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## The Developmental Imperative and Counsellor Education

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### Résumé

Après une brève mise au courant de l'état présent des méthodes développementales en counseling, l'auteur insiste que l'aspect développemental de la formation implicite dans la littérature sur le counseling doit être sérieusement considéré. Il propose de faire des efforts plus concentrés à préciser les aspects du développement dans la formation en counseling. L'auteur présente une structure constructive-développementale pertinente à la formation du conseiller. Il décrit l'incorporation de cette structure dans deux cours de théorie essentiels faisant parti d'un programme de formation en counseling. Finalement l'article rend compte de l'expérience des participants, l'auteur inclut, dans la formation ou on a fait des efforts d'incorporer les méthodes constructives-développementales.

### Abstract

Following a brief account of the state of knowledge with regard to developmental approaches to counselling, it is argued that the developmental training imperative implicit in the counselling literature should be taken seriously. It is suggested that this might be done through more concentrated efforts to articulate the specifics of counsellor education along developmental lines. A constructive-developmental theoretical framework well suited to developmental counsellor training is presented and the manner of its incorporation into two core theory classes in a counsellor education program is described. Finally, an account is provided of how a training effort employing the constructive-developmental framework was experienced by participants, including the writer.

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It is increasingly being recognized that if the counselling profession is to remain responsive to the needs of individuals in contemporary society, it will be required to become more preventive and developmental in nature. Dinkmeyer (1966) has portrayed the developmental emphasis in counselling as follows:

Developmental counseling, which can be contrasted with adjustment or crisis counseling, is not always problem oriented in terms of assuming that the child has some difficult problem. Instead, the goals are the development of self-understanding, awareness of one's potentialities, and methods of utilizing one's capacity. Developmental counseling truly focuses on helping the individual to know, understand, and accept himself. (p. 264)

The developmental orientation has received strong official endorsement from the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Association (Collins, Studd, & Wallace, 1984; Wallace, Studd, & Ringwood, 1982) and in the counselling literature (Aubrey, 1983; Hays & Johnson, 1984; Lecomte, Dumont, & Zingle, 1981; Robertson & Paterson, 1983; Schmidt, 1984). Furthermore, there is cause for optimism regarding the utility and impact of developmental approaches to counselling in light of the

considerable advances being made in theory development (Aubrey, 1980; Blocher, 1966, 1980; Carter, 1984; Gazda, 1977; Hersh, Paolitto, & Reimer, 1979; Mosher, 1979; Mosher & Sprinthall, 1971; Sankey, 1981; Sprinthall, 1980; Van Hesteren, 1978; Young, 1981; Young & Borgen, 1979; Young-Eisendrath, 1985) and the at least modest progress being made in effectively implementing developmentally focused programs of deliberate psychological education (Baker, Swisher, Nadenichek, & Popowicz, 1984; Baskin & Hess, 1980; Elardo & Elardo, 1976; Enright, Lapsley, Harris, & Shawver, 1983; Lockwood, 1978; Medway & Smith, 1978; Mosher, 1980; Rest, 1974; Sebes & Ford, 1984; Swisher, Vicary, & Nadenichek, 1983).

While progress has been made in the rationalization and implementation of developmental efforts geared to meeting the needs of a variety of client populations, there is presently a need to balance this client focus with concentrated attempts to articulate the kinds of activities and experiences which might constitute training programs designed specifically to prepare counsellors to function within a developmental framework. The need for developmental counsellor training has been widely acknowledged and clearly articulated by Canadian counsellor educators (Allan & Der, 1981; Carr, 1981; Collins et al., 1984; Hassard, 1981; Jevne, 1981; Peavy, Robertson, & Westwood, 1982; Van Hesteren, 1980). The challenge now is to begin to take the developmental training imperative seriously.

The general purpose of this article is to describe an attempt to take the developmental imperative seriously in the context of a counsellor education program. More specifically, the objectives of the article are: (1) to present a constructive-developmental theoretical framework that is well suited to counsellor training along developmental lines; (2) to describe how the developmental framework was incorporated into two core theory classes in a counsellor training program; and (3) to breathe life into the training effort by providing an account of how it was experienced by participants, including the writer.

#### KEGAN'S CONSTRUCTIVE-DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY

Robert Kegan's (Kegan, 1979, 1980, 1982, 1983; Kegan, Noam, & Rogers, 1982) theory of self-evolution represents a highly promising framework within which developmentally focused counsellor training can be carried out. The theory will be initially described in some detail in order to familiarize readers with it and in order to provide a meaningful reference point relative to which subsequent sections of this article might be better understood and appreciated.

Kegan's (1982) theory was formulated in the "constructive-developmental" tradition identified with the orientations of theorists like Baldwin (1897), Mead (1934), Perry (1970), and, most notably, Piaget

(1937). The theory is firmly rooted in Piagetian thinking and, in a sense, represents a reframing of Kohlberg's (1981) stages of moral development into stages of the self (Noam, Kohlberg, & Snarey, 1983).

In essence, Kegan's work depicts development as being a function of the "process of evolution as a meaning-constitutive activity" (Kegan, 1982, p. 42). The passage through what are variously termed "stages," "balances in subject-object relations," or "evolutionary truces" results in increased self-awareness, self-possession, and individual autonomy. Kegan (1982) explains the nature of the evolutionary process as follows:

Subject-object relations emerge out of a lifelong process of development: a succession of qualitative differentiations of the self from the world, with a qualitatively more extensive object with which to be in relation each time; a natural history of qualitatively better guarantees to the world of its distinctness; successive triumphs of 'relationship to' rather than 'embeddedness in.' (p. 77)

According to Kegan (1979), subject-object, or self-other, differentiation constitutes the "deep structure" of Piagetian and Neo-Piagetian theories and the "common ground" of several stage theories (e.g., Broughton, 1982; Erikson, 1963; Fowler, 1981; Kohlberg, 1981; Loevinger, 1976; Maslow, 1970; Perry, 1970; Selman, 1980).

Kegan (1982) emphasizes that there is a truth function inherent in the evolutionary process of meaning construction. As shifts in subject-object relations occur over the course of the evolutionary cycle, the self increasingly disembeds itself from the world and, in the process, redefines, or reconstructs, its relationship to the world in a manner that is better integrated and has more truth value (Kegan, 1982).

Having provided an indication of the general nature of Kegan's theory, the stages comprising it will now be briefly discussed. Kegan's (1982) theory is made up of a so-called Incorporative Stage and five subsequent stages (i.e., the Impulsive, Imperial, Interpersonal, Institutional, and Interindividual stages). These stages are considered to be a life-span developmental sequence and depict "the basic organization of the psychological self" in terms of successive qualitatively different subject-object relations (Kegan, 1982, p. 74).

From a virtually total assimilation orientation (i.e., an inability to differentiate the self from the world) in the Incorporative Stage, the meaning construction process evolves to a relatively disembedded status at the Impulsive Balance Stage. At this point, the self is synonomous with the impulses, which, in turn, take the previously dominant reflexes as their object. The Imperial Balance Stage is characterized by the construction of an enduring concept of self that is able to control, or "have," its impulses rather than "being" them. Because the self sees through its needs, rather than being aware that it has needs, it invests its newly acquired agentic capacities in controlling, or at least predicting, events external to it (Kegan, 1982).

With the advent of the Interpersonal Balance, which, according to

Kegan (1982) corresponds to Piaget's early formal operational and Kohlberg's "good boy—nice girl" stages, the self emerges from embeddedness in its own need structure such that, rather than "being" its needs, it now "has" its needs. "The interpersonal consequence of moving the structure of needs from subject to object is that the person, in being able to coordinate needs, can become mutual, empathic, and oriented to reciprocal obligation" (Kegan, 1982, p. 91). While the self at this "evolutionary truce" is capable of recognizing the needs and viewpoints of others, it remains embedded in a shared reality, or psychological space, and is not individuated to the extent of having a coherent identity.

The Institutional Balance marks the advent of a self which can, in the Eriksonian (1963) sense, be said to have an identity. By virtue of becoming freed from being rooted in, and being defined by, a variety of interpersonal mutualities, the self is now able to orchestrate and reflect upon these mutualities in the construction and maintenance of a sort of "psychic institution" (Kegan, 1982). "The feelings which depend on mutuality for their origin remain important but are relativized by that context which is ultimate, the psychic institution and the time-bound constructions of role, norms, self-concept, auto-regulation which maintain that institution" (Kegan, 1982, p. 100).

The transition from the Institutional Stage to the Interindividual Stage is of critical importance as far as the development of self-awareness and the achievement of individual autonomy are concerned. During this transition, the process of meaning construction impels the self to begin to experience the narrowness and rigidity of its self and world views and to move (i.e., "evolve") in the direction of acknowledging the relativistic nature of these views. "What is cracking here is that whole construction of the self as a system, form, or institution of which 'I' am the administrator who must keep the organization intact, a way of seeing now seen through" (Kegan, 1982, p. 237).

The rebalancing of subject-object relations at Stage 5 empowers the self to transcend and reflect upon the priorities and imperatives of the psychic administration in which it was previously embedded and in terms of which it was defined. The capacity to take one's self-system as object ushers in new possibilities for autonomous self-regulation. Rather than "being" the institution, the self now is "a source before which the institutional can be brought, by which it is directed, where before the institution was the source" (Kegan, 1982, p. 103). Particularly significant concomitants of evolution to the Interindividual Balance are an increased tolerance for emotional conflict and ambiguity and an enhanced capacity for intimacy and sharing of self.

Kegan's (1982) Interindividual Balance is associated with Kohlberg's Stage Six principled moral orientation and is characterized by the capacity for post-formal operational thought (Basseches, 1980; Com-

mons, Richards, & Armon, 1984; Labouvie-Vief, 1980; Murphy & Gilligan, 1980; Perry, 1970; Riegel, 1973). Kegan (Kegan, 1982; Kegan et al., 1982) explicitly acknowledges the convergence of the last stage of his model with post-formal operational theory and places particular emphasis upon the "dialectic," or contradiction accepting, nature of post-formal operational thought as this dimension is interpreted by Riegel (1973) and Basseches (1980).

Having presented Kegan's constructive-developmental theory, the focus of the article will now shift to explaining how the theory was incorporated into a counsellor training program and describing how such incorporation was experienced by a group of students and the writer.

#### USE AND TRAINEE EXPERIENCE OF THE CONSTRUCTIVE- DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE IN A COUNSELLOR EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Kegan theory was rationalized into two half classes designed to examine major paradigms in personality theory and counselling and to familiarize students with a variety of specific counselling approaches. Among the objectives of the classes were the following:

- 1) To begin to integrate and/or evaluate the Psychoanalytic, the Behavioristic, and the Existential schools of thought under the rubric of a self-based, developmentally oriented theoretical perspective.
- 2) To provide opportunities for personalizing the content of the courses through an emphasis upon process learning and discussion in class and the completion of a major assignment designed to optimize the discovery of the personal meaning of various theoretical perspectives and counselling approaches.
- 3) To assist participants in beginning to articulate a personal theory of counselling that will provide a viable foundation for competent performance in both the counselling practicum and, eventually, in independent professional practice.

In striving to reach these objectives, an attempt was made to provide learning experiences for class members which were in keeping with the spirit of growth facilitation reflected in the following rationale provided by Truax, Carkhuff, and Douds (1964) for "didactic-experiential" counsellor training.

Training in psychotherapy and counseling is itself viewed as a therapeutic process: a learning process which takes place in a particular kind of relationship leading to self-exploration and personality change. The analogy between therapy and therapist training leads logically to an emphasis upon providing the trainee with a therapeutic relationship and an opportunity for self-exploration concurrent with a specific program of didactic training. (pp. 246-247)

Twelve class members representing both sexes, an age range of 29 to 59, and a wide diversity of backgrounds met for a three hour session each week from the Fall of 1984 to the Spring of 1985.<sup>1</sup>

The major assignment focused on the Kegan framework and class members were asked to do the following:

- 1) Summarize Kegan's theory of self-evolution, giving particular attention to the basic theoretical assumptions underlying his framework and to describing the stages of self-evolution per se.
- 2) Examine and reflect upon your own development within the theoretical framework provided by Kegan. In this context, please discuss any "goodness of fit" that may exist between your own life experience and the substance of the theory.
- 3) Critique Kegan's theory in a relatively formal and conceptual manner in terms of its adequacy in accounting for the development of a person over the life-span. Feel free to evaluate the merits and possible limitations of Kegan's theory by comparing/contrasting it with other theoretical positions taken up in the course/program.
- 4) Provide an account of how you experienced the process of working on and completing this assignment.

As is evident from the previous description, an important guiding assumption underlying the Kegan task and the training effort in general was that, in order for counsellors to work effectively along developmental lines, it is necessary for them to understand, and to come to grips with, their own developmental experience. It was strongly felt that theory personalization is a prerequisite for moving beyond the vocabulary of developmentalism to being capable of functioning in a manner genuinely consistent with the spirit of growth embodied in developmental theory.

An attempt will now be made to convey a sense of how involvement in the Kegan assignment was experienced by class members. As much as possible, individuals will speak for themselves and an effort will be made to provide a representative account, even though, owing to space limitations, not every individual will be heard from. The experience of class members will be dealt with under appropriate thematic headings.

*The Experience of Challenge.* It has been forcefully, and at times rather frightfully, struck home to me as a result of initiating this training experience that developmental counsellor training involves a great deal more than extending invitations to become involved in academic-intellectual activities aimed at becoming familiar with the content of various developmental theories and discerning the implications of this content for meeting the needs of clients. In the present case, the learning process became a profoundly personal one in which class members invested tremendous amounts of *both* intellectual *and* emotional energy. Following are some indications of how individuals experienced the elements of challenge and struggle that came with the territory of this training attempt.

A common experience in approaching the Kegan assignment in particular was one of feeling a disconcerting blend of apprehension, threat, and intimidation. As one person candidly put it:

Initially, I felt very threatened at the prospect of negotiating this assignment. This reaction manifested itself in a variety of ways. First of all, I was unwilling to invest much of my 'self' in the process. I became proficient at note-taking, but could not place the concepts into a personal perspective. Secondly, I found myself alternately directing anger and frustration at the class itself, in its perceived emphasis on Kegan's approach and a consequent de-emphasis on the 'traditional' approaches. Thirdly, I felt intimidated, insecure about my own ability to meet the task; even to transcend Kegan's rather opaque writing style appeared monumental. This insecurity was further fostered by my minimal grounding in developmental theory and subject-object relations theory. Writing the paper itself was threatening in that I felt I lacked a 'richness of language' to relate to such a complex theoretical framework as Kegan provides.

Typically, such initial reactions were replaced by an increasing readiness to befriend personally relevant aspects of the theory and an optimism that, in the long run at least, giving oneself over to the learning process would be worthwhile. In the words of the same class member:

As I began to 'go with' the process however, I found myself addressing, in a very self-critical sense, issues which Kegan presented and, in fact, felt that the assignment was directing me to confront issues which I did not feel comfortable with confronting. Particularly, I often felt scared to question a self which had taken so long to establish. 'It took me too long, too much psychic sweat to get where I am now, emotionally and professionally, I'm not about to let someone erode that' (Sheehy, 1974, p. 195). Integration was the issue here. However, as I began to sense that 'I' was being supported, that my 'role' perhaps was not, and that this assignment was a support of my 'evolution,' I became less anxious.

Other individuals described more precisely the kind of struggle for self-insight stimulated by the study of Kegan's framework.

Through intense introspection and confrontation I have been encouraged to forfeit the 'I' as an institution in search of some higher meaning and level of intimacy in personal relationships. The recognition of my old way of being—rigid, self-directed, self-regulated, independent yet non-communicative at an intimate level—fit perfectly Kegan's description of the 'institutional.' This re-examination of what was truth for me served to illuminate my growing discontent and pushed me into reconsidering not only my marriage, but my entire way of behaving. With this came the recognition of the need I have for greater personal involvement and more intimate interpersonal relationships.

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As could be expected, analysis of one's self development is a challenge to objectivity. It is a test of just how far the self-other differentiation has evolved. For me it has been both a humbling and affirming exercise. In the process of evaluating the sources of my meaning construction I have more clearly seen the deep impact of the events or process by which transitions were triggered and the affective learnings from both truces and depressions. . . . In this process, I was surprised to learn how positive this period of distress can be. Downed defenses finally allow growth. (Intended as protection they have the power to imprison as well!)

For some, the learning process set in motion by undertaking the Kegan assignment went beyond feeling challenged to experiencing the pain that can come with confronting pressing personal issues.

It has been a painful process. At times I just left it and came back to it later. It was forcing me to live through those painful things that happened to me when I was younger and those things that are happening to me now. But I found it a catharsis. All the anger and pain were gone by the time I finished part II. I worked out the problems while I was writing. When I went to put the whole thing together for typing I had written over 50 pages. I have had to cut it down considerably. Kegan pushed me into a crisis. I resisted, yes, but the process, although painful, has shed new light on the questions I was grappling with in my personal life as well as my professional life.

*An Opportunity for Self-Exploration.* A concentrated effort was made to establish in the class a climate of trust in which self-exploration and self-disclosure were legitimized and actively encouraged. The preparedness of individuals to engage in such activities was made particularly evident by the manner in which the Kegan assignment was approached. The following excerpts provide an indication of the full measure of integrity that class members brought to bear on the task of examining their personal development within Kegan's framework.

One class member poignantly describes an existential turning point that for her was reached while training to be a nurse.

Nursing school provided an environment of relative calm, challenge and commitment for me, until I faced the death of a patient. My nursing instructor reprimanded me for dissolving in tears, and suggested I should quit if I couldn't handle death and I wouldn't make any kind of a nurse. The devastation of facing death for the first time, and the questioning of my own ability to cope with it, plunged me into several days of 'soul searching.' I vividly recall coming to the conclusion that death was inevitable no matter what way it happened, and I could not change or make death go away for anyone, including myself. I recall wishing I could contact the family of the patient who had died so I could tell them I had cried because I had cared, and we could have shared our fear and care together. My rage at the insensitivity of my nursing instructor has never gone away! I experienced other deaths while in nursing school and by the time I was finished I was acutely aware that life was questionable and that life was there for one to do with whatever one chose. I was free to do whatever I wanted in life, and I was responsible for my own future. The sense of now was very acute, and the need to live now, grab life in case it didn't last was prominent in my mind.

The following excerpt lucidly describes an attempt to understand and transcend a self-definition based upon socially approved roles and behavioral expectations.

It is only now that, with some clarity, I can recognize my meaning-making context which has been in 'operation' for much of the past nine years. Although I am able to 'hold objectively' some aspects of my 'institution,' much of my operationalizing continues to be derived from this context. My personal meaning, for the most part, is constituted by my definitions and my expectations of role and self. When 'shoulds' and 'musts' are not adhered to, I become agitated. I can now see how I am, largely, my 'psychic administration,' and how I identify myself with the institutions I have created and perpetuate. My idea of success is often tied to my performance in various roles. When I recognize short-comings, I experience moments of self-doubt. When I believe others are



critical of me, I summon a solidly constructed defense system. My structure is well defined: I am the 'solid' member of my family; I am political; I am a feminist; I am a good teacher, a good wife, a good friend.

For another individual, the birth of her first child encouraged growth in the direction of greater personal integrity and resulted in an enhanced capacity for care and intimacy.

At the present time, I believe I am still in transition, although at the later side of the shift. Much of the push toward Stage 5 occurred when I became a mother. With the birth of my first child, I again experienced a transcendence, which effected a profound transformation in my meaning-making—and consequently, in my personality. From the minute I laid eyes on my newborn, I seemed to change from being a cool, aloof individual to someone who feels an overflowing amount of warmth and affection. In accordance with this transition, this flooding of emotion quite perturbed me. I felt as though I might lose my grip (really my self). My relationship with my children has brought out my capacity for affection, empathy and caring, has moved me toward integration. At the same time, I believe I have moved toward separateness. I have been able to preserve my integrity by making choices which were discordant with interpersonal and societal expectations, but were nevertheless consonant with my own beliefs.

*Personal Relevance and Benefits Derived.* Generally speaking, class members highly valued Kegan's constructive-developmental framework as a context in which to explore and better understand their own developmental journeys. The "goodness of fit" between Kegan's theory and individuals' life experiences was quite remarkable. As one person put it, "It is amazing after outlining highlights of my own life and major developmental turning points for me, how I can superimpose Kegan's model on my life and see some sort of fit. The fog is lifting!" Another individual reinforced this sentiment by suggesting that, "One theory cannot be expected to cover the whole spectrum of my personality; however, Kegan's theory has been accurate in accounting for a surprisingly large segment of my personal development."

As might be expected, several individuals saw themselves as presently striving to make the transition from the "Institutional" level of self-development to the "Interindividual" level and, therefore, found Kegan's theory to be particularly valuable in coming to better understand their current developmental status and the struggle for personal growth that they are presently experiencing. It should also be noted, however, that the discovery of "goodness of fit" was not universal. Some individuals experienced from the outset, and continued to experience throughout the year, misgivings and doubts about various philosophical-theoretical assumptions undergirding the constructive-developmental perspective. In the words of one such person, "I have been struggling to articulate the nature of my 'quarrel' with developmental psychology and so far I have not been able to. In this respect, the paper feels inadequate. I am not yet ready."

Perhaps the greatest overall benefits derived by class members from involvement in this training experience were an increased degree of confidence in engaging in the process of self-exploration and an enhanced willingness to be open to new life experiences and growth opportunities. A few individuals captured the spirit of this positive, open-minded attitude particularly well.

My unsettled sense of self, the challenge of seeking more, seems much less pathological. It is reassuring to fit my so-called 'positive disintegration' into a transition stage of Kegan's model as the beginning of what he calls 'intimacy with oneself.' One can begin to balance roles, relationships and identities. It is important as an evolving person to learn to recognize and understand this. The old cliché, 'You can't be all things to all people,' is perhaps true, yet one can be more than one thing to those most important to you. At the same time it seems essential to be true to yourself and pursue that which has meaning for you. It is challenging to deal with this, despite some feelings of guilt, apprehension, and doubt. Putting these supposedly 'negative' feelings into a positive growth producing framework makes the struggle much more exciting.

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Coming to grips with Kegan has meant coming to grips with my own personal life. Although the journey is far from over and there is still more loss and pain to come, I look forward with eager anticipation to the new learnings and behaviors which it will evoke along the way. I have begun to understand myself and, in so doing, feel more able to take the risks and cope with impending change. I look forward to the 'activities in life which once begun must be completed.'

## DISCUSSION

In this section, I will highlight what have proven to be some decided theoretical strengths of Kegan's (1982) constructive-developmental framework when it is used in the context of developmental counsellor training. This relatively formal discussion will be followed by some personal reflections upon the training effort.

*Theoretic-Didactic Reflections.* Several theoretical aspects of Kegan's (1982) model make it admirably well suited to developmentally focused counsellor training. First, the model provides a viable framework within which existing developmental theories that are commonly invoked to rationalize developmental counselling thrusts can be compared, reconciled, and integrated. Second, Kegan's (1982) theory is able to accommodate a variety of approaches to counselling and psychotherapy. For example, Kelly's (1955) Psychology of Personal Constructs is particularly illuminative of the process of "meaning-making," Rogers' (1951) Client-Centered Therapy embodies a lucid account of the growth conditions required for self-evolution, and both Perls' (1969) Gestalt Therapy and Dabrowski's (1964) Theory of Positive Disintegration provide theoretically powerful beginning accounts of the mechanisms and growth dynamics involved in developmental stage progression. Third, by virtue

of its emphases upon the confrontation of questions of meaning, individuation through institutional-societal disembedding, and consciousness of the processes involved in the construction of self and world views, the most advanced stage of Kegan's (1982) theory (i.e., the Interindividual Self Stage) has proven to be an excellent point of departure for the study of several converging perspectives, or knowledge domains, that extend and elucidate existing developmental characterizations of high level human functioning. Among the most noteworthy of these viewpoints are Existentialism (e.g., Frankl, 1984; Kierkegaard, 1980; May, 1981; May, Angel, and Ellenberger, 1958; Van Kaam, 1966), Phenomenology (e.g., Giorgi, 1970; Heidegger, 1962; Husserl, 1964; Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Schutz, 1970; Theunissen, 1984; Wagner, 1983), the Sociology of Knowledge (e.g., Berger, 1963; Berger & Luckman, 1967), and a variety of Eastern perspectives on human growth and development (e.g., Guenther, 1984; Suzuki, Fromm, & DeMartino, 1963; Watts, 1961; Wilber, 1980, 1983). It should be noted that Kegan (1982) emphasizes the coalescence of the constructive-developmental account of self-evolution with the existential and phenomenological viewpoints. Fourth, as previously demonstrated in this article, the theory provides a framework within which counsellors in training can begin to explore and to better understand their own development. Lastly, Kegan's (1982) theory may be regarded as a diagnostic framework within which the developmental needs of clients can be assessed and through the use of which counselling interventions might be more appropriately selected.

*Some Personal Reflections.* Probably the major challenge posed by the present undertaking had to do with trying to maintain a high degree of fidelity to what the counselling literature suggests are important growth facilitating conditions through transcending, as much as possible, the status-power distinctions between faculty and students that tend to dominate interpersonal relationships in educational institutions. I have been poignantly reminded of the importance of being aware of how my well intended developmental efforts are received by students and I have become even more thoroughly convinced that as counsellor educators we must be prepared to acquire what Ivey (1977) has called "cultural expertise" and to understand what Blocher (1974) has described as the "ecology of student development." That is, we must become more open to examining the very conditions under which we carry out our educative function in order to sensitively monitor the extent to which the rhetoric of developmental and personal growth psychology typically comprising the substance of formally stated program objectives is in harmony with the actual lived experience of graduate students involved in counsellor education.

There are several benefits that I have derived from this experience for which I am very grateful. I have been challenged to re-examine my own natural affiliation with Kegan and cognitive-developmental thinking in

general. In the process, I have arrived at a more balanced appreciation of both the merits and the possible limitations of this orientation to human growth (see Epstein, 1983, and Swanson, 1983 for excellent extended reviews of Kegan's constructive-developmental theory). My confidence in developmental theory as a framework for counsellor training has been enhanced and I am optimistic about being able to improve my own effectiveness as a counsellor educator on the basis of the valuable personal and theoretical insights gained.

Above all, I am grateful for having had the privilege of being involved with and, hopefully, influencing in a positive way, a fine group of people. I am coming away from this experience with a deeply felt sense of humility in the face of the courage, commitment, compassion, and willingness to share of themselves demonstrated so amply by them. The time and energy investment involved in exploring the complexities and ambiguities of developmental perspectives and in grappling with the personal and professional issues raised by the ideas being examined was well worth it. This experience has made me realize that, in the past, I have tended to underestimate the capabilities and the wisdom of my students because I really didn't get to know them as well as I could have. Life, especially life in academic institutions, often seems a lot simpler and more manageable when we don't allow ourselves to be known to others and when we discourage others from letting themselves be known to us. It has been both heartening and awe-inspiring to learn first hand about the power that counsellors in training, under certain identifiable conditions, have to become the active agents of their own growth.

It is perhaps quite fitting to conclude this account with the following poem, entitled "Escence," which was written by Lorraine, a class member. She was inspired to write it after gaining a sense of understanding of Kegan.

Flashes of insight  
 With unfamiliar experiences,  
 And shades of meaning.  
 New self-awareness  
 Crashing in on me  
 Like waves.  
 Am I being washed away  
 Or cleansed of old perceptions?  
  
 Moments of feeling  
 Lost and desperate,  
 When I sense no direction,  
 Intent or meaning.  
 Feeling like an outsider  
 Confused, angry,  
 Hurt,  
 Insane.

But wait! I cry.  
 There's no return  
 And even this is  
 Better than the old?  
 Oh Lord, my essence is gone,  
 I am losing myself!  
 What's happening? I ask  
 In fear of the unknown.

I withdraw  
 And reach into myself.  
 I gain strength and courage  
 And reach out to others. And,  
 Flashes of insight  
 With unfamiliar experiences  
 And concrete meanings.  
 New self-awareness  
 A welcome friend.  
 Balance restored  
 But motion accepted, even  
 Desired, I'm me again.

It is indeed a challenge to be worthy of one's "students."

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#### Footnote

- <sup>1</sup> Some of the following student material pertaining directly to the Kegan assignment represents the experience of class members who completed it for the writer during the 1983-84 academic year. This material is included because it is particularly demonstrative of the usefulness and impact of the Kegan framework in the context of developmental counsellor training.

#### About the Author

Frank Van Hesteren is a member of the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Saskatchewan. His article in this issue reflects a continuing commitment to both theory and program development in the related areas of developmental counselling and psychological education.