy must be satisfied at least to *some* degree before the next need higher up on the hierarchy asserts itself. For example, one's physiological needs, one's need for food, water, oxygen, and so forth, must be gratified to a satisfactory degree (Maslow (1970) admits there is not an exact figure²⁴) before safety needs begin to emerge and demand attention.

The following brief explanation of the five needs gives one a sense of their content. Physiological needs are the most basic and include the need for food, water, sleep, rest, sex, warmth, oxygen, and the like. If deprived of certain basic needs, human beings will die. Once the physiological needs are relatively taken care of, one is motivated to seek

safety. Safety and security needs include the desire for physical and psychological security and stability, including an absence of danger and threat, and a desire for protection, structure, order, law, limits, and even a regular routine (Massey, 1981). Once one feels safe and secure, one looks for love and belongingness, for giving and receiving affection. This need for belonging and love can be satisfied through intimate relationships with family, friends and loved ones, or with groups or society at large (Massey, 1981). Once the previous three needs have been gratified to an acceptable degree, the need for esteem arises. Individuals desire self-respect or self-esteem as well as the respect and esteem of others. Therefore, this need consists of two aspects. It entails the *personal* desire for strength, achievement, adequacy, mastery, and competence; the desire for confidence in the face of the world; and the desire for independence and freedom. It also entails respect or esteem from *others*, such as a desire for reputation or prestige, status, fame and glory, recognition, attention, dignity, appreciation and the like. Satisfaction of the self-esteem need leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, adequacy, and of being useful and necessary in the world (Massey, 1981). In contrast, thwarting these needs produces feelings of inferiority, weakness, and helplessness, which, in turn, gives rise to either discouragement or compensatory or neurotic behaviours (Maslow, 1970). The healthiest and most stable esteem is based on *deserved* respect (Massey, 1981).

At the apex of Maslow's hierarchy lies the ultimate human need and the ultimate goal of human development (Massey, 1981)-self-actualization. Once the previous four needs are adequately gratified, Maslow believes that this most uniquely human, most satisfying need arises. Self-actualization is the final stage of human development and consists of the realization of one's inherent, unique potentialities and capabilities. While the higher needs, such as love and self-actualization, are not crucial to survival and can be postponed longer than the lower needs, meeting these higher needs produces the greatest sense of happiness and fulfillment in life (Cross & Cross, 1998).

Maslow (1970) calls the four lower levels of needs *deficient* needs and explains that individuals still trying to meet any of these lower needs (i.e., "ordinary people" or nonself-actualizers (p. 159)) are merely *striving* or *preparing* to live; they are not *growing*

or actually *living*. In comparison, individuals who have sufficiently gratified the lower needs change dramatically and become qualitatively different types of individuals (i.e., self-actualizers). Self-actualizers are motivated by *growth* or *being* needs instead of deficiency needs-"motivation is just character growth, character expression, maturation, and development; in a word self-actualization" (Maslow, 1970, p. 159). According to Maslow (1970), only the individual who is primarily motivated towards or focused on self-actualization is considered healthy; all others are "less than fully human" (p.57-58). Based on these ideas, meeting lower needs does not constitute authentic growth for Maslow; only growth at the highest need level does. Being fully human and healthy equates with self-actualization and nothing less; "general-illness of the personality is seen as any falling short of growth, or of self-actualization, or of full-humanness" (Maslow, 1968, p. 193).

The core of Maslow's growth theory is that the emergence of the higher growth or being needs is dependent upon satisfactory gratification of lower needs. Maslow believes that this occurs best when a child is raised in a loving, accepting environment where all his or her needs are sufficiently met. If a child's needs are *not* met, healthy growth is impaired. The child can become *fixated* on the unmet need well into adulthood and possibly for the rest of his or her life (Fadiman & Frager, 1976).

While the above information explains the general requirements for reaching self-actualization (simply gratify the lower needs), more information on growth is needed. Maslow (1968) acknowledges that growth involves risk and is often approached with ambivalence and reluctance.²⁵ Maslow explains that while there is an inherent desire and need to grow, there is also, within the individual, a desire for safety. *Every* human being has *both* sets of forces within: "One set clings to safety and defensiveness out of fear, tending to regress backward, hanging on to the past,...[t]he other set of forces impels him forward toward wholeness of Self and uniqueness of Self, toward full functioning of all his capacities..." (Maslow, 1968, p.46). Moreover, Maslow (1968) explains that "the dark forces are as 'normal' as the growth forces" (p.54). Each individual must constantly choose between growth-inducing choices and growth-debilitating or growth-inhibiting choices, "between the delights of safety and growth, dependence and independence,

regression and progression, immaturity and maturity" (Maslow, 1968, p.47). But choice is often difficult because both safety and growth have anxieties *and* delights. Maslow (1968) explains: "We grow forward when the delights of growth and anxieties of safety are greater than the anxieties of growth and the delights of safety" (p.47). Caught in a perpetual tug-of-war, individuals must constantly choose between the pull of safety and the pull of growth.

What this explanation shows is that, for Maslow, forward growth is strongly anchored in a foundation of safety. Unless the safety need is sufficiently met and continuously stable, forward growth is unpredictable or inconstant. (For example, Maslow (1968) explains that if lower needs become threatened or if an individual experiences stressful conditions, the person can *regress* to a lower need level.) If forced to choose between growth and safety, Maslow warns that safety will generally win out, *unless* the individual's safety need has been gratified. Maslow warns that individuals must come to realize that fixation on safety brings "catastrophe in the long run" (p.54). The individual pays a high price for fear, fixation, self-betrayal and/or prolonged regression; succumbing to them costs the individual all the benefits of authentic growth or self-actualization-happiness, joy, calmness, responsibility, confidence and a zest for living, i.e., the individual's mental and psychological health and development, or more generally, his or her humanness. For Maslow (1968), personal growth requires "courage, self-confidence, even daring" (p.98) and these are built upon successful gratification and satisfaction of the lower needs (which begins in a loving, supportive home environment); satisfaction of the safety need is paramount.

To summarize, in Maslow's theory of growth (theory of needs gratification), authentic growth is growth at the level of self-actualization, becoming that person which one is meant to be or actualizing one's inherent potentialities and capacities. When one is self-actualizing, one is most fully human. Such high order growth, however, requires sufficient gratification of the lower needs. Without sufficient and continued satisfaction of lower needs, an individual-child or adult-will become fixated on the lower need and will be unable to reap the "delights" of self-actualization. (Maslow (1968) believes that

individuals have within themselves the ability to know what is best for themselves and he calls this their "subjective delight experience" (p.49-50); this device "guides and directs the individual in the direction of 'healthy' growth" (p.57).²⁶ While self-actualization is the most fulfilling experience for individuals, Maslow (1968) believes that few live fairly consistent self-actualizing lives (approximately one percent). This might be due, in part, to the fact that authentic growth (self-actualization) entails risk and requires "great courage and a long struggle" (Maslow, 1968, p. 166). Growth is scary and not for the fainthearted. According to Maslow, the desire for authentic growth and self-actualization must win over the appeal of safety.

Envisioned Process: Carl Rogers (1902-1987)

*Whether one calls it a growth tendency, a drive toward self-actualization, or a forward-moving directional tendency, it is the mainspring of life, and is, in the last analysis, the tendency upon which all psychotherapy depends. **It is the urge which is evident in all organic and human life-to expand, extend, become autonomous, develop, mature-the tendency to express and activate all the capacities of the organism, to the extent that such activation enhances the organism or the self.** This tendency may become deeply buried under layer after layer of encrusted psychological defenses; it may be hidden behind elaborate facades which deny its existence; but it is my belief that it exists in every individual, and awaits only the proper conditions to be released and expressed. [bold added] (Rogers, 1961, p.35)*

For Rogers (1961), one grows authentically or becomes a fully functioning individual when one grows in tune with one's underlying *organismic actualizing tendency*,²⁷ one's inherent urge "to expand, extend, become autonomous, develop, mature-the tendency to express and activate all the capacities of the organism, to the extent that such activation enhances the organism or the self" (p.35). Unlike Maslow, who theorizes five motivating needs, Rogers believes that there is only "one basic tendency and striving," one need that subsumes all others, one "master motive" (Massey, 1981, p.307). This master motive is this underlying actualizing tendency-the tendency "to actualize, maintain, and enhance the experiencing organism," or the tendency to self-

actualize/become a fully functioning individual (Rogers, 1951, p.487). This actualizing tendency is selective, directional, and constructive; only under perverse or unusual circumstances does the organism actualize its potentiality for self-destruction and the like (Rogers, 1977). Rogers (1961) believes that all living things possess this tendency and that each individual strives, knowingly or unknowingly, to become himself or herself. For Rogers, authentic growth is *any* growth which is in tune with the underlying organismic actualizing tendency (or *any* growth towards self-actualization or full functioning).

Rogers (1961) presents seven general stages of growth and suggests that authentic growth entails any movement along this continuum, "from fixity to changingness, from rigid structure to flow, from stasis to process" (p. 131). Growth is not seen as movement from a fixity or homeostasis through change to a new fixity, but is growth from fixity to changingness. Rogers (1961) summarizes this process as follows:

In general, the evidence shows that the [growth] process moves away from fixity, remoteness from feelings and experience, rigidity of self-concept, remoteness from people, impersonality of functioning. It moves toward fluidity, changingness, immediacy of feelings and experience, acceptance of feelings and experience, tentativeness of constructs, discovery of a changing self in one's changing experience, realness and closeness of relationships, a unity and integration of functioning, (p.64-65)

As the individual grows along this continuum (in thought, feelings, communicative abilities, awareness, and so forth), he or she experiences increased awareness, increased psychological maturity, increased authenticity. Ultimately, he or she experiences a shift from incongruence to congruence.

Although all organisms have this inherent tendency to grow, Rogers (1961) believes that the actualizing tendency "is released and expressed under the proper conditions" (p.35). For Rogers, people do not develop (grow up) in a vacuum; they grow in relationships-"Relationships offer the best opportunity to be 'fully functioning,' to be in harmony with oneself, others, and the environment. Through relationships, the basic organismic needs of the individual can be fulfilled" (Fadiman & Frager, 1976, p.292). Some ways of relating interpersonally are mutually beneficial, while others "induce defensiveness and smother the growth of self" (Massey, 1981, p.313). The key, for

Rogers, is to ensure the former and avoid or rectify the latter. Rogers strongly believes that certain positive or optimum conditions (called "facilitative conditions" (Massey, 1981, p.313-314)) must be present in order for an individual to experience maximal self-actualization and authentic growth. These facilitative conditions might exist in one's family environment; however, if one is not that fortunate, Rogers believes that a growth-facilitating (a "helpful") environment can be created in therapy and other mature interpersonal relationships.²⁸

According to Rogers, a person is most likely to grow authentically (to self-actualize or become fully functioning) when he or she grows up in an environment of *unconditional positive regard*. In such an environment, the person learns self-acceptance (*positive self-regard*) and can become unified in experience, awareness and communication (i.e., experiences and develops *congruence*). Theoretically, in such a positive environment, the person does not develop what Rogers calls *conditions of worth* (always perceived as negative—explained below), does not forfeit *organismic valuation* (one's internal guidance system) for external *positive regard* (positive regard from others), and, therefore, does not experience *incongruence*. (Rogers uses the terms "congruence" and "incongruence" "to describe the extent to which the individual denies and rejects personal characteristics, abilities, desires, and beliefs (incongruence), or accepts the full range of his or her personal characteristics (congruence)" (Reeve, 1992, p.320).) It appears that, for Rogers, congruence (being *unified in experience, awareness and communication*) is a central index of authentic growth because congruence facilitates and reflects self-actualization. Rogers considers the human infant to be a model of *congruence* because the infant is seen as completely genuine and integrated (Cullari, 2000, chap. 12); there is no discrepancy between what the infant experiences and what he or she communicates.

Rogers believes that the process of self-actualization is characterized by struggle and pain, as can be seen in the child's learning to walk. Reeve (1992) explains that despite painful obstacles, such as setbacks, "the strength of the actualization tendency, 'the forward thrust of life,' pushes the child ever forward" (p.317). Optimally (or

theoretically), all experiences within the struggle and pain of actualization are evaluated in accordance with an *organismic valuation process*- "an innate capability to judge for oneself whether a specific experience is growth-promoting or growth-debilitating" (Reeve, 1992, p.317). Experiences perceived as maintaining or enhancing the individual (as meeting the actualizing tendency) are positively valued and are subsequently maintained and sought out while those experiences perceived as regressive or negative (as not meeting the actualizing tendency) are negatively valued and, hence, are terminated or avoided (Reeve, 1992). Reeve explains that the organismic valuation process creates "a feedback system that allows the individual to coordinate life experiences in accordance with his or her actualization tendency" (p.317).

Figure 2, below (taken from Reeve, 1992, p. 319), depicts the Rogerian model of the process of self-actualization. Rogers explains that, shortly after birth, a portion of the individual's *phenomenal field* (defined as "all experiences available at a given moment[,] both conscious and unconscious") becomes differentiated and the child develops a sense of "self" or a self-concept-an "I," "me," and "myself" (Cullari, 2000, chap. 12). The child's self-concept develops experientially, based on personal experience and feedback (unconditional or conditional positive regard-see below) from others, is an ongoing process, and is a person's view of himself or herself, based on past experience, present inputs, and future expectations (Fadiman & Frager, 1976). The organismic valuation process now applies to both the organism as a whole, as well as to this differentiated "self." In the fully functioning individual, there is little difference between the self (synonymous with self-concept) and the organism (Cross & Cross, 1998).²⁹ The organismic potentialities are genetic and the self-concept is socially determined, and the two can be different or at cross-purposes. To achieve maximum self-actualization (to become fully functioning) and to ensure that one's true inherent potentials are actualized, the two must be congruent.

Rogerum Model of the Process of Self-Actualization

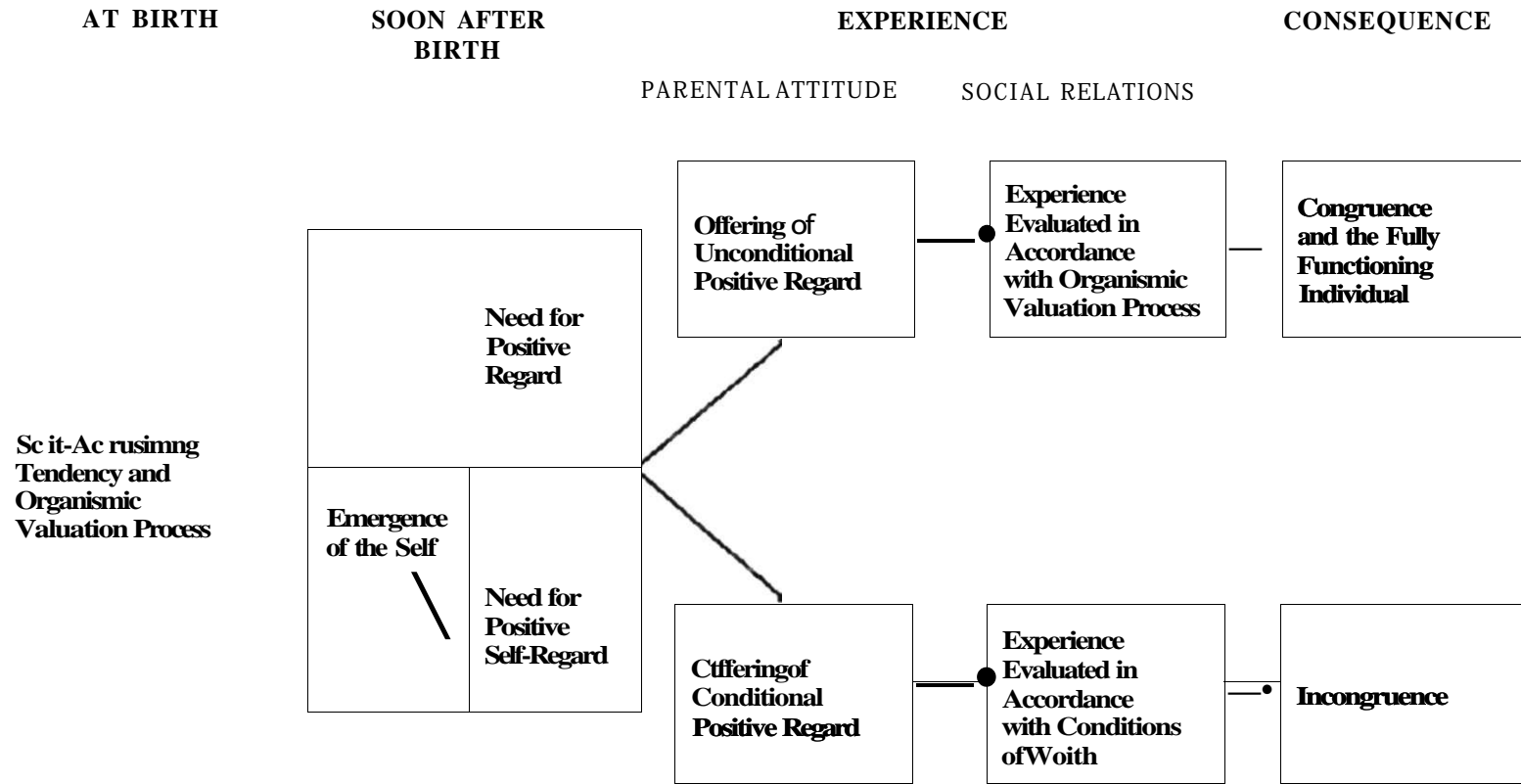


Figure 2

The emergence of the "self" brings with it a need for *positive regard*. Positive regard (similar to Maslow's needs for esteem from self and others and for love and belongingness) is Rogers' umbrella term for the universal need for approval, love and acceptance from others, which is particularly important during infancy. Because the child needs positive regard-approval, acceptance and love-'significant others' (those of importance to the individual) become extremely important in the developing child's life and the child becomes sensitive to the feedback (criticisms and praises) of others. Each individual needs positive regard from significant others because it helps the person develop positive self-regard, which includes self-esteem, self-acceptance, self-worth, a positive self-image and so forth (Cullari, 2000, chap. 12).

Concomitant with the need for positive regard is the development of *conditions of worth*-conditions, attitudes, or actions that one feels one must fulfill in order to remain worthy; they are the conditions upon which the person's behaviour and personal characteristics (the self) are judged as either positive and worthy of acceptance or negative and worthy of rejection (Reeve, 1992).³⁰ Reeve explains that "[b]y attending to the criticisms and praises of others, the individual begins to internalize societal feedback into the self-structure" (p.317-318). As a result, one's self-concept and one's self-regard-how one perceives and esteems oneself-are influenced by the feedback (positive regard) from others. By adulthood, the individual learns from significant others (parents, friends, teachers, ministers, coaches) what behaviours and characteristics are good and bad, right and wrong, desirable and undesirable. When the child internalizes conditions of worth into the self-structure and makes them his or her own, the self-concept becomes based on these introjected standards of value rather than on organismic evaluation. The conditions act as a substitute for the innate organismic valuation process such that experience is no longer judged by the actualizing tendency or with the innate organismic valuation process (Reeve, 1992). A discrepancy (incongruence) between organismic experiencing and the self develops. Because conditions of worth hamper the organismic valuation process, they are presented as negative or detrimental in Rogers' theory. Any movement away from adherence to the organismic valuation process or the actualizing tendency towards

socialized conditions of worth is antithetical to self-actualization and, therefore, antithetical to authentic growth because the individual ends up moving further and further away from his or her inherent ability to make the behavioural choices necessary to self-actualize (Reeve, 1992). Social conditions of worth also become introjected values and "tend to become fixed, rigid, and unchanging laws for social conduct" (Reeve, 1992, p.318). Fluidity is lost. This "conditioning" leads to conditional positive self-regard such that individuals like themselves only if they meet the standards applied to them by others rather than if they are truly actualizing their potentials (Cullari, 2000, chap. 12). In short, when a person grows up in an environment of *conditional positive regard*, experience is evaluated in accordance with *learned* conditions of worth and the individual experiences *incongruence**, split between the organism (actualizing tendency) and the self. He or she develops masks and facades, as well as the tendency to censor, distort, deny or be selective about what he or she is aware of in any experience. The incongruent person is split and defensive. Internalizing conditions of worth hinders congruence between one's organism and one's self (self-concept); congruence between the organism and the self is paramount for hearing and heeding the voice of the actualizing tendency or organismic valuation process.

Reeve (1992) explains that, for Rogers, the only way *not* to interfere with a child's actualization tendency is to provide "*unconditional positive regard*," rather than the '*conditional positive regard*' that emanates from conditions of worth" (p.318). He explains:

If given unconditional positive regard, a child has no need to internalize societal conditions of worth. If parents approve of, love, and accept the child for who he or she naturally is rather than for who the parents wish him or her to be, then the child's self-structure [self or self-concept] will be an isomorphic representation of the actualizing tendency. (Reeve, 1992, p.318-320)

As Rogers' model shows (Figure 2, p.66), growing up in an environment of unconditional positive regard leads to the individual evaluating experiences in accordance with his or her organismic valuation process, that part which is closest to, *is*, or speaks for the real self. When the self and the organism are congruent, choices are made in accordance with the

actualizing tendency and, as a result, the individual will self-actualize and become a fully functioning individual. Or, put another way, heeding organismic evaluations leads to authentic growth and self-actualization. The congruent individual is open, fluid, whole-unified in experience, awareness, and communication.

In summary, for Rogers, authentic growth is any growth which moves the individual towards actualizing his or her inherent potentialities. Self-actualization requires listening to and heeding one's organismic valuation process (learning to trust and rely on one's internal guide), overcoming detrimental effects of conditional positive regard, and developing congruence. Overall, one grows authentically (self-actualizes) when one grows towards personal wholeness, integration, and unity, towards becoming "that self which one truly is." Another way that Rogers describes authentic growth is that it is living "the good life" (which he believes is not a life for the faint-hearted). Such a life "involves stretching and growing to become more and more of one's potentialities. It involves courage to be. It means launching oneself fully into the stream of life" (Rogers, 1961, p. 196). What is heartening or deeply exciting to Rogers (1961) is that "when the individual is inwardly free, he chooses as the good life[,] this process of becoming" (p. 196).

Envisioned Process: Erich Fromm (1900-1980)

Only if he recognizes the human situation, the dichotomies inherent in his existence and his capacity to unfold his powers, will he be able to succeed in his task: to be himself and for himself and to achieve happiness by the full realization of those faculties which are peculiarly his-of reason, love, and productive work.
(Fromm, 1947, p.44-45)

Fromm's theory of authentic growth is much more complex than either Maslow's or Rogers' because both the individual and society or culture are taken into consideration and both are seen to impact an individual's personality and influence growth and development. Fromm's is a complex, multi-faceted theory which considers not only individual growth, but also the historical evolution of humanity; moreover, the two are

intertwined. It appears that, based on Fromm's ideas, authentic growth is self-realization and one realizes one's inherent self (i.e., grows authentically) in the following four ways: (1) by facing the reality of the "human condition" (i.e., being a part of, yet, apart from nature, and being isolated and alone due to humanity's freedom from nature and due to increasing independence and individuality); (2) by facing and accepting the duality of the individuation process (i.e., individuation brings both growth and separation and, thus, the "burden of freedom" (Cullari, 2000, chap.6); (3) by developing a productive orientation to the world (which allows human beings to self-realize and to meet their physiological and psychological needs—the needs for self-preservation and for relatedness, transcendence, rootedness, identity, and a frame of orientation); and (4) by creating a *sane* society—a society whose interests and goals are, first and foremost, the creation of productive, fully human beings, a society whose *social character* (the traits common to the largest number of its members) is the productive character. Conversely, authentic growth will not and cannot occur when one runs away from one's existential realities—from freedom, independence, and individuality—or, in a nutshell, self-realization will not occur if one embraces any of Fromm's four *nonproductive* orientations or *mechanisms of escape*? While the above is easy to say, it is much more difficult to explain. Ultimately, the only way to grow authentically towards self-realization is to develop the productive character (both individually and socially) because the productive character deals best with the existential dilemmas and the duality inherent in individuation and it also produces and/or reflects self-realization.

First, basic to Fromm's theory is the idea that humanity is a "freak" of nature, a part of nature, yet apart from it, due to humankind's ability to think abstractly and rationally, be aware of itself, and use imagination (Cullari, 2000, chap.6). This human situation results in "unsoluble [sic] dilemmas" of human existence or "existential dichotomies," which must be accepted in order for the individual to experience authentic growth as self-realization. Not everyone acknowledges or accepts these existential limitations. The productive character does. According to Fromm, the productive character accepts the reality that one will die, without succumbing to the anxiety or

despair which generally accompanies this reality; accepts that one will never live long enough to reach full realization of one's potentialities and does not become neurotic trying to reach unrealistic goals of perfection or self-realization; and accepts that one lives alone in a hostile environment and thus cooperates with others in a productive manner, preserving self-integration while relating healthily with others (Cullari, 2000, chap.6). As a result of accepting these existential dichotomies, the productive character is able to experience the maximum level of authentic growth and self-realization available within the bounds of these existential limitations.

Secondly, authentic growth towards self-realization requires that one accept the duality inherent in the individuation process and the "burden of freedom" that comes with it. For Fromm (1941), both humanity, in general, and individuals, in particular, experience the process of *individuation-the*. growing process of the emergence of the individual [or humanity] from his [or its] original ties" (p.24). Fromm sees human history as a record of humanity's growing individuation just as the history of a person's life is a record of that person's individuation.³² Fromm (1941) explains: "The social history of man started with his emerging from a state of oneness with the natural world to an awareness of himself as an entity separate from surrounding nature and men....[Humanity's individuation] seems to have reached its peak in modern history in the centuries between the Reformation and the present" (p.24). Social history is the story of increasing freedom from nature and increasing individuality (freedom from each other) just as an individual's history is increasing freedom from the person's primary ties and increasing individuality.

The process of personal individuation entails a person's growing individuality, independence, and separation from his or her original or primary ties with family and significant others. These ties provide security, belongingness, and rootedness (psychological human needs); however, once complete individuation is reached and the individual is free from these primary ties, the individual is confronted with a new task: "to orient and root himself in the world and to find security in other ways than those which were characteristic of his preindividualistic existence" (Fromm, 1941, p.25). Individuation presents the individual with an opportunity to grow in freedom and independence, to grow

stronger physically, emotionally and mentally, and to become more integrated as his or her personality develops, guided by his or her will and reason. The dualistic aspect to individuation is such that while individuation entails growth in self-strength, it also entails the realization that one is alone, an entity separate from all others (Fromm, 1941).

When the primary ties are severed, the child loses the security and unity those ties provided. For many, the world outside this secure existence can appear overwhelming, even threatening and dangerous. Separation creates a feeling of powerlessness and anxiety. In contrast, "as long as one was an integral part of that world, unaware of the possibilities and responsibilities of individual action, one did not need to be afraid of it. When one has become an individual, one stands alone and faces the world in all its perilous and overpowering aspects" (Fromm, 1941, p.28-29). The burden of freedom (growing independence) brings with it the reality of self-responsibility and accountability. With growing self-strength or self-realization ("[freedom] to develop and express [one's] own individual self unhampered by those ties which were limiting [oneself]") comes growing aloneness and separateness ("[freedom] from a world which gave it security and reassurance" (Fromm, 1941, p.30-31)). Despite the fact that people can "never reverse, psychically, the process of individuation" (Fromm, 1941, p.29), many are tempted to give up their individuality in order to overcome the feelings of aloneness and powerlessness. They are tempted to choose nonproductive orientations or *mechanisms of escape*, although these new nonproductive ties are not the same as "the primary ties which have been cut off in the process of growth itself" (Fromm, 1941, p.29-30). Any attempts to give up individuality are forms of self-negation and can never bring security and satisfaction. Instead, the opposite occurs. Refusing to embrace one's individuality costs one one's strength and the integrity of the self, and instills doubt, insecurity, dissatisfaction, and other self-debilitating behaviours (Fromm, 1941).

Unfortunately, as Fromm (1941) explains, a *lag* often occurs between individuation and the growth of the self because the growth of the self is hampered for a number of personal and social reasons, such as fear or a debilitating social environment. The lag results in "an unbearable feeling of isolation and powerlessness, and this in its turn

leads to psychic mechanisms, *mechanisms of escape*" (Fromm, 1941, p.31). One must embrace the lag productively. For Fromm (1941), the only positive response to feelings of isolation and powerlessness, to the burden of freedom, which emerges in the individuation process is a productive response,

[a] *spontaneous relationship to man and nature*, a relationship that connects the individual with the world without eliminating his individuality. This kind of relationship—the foremost expressions of which are love and productive work—are rooted in the integration and strength of the total personality and are therefore subject to the very limits that exist for the growth of the self. (p.30)

While developing the productive character does not end the insoluble conflict, for Fromm, it is the best and healthiest response. That is, growing separation may result in isolation that creates intense anxiety and insecurity or it may result in "a new kind of closeness and a solidarity with others *if the child has been able to develop the inner strength and productivity which are the premise of this new kind of relatedness to the world*" [emphasis added] (Fromm, 1941, p.30-31). It depends on the individual's response. For Fromm, the productive orientation or productive character is the only response which leads to healthy relatedness and, hence, authentic growth; it is the only positive response to the dilemma that individuation creates; it is the only response which *is* self-realization.

Thirdly, Fromm stresses that human beings have psychological needs as well as physiological (survival) needs. In order to grow authentically (to self-realize) one must choose to meet these psychological needs productively as opposed to ~~to~~ productively (through *mechanisms of escape*). That is, the productive orientation is the only response which healthily meets these psychological needs, which are the needs for *relatedness* (brotherliness, connecting the individual with the world without eliminating one's individuality), *transcendence* (overcoming one's animal nature through creativity and producing), *identity* (developing a genuine sense of self), *rootedness* (feeling at home in this isolating world), and *a frame of orientation and devotion* (developing a way of understanding and making meaning out of one's world and existence) (Fromm, 1941).

Lastly, Fromm believes that society plays a crucial role in liberating human beings so that the maximum number of people can enjoy self-realization. Fromm believes that

one can best grow authentically or realize maximum self-realization when one lives in a sane or healthy society.³³ Such a society is as follows:

[A] society in which the individual, his growth and happiness, is the aim and purpose of culture, in which life does not need any justification in success or anything else, and in which the individual is not subordinated to or manipulated by any power outside of himself, be it the State or the economic machine; finally, a society in which his conscience and ideals are not the internalization of external demands, but are really *his* and express the aims that result from the peculiarity of his self. (Fromm, 1941, p.270-271)

Such a society does not yet exist; however, Fromm (1941) is optimistic that eventually, over the course of history, the optimum society for generating large numbers of productive personalities will emerge. Thus, for Fromm, self-realization relies, in part, on society's help. Fromm (1941) explains: "the realization of positive freedom and individualism is...bound up with economic and social changes that will permit the individual to become free in terms of the realization of his self" (p.271); "[o]nly if man masters society and subordinates the economic machine to the purposes of human happiness and only if he actively participates in the social process, can he overcome what now drives him into despair-his aloneness and his feeling of powerlessness" (p.276). Because the individual and society interact, Fromm believes that the individual, as an active agent, has a responsibility to work towards creating an optimum social environment which would give priority to human beings' authentic growth and self-realization.

Fromm (1941) states that "[t]here is only one possible, productive solution for the relationship of individualized man with the world: his active solidarity with all men and his spontaneous activity, love and work, which unite him again with the world, not by primary ties but as a free and independent individual" (p.36). This productive orientation or character is the only healthy, growth-inducing way of accepting the reality of one's existential situation and of relating oneself to the world. Only by accepting responsibility for oneself and by using one's powers (by living productively, by self-realizing) can one give meaning to one's life or, as Fromm (1947) puts it,

only if he recognizes the human situation, the dichotomies inherent in his existence and his capacity to unfold his powers, will he be able to succeed in his task: to be

himself and for himself and to achieve happiness by the full realization of those faculties which are peculiarly his-of reason, love, and productive work, (p.45)

For Fromm (1947), realizing these three faculties in one's individual, idiosyncratic way is how one comes to terms with life's uncertainties and how one experiences authentic growth.³⁴

In summary, authentic growth is *productively* realizing one's unique inherent potentialities, being oneself and being for oneself-i.e., self-realization (Fromm, 1947). According to Fromm, self-realization unfolds best by developing the productive character. This entails realizing one's inherent potentialities in a free, spontaneous, objective, rational, open, loving, congruent manner. For Fromm, how one relates oneself to the world (one's character orientation) determines whether one will self-realize or escape from that responsibility. Productive characters relate themselves to nature and others through productive work and by developing their reason and love so that they can experience the natural and social world in a *human* way. According to Fromm (1955), only then can the individual "feel at home, secure in himself, and the master of his life" (p.67-68). Relating to the world productively is the only way a person can mitigate the growing insecurity that accompanies the increased independence and freedom that emerges as the individual individuates (matures) and separates from primary ties. Those who relate themselves to themselves, others, nature and their work lovingly (showing care, respect, responsibility, and knowledge, and without losing themselves in the process), creatively (by expressing their true selves), rationally (by relying on reason and becoming engaged in life), objectively (seeing themselves and their world *as it is*), and absorbed or involved are self-realizing and, thus, experiencing authentic growth. According to Fromm (1947), life, all that occurs between birth and death, is for the productive individual "a process of giving birth to one's potentialities, of bringing to life all that is potentially given in the two cells" (p.91). The only way to experience full mental, emotional, and sensual health, to experience authentic growth, to succeed at "the art of living," is to put one's energies towards the unfolding of one's inner potentialities. Anything less leads to unhappiness, discomfort, pain, and suffering. At its worst, it can

lead to self-destruction or other-destruction. Life has a tendency to grow, to be lived. If it is thwarted or blocked, it becomes transformed into life-destructive energy:

"Destructiveness is the outcome of unlived life" (Fromm, 1947, p.216-217). Success is authentic growth and self-realization-living life as one's unique self.

Critique of the "Experts"

For the purposes of this thesis, this section focuses its critique of the "experts" on two aspects only-*telos* and *process*-in order to determine whether these aspects can be improved upon. Comments on authentic growth occur when pertinent.

Telos

When all is said and done, Maslow, Rogers, and Fromm share a very similar notion of what constitutes the goal of authentic growth. Each sees actualization of an inherent self (self-actualization) in a secular or worldly context as the *telos* of growth.

Additionally, the goal and focus of growth seems to be constrained to the confines of the individual; hence, these theories of growth emerge as individualistic or as promoting individualism or individuality.

All three theorists posit the existence of an internal system or mechanism which *knows* when the individual is growing authentically, a system that is in tune with or represents the person's inherent potentialities and knows when he or she is making authentic choices which lead to self-actualization. In essence, all three inner systems are characterized by an internal guide or intrinsic conscience. Maslow speaks of the subjective delight experience, Rogers speaks of the organismic valuation process, and Fromm (1947) speaks of reason and the humanistic conscience-"*the voice of our loving care for ourselves*" (p. 159). The three theorists also suggest that these internal systems can be easily overridden or stifled; however, they cannot be completely eradicated. Authentic growth occurs when one develops the skills to hear and heed one's internal guide. Yet, the notion of a seemingly infallible internal guide seems problematic. All three theorists state that individuals, in the course of their upbringing, develop conditions of

worth (Rogers' term) or come to internalize external demands (for example, from irrational authorities, for Fromm). These external demands, beliefs, ideologies, and so forth are often introjected, becoming their own, causing individuals to somehow lose touch with their internal guides. As a result, authentic growth often entails the stripping away of "layer after layer of encrusted psychological defenses" (Rogers, 1961, p.35). How does one *know* when the voice speaking is one's *authentic* voice and not just another internalized voice of a parent or of culture? How does one know when one has finally dug through all the layers? Maslow's "subjective delight experience" sounds very hedonistic and naive. It rings of the dicta "If it feels good, do it" or "If it feels good, it must be good for me," neither of which seem like sound bases for making decisions. What if what gives one "subjective delight" is unhealthy for the individual? Something is not necessarily good for the person simply because it *feels* right. Fromm claims that society as a whole can (and often does) embrace or value traits or behaviours that are, in reality, not healthy for individuals. Regarding Rogers' theory, what happens if a person believes that it is his or her organism speaking when it is not? When people are close to the fixity end of Rogers' growth continuum, it seems more likely that they will confuse the voice of their defences with the voice of their organismic valuation process. Regarding Fromm, what happens if the person's intrinsic conscience is actually somebody else's voice of which the individual has taken ownership? Or, what if the individual's reason is warped by nonproductive beliefs? Ultimately, if the voice is subject to external influence and/or corruption, is the voice ultimately trustworthy? Moreover, is there *really* an internal voice which *knows*, a voice which is immune to or unaffected by the socialization which occurs when one grows up? This seems questionable.

After considerable thought, this thesis challenges the teloi put forward by these "experts," specifically the goal and notion of self-actualization and the finite, limited, secular, individualistic teloi envisioned by all three theorists. Both concerns are intertwined. First, the concept of self-actualization is problematic simply because it is difficult to fully comprehend what the theorists mean by it. For example, are potentialities genetic blueprints that must be realized exactly or are they simply general predispositions?

Are they "nature" or are they a combination of "nature" and "nurture"? It is possible that self-actualization is simply a partial telos and, therefore, might not be the end point of growth. Secondly, Maslow seems to suggest that a self-actualized individual looks beyond himself or herself to consider social problems and Fromm suggests that the productive character relates himself or herself to others lovingly. This "extra-personal" consideration indicates that growth entails more than the individual; however, despite these notions, in the end, growth for these three theorists is individualistic and self-centred. Even though Rogers considers others in his growth process, significant others seem instrumental. They exist simply to aid the individual self-actualize. The same seems true for Fromm. Even though Fromm recognizes the influence of others and of culture on individuals, his processes (productive love and work) seem to exist simply to help the individual self-realize. With Maslow, others also seem to exist instrumentally, in order to help the individual reach the highest level of Maslow's hierarchy, self-actualization. Perhaps the goal of authentic growth is something greater than the individual, something more expansive or inclusive or connective, something infinite, something **transpersonal** or **trans-human**, something spiritual, in a non-sectarian sense, something holistic, such as connection with **Ultimate Reality** or realization of Wholeness or of a greater **Whole**. Possibly love, as an empathically connective force, is the telos (or process) and self-actualization is simply one step along the way, a byproduct on one's way towards connection with Ultimate Reality or realization of Unity or Wholeness. Perhaps self-actualization is simply an index of one's growth to date. (An alternative telos is explored more fully in the next chapter.)

Of note, Maslow hints at something mystical in his description of peak experiences, but that is the closest any of the theorists gets to considering something trans-human. There are degrees of peak experiences and Maslow (1970) allows for a sense of heightened unity, integration and connection in acute experiences; however, most unity is perceived as remaining within the boundaries of the individual. Some mention is made of the individual experiencing heightened interpersonal unity, integration, and harmony. The idea of heightened connection or self-transcendence is not elaborated upon

much beyond acute identity experiences, be it with oneself, with one's partner, with another, or with one's creation (something one has created). Maslow (1968) briefly mentions that self-actualization (in the sense of autonomy) "paradoxically makes *more* possible the transcendence of self, and of self-consciousness and of selfishness;" he says self-actualization "makes it *easier* for the person to be homonous, i.e., to merge himself as a part in a larger whole than himself" (p.212). Homonomy could mean a sense of connection with one's family, with social groups, or with one's culture; it could also mean connection to something trans-human. Unfortunately, Maslow offers little to no elaboration of this concept. The potential for something trans-human appears to be present in Maslow's growth theory; however, it is not elaborated upon in his theory.³⁵ Rogers stays well anchored in the secular, looking no further than internal organismic harmony as the epitome of authentic growth. Some mention is made of interpersonal harmony; however, nothing beyond this is explored or considered. The same is true for Fromm; the goal of growth is personal or internal integration and unity, although he does recognize the need to relate productively with others (in order to achieve personal integration). Fromm sounds well-anchored in Enlightenment humanism with his fixation on reason and the rational. Fromm (1947) states that humanity cannot live without **faith**-not as faith *in* something, but as a pervasive attitude. Despite his disclaimer, when reading Fromm, one gets a distinct feeling that he has total faith *in* reason. Fromm anchors his explanations or theoretical ideas in human nature. The human need for transcendence (to create) and for a frame of orientation and devotion (to have a stable way of comprehending one's world) are not needs for something trans-human; they are simply human psychological (rational, productive) needs. That is, both needs stem from human nature and the human condition. Religion might be one of the ways these needs are met; however, religion is, for Fromm, simply one of many ways of meeting these psychological needs. For example, Fromm points out that secular devotions, such as devotion to material success, meet this need in the same way religion does. It is the need for meaning and comprehension of one's world that fuels this psychological need; nothing transcendent is required or desired. Even Fromm's (1947) humanistic ethics is based on

or anchored in human nature. Good is determined by what is good for humans; and what is good for humans is anchored in the dictates of human nature (Fromm, 1947). Fromm's (1956) concept of love is impressive; however, in the end, it also seems instrumental. Love is the best way of relating to others because it is the best way of ensuring maximum self-realization. Love is also anchored in the realities of human nature; it is not a trans-human unifying force. There appears to be no transcendent force above humanity provided for or desired in Fromm.

In the end, the teloi of self-actualization (Maslow), full functioning (Rogers), and self-realization (Fromm) emerge as confined and constrictive. Anchoring growth to the individual-to the psychological development of the individual-and confining growth to the secular realm seem to produce a limited, finite, short-sighted, truncated vision of the goal(s) of authentic growth. If growth ends at the individual, then it *could* be prone to being or becoming selfish and self-centred (and possibly even hedonistic and narcissistic). What if there is something beyond the individual and human beings, something not only transpersonal, but transcendent, something trans-human? This transcendent aspect of telos (and growth) is worthy of greater consideration and will be explored more fully in Chapter 4.

Process

In all three theories, authentic growth seems to entail overcoming obstacles in order to reach the ultimate goal of growth, self-actualization. That is, growth seems to entail overcoming some form of **alienation** in order to achieve some form of **intimacy**. Specifically, for Maslow, one must overcome (meet) lower needs, which keep one alienated from one's true goal, in order to reach the ultimate goal-the highest needs level (being needs)-so that one can self-actualize or develop an intimacy with one's inherent self. That is, one must overcome alienation from the highest need by meeting lower levels so that one can develop an intimate, integrative relationship with oneself. For Rogers, one must overcome the alienation of incongruence brought on by conditional positive regard and the concomitant conditions of worth so that one can reap the rewards of intimacy with

one's "real" self; that is, one must strive for and achieve congruence or internal integration. For Fromm, one must overcome the fear and alienation inherent in the human condition and the individuation process by developing the productive character in order to develop an intimate relationship with oneself and with others and the world (through productive work and love) so that one can meet the ultimate goal of self-realization. Thus, all three theorists seem to privilege intimacy over alienation. Authentic growth is generally seen as heightened intimacy-with self, especially, and with others, tangentially (for the purpose of aiding one achieve personal growth). Contrariwise, alienation (generally seen as estrangement from one's real self and/or from one's inner guide) is seen as negative or bad, as something to be overcome and, better yet, eradicated. Maslow's deficiency needs, Rogers' incongruence, and Fromm's mechanisms of escape are all states and processes which are seen as antithetical to authentic growth, self-actualization, mental health and psychological maturity and, therefore, must be eradicated or, at least, minimized. These theorists also tend to present authentic growth as only a positive experience. Although they mention the ambivalence or struggle that is tied to growth, they do not tend to delve deeply into it or adequately stress this reality. One gets the sense that authentic growth or self-actualization is good (i.e., pleasurable) and that there is little place for alienation in the process.

At first sight, this process-moving from alienation to intimacy-seems to make perfect sense. However, such is not necessarily the case. It would seem that the movement between alienation and intimacy is more complex, more continuous, and more common than these seeming one-time, large-order movements suggest. Growth seems to emerge from the continual, lifelong movement between these two poles. For example, alienation is often an impetus to growth, and intimacy is not necessarily always beneficial or positive. While the theorists might indicate that pain and suffering (alienation) often accompany growth, they do not necessarily stress that alienation often *stimulates* authentic growth. Instead, there is an implication that once one overcomes the struggle of growth, one reaches some nirvana-like intimacy where life is beautiful. This image is questionable

because such a process seems unrealistic, if not inimical to the idea of ongoing growth because there is no room for growth or no reason to grow in nirvana.

While these three theorists seem to present growth in a linear fashion, from alienation to intimacy, this might not be the case. Indeed, the triadic structure of Hegel's dialectic can be used to provide an alternative vision of growth, as a more expansive, inclusive vision, a vision of growth as an ever-widening, upward spiral that incorporates what comes before into that which follows. Hegel's triadic structure entails three elements: thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. The thesis proves unsatisfactory, thereby invoking its negation, opposite, antithesis; the thesis and antithesis become synthesized, but, upon greater reflection, the synthesis becomes inadequate. It becomes a new thesis and the cycle continues in a never-ending upward spiral of growth and expansion. Hegel's dialectic is presented simply as an alternative vision of growth, with alienation and intimacy interacting, each invoking the other in a constant interplay which leads to greater growth. Each element is overcome, yet preserved (what Hegel calls *sublation*) so that the synthesis of thesis and antithesis emerges as a higher level of growth (Spencer & Krauze, 1996). Just as the telos needs to be reconsidered, so does process.

All three theorists suggest that a certain ambivalence is tied to growth and that authentic growth is not for the fainthearted. Maslow (1968) states that, at bottom, growth is a constant choice between safety and growth, between growth-debilitating choices and growth-promoting choices. Safety needs *must* be satisfactorily met before an individual will make choices towards authentic growth. Rogers (1961) suggests an ambivalence when he acknowledges that growth entails struggle and pain. Although Rogers does not explore the idea, one can extrapolate that there is a tug-of-war between one's desire to satisfy one's organismic valuation system and one's desire or need for positive regard from others, and between heeding the organism and satisfying conditions of worth. Fromm (1941) also acknowledges a competition between the desire for growing strength and self-realization and the desire for the (apparent) safety of dependence and primary ties, which becomes especially salient in the dialectic that emerges in the individuation process. He also mentions a struggle between the quest for freedom and independence and the

desire for the seeming safety in dependence. All three theorists acknowledge, in one form or another, that overcoming the ambivalence or dialectical nature of growth—the choice between safety and comfort, on one hand, and risk and growth, on the other—requires courage on the part of those who choose to grow authentically. As Maslow (1968) summarizes: "[one] must choose between the delights of safety and growth, dependence and independence, regression and progression, immaturity and maturity" (p.47). Although none of the theorists seems to spend a lot of time delving into this ambivalence or explaining it fully, this aspect of growth might be the most important one because the urge to "stay put," to avoid the growth choice, is powerful in many people. If this were not so, Maslow would not claim that only one percent of the population was self-actualizing (Reeve, 1992), Rogers would not bemoan the fact that so many are in need of therapy to overcome incongruence and maladjustments from conditions of worth (1951), and Fromm (1941) would not complain that the vast majority of North Americans choose automaton conformity or some other self-abdicating or nonproductive way of living over the productive, self-realizing orientation.

The ambivalence inherent in growth can be tied to the notion of facilitative conditions for growth. All three theorists suggest that authentic growth is a choice and that one is apt to choose authentic growth in or under certain facilitative conditions. Although each theorist describes different conditions, it appears that these can be boiled down to two major classifications: an **environment of love** versus an **environment of fear**.³⁶ The former would be the optimum environment for making growth-inducing or growth-promoting choices; the latter would be the optimum environment for inhibiting authentic growth choices (or would be the optimum environment for making growth-inhibiting or growth-debilitating choices). While the "experts" do not present their theories as such, this dialectic warrants greater consideration.

Conclusion

Maslow, Rogers, and Fromm present different theories of growth. Nonetheless, important similarities emerge. All three theorists posit secular teloi and all three present

self-actualization as the ultimate goal of growth. These teloi emerge as truncated, limited, constricted, and short-sighted if one considers them in comparison to a trans-human telos. Process-wise, all three theorists seem to envision growth as movement from some form of alienation (generally seen as some form of separation from one's true, real, or inherent "self") to some vision of intimacy (generally seen as personal integration or connection with one's inherent "self"). Although the "experts" do not specifically present their theories in this way or using these terms, a linear process seems to emerge. On closer consideration, these concepts (alienation and intimacy) and this linear (one-way) movement from alienation to intimacy warrant closer scrutiny and further consideration. Lastly, these three theories seem to suggest the possibility of the existence of a **love/fear dialectic** when one considers growth in the context of **environment (internal and external)** as all three theories suggest that growth occurs best in certain *facilitative* environments. In the end, there appears to be room for additional theoretical exploration and expansion regarding growth. Chapter 4 looks more closely at these three criticisms or concerns—a trans-human versus secular telos, alienation and intimacy reconsidered, and a love/fear dialectic in both internal and external environments—and proposes a *tentative* alternative theory of growth.

CHAPTER 4 - AN ALTERNATIVE THEORY OF GROWTH AND GROWTH MODEL

Introduction

Chapter 3 concluded by suggesting that certain aspects of the "experts'" theories of growth deserve closer consideration. Specifically, growth's telos, the concepts of alienation and intimacy and their role in the growth process, and the possibility of a love/fear dialectic affecting the growth process deserve to be explored more fully. This chapter does just that by reconsidering telos and process in the form of a *tentative* alternative theory of growth. The alternative growth theory is presented in the form of a Growth Model³⁷ and is divided into two broad sections: **Envisioned Telos** and **Envisioned Process**. The descriptive sections on the tentative Growth Model are followed by sections explaining **Authentic Growth** and **Inauthentic Growth**. The tentative Growth Model becomes the interpretive tool with which to measure the efficacy of the growth techniques and ideas (theories of growth) put forth in the three self-help books selected for analysis (Chapter 5). By applying the Growth Model to three popular general, non-gendered psychological self-help books on personal growth and development, this thesis attempts to assess the books' teloi and processes to determine whether heeding the advice in these texts would lead to authentic growth as defined in this chapter. Introduction to the texts and justification for their selection occurs in the beginning of Chapter 5, as does the analysis.

A Tentative Alternative Theory of Growth

Growth is a complex process. The Growth Model presented in this chapter represents preliminary, personal ideas on growth's telos and process. No model is perfect; therefore, this model cannot presume to capture all the subtle nuances that individuals go through on the journey of growth. As more information is garnered, it might become apparent that a different model is required.

Growth Model: Envisioned Telos

After studying the "experts'" theories, it is believed that the concept of telos deserves further clarification. A telos is not a short-lived or short-sighted goal, such as buying a house, finishing a master's degree, or obtaining a promotion. This thesis believes that the telos represents the greatest goal one could achieve as a human being or the best goal to which one can grow. If achieved, it is perceived as bringing the greatest degree of well-being to an individual. That is, growing towards and achieving such an end goal would render an individual most complete, most fulfilled. (Authentic growth refers to the type of growth that brings an individual closer to this desired ultimate ideal telos.) Additionally, it becomes apparent that the telos or goal of growth can be misconceived and/or erroneous. Growth towards such a telos might appear authentic in nature, but would, in reality, be inauthentic according to the Growth Model.

As indicated in the previous chapter, the "experts," Maslow, Rogers, and Fromm, anchor their teloi in the individual and the secular. As a result, they allow little to no room for consideration of an end goal beyond or larger than the individual. This seems problematic and worth challenging. Authentic (positive, beneficial) growth cannot simply be concerned with and confined to the self-contained atom (individual); such a vision seems too limited, short-sighted, and finite, as well as potentially hedonistic and narcissistic. Such a telos seems too prone to being self-centred or selfish. Instead, this thesis proposes a transpersonal, trans-human telos, an ultimate goal for growth which encompasses more than the individual and more than the secular (the worldly and temporal).

Given the aforementioned limitations inherent in a purely individual or secular goal, this thesis proposes that the ultimate goal or telos of authentic growth is *maximal consciousness*³⁹, and any growth in consciousness or towards maximal (expanded or increased) consciousness constitutes authentic growth. Additionally, the Growth Model believes that increased consciousness results in or brings with it a concomitant increase in connection or connectivity (with oneself, others, **nature**) culminating, ideally and ultimately, in the realization that everyone (and everything) is part of a larger Whole or

part of a deeper reality or Ultimate Reality-i.e., the Infinite Unity/Connection of all things. Hence, the ideal, ultimate telos of authentic growth is maximal consciousness, and authentic growth comprises growth that promotes increased consciousness and a concomitant increased connectivity.

A closer look at authentic growth as increased consciousness (and concomitant connection) is imperative. First, as stated in Chapter 1, this thesis is not concerned with physical growth. Instead, it attempts to comprehend nonphysical growth. But what is nonphysical growth? Human beings are conscious beings; therefore, it seems logical to claim that consciousness comprises the nonphysical realm of humanness. If this is indeed the case, then it makes sense that authentic growth would entail growth in consciousness and that maximum or optimum human growth and development would comprise developing one's consciousness to the maximum.

If the ultimate telos of authentic growth is, indeed, *maximal consciousness*, then it also makes sense to ask what maximal consciousness encompasses. Consciousness seems to entail intellectual, emotional and spiritual dimensions. Maximal **intellectual consciousness** entails exercising the most integrative or unitive approach to the many different intellectual perspectives one encounters in life, such as ideological, social, cultural, gender, historical, and so forth. Developing maximal intellectual consciousness adds breadth. Maximal **emotional consciousness** entails the ability to extend the range of one's ability to identify with others. For example, Kenneth Burke's Identification Theory proposes that individuals must master intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal identification (Burke, 1990). This thesis believes that identification on these various levels would lead to the development of traits such as compassion, empathy, and/or sympathy. Developing maximal emotional consciousness adds depth. Maximal **spiritual consciousness** comprises the overriding or undergirding consciousness, entails both intellectual and emotional consciousness, and encompasses the realization/sensation that all is part of a greater Whole or Ultimate Reality. When the emotional realm (heart) and intellect (mind) are integrated, "something more" emerges. That "something more," the sense that there is something greater than the individual (transpersonal) and greater than

humanity (trans-human), can be called spiritual consciousness (spirit). Integrating the breadth of integrative or unitive intellectual perspectives (mind) with the depth of empathic emotional identification (heart) generates a sense of trans-human or universal connectivity-connection that resonates with the Infinite. The breadth of intellect and the depth of emotion mutually reinforce each other and, when combined, create an additional dimension, a sense of unitive trans-human connection or connectivity with the Infinite.

Additionally, compared to the "experts," who tend to focus solely on psychological (mind) development, the Growth Model believes that authentic growth must entail growth in *all* realms of human consciousness-intellectual, emotional, and spiritual. Growth in any one realm of consciousness without accompanying growth in the others would result in lopsided, unhealthy (inauthentic) growth. For example, one can be intellectually brilliant yet emotionally stunted, or one can be emotionally devoted to a small number of individuals and inconsiderate of those beyond one's inner circle. In the end, this thesis believes that when individuals increase consciousness in all these realms, they come to realize that they are part of a greater Whole and that they are interconnected with others in a positive, caring, loving way. Authentic growth, then, results in a broadening of horizons, in identification with and/or incorporation of and/or consideration of diverse aspects of life-thoughts, ideologies, cultures, behaviours, doctrines, practices, and more-in short, in an opening or expansion of the emotions (heart) and intellect (mind) such that one experiences a sense of empathic connection with self, others, nature, and the Infinite (spirit). The qualities will be more closely examined in the subsequent section.

Characteristics of Authentic Growth Derived from Telos

Maslow, Rogers, and Fromm present various ideas on the ideal characteristics that self-realized or self-actualized individuals would embody. This thesis agrees with many of their traits and believes that individuals displaying large numbers of these traits would experience a certain level of increased consciousness and connection. However, this thesis proposes that the goal of authentic growth goes beyond the individual and, therefore, proposes additional traits which would enable individuals to experience increased

consciousness and connection on more than simply an intrapersonal level. After exploring the "experts" theories, it becomes apparent that the telos is the crucial component in a theory of growth. If that which one is encouraged to grow towards is misguided, erroneous, short-sighted, selfish, and/or finite, then the individual's growth will not be authentic. This section suggests characteristics that an individual growing authentically would experience, embody or exhibit, at least to some degree; however, the list is by no means comprehensive. Based on the critique in Chapter 3, the Growth Model proposes a telos (see above) which it believes to be more beneficial to individuals than those of the "experts." But what are the characteristics of authentic growth that follow from a telos of maximal consciousness? Authentic growth, defined briefly here as any growth towards the ultimate growth goal of maximal consciousness, embodies the following five central characteristics. Authentic growth is (1) transpersonal, (2) trans-human, (3) **expansive**, (4) **liberating**, and (5) **connective**.

First, authentic growth is transpersonal in that it considers more than simply the individual. Growth at the expense of others or individualistic growth where only the individual's concerns, desires, interests are taken into account is considered to be selfish, self-centred, potentially narcissistic, short-sighted and finite. Authentic growth must be about more than just the individual realizing inherent potentialities.³⁹

Secondly, authentic growth is trans-human in that it considers more than the secular (temporal, worldly) and materialist realms. It incorporates a spiritual or Infinite dimension. As discussed earlier, increased intellectual and emotional consciousness combine, not to create, but to awaken one to the realization that all is interconnected, part of a deeper or overarching reality, an Infinite or Ultimate Reality, which aids individuals in stepping beyond themselves and realizing or experiencing empathic connectivity at ever-deeper levels. Some might experience this as a general sense of caring or compassion or **love** for humanity as a whole as well as for non-human entities, such as nature or the universe.

Thirdly, authentic growth is expansive. As consciousness expands or as the framework of one's perspective continues to evolve, incorporating or integrating more

intellectual perspectives and emotional identifications, the individual experiences a sense of expansiveness. Additionally, one's range of experiences expands. Some might experience this expansiveness as a feeling of enlightenment; others experience varying degrees of connectivity that encourage a more intense feeling of participation in the various spheres of life.

Fourthly, authentic growth is liberating. Increased consciousness, as defined herein, suggests that individuals open their minds (intellect) and hearts (emotions) to incorporate new perspectives and identify in new ways. In essence, the individual is incorporating "**oppositional otherness**"-that which was formerly "**other**" to the person-into his or her consciousness. As one incorporates more and more oppositional otherness into one's consciousness, less and less becomes or remains oppositional or "other" to the growing individual. The restrictions inherent in oppositional otherness are overcome as they are absorbed into the ever-expanding "**common space**" framework. The concept of a "common space" is crucial to authentic growth. As one becomes familiar with, incorporates, and/or identifies with that which was formerly unknown, misunderstood, incomprehensible, outside, oppositional-i.e., "other"-to the individual, the internal area of commonality (common space) expands. Individuals growing towards increased consciousness and connection are freer than those who are not growing in consciousness because as they grow in consciousness they begin to experience connection with the Whole; they experience and inhabit an ever-expanding common space with all aspects of reality. That which is external, oppositional, contrary, "other" to the individual diminishes. Less is external and unknown (or to be feared). Fear of the unknown is lessened as solidarity, communion, and rapport is heightened in this common space. Because one experiences communion with others and the world, one is more in harmony with life, more at ease, and more able to relinquish the need to control people and events. Freedom entails both freedom from the need to control and freedom from being controlled. One is free to grow, to let go, to flow. Using Rogers' terminology, one is free to be *process* rather than *fixity*. Barriers fall making room for compassion, connection and love to flourish.

Lastly, authentic growth is connective. It is a central belief of the Growth Model that as one grows ever-increasingly in consciousness, that as the framework of one's intellectual and emotional perspectives expand, the individual will experience an ever-increasing sense of connection or connectivity because more is continually being incorporated into the common space. Connection includes intrapersonal, interpersonal, transpersonal, and trans-human connectivity. That is, the individual will feel a sense of connection with himself or herself, with others, with nature, and with Ultimate Reality or the greater connective/unitive Whole.

This thesis believes that an individual who is growing or expanding in consciousness would feel more connected and, therefore, would more likely be, at base, a caring or loving individual. That is, he or she would be able to emotionally and empathically identify with someone (or something) greater than himself or herself and have "brotherly concern for others" (Woolf, 1975, p.681). It is believed that this person would exhibit such traits as compassion, empathy, kindness, respect, consideration, and caring, traits which have the best interests of the most people in mind. The overarching attitude displayed by these ideal individuals would be an attitude of love (empathic connection and benevolent concern), not only towards people (as Fromm suggests), but *ideally* towards everyone and everything (nature) because, ultimately, love opens the individual's emotions (heart) sufficiently to realize that all is interconnected, that all is part of a larger Whole, that there is a deeper connective Ultimate Reality. This attitude of love does not mean that the individual is satisfied with or likes how things are; however, an attitude of love implies that solutions sought will be the most inclusive possible. The ability to experience the ultimate goal of increased consciousness and concomitant connection requires the ability to love (give and receive); for the ability to love seems to embody the realization that all is interconnected, that all is part of the same Whole. Love requires faith—a general attitude of faith, as Fromm suggests, but also faith *in* oneself, the goodness of humanity, and the tightness of the universe as an Ultimate connective Reality. Without love, faith and **trust** in something trans-human, growth is limited. One seems to be left with the opposite—a high potential for fear, dependence, and despair.

It is difficult to artificially separate the various characteristics associated with authentic growth. That which is "other" is often perceived as threatening; therefore, the more oppositional otherness that is incorporated into the common space framework, the less threatened one is likely to feel. Additionally, the more connected one feels to something larger than oneself and larger than humanity (transpersonal and trans-human), the freer one is apt to feel and the more likely one is to relax, let go of control, and enjoy and immerse oneself in the growth process. The more one has grown authentically, the more "other" one has incorporated and the more one realizes (or is able to realize) that all is interconnected and that all is anchored in or is part of a deeper reality.

Compared to the "experts," this thesis proposes a more extensive, expansive, transpersonal, trans-human goal for growth. The goal, aim or purpose in life for human beings is to grow authentically, which is translated to mean to strive for ever-increasing consciousness and connection. Admittedly, there are degrees of consciousness. Regardless of one's current level, the Growth Model believes that increased consciousness is possible. That is, technically, there is no endpoint or final destination; authentic growth is a journey, a never-ending lifelong process, a dynamic, never-ending upward spiral towards heightened consciousness and connection. Human beings are finite beings; they die. At least, humans die to this form. As a result, it is highly probable that human beings will not achieve or experience complete consciousness and sustained connection to Ultimate Reality or to the Whole in this life. Regardless, human beings can achieve and continually experience ever greater levels of consciousness and connection over the course of their lifetime. There is always room for additional growth in connection (and understanding) with oneself, with others, with one's culture, with one's world, with nature, and with a deeper (Ultimate) reality, even if the final destination is unattainable in this finite existence. In the end, the *ideal* might be complete consciousness and sustained connection with Ultimate Reality or the Whole, but the *actuality* is a lifetime of continual, incremental movement in that direction.

Additionally, authentic growth as growth in consciousness conceived to be without inherent limitations supports the idea of an **alienation-intimacy complex**-see Envisioned

Process. Ongoing, as opposed to finite, growth becomes a constant, lifelong process of feeling separated from someone or something (alienation), of incorporating or integrating or, at least, processing this alienation so that one comes to terms with it (intimacy), and of being met, once again, with further experiences of separation and rapprochement (alienation-intimacy complex). This alienation-intimacy complex-this dance-can be conceived of as a never-ending, lifelong way of growing.⁴⁰

Justification for Trans-Human Telos

This vision of a greater Whole or of an Ultimate Reality put forth in this thesis is not a religious idea, in the sense of belonging to a religious doctrine; it is more a holistic or nonsectarian spiritual vision. The Bible and texts on mysticism and enlightenment accommodate such a realm, as do more recent psychologies, such as transpersonal, positive, and/or integral psychologies-see Wilber, 1998, 2000; as does what is often referred to as perennial philosophy (see Wilber, 1998); as well as do theories from other fields, such as Kenneth Burke's Identification Theory (rhetoric-see Burke, 1990). These authors' ideas on telos and authentic growth go beyond those of the "experts" because they incorporate the trans-human aspect which appears to be missing in Maslow, Rogers, and Fromm. It is probable that the "experts" are closed to this concept because of their secular humanist orientations. However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, in his later writings, Maslow began to explore the idea of a transpersonal realm and is, today, considered a pioneer and founder of both humanistic and transpersonal (fourth force) psychology-along with William James, Carl Jung, Stanislav Grof, and Ken Wilber, to name a few (Daniels, 1996-2001, *Pioneers of transpersonal psychology*). (See Appendix B for further justification of the presentation and use of this tentative alternative theory of growth.)

Growth Model: Envisioned Process

Process asks the question: How best does one grow authentically? Or, how best does one grow towards the envisioned telos of maximal consciousness (and connection)?

Unlike the "experts," who envision growth as a journey towards self-actualization, this thesis suggests that one grows authentically when one comes to terms with the alienation-intimacy complex and experiences (or develops) certain internal and external *facilitative conditions* (borrowing Rogers' term).⁴¹ These aspects are discussed more fully, below, as part of the Growth Model.

Life is growth-growing up, maturing, expanding in consciousness and connection. Life is also dynamic, not static; it is constant movement. Ultimately, life is choice. Consciously or unconsciously, individuals are either choosing to grow or choosing not to grow. Consciously or unconsciously, people are continually making growth-enhancing choices or are making growth-inhibiting choices. (Some choices are obviously more meaningful and consequential than others.) Because choice is central to the growth process and because authentic growth is critical to the quality of one's life experience, learning to make healthy, wise, authentic growth-inducing choices is crucial. This means that understanding the phenomenon of growth is crucial. If one can understand the dynamics of authentic growth, one will be in a better position to maximize or optimize one's own individual growth and, possibly, that of others, while simultaneously minimizing potential pitfalls into stagnation, regression and/or other forms of inauthentic growth. This part of the Model attempts to explore and explicate the growth process.

Growth Model Explained (Figure 3 below)

If the goal of life is to experience or generate ever higher levels of consciousness, then understanding the dynamics of growth is not only worthwhile, it is imperative. The Growth Model attempts to take into account both authentic growth and inauthentic growth. It might be argued that the bottom half of the matrix is the flip side or mirror image of the upper half with the upper half representing optimum conditions for authentic growth and the lower half representing optimum conditions for inauthentic growth (or the worst conditions for authentic growth).

Growth Model

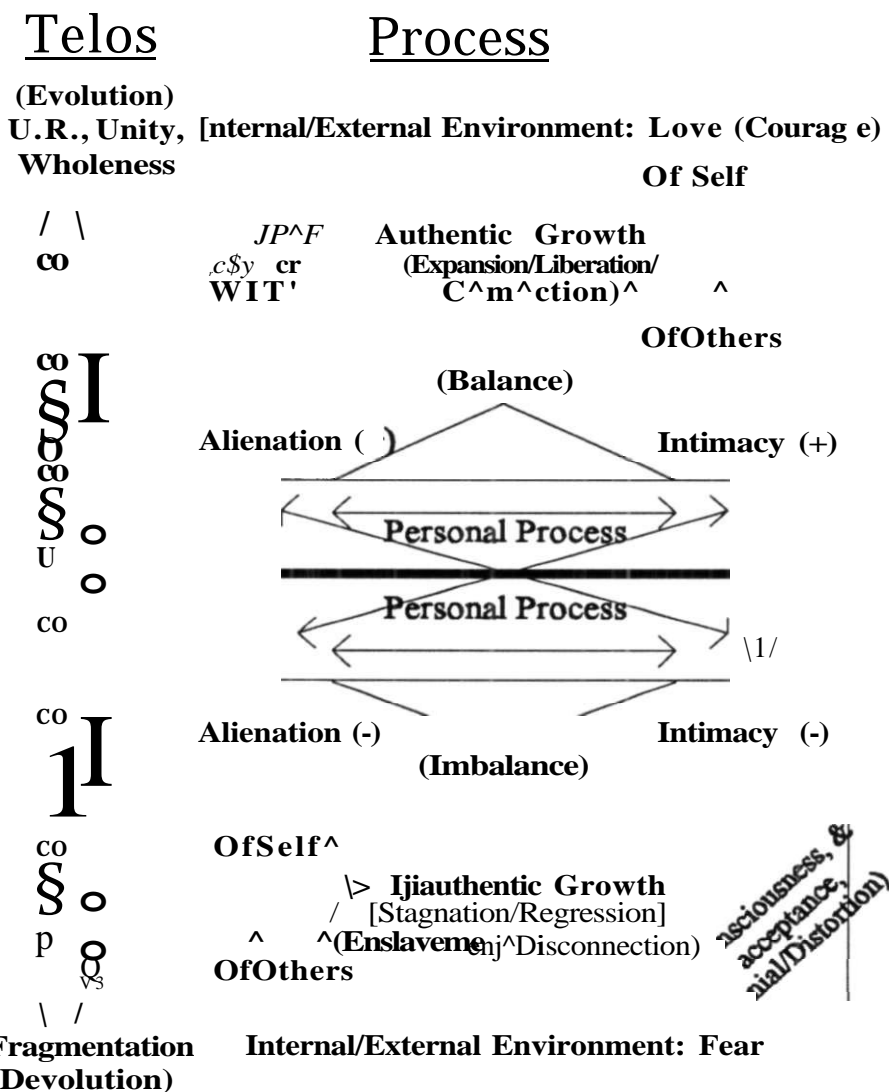


Figure 3

Structure or Layout

In an attempt to explain the Model, it has been broken down into two major parts:

- (1) **Alienation, Intimacy, and the Alienation-Intimacy Complex**, and
- (2) **Environment: Love/Fear Dialectic**. (Additional aspects of the Growth Model, such as Balance versus Imbalance and the Universal versus Personal are discussed in Appendix

C). That which individuals are striving for (authentic growth) and that which individuals wish to avoid or mitigate or transmute (inauthentic growth-e.g., substitute or unbalanced growth, stagnation or regression) will be discussed later in the chapter.

Alienation, Intimacy, and the Alienation-Intimacy Complex

When reading the "experts'" theories, one is struck by the sense that, to them, authentic growth, as heightened mrrapersonal *intimacy*, is positive (good) and that inauthentic growth, as *alienation* from one's true self, is negative (bad) and to be eradicated. After considerable thought, it becomes apparent that the notions of alienation and intimacy are much more complex and interconnected than first thought. For example, if one considers expanding consciousness as continually confronting and integrating "otherness" or the "other," a dialectic emerges (e.g., Hegel) as the individual confronts the otherness (alienation) and overcomes or integrates it (intimacy). Alienation is *not* simply a negative (bad) force or experience in people's lives, which must be eradicated, nor is it an isolated entity or experience. Instead, alienation can be either a positive or negative force and it is profoundly interconnected with intimacy. The interconnection or interrelatedness between alienation and intimacy is called the *alienation-intimacy complex* in this Model. As a result of uncovering and exploring this interrelatedness or interconnection between alienation and intimacy, it becomes impossible to talk about either experience alone. Both components must be considered. In addition, individuals' lives appear to consist of a constant movement between these two poles.

The alienation-intimacy complex represents the motor or driving mechanism of this Model in terms of process. Alienation, intimacy, and the interconnection between the two (the alienation-intimacy complex) are seen as universal, central, unavoidable experiences in everyone's lives. The interconnection between alienation and intimacy is indicated by the horizontal line connecting the two concepts (See Figure 3 above). Individuals not only slide along the continuum between alienation and intimacy (shown by the horizontal arrow; see Figure 3 above), they also slide vertically along a continuum between **positive alienation** and **negative alienation** and along a continuum between **positive intimacy**

and negative intimacy. As a result, one might argue that where one is with regard to these experiences at any given time in one's life can be mapped within a field (of experience).

Alienation and intimacy are differentiated based on how they are initially experienced. Alienation is defined as an initial experience of disconnection (or separateness) and intimacy as an initial experience of connection (or closeness). After all, when something is alien or alienating, one feels distant or separated from it in some way or on some level; there is some form of disconnection. Conversely, when one is intimate with someone or something, one feels close to it; there is some degree or level of connection. It is an "initial experience" because alienation does not necessarily remain disconnecting, just as intimacy does not necessarily remain connective. Much as the "experts" seem to do, many people tend to consider alienation as bad and to be eradicated or, at least, mitigated while intimacy is considered to be good and, therefore, sought after. Such dichotomous interpretations might be based on gut-felt understandings of these words. However, this need not be the most suitable attitude. Disconnection (alienation) is not inherently or automatically bad, just as connection (intimacy) is not inherently or automatically good. Instead, this thesis proposes that *both* alienation and intimacy can be *either* positive or negative, depending upon what the person ultimately does with his or her initial experience.

Daily and throughout people's lives, individuals experience numerous (possibly, incalculable) instances of alienation and intimacy, ranging from the most meaningful to the mundane. One's job is to negotiate these. One can deal with them effectively or ineffectively, healthily or unhealthily, beneficially or detrimentally, positively or negatively. Because increased consciousness (intellectual, emotional, spiritual) is considered to be the ultimate goal of life, it or, more accurately, its characteristics are used as the criteria by which to measure people's responses to the myriad instances of alienation and intimacy they experience in their lives. Ultimately, alienation and intimacy are considered *positive* (healthy, beneficial) when they lead to authentic growth (i.e., bring individuals closer to the ultimate telos) and *negative* (unhealthy, detrimental) when they stymie authentic

growth and, instead, lead to inauthentic forms of growth, such as stagnation, regression, unbalanced growth, addiction, repetition, withdrawal, enslavement, and the like (i.e., lead people away from the ultimate telos).

Four major possibilities exist within the alienation-intimacy complex: positive alienation, negative alienation, positive intimacy, and negative intimacy. Ultimately, these four possibilities reflect or comment upon the ways in which individuals approach or negotiate their initial experiences of alienation and intimacy. Table 1 (below) provides a summary look at all four aspects and lists characteristics perceived as belonging to each element. The following paragraphs elaborate upon these ideas.

Using authentic growth as a yardstick, the following four scenarios can be suggested. When one disconnects in such a way that authentic growth ensues, alienation is positive. When one disconnects in such a way that negative growth ensues, alienation is negative. When one connects in such a way that authentic growth ensues, intimacy is positive. When one connects in such a way that negative growth ensues, intimacy is negative. (Specific examples are given below as each scenario is explored more fully.) The *potential* for growth exists in all four instances (one can make a better "next" choice); however, the actualization of growth is the individual's choice and responsibility. *Both* alienation and intimacy can lead to or impede growth; however, of the four possible experiences in the alienation-intimacy complex, only positive alienation and positive intimacy lead to, promote, or are experiences of authentic growth; the other two instances inhibit it. Because life (growth) is constant movement, the goal is not to reach one of the positive quadrants and remain there. It is important that one be able to recognize the four quadrants and to recognize which quadrant one is in at any given time in order that one can make better subsequent growth choices. Additionally, this thesis suggests that the "good life" entails accepting the fact that life entails *continual* movement between the quadrants. The key is to try to oscillate between the positive quadrants and to minimize time spent in the negative quadrants.

A Closer Look at Alienation and Intimacy		TABLE 1
ALIENATION = DISCONNECTION		INTIMACY = CONNECTION
Positive Alienation:		Positive Intimacy:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitude of TRUST/FAITH (Open) • Manifests courage to act/risk in face of the new and challenging (Growth-inducing) • Opposite of Dependence (Negative Intimacy) • Entails Trust/Faith • Results in (expanded) Freedom (expansive, liberating, connective) • Healthy Disconnection from part that leads to Connection to greater Whole, such as growth by breaking away from or overcoming previous constraints (= Connective) • E.g. I have been fired and instead of blaming my boss and company, I draw on my courage, take honest stock of my strengths, weaknesses, attitudes and behaviours, and seek new employment 	<p>jP [^] III! f §\$ '* [j: , ^} ^ § \$ \V • , j</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitude of LOVE (Open) • Manifests self and mutual respect in relationships (Interdependence) • Opposite of Fear (Negative Alienation) • Entails Trust/Faith • Results in (expanded) Freedom (expansive, liberating, connective) • Healthy Connection to part that leads to more (expands) Connection to part and to greater Whole, such as honest self-disclosure (= Connective; gives one security to take on challenge) • E.g. A friend admits to being gay and I acknowledge my confused feelings at the revelation. I am open and honest about my feelings and listen to my friend's response with love and respect.
Negative Alienation:	>£	Negative Intimacy:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitude of FEAR (Closed) • Manifests anxiety in face of the new and challenging (Growth-inhibiting) • Opposite of Love (Positive Intimacy) • Lacks Trust/Faith • Results in Unfreedom (addiction or enslavement of self by self or others or things, or enslavement of others) • Unhealthy Disconnection from a part that leads to more (expands) Disconnection both from part and from greater Whole, such as stagnation/regression (= Divisive) • E.g. I have been fired and I spend my subsequent evenings in the bar complaining to whoever will listen. It is all the boss' fault. 	<p>(, r I3 [(3 II[^] Vii ; pIIII]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitude of DEPENDENCE (Closed) • Manifests stifling, unhappy, unfulfilling relationships • Opposite of Trust/Faith (Positive Alienation) • Lacks Trust/Faith • Results in Unfreedom (addiction or enslavement of others or by things, or by others) • Excessive (unhealthy) Connection to a part that leads to Disconnection from a greater Whole, such as smother love or hiding self in relationships (= Divisive) • E.g. My partner is often distant; I believe that it must be my fault. If I were just a little more loving, patient, understanding, so forth, all would be well.

Positive Alienation: Individuals experience positive alienation when they negotiate the initial experience of disconnection (i.e., a challenge) in such a way that they experience some degree of authentic growth (increased consciousness and connection) from meeting the challenge. When people choose to approach their feelings of disconnection (e.g., discomfort, pain, isolation) when facing new challenges or challenging situations (alienation) with an attitude of faith and trust (in themselves, in others, in the world, Ultimate Reality or the greater Whole), they generate the courage and resourcefulness it takes to make more growth-inducing choices. When they choose authentic growth over inauthentic growth, the initial sense of disconnection is eventually replaced by an increased sense of connection on some higher or deeper level, even if that sense of connection is, initially, simply with themselves. (For example, a person might experience an expansion of the common space as a result of incorporating new aspects of himself or herself.) Ideally, the individual experiences an increased connection to Ultimate Reality or the Whole through increased connection with the part, be it himself or herself, another, culture, nature. Healthy connection, like increased consciousness, is expansive and liberating as more "otherness" is incorporated into the common space. In the end, successfully negotiating the initial disconnection (alienation) results in expansion (in consciousness), liberation (freedom from feelings of separation from or non-identification with an "other") and increased connection, to some degree, on some level. Although the degree and level of experience of each varies and can be subtle, these hallmarks of growth are believed to occur.

Positive alienation can be thought to involve a conscious, deliberate "breaking away" or disconnection from some unwanted aspect of one's life or even from too-comfortable aspects as well. For example, one might consciously disconnect or break away from debilitating feelings, attitudes, behaviours, or patterns towards new growth-inducing ones. One might sever stifling (or even overly comfortable) relationships or boundaries, shed an old "self" (self-image), fight to overcome an oppressive situation, or even aim to embrace a new challenge. Assertively standing up to one's boss and getting fired as a result can be an example of positive alienation if one experiences a deeper

understanding of and connection with oneself, possibly through a greater sense of personal integrity for facing the alienating situation head-on. The ultimate criterion is that the outcome of one's choice leads to some level of authentic growth, however incremental it might be. That is, the result is that individuals are growing, changing, evolving, experiencing increased consciousness and a newfound sense of connection, even if that is only, initially, with oneself. Successfully negotiating alienation increases self-confidence and overall well-being. Additionally, because negotiating the alienation-intimacy complex (growth) is continual, successful negotiation prepares the individual to tackle more challenging experiences of alienation as they arise.

Lastly, it is important to realize that authentic growth can (and often does) involve suffering. In fact, one often grows most by successfully negotiating an especially trying situation. In the end, one expands in consciousness by encountering something external or "other" to the individual and by struggling to comprehend and integrate it into a larger, more conscious, more connected sense of being (and common space).

Negative Alienation: In contrast, individuals experience negative alienation when they negotiate the initial experience of disconnection in such a way that they experience some form of inauthentic growth. One can choose, consciously or unconsciously, to deal with alienation negatively. When an individual chooses to respond to the experience of disconnection with fear or despair, one is apt to experience (create) negative alienation. An attitude of fear or despair heightens anxiety and renders one less capable of negotiating and/or less willing to negotiate instances of disconnection, such as new challenges or challenging situations. Fear or despair impedes the trust, faith and courage required to face the alienation and use it for authentic growth. Instead, one tends to become fearful, unresourceful, and closed. This results in experiencing some form of inauthentic growth, such as stagnation or regression. These inauthentic forms of growth often manifest themselves in addiction, repetition, denial, distortion, and other defensive ploys. Ultimately, fear or despair leads to unfreedom or enslavement in some form. This can be

enslavement of self by self (e.g., self-defeating thought patterns), of self by others (submission), of self by things (addiction), or of others by the self (domination).

With negative alienation, the initial sense of disconnection (alienation) tends to expand, increasing one's initial sense of disconnection both from the part (that which one initially felt disconnected from) and, in turn, from the greater Whole or Ultimate Reality. That which is incorporated into the common space holds constant, at best, and atrophies, at worst. For example, if after getting fired (justly or unjustly) for standing up to one's boss, the individual drowns himself or herself in self-pity, taking every opportunity he or she can to denigrate the former employer for unfairness, disconnection is heightened and the person does not grow. The common space shrinks (the boss is ejected); the individual becomes stagnant, at best. Breaking off relationships prematurely out of fear and/or the inability or unwillingness to be vulnerable; refusing to accept the discomfort of alienation, thereby distorting or denying reality in some way; and avoiding new challenges (including the challenge of growing independence) are other examples of negative alienation. In each instance, disconnection is heightened. If people choose to stay stuck or mired (wallow) in domination, submission, stagnation, disconnection, dislocation, feelings of emptiness, purposelessness, and the like, then they are experiencing negative growth, and alienation is negative and unhealthy. If, on the other hand, individuals choose to use these feelings of disconnection as an impetus to change and to grow, however incrementally, then these persons have the opportunity to experience positive alienation or positive intimacy (i.e., authentic growth).

Positive Intimacy: Individuals experience positive intimacy when they negotiate the initial experience of connection in such a way that they achieve some degree of authentic growth. When one approaches life with an attitude of love (empathic connection-the opposite of fear) and courage, trust and faith, when one approaches relationships and experiences with care and respect for all entities involved, including oneself, one is more apt to experience positive intimacy. Positive intimacy is connective in a mutually respectful way, promoting interdependence rather than independence or (co)dependence.

The initial experience of healthy connection is heightened or expanded such that connection to both the part and to the greater Whole (Ultimate Reality) increases. Like positive alienation, positive intimacy is expansive, liberating, and connective. Through healthy connection, one experiences expansion of consciousness and the common space such that one feels more connected, more cooperative, and freer as less is perceived as being oppositional. Individuals grow reciprocally instead of at the expense of each other or of others.

On its part, intimacy is positive when one expresses one's identity honestly and openly, when one works at creating a larger self, and when one experiences a healthy sense of connection with others. Like positive alienation, intimacy is positive when it is expansive and growth-producing. For example, the parent who lovingly backs his or her child's desire to try a new sport that the parent is unsure about or terrified of tackling himself or herself can be an example of someone exhibiting positive intimacy because the parent does not transfer his or her fears and reservations to the child. Loving support allows both the parent and child and the common space between them to expand in various ways. Mature, interdependent adult relationships based on mutual respect and caring, and which allow all parties involved to grow, are examples of positive intimacy as well.

Negative Intimacy: In contrast, individuals experience negative intimacy when they negotiate the initial experience of connection in such a way that they experience some form of inauthentic growth. One can choose, consciously or unconsciously, to deal with intimacy negatively. Intimacy is negative when one approaches relationships and experiences with a conscious or unconscious attitude of dependence, the opposite of trust and faith (positive alienation). Although a connection exists, dependency (or co-dependency) sullies it. There are superficial semblances of genuine connection in negative intimacy; however, dependence (in grown adults) is, by its very nature, stifling. The relationship is not genuine, open, honest, trusting, caring, loving, and so forth. Instead, the relationship is based on fear, suspicion, doubt, and uncertainty. Like negative

alienation, dependence results in some degree of disconnection and enslavement (unfreedom), be it conscious or unconscious. Smother love, jealousy, losing oneself in another, and so forth are examples of negative intimacy and do not bring genuine, healthy connection. Excessive false connection to a part (for example, another individual or a substance or even an ideology) ultimately leads to or results in disconnection from the greater Whole or Ultimate Reality. Moreover, it also leads to some level of disconnection from oneself. Dependent persons compromise themselves in some way, often unconsciously, resulting in a degree of dishonesty in their relationships, including their relationship with themselves. Even if dependence is unconscious, a degree of disconnection prevails because one must ultimately be dishonest or disrespectful or fearful towards oneself, on some level, in order to be dependent. Dependence and co-dependence are ultimately disconnective; they are connective only in appearance, /nferdependence is connective. Moreover, while positive intimacy requires the willingness to be vulnerable, dependence (negative intimacy) erodes or negates (buries) these traits. Dependent or co-dependent relationships have built into them some degree of negative intimacy and disconnection, even if it is not readily seen or experienced as such.

Dependency is a legitimate growth stage in youth; however, when continued into adult relationships of any kind, the results are unfreedom-addiction or enslavement of others or by others. In negative intimacy, vigilance and control are commonplace because fear is its foundation. The common space is suspect because it is that of a prison rather than an open field. Ultimately, with fear at the base, negative intimacy cannot and will not lead to authentic growth.

Hiding oneself in relationships and/or possessing or smothering another (often in the unconscious hope of abdicating responsibility for oneself, one's choices, and/or one's life experiences) are examples of negative intimacy. For example, chameleon lovers who abdicate personal interests (their "self") and become obsessed with their partner's life, voluntarily taking on the other person's interests (though at the cost of their own), are consciously or unconsciously experiencing negative intimacy, possibly in an attempt to abdicate responsibility for themselves. Parents who *love* their children so much that they

do everything for them, especially after the children begin to reach an age when they should begin to experience increasing independence, are experiencing negative intimacy because such parents are unconsciously using their children to retain control, or are exhibiting a constrictive vision of the parental role, or are trying to live vicariously through their children. Individuals also experience negative intimacy whenever there is incongruence or a schism between what's going on in their inner world and what they say or do externally. For example, when one continues to treat a spouse lovingly (external) all the while dreaming of the freedom divorce could bring, one is experiencing negative intimacy. When one plays a role, such as Mr. or Mrs. Nice Person, possibly out of an unconscious or conscious desire to be liked or out of a fear of not being liked, negative intimacy ensues because genuineness is lacking.

Relationship Among the Elements: Interestingly, there appears to be a diagonal relationship between the elements, once again providing support for the idea of an alienation-intimacy complex. Negative alienation emerges as the opposite of positive intimacy. That is, fear is the opposite of love. Dependence (negative intimacy) is also an opposite of trust/faith (positive alienation). At base, one could argue that a lack of trust and faith in oneself or in another (or in love, for that matter) fuels dependence. Moreover, dependence (negative intimacy) can be seen as a subcategory or manifestation of fear (negative alienation), just as trust/faith (positive alienation) can be seen as a subcategory or manifestation of love (positive intimacy). If one lacks trust and faith in oneself or another, one is exhibiting a facet of fear. If one exhibits trust and faith in the face of difficulties, one is calling upon a facet of love. As a result, it becomes clear that attitudes of love, trust and faith are crucial to authentic growth. Authentic growth also requires courage, self-respect, mutual respect, and vulnerability, among other traits, all of which are anchored in love, trust, and faith. In contrast, fear and dependence exclude them. Fear and dependence diminish (lead to inauthentic forms of growth); love, trust, and faith expand (lead to authentic growth). Fear and dependence inhibit freedom (expand unfreedom); love, trust, and faith expand freedom. Positive alienation and positive

intimacy promote authentic growth; negative alienation and negative intimacy inhibit or diminish it.

Tension exists between the two distinctive components, alienation and intimacy. Individuals are constantly experiencing either alienation or intimacy in their lives. Individuals oscillate continually between the two. As a result, people's experiences with alienation and intimacy are numerous and inescapable; however, the instances range in degree or strength. Some experiences are more intense than others. In addition, that which overwhelms one person might barely register with another, and vice versa. (See Appendix C for a section on Universal versus Personal.) Tension also exists within alienation itself and within intimacy itself, that is, between the negative and positive poles or aspects of each entity. Individuals are constantly choosing their responses to these never-ending life experiences. Alienation creates tension between choosing to break free and/or overcoming disconnection (i.e., grow) and choosing to stay stuck, wallow or run away (i.e., stagnate or regress). Intimacy creates tension between choosing openness (open and honest self-expression) and choosing self-protection (hiding or losing ourselves), between smothering another and respecting individuals' boundaries, between dependence and interdependence. In the end, experiencing alienation and intimacy is inevitable (universal); choosing to deal with them beneficially is optional (personal).

An example of some of these dynamics can be seen in the course of human life. It starts with birth itself. The unity of mother with child in the womb is abruptly severed in the birth process, an extreme alienation for the infant. The infant reconnects with his or her parents in new forms of relationships. The oscillation between the two (disconnection/connection, alienation/intimacy) continues over the course of the child's life. For example, growth can be seen as expansive movement from the womb of intimacy to the alienation of birth, to a new intimacy with parents to separation (individuation) from them in adolescence, to intimacy with a mate to separation from a spouse, either through death or divorce. Granted, this is an extremely simplified look. The parent and child spend a lifetime negotiating alienation and intimacy; the "terrible twos," the "why" stage, puberty, manners, clothing, opinions, values, mates, and more require negotiation and are,

therefore, examples of instances of the centrality of alienation and intimacy in people's lives and in the growth process. Individuals not only negotiate alienation and intimacy within themselves, they negotiate these experiences between themselves and others, between themselves and events, between themselves and institutions or entities (e.g., culture), between themselves and ideologies, between themselves and a higher consciousness. There are many ways to view human lives, and underlying each is the inescapable, endless oscillation between alienation and intimacy. Individuals' experiences with the alienation-intimacy complex range from life-altering to minuscule, but the instances exist and inform their lives continually nonetheless.

Summary of Alienation-Intimacy Complex: If one's ultimate goal is to experience ever-higher levels of consciousness and connection (with oneself, others, nature, Ultimate Reality or a greater Whole), then being able to recognize and overcome negative alienation and being able to transform negative or painful feelings into the impetus or motivation to grow and change (into positive alienation) are critical to reaching those goals. The same applies to intimacy. If individuals' ultimate goals are to grow and experience higher levels of consciousness and connection, then it is critical that they learn to differentiate between positive intimacy and negative intimacy. This thesis believes that alienation and intimacy are always present, always in flux, always active in people's lives, and individuals' life experiences (quality of life) comprise how well they manage, deal with, or use these two experiences to their benefit or detriment. People can gauge how well they are dealing with these experiences of alienation and intimacy by the degree or level of expansive, liberating consciousness and connection they are experiencing in their lives. The more authentic growth individuals are experiencing in their lives, the better they are negotiating the alienation-intimacy complex. And vice versa: the better individuals negotiate the alienation-intimacy complex, the more authentic growth they will experience.

Environment: Love/Fear Dialectic

The "experts" imply that certain environments are more conducive to authentic growth or to making authentic growth choices than others (Rogers' *facilitative* conditions). This makes sense. Therefore, when dealing with growth, it is important to consider the growth environment. Fromm makes it clear that the growth environment consists of both an internal (within the individual) and external (interpersonal and cultural) environment. There seem to be two basic camps from which to approach life—from love or from fear. External environments and internal approaches or attitudes to life anchored in love will produce different life experiences, different personal and cultural beliefs and behaviours, and different socio-political environments than those anchored in fear. This broad classification introduces the notion of a love/fear dialectic associated with growth. This Model argues that the environment most conducive to authentic growth is one in which *both* the external environment (e.g., the physical world, culture and interpersonal relationships) and the internal environment (e.g., personal attitudes, beliefs, values, approaches to life) are based in love. The *worst* environment for promoting authentic growth (that is, the *best* environment for promoting negative growth, such as stagnation and regression) would be one in which *both* the *external* and *internal* environments are based in fear. (This love/fear dialectic can be seen at work in the positive and negative quadrants associated with the alienation-intimacy complex.) Bear in mind, however, that individuals can find themselves in an external environment of fear yet still approach life with an internal environment of love or, conversely, find themselves in an external environment of love and yet approach life with an internal environment of fear. The internal environment is ultimately the individual's choice. As Fromm (1941) points out, people do not choose the external environment; it is largely given to them. However, that does not mean that people cannot make choices to change it (or make growth-inducing choices within environmental constraints; Viktor Frankl⁴² comes to mind).

An external environment of love is believed to exhibit certain characteristics as well as foster certain traits in those living in such an environment. Basically, a loving external environment is considered to be a positive, supportive, beneficial, trustworthy

one. Because individuals would feel safe, accepted, and supported in such an environment, individuals would be conducive to living openly, confidently, cooperatively, expansively, and freely, to name a few relevant qualities. Such an environment would also be the best environment for feeling comfortable and safe enough to take growth risks (including the central risk of being vulnerable as growth requires courage and vulnerability). According to this Model, an external environment anchored in love and, hence, conducive to authentic growth, is apt to put an individual at ease such that he or she generates greater self-expression, greater development, higher levels of consciousness, greater acceptance of self, others, and reality (seen and unseen), as well as the willingness to let go of the need to control. If individuals sense that their external environment is trustworthy, they are more apt to trust themselves; if they trust both, they are more apt to trust the life process and to trust that things will turn out well.

In addition, if the external environment is a loving, supportive environment, individuals are apt to feel more positive towards it and more connected with it. There would not be the same desire or need to control the external environment and outcomes as there would be in a fearful environment. A loving external environment would be conducive to producing interpersonal relationships based on acceptance, love, and connection or, to use Rogers' terminology, unconditional positive regard. Ideally, people would not feel a need to use others instrumentally as means for meeting individual demands or ends. Relationships would be caring, honest, respectful, considerate, compassionate, responsible and thoughtful because one would feel empathically connected with people and other external components of one's environment. Culturally, such an environment is much more difficult to imagine considering it has never existed (as Fromm (1941) bemoans). One could imagine that such a loving society would be built upon the same values (mentioned above) that are central to healthy interpersonal relationships. Obviously, this vision is highly idealistic. (After all, no one has come up with a workable vision of a **Utopia**.) Nonetheless, it is an interesting and worthwhile task to attempt to visualize a different kind of world, which is more personal and connective, less individualistic and competitive.

In contrast, it would seem that the worst external environment for growth would be one that is rife with or based on fear. In such an environment, willingness to risk, faith, confidence, openness, and so forth would be virtually inconceivable. Fear, by its very nature, is closed, narrow, self-absorbed. In the most extreme cases (for example, concentration camps), the individual would be so concerned with his or her very survival that there would be potentially no or, at least, little room for positive intimacy or authentic growth. Such an environment, anchored in fear, would tend to lead to stagnation and atrophy as well as, quite possibly, to violence, self- and/or other-rejection, guardedness (even outright paranoia) and other alienating (negative) experiences. Such an environment would also, most likely, lead to a desire or need to control-oneself, others, and/or one's environment. If all that surrounds the individual is fear-inducing, then a sense of control becomes paramount. Based on attitudes of self-preservation and scarcity, hoarding, looking out for number one, competition and self-protection at potentially any cost would also tend to be paramount. According to this Model, living in an external environment of fear would tend to lead to seemingly unconquerable or irreversible disconnection (negative alienation), pain, suffering, stagnation, regression, and the like. Admittedly, fear can act as an impetus to undertake great feats; however, if one lives one's life in a fearful or fear-inducing environment, there is apt to be some form of holding back or some form of stuntedness. Negative alienation or disconnection often arises when fear is dominant. That is, living in an environment of fear seems to bring out the survival instinct within people. This "survivalism" manifests itself in attitudes and behaviours, such as competition, greed, pettiness, selfishness, vindictiveness, compulsive consumption, mind-numbing distractions, stagnation, paralysis, the tendency to focus on differences and overlook similarities, the tendency to create or disempower an "other" and more. When fear rules externally, individuals often end up disconnected or alienated from themselves, others, nature, Ultimate Reality or the Whole.

"Attitude" can be seen as a further refinement of the internal environment. An environment of love is even more powerful when it is coupled with an attitude of consciousness. An approach to life anchored in or based on love and *consciousness*

(*awareness*) seems to be most conducive to growth. In contrast, an approach to life anchored in or based on fear coupled with an attitude of unconsciousness or non-consciousness is least conducive to growth and is most likely to result in stagnation, regression, and/or withdrawal. Consciousness or awareness is an approach to life or an attitude which indicates that a person is willing to face reality. (Consciousness both stimulates authentic growth and is a byproduct of such growth.) That is, individuals are willing to become aware of what is going on within themselves and around them from moment to moment, day to day. *Acceptance* is also necessary for a successful, growth-filled life. It is one thing to be conscious of that which is going on within and around a person; however, individuals must also *accept* that reality. If and when people do not accept the reality of their current situation or of their current experience, they not only experience (often, unnecessary) pain, but are also more likely to withdraw, regress, spin their wheels, or get stuck in one way or another. In short, *denial* (and *distortion*), as opposed to acceptance, of reality brings unnecessary pain and inhibits authentic growth. Denial and distortion also tend to prolong the pain because, as many self-help texts propound, that which one resists persists. (Eradication of pain is impossible; in fact, one could argue that some pain is necessary otherwise pleasure might become insipid.) Individuals can consciously choose to shut down their minds and remain in denial; however, more often, they are unconscious that they are unconscious. (People are often unaware that they are sleepwalking through life.) Granted, individuals can still be unconscious in an environment of love; however, this Model argues that the *worst* environment or the environment *least* conducive to authentic growth is one which is anchored in fear (internally and externally) and one in which the individual is unconscious, in denial, and non-accepting of reality. With such detrimental attitudes, authentic growth becomes inhibited because individuals tend to be unaware of their options or choices surrounding their experiences of alienation and intimacy.

In the end, it is difficult to separate the external environment from the internal environment as each informs the other; however, one can envision that when one lives one's life anchored in an *internal* environment of fear, there is apt to be some form of

holding back. When fear exists, part of the person remains anchored in pain, closed, guarded, suspicious, distrustful (of oneself, others, and/or the world), focused on scarcity and the like. In contrast, an internal approach to life based on or anchored in love tends to lead to feelings of courage; trust and faith-in oneself, others, the world, abundance, and something greater than oneself and humanity, such as Ultimate Reality); openness; confidence; inner peace; freedom; connection; and more. It is probably rare, if at all possible, to find someone who lives his or her life always fully in "love;" however, it makes sense that the health of people's lives is directly related to the degree to which they live their lives internally anchored in love. According to this Model, those who live more of their lives in fear than in love will have less fulfilling, less satisfying, less full and adventurous lives than those who live their lives more often in or from love. Fear-based individuals will feel less connected and conscious than love-based people.

Authentic Growth

Authentic growth is not a simple concept. For the most part, dictionary definitions of growth are not very helpful in defining this term. The only definition which seems to capture the concept of authentic growth is the definition of growth as "increase" or "expansion." However, this is still inadequate. After all, one can grow-i.e., expand or increase-in evilness, meanness, selfishness, or in any other number of "negative" ways. (Hence, Rogers' (1977) clarification that the actualizing tendency is "selective, directional, and constructive" (p.242).) Instead, the only growth being advocated as authentic is "positive growth" or growth that is beneficial to the individual, growth which helps the individual reach the ultimate growth telos.

Authentic growth as defined in this thesis is best understood by breaking it down into its component parts-telos and process. First, authentic growth is any positive growth which brings an individual closer to the ultimate goal of growth (telos). In this thesis, the goal of growth is both transpersonal and trans-human and is considered to be maximal consciousness, which is expansive, liberating, and connective. As one grows authentically, one grows holistically (in all realms)-spiritually, morally, consciously, emotionally,

intellectually, intuitively. As one grows authentically, one experiences ever-increasing or ever-deepening consciousness as well as connection (intrapersonal, transpersonal, and trans-human integration and unity). Secondly, individuals grow authentically by successfully negotiating the alienation-intimacy complex (process). This thesis proposes that successfully negotiating the alienation-intimacy complex results in beneficial growth that leads one closer to the ultimate goal of increased consciousness and connection with oneself, others, nature and/or the Whole or Ultimate Reality.

This thesis believes that these aforementioned characteristics can be used as the criteria by which one can judge the efficacy of other theories of growth. Specifically, if a theory's telos and process result in expansiveness and liberation and growth in consciousness and connection at a transpersonal and trans-human level, then such theories will be deemed to lead to authentic growth. However, if a theory brings forth the opposite-e.g., self-centredness, diminished consciousness, exclusion, enslavement, and/or disconnection-then such theories will be deemed antithetical to authentic growth. (See Inauthentic Growth below.)

Authentic growth as deemed herein is limitless. There is always room for growth as increase and expansion in consciousness and connection, *if one so chooses*. Admittedly, human beings have physical, mental, social, economic and cultural limitations; however, one can still conceive of no endpoint for authentic growth when defined in this way. This unknown quantity, this lack of endpoint, this capacity to continually grow authentically throughout one's life, is growth's gift, not its flaw. Authentic growth is not only limitless, it is a never-ending process. It is not a destination. If life is authentic growth, then one must continue to grow in order to feel truly alive. Ultimately, growth is a choice. The more conscious people are, the more growth choices they perceive as being available to themselves. In the end, however, people can (are free to) choose to stop growing at any point in life.

Inauthentic Growth

Many theories of growth spend some time discussing how *not* to grow or ineffectual strategies that do not lead to authentic growth. They even discuss the ramifications of not growing towards their stated telos. Theories of growth, then, provide some vision of what does *not* constitute authentic growth or, conversely, provide insight into inauthentic forms of growth. It is worth taking a few paragraphs to discuss examples of inauthentic forms of growth. Such forms often have the appearance of growth, but are not authentic because they do not lead one towards the desired telos. Equally importantly, inauthentic growth occurs if the telos itself is misconceived; growing towards an inappropriate telos will not result in authentic growth (no matter how well-conceived be the process). Inauthentic forms of growth include substitute or false forms of growth, unbalanced growth, even "non-growth" (stagnation, staying stuck) and reverse growth (regression, diminution, movement backwards). These forms of growth are difficult to define and some even overlap. Negative growth can be thought of as an umbrella term for inauthentic types of growth and refers to any growth which is detrimental to the individual in some way. These include any growth *away from* the ultimate telos or any growth *towards* a misconceived telos. Growth in unconsciousness, such as in selfishness, evil, meanness, self-centeredness, and the like, constitute forms of negative growth as does any growth at the expense of others.

Substitute forms of growth entail following practices which, while presented as leading to or appearing to lead to authentic growth, on closer inspection, do not. For example, religiously (unconsciously and uncritically) following the dictates of self-help literature might be such a substitute form of growth. Because substitutes are compulsive and repetitive, they cannot be considered authentic forms which are ultimately liberating. Compulsively buying and/or reading self-help book after self-help book indicates inauthentic growth. Reading such books can become a substitute *for* growth when it becomes a way of duping oneself into thinking that one is working on authentic growth while, in reality, one is simply avoiding it. Deferring blindly to an external authority (the book), in its own right, precludes authenticity and authentic growth. Reading is merely a

diversion to doing the work of growth. In the end, substitute growth often entails substituting the external (focusing on the physical or material) for the internal, or the inauthentic for the authentic.

Other examples of substitute growth also exist. For instance, perfecting a defence or coping mechanism, such as denial or repression, is *technically* a form of growth (one is getting better at it); however, it is a false (and negative) form. In essence, motive might be the determining factor here. For example, if, over the years, a person becomes an accomplished better "helper" to his or her friends and family but the person does this out of an unconscious or conscious desire to be loved and/or out of a fear of rejection, then, technically, the individual has grown-after all, the person has become a better helper-but the individual has experienced a false (negative) form of growth. The person has grown, but at a cost to himself or herself. The person's motive for being helpful is neither healthy nor authentic; therefore, the person's growth is neither healthy nor authentic. "Busyness" can also be a false form of growth. On the surface, people appear to be active and productive; however, this busyness is often a diversion keeping them from doing that which is most beneficial to themselves and/or others. Busyness is often simply a "socially acceptable" form of escape.

Non-growth or stagnation is common and can either be short-lived or long-lived. (Fortunately, most people, at some point in their lives, eventually experience something (external or internal) that gives them the impetus to change and grow, at least out of their current ruts.) Stagnation occurs when people become mired in their own experiences and remain stuck, uselessly spinning their wheels and going nowhere. Compulsively repeating the same patterns or behaviours indicates stagnation. Although the repetitions might not be identical, they are often sufficiently similar as to be considered the same. With repetition, the rut (stagnation) gets more entrenched. Until individuals make a radical shift-possibly in perception, in thought, or in action-they remain stuck, neither losing nor gaining ground (but wasting valuable time/life).

Reverse growth, regression or diminution occurs when people actually begin to grow backwards or lose ground; they devolve. For example, small fears can balloon into

full-fledged phobias, severely curtailing people's behaviour. As a result, individuals cease to grow and actually lose ground, giving up more and more living or life experiences in an attempt to protect themselves from an irrational fear which has ballooned out of proportion. One's comfort zone actually shrinks. Fear of the unknown and the desire to avoid taking risks or avoid taking responsibility can lead to either stagnation or regression.

Unbalanced growth occurs when one focuses on growth in one area of life at the expense of other areas (for example, intellectual development at the expense of emotional development). Unbalanced growth also occurs when one focuses on the external (e.g., physical and material) realm at the expense of the internal or, vice versa, focuses on the internal at the expense of the external. Extreme self-centredness and an inability to see things from another's perspective might be examples of an imbalance towards the internal. Dissociation from one's own feelings or a compulsive focus on gaining material wealth might be examples of an imbalance towards the external. Workaholism might be either. One might work excessively in order to run from oneself or family obligations (focusing on the external) or one might work excessively because it makes one feel good internally (focusing on the internal). The line of demarcation is apt to be a fine one as imbalance is most likely a matter of degree or a matter of motive. Ultimately, maintaining a defensive, compensatory, unbalanced stance enslaves the individual, severely curtailing authentic growth and freedom. The external realm comprises more than simply nonconscious phenomena, such as the physical and material. Other individuals (conscious entities) are also experienced as external (external consciousnesses) to an individual (as well as partially internal through certain feelings of commonality). Unbalanced growth also occurs, then, when one is unable to experience and internalize another consciousness in such a way that one creates an expanded common space.

Conclusion

The tentative Growth Model put forward in this chapter attempts to address potential weaknesses in and go beyond the ideas of the "experts" explored in Chapter 3 by putting forth alternative ideas regarding authentic growth-telos and process. Going

beyond the "experts," this chapter proposes a transpersonal, trans-human telos, one which considers growth as something which entails more than the individual and his or her personal development and more than secular concerns. This chapter also proposes that growth entails continual negotiation of experiences of alienation and intimacy via what has been termed the alienation-intimacy complex. Unlike the "experts," who seem to suggest that growth is linear and entails almost a one-time, large-scale movement from alienation (generally experienced as separation from one's true self) to intimacy (generally experienced as connection with one's true self), this chapter proposes that authentic growth entails continual, never-ending, lifelong negotiation of experiences of alienation and intimacy. As a result, this chapter envisions growth as an ever-increasing, ever-widening, upward spiral instead of a linear progression. Additionally, instead of seeing growth as intimacy and, hence, good, and seeing alienation as all bad, this Model takes a closer looker at the two aspects and proposes an alienation-intimacy complex, which is continually active and plays a central role in people's lives. This chapter also extracts and elaborates upon what appears to be a love/fear dialectic implicit in the "experts" theories of growth. This chapter's tentative alternative theory of growth proposes that the optimum (internal and external) environment for authentic growth is one anchored in love, while the environment least conducive to authentic growth is one anchored in fear. The love/fear dialectic undergirds and affects individuals' growth choices. Lastly, and most importantly for the following chapter, Chapter 4 presents a more concrete vision of what constitutes authentic growth and its inherent characteristics according to this thesis. These characteristics-transpersonal, trans-human, expansive, liberating, and connective-constitute the criteria (yardstick) against which the efficacy of the self-help theories of growth (teloi and processes) explored in the following chapter can be measured.

CHAPTER 5 - ANALYSIS AND REPLY TO RESEARCH QUESTION

Introduction

As indicated previously, this thesis proposes that a self-help book can be approached or read as a theory of growth, that within each text the author puts forth his or her ideas on what constitutes the ultimate goal of growth (telos) and presents particular steps to follow in order to achieve that ultimate goal (process). This chapter justifies selection of the three self-help books to be critiqued, presents a summary of each book's telos and process (theory of growth), critiques the theories of growth based upon criteria derived or extracted from the Growth Model (the interpretive tool) presented in Chapter 4, and answers the research question as to whether readers following the advice and procedures put forth in these books would experience authentic growth as defined in this thesis. The following chapter concludes this thesis and considers the cultural implications of this chapter's findings, points out thesis strengths and weaknesses, comments on generalizability of the Growth Model, makes suggestions for further research, and provides personal reflections.

Justification for Book Selection

The three books analysed are Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking* (1952,**1996**), Dr. Wayne Dyer's *Your Erroneous Zones* (**1976**, 1997), and Anthony Robbins' *Unlimited Power* (**1986**, 1997). The years given are the original copyright year followed by the most recent reissue year. The emboldened date represents the year of the book analysed herein. Each book has been reissued numerous times, indicating that the books continue to be popular and continue to sell. Admittedly, someone might take exception to the age of these texts; however, their selection is justified precisely because of their age and because of their enduring popularity. Today, Dr. Phil McGraw is a popular self-help guru; however, his longevity is yet to be established.⁴³ In contrast, Norman Vincent Peale's book, *The Power of Positive Thinking*, continues to sell a half-century after its initial release.

These books were chosen based on their having reached best-seller status and on their continued popularity (indicated through continued sales and multiple re-releases). Evidence is provided based on information gathered from the Amazon.com web site. Amazon.com is a popular Internet bookseller and is the only bookseller that ranks its books. While it is unclear exactly how the ranking takes place, the site provides some evidence of popularity via continued sales. (Ranking appears to be based solely on sales volume and the top twenty-five best-sellers in various categories appear to be updated weekly.) Moreover, Amazon.com allows one to sort books by best-seller status, again providing evidence regarding a book's popularity. The following list provides information which attests to the continued popularity and pervasiveness of these books, despite the nearly fifteen to fifty years since their initial appearance:

According to information on the books' front covers, all three books are "national best-sellers" having sold millions of copies each.

- All three texts were reissued in the later 1990s.
- For the week of August 21, 2001, on Amazon.com, listing the books by the category "bestseller," *The Power of Positive Thinking* emerges as number 27 (1991 copyright) and number 30 (1996 copyright) of 2,310 books in the Self-Help Motivational grouping and *Unlimited Power* emerges as number 64 in the same group. Using the same category, "bestseller," *Your Erroneous Zones* emerges as number 85 of 2,462 in the grouping Self-Help Personal Transformation. Each book, despite its age, is within the top 100 of over 2,000 self-help books in its grouping.
- For the week of August 21, 2001, out of all the books sold by Amazon.com, overall ranking for each book ranged from approximately 2100th to 4,000th. This might not seem very impressive; however, these authors' other books generally rank in the tens of thousands to the millions.
- Each book is available in a variety of formats, including Spanish translation and audio cassette.

The number of web sites associated with each author suggests that each author continues to be popular. Using the Lycos search engine, "Norman Vincent Peale" evokes 8,706 web sites, "Wayne Dyer" brings up 14,783 web sites, and "Anthony Robbins" elicits 10,888 web sites (August 21, 2001). In comparison, Dr. Phil McGraw, a comparatively recent self-help phenomenon, has only 1,100 web sites associated with his name.

The authors' popularity might be kept in the forefront due to their prolificacy. Each author has several books, audio cassettes, and, sometimes, video cassettes associated with his name. Peale elicits 149 Amazon.com listings under his name, Dyer elicits 124 listings, and Robbins a scant 60, in comparison. Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking* (1952) sold over 20 million copies in 41 languages (Biblical Discernment Ministries, 1994). Robbins' *Unlimited Power* has been published in eleven languages around the world (Robbins, 1991).

Reader testimonials available on Amazon.com and other web sites are favourable to the books' contents and provide ratings of 4 out of 5 stars, at minimum, in all three cases (and are often higher).

All three authors present their book's ideas in a multitude of formats. Along with his books and audio cassettes, Peale presented his ideas in a weekly radio program, "The Art of Living," and started what is now the largest religious magazine, *Guideposts*. His sermons were also broadcast, first on radio and later on television (Cornerstone, n.d.). In addition to his books and audio cassettes, Dyer has appeared on thousands of television and radio programs and has been interviewed in dozens of popular magazines. In addition to his books, Robbins' educational audio cassette system, "Personal Power," is "the number one personal and professional development system of all time-with more than 35 million tapes being used to transform lives worldwide" (Robbins Research International, Inc., 2000a). Robbins' infomercials air "on average every 30 minutes, 24 hours a day somewhere in North America since their initial introduction in April 1989...[and] [more than one million people have attended Mr. Robbins live seminars" (Robbins

Research International, Inc., 2000b). Robbins' financial success from his self-help ideas is phenomenal and a biography on him was just released in 2000. Robbins is the most prolific of the three (books, tapes, seminars, multimedia packages, coaching systems used worldwide, personal and corporate consulting, founder and dean of Master University), Peale second (though deceased), and Dyer least. Dyer's more recent books seem more spiritual in nature and continue to garner him considerable attention.

Because of each book's best-seller status and seeming continued popularity, it is believed these texts are worth studying. Moreover, because the works span several decades, the books might give indications as to changes in what constitutes authentic growth or in growth goals over the decades. Additionally, the books' continued popularity would suggest that they provide a timeless message to readers.

In this thesis, the August 1996 softcover Fawcett Columbine edition of *The Power of Positive Thinking* (simply because of the larger format), the original 1976 softcover version of *Your Erroneous Zones*, and the original 1986 softcover version of *Unlimited Power* are analysed. *The Power of Positive Thinking* is also currently available in a smaller May 1991 version; *Your Erroneous Zones* is available in November 1993 and August 1997 versions; and *Unlimited Power* is available in a 1997 version.

The Authors

Norman Vincent Peale (1898-1993) was a preacher, Dr. Wayne Dyer is a psychologist with a doctorate in counselling, and Anthony Robbins is a layman with no formal post-secondary education. The authors' backgrounds and eras appear to influence their writings.

Peale was pastor of New York City's Marble Collegiate Church for 52 years, introduced psychology into the Church process, and established a clinic with Dr. Smiley Blanton, a Freudian psychiatrist (Cornerstone, n.d.). Of the three books analysed, it is not surprising that Peale's is most overtly religious.

Dyer, whose childhood was spent in orphanages and foster homes, is the only certified psychologist who is academically trained in the field (Dyer, 2001). Dyer's educational background shows through as his text is the most academic in style and content. His book is also the only one that provides an index. (None of the books provides a bibliography or reference section.) Dyer's expertise emerges in the methodical structure of the book and in the amount of detail he provides for his reader. Dyer's book is the least peppered with anecdotes. If examples or stories are used, they are often fictitious compilations or hypothetical situations. Only a few case studies or true stories are used.

Robbins, the layman, is a self-help phenomenon in his own right and could easily **be** the sole subject of a master's degree. His is a rags to riches story, which he uses to lend powerful credence to his teachings. Within a short span, Robbins went from a penniless young man to a multi-million-dollar world-renowned motivational speaker who has worked with some of the world's most influential people in the areas of politics, business, and sports. Robbins' text seems to be the broadest in scope (and the most microscopic in detail). For example, it deals with topics such as goal setting and values clarification, and looks at the minute details regarding submodalities (the way people represent things visually (e.g. light/dark), aurally (e.g. loud/quiet), and kinesthetically (e.g. soft/hard) to themselves). Robbins is the only author to provide his readers with a glossary.

Interpretive Tool: The Growth Model

In keeping with the previous chapters, the three books are analysed from the perspectives of telos and process. The three texts are analysed individually, in chronological order by their original copyright dates (Peale, 1952; Dyer, 1976; Robbins, 1986). This is done in order to determine whether any interesting patterns emerge over time, such as changes in teloi and processes over the three decades these books span. Analysis of the texts comprises two sections—**Telos** and **Process**—and is followed by a **Critique**. The Critique entails a comparison of the authors' theories of growth (teloi and

processes) with central criteria gleaned from the Growth Model put forth in Chapter 4. Once the authors' theories of growth are analysed and critiqued, the efficacy of these self-help books in achieving authentic growth can be determined. That is, the thesis can answer its research question: **If readers follow the ideas, advice, and procedures put forth in these general, non-gendered, psychological self-help books on personal growth and development, would they experience authentic growth as defined in this thesis?** The research question is answered in the section entitled **Reply to Research Question.**

Analysis: Norman Vincent Peale, *The Power of Positive Thinking**

Telos

While Peale's main *process* is fairly obvious, considering it constitutes the title of his book, the same cannot be said of his *telos*. Instead, the reader is met with myriad vague visions of what constitutes Peale's telos. For Peale (1996), "happiness and well-being" (p.xi), "a victorious life" (p.xii), "successful living" (p.xiii) and a life "full of joy and satisfaction" (p.xi) are ultimate goals for which to strive. More specifically, Peale claims that he has watched "countless" people "learn and apply a system of simple procedures" (process) which has brought, among other things, "peace of mind, improved health, and a never-ceasing flow of energy" (p.xi). He proclaims that "[h]undreds have read, listened, and practiced [his techniques], and the results are invariably the same: new life, new power, increased efficiency, greater happiness" (Peale, 1996, p.xiii). These benefits, that readers reap, can be seen as teloi. Twice Peale proclaims (on the book's back cover and on page xii) that the general purpose of his book is to help the reader "achieve a happy, satisfying, and worthwhile life." This statement appears to summarize Peale's ultimate telos.

But what exactly constitutes a "happy, satisfying, and worthwhile life"? What does "a victorious life" mean, or "successful living" and so forth? Peale's (1996) concepts are vague. These terms can mean different things to different people, and Peale does not

take the time to define them. Instead, one must extrapolate his vision of the good life from the material of the text. The only fairly well discussed term is happiness because it has a chapter dedicated to generating it (Peale's Chapter 5).⁴⁵ Peale's vision of happiness is limited in scope-limited to those things that are known and liked by the person, like family and work; as a result, happiness emerges as finite and limited as opposed to expansive (the latter being a criterion from the Growth Model).

One can extrapolate that, together, the traits sought after in each of Peale's (1996) chapters constitute the components of a happy, satisfying, worthwhile life. That is, an individual exhibiting these traits would have such a life. Persons who believe in themselves; have peace of mind, constant energy, and vitality; pray regularly (and "properly!"); do not fret, fume or worry; expect and get the best; know how to create their own happiness, how to solve personal problems, and how to be liked by others; do not believe in defeat; use faith in healing; are able to remake themselves with new thoughts when necessary, and, most importantly, know how to "draw on that Higher Power" would, according to Peale, live happy, satisfying, worthwhile lives. There is only one problem. When reading Peale's text closely, two key concepts continue to surface throughout the book, success and efficiency, with the latter term being a central component of the former. A close reading of his book indicates that *success* emerges as the ultimate goal, and it seems to be strongly tied to or synonymous with *material* success. Anecdote after anecdote tells of how people employed Peale's processes to achieve some form of material benefit. That is, the overarching telos appears to be solidly anchored in the material world, specifically in material gain. Close, critical reading shows that Peale's desire to help readers achieve a "worthwhile life" is tied to having them achieve an efficient, productive, successful *material* life. Even the goal of curing psychological problems seems to be for the express purpose of becoming efficient and productive persons in an economic sense. This becomes apparent through Peale's repeated use of the adjective "pathetic" to describe the lives or situations of those who are suffering from "inferiority complexes," lack of purposefulness, are down on their luck and so forth. Peale tells of his habit of praying for people as he passes them in the train. He writes of one

instance: "I saw a man leaning half asleep against a wall, and I prayed that he would wake up and get off relief and *amount to something*" [emphasis added] (Peale, 1996, p.50). There is a definite bias in Peale's vocabulary and writing, albeit probably unconscious on his part, which privileges economic success. Ultimately, psychological success-i.e., the successful use of positive thinking, overcoming worry, believing in oneself, learning to draw upon "That Higher Power," and his other processes-is aimed at establishing economic prosperity. Despite suggesting quite lofty broad goals with his vague statements, the overriding telos emerges as material success. The implication is that the more materially successful one is, the more happiness, well-being, and satisfaction one will reap, i.e., the more "worthwhile" one's life will be.

Process

Peale's *process* is much easier to extract than his telos, and it is much more precise. Peale (1996) calls his process "a simple, workable philosophy of living" (p.viii), and it entails what his book title suggests-the power of positive thinking-or, what Peale more accurately calls "applied Christianity" (p.xiii).⁴⁶ Peale claims that he offers spiritual (p.ix) and prayer (p.52) "techniques"-a "scientific system" (p.xiii)-that can render being defeated "by the problems, cares, and difficulties of human existence" "quite unnecessary" (Peale, 1996, p.xi). Peale offers his readers a choice: "[you can] permit obstacles to control your mind...and thus become the dominating factors in your thought pattern" or "[b]y learning how to cast them from the mind, by refusing to become mentally subservient to them, and by channeling spiritual power through your thoughts you can rise above obstacles which ordinarily might defeat you" (Peale, 1996, p.xi). Such is the ultimate bifurcation that Peale addresses-letting life's obstacles control one's mind or learning to harness one's mind in order to control life's obstacles. Peale's book offers "methods" by which obstacles "are simply not permitted to destroy your happiness and well-being" and teaches readers how to "will" not to be defeated (p.xi-xii). In the end, taking command of one's thought processes so that one is not defeated by life's obstacles is the major method of achieving the overarching telos of a (materially) successful life.

So, how does one take command of one's thought processes? By learning to think positively. One must learn to change one's thoughts and attitudes and one does this through positive visualization, repeating specific affirmations (usually Biblical quotations), praying, believing in oneself and in God, having faith, meditating, using "spiritual principles" (Peale, 1996, p.65), being peaceful, knowing oneself, and turning one's problems over to God. In fact, Peale's general process is most simply captured in his Chapter 4, entitled "Try Prayer Power." The three "simple" steps are "prayerize" (e.g., use "proper" prayer techniques, affirmations, meditation), "picturize" (e.g., visualize desired outcomes with belief and faith) and "actualize" (most often simply the result of doing the former two and turning things over to God). Peale writes: "Affirm it, visualize it, believe it, *and it will actualize itself*. The release of power which this procedure stimulates will astonish you" [emphasis added] (p. 12). Peale believes that these three steps are central to achieving one's goals and they seem to capture the foundation or core of positive thinking.

Although Peale (1996) mentions the importance of knowing oneself, it is mentioned only twice throughout the book, almost in passing, and it quickly takes a back seat to a more forceful idea. A close reading of Peale shows that the overriding message is that one *must* (not *should*) turn one's life, one's problem, one's situation over to God. One prays, visualizes, and affirms in the *hopes* (faith) that God will grant the person his or her "wish." Peale's techniques are ultimately offered as ways in which readers can tap into the "spiritual power" of the universe or "God power." God is central to Peale's process. In addition to turning one's will over to God, one is required to fill one's mind with positive thoughts. According to Peale, filling one's mind with thoughts of faith, confidence, and security will "force out or expel *all* thoughts of doubt, *all* lack of confidence" [emphasis added] (Peale, 1996, p.12).⁴⁷ Peale's stress on positive thinking (filling one's mind with *positive* thoughts) is tied to his underlying beliefs or philosophy. For Peale, thoughts are things which "actually possess dynamic power" (p. 166): "Think positively...and you set in motion positive forces which bring positive results to pass....On the contrary, think negative thoughts and you create around yourself an atmosphere

propitious to the development of negative results" (p. 166). Because Peale believes that thoughts are creative entities, it makes sense that he is so adamant that readers control or positively channel their thoughts. And bearing in mind Peale's profession, no better thoughts exist for a Christian pastor than to suggest readers concentrate on than God.

In the end, Peale (1996) is adamant that by controlling one's thinking and by channelling God's spirit through one's thoughts, one need not be defeated by anything, unless one chooses to be (p.xi-xii). To reach the ultimate telos of a happy, worthwhile life, all one needs to do is read this book "thoughtfully, carefully absorbing its teachings" (p.xii), and then these "scientific yet simple principles of achievement, health, and happiness" (p.xiii), this "simple yet scientific system of practical techniques of successful living that works" (p.xiii), will bring the reader "new life, new power, increased efficiency, greater happiness" (p.xiii), among other things.⁴⁸

Analysis: Dr. Wayne Dyer, *Your Erroneous Zones*⁴⁹

Telos

A frustrating aspect of reading these three self-help books is the difficulty in extracting each author's ultimate telos. Several goals are generally put forward, all of them intertwined. For example, Dyer (1976) discusses happiness, freedom, self-reliance, self-actualization, and independence. In the end, it appears that his ultimate telos for growth is independence, as epitomized in a self-actualized individual. For Dyer, self-actualized persons are individuals who are in charge of themselves (in charge of their thoughts and, thereby, in charge of their emotions) and are unaffected (not "immobilized" in any way) by the actions or existence of others or themselves. But Dyer does not stop there. There is a progression in Dyer's theory. One is encouraged to heed the processes given by Dyer (see next section) in order to become the type of individual who can best reap the ultimate human rewards he envisions. Dyer encourages the individual to eradicate erroneous zones (self-defeating behaviours) in order to become independent (self-actualized) so that he or she can experience maximum freedom and, ultimately,

maximum happiness. Put another way, according to Dyer, freedom-the ability to do what one wants, when one wants, how one wants, the ability to be in total charge of one's life-leads to happiness, and both freedom and happiness require that one be independent of others, that one be unaffected by the actions and existence of others.

Dyer (1976) is very clear as to which characteristics are embodied by the optimum human being. In his Introduction, Dyer provides a list of twenty-five questions his readers are to answer (p. 15-16). One can deduce that the optimum individual would answer these questions in the affirmative. Reading his chapters confirms this. Moreover, Dyer clarifies his vision of the optimum individual by dedicating his last chapter (Chapter XII) to describing this ultimate human being. Sounding very similar to Maslow (though not citing Maslow as a source), Dyer describes a self-actualized individual.⁵⁰ Characteristics include believing that one's mind is one's own, that one is in control of one's feelings, that one is motivated from within rather than from without, that one is free from the need for approval, and that one sets one's own personal rules of conduct. Such an individual is also free of hero worship, avoids complaining, accepts himself or herself as he or she is, and welcomes the mysterious and the unknown. The list continues. Many would look at these traits and agree that a mature individual would exhibit many of them. For Dyer, the major choice individuals must make is to "decide to be personally free or remain chained to the expectations that others have of you" (p. 16). For Dyer, "others" seems to include one's culture and cultural institutions as well as individuals. One's goal seems to be independence from externals and control of internals in order that one can experience maximum freedom, effectiveness, and happiness.

Dyer (1976) justifies his teloi of aiming for personal happiness and of taking charge of oneself (becoming independent of others) with the rationalization that people are dead for a very long time. Dyer writes:

The next time you are contemplating a decision in which you are debating whether or not to take charge of yourself, to make your own choice, ask yourself an important question, 'How long am I going to be dead?'...Surely, if your sojourn on earth is so brief, it ought at least to be pleasing to you. In a word, it's your life; do with it what *you* want. (p. 18)

Once Dyer justifies his position, that one can (and should) do with one's life what one wants, he introduces his process-that is, *how* to achieve this goal.

Process

Dyer (1976) has a doctorate in counselling and his professional background shows in his approach to his process. He is extremely methodical and outlines for the reader exactly how he sets up his chapters. He claims that each chapter is set up like a counselling session in order to provide "as much opportunity for self-help as possible" (Dyer, 1976, p. 12). Each chapter explores a particular erroneous zone or self-defeating behaviour and examines the historical antecedents (cultural source) for the behaviour. After describing the behaviours associated with the particular erroneous zone, Dyer examines reasons for holding onto "behaviour which does not make you happy" (p. 13). This particular section suggests psychological payoffs (the "psychological support system" (Dyer, 1976, p. 13)) individuals obtain from maintaining the self-defeating behaviour. (In the end, Dyer claims that individuals hold onto their self-defeating behaviours because doing so offers them a sense of safety and security; it helps them avoid the discomfort and uncertainty of having to change (i.e., grow), risk, and/or take responsibility (p.13).) Each chapter concludes with "some straightforward strategies for eliminating self-nullifying behavior" (Dyer, 1976, p. 13). Dyer lauds readers for noticing repetitiveness in his information because he claims that repetition is required in order to instigate change: "An insight must be repeated, and repeated, and repeated again. Only then, when it is fully accepted and understood, do you begin to alter behavior" (p. 13-14). Armed with this structure, the reader knows what to expect in the chapters ahead. The reader also realizes that, for Dyer, self-defeating behaviours are considered to be major blocks to independence, self-actualization, effectiveness, and happiness.

Dyer (1976) claims that his book entails two central themes: (1) that one chooses one's own emotions, and (2) that one must take charge of one's present moments. These two themes form the cornerstones of his process. Of central concern to Dyer is the first theme, that individuals choose their emotions. For Dyer, the ability to choose is

humanity's ultimate freedom. People can choose happiness over unhappiness, just as they can choose self-fulfilling behaviours over self-defeating behaviours. To prove his point that individuals choose their emotions, Dyer provides the following syllogism:

Major Premise: I can control my thoughts.

Minor Premise: My feelings come from my thoughts.

Conclusion: I can control my feelings, (p.21).

Dyer concludes: "If you control your thoughts, and your feelings come from your thoughts, then you are capable of controlling your own feelings. And you control your feelings by working on the thoughts that preceded them" (p.22). Dyer believes that people must come to believe that they control their own emotions in order to take charge of themselves (become independent), eradicate erroneous zones, and experience happiness. Sounding very much like Peale, Dyer explains to the reader that things and people do not make a person unhappy; "you make yourself unhappy because of the thoughts that you have about the people or things in your life" (p.22). He concludes: "becoming a free and healthy person involves learning to *think* differently" (p.22). Dyer believes that the free, happy, healthy individual knows that emotions are subordinate to thoughts and are generated by thoughts. To be an independent, free, happy, healthy individual, one must simply choose appropriate (self-enhancing) thoughts and emotions. (Much like Peale's, Dyer's theory seems to revolve around thought control.)

Present-moment living is Dyer's (1976) other theme and it is tied to the previous theme. A happy, healthy, independent, effective life requires that one continually choose appropriate thoughts and emotions in every *present moment*. Dyer explains that one only ever lives in the "now." According to Dyer, one of the reason for eradicating erroneous zones is because they use up present moments by focusing on a different time. For example, he explains that worry focuses on the future and guilt focuses on the past and neither focuses on making the most of the present moment (Chapter V). Dyer writes: "There is only one moment in which you can experience anything, and that is now[.]...Turning your now into total fulfillment is the touchstone of effective living, and virtually all self-defeating behaviors (erroneous zones) are efforts at living in a moment

other than the current one" (p. 14). Dyer believes that if an individual makes self-enhancing choices in every present moment, the person will experience happiness and effective living.

Another important part of Dyer's (1976) process involves eliminating erroneous zones and doing so requires awareness. Once one becomes aware of an erroneous zone and aware of the reasons for holding onto it, one can then choose to eradicate it, thereby making "total growth more approachable" (Dyer, 1976, p. 13). Dyer's expectation is that once one becomes aware of a self-defeating behaviour and of the reasons for holding onto it, one will be more willing to attempt the strategies he suggests for eliminating the growth-inhibiting behaviour. For Dyer, awareness mainly entails realizing and accepting one fact-that "YOU ARE THE SUM TOTAL OF YOUR CHOICES" [original emphasis] (p. 14). Each person is responsible for the choices he or she makes. This means that the amount of happiness and effectiveness a person experiences is in the hands (choices) of that individual.

Similar to Peale's process, Dyer's (1976) involves controlling or changing one's way of thinking.⁵¹ However, dissimilar to Peale's process, which aims at turning one's problems or difficulties over to God, Dyer's process aims at taking charge of oneself. In stark contrast to Peale, Dyer advocates self-reliance and self-responsibility. For Dyer, "taking charge of oneself" means that people are responsible for themselves (for their choices) and that they rely on themselves (are independent). Dyer warns, however, that while taking charge of oneself "will involve a whole new thinking process"⁵² (p.20), this will prove difficult "because too many forces in our society conspire against individual responsibility" (p.20). Unlike Peale, Dyer explores and presents cultural explanations for the existence of most erroneous zones. (He believes that the erroneous zone procrastination is an exception; it is self-inflicted and not rooted in cultural antecedents (Chapter IX).) These cultural prohibitions add to the difficulty of growing and changing. Dyer's response to or way of dealing with cultural prohibitions is simply to recognize their existence and, through the power of one's thought process, choose to be unaffected by them.

It is worth noting that Dyer reassures readers that learning the principles of effective living is "pleasant" and "uncomplicated." One need not be a professional; "[y]ou learn them by being committed to your own happiness and by doing something about it" (p. 12). However, Dyer states that change can be "tough, damn tough" (p.25). He warns, "If you're like most people, every fiber of your being will resist having to take on the hard work of eliminating the thoughts that support your self-forfeiting feelings and behavior" (Dyer, 1976, p. 11). Dyer concludes, however, that difficulty "certainly is no reason to avoid doing it" (p.25). Similar to Peale, Dyer claims that his principles are simple; dissimilar to Peale, he claims that change (growth) can be difficult. To become independent so that one can live a "free, effective, and fulfilling life" requires that individuals take charge of themselves, commit to themselves, be responsible for themselves, be self-reliant, take charge of their thoughts and emotions, exorcise erroneous zones and live in the present moment, regardless of how difficult this might be.

Analysis: Anthony Robbins, *Unlimited Power*⁵³

Telos

The ultimate telos for Anthony Robbins (1986) appears to be to achieve and live what he calls "excellence." This can be seen by the way he repeatedly structures his chapters around this concept. For example, Section I of his book is entitled "The Modeling of Human Excellence," which presents belief as the birth of excellence, physiology as the avenue of excellence; and energy as the fuel of excellence. In Section II, the reader learns that metaprograms ("the internal programs (or sorts) we use in deciding what to pay attention to" (Robbins, 1986, p.254)) are the "distinctions" (refinements) of excellence. In Section III, the reader learns that leadership is the "challenge" of excellence while "living excellence" is the human challenge.

But what exactly does Robbins (1986) mean by "excellence"? Interestingly, Robbins does not include this term in his glossary. Apparently, the concept is either so self-evident or so self-explanatory as not to require definition or explanation. Robbins

describes "individuals of excellence" as "people who produce outstanding results" (p.78) or as "result-oriented people who produce their life exactly as they desire it" (p.413). Throughout the book, he offers examples of people who meet this criterion and who are considered emblems of excellence. Individuals range from politicians (J. F. Kennedy) to athletes (Pete Rose), business icons (Ted Turner) to singers (Bruce Springsteen), religious leaders (Jesus) to actors (John Wayne). According to Robbins, those who produce outstanding results are (or were) "master communicators" (or, more accurately, master persuaders) and include John F. Kennedy, Thomas Jefferson, Martin Luther King, Jr, Winston Churchill, Mahatma Gandhi, and even Hitler. Mastering communication is crucial because, as Robbins writes, "all behavior and feelings find their original roots in some form of communication. Those who affect the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the majority of us are those who know how to use this tool of power" (p.8). Robbins explains that these people of excellence "were able to take their vision, whether it was to transport people into space or to create a hate-filled Third Reich, and communicate it to others with such congruency that they influenced the way the masses thought and acted. Through their communication power, they changed the world" (p.8) or people's experience of the world. For example, Robbins mentions Ted Turner repeatedly, claiming that Turner's vision for cable television changed the way people watch that medium. After discussing several such individuals of excellence, Robbins asks, "Why aren't we all empowered, happy, wealthy, healthy, and successful?" (p.7). One could argue that these adjectives give insight into aspects of what constitutes "excellence" for Robbins. In the end, as with the previous two authors, Robbins' telos is not a single-headed, clearly defined entity. One must work at defining "excellence;" moreover, one is never really completely sure of its definition.⁵⁴ Although Robbins does not define his term, excellence (his telos) seems to emerge as the ability to communicate with oneself and/or with others in such a way as to get oneself or others to take the particular actions one wants or to produce the results one wants (process).

Those who master the challenge of living excellence or are models of excellence share a multitude of common characteristics. Through the practical techniques presented

(what Robbins (1986) calls *Optimum Performance Technologies®*), each chapter provides clues as to what a person of excellence does, thinks, believes, values, and so forth. In short, persons of excellence or successful individuals-individuals who are capable of producing outstanding results-are passionate, hold empowering beliefs (especially the seven beliefs of excellence-his Chapter 5), have strategies or ways of organizing resources that make things work to their greatest potential, know what really matters to themselves or what they value, have energy, are able to bond with others or establish rapport, and exhibit mastery of communication (over self and others). Such individuals can handle frustration, rejection, financial pressure, and complacency. People of excellence also give more than they receive "because it virtually guarantees true happiness" (Robbins, 1986, p.383). Such individuals have mastered their own minds, are sovereign over themselves, have power-the ability to direct their own personal kingdom, their own thought processes and behaviours-in order to produce the precise results they desire. They are master communicators and master persuaders, able to comprehend their own strategies as well as elicit those of others. The ultimate mark of excellence, according to Robbins, is leadership, becoming the trend setter instead of the trend follower. These traits provide a glimpse of aspects emblematic of excellence for Robbins.

Process

For Robbins (1986), the goal of growth is excellence-producing outstanding results. One achieves this by mastering two skills: communication and action. Robbins' detailed processes entail strategies for improving communication (with oneself, others, and/or the masses) and for motivating oneself (and/or others) to take appropriate, effective action. Robbins declares that "everything in this book is directed toward providing your brain with the most effective signals to empower you to take successful action" (p. 14). Such is his bottom line. Robbins does not stop at simply motivating oneself to produce outstanding results. Robbins appears to provide for three levels or types of excellence-personal excellence, interpersonal excellence, and global (mass) excellence. That is, based on his book's three sections, one can extrapolate that

excellence involves three levels: (1) getting oneself to produce outstanding personal results (personal excellence); (2) getting others to produce desired results (interpersonal excellence); and (3) getting the masses to produce desired results (global excellence). Excellence requires mastery of self- and other-communication as well as motivating oneself and others to take appropriate action.⁵⁵ Apparently, the literal definition of the word "power" is "the ability to act" and, according to Robbins' theory, people's ability to take effective action is dependent upon "how we communicate to ourselves" (p.7); that is, "[w]hat we do in life is determined by how we communicate;" "[w]hat we picture and say to ourselves, how we move and use the muscles of our bodies and our facial expressions will determine how much of what we know we will use" (p.7). What and how people communicate with themselves determines the arsenal of actions they will perceive as being available to them at any given moment. The more empowering a person's self-communications (internally and externally), the greater the number of behavioural choices he or she will have because the more potential he or she will tap into.

Modelling forms the core of Robbins' (1986) process. Robbins' foundational premise is that "Excellence can be duplicated" (p.109)-i.e., "success leaves clues" (p.26)-and modelling-the process of "discovering exactly and specifically what people do to produce a specific result" (p.27)-is how one duplicates excellence. Specifically, Robbins believes, "[i]f other people can do something, all you need to do is model them with precision and you can do exactly the same thing, whether it's walking on fire, making a million dollars, or developing a perfect relationship" (p. 198). Robbins explains that "all results are produced by some specific set of actions" (p. 198); therefore, to produce a specific result one simply needs to duplicate the "specific set of actions" employed by the person who has produced the desired result. He writes, "[i]f you exactly reproduce someone's actions-both internal and external-then you, too, can produce the same final result" (p. 198). In order to achieve similar results, one must model three key areas: (1) *internal representations*, such as beliefs, attitudes, values, and metaprograms-"the internal programs (or sorts) we use in deciding what to pay attention to" (Robbins, 1986, p.254); (2) *mental syntax*-"the way people organize or order their thoughts" (Robbins,

1986, p.32); and (3) the condition and use of *physiology*. Robbins claims: "Do all three effectively and elegantly, and you can do just about anything" (p. 198). (Note that Robbins consistently uses this word "elegantly." It appears to mean done smoothly and surreptitiously or without being detected.)

In the end, it appears that Robbins (1986) wants his readers to realize three things: (1) that people have much more control over themselves than they ever thought possible (over beliefs, values, internal representations of various kinds, physiology, states, behaviours and more); (2) that excellence requires that individuals master communication, not only self-communication but communication with (persuasion of) others as well; and (3) that excellence requires that people take effective action towards their goals (hence one must know how to set and reach goals). If one can master communication so that one will take appropriate action, one is well on one's way towards excellence. One simply needs to understand, learn, and model successful communication and behaviour.

Robbins (1986) presents his processes under the rubric *Optimum Performance Technologies®* and his central technology, modelling, is based on or comes out of the practice called Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP, for short). Robbins defines NLP as "the science of how to run your brain in an optimal way to produce the results you desire" and it studies "how people communicate to themselves in ways that produce optimum resourceful states and thus create the largest number of behavioral choices" (p.27). This understanding is crucial because Robbins believes that "[o]ur ability to do anything in life is based upon our ability to direct our own nervous system....Those who are able to produce some outstanding result do so by producing specific communications to and through the nervous system" (p.26). This "science" of optimally running one's own brain so that one can produce optimum results is based on a major presupposition-"that we all share the same neurology, so if *anyone* can do *anything* in the world, you can, too, *if you* run your nervous system in *exactly* the same way" [emphasis added] (p.27). Modelling is "[t]his process of discovering *exactly* and *specifically* what people do to produce a specific result" (Robbins, 1986, p27).

Robbins' (1986) general modelling process can be presented in a table-type schema-see Appendix D. The following few paragraphs explain his general ideas regarding modelling. As mentioned earlier, there are two central aspects to Robbins' theory: communication and action. Human beings experience sensory inputs via their five senses; interpret these sensorial stimuli through personal filters, such as beliefs, values, preferred modalities, metaprograms, past experiences, and so forth; and communicate these interpretations to themselves via *internal representations* and *physiology*. These factors determine one's *state*. State is crucial, according to Robbins, because one's state determines one's *behaviour*. Physiology and internal representations (conscious and unconscious self-communications) can either be empowering or disempowering, resourceful or unresourceful. Resourceful states provide individuals with more behavioural choices than unresourceful ones do.⁵⁶ Robbins claims that he is providing readers with practical techniques or skills so that they can move from unconsciously reacting to external and internal stimuli to taking responsibility for their states by taking conscious control of their physiology and internal representations. Robbins considers his text to be, among other things, "a guidebook for conscious modeling with greater precision, a chance for you to become conscious of something you've always been doing in your life" (p.34). He firmly believes that people can always represent experiences to themselves in a resourceful way: "No matter how terrible a situation is, you can represent it in a way that empowers you" (Robbins, 1986, p.43).

The main reason for mastering self-communication or representing experiences to oneself in a resourceful way is so that one will then take "effective" action towards one's desired goal. For Robbins (1986), resourceful communication without action is useless. This can be seen in the number of times he criticizes "positive thinking" throughout his book. Thinking about something is not the type of action Robbins advocates; physical action is paramount. To Robbins, positive thinking takes time and causes one to stop (and think). His techniques, such as anchoring (tying one's resourceful state(s) to a specific trigger (behaviour) that one can produce on demand) is available "in an instant" and, therefore, is superior (Robbins, 1986, p.324-325). After all, time is of the essence for

Robbins; time is "one resource none of us will ever have enough of (p.21). Excellence requires "elegant" action in a specific direction. Robbins summarizes his method for achieving excellence in his "Ultimate Success Formula" (or path to success). Success (excellence) requires that people know what outcome they want, take appropriate action to achieve it, develop the sensory acuity to know what they're getting, and change their behavior *until* they get what they want.⁵⁷ Flexibility-the flexibility to keep taking new actions until one achieves one's goal-is crucial. Ultimately, excellence requires that one take continual appropriate action towards one's goals. And sometimes the most important action one can take is to put oneself into a resourceful state.

The aforementioned section provides a rough overview of Robbins' (1986) techniques, which serve to motivate people to take action and serve to enlighten individuals as to how and what to model in order to produce similar results in less time. This knowledge also makes it easier for individuals to "lead" (influence) others. According to Robbins, excellence also entails getting others to take effective action. While Robbins might mean people to learn these techniques in order that they might aid others to have better lives, this does not come across in his book. Learning to "mirror," then "pace," and then "lead" others comes across as skills to learn in order for people to get others to do the initiator's bidding.

Lastly, for Robbins (1986), excellence also entails (or should entail) mass excellence-getting the masses to produce outstanding results. The final two chapters of his book look at the "global village" and consider "mass communication," that is, communication that has the ability to motivate or change the masses. Robbins explores the power of advertising and concludes that "[p]ersuasion may be the ultimate skill for creating change" (p.389). Robbins does not provide additional processes in this final section. Instead, he explains how advertisers use the techniques he has presented throughout the book for their benefit. This leads Robbins to conclude that "the means to change massive numbers of people's internal representations, and thus massive numbers of people's states, and thus massive numbers of people's behaviors, is available to us right now" (p.393). That mechanism is "the technology of media": "By effectively using our

understanding of the triggers of human behavior and the present-day technology for communicating these new representations to the masses, we can change the future of our world" (Robbins, 1986, p.393). While Robbins might be right and puts forth an interesting idea, he does not provide any suggestions as to what this "better world" would look like. He does not speculate on such a vision. In this final section, Robbins concludes by telling readers that "the real message of the book" is about becoming a leader and trend setter-"[t]rend creation is what leadership is about" (p.402)-rather than a trend follower.⁵⁸ In the final analysis, Robbins' processes are strategies for mastering communication in order to get oneself, others, and/or the masses to take the necessary action to create outstanding results. The person of excellence seems to be the person who determines what constitutes "outstanding results" (excellence).

Critique of Self-help Authors' Theories of Growth Based on the Growth Model (Interpretive Tool)⁵⁹

Telos

According to the Growth Model put forth in Chapter 4, the ultimate goal of authentic growth is maximal consciousness experienced as ever-increasing, ever-widening growth in consciousness (intellectual, emotional, spiritual) and connection (with oneself, others, nature, Ultimate Reality/the Whole). As one grows authentically towards this telos, one comes to realize holistically that all is interconnected and that all is part of a deeper reality. When one grows towards this telos, one experiences or exhibits certain characteristics. The characteristics associated with this telos and with authentic growth towards it form the criteria against which the self-help authors' teloi can be measured. The telos proposed in Chapter 4 is trans-human (considers more than humanity and the secular realm) as well as transpersonal (considers more than the individual-the mrrapersonal-alone). The telos is also expansive, liberating and connective. That is, authentic growth towards this telos opens up the individual's consciousness so that the person incorporates elements beyond the personal, the secular and the temporal. As one

incorporates more experiences and perspectives-more "oppositional otherness"-into one's consciousness, one begins to see and sense more and more connectivity. Less of one's world is seen as external and threatening. The more one sees oneself as connected with or as a part of something larger than oneself and humanity, the stronger one's sense of liberation. The individual feels more connected and, therefore, freer to relax, let go, and grow.

All three self-help authors fall short in the area of telos when comparing theirs to the one presented in the Growth Model because none of the authors posits a trans-human goal as the ultimate telos. Instead, each envisions a telos which is finite and well-anchored in the secular world. Additionally, all three self-help authors seem to zero in on the individual and envision their teloi in terms of the individual only (intrapersonally). As a result, their teloi emerge as short-sighted, finite, circumscribed, and limiting. Most importantly, their teloi appear to be erroneous, misconceived and misleading, in and of themselves.

All three authors present vague teloi, ones which sound appealing and, like horoscopes, use such general terminology that at least *some* aspect of the description resonates with each reader. There is something for everyone, which might add to the books' appeal. For example, Peale (1996) claims that he wants to help readers achieve a happy, satisfying, and worthwhile life. Dyer (1976) claims that he wants to help his readers be free and happy. Robbins (1986) wants his readers to achieve excellence. Who would not want to be free, happy, satisfied, and/or excellent? Likely, everyone would. However, in all three cases, the reader is left wondering what exactly the authors mean by these vague descriptors. The critical reader must discern for himself or herself what each author's telos *really* is. In the end, for Peale, a happy, satisfying, and worthwhile life equates to material success. For Dyer, one achieves freedom and happiness by becoming extremely independent. For Robbins, excellence means producing outstanding results. This thesis posits that material success (Peale), extreme independence (Dyer) and producing outstanding results (Robbins) will not and cannot produce authentic growth as defined herein precisely because these goals are finite, limited and secular. This thesis

argues that finite goals cannot provide readers with the level or degree of consciousness and empathic connection it believes people consciously or unconsciously seek because each telos lacks consideration of the deeper connective, expansive, trans-human aspect which is central to the telos put forth in this thesis and to authentic growth. Material success, independence, and outstanding results might provide short-lived or temporary happiness and satisfaction; however, without the deeper connection, individuals will continue to experience some nagging degree of discontent. Material success, self-reliance, and productiveness are, at best, partial teloi because they do not tap into what is believed to be the true essence of growth (conscious connection with Ultimate Reality or a greater Whole). They will produce, at best, fleeting, momentary, superficial, and, ultimately, substitutive experiences of happiness and satisfaction rather than fulfilling consciousness and connection.

Peale's (1996) telos of material success cannot produce the degree and kind of consciousness, expansion, liberation, and connection that this thesis argues life (authentic growth) is about. Material success might bring a level of personal material comfort and security; however, it will not bring a sustained sense of consciousness, fulfillment, contentment, and connection. No matter how much material success an individual experiences, the person must move beyond the material to a higher plane in order to experience the goals of authentic growth in their manifold manifestations, such as love, compassion, empathy, and sharing. In fact, limiting one's telos to material gain could conceivably bring about the opposite. People focused on material success might find it difficult to relax, to let go of control, to trust others, and to share openly with humanity as a community because the "happiness" of such individuals is dependent upon personal acquisitions. Others can be perceived as potential threats. Material goals are more apt to elicit competitive attitudes than cooperative ones. Personal growth in the material realm is not expansive in the way that is meant in this thesis. One must learn to make genuine (not instrumental) room for others in the common space. No matter how much material success the individual garners, something will be lacking because the person will lack the sense of ever-widening connection to Ultimate Reality or Wholeness (manifested through

connection to oneself, to others, to nature) that is believed to be the ultimate goal of growth. This is not to suggest that material success (Peale) is to be avoided; however, focusing solely on material gain as a telos emerges as short-sighted and erroneous. It might bring about temporary satisfaction, at best; however, it lacks authenticity and the power to sustain. The real goal of authentic growth from the perspective of the interpretive tool used herein is to maximize consciousness so as to realize that all is interconnected, that all is part of a deeper (Ultimate) reality or the same Whole. Having a short-sighted, finite, material goal as the ultimate goal of life can only bring short-lived, shallow happiness and satisfaction.

Dyer's (1976) telos is no better. Dyer envisions optimum individuals as independent, self-contained atoms who do not need others. Such an independent, atomistic existence precludes the expansive, liberating, connective experiences the trans-human telos evokes. It seems highly unlikely that one can experience maximal consciousness, connection, fulfillment, or love if one is busy trying to make sure he or she is sufficiently self-reliant so as to need no one. The Growth Model states that interdependence is a hallmark of authentic growth, not extreme independence. Independence is, at best, a partial telos or a step towards the larger telos of consciousness and connection. Dyer's theory aims at rendering the individual independent so that this ideal self-actualized or independent person is unaffected or unruffled by people and events. Such a person would *need* no one and would not be immobilized in any way by internal or external situations. According to Dyer, such a person would be free and happy. The Growth Model begs to differ. Dyer's independent individuals might be free to do what they want, when they want, how they want; however, this freedom is not genuine. That is, Dyer's freedom is based on successfully rendering oneself immune to the existence of others (in essence, cutting oneself off from people or culture) as opposed to a more genuine freedom emerging from an ever-expanding common space with others, as the Growth Model proposes. Dyer's vision of the ideal hyper-independent individual (as described in Chapter XII) emerges as narcissistic, hedonistic, atomistic and unrealistic.⁶⁰ The person emerges as emotionally stunted and sterile, insensitive to others, and incapable

of interdependence or heartfelt interaction, which is central to the Growth Model. Dyer's reverence for independence leaves little to no room for a common space among individuals.⁶¹ It is as if overlap between people can be problematic; therefore, it should be avoided. It is also difficult to imagine how the acute independence Dyer promotes will lead to Dyer's own goal of happiness. It is difficult to conceive of how holding oneself outside the emotional reach of others so that one is unmoved or unperturbed by their thoughts, words, or actions can lead to any lasting sense of empathic connection, fulfillment or even happiness. Dyer is probably correct in claiming that individuals need not be as buffeted as they allow themselves to be by the winds and tides (emotions and behaviours) of others; however, being totally immune or unaffected by others sounds like emotional suicide. For example, how can one love without developing a common space?⁶² The Growth Model suggests that seeking connection rather than independence will result in authentic growth. Compared to the Growth Model, Dyer's telos is erroneous and misguided because Dyer's vision of independence precludes the allowance for the existence of a common space and deeper connection. His idea of freedom is truncated (narcissistic) compared to the idea of liberation through connection put forth in the Growth Model, and his self-centred telos is not expansive in the ways that the Growth Model proposes.

Robbins' (1986) telos is excellence, and individuals of excellence are defined as "results-oriented people who produce their life exactly as they desire it" (p.413). This definition indicates that the main goal of Robbins' theory of growth is obtaining results. Moreover, Robbins is interested in producing outstanding results in the shortest amount of time possible. One does not get a sense that Robbins is interested in the individual becoming a decent or better human being or that he is even interested in any growth which might occur over the course of producing results. Time is of the essence. Excellence (results) seems to be all that matters. The Growth Model does not believe that "excellence," defined as producing results and/or as living one's life "exactly" as one desires it, is the ultimate goal of human existence although it concedes that producing desired results is an enjoyable and important part of life. For example, successfully

achieving goals generally makes people feel confident about themselves and their abilities and gives them the confidence to tackle more challenging experiences. However, producing results is a limited, short-sighted, truncated telos in and of itself. If, as the Growth Model argues, the goal of life is to grow in consciousness and connection, to ultimately realize that all is part of a deeper reality or larger Whole (telos), then focusing on producing finite, secular results limits one's vision (rather than expands it) and stunts one's growth. Focusing on results, even focusing on producing "excellent" results, does not necessarily take into consideration any view of humanity as part of a larger reality or Whole, nor does it necessarily create any common space with others. Through his telos of excellence, Robbins shows that he stays well anchored in the secular, material world. He sometimes hints at loftier, more expansive, inclusive goals; however, in the end, his theory stays short-sighted, finite and material. It is also worth noting that Robbins does not even stop to consider whether the results being produced by his individuals of excellence are beneficial or fulfilling to the individuals producing them or to the masses whom the results affect. Robbins seems to *assume* that producing outstanding results (excellence) is sustaining and fulfilling regardless of what the results are. Excellence, as conceived of by Robbins, does not produce a sense of liberation, expansion and connection as conceived of in the Growth Model. The individual is limited, constrained, confined. One is not even free to grow; one is compelled to *model* others.

In the end, all three authors present limiting, short-sighted, finite, secular, material teloi compared to that of the Growth Model and, as a result, their teloi emerge as erroneous, misconceived, and misleading. None allows for a genuine trans-human element.⁶³ None promotes a sense of genuine community, commonality, or common space. None envisions a deeper reality or any sense of deep connection with fellow human beings or to a deeper, encompassing Whole or Ultimate Reality. None of the teloi emerges as liberating or expansive on a genuinely, transpersonal, trans-human connective level. (All three self-help authors seem to zero in on the individual and consider their teloi in terms of the individual only). As a result of these shortcomings, all three self-help authors' teloi fall short when compared to that proposed in the previous chapter. It is

worth noting that each theory promotes a degree of consciousness; however, the level of consciousness tends to be limited to a form of \wedge -consciousness.

Process

As discussed in Chapter 4, the central turbine of the Growth Model's process is the alienation-intimacy complex. Alienation and intimacy can either be positive (growth-promoting) or negative (growth-debilitating) and life consists of negotiating innumerable daily, weekly, monthly, yearly experiences of both kinds. Life as growth is constant movement and authentic growth entails successfully negotiating continual individual experiences of each element. Four major quadrants (negative alienation, negative intimacy, positive alienation, and positive intimacy) are posited and the Growth Model suggests that authentic growth occurs when individuals are in the positive quadrants rather than the negative ones. Moreover, the aim is not to reach one quadrant and stay there. Attempting to stay in any quadrant, even those described as positive, ends up becoming negative and detrimental to growth. Maximal consciousness entails realizing that authentic growth requires continual movement between alienation and intimacy. Staying still for more than simply a respite (Maslow's (1968) "coasting") soon becomes stagnation.⁶⁴ The growth process entails developing increasing levels of consciousness as well as facilitative attitudes which, in turn, further growth. Internal facilitative attitudes include love, faith, trust, consciousness, and acceptance, and as one grows in these qualities, one becomes more aware that all is interconnected. As the common space expands, one need not be so wary of others and of life; one need not see others as adversaries because one feels connected to them. Additionally, as one grows in consciousness and connection, one becomes more able to successfully negotiate the alienation-intimacy complex. The same occurs in reverse. The more successfully one negotiates the alienation-intimacy complex, the more conscious and connected one feels, be it with oneself, others, nature, or Ultimate Reality or the Whole.

All three authors present different processes from each other as well as from the one presented in the Growth Model as ways to reach their respective teloi. Based on the

earlier analysis, the authors' teloi emerge as erroneous or, at least, limited. As a result, following the authors' processes would most likely lead readers astray because they would lead readers towards misguided or misconceived growth goals. This being the case, it would be easy to dismiss the authors' processes as erroneous. While this might be the case, the processes deserve closer consideration. There might be something of value in them. Additionally, there are, most likely, many diverse paths to the same destination and these authors might present valid options. The three self-help authors' processes are evaluated in comparison to the aspects introduced in the Growth Model. That is, the processes are examined from the standpoint of the alienation-intimacy complex. The love/fear dialectic is dealt with in the section Reply to Research Question that follows. In the end, exception is taken to certain aspects of the various processes, and it is suggested that each theory has the potential to harm the individual in some way.

Peale: Not surprising, Peale (1996) does not envision or discuss the alienation-intimacy complex; however, when considering the alienation-intimacy complex, Peale's process seems to promote an unbalanced, inauthentic type of growth. In comparison with the Growth Model, Peale sees alienation as bad and something to be avoided, mitigated or eradicated. In its stead, he advocates intimacy-intimacy with God. For Peale, it appears that two forms of alienation exist-alienation from God and alienation from obtaining one's goal. The former perpetuates the latter. Alienation, experienced as negative thinking, the inability or unwillingness to overcome obstacles, and the inability or unwillingness to channel one's thoughts spiritually or positively towards positive results, acts as a warning signal that one is alienated from the source for success (God). And as long as one is alienated from God, one will be unable to grow, experience and enjoy success-the "good life." For Peale, alienation is, accordingly, negative and to be eradicated.⁶⁵ Compared to the Growth Model, Peale's vision of alienation is arrested. Peale does not conceive of alienation as a potentially positive, stimulating, growth-inducing experience, one which individuals will continue to wrestle with throughout their lives.

Peale (1996) privileges intimacy over alienation and envisions growth as movement away from the debilitation or immobilization of alienation to the comfort and happiness of intimacy. For Peale, the most important form of intimacy is intimacy with God. God is to be taken on as a partner and is to be relied upon as one's guide through life. (Peale's God, one's "partner," is not presented as an internal resource that works with and through individuals; it is an external entity which requires people's homage. Moreover, homage must be done in a specific manner (e.g., specific prayer techniques).) Occasional Up service is paid to considering others; however, on the whole, Peale is more concerned with the individual meeting personal goals (with the help of God as partner) than in creating any genuine common space with others. The overriding focus on personal gain along with an instrumental view of loving others undermines any notion of genuine intimacy between the individual and others.⁶⁶ Peale is not really asking individuals to become better people—more loving, caring, conscious, and connected individuals; he is simply asking that they learn the techniques of positive thinking in order to better achieve material gain.

Compared to the Growth Model, Peale's conception of intimacy falls into the quadrant of *negative intimacy* because the most common characteristic of Peale's vision of intimacy is dependence, specifically dependence on God. Peale's ultimate imperative or plea is for readers to surrender and "draw on that Higher Power." Admittedly, Peale advocates faith and belief in oneself, in others, and in God; however, the overarching message is to surrender oneself to God's will. (God decides whether one receives what one prays for or visualizes or affirms, thus one is at His mercy.) This plea to surrender renders the individual subordinate and undermines responsibility and accountability. Based on the Growth Model, dependence (by an adult) is ultimately unhealthy, detrimental, and growth-debilitating, and, therefore, negative. By asking people to depend on God for growth, Peale takes away agency and enslaves the individual to a Higher Power. The individual is not taught to develop trust and faith in his or her own abilities (though Peale briefly mentions that this trait is important); instead, the individual is taught to have total faith in an external source. (God is an external source of wisdom and

guidance for Peale, one which has the ultimate say in whether an individual succeeds or not. God is not a deeper reality which results in an expansive, liberating sense of connection.) Thus, Peale's vision of intimacy, even though it is supposedly with the Ultimate Source, is, in reality, limited and confining. This dependent intimacy keeps the individual stunted in growth. The individual remains a child dependent upon and answerable to a greater Parent. Based on the Growth Model, dependence (negative intimacy) hinders authentic growth; therefore, Peale's process promotes an inauthentic form of growth. Specifically, Peale's process promotes *unbalanced* growth because of its emphasis on the external. (With God as an external source, Peale's internal realm has a surprisingly external feel to it.)

Peale is also naive in his conceptions of alienation and intimacy. Peale seems to be envisioning (fairly) permanent movement from alienation to intimacy. It is as if Peale believes that once one has mastered the art of positive thinking, one will no longer be adversely affected by life's obstacles and, therefore, no longer experience alienation. One simply has to continually draw upon one's positive thinking skills to ensure continued intimacy. Compared to the Growth Model, this is simplistic and more like wishful thinking than genuine growth. Because alienation is considered bad and to be eradicated and because intimacy is considered good and to be sought, it makes sense that Peale wants to suggest to his readers that alienation can be overcome and put into one's past and that sustained intimacy is but a positive thought away. Such thinking is contrary to the ideas posited in the alienation-intimacy complex.

In the end, Peale emerges as a product of his culture. Peale's (unconscious) faith in progress, in American capitalist society, in efficiency, in science (his techniques are presented as "laws"), in "technique" underlie his theory as strongly as its philosophical roots of mind cure and New Thought. For Peale, the external world is accepted as is or is taken for granted; growth (material gain) simply requires that the internal world—one's thoughts—be controlled.

Dyer: Dyer's (1976) process-development of extreme independence-promotes self-centredness, hedonism, and narcissism; produces truncated or stunted individuals; and, when considered in light of the alienation-intimacy complex, promotes an inauthentic type of growth. Extreme independence, is, at best, partial growth. Dyer's "if it feels good do it" approach to choices, his celebration of total independence, and his belief that individuals are solely and only responsible for themselves and should be completely self-reliant pave the way for individuals to make choices which benefit them *in the short term* but which are detrimental to them *in the long run*. Learning to become independent is healthy *to a point*; however, extreme independence becomes unhealthy because it costs people warm, caring, heartfelt, connective relationships. In comparison, the Growth Model claims that authentic growth cannot occur at the expense of self or others and, centrally, involves interdependence and interconnection-the realization that all is interconnected, that all is part of a deeper reality or a greater Whole.

Dyer's (1976) independence can be seen from two perspectives. From one perspective, Dyer's independence can be seen as a heightened intimacy with oneself and, from the other perspective, it can be seen as a heightened alienation from others. While Dyer might consider both of these to be positive, the Growth Model considers both to be negative. The intimacy with oneself emerges as extreme self-reliance. For Dyer, one is to *need* no one. This vision sets a strict parameter on the individual rendering intimacy with oneself a *must* instead of simply one facet of many in the growth process. Conversely, strict independence as alienation from others is negative in the Growth Model because it allows for no mutuality, no sense of interconnectedness, no common space. Dyer does not even really allow for common decency. Helping another seems to be a weakness because, according to Dyer, the healthy, mature individual can stand on his or her own two feet *without* needing anyone else's help, and helping another weakens the other's growth in independence. While overcoming self-defeating behaviours (negative self-alienation) is positive and healthy (i.e., when transformed into positive alienation), developing alienation from others in the form of extreme independence and self-reliance is not. Is it not better to transform this negative alienation (extreme independence) into

either positive intimacy (interdependence) or positive alienation (facing the challenge of overcoming the seeming safety of independence)? Based on the Growth Model, Dyer advocates that his readers grow from negative alienation (self-alienation) to negative intimacy (self-reliance or dependence on self). Or, one could argue that Dyer's theory advocates growth from negative alienation (self-alienation) to positive alienation (self-connection) back to negative alienation (hyper-independence). It depends on which vantage point one uses. Regardless, following the dictates of Dyer's theory would not lead to authentic growth as defined in this thesis because the result is negative-negative alienation from others or negative intimacy with oneself. Dyer's theory shows one how to grow *to a point*, then asks them to stagnate (remain independent). Dyer does not allow for the possibility of a level of growth beyond independence, such as interdependence. One might argue that growth is about moving from dependence (childhood), to independence (adolescence), to interdependence (maturity). If this is the case, then Dyer advocates a truncated or stunted level of growth. In fact, it would appear that Dyer's theory advocates that one grow to adolescence and stay there.

Dyer (1976) believes that once individuals have eradicated erroneous zones (overcome or eradicated negative alienation), they will be able to reside (with relative, if not complete, permanence) in the positive intimacy quadrant. Continual, lifelong movement between alienation and intimacy is not considered. Based on the Growth Model, permanent movement from one experience to the other is not the goal. Even positive intimacy and positive alienation become negative if one tries to freeze (hold onto) these experiences. In contrast, the Growth Model proposes that one must contend with the never-ending, lifelong oscillation between experiences of alienation and intimacy.

Robbins: The central process or method in Robbins' (1986) theory of growth is "modeling"-imitating the internal representations (what one represents and how one represents things to oneself using the five senses), mental syntax (the order and amounts in which one represents things to oneself), and physiology of those who have achieved similar results to those one wishes to achieve. When compared to the Growth Model,

Robbins' process emerges as manipulative, invasive, limiting, paternalistic and disingenuous. Modelling and rapport (pacing and leading) emerge as manipulation, communication as persuasion (getting others to do one's bidding), and imitation as invasion (using others' "strategies" against them, e.g. buying strategies). Robbins' own anecdotes suggest the manipulative, invasive, disingenuous, unethical potential in his processes.⁶⁷ These factors alone render Robbins' processes questionable for generating authentic growth.

Robbins' (1986) process must be analysed in light of the alienation-intimacy complex. Not understanding how one's nervous system works constitutes the major alienation for Robbins. This is a form of self-alienation. When one does not understand how to communicate with oneself in such a way as to compel oneself to produce outstanding results, one experiences alienation. Anything that prevents an individual from taking appropriate action in the direction of one's goals or from achieving one's goals constitutes alienation or anything that stands between the individual and excellence is alienating and, therefore, bad and to be eradicated. For example, debilitating internal representations and/or poor physiology are alienating because they result in unresourceful states and such states prevent the individual from taking appropriate goal-directed action. Robbins deals mostly with intrapersonal alienation, but he also touches upon interpersonal alienation. For the most part, interpersonal alienation seems to refer to behaviours that inhibit establishing rapport. Note, however, that rapport does not seem to be sought for its communal or connective aspect, as the Growth Model would advocate, but for its ability to help the individual trying to establish rapport to achieve his or her personal goals more quickly and efficiently than without it.

In comparison, intimacy is crucial to Robbins (1986). His techniques are all about building intimacy, be they intimacy with oneself by understanding one's internal workings and by putting oneself in a resourceful state, or be they intimacy with another by building rapport, mirroring, pacing and leading. For Robbins, intimacy is good and to be sought at all costs because intimacy breeds success (excellence, results). According to Robbins, people of excellence or successful people "are willing to do whatever it takes to succeed"

(Robbins, 1986, p.81). (Note that Robbins places a caveat in a footnote stating that it goes without saying that one does whatever it takes-what he calls W.I.T.-to succeed "without harming another person" (p.81); however, this caveat quickly gets lost in the anecdotes on the uses of rapport.⁶⁸) In contrast to intimacy, alienation is bad because it impedes success (excellence, results).

The kind of intimacy that Robbins' processes (modelling and rapport) advocate seem superficial, instrumental, and disingenuous. When one is told to establish rapport with others, one is not establishing genuine rapport in an attempt to feel empathy or compassion or connection; one is establishing rapport because it is one of the quickest ways to achieve a goal. While some instances of creating rapport might be more genuine than others, the instrumental tone of Robbins' book precludes genuine connection as the ultimate objective. Robbins *might* be trying to suggest that genuine intimacy is the ultimate criterion for rapport when he occasionally suggests that one must consider others in their journey towards personal goals; however, if this is truly the case, the goal gets lost over the course of the book. Robbins would have to be much clearer on this point in order to convince a critical reader as to the genuineness of this intimacy. Intimacy with oneself is also instrumental in that intimacy seems to exist solely to motivate oneself to take appropriate action towards a goal, to get oneself to use whatever trick one can to motivate oneself to take appropriate action. Excellence (producing outstanding results) is the reason for establishing intimacy, not compassion, not connection, not love.⁶⁹ As a result, when compared to the Growth Model, Robbins' vision of intimacy seems limited and misconceived (erroneous).

Robbins (1986) makes no mention of an interaction between alienation and intimacy. As indicated above, alienation is to be eradicated and intimacy is to be sought, provided it leads to excellence, success, outstanding results. For Robbins, the only movement with regard to these two components is movement from alienation (not understanding how to communicate effectively with oneself and/or others in order to produce outstanding results) to intimacy (understanding how to communicate effectively in order to take appropriate action in the direction of one's goals). The inference is that

once one masters communication, one will be able to snap oneself into resourceful states on demand, or, as Robbins claims, "in an instant." This implies that, should negative states occur (instances of alienation), one need simply apply the appropriate communication skill to instantly eradicate alienation and experience intimacy. Robbins believes that everything can be made to be resourceful-"[t]he meaning of any event is the meaning you give it. You can send your brain powerful, positive, empowering signals that will make everything work for you, or you can send your brain signals about what you can't do" (p.405). This position might indicate that Robbins believes that seemingly negative events can be growth-inducing, //the individual chooses to represent them to himself or herself in a positive light. On closer inspection, however, Robbins seems to advocate that negative experiences simply need to be reassessed and re-presented to oneself in a more positive light, that they really are not negative at all in the first place; one just mistakenly represented them to oneself as such. There is a sense of sleight-of-mind going on here as opposed to facing difficult situations as they are and growing through them. The Growth Model tries to acknowledge that trials and tribulations occur and that individuals need not become stuck or debilitated by them, that people can process them in a positive (growth-inducing) way and grow authentically as a result of facing the difficulty. Robbins seems to acknowledge that difficulties occur; however, in practice, he glosses over them and implies that individuals need simply "woosh" (his word) difficulties into positive events through some slick, quick technique, such as the "swish pattern" (the individual swishes away-switches or replaces-a negative, unresourceful thought, belief, image, or the like with a positive, resourceful one and "woosh," the problem is fixed).

When one considers Robbins' process from the perspective of the alienation-intimacy complex, Robbins' process seems to promote inauthentic growth because of his truncated, instrumental view of intimacy, because of his simplistic view of growth as movement away from alienation to intimacy, rather permanently, and because of the (ethically) questionable motives behind his processes of modelling and rapport. There is so much room for manipulation and misuse in Robbins' processes, neither of which promotes authentic growth.

Robbins (1986) brings up several good ideas over the course of his book, ideas which seem compatible with the Growth Model; however, he does not follow through with them. At best, he limits them to a tiny aspect of his theory. For example, Robbins takes others into consideration, even though he does not explore the complexities of trying to negotiate personal goals with those of others. He considers the centrality of love, but he limits it to a discussion on discovering and manipulating love strategies. Robbins also recognizes the existence of addictive and substitute forms of growth, although he discusses them only with regard to temporary state changes. He discusses the possibility of higher planes of consciousness which people might be able to tap into, though he barely mentions this idea and uses it simply as a ploy to convince people to set goals. Robbins believes in God, tantamount to a trans-human force; however, he does not consider this force in his theory in any way. Robbins also considers the possibility of mass change, although he does not put forward any visions for such change. With respect to his vision of excellence, this concept is inadequately defined and seemingly limited to producing outstanding results. Thus, great ideas are introduced, but they are swept aside in the interests of efficiency, effectiveness, elegance, and saving time. It is as if Robbins were aware, on some level, of the importance of these ideas and issues; however, due to their elusive nature, he opts for the easier route and deals with concrete, finite, circumscribed ideas. Perhaps, in a backhanded manner, Robbins provides unintended support for the more intangible goals and processes put forth in the Growth Model.

Summary

After considering the self-help authors' processes in comparison to the Growth Model, each author's process exhibits questionable characteristics which could potentially harm the individual embracing them. Abdicating self-responsibility and depending on God (Peale), making choices based on a philosophy of "if it feels good, do it" and insisting on strict independence (Dyer), and attempting to achieve outstanding results by manipulating others through mirroring, pacing, and leading (Robbins) are all erroneous processes which lead to inauthentic forms of growth. Additionally, all three authors end up promoting

inauthentic forms of growth when considered in terms of the alienation-intimacy complex. In all three instances, alienation, be it from God (Peale), from oneself (Dyer), or from comprehending and mastering one's own or imitating another's nervous system (Robbins), is conceived of as negative and to be eradicated. None of the authors appears to envision alienation as a potentially positive force which can stimulate authentic growth and none seems to see alienation as an inescapable continual fact of life. All three implicitly envision alienation as something which can be overcome to a large degree. That is, each author seems to infer that once people reach a certain level of development (e.g., once Peale's individuals master positive thinking, once Dyer's persons become independent, and once Robbins' individuals master communication), problems and challenges (alienation) will no longer have the potency they carry when individuals are underdeveloped and do not have control over themselves (over thoughts-Peale; over thoughts and emotions-Dyer; and over their nervous system-Robbins).

As for intimacy, all three authors tend to privilege intimacy over alienation. Each envisions growth as movement away from the debilitation or immobilization of alienation to the comfort of intimacy. In stark contrast, the Growth Model claims that life consists of continually negotiating the never-ending, lifelong oscillation between experiences of alienation and intimacy. Moreover, compared to the Growth Model, all three authors end up promoting negative forms of intimacy. In the final analysis, when compared to the Growth Model, these three self-help theories of growth emerge as promoting inauthentic forms of growth because the individual following the dictates of each theory would end up experiencing negative intimacy (Peale, Dyer, Robbins) and/or negative alienation (Dyer). Worse yet, the individual's growth would be partial at best (Dyer) and stunted at worst (Peale, Dyer, Robbins).

In general, compared to the Growth Model, all three self-help authors present theories of growth which are exclusionary and constrictive as opposed to inclusive and expansive. None of the authors seems to promote growth processes which make room for a genuine level of connection between people let alone with a deeper reality. All three authors envision the growth process as something which must be controlled and

performed in a particular way or else growth will not occur. Additionally, the growth they envision is limited, finite, secular, and confined. While some of the processes result in some degree of increased self-consciousness, none of the theories achieves the type or degree of consciousness that the Growth Model advocates as necessary to achieve its vision of the "good life." While any level of raised consciousness is beneficial, these three authors unconsciously set limits on the level of consciousness to be striven for or reached. Even Peale's (1976) God is not a transcendent consciousness; God is an instrument or tool for achieving results. Because these self-help theories are exclusionary and constrictive, they enslave rather than liberate. Readers are asked to become slaves to the techniques provided (and to making sure they use them "properly"), thereby losing flexibility and freedom in the growth process. The common space is truncated. The three self-help theories of growth strive for limited, erroneous, misconceived goals and their processes consequently promote inauthentic types of growth.

The authors' beliefs in the authority and finality of their theories glosses over the fact that any theory imposes limitations because human existence is complex beyond comprehension. That is, all theories are simplified. Additionally, these authors present their self-help theories as holistic approaches to growth when, in reality, they seem to deal only with certain aspects of human development in an attempt to help people grow in that area. Part of the danger of reading self-help books uncritically is that the authors' mechanistic and simplified paint-by-number (follow the steps/techniques) view of growth can be overlooked. The simplicity of these theories deceives the reader as to how difficult growth really is. (Admittedly, Dyer claims on several occasions that growth is difficult; however, the tone of his book suggests otherwise.) All three books provide such seemingly simple steps to follow that the inherent message is that change and growth are quick and easy. Worse yet, this simplified, mechanistic view of growth sets the reader up for disillusionment through failure. Thinking positively, eradicating an erroneous zone once and for all, and being able to change one's state on demand are not as easy as implied, if they are indeed achievable at all. While some of these authors' techniques seem to have practical usefulness in raising consciousness or, perhaps, in experiencing growth in

a *particular* area of life, problems arise when these techniques are presented as *the sum total of* what is necessary for growth or *the* "good life." As noted earlier, the authors do not clarify exactly what this "good life" looks like. Instead, they present vague teloi and bandy about catch words which appeal to most people. Misconceived teloi and constrictive processes presented as *the* answer to growth set readers up for disappointment. In contrast to how they present themselves, self-help books are not even *an* answer to growth process, let alone *the* answer. They are, at best, a partial answer.

Reply to Research Question

The research question asks: **If readers follow the ideas, advice, and procedures put forth in these general, non-gendered, psychological self-help books on personal growth and development, would they experience authentic growth, as defined in this thesis?** Based on the above critique, the answer is "No" because all three books offer their readers erroneous, short-sighted, limited, finite, secular teloi and provide exclusionary, controlling, constrictive, enslaving processes. Achieving the authors' teloi would not provide the individual with maximal consciousness and connection. This thesis **argues that** authentic **growth** occurs best when one grows in **consciousness** and feels an ever-deepening sense of connection with oneself, others, nature, Ultimate Reality/the Whole. One grows authentically and feels fulfilled and whole to the degree that one incorporates others and the experiences and aspects of life into a common space because then one feels freer to love, trust, relax, let go of control and risk, such as risk being vulnerable, risk failing, risk being emotionally hurt. According to this thesis, as one grows authentically in consciousness and connection, one is more willing to open oneself to life. This is not to suggest that there are no difficulties, no pain, and no suffering associated with or inherent in authentic growth. Quite the contrary. Authentic growth can be extremely painful as one is struggling through a growth challenge; however, the Growth Model proposes that one of the hallmarks of authentic growth is that once one has successfully faced a difficult hurdle, one feels a sense of achievement, pride, and fulfillment

(fullness) inside. The positive feelings expand, such as love, trust, faith, joy, confidence, fulfillment, even relief. Ideally, one is now better prepared for future hurdles.

In the end, two overriding conclusions emerge: (1) that the self-help theories of growth seem to be control models of growth, and (2) that these theories are based in fear. In fact, these three self-help theories tend to be theories of mind control because all three seem to strongly advocate that growth or change requires that one learn to control one's mind. All three authors seem to be saying that if one changes one's mind, one can change one's life; and if one can change one's life, one can create the kind of life one desires, a life which is happy, satisfying, and worthwhile. More generally, each author, in his own way, seems to be advocating a control model of growth because growth seems to be unconsciously seen by these authors as something that must be subdued, coerced, controlled, and closely monitored. In contrast, the Growth Model aims at letting go of control because it envisions that control cuts people off from the flow of life, Ultimate Reality, the Whole. Connection with a deeper intimacy or reality is lost in these control theories. Moreover, control lacks trust and faith and demands rigidity. Perhaps the reason these authors believe growth must be controlled is because the theories themselves are not anchored in an authentic foundation; they lack connection to the deeper reality which sustains, gives courage, and calms.

The Growth Model posits that an environment (both internal and external) of fear is the environment least conducive to growth (love/fear dialectic). This idea can apply to theories as well, not just to individuals. A theory anchored in attitudes of fear, as opposed to love, is like a house built on a hill of sand. When a theory is anchored in a shaky, unreliable (false) foundation, it must be closely watched (vigilance), monitored and controlled in order to ensure that it stays standing. Each self-help author, in his own way, betrays his fear by anchoring his theory in concrete, finite, short-sighted, easily-controllable goals. Peale's (1996) and Robbins' (1986) material goals and Dyer's (1976) extreme independence (a self-contained atom immune to the vagaries of life and the machinations of others) are more easily controlled than infinite goals and the murky world of interdependence (connection). This realization, that the self-help theories appear to be

anchored in attitudes of fear, supports the Growth Model's idea that a fear-based environment is not conducive to authentic growth, especially not widespread authentic growth. Internal and external (cultural) environments of fear appear to spawn theories that are truncated in some way. In contrast, the Growth Model is anchored in environments of love, trust and faith and offers an open-ended vision of growth. In the end, control works against Ultimate Reality, unity and wholeness, against the essence of being human. While the Growth Model advocates ever-increasing unity through ever-increasing consciousness, these authors advocate control, which emerges as a violation of growth and unity. Control requires that individuals be alert, vigilant, defensive, watching out for that which cannot be controlled or for that which can become uncontrolled.

The major difference between the tentative alternative theory of growth presented in the Growth Model and the self-help authors' theories lies in the teloi. The Growth Model envisions an infinite, intangible (less concrete), trans-human goal for growth (and life) as opposed to the self-help authors' concrete, finite, more easily circumscribed, secular goals. Because the teloi differ so dramatically, so do the processes. While the self-help authors offer specific detailed techniques for achieving a specific goal, the Growth Model offers a more general or global process. Regardless of how minuscule or grandiose the goal one strives for, one must still negotiate the alienation-intimacy complex. It is inescapable. As a result, the Growth Model places equal emphasis on both telos and process because growth (in consciousness and connection) is a never-ending, lifelong process. The goal helps guide a person in making authentic growth choices (negotiating process). In comparison, the self-help authors privilege telos over process. Each author offers his process as the best way to reach his envisioned ultimate goal, but the goal is the focus. Growth for the sheer enjoyment of it does not seem to be considered. Growth is not really presented as a lifelong journey (though some Up service is given to this idea) as much as it is seen to be about reaching a specific destination or, more accurately, repeatedly reaching specific destinations. Perhaps the self-help theories privilege telos over process because it is easier and more appealing to deal with finite, concrete, tangible goals than to admit and face the scariness that accompanies the

realization that the growth process is continual, ongoing, never-ending. Perhaps the popularity of the genre is anchored in its ability to convince the reader that finite, concrete, material, secular goals are the ultimate goals of life and that meeting them (i.e., change and growth) are easy once one masters a few simple techniques.

In part, the Growth Model does not privilege telos because of its trans-human dimension. Although an *ideal* endpoint (experiencing total consciousness and complete connection with the Whole) is envisioned, it is not necessarily believed to be *completely* attainable in this lifetime. Human beings are, after all, finite beings. Regardless, increased consciousness and connection are continually attainable throughout one's lifetime. Moreover, increased consciousness and connection are attainable in the myriad everyday experiences of life. Authentic growth can occur in even the most mundane experiences of alienation and intimacy. In their attempts to eradicate alienation and its accompanying discomforting sensations (i.e., to contain growth), the self-help authors undermine part of the process which leads to the ultimate telos of consciousness and connection. Because the self-help theories offer truncated teloi, the theories end up asking (and helping) people feel good about (accepting of) feeling bad (dissatisfied, discontented), resulting from striving for finite, erroneous teloi. Moreover, the self-help theories normalize violation of the self by asking individuals to restrict their growth process.

Despite the short-sighted, finite, secular teloi of these self-help theories, each theory is not completely unacceptable. Each theory seems to provide a kernel or kernels of useful information which can help a person grow in some way. Individuals could gain some degree of personal improvement. For example, realizing the importance of setting goals and knowing what one wants (Peale, Robbins); overcoming the worry habit (Peale, Dyer); knowing oneself more fully, such as recognizing one's self-defeating behaviours and their payoffs, or discovering one's values and beliefs (Dyer, Robbins); and taking responsibility for one's emotions and actions (Dyer, Robbins) are all beneficial skills to develop or realizations to make. Nonetheless, if individuals follow the dictates of these three self-help books, they would not experience authentic growth as defined in this thesis. Individuals would not experience the type of consciousness and connection this thesis

believes human beings are ultimately striving for. Additionally, it is worth considering the overriding reasons (telos) for which one is developing these skills. The Growth Model disagrees that one learns these skills simply so that one can make more money and be a more productive, effective member of society (Peale); or so that one can be totally independent of others and society, so that one can do what one wants, when one wants, how one wants, in short, be free and happy (Dyer); or so that one can become the persuader instead of the "persuadee" or get oneself and/or others to take appropriate action in the direction of one's goal of "excellence" (Robbins). According to the Growth Model, incremental growth (i.e., authentic growth) exists in order to move people towards the larger overriding telos of increased consciousness and connection.

Based on this critique, erroneous, short-sighted, limited teloi and simplistic, unrealistic, constrictive processes prevent the readers of these self-help books from experiencing authentic growth as defined in this thesis. Peale's theory creates children (dependent on the Parent), Dyer's creates adolescents (independent hedonists), and Robbins' creates automaton clones. None of the self-help theories is appealing and none embodies authentic growth as defined in this thesis.

CHAPTER 6 - CONCLUDING REMARKS: CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS, CRITIQUE, AND PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Introduction

Chapter 5 concluded that individuals would not experience authentic growth as defined in this thesis if they followed the advice, techniques, or dictates of the three self-help books analysed herein because all three books present erroneous, misguided, finite teloi and processes. This information is crucial to this thesis. However, on closer inspection, one additional step is warranted. The literature review (Chapter 2) states that self-help literature both reflects and informs culture. This being the case, it is not enough to simply answer the research question presented in this thesis. It is important to consider the cultural implications of the findings regarding these three general, non-gendered, psychological self-help texts. This final chapter considers cultural implications associated with the three self-help theories of growth presented in Chapter 5. This chapter also examines thesis strengths and weaknesses, generalizability of the alternative theory of growth (Growth Model), and further areas of study. It concludes with personal reflections.

Cultural Implications

The three books-Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking*, Wayne Dyer's *Your Erroneous Zones*, and Anthony Robbins' *Unlimited Power*-span slightly more than three decades. (Peale's book was first published in 1952, Dyer's in 1976, and Robbins' in 1986.) In keeping with findings reported in Chapter 2 (Literature Review), these three self-help theories of growth (or these books) reflect and inform their respective eras. Additionally, despite the seeming uniqueness of these three theories and despite being written in different decades, they share a common broad cultural trait. This section (1) briefly considers how the self-help theories' are cultural reflections of their era and their implications, (2) explores the implications of the three theories' sharing a particular

cultural trait, and (3) discusses some cultural implications of the findings discussed in the previous chapter.

Regarding the first item, Starker's (1989) text, *Oracle at the Supermarket*, provides an excellent overview of how self-help literature has mutated over the ages and how it both reflects and informs contemporary culture. Based on Starker's findings, Peale's rampant success in promoting his modified New Thought ideas reflects three sets of variables. (See Starker's Chapter 7.) Briefly, Peale's ideas appealed to individualism, promised health and wealth with minimal effort, and had a magical wish-fulfilling quality to it. Additionally, Peale's approach to religion was more palatable to many of the young families seeking success and prosperity than were many of the traditional approaches. (Apparently, there was a religious revival going on in the 1950s after America had participated in two wars. Peale also appealed to women who were looking to improve their lot in life.) Lastly, according to Starker, Peale mastered the self-help style by offering simplification and engaging anecdotes; however, Peale added "the critical element of 'technique'" (p. 109). Starker also claims that Peale offered a precursor to the "selfist (or selfish) literature of the next two decades" (p. 109)-the category into which Dyer falls. Peale's advice was directed towards the individual, not the family or the community. Starker writes: "There was scant evidence of the 'Good Works' of the Protestant ethic in New Thought philosophy, which revolved around self-improvement" (p. 109). Starker's research supports Chapter 5's analysis of Peale and supports the idea that Peale's telos grows out of, reflects and perpetuates cultural happenings, such as the rising focus on material wealth (materialism) and on the individual (individualism).

According to Starker (1989), Dyer's theory falls directly into the era of the "me generation." (See Starker's Chapter 8.) Of the period between 1960 and the late 1970s Starker writes: "[the period] has been described as one of selfism, selfishness, self-worship, individualism, narcissism, and psychological revolution" (p. 126). This description fits Dyer's theory. Dyer's theory not only grows out of and reflects increasing selfist trends, it perpetuates them. Dyer's entire theory and his telos of independence seem individualistic, narcissistic, and self-absorbed. According to Starker, Dyer's theory

mutates and perpetuates the new psychologies of the era (including Maslow's and Rogers' and, possibly, Fromm's) and reflects certain cultural characteristics which were being sought, including quicker psychological cures (e.g., Freudian psychoanalysis took years) or faster growth, autonomy, freedom of choice, self-expression and self-realization. Starker writes: "the character of the best-selling self-help book of the 1970s was both representative of the evolving social climate and a medium for its promulgation" (p. 121). Starker supports Chapter 5's analysis of Dyer and supports the findings that, despite Dyer's seemingly different theory, he still sounds much like Peale. However, Starker captures this notion more eloquently. Starker concludes that much of the advice provided in best-selling self-help books of the 1970s "sounds like 'positive thinking,' *revived in an updated, more psychological framework*" [emphasis added] (p. 121). Dyer's theory might not focus as closely on materialism as did Peale's; however, Dyer reinforces the importance of individualism with his emphasis on independence and freedom-doing that which makes the individual happy.

Robbins' book falls into what Starker (1989) calls the healthy, wealthy and wise 1980s. (See Starker's Chapter 9.) In the 1980s, Starker claims that the psychological self took a back seat to the physical self (e.g., books on exercise and diet) and the economic self (e.g., books on investment strategies and career success and advancement). Robbins' book falls into the latter category, personal economics, or into the genre which is often called "success literature." According to Starker, Peale's materialism and Dyer's cult of personal growth were being replaced by the desire to become a "winner" in life (p. 140). Starker credits the focus on "becoming a 'winner' in life, breaking away from the pack, becoming rich" (p. 140) with the aging of the huge baby-boom generation and summarizes Robbins' era as follows:

The self-help literature of success has long been with us in America, and shows little sign of disappearing. *Its particular manifestations, however, vary with the cultural values and needs of the moment.* In the 1980s, for example, readers suddenly became fascinated with 'excellence,' flocking to such works as *In Search of Excellence* (1982) by Thomas J. Peters, [emphasis added] (p. 144)

Starker (1989) suggests that "[t]he sudden devotion to excellence, no doubt, was partly a reaction by the American business community to the widespread perception that it has been badly outclassed by the Japanese" (p. 144). Japanese management practices were already considered superior, but now the Japanese were inundating markets with cheaper, yet superior, products. Starker (1989) concludes: "The new injury to American pride required that business people seek guidance regarding their management and production practices. Popular books, once again, offered to show them the way" (p. 144). Starker's research supports Chapter 5's analysis which claims that despite Robbins' occasional mention of consideration of others and other lofty goals, his interest is in material goals and productivity or, as Robbins states, producing outstanding results.

In the end, Starker's (1989) book supports the previous chapter's analysis of the self-help authors' teloi and supports the idea that their teloi reflect cultural trends, values, sentiments. Moreover, by reflecting cultural trends, the books end up perpetuating dominant cultural values. A vicious circle emerges. That which the books offer their readers are, either consciously or unconsciously, ideas which reflect dominant or fundamental (albeit often unconscious-i.e., the social unconscious) cultural values; however, as Fromm so eloquently pointed out, these might not necessarily be beneficial to humanity. Peale, Dyer, and Robbins, consciously or unconsciously, offer theories of growth which both reflect and perpetuate common beliefs and values. Worse yet, each author offers his theory as if it were *the* theory of growth. Because the self-help authors offer their ideas in such an authoritative manner as to imply that their theories are the only viable options, readers might tend to accept this as truth or fact. Such is not the case. The tentative alternative theory of growth or Growth Model is an attempt to step outside the dominant culture and offer an alternative vision of growth. Whereas the self-help authors seem to give their readers one choice-between growth and non-growth-the Growth Model adds an additional choice. Readers can choose from finite visions of growth and infinite visions of growth. In fact, one could argue that an insidious aspect of self-help books is that they offer their ideas as absolutes with no alternatives. By doing so, they take away a core aspect of being human-the right to choose among alternatives.

Regarding the second issue, despite the seeming uniqueness of all three self-help theories, i.e., despite their having disparate teloi and processes, all three theories share remarkable broad cultural traits or commonalities. Most notably, in all three texts, the "machine" appears to be the latent metaphor for human beings or, more specifically, the overriding metaphor for the mind, as the mind (thoughts) is the area all three books target (want to control) most centrally. This oversimplified, mechanistic view of human beings is very disconcerting. The implication is that people are machines, that one simply needs to understand their mechanical workings in order to get them to function properly (i.e., be rational, reasonable, efficient, productive, and so forth). Once one understands the mechanics of how the mind (mind and body, for Robbins) works, one can control it; and once one can control the mind, it will be relatively easy to obtain desired outputs-be it material gain, independence, or excellence. Problems arise from a lack of understanding and a lack of control of the machine (mind). (Even calling the mind a "biocomputer" (p.204), as Robbins (1986) does at one point, is still limiting the complexity of human beings.) This common "machine" metaphor might stem from a common model (vision) of growth which seems to underlie all three theories. All three authors seem to envision growth in terms of industry, business, or economics. (Even Dyer, whose text comes across as somewhat anti-establishment and critical of cultural values and practices, focuses on results (independence) and admonishes individuals who fall short, almost as if there is a linear, business plan to growth.) The authors' business- or economic-like approach to growth might grow out of (reflect and reinforce) Western culture's fixation on progress, productivity, and results. Perhaps, in an attempt to fit into dominant culture and thereby ensure appeal to the masses, the authors offer effective, efficient, simple, easy, quick-i.e., "practical"-techniques, technologies, and tools (generally described as "scientific" in nature). Consciously or unconsciously, all three authors share a fixation on practicality, effectiveness, efficiency, and speed. All of these characteristics are valued culturally, especially (but not only) in the realm of business, industry or economics. Consciously or unconsciously, Peale and Robbins (more so than Dyer), provide theories of growth which

render individuals better suited to industrial, capitalist culture. They do not challenge culture, they seem to embrace it and desire to perpetuate it.

This last segment explores the cultural implications of the findings from Chapter 5, which can be summarized as follows: (1) there is a cultural tendency to simplify and "technologize" growth, most likely so that it can be controlled and shaped; (2) there is a cultural tendency to produce and embrace only one model or vision of growth; and (3) there is a cultural tendency to anchor concepts of growth in fear. Together, based on this thesis, the assumptions inherent in these exemplary texts culminate in a cultural tendency to produce and embrace a truncated, stunted, detrimental vision of authentic growth.

In the first instance, one could argue that Jacques Ellul's (1980) notion of "technique"-defined as "the tendency to achieve planned results through standardized means with maximum efficiency"-has been applied to growth (p. 131). Growth is not seen as a human affair; it emerges as a disembodied, dehumanized "technique." Ellul (1980) complains that the goal of "technique" is, ultimately, to adapt man to the mass and it accomplishes this through "involuntary psychological collectivization," such as advertising (p.131). Based on the analysis in Chapter 5, one could argue that certain self-help books might form another agent of "involuntary psychological collectivization." Just as Ellul and Fromm warn, psychological collectivization does not necessarily have humanity's welfare as its end (or focus); more correctly, it is designed for humanity's exploitation (Ellul, 1980, p. 135). Ellul (1980) warns: "When psychological techniques, in close co-operation with material techniques, have at last succeeded in creating unity, all possible diversity will have disappeared and the human race will have become a bloc of complete and irrational solidarity" (p. 137). Ellul's warnings in *The Technological Society* regarding "technique" should stir readers to be more critical of the enculturation inherent in self-help books.⁷⁰ The "technologizing" of growth or the visions of growth as "technique" inherent in the self-help theories of growth analysed in this thesis seems to support the idea that theories of growth both reflect cultural values and shape cultural notions of growth. As a result, Ellul's writing, and others like it (Rimke, 1997), should warn readers to look more closely at the type of growth being proposed in these texts. By promoting technologization, all

three self-help theories of growth violate the human qualities of individuality and freedom, and the books make violation of this essence the norm. One cultural implication of these texts, then, seems to be a normalization of the violation of the human essence through technologization.

Secondly, the fact that all three theories of growth share a common mechanistic metaphor for humanity and a common industrial vision of growth seems to indicate that Western culture has a tendency to envision only one model of growth. As a result, the self-help books offer readers their theories as the only alternative. No other vision, such as that of the Growth Model, is offered or seriously considered. Even though Robbins hints at a larger goal to growth, he chooses not to pursue its implications for his growth theory.

Thirdly, as indicated in Chapter 5, self-help theories of growth appear to be anchored in fear. The authors' concern for stringent control of thoughts, emotions, and physiology (a control your thoughts/mind and you control your growth/life mentality) coupled with their insistence on striving for manageable, finite, concrete, secular goals indicate that these theories lack trust and faith at some level. The authors seem to fear that which is intangible, such as emotions. These control models of growth seem to make sense when one considers cultural values. For example, Western culture seems to value competition rather than cooperation, analytic and pragmatic reason rather than synthetic and speculative reason, parts (mind versus body versus spirit) rather than the whole (holism-mind, body, emotions, and spirit altogether), the physical (science) rather than the metaphysical (spirit), and hierarchy rather than equality. In each instance, the former item tends to lend itself to fear-based behaviours, such as guardedness, vigilance and control more so than the latter one. In contrast, the Growth Model proposes that a culture which values the second item in each pair would lend itself to connective or love-based behaviours, such as openness, cooperation, connection, compassion, helpfulness, and the like. The cultural values listed first in each pair are prevalent in the self-help theories explored in this thesis thereby lending credibility to the argument that there is a cultural tendency to anchor concepts of growth or anchor visions of growth in fear.

In the final analysis, it seems that, based on this thesis, the aforementioned qualities culminate in a cultural tendency to produce and embrace a truncated, stunted, detrimental vision of authentic growth. Based on the findings in this thesis, the Western, cultural vision of authentic growth, in the context of twentieth century American popular culture, is seriously flawed. The Growth Model argues that authentic growth is *not* merely a "technique" for creating a mass that is content to fit into society. Authentic growth is *not* about eradicating experiences of alienation in the hopes of replacing them, once and for all, with the seemingly more comfortable experience of intimacy. Authentic growth is *not* about simplifying life and growth to the point that the complexities of humanity are levelled into a flat, uneventful existence. Hannah Arendt (1998) theorizes as to the dangers of simplification of the political realm. Extrapolating from her concern, one could argue that simplification of the growth process also proves dangerous. In short, simplification of the growth process produces stunted individuals. Individuals who follow the self-help theories of growth analysed in this thesis will become stunted, discontented, truncated persons. Unfortunately, while Arendt sees totalitarian ideology in its reductive form as negative, the opposite seems to be the case with self-help theories of growth. Sales figures suggest that simplified ideas on authentic growth are seen in a positive light and are embraced by billions of readers a year. Perhaps part of self-help literature's mass appeal is that readers are oblivious to the reductive nature of these self-help ideologies. Perhaps, the books' simplicity is their appeal.

Critique of This Thesis

This section briefly comments on the strengths and weaknesses of this thesis. Momentarily, in the beginning, there was concern that this thesis was analysing these self-help books based on criteria for which they were not intended. That is, there was an initial concern that these books were not intended to help readers experience authentic growth. In the end, however, it became apparent that these books, consciously or unconsciously, attempt to do precisely that. While these texts might not use the terminology this thesis uses, such as "authentic growth" or "theory of growth," they are still putting forward a

vision of what they believe is authentic growth. These books implicitly promise, and sometimes explicitly guarantee *{provided one follows dictates precisely}*, that following their techniques (process) will lead to positive growth in the direction they advocate (telos). Such a formula constitutes a theory of growth, however crude, because it entails the two central components of a growth theory-telos (goal) and process (method). Implicitly, growth in the manner (process) and/or direction (telos) they encourage constitutes authentic growth for these authors. More importantly, these books implicitly promise their readers the "good life."

Here is the crux. This entire thesis rests on the viability or validity of the ideas presented in the Growth Model. The thesis presupposes that its ideas regarding growth are viable. An obvious argument is simply to challenge the writer and ask who she thinks she is to propose such ideas. The obvious counter-argument is simply to claim that ideas have to start somewhere. A more academically convincing argument is to explain that, although the writer was not aware of it at the time, and although she is still not very familiar with such theories, certain texts already exist that lend credence to her ideas. For example, Hannah Arendt's (1998) excerpt, "Ideology and Terror: A Novel Form of Government," lends credence to the potential dangers of simplification. Christopher M. Bache's book, *Dark Night, Early Dawn*, lends credence to the existence of a collective unconscious, perhaps Ultimate Reality or the Whole. In fact, in the Foreword to Bache's (2000) book, Stanislav Grof writes: "When we transcend all these boundaries [e.g., temporal and spatial] in deep experiential self-exploration, we realize that all of existence is a manifestation of one Being that has been known throughout the ages by many different names-Atman, the Tao, Buddha, the Great Spirit, Allah, Keter, the Cosmic Christ, and many others" (p.xiv). Grof goes on to state: "if [Bache] is right that the transformational work of an individual can generate a therapeutic effect in the field of species consciousness, then each of us has the potential to contribute to a more harmonious future for the planet by contemplating our social activism with deep inner work" (Bache, 2000, p.xv). Such statements indicate that works by authors such as Grof (one of Bache's precursors) and Bache support the proposal in this thesis that the goal of

growth is increased consciousness, and connection with a deeper reality. Even Robbins mentions a text which speaks of a collective conscious. Robbins (1986) writes, "many prominent scientists and brain researchers, such as physicist David Bohm and biologist Rupert Sheldrake, believe there is a collective consciousness we all can pull from-and that when we align ourselves through belief, through focus, through optimal physiology, we find a way to dip into this collective consciousness" (p.200). (Bohm's book is called *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*.) The idea that there is a positive force beyond the tangible is not unprecedented. Ken Wilber's (1998) transpersonal psychology and discussion of perennial philosophy also support the vision of growth presented in this thesis. Because this thesis does not focus on establishing the viability and validity of its ideas, doing so is a logical (and crucial) next step in research.

Even if the ideas in this thesis prove in the future to be untenable, it is believed that this thesis has brought to light important aspects of self-help literature. For example, merely categorizing certain self-help books as growth theories is worthwhile because doing so demands that they be held accountable. After all, if such books are telling people *how* to grow and *where* to grow to, it is important that readers assess the validity of both the destination and the methods offered. Individuals must be able to determine whether self-help books ask their readers to grow in a way that is self-destructive in any way. Inauthentic, addictive, repetitive, stifling growth must be challenged.

Additionally, it is believed that this thesis has provided viable criteria by which to assess a self-help text. Analysing a book based on telos and process is a worthwhile way to assess the efficacy and beneficence or detriment of self-help texts. The alienation-intimacy complex is also a valuable mechanism when assessing the growth process and, hence, deserves further study.

Self-help books are also cultural artifacts. As such, they reflect, reinforce, and can help create social norms and/or fundamental cultural values, many, if not most, of which are transparent to people. Dissecting the texts to determine the stated and unstated teloi gives individuals an idea of Western culture's visions (at least at the level of popular culture) of what constitutes authentic growth. As Fromm points out, even if something is

widely accepted or practiced by a society, it does not necessarily make it good for people. If self-help books are products of their culture, their visions of growth are apt to reflect the culture's dominant views and values and are apt to act as reinforcers of the same. Moreover, such books can also consciously or unconsciously act as cultural groomers. That is, the texts groom individuals to better fit into society, regardless of whether society is detrimental to the person.

Finally, this thesis investigates aspects of self-help literature and growth which have not been explored to date. As a result, this thesis adds a new segment to efficacy research-judging efficacy of growth goals and processes based on the criteria of "authenticity." This work also explores growth itself, adding new insight to this topic.

Generalizability of the Growth Model

One must question the generalizability of this model to other types of psychological self-help books as the genre covers a wide array of topics. Additionally, one must consider its generalizability to equivalent self-help-type books in other cultures. In the end, it is believed that self-help books of various types can be read as theories of growth. After all, implicitly or explicitly, they offer readers a vision of an goal towards which to grow and offer particular steps in order to get there. For example, books dealing with relationships can be seen as theories of growth in the realm of building (growing) healthy relationships. The book presents a telos (an envisioned ideal end goal for or end vision of relationships) and presents processes on how to achieve that end. Books on self-esteem, assertiveness training, business ideals, and so forth all seem to contain those two main ingredients-telos and process-as well. If that is the case, they can be considered models of growth and, hence, the Growth Model can be applied to them. Additionally, because the alienation-intimacy complex is thought to be central and unavoidable in people's lives, it is believed that the Growth Model can be applied to any situation where some form of growth is promoted because the alienation-intimacy complex appears to be a central dynamic of growth.

On the basis of findings in this thesis, it is believed that most of these self-help texts would miss the mark because, like the three texts in this thesis, their visions of growth will most likely be secular, truncated, finite, limited, and constrictive. Moreover, such books are apt to reflect and reinforce cultural ideals and values regarding what constitutes healthy relationships. Because the current cultural milieu has a truncated vision of humanity, human relationships, and human existence, the self-help books are apt to propose truncated, limited, constricted visions of growth, regardless of the area the books address. The theories will be, at best, theories of *partial* growth.

Regardless, the various books in this genre (the various subgenres) merit further, closer study. If these books are as popular as sales figures indicate, then it is crucial that individuals determine the beneficence or detriment of their content.

Future or Further Research

Perhaps, as indicated above, the most important future research regarding this thesis pertains to exploring and establishing the viability of the underlying ideas presented in the Growth Model. Perhaps, further study of Wilber's, Grof's, Bache's, and Bohm's theories, would buttress the ideas regarding the ultimate goals of growth presented herein.

The three self-help texts studied herein span more than three decades and, according to thesis findings, there appears to be a deep-seated, erroneous (finite, limited, constrictive, secular) vision of what constitutes authentic growth in North American culture. This finding suggests that two additional types of research are worth undertaking. First, more extensive cultural analyses of self-help texts will provide more in-depth, precise information as to the various ways in which these texts reflect and reinforce conscious and unconscious cultural values. Two areas of interest to this writer include researching reasons for the genre's popularity based on polling or surveying, and researching the appearance of self-help ideas and terminology in other media, such as movies, literature, and fictional and nonfictional television shows. Additionally, book reviews and/or electronic chat rooms can be analysed to determine how self-help texts are being received by the culture, or web sites dedicated to authors and/or self-help books can

be analysed for popularity of ideas being propounded. This thesis provides some cultural analysis; more is warranted.

Secondly, it would be interesting to apply the Growth Model to books based on Eastern values or Eastern philosophy. Perhaps, self-help books anchored in Taoism or Zen Buddhism might provide refreshing insights on visions of growth, on the goals of growth and on how to achieve them. It is possible that Eastern philosophies have engendered ideas on growth which differ dramatically from those of the humanist "experts" (Maslow, Rogers, and Fromm) presented in Chapter 3, let alone different from those of popular "psychologists," such as Peale, Dyer, and Robbins. It is believed that a comparison of Eastern and Western ideas on what constitutes authentic growth would be a worthwhile, valuable, enlightening undertaking. It is worth knowing whether a stunted, truncated vision of growth is a Western phenomenon and/or if it is a worldwide phenomenon. New Age literature would also be a genre worth analysing based on the Growth Model. Perhaps New Age texts allow for a trans-human element, which seems to be ignored in popular self-help texts.

While analysing these self-help texts, this writer was struck by the rhetorical tools used by these self-help authors, each a master communicator in his own way. For example, their use of the language of science, considered to be the language of authority by many, if not most, Westerners; their use of absolute terminology, such as all, none, never, always, everyone, and everything; and their tendency to present their ideas as simple, easy techniques which are easily learned, quickly applied, and quick to produce results are ways in which these authors buttress their ideas. The self-help authors' tendency to put the onus for growth on their readers, the authors' tendency to imply that the readers are deficient or incompetent if they do not achieve the results virtually promised or guaranteed by the authors, and the authors' tendency to overwhelm and browbeat their readers into submission might serve to keep readers from challenging the veracity, authority, and validity of the ideas put forward in the texts. Because of this rhetorical commonality, it is firmly believed that rhetorical analysis of these texts is both necessary and merited. Close rhetorical analysis will show more closely how these authors

buttress their ideas so that many readers might not take the time to assess the validity and veracity of the ideas put forward.

Personal Reflections

This thesis was undertaken in an attempt to find answers to personal questions: How does one *really* live? What constitutes *really* living? How does one ensure that one does not reach the point of death only to realize that one has not lived at all? The writer's personal answer to these questions is that people *really* live when they embrace the complexities, uncertainties, and ambivalence of growing authentically; when they embrace the constant, continual, unavoidable experiences of alienation, intimacy and the alienation-intimacy complex; when they dare to risk being vulnerable, open, loving, sharing, compassionate, and empathically connective. Human beings *really* live when they find the courage, trust and faith to risk interdependence, interconnection, increased consciousness and connection on multiple levels. Ultimately, individuals *really* live when they let go of control and dare to connect-to love. In stark contrast to the messages put forward by the self-help authors, authentic growth is not necessarily easy, simple, painless, or permanent. Authentic growth is fluid, ambivalent, challenging, and continuous. However, despite these seemingly off-putting traits, authentic growth is believed to bring to human beings those things it is believed they ultimately seek: heightened consciousness, a deep sense of connection, intense fulfillment, freedom to grow, and a visceral sense of belonging to something larger than themselves (Ultimate Reality, the Whole). In short, human beings ultimately seem to seek increased consciousness and connection with Ultimate Reality, a return to the Whole, to Unity. The self-help books analysed herein seem to promise their readers the moon (happiness, freedom, satisfaction, excellence), but, in actuality, they hobble their readers' ankles and keep them weighted in place by setting erroneous, finite, secular teloi (low targets) and providing constrictive, truncated, exclusive, enslaving, conscious-numbing processes.

Based on this thesis, these three self-help books emerge as magicians' wands-practice these techniques and you will develop the amazing ability to perform

sleight-of-mind as opposed to sleight-of-hand. The books demonize emotion while revering reason; they level complexity and glorify simplicity. In the authors' desire to simplify the growth process and offer "practical," "effective" techniques, they erase or mask the pain, struggle, and embarrassment of the ambivalence that often accompanies growth. The message is clear: growth is supposed to be efficient and effective, that is, neat, clean, tidy, not the messy kind that life actually entails. These books offer sanitized growth. There is no blood, no mess, no pain, no sorrow, just simple, easy principles and techniques. But, equally deficient, there is no elation, no passion, no depth, no genuine connection. Their growth is sterile, antiseptic. Simply follow the dictates (processes) to experience the moon (telos) without the pain and suffering, confusion and anguish which often accompanies growth. Anguished growth is simply evidence of a misuse of one's Mind, that one is doing it wrong. For these authors, growth is not about increased consciousness, an increased sense of unity with oneself, others, humanity, nature, Ultimate Reality. It is about division. Heart is dissociated from Mind and, let there be no mistake, Mind rules. And because Mind rules, growth need not be messy. Emotion is messy; Mind is clean. While such sterile growth might sound enticing, such visions are but a lie. Authentic growth cannot be simplified to a paint-by-number "technique." And authentic growth is not simply the domain of the mind. Authentic growth requires all aspects of the individual-heart (emotions), soul (spirit), body, and mind (intellect).

Authentic growth, growth towards increased consciousness and connection, towards increased freedom in the realization that all is part of a deeper reality or greater Whole, requires never-ending, lifelong negotiation between daily experiences of alienation and intimacy. Daily, human beings must choose between love/growth-governed choices and fear/non-growth-governed choices, that is, between responses that help people grow and expand intrapersonally, interpersonally, culturally, and spiritually, and responses that lead people astray, keep people stagnant, or make people regress. Authentic growth is hard and it is messy, but it is beautiful. Only growth anchored in the authentic-the Infinite-can produce the depth of consciousness and connection individuals desire.

ENDNOTES

1. While stagnation or non-growth (staying still) is *technically* not a form of growth, it is perceived as negative and detrimental to the individual and is, therefore, for brevity's sake, placed under the rubric of inauthentic forms of growth in this thesis.
2. Aristotle introduces the notion of *telos* or end in his ideas on change. This thesis echoes Aristotle in that it envisions growth as growth *towards* a particular end goal (telos)-explored and explained more fully in the body of the thesis. Echoing, but not imitating Aristotle, this thesis has a teleological view of growth. (See Cooper, 1998, p.115-127.)
3. See Hyndman, 1996, for an excellent review of self-help group programs.
4. From 5 a.m. to noon weekdays, KEST1450 AM in the San Francisco Bay area, is dedicated to self-help topics (KEST1450 AM Radio home page).
5. Starker (1989) goes on to state that once one gets beyond these minimal criteria of intended audience and presumed utility, any attempts at definition become increasingly difficult. Rather than creating additional criteria, he finds it useful to think about *dimensions of content* along which books meeting the minimal criteria might be placed.
 According to Starker (1989), the "dimensions of content" along which the self-help books can be assessed include *anecdotal versus informational, prescriptive versus descriptive, and a closed versus an open system*. Some books rely heavily upon anecdotes, such as interesting, amusing, or biographical incidents, and use these as the primary means of support for their arguments and advice. Others depend more heavily upon empirical data-well-established and public facts. While self-help books frequently incorporate both types of content, the book can usually be characterized as tending in one direction or the other. Many self-help books are prescriptive, laying down authoritative rules or descriptions for behaviour that one must follow fully and faithfully in order to achieve results; "failure to reach the promised goal presumably indicates that one has not adequately followed the prescription" (Starker, 1989, p.9). Descriptive works emphasize education and present a number of possible procedures or techniques for accomplishing an objective without prescribing one for the reader. The reader is free to choose among various alternatives. According to Starker (1989), a book characterized by a closed system "presents a self-contained philosophy, complete unto itself, which resists and discourages interaction with other perspectives" (p.9). In contrast, an open system philosophy "encourages access to new information and influences and is flexible enough to permit modification according to changes in circumstance" (Starker, 1989, p.9-10). These dimensions are merely tools that have proven helpful to Starker in thinking and reading about self-help books.
6. Irvine (1996) begins her article with the following joke: "What does a codependent say after sex? 'That was good for you. How was it for me?'" (p.721). Jokes are but one of the ways in which aspects of "self-help" are being spoofed in popular

culture. Saturday Night Live's character Stuart Smalley was made into a full-length movie ("Stuart Saves His Family"), and the cornucopia of self-help books has generated a book-length spoof. Bines and Greenberg's book, *Self-Helpless: The Greatest Self-Help Books You'll Never Read* (1999), is a clever text satirizing self-help best-sellers. The covers of the books being spoofed remain sufficiently the same and are, therefore, immediately recognizable to the self-help aficionado; however, the titles and accompanying promotional text are rewritten and mocked. Sample titles include: *Chicken Suit for the Soul* as opposed to the bestselling *Chicken Soup for the Soul* by Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen, and *How to Win Followers & Indoctrinate People* instead of Dale Carnegie's bestselling *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. References to self-help are also found repeatedly in various songs, movies, sitcoms, and comedy routines.

7. See Starker (1989) and A. H. Douglas (1979) for general analyses of the roots of self-help. For analyses of specific movements, see McCarthy (1984), the Emmanuel Movement; Materra (1997), New Thought; Bailey (1999), New Thought; and Woolverton (1983), three intertwined movements.

8. See Riessman, 1982; Riessman & Bay, 1992; Couto, 1992; and Pilisuk & Minkler, 1985, to name just a few sources.

9. The number of sources for research on self-help literature are numerous, but not unwieldy considering the number of self-help books on the market. See A. H. Douglas, 1979; Forest 1988, 1991, 1997, 1998; Quartaro, 1993; Rosen, 1987; Saper, 1990; Scholz and Forest, 1997; Simonds, 1992; Starker, 1988, 1989; and the various authors in *Women's Studies in Communication*, Volume 18, No. 2, Fall, 1995, for different perspectives and research on various aspects of self-help literature.

10. The most substantial body of scholarly literature found in journals seems to pertain to "self-help groups," or the concept of "mutual aid." This makes sense considering it is the aspect of self-help that is studied by the greatest number of disciplines. Medicine, psychology, psychiatry, sociology, and developmental studies are some of the disciplines which have studied this phenomenon from different perspectives.

11. Woods' (1995) findings in her Master's thesis, *Women's Self-Help: A Feminist Critique* support my own research findings in my term paper *Feminist Critiques of "Self-Help" Literature*. In part, Woods analyses self-help books geared to women and argues that they rely on an androcentric definition of subjectivity and support and promote a "traditional," patriarchal ideal of femininity such that women are still viewed and presented as "emotional custodians" (p. 119). Woods writes:

The symbolic and social organization of gender within our patriarchal society positions women on the side of emotion in the androcentric dualism that pits instrumental reason against emotion....Though contemporary women's roles extend beyond the confines of emotional caretaker in the traditional nuclear family, women are continually reminded of their inherent caring, nurturing, and emotional

nature. Yet...this quality is devalued. Thus, self-help for women can be seen as a discourse that attempts to incite and sustain women's interest in highly emotional relationships, (p.6)

In her doctoral dissertation, Reeb (1999) argues that John Gray's book, *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*, potentially appeals to readers because it (and possibly others like it) exonerates readers from taking responsibility for their actions and their relationships. For example, Reeb writes: "Men and women no longer have to struggle to communicate with one another; just give in to the abilities prescribed by one's gender" (p.68). Instead, one simply has to accept that gender dictates interaction. Such books promote a "What can we do? After all, men and women *are* biologically different" attitude of nonresponsibility. More insidiously, the book (and others like it) presents nothing new. Reeb writes:

Much of the text, that is presented as new and original, is a revisit to the cultural guidelines of yesteryear, old rhetoric in a new cloak...[I]t is in fact legitimizing norms of behavior and beliefs from a time that women were not seen as equal to men in power and ability. New political weight is being given to the same old tenets. Relationships and love are being redefined, but redefined in their old image. The basic attitudes, women as passive, helpless, and naive have not changed. The same stereotypes are threatening the idea of female agency and ability, (p.70-71).

Findings such as the above help explain and justify the interest of feminist scholars in self-help literature.

12. Mind cure and its affiliates or descendants, New Thought and Christian Science, are three related quasi-religious movements which arose in the nineteenth century and continue to exist today. Mind cure borrowed ideas from Mesmer (a physician who believed in the curative power of magnetism and was an early experimenter with hypnosis (Dresner, 1995)) and became a new theory of disease started by Phineas Quimby in the nineteenth century. Mind-curists believed that "disease was an unfortunate delusion[,]...an invention of Man, an error of the mind[,]...a nonentity" and could be treated by "conversation and education[,] by reversing people's "erroneous thinking" (Starker, 1989, p.27-28). Mind cure techniques included affirmations, deep relaxation, meditation, suggestion, and positive thinking. According to Starker (1989), the central aspect of New Thought is "wish-fulfillment"- "the essence of New Thought was the fulfilled wish and how to achieve it" (p.39). Moreover, New Thought offered abundance-'fantasies of unlimited and magical supply on demand" (p.39). The founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, was originally cured by Quimby, which strongly influenced her movement's philosophy. Starker (1989) writes: "Christian Science represented a highly closed philosophy, consisting largely of a repudiation of the reality of all pain and disease, and even of physical matter itself. The latter were explained as merely manifestations of the mind....Physicians, and other representatives of mainstream science, were unnecessary and unwelcome" (p.29-30). Christian Science was a more extreme philosophy and practice than New Thought. Hydropathy entailed the use of water in the treatment of disease. Sylvester Graham (Grahamism) was founder of the Hygienic movement and advocated "a

radical form of vegetarianism" (Starker, 1989, p.78). Graham was a health crusader who promoted healthy habits, including a proper diet (including eating his own baked goods) and occasional abstinence, as sexual activity was believed to pose a health threat by depleting men's "life force" (Starker, 1989, p.79). Spiritualism originated in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century and is described as "belief in the survival of the human personality and in communication between the living and those who have 'passed on'" (Dresner, 1995, p.841).

13. Mesmerists were those who followed the practices of physician Friedrich Anton (1734-1815), "an early experimenter in hypnosis,...formerly (and popularly) called *mesmerism* after him" (Dresner, 1995, p.588).

14. Read Starker (1989) for an excellent, interesting, easy read regarding the roots of self-help literature and how various cultural factors and cultural events shaped the literature of that time. Additional sources include Butler, 1990; Carter, 1971; A. Douglas, 1977; George, 1993; Lears, 1983; Meyer, 1980; Moor, 1994, and Walters, 1978. These authors provide the raw material out of which my personal findings are based.

15. The January, 1994 re-issue of Dale Carnegie's book *How to Win Friends and Influence People* was number seven of 25 books listed on the Amazon.com Self-Help Bestseller list on August 21, 2001.

16. Admittedly, this thesis explores North American self-help literature; therefore, one could argue against its claims of the universality of authentic growth (as described herein). It is possible that the telos and ideas pertaining to authentic growth put forward herein are simply American or North American phenomenon. An equally defensible position is to explain that even though other cultures might not use the same terminology as this thesis, it does not preclude them from striving for and experiencing the same phenomenon. This thesis proposes that latter position over the former.

17. Studies on bibliotherapy appears to comprise the largest area of research on self-help literature, let alone efficacy research. For example, various definitions of bibliotherapy, the history of the practice, types of bibliotherapy, the use of bibliotherapy by practitioners, how the practice is viewed by professional practitioners, and the efficacy of the practice of bibliotherapy have been studied by various scholars, including Scholz & Forest (1997), Starker (1988), Pardeck (1993), Scholz (1992), and Saper (1990), to name a few.

18. Another study measured self-actualization; however, this study is in the context of college-level personal development courses or education. Curtis (1979) measured the effects of personal development education on growth towards self-actualization. Again, the findings were disappointing. Regardless, the researcher claims that while measures did not seem to provide evidence that self-actualization occurred, anecdotal stories from professors and students indicated otherwise. Curtis suggests that other aspects must be

taken into consideration when measuring self-actualization or personal growth. While this study proves interesting and does indicate that some courses appear to increase self-actualization, courses are not self-help literature.

19. Piaget's equilibration process discusses what occurs when a system of equilibrium is disturbed. He discusses three successive cognitive behaviours which occur when one's equilibrium is disturbed. First, there is denial or rejection of the disturbing material. Secondly, there is minimal system modification so that the disturbing material is assimilable (beta-level change). Lastly, the new information or events "lose their disturbance characteristics and establish themselves in the potential transformation of the system" (Piaget cited in Quartaro, 1993, p. 170) (gamma-level change).

20. Vitz (1977) also discussed Rollo May; however, May figures so infrequently in Vitz's writing compared to Fromm, Rogers, and Maslow that I have chosen not to use May's ideas in this thesis.

21. For a quick biography of each of the three theorists-Maslow, Rogers, and Fromm-see Dr. C. George Boeree's electronic text book on the Internet (Boeree, 1997a, Index) and then choose the appropriate psychologist.

22. According to Maureen O'Hara, Association of Humanistic Psychology President in 1991-1992, humanistic psychology spread into so many areas of North American society during the 1970s and 1980s that it is no longer called "Humanistic Psychology;" however, it is still represented by the Association for Humanistic Psychology and the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, as well as A P A Division 32, the Division of Humanistic Psychology. Maureen O'Hara, writes:

[Humanistic psychology] is also represented in a variety of A P A divisions concerned with psychotherapy and issues of social concern. And it is in Transpersonal Psychology (Association for Transpersonal, Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, New Age, East-West, the Consciousness Movement, Noetic Sciences); the Growth Center and Human Potential Movements; the Self-Esteem and Addiction Recovery Movements; Family Therapy, Holistic Health and Hospice, and Organizational Development and Organization Transformation. It is philosophically aligned with the post-modern philosophy of science, constructivist epistemology, structuralism, and deconstructionism. We also could include green politics, deep ecology, the feminist and gay rights movements, and the psycho-spiritual wing of the peace movement. (Cited in Cullari, 2000, chap. 12)

While the rubric humanistic psychology might not exist as a title, there are still many groups which could be labelled as such. The values of this third force psychology persist as can be seen in the persistence of humanistic journals and associations. According to O'Hara, the Association of Humanistic Psychology, founded in 1962, is "a worldwide community of diverse people promoting personal integrity, creative learning, and active responsibility in embracing the challenges of being human in these times" (cited in Cullari,

2000, chap. 12). Membership includes therapists, teachers, healers, consultants, body workers, lawyers, social workers, public servants, corporate managers, activists, futurists, and politicians. Due to the strength of this Association and to the apparent pervasiveness of what began as humanistic psychological ideas, I feel comfortable using the theorists I have chosen.

23. See Rogers' (1961) text, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy*, for more details on these characteristics.

24. Maslow is often vague in his theory. For example, he does not provide precise values when discussing the degree to which one need must be met before another emerges. Maslow does, however, for illustrative purposes provide an arbitrary example. Maslow (1970) writes: "it is as if the average citizen is satisfied perhaps in 85 percent in his physiological needs, 70 percent in his safety needs, 50 percent in his love needs, 40 percent in his self-esteem needs, and 10 percent in his self-actualization needs" (p.54). The point is that the concept of emergence of a new need, after satisfaction of the prepotent need, is not a sudden phenomenon. Rather, the new need emerges gradually by slow degrees from nothingness. For example, as need A becomes satisfied twenty-five percent, need B might emerge five percent and so forth.

25. Cross and Cross (1998) capture the idea that growth is not for the fearful. They write:

Self-actualization takes courage, strength, self-control and discipline. It takes the courage to give up the comfortable, predictable, controllable way of life one has grown accustomed to in favor of fulfilling one's potentials. It takes the strength to leave one's former securities and emotional props, the old ways of thinking about oneself. It requires the discipline and self-control to forge a new way alone. This deliberate growth and self-challenge is not always a comfortable state. Yet the reward includes happiness, fulfillment and peak experiences, (p.121-122)

26. The following information rounds out some of Maslow's additional ideas on growth. Maslow (1968) firmly believes that the inner core of the real self is "good, trustworthy, and ethical" (p. 161) and that the individual has within oneself the ability to know what is best for oneself. Maslow (1968) calls this one's "subjective delight experience"-one's ability to trust oneself, one's own impulses, judgments, and feelings (p.49-50). This device "guides and directs the individual in the direction of 'healthy' growth" (Maslow, 1968, p.57); only the individual can make the choice to grow forward because he or she is the only one who "can ever really know the right moment when the beckoning forces ahead overbalance the beckoning forces behind, and courage outweighs fear" (Maslow, 1968, p.49). That is, the individual must set his or her own pace of growth. Pushing an individual (even a child) to grow forward will *not* work because the person loses touch with this internal guide. Sounding very much like Rogers (see next section), Maslow (1968) explains that children often lose touch with or relinquish their "subjective experience of delight" in order to retain the love, esteem and good opinion of

others. Because safety is a basic and prepotent need for children, they willingly give up self and growth in order to experience safety: "[i]f the only way to maintain the self is to lose others, then the ordinary child will give up the self" (Maslow, 1968, p.52). This scenario suggests that safety does not simply refer to physical safety; one must feel psychologically safe as well. Gratifying love, esteem, and a sense of belonging appear to be a form of safety. (Perhaps, Maslow's needs can be divided simply into two needs: the need for safety, be it physical or psychological, and the need for self-actualization or growth.)

Maslow (1968) briefly mentions that external sources, such as parents and therapists, can help an individual develop the courage to overcome defences and grow forward *provided* they understand that the individual must set his or her own pace, understand that "defensive and regressive forces...are necessary if growth is not to look like an overwhelming danger instead of a delightful prospect" (Maslow, 1968, p.53-54), and understand that growth can emerge only from safety. These helpful individuals must both beckon forward and respect "retreat to lick wounds, to recover strength, to look over the situation from a safe vantage point, or even to regress to a previous mastery or a 'lower' delight, so that courage for growth can be regained" (Maslow, 1968, p.54-55). Growth, in the end, is not necessarily a constant forward progression. Sometime temporary regression is wise. (Maslow (1968) sees all choices as wise choices, if one grants two types of wisdom: some choices are defensive-wisdom, some are growth-wisdom.) The particular situation determines whether a choice is wise and daring defensiveness or fear-based.

27. Underlying Rogers' growth theory are certain fundamental beliefs. Rogers believes that "the core of man's nature is essentially positive[,] that an individual is a "trustworthy organism[,] that "organisms know what is good for them[,] and that, in human beings' ability to experience, "we have...an innate ability to value positive[ly] what we perceive as actualizing, and to value negatively what we perceive as nonactualizing" (called the *organismic valuation process*) (Cullari, 2000, chap. 12). Rogers believes that only the individual knows what is good and best for himself or herself in all stages or levels of development (Cullari, 2000, chap. 12). These foundational beliefs inform Rogers' theory. (See Figure 2 for a schema of Rogers' theory; taken from Reeve, 1992, p.319.)

28. Rogers recognizes that not everyone grows up in an optimum growth-inducing environment of unconditional positive regard; therefore, Rogers developed his Person-Centered Therapy, which is all about creating or providing the "proper conditions." Rogers (1977) theorizes that healing and growth for the person experiencing pain stemming from incongruence will occur *provided* a certain type of environment (safe, empathetic, acceptant) is *created for* and *communicated to* the individual. For Rogers (1977), the optimum growth-inducing therapeutic environment is one in which the therapist is congruent, has empathic understanding, and creates an acceptant environment of unconditional positive regard for the client. Rogers firmly believes that the therapist's job is not to solve a person's problem; it is to create a warm, safe environment so that the individual feels safe enough to find the courage and confidence within to heal himself or

herself. Therapy is not about doing something to the individual or having the individual do something about himself or herself: "It is instead a matter of freeing him for normal growth and development, of removing obstacles so that he can again move forward" (Rogers, 1977, p.6). Rogers' (1977) therapy is about freeing the client to become an "independent, self-directing person" (p.7). Change occurs in a facilitative environment because the client can come to realize that "the individual has within himself vast resources for self-understanding, for altering his self-concept, his attitudes, and his self-directed behavior" (Rogers, 1977, p.7). Metaphorically speaking, then, Rogers is more concerned with teaching an individual how to fish than in feeding him for a day. The aim of his therapy is to create a safe environment so that the individual can "dissolve conditions of worth, achieve a self congruent with experience and restore the organismic valuing process" himself or herself (Cullari, 2000, chap.12). For Rogers (1961), *any* safe, empathetic, acceptant environment or relationship promotes personal growth and development; one need not rely on therapy (p.37). Cross and Cross (1998) add that Rogers believes that other life experiences, both positive and negative, can provide experiences that jar the person enough for cracks to occur in his or her defences so that the individual becomes "detached, freed from conditions of worth, from socialization and from roles" (p. 105).

29. The individual also develops an *ideal self*: "the self-concept which the individual would most like to possess, upon which he places the highest value for himself" (Rogers in Fadiman & Frager, 1976, p.286). Like the self, the ideal self is also a shifting, changing structure, constantly undergoing redefinition. Fadiman and Frager (1976) note:

The extent to which the self and the ideal self differ from each other is one indicator of discomfort, dissatisfaction, and neurotic difficulties. Accepting oneself as one actually is, not as one wishes to be, is a sign of mental health. Acceptance is not resignation, a giving up on oneself; it is a way of being closer to reality, to one's actual state. The image of the ideal self, to the extent that it is grossly different from one's real behavior and values, is an obstacle to personal growth. (p.286)

30. Massey (1981) explains the negative impact of conditions of worth and conditional positive regard on one's opinion of one's self and how they hamper authentic growth:

The capacity for positive self-regard presupposes having received positive regard and not having been severely and permanently damaged by its absence or by a concerted depreciation of self-esteem. Since humans appear to possess a greater urge to satisfy the need for positive regard than to gratify the organismic valuing process, some people exhibit a tendency to ignore, deny, or distort self-experiences if that results in pleasing and securing the approval of significant others. Perception becomes selective, so that one is aware of and correctly symbolizes experiences consistent with conditions of worth (approving of only certain behaviors as acceptable). Adapting conditions of worth as criteria for living may provide security and approval, but can also seriously sidetrack the individual's unique and independent movement toward self-actualization. Incongruence

between self and experience perpetrated by a twisting of self and behavior to secure positive regard through submission to conditions of worth leads to psychological maladjustment and leaves one vulnerable to further distortion and misdirection. Not accurately symbolizing in awareness actions and trends incongruent with the self gives rise to discrepancies in living. This is a precarious situation, since the individual is not existing consistently, (p.312-313)

31. According to Fromm (1941), submitting to an authority (power) perceived as greater than oneself (masochism) and expecting to be given everything; overpowering others (sadism) and taking whatever one wants; destroying oneself or others; hoarding things; conforming (automaton conformity) and marketing one's most marketable self (selling oneself as a consumer product) are examples of unhealthy, nonproductive ways in which individuals relate to people and things. None of these results in authentic growth or self-realization. Instead, each is an escape (*mechanisms of escape*) from the responsibility of personal freedom which comes with individuation.

32. Fromm (1941) believes that the history of humanity can be characterized as a parallel process of growing individuation and growing freedom. Humanity's freedom is "freedom from instinctual determination of his actions," and over the course of history, humanity itself has become more and more separated from nature and, in recent centuries, more and more separated from human ties (Fromm, 1941, p.32). Just as with personal individuation, Fromm (1941) explains that a lag can occur (and has occurred) in a cultural context, which makes freedom an unbearable burden. To date, Western culture (the economic, social and political conditions upon which the whole process of human individuation depends and which both influence and are influenced by individual individuation) does not offer a basis for the realization of a productive solution to humanity's situation. As in personal individuation, powerful tendencies arise to escape from this freedom into submission or some other kind of relationship to man and the world which promises relief from uncertainty and doubt, even if it deprives the individual of his or her freedom (Fromm, 1941). Escapes like "the demands for the State, the enthusiasm for magic qualities of powerful leaders, powerful machines, and material success" become ways in which people search for relief from freedom (Fromm, 1947).

33. Fromm (1941) concludes that, in recent social history, the individual has grown in many respects, has developed mentally and emotionally, and participates in cultural achievements to a degree unheard of before; however, a lag exists: "the lag between 'freedom from' and 'freedom to' has grown. The result of this disproportion between freedom *from* any tie and the lack of possibilities for the positive realization of freedom and individuality [freedom *to* become one's real self] has led, in Europe, to a panicky flight from freedom into new ties or at least into complete indifference" (p.37). For Fromm (1941), automaton conformity is such an example and is rampant in modern Western society. People can try to escape from their inner restlessness in various ways, such as appeasing the mind "with soothing and harmonizing ideologies" or through "ceaseless activity in pleasure or business" or by trying to "abrogate his freedom" in various ways

(via *mechanisms of escape*), but such escapes will not work (p.44). Only the productive response at the individual and social levels will work.

34. Fromm (1947) believes that, when one considers the powerful social conditions which impair productiveness, individuals must possess an impelling "impulse to achieve psychic health happiness" (p.223); however, he believes there is "no innate 'drive for progress' in man" (p.41). Fromm believes that the existence of reason and an inherent actualizing tendency cause human beings to strive to develop and to create a world of their own in which they can feel at home with themselves and their fellow beings (p.41), to strive forward, dynamically, both individually and socially, despite opposing social forces. The contradictions in human beings' existence leave them both discontented and perplexed, compelling them forward in an attempt to find new solutions to these existential dichotomies: "Having lost paradise, the unity with nature, he has become the eternal wanderer" (Fromm, 1947, p.41). The individual is impelled to go forward, making the unknown known, giving account of oneself to oneself, making meaning of one's existence, and striving "to overcome this inner split, tormented by a craving for 'absoluteness,' for another kind of harmony which can lift the curse by which he was separated from nature, from his fellow men, and from himself" (Fromm, 1947, p.41). For Fromm, the human condition propels human beings forward both individually and socially. The productive orientation is simply the best solution so far.

35. In his web site, Dr. C. George Boeree states that, toward the end of his life, Maslow "inaugurated what he called the fourth force in psychology:...The fourth force was the transpersonal psychologies which, taking their cue from Eastern philosophies, investigated such things as meditation, higher levels of consciousness, and even parapsychological phenomena. Perhaps the best known transpersonalist today is Ken Wilber, author of such books as *The Atman Project* and *The History of Everything*" [italics added] (Boeree, 1998, last \ before Discussion). These ideas are dealt with more fully in Chapter 4. I am comfortable making the claims I make in this chapter because this "fourth force" psychology is not the growth theory for which Maslow is best known.

36. One could argue that hate is fear-driven or fear-based, making fear the opposite of love.

37. The term "the Growth Model" will be used throughout this thesis as being synonymous or equivalent to "the tentative alternative theory of growth." It is used simply because it is easier to write and takes up less space.

38. Some might argue that the term "enlightenment" would work better than "maximal consciousness;" however, I hesitate to use the term because its meaning is strongly associated with and influenced by Eastern philosophies and because I am not familiar enough with its intricacies. In comparison, the concept of ever-increasing consciousness (and its concomitant sense of increasing connection with others, nature, and a deeper or Ultimate reality) resonates with me.

39. I find the notion of a "real" or inherent self to be questionable. Growth certainly must entail increased development of one's capacities; however, the degree to which a "real" self exists already within is questionable. If, as Fromm suggests, individuals are composed of a genetic component (*temperament-one's nature*) as well as a socially constructed component (*character-one's nurture*), then it is entirely probable that one's "real" self is that "self" which one creates as one experiences authentic growth. Perhaps, a baseline genetic component exists; however, part of what construes one's "real" self surely is "learned" or, more accurately, "created" through one's experiences over the course of one's life.

40. Hegel's triadic process-thesis, antithesis, synthesis-supports this ever-expanding process of incorporating yet expanding beyond that which has come before. In summarizing Hegel, Spencer and Krauze (1996) describe Hegel's vision of the Whole as follows: 'The whole is an overcoming which preserves what it overcomes. Nothing is lost or destroyed but raised up and preserved as in a spiral' (p.80). This is a good model for the growth process envisioned in this tentative alternative theory of growth.

41. One must also learn or continually strive to balance the various aspects of one's life, such as intrapersonal, interpersonal, and cultural (global) factors. Balance is addressed in Appendix C.

42. Viktor Frankl spent several years in a Nazi concentration camp (Auschwitz). Despite enduring and witnessing unspeakable horrors, he was able to survive by analysing his and his fellow prisoners' situation. Frankl (1984) developed a new theory, *logotherapy*, which became the Third Viennese School of Psychotherapy. The back jacket of his book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, explains that "[a]t the core of his theory is the belief that man's primary motivational force is his search for meaning." Frankl's search for meaning helped him triumph over his horrific ordeal.

43. Note that Dr. Phillip C. McGraw authored three of the top five books on the Self-Help Bestsellers list as of August 21, 2001, according to the Amazon.com web site. (Twenty-five books are listed.) Interestingly, the top six texts on the Self-Help Bestsellers list are all books by people featured at some point on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* (called *Oprah* hereafter). "Dr. Phil," as he is affectionately called by Oprah and others, is a regular "expert" every Tuesday on *Oprah*. Cheryl Richardson, who authored the other two of the top five texts listed is a regular "expert" every Monday on *Oprah*. The sixth Self-Help Bestseller, written by Julie Morgenstern, was also featured on *Oprah*. Authors are well aware of the power that Oprah Winfrey carries. In fact, Amazon.com has a category on its web site entitled "Oprah's Picks," thereby indicating the power Oprah carries to increase the popularity of a book.

44. The 225-page August 1996 softcover Fawcett Columbine edition of *The Power of Positive Thinking* is divided into seventeen short chapters, each providing the reader with a goal to strive for (e.g., health, happiness, or vitality) and the process with which to

achieve it (e.g., prayer power or expecting the best). While the goals vary from chapter to chapter, the process tends to overlap considerably and can be boiled down to a few key methods. The book provides anecdotal evidence and provides no citations (except for bibliographic information on two other books written by Peale), no bibliography, and no way for the reader to verify Peale's claims.

45. Peale (1996) states that happiness is "a fundamental desire of every human being" (p.59). He uses his young daughter's formula for describing happiness because, as he writes,

it seems to me that it's all there-her playmates (that's her associates), her school (the place where she works), her church and Sunday school (where she worships), her sister, brother, mother, and father (that means the home circle where love is found). There you have happiness in a nutshell, and the happiest time of your life is in relation to those factors, (p.58)

Based on this definition, happiness has a fairly confined, familial definition.

46. In his preface, Peale (1996) explains the process he undertook in the writing and marketing of his book. Whether the reader is aware of it at this time or not, the preface introduces the reader to Peale's process in action. When undertaking the writing of this book, Peale "put the project into God's hands" because he and his wife have "the policy of taking God into working partnership in all our problems and activities" (p.viii). Peale prayed for guidance in writing the manuscript and prayed when dedicating the manuscript, asking "only that it might help people to live more effective lives" (p.viii). Once the book was published and he received his first copy, Peale "thanked God for His help and dedicated the book once more" (p.viii). Such summarizes his method of positive thinking.

47. Note that success is rarely, if ever, attributed to actually taking concrete physical steps in the direction of one's goals. Instead, one simply has to turn the problem over to God and use one's mind positively (i.e., fill it with positive thoughts) to achieve success. The ease of this system-that is, the lack of attention paid to actual concrete work-might render the book appealing to its readers.

48. Peale (1996) claims he is offering his readers "practical religion" or "applied Christianity" (p.xiii). One simply has to learn to apply "practical prayer techniques" (Peale, 1996, p.41) to garner remarkable benefits in one's life. Peale uses anecdote after anecdote to testify to the efficacy of God-centred positive thinking and to demonstrate "the law of Divine-human relationship working itself out in practical affairs" (p. 132). In one anecdote, a nonbeliever changes his mind about religion and realizes the power of prayer: "[f]or the first time he was getting the idea that religious faith is not something piously stuffy but *is a scientific procedure for successful living*. He was observing at firsthand the practical working of prayer power in personal experience" [emphasis added] (Peale, 1996, p.49). Success is virtually guaranteed because it is "spiritual law." (According to Peale, if one does not obtain the results one seeks, it is either because the person did not use these techniques correctly or because God, the Omniscient, knows

better and does not want the person to obtain these goals. Peale does not differentiate and explain how a person is to know which option-poor technique or God's wisdom-is operating in such instances.) Peale stresses repeatedly that these techniques are not simply ideas that he has come up with; they are "demonstrated and effective principles" (p.xi), "powerful laws" (p.86) (i.e., "laws of God" (p.28) and "spiritual laws" (p.44)), and "fact[s]" (p.58). Peale (1996) offers "formula[s]" (p.44), spiritual (p.ix) and prayer (p.52) "techniques" and a "scientific system" (p.xiii)-"a perfected and amazing method of successful living" (p.xii). For Peale, prayer, turning problems over to God, taking God on as a partner, and the other techniques he recommends are all effective aspects of positive thinking and they work because they are part of a scientific system of "spiritual law." Readers are not being offered *suggested* growth techniques; they are being offered scientific laws, formulas, techniques. Perhaps this scientific backing is offered to buttress and help sell his ideas.

49. Dyer's 253-page original 1976 book is broken down into an Introduction/Personal Statement and twelve titled chapters. Chapter XII is entitled "Portrait of a Person Who Has Eliminated All Erroneous Zones." With this chapter, Dyer, unlike the other two authors, presents the reader with a specific image of what his ideal person-someone who has reached Dyer's ultimate telos-would be like. Similar to the other two authors, Dyer presents neat packets of information to the reader. Chapters are relatively short with the longest one being 28 pages. Each chapter presents a self-contained erroneous zone (self-defeating behaviour) to be dealt with; eradication of them all is part of Dyer's image of a self-actualized individual. Unlike Peale and Robbins, Dyer has several citations (in footnotes) and provides an index which includes names of the people he cites. The book does not provide a complete listing of citations; however, it is the most complete of the three books.

50. It is worth noting that Dyer emerges solidly as a humanistic psychologist. His ideas are reminiscent of both Maslow's and Rogers' and he uses their terminology on occasion. For example, Dyer talks about both self-actualized individuals (Maslow) and fully functioning persons (Rogers).

51. Dyer warns: "Taking charge of yourself involves more than simply trying on new thoughts for size. It requires a determination to be happy and to challenge and destroy each and every thought that creates a self-immobilizing unhappiness in you" (p.26-27). For Dyer, self-actualized (independent) individuals have eradicated the common pitfalls (erroneous zones) he describes, have declared their independence (Chapter XI) from external control, and have taken charge of their thoughts and emotions. They are free to experience happiness.

52. Throughout his book, Dyer (1976) places responsibility for one's emotions or for how one is feeling squarely on the shoulders of the individual (self-responsibility). By doing so, he believes his readers will learn to ask new questions of themselves, such as "Why am I choosing to feel upset right now?" (p. 14).

53. The back cover of the original 1986 softcover version of *Unlimited Power* introduces the reader to an overview of the book's contents. The overriding caption clarifies the book's title: "IT'S NOT ABOUT POWER OVER OTHER PEOPLE. IT'S ABOUT POWER OVER YOURSELF!" Robbins is billed as "the undisputed master of the magic of mind power" and, apparently, this book will show readers how to harness theirs. The power of Robbins' techniques are summarized in this promissory statement: "Yes, you can do, have, achieve, and create anything you want out of life. Robbins has proved it." Based on this summary, areas as diverse as fears and phobias, health and energy, interpersonal relationships, communication skills, and the five keys to wealth and happiness are addressed. The book appears to cover a diverse array of life's areas, possibly adding to the appeal of the book. The 421-page book's format is more complex than the former two. Unlike the former two texts, *Unlimited Power* begins with an information piece on the author and peer endorsements. Within three short years, Robbins went from a "six foot seven inch, clean-cut twenty-six-year-old...living in a 400-square-foot bachelor apartment, where he had to wash his dishes in the bathtub" to "a super success, a self-made millionaire who lives with his family in a castle by the sea and reaches tens of thousands of people each year with his *proven* programs for personal achievement;" he did this "by discovering the hidden powers of his mind, transforming his inhibitions into strengths, and developing strategies for excellence" (Robbins, 1986, first page inside front cover). Such a story provides compelling support for what the biography calls Robbins' "*proven* programs for personal achievement" (Robbins, 1986, first page inside front cover). The next two pages offer endorsements from people from various walks of life, including Norman Vincent Peale. The book contains a Foreword by Kenneth Blanchard, PhD-co-author of *The One Minute Manager*, a text that is referenced occasionally in Robbins' text-and an Introduction by Sir Jason Winters-author of *Killing Cancer*. The text is then broken down into three major sections, each containing several titled chapters. Similar to the former two self-help texts, chapters are fairly short with none reaching thirty pages. The book concludes with a glossary and information on the Robbins Research Institute. The three sections of the book have as their respective foci mastering personal communication, mastering interpersonal communication, and harnessing mass (global) communication.

54. Robbins (1986) presents several potential goals thereby making choosing an ultimate telos difficult and confusing. In fact, Robbins offers a dizzying number of goals for the reader such that one becomes confused as to the purpose of the book. One vacillates between seeing the book as a source for personal growth and seeing it as a communications manual on how to manipulate and persuade others. Because the book goes into such detail on the various aspects of Robbins' theory, the reader can easily get lost in the forest. One is so overwhelmed by minute details that one forgets what the overall forest (goal) looks like.

55. Robbins (1986) believes that communication is power; he writes: "All behavior and feelings find their original roots in some form of communication. Those who affect the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the majority of us are those who know how to use this

tool of power" (p.8). Moreover, in modern Western society, "those with the information and the means to communicate it have what the king used to have-unlimited power" (Robbins, 1986, p.6). According to Robbins, "the kind of specialized knowledge needed to transform the quality of our lives is available to everyone" (p.6); it is in bookstores, video stores, libraries, speeches, courses and more. The only thing preventing people from all being "empowered, happy, wealthy, healthy, and successful" is their lack of action. Robbins explains that knowledge is important, but "[k]nowledge is only *potential* power until it comes into the hands of someone who knows how to get himself to take effective action" [emphasis added] (p.7).

56. According to Robbins (1986), a person's state determines the individual's behaviours. People have more choices of behaviours when they are in a resourceful state than when they are in an unresourceful one. If people find themselves in an unresourceful state, Robbins states that they must simply change their physiology and/or internal representations in order to change that state. Physiology and internal representations are intertwined in what Robbins calls a "cybernetic loop" (p.39) and changing either internal representations or physiology affects the other as well as one's state. Changing one's states results in different choices of behaviour.

57. Robbins' (1986) describes his "Ultimate Success Formula" or path to success this way: (1) "know your outcome, that is,...define precisely what you want" (p.11); (2) "take action—otherwise your desires will always be dreams.... You must take the types of actions you believe will create the greatest probability of producing the result you desire" (p. 11); (3) "develop the sensory acuity to recognize the kinds of responses and results you're getting from your actions and...note as quickly as possible if they are taking you closer to your goals or farther away'-because "[t]he actions we take do not always produce the results we desire" (p. 11); and (4) "develop the flexibility to change your behavior until you get what you want" (p. 12).

58. Robbins (1986) provides two possible models of trend creation. (Those who lead the masses are trend creators.) The first one is through education, such as through his Unlimited Excellence Camps and his training program to provide teachers with NLP and other *Optimum Performance Technology*® skills. The second way to create positive new trends, according to Robbins, is "by finding common ground, by trying to create a viable alternative," that is, by finding a "win-win frame" (p.401).

59. It is important to realize that while the critique of the "experts" and the self-help authors might appear to be similarly harsh in terminology or findings, this thesis recognizes that the theories and ideas put forth by the "experts" and the self-help authors are not directly comparable. Nor are the individuals themselves. For example, Rogers was deeply dedicated to finding concrete, effective ways to genuinely help others become psychologically well and Maslow approached his ideas and theories with the utmost integrity. Additionally, the "experts" exhibited considerable philosophical awareness of what humanity might be like or achieve, taking into consideration the complexities of

human beings. In contrast, the self-help authors emerge as superficial authors with little to no reflective awareness of the manifold dimensions of human consciousness and of the complexities of human beings, in general.

60. Dyer (1976) thinks he is painting a picture of the ultimate human being; however, he paints a picture of a self-centred, callous individual who lacks warmth, compassion, and heart-lacks *hwnanness*. For example, this individual cannot be leaned upon without "disappearing, first emotionally, and then physically as well" (Dyer, 1976, p.235). Dyer's vision of an individual who is unflappable or unaffected by the vagaries of life and who is immune to any external forces, be it culture, events or others, fails miserably because he or she is closed and stunted.

61. Not only does Dyer make no room for the existence of a deeper connection across humanity or of a deeper level of existence, he makes no real room for the possibility of human beings intertwining. People are islands without bridges. Central to the Growth Model is perpetual internal (within self), interpersonal (between self and others), cultural (between self and culture), global (between self and universe), spiritual (between self and Ultimate Reality or a greater Whole) interaction through the alienation-intimacy complex. That is, the essence of life seems to consist of struggling with or negotiating some of the very scenarios (challenges), such as negotiating differing personalities and compromising personal and interpersonal needs, which Dyer (and the other two authors) strives so hard to eradicate.

62. For Dyer, love is two separate atoms living parallel lives. They remain mutually exclusive and simply choose to walk a parallel path: "love...predicates a relationship in which each person has the right to be what he chooses without any necessary conditions imposed by the other" (Dyer, 1976, .115).

63. Despite the centrality of God, a transcendent being, in his theory, Peale (1996) actually makes no genuine room for a trans-human, expansive, collective sense of Unity or Wholeness. Instead of providing a telos which strives to elevate humanity to become more loving and expansive-more God-like-Peale reverses the process and limits God. Peale brings God down to humanity's level, rendering God an instrument for obtaining success in *practical* matters. Peale's repeated use of the word "practical" reinforces the fact that Peale's focus is on the finite secular world, i.e., on material success. Peale also writes: "Remember that God does nothing except by law" (p. 151). Binding God to "law," even if it is "spiritual law," in essence, binds God (Peale's trans-human aspect) to the secular world, confining growth's telos to the finite and, thereby, not producing authentic growth as defined by this thesis. Dyer (1976) is no better in this regard. On his part, Dyer does not consider any trans-human aspect whatsoever in his theory. Dyer's insistence that the individual be independent and self-reliant precludes any consideration of a greater connective Force. Dyer envisions optimum individuals as independent, self-contained atoms who do not need others. As a result, Dyer seems to preclude consideration of (or room for) others let alone consideration of an Ultimate Reality. Robbins (1986) briefly

introduces the notion of a greater force that people might be able to tap into. Using a story called the Hundredth Monkey, Robbins suggests the existence of a collective unconscious "we can all pull from" (p.200). Robbins writes: "many prominent scientists and brain researchers, such as physicist David Bohm and biologist Rupert Sheldrake, believe there is a collective consciousness we all can pull from-and when we align ourselves through belief, through focus, through optimal physiology, we find a way to dip into this collective consciousness" (p.200). Despite being an intriguing notion, Robbins quickly moves on to make his real point-the importance of setting clear goals. Although Robbins allows for something inexplicable, something beyond the individual, something trans-human, he does no more than mention it. Unlike with Peale, God does not play a role in Robbins' theory of growth; however, like Peale, Robbins suggests that a force greater than humanity exists. In the end, however, Robbins does not explore the implications of such forces in his growth theory; therefore, one is compelled to conclude that Robbins' theory does not allow for a viable trans-human component.

64. Individuals are either moving forward (growing, evolving), resting (catching their breath before their next growth spurt-Maslow's (1968) "coasting" (p. 172)), staying stuck in their tracks (stagnating), or losing ground (going backwards, regressing, devolving). The first two can be construed as positive experiences, the last two as negative. Taking time to rest or catch one's breath from growing seems reasonable; the key, as indicated, is to ensure that this time of rest does not get so comfortable that it turns into stagnation.

65. Interestingly, in certain situations, Peale seems to indicate that alienation might simply be one's lot in life. For example, if one does not get what one prays for, it might be because God does not will it to be so. If that is the case, such alienation is to be embraced as being good because it is God's will. One is to accept the verdict and move on. Generally, for Peale, alienation is bad and to be eradicated; however, if alienation from a goal persists, it is to be accepted as the will of God and, therefore, as good.

66. Peale (1996) speaks of love for others occasionally in his book, but it comes across as an empty word, at best, instrumental, at worst. Loving others is offered as a cure for self-love, anger, illness, and getting others to like you; thus, loving others is thrown out like a platitude, lacking depth or meaning. Too often, consideration of others is important simply because it helps one's personal cause. (See Peale's Chapter 4 on praying for others.) Additionally, for Peale, intimacy with oneself (self-love) is a deficit to be remedied.

67. Regarding leading, Robbins' (1986) examples suggest that the *real* motive for leading others is to get those being led to help those doing the leading achieve the leaders' desired goals. For example, Robbins states that "[understanding strategy is absolutely essential to success in sales" (p. 140). While Robbins does state that "[a] salesman who learns how to elicit strategies will be learning his customer's exact needs" (p. 140), he later states that the best salespeople are the ones who "can take any 'no' and use it as a prod to go onto the next 'yes'" (p.375). The latent message is that successful salespeople are

master persuaders (or, more accurately, master manipulators) who understand buying strategies, adjust themselves accordingly in order to achieve rapport, then have the ability to lead the client around in such a way that the client wants to do what the salesperson wants the client to do ("agreement frame" (Robbins, 1986, p.282)).

One particular example causes one to question the ethics of Robbins' process. In one of his seminars, Robbins sends his clients out into society without common cultural artifacts, such as wallets, money, and identification. In this instance, Robbins asked his clients to get to Phoenix, Arizona, find work, spend the night and return the next day, simply by using the technologies he had taught them. One woman entered a bookstore and began imitating a well known self-help author; this person began falsely autographing the author's books. The bookstore owner was initially taken aback, then apologized to the woman for not initially recognizing her as the author. This is blatant misrepresentation and fraud, yet Robbins had no difficulties accepting this behaviour. Instead, Robbins was pleased that this woman had mastered the art of modelling so well that people actually mistook her for the person she was imitating. This example supports the potential for abuse of these techniques.

68. Robbins (1986) describes the effect of rapport on another as follows: "People feel as though they've found their soulmate, someone who totally understands, who can read their deepest thoughts, who is just like them" (p.235). While this sounds positive on the surface, its ethical nature is questionable. Robbins goes on to tell of an instance where he began mirroring a man in Central Park. He writes: "Before too long he gets up and walks over to me. No surprise. I'm totally attractive to him because he thinks I'm just like him" (Robbins, 1986, p.241). Robbins claims that the man tells Robbins that Robbins is obviously "a very intelligent man" because the person believes that Robbins is just like him. This behaviour sounds offensive, manipulative, and insincere. There was no purpose in this encounter except to manipulate the stranger into feeling rapport with Robbins so that the author could prove a point as to the power of this technique.

69. Speaking of love, it is worth noting that, for Robbins (1986), love is reduced to an instantly "trigger-able" state once one's love strategy is discovered. Compared to the notion of love as a universal force and, in its purest form, the ultimate experience of Wholeness, Robbins' vision of love is truncated—the product of internal communications and physiological states. As he does with so many other concepts, Robbins throws out brief comments on the importance of love on various occasions, but does not elaborate or substantiate what he means.

70. These texts try to enculturate readers, either blatantly or subtly. For example, the paternalistic tone of these self-help books might purposefully or inadvertently contribute to enculturation of their readers. All three books have a paternalistic "Father knows best" tone to them because the authors write in such a way that they emerge as learned men ("experts") imparting their wisdom to the less informed. Additionally, there is a subtext which implies that those who master the techniques given in these books will join the ranks of these wise men. For example, Robbins (1986) makes the occasional admonition

that one must consider others as one travels the road of excellence; however, he does not explain how to reconcile these potentially conflicting aspects of growth (how to balance self and others). Instead, a subtext implies that individuals of excellence simply *know* what others' needs are. For Robbins, excellence seems to entail an inherent superior (paternalistic) wisdom. Peale's book strives most overtly for enculturation of its readers and Robbins' is second. In contrast, Dyer tries to have his readers learn to stand outside culture; however, standing outside culture is not a realistic or viable solution.

GLOSSARY

Alienation: An initial experience of disconnection or separateness, often deemed to be bad and to be eradicated or mitigated. "Initial experience" is critical because alienation **does** not necessarily remain disconnecting. Instances of alienation can range from life-altering to minuscule. Experiences of alienation can be positive or negative; it depends on what the person ultimately does with the initial experience.

Alienation-intimacy complex: In this thesis, the name assigned to the interrelatedness or interconnection between alienation and intimacy in one's life. The Growth Model believes that experiencing instances of *alienation, intimacy*, and the interrelatedness between the two (the alienation-intimacy complex) are central, unavoidable, continual (lifelong), and universal. While the alienation-intimacy complex is universal, how one deals with each instance of alienation or intimacy is unique or personal. Everyone's life entails contending with the continual, lifelong oscillation between experiencing instances of alienation and instances of intimacy. Instances range from life-altering to minuscule, but they exist nonetheless and inform the individual's life. The Growth Model believes that the more authentic growth a person experiences in his or her life, the more competent he or she will be at negotiating the alienation-intimacy complex. The alienation-intimacy complex consists of four crucial quadrants: *positive alienation, negative alienation, positive intimacy*, and *negative intimacy*. Authentic growth is possible at any time, regardless of the quadrant one is currently in; however, it is believed that the positive quadrants (positive alienation and positive intimacy) are more conducive to promoting authentic **growth** than the negative quadrants (negative alienation and negative intimacy).

Authentic growth (general definition): Positive, beneficial growth. Theories of growth comprise, at minimum, a telos (envisioned end goal) and process (method by which to reach that goal). Authentic growth, in general, is conceived to be any growth which moves an individual closer to the theorist's or author's envisioned telos, presumably by following the theory's processes. **Problem:** A telos can be erroneous, misguided, short-sighted, and/or limited; therefore, a theorist's or author's vision of what constitutes authentic growth might actually be inauthentic. Growth towards an erroneous telos is neither positive nor beneficial and, therefore, becomes, in reality, a form of *inauthentic growth*.

Authentic growth (in Growth Model): After considering the experts' theories of growth, this thesis defines authentic growth as any growth which brings a person closer to the Growth Model's envisioned transpersonal, trans-human, expansive, liberating, connective telos of maximal (intellectual, emotional, and spiritual) consciousness.

Common space: The concept of a "common space" is crucial to authentic growth. Consciousness expands by incorporating that which was formerly "other" (e.g., that which

was formerly unknown, misunderstood, incomprehensible, outside, oppositional) to the individual. As one becomes familiar with, incorporates, and/or identifies with some "otherness," the internal area of commonality (common space) expands.

Connectivity, Connective, or Connection: A characteristic or quality of authentic growth. The interlinking of the various or different elements in our consciousness so as to **develop** or discover a sense of unity between those elements heretofore considered disconnected or separate. (See *Expansiveness* and *Liberating*.)

Emotional consciousness: (Can also be described as Heart.) The facet or realm of consciousness which entails the emotional ability to extend the range of one's ability to identify with something or someone beyond oneself. Identification is believed to lead to traits such as compassion, empathy, and/or sympathy. (See *Intellectual consciousness* and *Spiritual consciousness*.)

Environment: Growth does not occur in a vacuum. The Growth Model proposes that certain environments are more conducive than others to promoting authentic growth choices. The Growth Model differentiates between the *external* environment (e.g., others, culture) and the *internal* environment (e.g., attitudes, beliefs). (See *Love/fear dialectic*.)

Environment of fear: An internal and/or external environment of fear is considered to be negative, detrimental, and prohibitive to producing or promoting authentic growth in individuals. Environments (societies or attitudes) anchored in fear stifle individuals in myriad ways, thereby tending to render individuals afraid, unwilling, or unable to make authentic growth choices.

Environment of love: An internal and/or external environment of love is considered to be positive, beneficial, supportive, and encouraging to producing or promoting authentic growth in individuals. Environments (societies or attitudes) anchored in love support individuals in myriad ways, thereby tending to render individuals willing and able to make authentic growth choices. Love, generalized in this way, is used herein to capture the idea of (1) "unselfish[,] loyal and benevolent concern for the good of another;" and/or (2) "brotherly concern for others" (Woolf, 1975, p.681).

Expansiveness or Expansive: A characteristic or quality of consciousness resulting from authentic growth. One's consciousness expands by incorporating elements heretofore considered to be, or experienced as, "other." (See *Connectivity* and *Liberating*.)

External environment: The external environment refers to that which is outside the individual-e.g., culture, other individuals, the physical world, and so forth. The Growth Model proposes that certain external environments facilitate authentic growth more than others. The external environment most conducive to promoting authentic growth is one

anchored in love. The external environment least conducive to promoting authentic growth is one based in fear. See *Lovelfear dialectic*.

Faith: A generalized internal attitude which is believed to facilitate making authentic growth choices, as opposed to inauthentic growth or non-growth choices. This is not a religious characteristic. Dictionary definitions attempt to capture the nonsectarian meaning used in this thesis: (1) "firm belief in something for which there is no proof;" (2) "complete confidence;" (3) "without doubt or question" (Woolf, 1975, p.412).

Growth: Growth is considered to be a, if not *the*, central goal or purpose of life. However, different forms of growth exist. Because growth can be either positive and beneficial or negative and detrimental, growth is further refined and divided into two categories: *authentic growth* and *inauthentic growth*.

Growth model: The Model used to capture the core ideas of the tentative alternative theory of growth put forth in this thesis. The core components are the *telos*, *process*, *alienation-intimacy complex*, and the *lovelfear dialectic* pertaining to the internal and external environments.

Inauthentic (forms of) growth: Forms of growth which appear positive and beneficial, but are, in reality, negative and detrimental to the individual in some way. Inauthentic forms of growth include substitute growth, unbalanced growth, reverse growth or regression, and stagnation (non-growth). While stagnation-staying still/not growing-is not *technically* growth, it is negative, unhealthy and detrimental to the individual; therefore, it is lumped under the rubric inauthentic forms of growth, which attempts to capture negative types of growth.

Intellectual consciousness: (Can also be described as Mind.) The facet or realm of consciousness which entails the most integrative or unitive approach to the many different perspectives one encounters in life, such as ideological, social, cultural, gender, historical, and so forth. (See *Emotional consciousness* and *Spiritual consciousness*.)

Internal environment: The individual's internal environment refers to the person's personal attitudes, beliefs, values, approaches to life. The Growth Model proposes that certain internal attitudes facilitate authentic growth more than others. The internal environment most conducive to promoting authentic growth is one anchored in love. The internal environment least conducive to promoting authentic growth is one based in fear. See *Lovelfear dialectic*.

Intimacy: An initial experience of connection or closeness, often deemed to be good and to be sought after. "Initial experience" is critical because intimacy does not necessarily remain connective. Instances of intimacy can range in breadth and intensity. Experiences

of intimacy can be positive or negative; it often depends on what the person ultimately does with the initial experience.

Liberating or Liberation: A characteristic or quality of authentic growth. One experiences liberation or freedom in the context of a higher degree of connectivity and expansiveness insofar as there is a reduction of an "*oppositional otherness*" in one's frame of reference or consciousness. (See *Connectivity* and *Expansiveness*.)

Love/fear dialectic: The Growth Model proposes the notion of a love/fear dialectic associated with authentic growth; it argues that the internal and external environments most conducive to authentic growth are environments anchored in love and that the environments least conducive to growth are ones anchored in fear. (This love/fear dialectic can be seen at work in the positive and negative quadrants associated with the alienation-intimacy complex.) The environment most conducive for growth is one in which *both* the external environment and the internal environment are based in love. The *worst* environment for promoting growth (that is, the *best* environment for promoting negative growth, such as stagnation and regression) would be one in which *both* the *external* and *internal* environments are based in fear. Individuals can, however, find themselves in an external environment of fear yet still approach life with an internal environment of love or, conversely, find themselves in an external environment of love and yet approach life with an internal environment of fear. The internal environment is ultimately the individual's choice and is crucial. The external environment is largely given to people; however, that does not preclude people from making choices to change it (or make growth-inducing choices within environmental constraints).

Love: Love is used herein in the sense of empathic connectivity or the ability to emotionally identify with oneself, others, nature or Ultimate Reality.

Maximal consciousness: The ideal, ultimate end goal of authentic growth envisioned by the tentative alternative theory of growth (Growth Model) put forth in this thesis.

Rationale: Human beings are conscious beings; hence, maximum or optimum human growth and development would comprise developing one's consciousness to the maximum. All three areas of consciousness (intellectual, emotional, spiritual) must be developed in order to constitute authentic growth. For example, intellectual development without accompanying emotional development (e.g., being intellectually brilliant yet emotionally stunted) is neither healthy nor authentic. Developing one's intellect adds breadth. Developing one's emotional capacities adds depth. Developing one's spirit touches or invokes the Infinite and adds dimension beyond the personal. (See *Emotional consciousness*, *Intellectual consciousness*, and *Spiritual consciousness*.)

Nature: "The external world in its entirety" (Woolf, 1975, p.766).

Negative alienation: Individuals experience negative alienation when they negotiate the initial experience of disconnection (e.g., a challenge) in such a way that they experience **some** form of ^{/^}authentic growth.

Negative intimacy: Individuals experience negative intimacy when they negotiate the initial experience of connection (intimacy) in such a way that they experience some form of **mauthentic** growth.

"Oppositional otherness" or "other": That which is external to an individual and has not been incorporated into his or her consciousness (e.g., understanding, perspective) in some capacity. That which is "other" can be physical or metaphysical. As one incorporates more and more oppositional otherness into one's consciousness, less and less becomes or remains oppositional as it is absorbed into the ever-expanding "common space" framework. Growth in consciousness is believed to entail incorporating other consciousnesses into a common space. (See *Liberation*.)

Positive alienation: Individuals experience positive alienation when they negotiate the initial experience of disconnection (e.g., a challenge) in such a way that they experience some degree of authentic growth (increased consciousness and connection, e.g., from meeting the challenge).

Positive intimacy: Individuals experience positive intimacy when they negotiate the initial experience of connection (intimacy) in such a way that they achieve some degree of authentic growth.

Process (general definition): In a theory of growth, the ways, behaviours, or methods put forward by a theorist or author that one should use in order to achieve or move towards that theorist's or author's envisioned telos. Processes can vary dramatically from theory to theory, even when the same telos is envisioned.

Process (of Growth Model): Learning to successfully negotiate the Growth Model, especially negotiating the *alienation-intimacy complex* (e.g., recognizing its four quadrants-*positive alienation, negative alienation, positive intimacy, and negative intimacy*-so that one can make growth-promoting choices when experiencing instances of alienation and intimacy), and being aware of the power and influence of the love/fear dialectic pertaining to one's internal and external environments. Attitudes and environments anchored in fear tend to foster making growth-inhibiting choices while attitudes and environments anchored in love tend to foster making growth-inducing choices.

Spiritual consciousness: (Can also be described as Spirit, characterized by the Infinite.) The facet or realm of consciousness which entails both intellectual and emotional consciousness and encompasses the realization/sensation that all is part of a greater Whole

or Ultimate Reality. When the emotional (heart) and the intellectual (mind) are integrated, "something more" emerges. That "something more," the sense that there is something greater than humanity, is called spiritual consciousness (spirit). More specifically, integrating the breadth of the perspectives of the intellect (mind) with the depth of emotional identification (heart) generates a sense of trans-human or universal connection-connection that resonates with the Infinite. The breadth of intellect and the depth of emotion mutually reinforce each other and, when combined, create a sense of connection to the Infinite Whole. Intellect (Mind) + Emotion (Heart) => Trans-human/Universal Connection (Connection with the Infinite (Spirit)). (See *Emotional consciousness* and *Intellectual consciousness*.)

Telos (general definition): The ideal, ultimate end goal of growth envisioned by a theorist or author in his or her theory of growth. (Growth is envisioned as movement towards a particular end goal.) (Plural: Teloi.)

Telos (of Growth Model): Maximal consciousness, which entails all realms of consciousness. (Human beings are conscious beings; hence, maximum or optimum human growth and development would comprise developing maximal consciousness.) *Maximal consciousness* is divided into three main parts: *intellectual consciousness* (i.e., mental, psychological), *emotional consciousness*, and *spiritual consciousness*. (Plural: Teloi.)

Theories of growth: A formal or informal set of ideas regarding growth. Such theories entail both telos and process. That is, such theories envision an ideal end goal to which human beings *should* grow (telos) and provide ideas on how best to achieve that telos (process).

Trans-human: Beyond humanity, the secular, and the worldly. The Growth Model proposes a telos which is trans-human, meaning that the goal of growth must consider a realm beyond the mundane (or secular). This trans-human aspect is captured in the concepts of Ultimate Reality, the Whole, or the Infinite. A telos which does not consider the trans-human realm is considered to be short-sighted, erroneous and finite.

Transpersonal: Beyond the intrapersonal or the individual-that is, entailing a consciousness that is interrelated to the consciousness of other human beings. The Growth Model proposes a telos which is transpersonal, meaning that the goal of growth must consider more than the intrapersonal realm or the individual. A telos which is not transpersonal and aims at individualistic growth is considered to be short-sighted, erroneous and finite.

Trust: A general attitude or trait considered to be conducive to helping an individual make authentic growth choices. It is defined generally as follows: "to place confidence in" (Woolf, 1975, p. 1256).

Ultimate Reality: Understood in this thesis to be the Infinite Unity/Connection of all things. Synonymous with the concept of the *Whole*.

Whole (the): Understood in this thesis to be the Infinite Unity/Connection of all things. Synonymous with the concept of *Ultimate Reality*.

REFERENCES

- Apfel, R. J. (1996). "With a little help from my friends I get by": Self-help books and psychotherapy. *Psychiatry*, 59, 309-322.
- Amazon.com. (2001). Self-help bestsellers list. Retrieved August 21, 2001, from Web site: <http://www.amazon.com>
- Arendt, H. (1998). Ideology and terror: A novel form of government. In L. A. Jacobus (Ed.), *A world of ideas: Essential readings for college writers*, 5th ed., (pp.83-101). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Association for Humanistic Psychology (AHP). (2001). About humanistic psychology: From Maslow to the 21st century. Retrieved December 12, 2001, from Association for Humanistic Psychology Web site: <http://www.ahpweb.org/aboutahp/whatis.html>
- Bailey, F. C. (1999). *'Preachers without pulpits': New Thought and the rise of therapeutic self-help in progressive era America (Henry Wood, Sidney Weltmer, Elizabeth Towne, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Ralph Waldo Trine)*. (Doctoral dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1999). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 60(06), 2189A.
- Biblical Discernment Ministries. (1994). Norman Vincent Peale. Retrieved December 12, 2001, from Additional *Guideposts* Notes Web site: <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Psychology/guidepo/peale.htm>
- Bines, J., & Greenberg, G. (1999). *Self-helpless: The greatest self-help books you'll never read*. Franklin Lakes, NJ: The Career Press, Inc.
- Black, Max. (1968). Humanism. In *Merit Students Encyclopedia* (Vol.9, pp. 125-126). Crowell-Collier Educational Corporation.
- Boeree, C. G., Dr. (1997a). Personality theories. Retrieved December 12, 2001, from Shippensburg University, Psychology Department Web site: <http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/perscontents.html>
- Boeree, C. G., Dr. (1997b). Personality theories. Retrieved December 12, 2001, from Shippensburg University, Psychology Department Web site: <http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/fromm.html>

- Boeree, C. G., Dr. (1998). Personality theories. Retrieved December 12, 2001, from Shippensburg University, Psychology Department Web site:
<http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/maslow.html>
- Bohm, D. (1980). *Wholeness and the implicate order*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Briggs, A. (1987). Samuel Smiles: The gospel of self-help. *History Today*, 37, 37-43.
- Burke, K. (1990). From "A rhetoric of motives." In P. Bizzell, & B. Fferzberg (Eds.), *The rhetorical tradition: Readings from classical times to the present*, (pp. 1018-1034). Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Awash in a sea of faith: Christianizing the American people*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Carnegie, D. (1936). *How to win friends and influence people*. New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc.
- Carter, P. A. (1971). *The spiritual crisis of the gilded age*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press.
- Cavanagh, M. F. (1998). *Codependency, discourse and lived experience: A critical interdisciplinary dialogue*. (Master's thesis, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, 1998). Master's Abstracts International, 37, 826.
- Champagne, L. (1990). *Self-Esteem, feminism, and self-help books: A tool for evaluating self-help books on self-esteem*. Unpublished master's thesis, Smith College School for Social Work, Northampton, Massachusetts.
- Cooper, D. E. (1996). *World philosophies: An historical introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Cornerstone Books, (n.d.). Norman Vincent Peale (1898-1993): Champion of positive thinking. Retrieved December 12, 2001, from Cornerstone Books Web site:
<http://website.lineone.net/~cornerstone/peale.htm>
- Couto, R. (1992). What's political about self-help? *Social Policy*, 23(2), p.39-43.
- Cullari, Dr. (2000). Personality theory, Psy 343. Retrieved December 12, 2001, from Lebanon Valley College Web site:
<http://www.lvc.edu/psychology/courses/personahtv.html>

- Curtis, S. A. (1979). The effects of personal development education on growth toward self-actualization: An empirical analysis. (Doctoral dissertation, The Florida State University College of Education, 1979). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 40, 5331A.
- D., Jim. (2000). Co-dependency. Retrieved December 12, 2001, from Next Step Recovery Inc. Web site: <http://www.mlode.com/~ra/ra8/co-dependency.htm>
- Daniels, M., PhD. (1996-2001). Introduction to transpersonal psychology. Retrieved November 22, 2001, from Transpersonal [Psychology.co.uk](http://www.mdani.demon.co.uk/trans/tranintro.htm) Web site: <http://www.mdani.demon.co.uk/trans/tranintro.htm>
- DeFrancisco, V. (1995). Helping our selves: An introduction. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 18(2), 111-122.
- DeFrancisco, V. & O'Connor, P. (1995). A feminist critique of self-help books on heterosexual romance: read 'em and weep. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 18(2), 217-227.
- Douglas, A. (1977). *The feminization of American culture*. New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday.
- Douglas, H. A. (1979). *The society of self: An analysis of contemporary popular inspirational self-help literature in a socio-historical perspective*. Unpublished master's thesis, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.
- Dresner, D. (1995). Collins paperback encyclopedia. Glasgow: *HarptrCoHmsPublishers*.
- Dyer, W. W., Dr. (1976). *Your erroneous zones*. New York: Avon Books.
- Dyer, W. W., Dr. (2001). Home page. Retrieved December 13, 2001, from Web site: <http://www.drwaynedyer.com/>
- Earle, R., Metzner, S., & Zion, C. (1992). *Come here, go away: Stop running from the love you want*. Richmond Hill, ON: Distican.
- Ebben, M. (1995). Off the shelf salvation: A feminist critique of self-help. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 18(2), 229-243.
- Ellul, J. (1980). The technological society. In D. S. Gochberg (Ed.), *Classics of western thought: The twentieth century* (pp.131-145). Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.

- Fadiman, J. & Frager, R. (1976). *Personality and personal growth*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Forest, J. J. (1987). Effects on self-actualization of paperbacks about psychological self-help. *Psychological Reports*, 60, 1243-1246.
- Forest, J. J. (1988). Exploring more on the effects of psychological self-help paperbacks. *Psychological Reports*, 63, 891-894.
- Forest, J. J. (1990). Perspectives on human behavior in self-help paperbacks and introductory psychology textbooks. *Psychological Reports*, 67, 335-338.
- Forest, J. J. (1991). Effects of attitudes and interests on personality change induced by psychological self-help Books. *Psychological Reports*, 68, 587-592.
- Forest, J. J. (1997). Rated relevance of words in self-help psychology books. *Psychological Reports*, 80, 22.
- Forest, J. J. (1998). A replication of rated relevance of self-help words from psychology books. *Psychological Reports*, 83, 674.
- Frankl, V. (1984). *Man's search for meaning*. New York: Washington Square Press.
- Fredenburgh, F. A. (1971). *The psychology of personality and adjustment*. Menlo Park, CA: Cummings Publishing Company, Inc.
- Fromm, E. (1941). *Escape from freedom*. New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc.
- Fromm, E. (1947). *Man for himself: An inquiry into the psychology of ethics*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Fromm, E. (1955) *The sane society*. Greenwich, Connecticut: Fawcett Publications, Inc.
- Fromm, E. (1956). *The art of loving*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1956.
- Gemin, J. (1997). Manufacturing codependency: Self-help as discursive formation. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 14(3), 249-266.
- George, C. V. R. (1993). *God's salesman: Norman Vincent Peale and the power of positive thinking*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Grodin, D. (1995). Women reading self-help: Themes of separation and connection. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 18(2), 123-134.

- Hegel, G. W. F. (1977). *Phenomenology of Spirit*. (A. V. Miller, Trans.). Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Original work published 1807)
- Hyndman, B., M.HSc. (1996). Does self-help help? A review of the literature on the effectiveness of self-help programs. Evaluation in Health Promotion Series. Canadian and International Perspectives. The Centre for Health Promotion and ParticipACTION, University of Toronto.
- Irvine, L. (1996). Featured essay on Elayne Rapping's "The culture of recovery: Making sense of the self-help movement in women's lives" and John Steadman Rice's "A disease of one's own: psychotherapy, addiction, and the emergence of co-dependency." *Contemporary Sociology*, 25(6), 721-722.
- JFKU Graduate School for Holistic Studies. (1995-2001a). Department of Consciousness Studies. Retrieved November 22, 2001, from John F. Kennedy University, Department of Consciousness Studies Web site: <http://www.ifku.edu/holistic/cs-ma.html>
- JFKU Graduate School for Holistic Studies. (1995-2001b). Department of Consciousness Studies. Retrieved November 22, 2001, from John F. Kennedy University, Department of Transpersonal Psychology Web site: <http://www.ifku.edu/hoUstic/tpc.html>
- Johnson, W. B., & Johnson, W. L. (1998). Self-help books used by religious practitioners. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 76(4), 459-466.
- Kaminer, W. (1992). *I'm dysfunctional, you're dysfunctional: The recovery movement and other self-help fashions*. Reading, MA : Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.
- KEST 1450 AM Radio Home Page. Retrieved December 12, 2001, from <http://www.psvchicpsvchology.com/kest.htm>
- Lears, T. J. J. (1983). From salvation to self-realization: Advertising and the therapeutic roots of the consumer culture, 1880-1930. In W. Fox & T. J. J. Lears (eds.), *The Culture of consumption: Critical essays in American history, 1880-1980*, (pp. 1-38). New York: Pantheon.
- Lerner, H. G. (1989). *The dance of intimacy: A Woman's guide to courageous acts of change in key relationships*. New York: Harper & Row.

- Levi, P. (1958). *Survival in Auschwitz: the Nazi assault on humanity*. (S. Woolf, Trans.). London: Collier MacMillan Publishers. (Original work published in 1958)
- Lichterman, P. (1992). Self-help reading as a thin culture. *Media Culture & Society*, *14*(3), 421-447.
- Lubusko, A. & Forest, J. (1989). Memory for information in self-help psychology books. *Psychological Reports*, *65*(3), 891-896.
- Marrs, R. W. (1995). A meta-analysis of bibliotherapy studies. *American Journal of Community Psychology*. *23*(6), 843-870.
- Maslow, A. H. (1956). Self-actualizing people: A study of psychological health. In Clark E. Moustakas, (Ed.), *The Self: Explorations in personal growth* (pp. 160-194). New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Incorporated.
- Maslow, A. H. (1968). *Toward a psychology of being*. Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc.
- Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Massey, R. F. (1981). *Personality theories: Comparisons and syntheses*. New York: D. **Van Nostrand Company**.
- Mastronardi, M. (1995). Codependence and the politics of inner resistance. *Women's Studies in Communication*, *18*(2), 199-208.
- Materra, G. W. (1997). Women in early new thought: Lives and theology in transition, from the Civil War to World War I. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *58* (03), 935A. (UMINo. 9727722).
- McCarthy, K. (1984). Psychotherapy and religion: The Emmanuel Movement. *Journal of Religion and Health*, *23*, 92-105.
- McGraw, P. C, Dr. (2000). *Life strategies: Doing what works, doing what matters*. New York: Hyperion.
- McGraw, P. C, Dr. (2000). *Relationship rescue: A seven-step strategy for reconnecting with your partner*. New York: Hyperion.
- McGraw, P. C, Dr. (2000). *The relationship rescue workbook*. New York: Hyperion.

- Meyer, D. (1980). *The positive thinkers: Religion as pop psychology from Mary Baker Eddy to Oral Roberts*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Mill, J. S. (1988). On liberty and utilitarianism. In E. E. Knoebel (Ed.), *Classics of western thought: The modern world* (pp.323-337). Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.
- Moore, R. L. (1994). *Selling God: American religion in the marketplace of culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Morgenstern, J. (1998). *Organizing from the inside out: The foolproof system for organizing your home, your office, and your life*. Owl Books. New York: Henry Hold and Company.
- Nicolosi, L. (2001). Reflections on the human potential movement: An interview with William Coulson. Retrieved December 12, 2001, from National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality Web site:
<http://www.leaderu.com/orgs/narth/coulson.html>
- Pardeck, J. T. (1993). *Using bibliotherapy in clinical practice: A guide to self-help books*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.
- Peale, N. V. (1996). *The power of positive thinking*. New York: Fawcett Columbine.
- Peoples, K. M. *The presence of social interest and autonomy as complementary features of genuine self-actualization in participants of the human potential movement*. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 42 (05), 2076B. (UMI No. 8124397)
- Pilisuk, M., & Minkler M. (1985). Social support: Economic and political considerations. *Social Policy*, 15(3), 6-11.
- Quartaro, G. K. (1994). The use of self-help books: A grounded theory approach. (Doctoral Dissertation, York University, 1993). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 55, 4130B.
- Ramis, H. (Director). (1995). *Stuart saves his family*. [Motion picture]. United States: Paramount Pictures.
- Rapping, E. (1997). There's self-help and then there's self-help: Women and the recovery movement. *Social Policy*, 27, 56-61.

- Reeb, J. A. The meaning of Mars and Venus on Earth. (Doctoral dissertation, The California School of Professional Psychology, 1999). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 60, 2363B.
- Reeve, J. (1992). *Understanding motivation and emotion*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.
- Richardson, C. (2000). *Life makeovers*. New York: Broadway books.
- Richardson, C. (1999). *Take time for your life: A personal coach's seven-step program for creating the life you want*. New York: Broadway books.
- Rimke, H. M. (1997). (Re)constructing the ethical self: Self-help literature as a contemporary project of moral regulation. *Masters Abstracts International*, 36 (05), 1283. '
- Robbins, A. (1991). *Awaken the giant within: How to take immediate control of your mental, emotional, physical, & financial destiny!* New York: Summit Books.
- Robbins, A. (1986). *Unlimited power*. New York: Fawcett Columbine.
- Robbins Research International, Inc. (2000a). Anthony Robbins (biography). Retrieved December 12, 2001, from The Anthony Robbins Companies biography Web site: <http://www.tonyrobbins.com/bio.html>
- Robbins Research International, Inc. (2000b). Anthony Robbins (biography). Retrieved December 12, 2001, from The Anthony Robbins Companies biography Web site: <http://www.tonyrobbins.com/bio2.html>
- Rogers, C. R., PhD. (1951). *Client-Centred Therapy: Its current practice, implications, and theory*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Rogers, C. R. (1956). What it means to become a person. In Clark E. Moustakas, (Ed.), *The self: Explorations in personal growth* (pp. 195-211). New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Incorporated.
- Rogers, C. R. (1961). *On becoming a person: A therapist's view of psychotherapy*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Rogers, C. R., PhD. (1977). *Carl Rogers on personal power*. New York: Delacorte Press.

- Rosen, G. M. (1987). Self-help treatment books and the commercialization of psychotherapy. *American Psychologist*, 42, 46-51.
- Saper, Z. L. (1990). *Effect of type of instruction on solution of psychological self-help problems*. (Master's thesis, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, 1990). *Masters Abstracts International*, 30, 1488.
- Saper, Z. & Forest, J. (1987). Personality variables and interest in self-help books. *Psychological Reports*, 60, 563-566.
- Saper, Z. & Forest, J. J. (1992). Effects of type of instruction on solution of psychological self-help problems. *Psychological Reports*, 70, 1095-1105.
- Schmidt, M. (1993). *An analysis of ethical appeals in codependency self-help literature*. Unpublished master's thesis, South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD.
- Scholz, D. F. (1992). *Using fictional, biographical, and self-help literature in controlled and uncontrolled reading situations*. (Master's thesis, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, 1992). *Masters Abstracts International*, 31, 1945.
- Scholz, D. F. & Forest, J. J. (1997). Effects of fictional, autobiographical and self-help literature on personality measures. *Psychological Reports*, 80, 91-96.
- Simonds, W. (1992). *Women and self-help culture: Reading between the lines*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Spencer, L. & Krauze, A. (1996). *Hegel For beginners*. Duxford, Cambridge: Icon Books Ltd.
- Starker, S. (1988). Psychologists and self-help books: Attitudes and prescriptive practices of clinicians. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 42(3), 448-455.
- Starker, S. (1989). *Oracle at the supermarket: The American preoccupation with self-help books*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Taylor, S. E., Pham, L. B., Rivkin, I. D., & Armor, D. A.. (1998). Harnessing the imagination: Mental stimulation, self-regulation, and coping. *American Psychologist*, 53(4), 429-439.
- Vitz, P. C. (1977). *Psychology as religion: The cult of self-worship*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

- Voorhees, C. M. (1984). A comparative analysis of self-administered bibliotherapeutic methods: Self-help publications on human relationships, child-rearing and marital growth. *Dissertation Abstract International*, 45 (07), 1996B. (UMINo. 8418710)
- Walters, R. G. (1978). *American reformers: 1815-1860*. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Wilber, K. (1998). *The essential Ken Wilber: An introductory reader*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc.
- Wilber, K. (2000). *Integral Psychology: Consciousness, spirit, psychology, therapy*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc.
- Williams, M. , & Rappoport, D. (Executive Producers). (2001). The Montel Williams show. [Television series]. New York.
- Winfrey, O. (Supervising Producer). (2001). *The Oprah Winfrey show*. [Television series]. Chicago.
- Woods, N. E. (1995). Women's self-help: A feminist critique. *Masters Abstracts International*, 34 (05), 1829. (UMINo. MM08386)
- Woolf, H. B. (Ed.). (1975). *Webster's new collegiate dictionary*. Toronto: Thomas Allen & Son Limited.
- Woolverton, J. F. (1983). Evangelical protestantism and alcoholism 1933-1962: Episcopalian Samuel Shoemaker, the Oxford Group and Alcoholics Anonymous. *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, 52, 53-65.

APPENDIX A

Humanism and Humanistic Psychology

Maslow and Rogers are both humanistic psychologists and Fromm shows a serious leaning in that direction. In *humanism* in general the human being is central. Humanism explores and celebrates the individual human being and one's development, interests, and potentialities. Humanists believe in the goodness and high potential of human nature rather than in religious or transcendental values (Dresner et al., 1995). Ultimately, humanism desires to enlarge an individual's awareness of oneself. Although the term originates in the Renaissance, humanistic thought can be traced back to Classical Greece and, in fact, Socrates' teaching, "Know thyself," encapsulates the early roots of humanism (Black, 1968). These humanistic tendencies are not only found in Maslow's, Rogers' and Fromm's theories, they are prevalent in many self-help texts.

As for *humanistic psychology*, it is a psychological approach that adheres to humanist ideas and values. Therefore, it emphasizes human beings' uniqueness and is concerned with subjective experience, human values and human potentialities or the full richness of human experience (AHP, 2001, The founding). Reeve (1992) claims that the humanistic psychological approach "stresses the notion of self and its striving towards fulfillment" (p.311). One web site defines humanistic psychology as "a value orientation that holds a hopeful, constructive view of human beings and of their substantial capacity to be self-determining" and that tries to enhance "such distinctly human qualities as choice, creativity, the interaction of the body, mind and spirit, and the capacity to become more aware, free, responsible, life-affirming and trustworthy" (AHP, 2001, The humanistic view of human behavior, fl). Humanistic psychology believes that answers are to be found in human consciousness and experiences and tends towards holism in its approach to the individual. Holistic approaches assert that "a human being is best understood as an integrated, organized whole, rather than as a series of differentiated parts"(Reeve, 1992, p.311); that which affects one aspect of the organism (system) affects the entire organism, such that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. For example, hunger affects the whole person, not just the stomach (Reeve, 1992, p.311).

Humanistic psychology is especially concerned with the task of bringing the individual in contact with one's own original and authentic nature, with challenging the individual to become what one already inherently is, and with encouraging the individual to self-actualize and strive toward fulfilling his or her full innate or inherent potential (AHP, 2001, The humanistic view of human behavior). (This aspect is central for this chapter's "experts.") Humanistic psychology also has faith in the individual's capacity to do so. Because self-actualization is not considered an easy task, humanistic psychology generally stresses taking responsibility for oneself "as one confronts personal transitions" (AHP, 2001, The humanistic view of human behavior,

This school of psychology also acknowledges external and internal forces, such as social and unconscious forces, and recognizes that some of these forces are negative and destructive (AHP, 2001, The humanistic view of human behavior). Lastly, humanist psychologists generally study "healthy" individuals as opposed to "unhealthy" (e.g., neurotic) people. This point is especially true for Maslow; however, it is less true for Rogers and Fromm. Rogers gained insight into his theory based on experiences in his Person-Centered Therapy and Fromm drew most of his ideas from what he considered to be pathological behaviours that he saw happening around him. In the end, humanistic psychology wanted to offer "a fuller concept and experience of what it means to be human" (Cullari, 2000, chap. 12) than was offered by the other two schools of psychology, behaviourism and psychoanalysis.

The above-mentioned general information on humanistic psychology sets a backdrop for the specific theoretical ideas presented by those psychologists that have been labelled the "experts"-Maslow, Rogers, and Fromm.

It is important to note that, later on in Maslow's career, he went on to work quite extensively in transpersonal psychology and has apparently become well known for these ideas. Unfortunately, this writer was unfamiliar with this reality at the time of writing and focused on the theory she was most familiar with-Maslow's Theory of Needs Gratification. Exploration of Maslow's additional work is recommended and warranted.

APPENDIX B

Justification for This Tentative Theory of Growth

Chapter 4 introduces a tentative theory of growth based on personal thoughts garnered over the years, particularly from ideas based on personal work done in undergraduate (General Studies 300 and General Studies 500) and graduate (directed-reading) courses. Although the ideas offered are this writer's, they are not completely without support in the world of academia. In his later life, Maslow wrote of visions of a fourth force or transpersonal psychology, which has since come to fruition. Ken Wilber is thought to be the key proponent of this vision as well as the key proponent of perennial philosophy (Daniels, 1996-2001, *Pioneers of transpersonal psychology*). Two of Wilber's works that have recently come to my attention are *The Essential Ken Wilber: An Introductory Reader* (1998) and *Integral Psychology: Consciousness, Spirit, Psychology, Therapy* (2000). Both positive psychology (the main proponent of which is Martin E. P. Seligman) and transpersonal psychology appear to be relatively recent fields. (This writer has only recently learned that Wilber and Grof have been writing on this topic since the 1970s.) Based on the number and type of web sites dedicated to each, of the two, the latter seems much more established than the former. (For example, John F. Kennedy University, Orinda, California, has a Department of Transpersonal Psychology (JFKU, 1995-2001b) and a Department of Consciousness Studies (JFKU, 1995-2001a) and the university offers various graduate degrees in transpersonal psychology (JFKU, 1995-2001b).)

While this tentative theory grows out of a genuine personal, practical desire to understand the goals of life, it is reassuring to know that other theories support these ideas, even though their focus might differ dramatically. For example, Kenneth Burke's identification theory deals with rhetoric, yet speaks of the need to identify on three levels-the intrapersonal, the interpersonal and the transpersonal (Burke, 1990). Even Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (thesis, antithesis, synthesis) provides support for these ideas (Hegel, 1977). Hence, while the ideas presented in this thesis might not comprise a

comprehensive, completely defensible theory of growth, I believe that the tentative theory offers worthwhile ideas which are worth exploring and worthy of further study and closer consideration at a later date. A logical next step entails analysing this tentative theory and model of growth more fully.

APPENDIX C

Additional Aspects of the Growth Model

The following sections comprise additional aspects of the Growth Model presented in Chapter 4. They are provided in an Appendix because these aspects are not directly addressed as part of the critique of the "experts" and the self-help books under analysis. While these aspects are not addressed directly, they still comprise crucial aspects of the growth process. The notion of balance versus imbalance occurs within the alienation-intimacy complex and between other elements as well. Additionally, it is important to realize that the growth process is universal; however, specific growth experiences are individual and idiosyncratic. That which poses a huge challenge to one person might go virtually unnoticed to another. Hence, the growth process is universal, but growth experiences are personal.

Balance versus Imbalance:

Balance is a crucial aspect of growth. Regarding this schema, balance is required between positive alienation and positive intimacy as oscillation between the two seems to be the stuff of life. Too much of either can become a negative experience. For example, too much intimacy can lead to smothering, saturation, withdrawal and even stagnation or alienation. Too much alienation can lead to withdrawal, regression, and stagnation, even psychosis. In fact, it is worth noting that although alienation and intimacy are discussed as two separate components and experiences, there is an amazing amount of overlap. It is difficult to know where one begins and the other ends. Alienation and intimacy can be problematic concepts due to this overlap; hence, they are differentiated by the experiences they initially generate—alienation as disconnection and intimacy as connection. Individuals must also learn to balance their desire and need for space with their desire and need for connection. They must also balance their personal need and desire for space and/or connection with those same needs found in the other people in their lives.

The most blatant area requiring balance in this model is between alienation and intimacy; however, other areas require balancing as well. For example, individuals are constantly trying to balance personal goals, dreams, wishes, and desires with those of others, especially those who form an intimate part of their lives (for example, spouses, children, parents, close friends-significant others). People are constantly trying to balance their individuality with the reality of their social existence, their "sociality"-with the fact that they are social creatures. Ultimately, trying to balance independence (individuality) with interdependence (one's interconnectedness) is one of the most challenging aspects of life. In the end, there is no one, set, optimum balance point for which individuals can strive and hope to obtain and maintain because life is flux. Life is dynamic, not static. The guiding principle or yardstick for balance, as with all aspects of growth, is authentic growth measured as movement towards growth's telos-as increased consciousness and connection. If the ultimate goal is maximal consciousness and connection to a deeper (Ultimate) reality or to the larger Whole (unity), then at each particular moment the optimum balance point is that which renders a person most conscious and most connected.

These above-mentioned examples of aspects requiring balance show how one must take into consideration balance between the internal (within ourselves) and the external (our environment, including others). In the upper half of the matrix-that is, in the environment most or more conducive to authentic growth-awareness, faith, courage, confidence, acceptance, and the ability to let go of control are but a few of the attitudes or approaches which would help individuals be aware of and strive for greater balance between the internal and the external. One must learn to balance living for oneself with living with and for others. Extremes of either are detrimental. As one moves down the scales towards negative alienation and negative intimacy and more into the (perceived, if not real) environment of fear, one is apt to see and experience extremes. For example, extreme forms of negative intimacy might emerge as perverted internalization-as subjectification gone mad (for example, Hitler). The individual becomes the entire universe with no connection with the external except for selfish gains and for destructive purposes. Perverted externalization-an extreme form of self-alienation-might emerge

when one experiences total objectification, no connection with the internal. Such an example of extreme externalization would be one of dehumanization and reification, such as in the concentration camps-see Levi (1958). Slavery would be another such (potential) example.

The key, ultimately, is to practice and refine the necessary art of learning to balance the various elements (experiences) in one's life. Possibly, the best way to do this is to learn to make healthy choices. Making wise choices requires an understanding or awareness of what one is ultimately striving for. If one wishes to grow authentically, one must choose between controlling and letting go, between resisting and accepting, between love (courage) and fear, between being open (for example, to new experiences and to sharing ourselves with others) and being closed, between being willing to risk and being unwilling (afraid) to risk. None of these elements is bad in and of itself, provided they are chosen consciously within a particular context. After all, even fear is a friend when it occurs in the correct context. So is being closed and guarded, unwilling to take a foolish risk, and so forth. Global (as opposed to local or particular instances of) need for control, resistance, fear, closedness, unwillingness to risk, and detachment inhibit growth. In stark contrast, global letting go, acceptance, love, openness, willingness to risk, and attachment are more apt to be healthy, positive, growth-inducing approaches to life. Discrimination seems paramount. Consciousness and awareness bring discrimination such that choices are made consciously, appropriately, and contextually. Balance, therefore, is about negotiating alienation, intimacy, and the alienation-intimacy complex, and about negotiating the internal (self) and external (others, culture, world, universe) in various scenarios. A *conscious*, purposeful approach to each instance is crucial to success in this area.

In contrast, life becomes unbalanced when one spends the bulk of one's time in fear (negative alienation) and dependency (negative intimacy). These cannot balance out. At least, not healthily. There might be balance in a master/slave relationship, but it is a false, pseudo, illegitimate form of balance. It is ultimately an imbalance. Power and domination can bring at best false balance. Any choices which bring about unfreedom

(enslavement), stagnation, withdrawal, regression, diminution, distance, addiction, repetition, abdication of responsibility, negative disconnection, and so forth lead to imbalance. (A reminder: letting stubborn pride keep one from making amends with a loved one is *negative* alienation because it keeps each other distant; severing all ties with an abusive person is *positive*, especially if the individual recognizes the damage of such a relationship and if it gives the person back a sense of dignity and personal strength.)

Love and fear cannot be balanced. Neither can trust/faith and dependence, considering that each is a subset of its parent, love and fear, respectively. Each element is mutually exclusive. One could easily argue that dependence and fear can be good and have their place. However, the problem arises when either becomes global and indiscriminate as opposed to local or contextual. When fear and/or dependence become pervasive attitudes or approaches to life (global), growth and all that is positive in life are inhibited or stifled. Balance is impossible; one's perspective is skewed. When fear and/or dependence arise contextually (locally, in particular instances), as the situation merits, then they are gifts that help individuals live life wisely.

It appears that discrimination is key. Life must be lived *consciously*. Awareness ensures that the individual assesses each situation with discrimination. After all, indiscriminate trust, faith, and love can become problematic in certain situations. However, a global attitude or approach to life based in trust, faith, and love (especially with conscious discrimination when warranted), is more conducive to experiencing authentic growth than the reverse, approaching life globally in fear and dependence. A rich, happy, healthy, fulfilling, free, mature, connected, wholesome life requires trust, faith, love, courage, acceptance and conscious effort, to name a few. In agreement with the "experts," such a life is not for the faint-hearted.

Universal versus Personal:

The Growth Model perceives alienation, intimacy and the interaction or tension between the two (the alienation-intimacy complex) to be a central, unavoidable aspects of the growth process. As a result, each individual, as a human being, must struggle with the

alienation-intimacy complex. The experience is *universal*. However, how one chooses to respond to each experience of alienation or intimacy is *personal*. By the fact that individuals are human beings, each and every person must, consciously or unconsciously, deal with, struggle with, come to terms with, or reconcile his or her *personal* responses and reactions to the unique experiences of these three elements. The experience of growth and of having to deal with the alienation-intimacy complex is universal, people's experiences and the ways in which they respond to, or choose to deal with, experiences are *individual* or *personal*. This is what the model attempts to capture in the concept "Personal Process" in the centre of the Growth Model (Figure 3). Each individual approaches experiences of alienation and intimacy from a unique, individual perspective, place, or mind set. That is, an individual's reaction or response to an experience of alienation or intimacy will be unique, based on that person's personality, psyche, life experiences, current mind set, current location (literally and figuratively speaking) in life, social status, cultural influences, and so forth. Moreover, the *appropriate* response to any experience of alienation or intimacy is personal or individual, dependent upon the individual's current situation in life and the current context. Each person, as a unique individual, must find his or her own personal, individual responses to the dynamics of the alienation-intimacy complex and growth. In the end, growth seems optional (personal); contending with the alienation-intimacy complex is not (universal).

APPENDIX D

Robbins' Basic Theoretical Schema		TABLE 2	
Experience -* (internal and external inputs; modalities: i.e., visual, auditory, kinesthetic, gustatory, olfactory)	Internal Representations	-> State	-4 Behaviour
	> Beliefs		
	> Attitudes		
	> Past Experiences		
	> Submodalities-finer modal distinctions		
	> Values		
	> Metaprograms		
	Mental Syntax (Order of inputs)		
	Condition and Use of Physiology		
	> Muscle Tension		
	> Breathing		
	> Nutrition		
	> Posture		
	> Biochemical Functioning		

APPENDIX E

Summary Table for Theories of Growth			Table 3
Author	Telos	Process	Authentic Growth
Maslow	Self-actualization*	Climbing the Hierarchy of (Prepotent) Needs	Growth at level of self-actualization; growth at lower levels is merely existing.
Rogers	Full functioning*	Heeding <i>organismic valuation process</i> ; developing congruence & overcoming incongruence from conditions of worth	Any growth which moves the individual from fixity end (incongruence) to fluid end (congruence) of growth continuum.
Fromm	Self-realization*	Developing the productive character	Any growth which leads to self-realization.
Prager - Alternative Theory	Maximal consciousness**	Learning to negotiate the various components of the Growth Model, especially the alienation-intimacy complex and the love/fear dialectic	Any growth which results in increased intellectual, emotional, and spiritual consciousness and increased connection, with oneself, others, nature, Ultimate Reality.
Peale	Material gain*	Positive thinking and turning one's desires or problems over to God	Any growth which results in material gain.
Dyer	Independence*	Controlling one's thoughts and emotions, overcoming erroneous zones, and living in the present moment	Growth which results in increased independence (so that one is not immobilized by oneself or others).
Robbins	Excellence*	Modelling and Rapport (mirroring, pacing, and leading others)	Producing excellent results in the least amount of time.
<p>* Telos is individualistic, secular, limited and short-sighted. ** Telos is transpersonal, trans-human, expansive, liberating, and connective.</p>			