
Reflections on Ideological Consistency Between Community-Based Research and Counselling Practice

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ABSTRACT

Community-based research (CBR) and counselling practice share multiple skill sets and ideological tenets. In addition, CBR offers an approach to research that can be highly conducive to effective counselling-related research. Despite these consistencies and benefits, counsellors and counselling students have underutilized this approach to research. This article highlights several ideological similarities shared between counselling practice and CBR, along with benefits for counsellors in adopting such a research approach.

RÉSUMÉ

La recherche communautaire (RC) et la pratique de counseling partagent un série d'ensembles de compétences multiples et de principes idéologiques. Par ailleurs, RC offre une approche qui peut être extrêmement favorable à la recherche efficace en counseling. Malgré ces homogénéités et ces avantages, les conseillers et les étudiants en counseling ont sous-utilisé cette approche à la recherche. Cet article souligne plusieurs similarités idéologiques partagées entre la pratique de counseling et RC, ainsi que les avantages pour les conseillers adoptant une telle approche à la recherche.

Community-based research (CBR) is an approach to research that fits well with the underlying ideologies and tenets of multiple professional counselling modalities. In addition, CBR is a useful orientation for the counsellor, given its inherent benefit in researching many types of problems encountered by counsellors. The goal of the present article is to explore the existence of several overlapping ideologies between counselling and CBR. The purpose is also to identify the benefits for counsellors of adopting a CBR approach in their research. This article represents a unique contribution to the literature in that it examines and compares the ideological frameworks of counselling theory and CBR. CBR fits well with several counselling philosophies and ideologies in terms of several important orientations, including a focus on (a) relationship and partnership; (b) collaboration and capacity building; (c) learning, growth, and development; (d) process and context; (e) cultural appreciation and inclusion; (f) empowerment; (g) in-depth discovery and understanding; and (h) applied change. These areas of similarity between counselling and CBR will be discussed here, but first I will discuss the relevant literature surrounding CBR and counselling as well as describe the two CBR studies I conducted that have guided the development of the current article.

Defining CBR

CBR is a collaborative and respectful research process involving researchers and community members for the purposes of researching community and societal-level concerns (Radda, Schensul, Disch, Levy, & Reyes, 2003). This is distinct from research conducted by professional researchers in a community setting with little or no input from members of the community (Brodsky et al., 2004; Harris, 2006). Within CBR, researchers and community members focus on collaboration and the development of egalitarian relationships. Central tenets of CBR include the following aspects of research:

1. Applied and focused on immediate front-line problems.
2. Relevant and pressing community issues are addressed.
3. Information shared and exchanged between all members of the project.
4. Process and results used to transform and guide the community.
5. Process and results used to facilitate social action and change.
6. Awareness exists for power dynamics, which are challenged so as to facilitate community empowerment. Community empowerment can lead to members of the community taking active control over their lives and having democratic participation in their communities (Rappaport, 1981; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988).
7. Scientifically accepted research methods and ethical guidelines are followed (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, 2005; Chapdelaine & Chapman, 1999; Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995; Cotter, Welleford, Vesley-Massey, & Thurston, 2003; Harris; Health Canada, 2002; Huang & Wang, 2005; Posavac, 1997; Wallerstein, 1999).

CBR involves creativity, patience, and determination in order to produce meaningful partnerships between people who are typically disconnected. Similar to CBR partnerships, the process of conducting CBR is dynamic; the community, an applied infrastructure, is a complex environment. Thus, flexibility and critical thinking are required to be successful with this type of a research orientation.

CBR has been significantly influenced by action research and participatory research (Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, & Donohue, 2003; Tinkler, 2004). These approaches share a focus on collaborative research conducted at the applied and social levels, with members of these settings (e.g., community members) adopting roles formally taken by external professional researchers. Action research and CBR have emerged as forms of resistance to more conventional or traditional research practices that could potentially be used to impose guidelines on communities from policy makers/researchers who are often far removed from the change structure (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). Participatory research and CBR share a focus on empowerment and addressing power differences between people and structures (Sclove, Scammell, & Holland, 1998; Tinkler). CBR, although sharing central tenets with action research and participatory research, has emerged as a distinct model of inquiry, one that is often centred on collaborative egalitarian

partnerships between academic institutions and community-based organizations (Strand et al.).

Published CBR

Although many CBR studies do not get published in peer-reviewed journals, as publication is often not the main focus of CBR, some examples of CBR are available in print (for a review, see Boynton, 2002; Campbell, Sefl, Wasco, & Ahrens, 2004; Cotter et al., 2003; Harris, 2006; Mykhalovskiy & McCoy, 2002; Oliva, Rienks, & Netherland, 2004; Radda et al., 2003; Robinson et al., 2002; Schensul et al., 2006; Shahmoon-Shanok et al., 2005; Tolomiczenko & Goering, 2000). In conducting CBR, several information sources exist focusing on various stages and processes involved in actually conducting a CBR project (for reviews, see Boynton; Brodsky et al., 2004; Campbell et al.; Harris; Tolomiczenko & Goering). For example, Harris has outlined a 10-stage model (i.e., preliminary work, relationship building, idea conceptualization, preliminary proposal, working proposal, contract development, action, evaluation, dissemination, and implementation of results) for conducting CBR with an HIV/AIDS population. Santiago-Rivera, Morse, Hunt, and Lickers (1998) developed a framework for fostering partnerships within CBR when working with cultural groups. Their framework is based on the guiding principles of respect, equity, and empowerment. In addition, Boynton has suggested that CBR involves several steps, including (a) commissioning the research (e.g., developing research questions); (b) training peer researchers (e.g., teaching community members research skills); (c) determining which community members and researchers will be research interviewers; and (d) disseminating results.

Despite action research and CBR being successfully utilized by some groups of counsellors, including school counsellors (Rowell, 2006), community counsellors (Hecht et al., 2005), and family counsellors (McCollum & Stith, 2002), CBR has not been utilized to its potential by the counselling community. McCollum and Stith noted that family therapist researchers have an important opportunity to connect with community agencies through CBR partnerships in order to create treatments that have clinical utility. They go on to suggest that family therapists' treatments should be appropriate for the community settings in which they will be utilized. Mendenhall and Doherty (2005) noted that participants involved in action research receive immediate concrete benefits (e.g., learning about and participating in the research process can be empowering), illustrating another reason for counsellors to become involved in this type of research approach. What follows is a description of two CBR studies that I conducted that explored issues related to counselling and HIV.

The Current CBR Studies

The current article is based on my reflections of two community-based qualitative research projects that occurred in a Western Canadian province. Project 1 involved interviewing 12 gay men living with HIV or AIDS to explore their

experiences regarding counselling and peer support services. Project 2 involved interviewing 13 individuals who reported engaging in high-risk behaviours following notification of their HIV-positive status. This second project was conducted in order to better understand the time period following an HIV diagnosis and to develop strategies to reduce potentially high-risk behaviours that may be exhibited following the HIV diagnosis.

Within each of these projects, I followed general principles of CBR, including partnership development with community-based agencies and involvement of community-based agency members during different stages of the research (Harris, 2006). During each of these studies, I experienced a sense of congruence between my research orientation (i.e., CBR) and my work in counselling. Given the nature of these counselling-based studies, a CBR approach offered several important benefits, such as (a) acquisition of community perspective, (b) assistance with recruitment of hard-to-reach participants, and (c) enhanced community capacity building and empowerment. This article is an attempt to alert counsellors and counselling students of the overlap between counselling philosophy/ideology and the CBR approach, as well as the benefits of conducting CBR.

REFLECTIONS ON IDEOLOGICAL SIMILARITIES BETWEEN CBR AND COUNSELLING PRACTICE

Relationship and Partnership

CBR and counselling share an underlying appreciation for the development of relationships and partnerships. Indeed, relationships are the foundation that guides and facilitates many of the other activities in both CBR and counselling, such as learning and growth opportunities. Several researchers (Harris, 2006; Santiago-Rivera et al., 1998) have highlighted the importance of relationships and partnerships within CBR, suggesting that these relationships create opportunities for much of the work involved in CBR. In addition, research suggests (Horvath, 2000) that without a therapeutic alliance in place early in counselling (e.g., third to fifth sessions), positive counselling outcomes will be jeopardized. As can be seen, without a partnership established between stakeholders, neither CBR nor counselling is likely to function effectively. In fact, without working partnerships in place, CBR can run the risk of being conducted as would some forms of traditional research, whereby “experts” conduct the project far removed from community members. Likewise, without a working therapeutic alliance, counselling can fail (e.g., premature termination by client).

Counsellors are in a unique position to develop community-level partnerships for the purposes of conducting CBR, as they have training and expertise in the area of relationship building (e.g., listening and communication skills) and are often relationship-oriented people. In addition, relationship/partnership development fits with counsellors’ professional identities, as counselling is relationship-oriented.

In counselling, working relationships contain specific characteristics. Bordin (1979, 1994) has suggested that working relationships between client and counsel-

lor are bidirectional (i.e., each member contributes to the relationship's growth) and have three important aspects: (a) an interpersonal attachment (e.g., trust and regard for the other person), (b) agreement on tasks, and (c) agreement on long- and short-term goals. These elements can be applied to community-researcher relationships (Harris, 2006).

Within CBR, the development of a trusting nonjudgemental interpersonal connection can occur among researchers and community members. Although this relationship is not inherently therapeutic, it can serve as a foundation for future growth and development, effective applied research, and community capacity building. In my own experiences, CBR relationships are often developed through open discussion and agreement of the goals and tasks to be accomplished during the research process. Again, this style of open discussion for the purpose of establishing research guidelines fits well with counsellors' professional ideologies.

CBR relationships contain an explicit collaborative and egalitarian element, whereby members work together toward superordinate goals. With few exceptions, counselling theories and practice guidelines highlight the importance of collaboration and egalitarian relationships in counselling. Research suggests that collaboration is an important aspect of the therapeutic alliance in counselling (Bachelor, 1995; Horvath, 2000). Within CBR, the development of working relationships between researchers and community members can focus on (a) recognizing the expertise of each member, (b) having respect for each member, (c) showing interest in the business that each member practices and learning about what the other does, (d) having sensitivity, (e) listening and demonstrating comprehension through reflecting/paraphrasing skills, and (f) being willing to compromise (Harris, 2006). Counsellors, through their expertise and experience, are able to accomplish the above relational elements in an ideologically affirming manner.

Collaboration and Capacity Building

Within the established partnerships can come collaboration and capacity building. Collaborations offer unique opportunities to come together and share resources and perspectives for the purpose of solving a research problem and building capacity. Collaboration can lead to changes in perspective and increased access to resources such as research and community expertise and improved opportunities for operating grant funding (Harris, 2006; Seifer & Calleson, 2004; Suarez-Balcazar et al., 2006). Different perspectives and expanded resources can help widen the lens and infrastructure of the research project. The same is true of counselling: the effectiveness of counselling is often in the collaboration between the client and counsellor (Horvath, 2000) with the fusion of perspectives and resources. Indeed, this can be observed within several group counselling modalities, where multiple members, with varying perspectives and experiences, come together to collaborate in order to solve problems, build capacity, and share experiences (Yalom, 1995). The counsellor, in both individual and group modalities, often

takes on the role of facilitator, guiding to various degrees the processes inherent in the collaboration (Corey, 2005).¹ Thus, the counsellor has experience and training in collaboration and capacity building.

Sometimes researchers and community members will struggle in developing research questions, engaging in research, and solving problems. In my own CBR experience, it is often the connection/collaboration that brings together the necessary perspectives to determine an appropriate and important problem to solve, the required methods of research to solve the problem, and the plan with which to conduct the project. This process can be facilitated through CBR (Harris, 2006; Parrott & Steiner, 2003; Santiago-Rivera et al., 1998). Again, a similar process can be observed in many types of counselling: the counsellor and client work together to solve a problem or answer a question, with each bringing the necessary perspective to combine to deal with the issue.

Learning, Growth, and Development

CBR and counselling/counselling psychology share a focus on a developmental learning model of practice (Radda et al., 2003; Santiago-Rivera et al., 1998; Sinacore-Guinn, 1995; Young & Nicol, 2007). CBR, along with multiple counselling modalities, embrace and facilitate a process of teaching and growth among members. This focus on growth embodies the philosophies of CBR and several counselling modalities (e.g., person-centred, existential, feminist): human beings are perceived as capable of learning and developing, provided the necessary conditions are in place (Elliott, Greenberg, & Lietaer, 2004). CBR, along with several models of counselling (e.g., person-centred, existential, feminist), often challenge “expert” and traditional “medical” models of practice, whereby professionals dictate the tasks and goals and determine pathology and problems (Brodsky et al., 2004; Corey, 2005; Strand et al., 2003).

Within CBR, I have found that opportunities for learning and development often transcend the research findings and encompass aspects of the actual collaborative partnerships. Within these relationships exist opportunities to learn about people from very different backgrounds and orientations, as well as the chance to learn about the professional roles and personal experiences of other people (e.g., what it is like to live with HIV and volunteer at an HIV agency, or what it is like to be a professor at a university conducting research). Thus, CBR can lead to changes in perspective and orientation. It can also lead to a restructuring of priorities. For example, initial researchers’ goals of data collection/analysis and peer review publication may shift to understanding the community and helping community members in the process of capacity building for the purposes of making change at the community level.

During CBR work, in my experience, informal and formal opportunities arise in which members can discuss their perspectives. These perspectives are shaped and formed by context and life experiences. People from different contexts who have had different experiences will likely have different perspectives. Thus, within CBR, members must be able to respect and work with members holding differ-

ent perspectives. This is consistent within most counselling modalities, whereby counsellors respect the worldviews of their clients. In fact, the belief that people have unique perspectives and worldviews is a central aspect of several counselling theories (Corey, 2005; Kohl, 2006; Yamamoto, 2001), and these perspectives can be influenced and changed through interactions and relationships with others with different perspectives. Thus, in both CBR and counselling there exist opportunities for perspective-taking and looking at life and problems in different ways. Academic and professional researchers bring their academic and research perspectives, which can be coupled with the community and lived experience perspectives of community members.²

In my own research with people living with HIV/AIDS, this merging of perspectives was a highly powerful experience. Having community members living with HIV share their experiences of struggling with high-risk behaviours (e.g., drug addictions, suicidal ideation) and additional psychosocial stressors provided me with rich perspectives, which ultimately strengthened the research and the experience of engaging in the research process. As a researcher, I was able to bring my perspectives regarding research and HIV/AIDS research issues to the CBR partnerships where they became fused and connected with the members' perspectives. This led to the potential for learning and growth for members of the team. This fusion of perspectives offers the opportunity for enhanced research, but also for people to learn, develop, and grow on a personal level. Being exposed to the perspectives of community members gives academic researchers the chance to see things in new ways. It also offers the community members an opportunity to learn through seeing the researchers' perspectives.

Importantly, Hans-Georg Gadamer, a visionary behind philosophical hermeneutics, has suggested that understanding and interpretation occur through a similar process of perspectives fusing, or coming together, between people (Weinsheimer & Marshall, 1989, 2004). Within many models of counselling, perspectives are often shared between counsellor and client in an attempt to facilitate learning and growth. Again, this learning and growth often occur, in part, through the fusion of counsellors' and clients' perspectives. As can be seen, CBR and counselling share a focus on growth and learning. This learning is often facilitated through careful consideration of the processes inherent within CBR and counselling practice.

Process and Context

Within CBR, as well as within many counselling modalities, process and contextual variables are attended to (Brodsky et al., 2004; Elliott et al., 2004; Primavera & Brodsky, 2004). The process can include any variable or aspect of the work, occurring before, during, or following the counselling session/research work, that contributes directly or indirectly to understanding and change. For example, in CBR and counselling there is a focus on the relationships or partnerships, which often contribute to understanding and change. These relationships or partnerships are inherent aspects of the process.

Similar to the process variables, context variables include the entire context that encompasses the research and the counselling environments. Context variables can include aspects of the internal and external environment that likely contribute to change and growth (e.g., relationships, perspectives, and physical location of the research/counselling such as community-based organizations) or aspects of the environment that are less likely to contribute to change and growth (e.g., age variables).

CBR tends to focus on the process and context of the research. There is an appreciation of process and context variables. Although internal validity is important, contextual variables, which are often perceived as confounders in traditional research approaches,³ are often identified, explained, and utilized in the CBR process. Community members are highly involved in determining the project focus, which is a community-relevant project (Strand et al., 2003) and thus often involves a focus on process and context. In traditional research this type of contextual analysis is not always a focus, with these types of variables sometimes being controlled or partialled out of the study.

In addition, traditional research approaches often maintain a focus on the study outcomes, emphasizing results as the primary benefit of conducting the research. In contrast, CBR highlights both the process and the outcomes as important benefits of the research (Harris, 2006). Thus, CBR, similar to counselling, shows an appreciation for the process and context within which people live.

Cultural Appreciation and Inclusion

Diversity and cultural variation have become the norm within North America. Recognizing, understanding, and respecting this diversification are among the hallmarks of effective counselling and CBR. Counsellors strive to understand the worldviews of the clients with whom they work, which necessitates an appreciation of cultural factors. Thus, counsellors attempt to understand their clients through their clients' frame of references and worldviews. Through counsellors' understanding of the unique aspects of their clients can come appreciation and acceptance, which can facilitate working relationships between members of different cultural groups. Diversity and cultural training is an important aspect of counsellor education and skill teaching, and has been adopted by many counselling associations (e.g., Canadian Counselling Association) as an area of practice. This illustrates the reality that many counsellors have this type of training and also highlights the ideological stance of the counselling field toward multicultural competencies. Thus, many counsellors not only understand diversity issues but embrace diversity as an aspect of their professional identity.

Appreciating diversity and learning to work with people from various cultural backgrounds is a prerequisite to CBR. Similar to counselling practice, CBR requires respect and consideration for broad cultural and diversity issues. These include understanding of various cultural groups but also other diversities such as sexuality, economic brackets, educational levels, and an appreciation of community members' frame of references and worldviews. In working with community

members who have various experiences, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds, researchers need to have cultural competencies, or a willingness to acquire such competencies, including knowledge, skills, and abilities, in order to facilitate productive partnerships and quality research. Even beyond these skills and abilities, community-based researchers need to possess the appropriate cultural attitudes, encompassing appreciation and respect for diversity. Counsellors often possess the above-mentioned cultural skills and knowledge and this appreciation and respect for diversity.

Counsellors and community-based researchers can facilitate cultural appreciation and inclusion in several ways, such as (a) learning about cultural and diversity research studies that have been done regarding specific cultures with which they will be working; (b) completing course work in the area of cultural competencies in order to develop appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities in this area; (c) showing respect and appreciation through asking questions about others' cultures, in a non-judgemental manner, and respecting their responses; (d) listening to others' stories and experiences to increase understanding of their worldviews; and (e) avoiding the imposition of the counsellor's or researcher's worldviews on others. These are all aspects of effective relationship building, which can lead to productive opportunities to work together, and which fits well within a counselling model and a CBR approach. This again highlights the professional congruence between counselling and CBR.

Empowerment Focus

CBR and several other models of counselling (e.g., feminist approaches) share a focus on empowerment (Corey, 2005; Santiago-Rivera et al., 1998; Strand et al., 2003; White, 2002). In both counselling and CBR this empowerment focus occurs during the process of the counselling or research and through its formal completion. Thus, empowerment occurs through the process and through the outcomes of counselling and CBR. Within CBR, similar to several counselling modalities, empowerment is one of the main goals. CBR strives to facilitate empowerment through building partnerships between people who possess several different types of expertise, such as community expertise and research expertise, through (a) the occurrence of teaching and learning among all members of the team, (b) designing and implementing a research program to address a significant and applied problem within the community, and (c) working together throughout the research process. Within counselling, these types of process experiences are highly valued and often perceived as facilitating change and growth (Orlinsky, Helge Ronnestad, & Willutzki, 2004).

Empowerment also occurs through research outcomes, such as capacity building and implementation of the study findings. This is similar to counselling, as counselees may develop a sense of empowerment through utilization of what they learned in counselling (e.g., focus on "giving counselling and psychology away" to clients and society). As can be seen, counselling and CBR share an ideology and practice focus on empowerment in terms of both process and outcome.

In-Depth Discovery and Understanding

CBR facilitates a process of in-depth understanding and involves many people, including community members and professional researchers. Involving people from different backgrounds, some of whom have lived experiences of the phenomena under investigation, can take the research to a level containing significant depth. In my own CBR experiences, this depth has occurred through multiple avenues, such as sharing perspectives and merging ideas as to how the research should be conducted. Several counselling modalities, such as experiential counselling theories, embrace this philosophy of finding depth (Elliott et al., 2004). These types of counselling models often involve deep understanding and changes in perspective for the client and may also have the potential to even influence the counsellor.⁴

Similar to CBR, this depth is, in part, often facilitated through the relationship or partnership, effective listening and communication skills, and a willingness and ability to go deeper. Within CBR, the focus is not on therapeutic depth: it is about human understanding. CBR, along with several counselling modalities, is about understanding people in a deep, authentic manner. In addition, counsellors are often intrinsically interested in people, and thus they likely contain the capacity and ability to learn about people in depth. This is also important in CBR. Community-based researchers will likely benefit from possessing a willingness and ability to deeply understand the people with whom they are forming working partnerships.

Community and Applied Change

Much of facilitating change and building capacity in CBR is at the community or society level. Although many approaches to counselling are often aimed at the individual level, several schools of counselling (e.g., systems, community) and theories of counselling (e.g., family, feminist) are focused at the community and societal levels. Indeed, many counsellors strive to make systemic changes through the work they do. CBR is also about making applied change, and the focus is on real problems (McCollum & Stith, 2002). Although research at the basic level is important for counsellors, counselling is itself often perceived as an applied discipline. Counselling research is often focused at the applied level, attempting to understand people and facilitate and make changes in practice.

DISCUSSION

As discussed throughout this article, many counsellors and community-based researchers share a unique skill set (e.g., listening skills, facilitating skills, teaching skills, flexibility and patience, and willingness and ability to learn) and several ideological tenets (e.g., appreciation of diversity and focus on the process). Multiple counselling theories can, in part, underlie the process of conducting CBR. Although this does not occur in a direct therapeutic manner, the mechanisms, ideologies, processes, and outcomes of counselling and CBR are similar. Thus,

although CBR does not directly contain a therapeutic focus, CBR does contain primary goals consisting of understanding, developing, empowering, and changing, all of which are central aspects of counselling practice. This means that counsellors can utilize their professional orientations and ideologies in the research work they do, facilitating a process of professional congruence in their lives.

Having said that, it is important to note that counselling is a broad field, consisting of multiple theoretical and applied orientations. Not all counselling modalities will fit with all aspects of CBR. For example, although all major counselling models do recognize the value and importance of the therapeutic alliance, these models do differ in the amount of importance placed on, and indeed the overall purpose of, the therapeutic relationship in counselling (Corey, 2005). Thus, some counselling models, such as experiential modalities, which place a major emphasis on the therapeutic alliance, would fit especially well with a CBR focus. Another example, the emphasis placed on depth in the counselling process, also varies depending on which counselling modality is being considered. Accordingly, some especially depth-oriented theories (e.g., existential) will fit well with CBR in this regard. Nonetheless, CBR and many models of counselling do share multiple ideologies.

In addition to the facilitation of professional congruence, CBR can serve several important benefits for counsellors conducting research. For researchers who are removed from community settings, the risk of conducting research missing a community view is a potential problem that could jeopardize the clinical value of the research. CBR can create opportunities for a broader, more inclusive frame of reference. Community member involvement in the research process also allows for the verification and open discussion of key findings and interview material as well as consideration of the contextual and process variables inherent in the research.

CBR can facilitate empowerment and growth among community members and professional researchers. Knowledge transfer and development can occur as the researchers shift from “outsider” to “insider” roles. The researchers bring their research skills and intermediate objectivity into the community environment, where there is a level of fusion with the knowledge and skills of the community to create the CBR partnership (Harris, 2006). CBR also includes a focus on capacity building and change, further facilitating a process of empowerment.

CBR can lead to applied social change at the community-social level. For applied changes to occur in practice, in most settings, there needs to be involvement from members of the proposed change structure. If change is to occur, community members and stakeholders need to have interest in the project. Thus, CBR, through involvement of community members, can facilitate broad applied change at the community-society levels.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

CBR shares skill and ideology with several modalities of professional counselling. Although CBR is not inherently therapeutic, it does focus on relationship

development, understanding, empowerment, and change, and thus fits well within a counselling framework. As an approach to research, CBR offers an important opportunity for professional congruence for the practicing counsellor along with a highly effective research approach that is conducive to conducting counselling-based research.

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Notes

- 1 Although most individual and group counselling modalities require some degree of facilitation on the part of the counsellor(s), it is recognized that some modalities (e.g., traditional person-centred) place far less emphasis on active counsellor facilitation or direction of process.
- 2 It is important to note that academic researchers may have perspectives that reflect lived experiences and community awareness of the phenomena under investigation, just as community members may have academic and research perspectives.
- 3 As mentioned previously, my use of the statement “traditional forms of research” refers to forms or models of research whereby “experts” conduct the project removed from community members in an attempt to remain objective and maintain control over the study conditions.
- 4 Several writers have suggested that within certain counselling models (e.g., existential, gestalt, narrative), the counsellor is subject to change through the therapeutic encounter with the client (Deurzen-Smith, 1997; Monk, 1997; Polster & Polster, 1973).

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