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INTRINSIC EXPERIENCE AND PLACE

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INTRINSIC EXPERIENCE AND PLACE

by

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INTRODUCTION

> By the end of the 1920s, the influence of behaviorism and kindred movements in psychology, as well as of operationism and logical empiricism in philosophy of science, had deterred psychologists from interesting themselves in pleasure as a kind of conscious experience or an attribute of conscious experience, to be studied through descriptive introspection, and from placing great hopes in it as a means of illuminating behavior.1

It is remarkable that a by-product of the self-definition of twentieth century psychology is the exclusion from the purview of acceptable inquiry experiences which are not considered central to the functional aspect of the lives of people. Whether the "scientific method in psychology" or the cultural context in which twentieth century psychology is embedded has led to the functional/instrumental dominance of the field is a moot point. For certainly the categories for discussing that which is <u>not</u> functional or instrumental lack richness and development, for example, the functional dominance in the field of play,[2] the focus on time and activity in the field of leisure,[3] the experimental psychological focus on reinforcement, and task performance in intrinsic motivation.

This research began as a search for the articulation of categories of experience which are not understood as functional for another goal but are important and meaningful

in and of themselves, for themselves. As such, it is without an easy category label--neither intrinsic motivation, play, pleasure, nor leisure are suitable. The author whose work is closest to this research, Csikszentmihalyi (1975), has used the term "autotelic experience" in describing any such experience: "An 'autotelic experience' is a psychological state, based on concrete feedback, which acts as a reward in that it produces continuing behavior in the absence of other rewards."

I prefer to use the term "Intrinsic Experience," experience understood primarily for itself and thus free of a "category label." It is both easier to explain and avoids the "reward"-centered definition which allies it to traditional psychology.

I further utilize the term "Partitioned Place" to refer to places in which intrinsic experience can or does occur. Wilderness is perhaps the archetypal example of such place for some people. For others, intrinsic experience does not occur in wilderness and may relate to other places. A strong hypothesis of this research was, indeed, that the relationship between experience and place allows for intrinsic experience in a variety of locations for different individuals. While the place of intrinsic experience itself may vary from individual to individual, intrinsic experiences also share a remarkable number of similar characteristics. Thus, "Partitioned Place" refers to places

where the relationship between the individual and place allows for intrinsic experience.

This inquiry is an exploration into the domain of experience which is not to be understood primarily as functional or instrumental for another goal, but important and meaningful in, of, and for itself. The research begins with a consideration of intrinsic experience and proceeds to question the relationship between this experience and place.

CHAPTER 1

Background and Literature Review, Methodology, and Sample

Background and Literature Review

Csikszentmihalyi (1975) studied individuals in a variety of activities: chess players, rock climbers, rock dancers, and surgeons and found that all shared a very similar "autotelic experience" he termed "flow". "Flow" is an experience demarcated by the following characteristics: a) Merging of action and awareness; the individual is aware of what he is doing "but not of the awareness itself"; b) loss of self-consciousness; c) centering of attention on a limited stimulus field; narrowing of consciousness; d) heightened awareness; awareness of internal processes; and e) the experience is intrinsic, for itself.

Csikszentmihalyi identified several characteristics of the situation which are necessary for "flow" to occur: a) Activity must be feasible, within one's ability to perform, neither below nor above individual "skill level"; b) the individual must be in control of his/her actions and the environment; c) the action must be voluntary, free within the context of the action; and d) the demands of the situation must be non-contradictory; feedback must be clear and unambiguous; demands can't conflict.

Thus, Csikszentmihalyi was identifying an experience which is not determined by time (it doesn't necessarily occur on weekends, evenings, vacations, etc.) or by type of activity. Indeed, Csikszentmihalyi clearly argues that "flow" could occur during what is customarily defined as "work".

Csikszentmihalyi's initial treatment of "flow" in everyday life[4] utilized a sample of undergraduates and a pre-post design. Cognitive and personality measures were administered prior to test conditions. Then, "each subject was told to stop all enjoyable, noninstrumental behavior for a forty-eight hour period. Subsequent to this experimental procedure, the pre-test battery was re-administered. Respondents were found to be more tired, to experience a decrease in self-perception and to be more alienated . . . while some measures . . . showed an improvement in cognitive performance." The difficulty, however, is that this analysis tells us nothing about what intrinsic experience in everyday life is. Characteristics identified in the author's earlier examination of specialized populations are not utilized in this later examination of "everyday life".

Subsequent work by Csikszentmihalyi and his students extended the notion of "flow" in everyday life (1979).[5] Eighty-two workmen from five large companies in the Chicago area . . . (whose) occupations range from assembly line and clerical employees to engineers and managers in the Chicago area were provided four statements describing "flow" and

were asked to indicate whether or not they had ever had a similar experience. The statements were:

1. My mind isn't wandering, I am not thinking of something else; I am totally involved in what I am doing. My body feels good . . . I don't seem to hear anything, the world seems cut off from me . . . I am less aware of myself and my problems. (Intended to tap the "merging of action and awareness" and the "concentration" dimensions.)
2. My concentration is like breathing . . . I never think of it. I am really quite oblivious to my surroundings after I really get going. I think that the phone could ring, and the doorbell could ring, or the house could burn down or something like that . . . when I start, I really do shut out the whole world. Once I stop I can let it back in again. (Intended to tap the same dimensions as above.)
3. Although I am not aware of specific things, I have a general feeling of well-being, and I am in complete control of my world . . . I have more confidence in myself than at any other time. I have no worries of failure. What a powerful and warm feeling it is. (Intended to tap the dimensions of "control".)

4. I am so involved in what I am doing . . . I don't see myself separate from what I am doing. (Intended to tap the "merging of action and awareness" and the "loss of self-consciousness" dimensions.)

Seventy-one of the 82 respondents who indicated that they had similar experiences were asked both about the types of activities during which it occurred as well as the frequency of occurrence. Results can be summarized in the following chart:

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	EXAMPLE	PERCENT OF MENTIONS	TYPE OF RESPONDENT
Social	(Vacationing with family, being with children, wife or lover, parties)	16	White collar, Educated females
Passive Attending	(Watching TV, going to the theatre, listening to music)	13	No Report
Work	(Working, electrical work, challenging problems at home)	31	Blue collar, Married males
Hobbies and Home Activities	(Cooking, sewing, photography, singing)	22	Single female, low income/ education
Sports and Outdoor	(Bowling, golf, dancing)	18	Higher income and education

These data provide an interesting foundation for an exploration of what the "flow experiences" were and what role they played in the daily life of an individual. Yet, there are significant conceptual difficulties in the

research regarding the definition of whether a respondent experienced "flow" or not. (These issues are addressed in the "screening" part of the present research design.) Moreover, unfortunately, the authors turn immediately to another question, the correlates of these experiences in work satisfaction and alienation, and time allocation in various daily activities and not to the experience itself. The study proceeds to utilize a methodology wherein respondents are provided with a beeper and asked to record what they are doing when the beeper "goes off". This activity, however, is not necessarily a "flow" experience, and we are left with only limited information of the experience of "flow" itself.

Gray (1977) utilized the "flow" model development by Csikszentmihalyi in an examination of leisure activities of middle-aged and elderly adults, finding that enjoyable activities were ones which provided "flow-like" characteristics. Mayers (1978) found that activities enjoyed in the school experience by adolescents also had "flow-like" properties.

Subsequent work by Csikszentmihalyi focused on utilization of his "Experimental Sampling Method", employing the "beeper" methodology mentioned earlier and considered measures of well-being in everyday life (1979) and the "experience of freedom". None of these studies are direct considerations of what we have discussed as intrinsic experience, but rather examinations of correlates or

implications suggested by Csikszentmihalyi's earlier work, reflecting the author's desire to relate his model to other areas of life. Csikszentmihalyi's initial work is the definitive empirical work on intrinsic experience to date.

Yet certainly other areas of social science have contributed to an understanding of intrinsic experience. Leisure is an area of sociology which has explored--at the broadest level--what people do and experience when they are not working or constrained. It would seem reasonable that there are implications in this field for an examination of nonfunctional intrinsic experience.

The field of leisure is remarkably full of time and activity definitions of experiences (e.g., studies of specific activities, time budget studies) which do not allow us to examine the quality or characteristics of experience and thus explore intrinsic experience. However, there are a few writers who utilize a normative definition of leisure, one which uses the quality of the experience as the criteria for a "leisure" activity. Several of these writers have shared many of the elements articulated by Csikszentmihalyi in their understanding of leisure.

Leisure and Intrinsic Experience

The political scientist de Grazia (1962) provided an extensive review of the classical understanding of leisure, an understanding which is nearly isomorphic with Csikszentmihalyi's understanding of intrinsic experience.

De Grazia, in discussing Aristotle's conception of leisure as different from the world of work, defines leisure as: "Having in itself intrinsic pleasure, intrinsic happiness, intrinsic felicity. Happiness of that order does not belong to occupation; it belongs to those who have leisure."[6]

For Aristotle, "leisure is freedom from the necessity of being occupied."[7] De Grazia takes pains to point out that for Aristotle, leisure "is a state of being in which activity is performed for its own sake and its own end." For both Plato and Aristotle only music and contemplation qualified as activities worthy of leisure, activities in which the mind is developed and in which the individual is truly free. "The man in contemplation is a free man. He needs nothing. Therefore, nothing determines or distorts his thoughts. He does whatever he loves to do, and what he does is done for its own sake."[8]

Kelly (1978) has distinguished three different types of leisure: "unconditional" leisure, that undertaken for its own sake; "complementary" leisure which is complementary to roles and relationships; and "coordinated" leisure understood primarily in its relationship to work.

His "unconditional" leisure seems closest to intrinsic experience. Kelly found that for those who became parents, "unconditional" leisure experience were highest during the pre-parental years.

Jewson (1981) examined former stamp collectors, returned stamp collectors, new collectors, and collectors

who had collected over three years in five United States cities. He found that the quality of the experience of stamp collecting was the crucial determinant of whether participants continued with the hobby. Experienced collectors found that their experience of stamp collecting was intrinsic: focused, controlled, highly affective involvement, aesthetic, separate, captivating--"I get lost in it . . . hours can go by . . ."--and pleasurable. Jewson found that collectors who did not continue with the hobby understood the experience of collecting in extrinsic terms. Even committed collectors with a significant monetary investment in the hobby saw financial reasons as relatively unimportant. Jewson hypothesized that the ability of an individual to structure the experience of stamp collecting so as to provide an intrinsic experience was critical in determining whether an individual continued with the hobby.

Summary: Intrinsic Experience and Leisure.

These leisure studies show a remarkable degree of convergence with the elements identified earlier as characteristics of intrinsic experience:

CHARACTERISTIC OF INTRINSIC EXPERIENCE	CONVERGENCE IN LEISURE LITERATURE
Feasible, within ability to perform	Aristotle: classical emphasis on competence, music, and philosophy. Jewson: activity to facilitate experience.
Control of actions and environment	Kelly: life cycle phase and unconditional leisure. Jewson: structure.

Voluntary, free within the context of the action	Aristotle: as cited. Neulinger: perceived freedom.
Demands clear, noncontradictory	Kelly: role conflict. Jewson: structure--intrinsic definition.
Not time nor activity	Meyersohn: orientation transcendence. Jewson: intrinsic experience, multiple actions.
Merge action and awareness centering of attention	Meyersohn: transcendence. Jewson: quality of experience.
Loss of self-consciousness	Meyersohn: transcendence contrast with routine. Jewson: quality of experience.
Heightened awareness	Classical: development of mind. Jewson: quality of experience.

As such, this literature validates a key premise of this research: intrinsic experience occurs as part of human experience and is important. However, only two of the authors cited (Kelly and Jewson) have conducted empirical research which bears on intrinsic experience.

The research reported here is similar in orientation to many of the arguments cited and is closest to the work of Jewson (1981) in its emphasis on the quality of experience and how individuals structure activity to provide themselves with a specific experience. It extends the current literature both through providing empirical insights to bear on what are, for the most part, theoretical or philosophical positions, as well as by examining the relationship of intrinsic experience to place.

Intrinsic Motivation and Intrinsic Experience

Intrinsic motivation has, of course, strong links to what we have discussed as intrinsic experience. Deci (1975) defined intrinsic motivation as: "Activities . . . for which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself . . . The activities are means to themselves rather than a means to an end . . . There is no apparent reward and . . . the person is deriving enjoyment from the activity."[9]

Hunt (1965) and Berlyne (1960) have focused on the importance of an "optimal level of incongruity" in intrinsic motivation arguing that organisms seek out stimulation "to the right extent when naturally occurring stimuli are either too easy or too difficult to assimilate." (Csikszentmihalyi discussed this level of stimulation notion as central to "flow" and as between boredom and anxiety.)

The question is how we view the importance and role of concepts such as optimal level of incongruity and arousal, etc. What is their relationship to what we have been calling "intrinsic experience"? Deci (1975), for instance, has argued that intrinsically motivated behaviors are not biologically based, are independent of non-nervous system needs, and are aimed at bringing about certain internally rewarding consequences. Deci argues that feelings of competence and determination are these "internally rewarding consequences".

Other authors in Deci's tradition have also pointed to personal causation, competence, and self-determination as

characteristics of experience facilitated through optimal incongruity (deCharms, 1969, Angyal 1941). Other authors have not asked for what kind of experience arousal and incongruity are prerequisites (e.g., Helson 1964 or Berlyne 1971).

It is our hypothesis that incongruity and arousal are elements in intrinsic experience, meaningful only as part of a larger context of human experience. Our hypothesis is that examination of arousal and incongruity outside of the context of important aspects of human experience such as the ability to act, control of actions and environment, volition, noncontradictory demands--all elements of intrinsic experience--is meaningless. Jewson (1975) found, for instance, in his exploration of the utility of Helson's (1964) Adaption Level Model in consideration of children's experience of a novel environment, that incongruity in and of itself does not explain or predict either experience or the "effects" of experience.

In sum, our hypothesis is that intrinsic motivation as an area of psychology has identified a number of phenomena which are, in all probability, components of intrinsic experience and that it may well be the case that it is within the framework of intrinsic experience that these components are meaningful aspects of human experience.

Intrinsic Experience and Place

Huizinga (1950) has discussed the elements we have identified as intrinsic experience (transcendence, in itself, for happiness, volition, orientation, separation from the ordinary). In a beautiful passage, he goes on to one of the few discussions of the relationship of this notion of experience to place:

> All play moves and has its being within a playground marked off beforehand either materially or ideally, deliberately or as a matter of course. Just as there is no formal difference between play and ritual, so the "consecrated spot" cannot be formally distinguished from the playground, the arena, the card table, the magic circle, the temple, the stage, the screen, the tennis court, the court of justice, etc.; all are in form and function play--ground, i.e., forbidden spots, isolated hedged round, hallowed within which special rules obtain. All are temporary world, dedicated to the performance of an act apart.10

Direct empirical consideration of the role of place in its relationship to intrinsic experience has not been made. The outdoor recreation literature has identified many motivations and benefits attributed to wilderness and camping. Rossman and Uhela (1977) identified tranquillity, natural beauty, and escape from "hectic urban pace", as well as the perception that these "rewards" can only be obtained in a wilderness setting, to be of primary importance to wilderness visitors. Their argument focuses on a specific type of experience available only in a specific setting--wilderness. This has repeatedly been a critical argument for the preservation of wilderness locations.

Driver (1977) identified similar "benefits" in his examination of wilderness experiences. Hendee (1968), Scott (1974), Shafer and Meitz (1969), and ORRRC (1962) have all identified variables similar to our earlier discussion of intrinsic experience in their consideration of the wilderness experience (aesthetic-emotion, "peak experiences").

It is interesting that many of these authors cite "escape from civilization" as an important motivation in wilderness experience. This motivation may be similar to what we have earlier defined as "Partitioned Place"--settings where certain individuals may have intrinsic experience.

Peterson (1974) and others have examined some of the environmental factors which contribute to satisfaction with camping. They argue that "satisfaction with camping is a function of the degree of congruency between aspirations and the perceived reality of the experience." Lucas (1964) has also looked at factors which impede or facilitate wilderness experience such as density and the encounter with other people.

It is highly probable that there is a certain small segment of the population who have intrinsic experience as part of their relationship to outdoor or wilderness environments. It is likely that there are many others who have this intrinsic experience as part of a relationship with another specific environment. Our hypothesis is,

therefore, that the relationship of different people to different places may show a number of common characteristics through intrinsic experience. Indeed, while Csikszentmihalyi did not consider place or environment directly, he did argue for a similar experience across widely disparate environments: mountains, hospitals, dance floors, etc. The question about the characteristics of places which relate to intrinsic experience has not been addressed previous to this research. Moreover, we hypothesize that people have access to different types of places and contrasting environments offer different opportunities. For example, a resident of Minnesota might have access to a major wilderness by taking a 15 minute walk, an option not available to a resident of New York City, who could, of course, repair to Coney Island, Broadway, or Central Park. Examining intrinsic experience of residents from different locations would help us to better examine whether these locations are characteristic of the experience/place relationship and thus to examine the role of intrinsic experience.

In categorizing environments, the researchers of the outdoor recreation environment placed different environments along a continuum, from high density/urban to wilderness/primitive (ORRRC 1962, Clawson 1966). Each type of environment along this continuum was defined by both the characteristics of place and proximity to users. Proximity of users to alternative environmental opportunities was key

in an examination of a specific place experience in the lives of people.

Furthermore, the intrinsic motivation literature suggested that arousal and incongruity, intrinsically motivating factors, could be related to a greater probability for intrinsic experience to occur in environments in which an individual did not generally spend time (i.e., the city resident who visits a "foreign" or wilderness setting). Meyersohn (1970) discussed the contrast with the "routine ordinary" world as well as segregation and isolation characteristics of play and charisma. In discussing the applications of these concepts to outdoor recreation the report (ORRRC 1962) cited that "urban dwellers are more likely to be wilderness vacationers than rural dwellers." Indeed, solitude and exit from civilization have constantly recurred as factors important in examination of the wilderness experience.

All of this further suggested the utility of examining intrinsic experience in both the prevailing environment, that environment in which an individual generally functions, contrasted with intrinsic experience which occurs away from the prevailing environment. Moreover, it suggested the utility of examining whether contrast between prevailing experience and intrinsic experience is a characteristic of intrinsic experience. Is contrast necessary for intrinsic experience? Examination of this issue will help us more

clearly understand intrinsic experience and its relationship to place.

Summary: The Literature and Intrinsic Experience.

Research and conceptual discussion from a wide variety of directions (history, philosophy, sociology, psychology, recreation) converge to focus us on a very specific kind of human experience: intrinsic experience. While the literature clearly argues for the existence of this kind of experience, it leaves a number of questions unexamined or only partially examined. We know, for instance, little about this experience itself with special populations and almost nothing about intrinsic experience with general population. The literature has cited characteristics of intrinsic experience in various areas: charisma, play, "unconditional leisure", intrinsic motivation, wilderness, and camping. Yet only the work of Csikszentmihalyi (1975, 1978) and Jewson (1981) has explicitly shown the relationship between intrinsic experience and "leisure" or work activities. We thus infer that many of the characteristics we have discussed in the literature are indeed related to intrinsic experience or characteristics of intrinsic experience. We know little about whether intrinsic experience coheres to certain types of activities or not. The question of time and its relationship to intrinsic experience has not been considered. We know little about the implications of the "prevailing context"

(work, family, etc.) for individuals' relationships to intrinsic experience itself. We know little or nothing about the issue of the transition(s) to and from intrinsic experience.

There is no information available on the relationship between intrinsic experience and place, though we have hypothesized that: a) For a segment of the population, intrinsic experience occurs in a specific context (such as wilderness); b) certain characteristics of the relationship of people to place will hold constant through intrinsic experience across differing places: Intrinsic experience is not place dependent; and c) differing places, however, will afford different opportunities for environmental experience. We can thus profit from examination of intrinsic experience across different kinds of environment, within the prevailing environment, and away from the prevailing environment.

These questions framed this research. It is directed toward a fuller understanding of intrinsic experience in general as well as toward an initial conceptualization of the relationship between intrinsic experience and place.

Methodology

The objectives of this research were addressed in conducting 76 one-on-one in-depth interviews in three locations in a midwestern state in 1983. For the sake of respondent confidentiality, we will call the three locations "Big Town," referring to a major metropolitan area, "Farm

Town," referring to a rural agricultural town with a population of approximately 15,000, and "Woods Town," referring to a small northern town of 5,000 located on the edge of a major wilderness area.

Screening/Respondent Qualification

Previous research, principally that of Csikszentmihalyi (1976) had identified five principal dimensions of what we label intrinsic experience (Csikszentmihalyi called it "autotelic" experience). As we discussed earlier, in order to avoid overemphasizing a particular experience and to remain true to the dimensions identified in earlier research, a screening/qualification questionnaire was developed which "tapped" the dimensions of earlier research. (See Appendix A.) This was done to avoid an a priori assumption that intrinsic experience necessarily relates to a given activity, a questionable assumption in previous research.

The five dimensions of intrinsic experience previously identified are: a) merging of action and awareness, b) loss of self-consciousness, c) centering of attention, d) heightened awareness, and e) intrinsic experience for itself.

For each dimension, two or three verbatim respondents' statements from Csikszentmihalyi's research were identified. These were scaled in a questionnaire from 6 to 1, "high agree" to "low agree".

To qualify, a respondent had to express high agreement (4, 5, or 6) with at least one statement from each dimension and had to be able to report one experience about which all dimensions were simultaneously true.

This screening avoided limitations of earlier research which qualify intrinsic experience on some but not all identified dimensions or found its locus in a particular activity or experience. Therefore, in this research, respondents' qualifications required agreement with a multiple set of dimensions prior to any consideration of activity or experience.

In practice, the screening/questionnaire was administered by telephone to a randomly dialed adult population. Respondents were screened by a professional market research firm located in "Big Town". The interviewers told respondents that they were conducting a "Life Experience Study" and were read the following statement:

> There is a wide variety of emotional experience and happenings that people, to one degree or another, experience or don't while going through life.
>
> I will read you several statements, each describing such an experience or happening. By using a scale from 6 to 1, please tell me to what degree each statement describes an experience or happening that you yourself ever experienced. The more a statement describes the way you felt, the higher the number you would give it; the less it describes the way you felt, the lower the number you would give it. Remember, you can use numbers from 6 to 1.

Qualified respondents were interviewed in a central location: a professional research firm in "Big Town", a

motel in "Farm Town", and a church school in "Woods Town". Interviews generally lasted somewhat over an hour.

In a sense, validation of the screening instrument must be viewed from the perspective of our overall field experience in the study and its ability to generate respondents who reliably reflect intrinsic experience. As this research is original, and its purpose is to develop and explore the parameters of intrinsic experience against nonspecialized populations, the question of validation can be examined both a priori and a posteriori:

A priori: Did the instrument generate respondents who indicated high agreement with its dimensions and could report a specific experience reflective of those dimensions which to the respondent fully reflected those dimensions?

A posteriori: Did the instrument generate respondents whose experience cohered to the ingoing focus of this research: "experience in and of itself, for itself", and did that experience cohere to the emergent dimensionalization of "intrinsic experience" in this research?

The preliminary question was addressed in both a pilot study conducted in New Jersey, in the late fall of 1982, and in our screening field experience.

In the New Jersey study, 50 adults were randomly screened using the intrinsic experience qualification/screener. From this number, 8 "passed" the screener: 6 women and 2 men. All 8 were invited in for an interview to determine whether the five reported dimensions cohered to at least one experience and whether that experience evidenced face validity in its relationship to

"experience in and of itself, for itself". All 8 respondents qualified on both factors, reflecting experiences which are quite consistent with those reported in the body of this research (teaching, sex, religion, death, loss of others).

Five respondents who did not qualify were invited in for an interview. When the questionnaire was re-administered during the interview, those respondents did not qualify on the screener or when the interviewer asked about experiences relative to either: a) one or more dimensions, and/or b) "an experience in and of itself". On neither question could those respondents generate an experience which evidenced a relationship to the focus of this research. As evidenced by the overall data in sample, in this research, this pattern held true in our entire research program.

Anecdotally, it is interesting to report that on a few occasions respondents reported for the interview who had been inappropriately qualified for the research. (Respondents were requalified during the interview.) In these instances, the interviewer was constantly reminded of Kierkegaard's statement: "but a self he does not have", for the respondent evidenced very few of the characteristics of intrinsic experience, "self" (as we shall see) being a primary characteristic.

The study was designed to explore the dimensions of a phenomena: intrinsic experience in the lives of everyday

people. As the exploration of the phenomena was our interest, we did not conduct a systematic examination of the potential respondents who did not "pass" the screening instrument and were thus not eligible for the study. Such research would offer a counterpoint to our present research, exploring the "opposite side of the coin", asking questions beyond the focus of the research.

It is interesting to point out that the highest failure rate in the screening instrument occurred to dimension 2 (see Appendix A) which was developed to tap "centering of attention, narrowing of consciousness." As we shall examine in this research, intrinsic experience is generally an experience apart form the daily prevailing life-context and requires a degree of separation from that context involving a sense of "separateness", separation, and suspension. Such experience may be extremely fragile in a culture that values inclusion, involvement, and relationships, and require a level of attention or more properly <u>intention</u> which is exceedingly difficult. Overall, 76 individuals were screened for qualification in this research: a) 24 in "Big Town", b) 26 in "Farm Town", and c) 26 in "Woods Town". Qualification level is defined by dividing total completed calls made by respondent who "passed" screener. Qualifications levels were as follows: a) 2.3%: "Big Town", b) 3.9%: "Farm Town", and c) 8.6%: "Woods Town".

Sample

Research participation was heavily skewed toward women. Of the 76 respondents overall, 54 were women (75%). The sample distributes as follows:

	Women	Men
"Big Town"	20	4
"Farm Town"	21	5
"Woods Town"	13	9

Age of respondents ranged from 20-76. Each location provided respondents in one of the four age breaks: 20-30, 31-45, 46-59, and 59+.

The sample represents a wide diversity of socio-economic/occupational levels ranging from college professors to the unemployed, professional managers and housewives to teachers and students. The sample does not represent professionals such as doctors, lawyers, or senior business management. Each location provided housewives, teachers, clerical workers, full-time, part-time, retired, and unemployed people.

"Big Town" respondents included: day care workers, volunteer, salesperson, teacher, homemaker, craftsperson, retiree, unemployed person, planning supervisor, and student.

"Farm Town" respondents included: nurse, homemaker, park engineer/planner, student, unemployed person, clerical worker, retiree, electronics worker, child care worker,

teacher, beauty shop manager, truck driver, and person in the military.

"Woods Town" respondents included: consultant, retiree, clerical worker, professor, beautician, teacher, homemaker, nurse, cook, child care worker, unemployed person, and salesperson.

The Interview

Respondents reported to a central research location for the study. At the beginning of the interview, respondents were informed that they were participating in a study of "life experiences" and that we did not really wish to tell them a great deal more about the research until the completion of the interview itself to avoid biasing or influencing their responses. After the interview was completed, respondents were specifically told the purposes and objectives of the research as well as the hypotheses that were emerging during the interview process.

A focused, in-depth, one-on-one interview format was utilized for the interviews. This format allowed for considerable probing of responses and for the research process to explore individual variation in response. This approach, widely utilized in academic as well as industrial and marketing research, was deemed essential both to fulfill the exploratory objectives of this research as well as to allow us to examine "intrinsic experience" from within the life-context of the respondent.

The interview began with an exploration of the context of the respondent's life; the first question was "Tell me about yourself." This contextual exploration lasted from 20 to 45 minutes and ranged from a description of current life circumstances (e.g. employment and family status) to a review of key environmental and personal experiences since childhood.

Only after the context of the respondent's life had been developed was "intrinsic experience" explored. The interviewer introduced the topic of intrinsic experience by re-administering the screening instrument. Upon re-administration, the interviewer would then recall for the respondent the five statements to which he or she had indicated high agreement and ask what experience(s) they all described.

This experience(s) was then explored in depth "in and of itself" as well as in relation to the life-context of the respondent. A copy of the interview guideline can be found in Appendix B.

CHAPTER 2

The Themes of Intrinsic Experience

There are certainly categories in psychology which can be readily discussed with little introduction. However, as evidenced by our review of the literature, the category of intrinsic experience does need introduction and explanation. In order to orient the reader to intrinsic experience as a human experience, this chapter will focus on the lives of two women. Kris lives in a wealthy suburb of a large, midwestern city, is married to a stockbroker, and does not work. Helen lives in a rented home in a rural farm community, does not work, and is highly conflicted about it.

Detailed transcripts of these two interviews are presented for a distinct purpose. They allow the reader a better understanding of the research process and provide a context from which to examine the specific phenomena of intrinsic experience and its interplay with life-context. Through examination not only of the specific phenomena but the overall context in which that phenomena is embedded, we gain a more coherent perspective on the topic of our research. We also meet our respondents as people and encounter the phenomena of our interest as an experience which does not occur in isolation but occurs rather as a central life event within the overall life-context.

The lives of these two very different women present a number of similar themes. We will see that although their experience is quite different, their intrinsic experience is discussed very early in the interview as a critically important experience within the context of their lives. We will note that both have experienced adversity, however different that adversity might be. We will see that emerging from that adversity, both women experience self. We will see that for both women adversity and experience of self are integrated at the point of intrinsic experience.

These are important predominant themes, both in this chapter and within this research. There are variations on the themes we will explore in this chapter, and we shall examine these variations in Chapter 4. We begin our exploration into these central themes by meeting both "Kris" and "Helen". We will present transcripts of their interviews in detail to allow the reader a fuller sense of these women.

"Helen"

(Tell me about yourself.)

"I have four kids. Teens. I was married at 18, had a child at 18. I've been raising kids since high school. I haven't had a lot of time for myself . . . the involvement of being a wife and a mother. Teens are the most difficult years. I'm into deep things, a decision I had to make about one of my daughters. It was hard to make but I made it. I feel I'm becoming stronger in making these decisions now

because, like I say, I have a 16, a 14, and a 13 year old. Before I defended them, now they are making their own decisions. I feel I'm a little stronger now. Not feeling bad about helping instead of punishing. So that's my life. I didn't have too much to tell because I didn't have a chance to do much on my own before I entered motherhood and wifehood. Right now I have just full devotion there. I feel sometimes cheated because I don't think I had enough decisions in my teenage years to make better decision. That's why I try and make my kids see more of what they have, of what they could do. Make a mistake and all of a sudden you're stuck with it. Oh, I had a few ways to go but I chose to be a mother and a wife. I did that. I had to deal with decisions on my own without my mother's advice which was real bad. But I did it, 18, 19, 20, 21, four kids and a miscarriage. Then it came to raising them. I was the one that did that. I should have better teenagers than that but I didn't and I have a couple of problems now. I'm not going to say I didn't do a good job because I did. I didn't spend much time on myself though. I think what can I do for myself. I'm 34 years old. It's time.

(Are you married?)

"Yes, my husband works at an extrusion company [plastics]. I've lived in this state all my life. (She changes the subject to tell us about a boarding school experience in Oregon.) One time I was getting mixed up.

Mom was very strict. I held close to the house until I was 15. I look at my whole life now and I think about that one year. The people I met, the whole school. But I was a top student out there, much better than I was at home. I was on the honor roll out there. Never came close at home. I felt totally different. Well, mother couldn't afford it anymore. So then she had another baby. So I came home then. I wanted to graduate too. Just traveling out west, even to Minneapolis. I like to see things, places. See more country. People talk about places, much more than me. I just feel like I've never done anything. At least a vacation. I've just been raising children. No, I haven't traveled. I went to the Iron Range to see my brother for the first time last summer. That was a treat. We only spend two days there, so rushed, but I just. . . ."

"Raising kids is hard now. There's just so much more involvement than even my mother thought she had . . . I've been having a hard time communicating with them."

(What are three word to describe your childhood?)

"Angry. Unhappy. Uncertain."

(Any hobbies?)

"I sew. Read. I used to be able to read a lot, feel like I've been cheated out of time to do that. I'm domestic, took Home Ec. My teacher wrote on my last report card that I was good in the domestic areas. I've taught a

lot of people different things, cooking, canning. People constantly ask me advice. I am good at it and I enjoy it. When I have the time I do enjoy it. One of the most relaxing things for me is sitting behind the sewing machine, even mending."

(When are you happiest?)

"Lately I've had a lot of problems. Kids growing up. My husband . . . we have a good marriage. We differ on raising kids. He is real traditional . . . I get a lot of company . . . there's an hour and a half on Friday when everyone is away. I don't want phone ringing. I don't want no one. I just need that. Just do nothing, just sit there and think. A lot of times it doesn't happen. Because somebody will probably come in. But if it does happen I love it. I feel that I have needed the insulation. I feel that I feel myself being bogged down by it. But lately it's becoming overbearing. I've just got too much on my mind. Too many things to handle. I like time alone right now. I would like time alone. I enjoy people."

(What are three words to describe you?)

"Cheerful. Understanding. Good listener."

"My kids aren't making the right decisions now and I would be telling them what to do. But it doesn't work that way anymore if you're going to get along with them. I've

got to learn that if I'm going to make it. But I'm finding that real difficult."

"My mother told me what to do. I could never tell her what I wanted, what I needed, what I felt. My husband is still this way. He's ten years older than me. I lived in a small town, was the oldest of nine children. My mom had three kids my child's age. I live at Jefferson and 10th here in town, on a very busy street. We rent a three bedroom house, nice part of town. It has a smaller kitchen. We're kitchen people. Small house when you get 15 people in. Comfortable living room where I can just sit down and be myself. That's where I spent the (private) time on Friday, in my living room. It's decorated to suit my taste. I have lots of pictures of my children around. A new picture every year."

(<u>If you could live any life you wanted, what would it be</u>?)

"I think . . . that's a tough one. Like I say I haven't had a chance to think about what I really want. I get so involved in the 16 years of this, you know. So in the past three or four months I've thought about what I really want. I have daydreamed about going to school, finding my own apartment, have my own job. It's kind of late in the year for that. My girlfriend and I used to talk about this. What fun. . . ."

(If you could live in any place you wanted, where would you live?)

"I'd go back out West, to Oregon. I was the happiest there. I can still see the mountains and ocean. It was a nice place to live."

(Have you been out there since?)

"No".

(Would you live there full time?)

"Yes".

(What did you like about it?)

"The climate, the mountains, the town, the smell. The school is the biggest thing there. Grew to love Portland."

(How did you feel living there?)

"I was a happy mature teen. I grew more in that year than in my life because my mother kept me from making decisions. I wasn't even able to wash my hair alone until I was 14. You've got to learn to let your kids grow too. We did have more difficulty when I came back."

(Have you had any experience with loss?)

"My dad at three. Only vague memories. An uncle, dad's younger brother. Husbands, grandparents."

(Rescreened for Intrinsic Experience Questionnaire: What experiences does this describe?)

Oregon: (First experience, then second experience)

"The three times in my life when my husband was treated for alcoholism. The first time was the worst because I didn't understand it. I was too young. I was alone and I didn't understand. That was the worst time in my marriage. The second time was . . . the third time I didn't understand why he was going. I've had it with this crap; I was getting angry. I was alone. I didn't know very many people."

[The third experience was]

"When I worked . . . one year with other people. I was totally involved there. Work was more important at that point than anything else in my life. Even my family. I did have a guilt trip, like I told you. But I went to meetings, was very involved, all that. I was really taken up with it. I felt it was good for me. But at the same time I look back and could see a change in my children. They weren't as well behaved as they used to be. Because I wasn't there all the time."

(What was it like to be Helen there, inside?)

"I felt totally accepted by everybody there, the teachers, the Dean. Before I was accepted I was negative. Once I felt accepted I was important, I was me. I was getting credit for being me. I felt that I discovered

myself for the first time. At home I was told what to do, I couldn't make decisions. There I wasn't afraid to be me. I did things that I didn't think I ever could do. I was able to get up and give a performance alone, speech. To this day it amazes me that I did this. I was so relaxed and unafraid. I was very trusted, more trusted than other kids in school. I had a different image of myself. At home I didn't think I was worth anything. My grades were terrible. But out there I felt I could be me without anybody criticizing me. I proved myself fully what I was worth. It was a lot. So you see I didn't have no pressures on me. At home I was pressured all the time. Afraid, this is why I realized I'm probably doing some things mother did and it's not going to work. This is probably good for me. I just got done talking to a probation officer two hours ago. But out there I wasn't afraid of disapproval. I still have that, afraid of disapproval."

(Do you ever feel like you did in Oregon now?)

"No. Only when working. I was told I did a good job. But I feel I still have children. I'm good working, good with children. That's important. Kids won't be young much longer. I'm going to be young."

(Did those feelings stay with you after you left Oregon?)

"No. It was different when I came home. Mom was the same. Overbearing. I got pregnant in high school. Didn't

take long. And my husband married me. He is not the father of my first child, but he married me. I was real lucky, otherwise I was going to give up. Mom should have sat down and talked to me. My mother is extremely religious. Everyday she calls me. She moved down here now. She left my stepfather after 26 years with him. Stayed with me, I helped her set up, she's self-sufficient . . . she's preaching to me now, she preaches all day and I find myself with the kids. I shouldn't do this but I say 'Tell Grandma I'm sleeping.' I'm not an atheist but I grew up with this and right now I find these kids of mine that are wayward. They have got to get saved."

(Tell me about the [husband's] alcoholism?)

"When I got up there [to initial treatment center] the first time, the finger was pointed at me. You've got the problem. You need help. I heard that when I was up there. I felt like my husband had the problem before I married him yet I was totally at fault."

(What was your experience of his alcoholism?)

"Unsure of myself. Not knowing what I was expected to do. Expecting things that weren't there. I expected a miracle. I got up there [treatment center] and I didn't know what an alcoholic was. My husband loves his beer. And then I overheard conversations: 'When I get out of here I'm going to go out and get plowed.' I didn't understand it.

It was very frustrating, mixed up. Not knowing where to go. Not knowing how even to express myself. I could have never talked like I'm talking right now in those meetings. They bombarded me with questions and I'd start to cry. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know what I was involved in. I didn't have a choice. I did it because I had to. I did it because my husband was there. At this point I did not like it and when I got there I like it less."

(Did you find out anything from your husband's alcoholism?)

"Not the first time. He'd come home, start drinking again and go back up [to the treatment center]. I didn't ask a lot of questions then, either. I ask questions now but I didn't then. I was disgusted, I didn't know how to handle it. The third time I asked questions. I learned more the third time than ever. I was supposed to, I was supposed to go to Alanon. I don't think I learned as much about me as I learned about my husband. That was the third time, the most satisfying treatment to me. He didn't go [to original treatment center], he went to a private one and it wasn't full of a lot of people who were negative. And I learned about my husband. I didn't know my husband very well. I learned I could be stronger in it. Stronger in helping it. In forming my opinions and in letting him know where I'm coming from which I never did. I used to just let him do whatever. The communication was built up more during that time. We never used to communicate. Up there [private

treatment center], we learned to communicate more together. I like the counselor. He didn't pick me apart. He didn't call me an enabler and say I needed help, and that I'm just as sick as my husband. He handled it differently. Together we handled it. In the first place there was the hot seat. Now that was hard to handle when you're 19 years old, three kids at home. You don't ever go out and socialize. I didn't have any friends. The kids were my life.

(Tell me about your job. How did it feel to be you then?)

"Important. Satisfaction. Feeling that I'd done . . . satisfaction. I think that was the biggest feeling there, satisfaction. I felt good about doing what I did. And I was rewarded for it too. I was complimented for it. And you need that, which intrigued me to do a better job, yet. Like I say when I say I want to put my soul into it, when I proved that I could do it and they're telling me you're doing fantastic and at that point it was the first time I ever was told that I really did good. I really accomplished something. In fact, a year after I left they were calling and asking for me when I wasn't even there. 'I want to talk to Helen, only Helen.' They still call once in a while for a little advice. Not much anymore because it's government funding and there's no funding for this position. A couple of years after, people still ask questions. I felt really worth. I felt good. I did something this time that was really worth something and it was successful.

(What about the demands of the kids you mentioned?)

"I thought I'd cut myself off of that and threw myself into my work so I didn't let it become . . . oh, the supper, I threw the supper on and I washed every weekend. But my kids just weren't that important at that time in my life."

(Did it matter that you were getting paid?)

"That I was able to bring home a check. A nice check. Oh yes, absolutely."

(Why did you stop?)

"There was no money for that slot. I had even volunteered for that position before I was hired. So I got into it slowly, if a secretary was sick or something."

(Would it have mattered where the school was?)

"I think it wasn't important. No, I was able to be away from my family and find myself. Wherever it was I'm sure I would have suffered the first few weeks. I was homesick. But still I was able to be myself without any fear of disapproval. Just be free. Not worry about what anybody thought. Oh, they have to keep people under control in a school like that but I didn't mind it, that kind of control. 'Cause I was able to grow. I don't think today I'd be the person I am without that . . . although for a while there I was stifled. I got married. I'm stifled still but I'm not the person I was nine or ten years ago.

I'm able to express myself more; I'm not quiet. I was very afraid to express myself and my feelings. The things you're asking right now I could have never done ten years ago. I've grown a lot. Like I say, I was stifled for a while. But I still revert back to the growth in Oregon. It helps me 'cause I look back and say I did it out there, I knew who I was out there and I could be that person.

(Anything you'd like to be true in your life?)

"My children to be fixed up, that's a goal. I would like success for my children. I admire families that have successful children. My mother has successful children."

"I'm proud of my brothers and sisters. I have a good family. No divorces. My brother has a good job. My sister out west in Washington. Successful children. I want to see them grow up to be somebody. I think that I blotched up my life. You have to keep going forward. Nothing's going to change. I want them to live better than I did. I'd live in Oregon."

(A metaphorical question--What if, where you lived in Oregon became a person, what would that person be like?)

"My neighbor lived next door three years and became the closest person that I've ever had here. She's comforting, considerate of feelings. Just last night she came to help me with my daughter. She relies on me. She makes me feel that she needs me. I'm teaching her to can. She's bright herself, yet she makes me feel as though I can still teach

her something. People can learn from me even though I've made a lot of drastic mistakes in my life.

Helen's three reports of intrinsic experience were school in Oregon, working, and her husband's alcoholism. Two of these experiences, Oregon and working, are brought up spontaneously by Helen before the interviewer mentions the dimensions utilized earlier in screening and probes specifically the area of intrinsic experience.

Before we begin to explore the themes in Helen's interview, however, we turn to "Kris". Kris, in contrast to Helen (who lives in a rural farm community), lives in an upper middle class suburb of a major midwestern city.

"Kris"

(Tell me about yourself.)

"My profession is being a mother and housewife. I've just recommitted myself to motherhood. I just had a baby this summer and my other children are 10 and 12. That came after kind of a personal search as what I wanted to do for the rest of my life and I found that motherhood really used me completely and creatively and otherwise."

"I've moved an awful lot and made very good friends in different places and yet I think moving has forced me to grow and change and become more myself than if I'd stayed here the entire time. Coming back, that's really hitting me right now, how different I am than the other people I knew before I left."

"I'm interested, I like crafts . . . I like things concerning helping other people find themselves whether that would be alcoholics recovering or chemical dependency of any sort, grief, death and dying."

"I feel through our moving we've gone through the grief experience many times, and we've had friends who've had children die of cancer, and we've been through that with them. So those are the areas I most enjoy working with. Anything along those lines. I think anything that touches deep inside you follows almost the same dynamics and just needs people to befriend one another and care for each other through that. Giving each other support 'cause everyone always comes out the other end, they just need support to know they're gonna make it."

"My husband is, um, I'm getting a lot more involved in his work, which is not the way I'd want to go, but I find that . . . it turns out to be really good. Every time I do that (am involved with his business), every time I just follow through with it, it turns out to be good. But it is not what I choose to do with my life. He's a regional manager. He does a lot of traveling. We have to do more entertaining. Let's say, once I do it, it's enjoyable but it's not comfortable for me."

"I'm really enjoying the baby coming a lot. His coming is almost like, I have a 10 and 12 year old, and then Bob and I, like I say, we've done a lot of moving. He's just a whole different experience for us. All of us are just

discovering all neat things about ourselves through watching Matthew grow. He is just neat. I'd thought with the other two I'd experienced the miracle so much of life and birth and the whole thing but not like Matthew, so maybe it's my age, but no, [pause] the kids are experiencing it too. That's been really good."

"I really like my . . . crafts. I really enjoy folk art and what I learned when I moved here. I was taking a class and was doing it free hand so I enjoyed seeing colors come together--completely decorated three rooms with folk art."

"Journaling. That is the other thing. That started about two and one-half years ago and that's been a real change in my life. I guess when they called on the phone, [screening with Intrinsic Experience questionnaire] the questions that they asked were probably thorough--I had started meditation at that time and journaling at the same time and those were the times that I experienced being at one with something else and being able to separate, you know, from myself--being totally involved. And through that I think I've been able to enjoy almost everything I do a lot more and experience that type of thing much more often than I did before. Probably that's why Matthew [new child] is really special to me."

(Journaling is . . .)

"Well, I've done it all different ways. It probably came from moving a lot. And we moved two moves ago; we moved away from really dear, dear friends--they were like family to us. The time we moved they had an 18 year old son who was dying of cancer, so it was a really difficult time to go and I just . . . I moved and it was like I just couldn't take anybody else in because I couldn't let them go because I felt I needed to be there for them. But I needed someone to talk to, that's how I started journaling. And . . . then it became a prayer experience also. So here are both things going on. So it's taken all different forms. We've moved twice since. It's taken all different forms kinda to fit what I needed at the time. So sometimes it's just kinda recording and observing the day as it goes by. Sometimes it's just used in terms of meditative prayer but that always, always pertains to my life anyway, what's happening. So that just takes all different kinds of--sometimes it's just searching out a problem and working through it and that would be the only thing that I could find that would really listen to me without any judgments whatsoever. That would be the journal. So I'd sit and maybe write for a week about how angry I was about something. And at the end of it I would feel much better and I felt like I knew myself. I liked myself better after. So that's been really an important thing in my life. And maybe sharing that with others since we moved back here and

there's other people that've started journaling, I see a change in them."

(How many years have you been in this state?)

"Eleven years. Lots of years were like a year and half. It takes you about a year to get settled. To start being familiar, just physically, and then it's difficult, you know, moving that often."

(You mentioned support, chemical dependency, grief . . . tell me about that.)

"Well those in the different areas that we've been in . . . that all started . . . our first move bought us to . . . that was into Chicago and we got to be part of this group, it was a community group they called themselves. I guess it was people that were going to church and all that and had decided that it just didn't make any sense to them and yet, a lot of the ideas--they felt a lot of the ideas that God had given us were good ones, but for some reason they were getting really goofed up. It just wasn't real, it wasn't making sense. That's when this thing started. So there's a commitment to one another, to accept each other as much as we could just as we were and see where we were going from there. And so we didn't know what we were doing, but it was really good and probably the areas I've gotten into come from that. Like I say, there was a family--we had two families with cancer. And so you got so, we loved each other so much that if anything happened to the other member,

it was happening to you too! And so the interest grew from that. We lived there twice, and so we knew alcoholics that Bob knew through his work. Bob's a very caring person, and in that small town we had very good friends. I think the community group set the tone for the way Bob handles people and then he managed a agency in a small town. Now there, we had really good friends and he was an alcoholic, and so we went through chemical dependency with him. So in moving to Davenport, Iowa, we became part of a group called the "Befrienders". It was run by a man who just started journaling. He was a minister. He worked in a hospital and he had just kinda put together what he'd found out and he was treating people to work through that. And then they worked through two years in that and went to hospice training, if they wanted to, and that was for death and dying. And all the people I left there . . . some that died. They have started a hospice. It's run out of a sanitarium in Chicago. So it isn't--it's all just grown out of our experience, you know, what we've done. So that's how I've been involved in it. It's just through that way and then just been volunteer."

(Was this important to you?)

"Well, like I say, I think moving, there's that whole experience there. I think--okay, it's worthwhile, you know. Like when you are with someone in that way. When you move a lot, what it is, you just pull up all your roots and you go

from place to place and so you've built up, put in all this time, and built these deep relationships. You pull everything up and start over again, and that's just . . . it drives you crazy because you have to go through all the small talk again, all the junk before you finally get to where people are living. When you are working that way, where people have thrown away all the shame, all the cover-ups, everything else, and they're at the point of saying, "I don't know how to run my life--I don't know what to do with it--I need help and I need someone to care for me." So at that point they're throwing away everything and sharing at a level where they're living. Period. Day to day. And to me it cuts through two, three years of getting to know people. So I suppose that's why it's fulfilled that need in me of being in touch with other people on the same journey. So that's probably why."

(Did the moving make it harder or easier to come back here/leave the last place?)

"Well, I think this, this--no. This move is probably the hardest because I think I have changed so much and coming back to family has really been something else, you know. I came back to, I live really close like to my sister, and I really love them all, still, but it's very difficult because things I feel completely comfortable talking about, it really frightens them--they're not comfortable with it and so that's probably been the hardest part, kinda coming up against what I used to be. And their

expectations of what I used to be like and still daring to be myself, that sounds ridiculous at this stage--it doesn't, huh?! I keep thinking at this age to be fighting through that, but I am, head on!"

(Do you travel?)

"Yeah. Now with Bob, I'm doing a lot more, just the two of us. We enjoy traveling as a family. We do more into the mountains or to the ocean and things like that. We go to Florida about once a year. We have a van.

(What are words to describe your childhood?)

"Happy, creative, joyful. I was really a happy little girl, all the time. Sunshine they used to call me . . . exciting."

(Words which describe the relationship you and your husband have?)

"Happy, growing, deep, strong."

(What is leisure for you?)

"Not very often with baby and with kids. It's something I'm really wrestling with 'cause I need leisure time. Um . . . I think it's a whole variety of things. Sometimes if it's just been going full blast, leisure time is giving in to TV and having it make no sense whatsoever but that isn't usual but lately that's what I do. Um, leisure time, I like to do really physical activity um . . .

swimming, we live on the lake I like to come in and go swimming (um) just getting out and going for a walk and being outside in the woods. That's good leisure time. Journaling is leisure time for me--um, painting, uh, making things is leisure time; just being with someone else . . . is leisure time."

(Any of those a preferred thing?)

"I think it . . . I need, I need so I don't know if that would be called leisure then--I need time away by myself, everyday--a little bit of time away, by myself--I don't know if that would be called leisure time, so that's maybe "preferred" so. . . ."

(Talk about that.)

"Well, I guess that's in terms of journaling again, um, I just . . . getting in touch with how He [God] sees me which is always filled with love and acceptance. Um, kind of a direction of the day. Um, that's kind of what that time means. Um, my whole body relaxing--just drinking everything in around me. Um, kind of makes everything make sense. Everything else comes together, falls into place by doing that."

"If I don't have that time, I get really uptight. I do a lot of running--I don't know if you know about kids 10 and 12 years old. But you spend as the mother of them, you spend a lot of time in the car--running from here to there

and everywhere. And that can really be hassling, you know, and I find that if I don't spend that time away I--first of all you can lose yourself, you know, in the midst of all of that and going in all those different directions all of a sudden you're gone and there isn't any Kris left."

"I discovered that quite a while ago. And so that's what happens. I lose myself piece by piece. But this way I don't, I stay in one. Um, and it takes that time in the car--it kind of sets the tone--if I do that in the morning or even in the evening--the time in the car is often spent just drinking in--enjoying it--you know, I can see the sky--my sister went into the hospital yesterday and they thought she had cancer. And by taking that time out alone, I could actually see the stars in the sky coming home; and the clouds, the wisps, and I was just astounded that I could do that in the midst of that. And so that's the difference it makes. So that's why it's such a priority because it works."

(When are you happiest?)

"Mm. [giggle] Well, when I'm journaling--it sounds just awful I keep going through this--um, and then after that I think just Bob and the kids and when it's all falling together and making sense and so when no matter what that would be doing or making things. All those things are really happy things for me. Um, seeing the kids discover something brand new or discovering that they're neat, you

know, just turning around and seeing themselves for the first time that they didn't know they were that way and just they're doing a lot of that lately, just this is a big transition and we're really happy for them. Um, and journaling is that same type of thing for me. Um, being just being--being able to take time together and be together."

(Have there been times in your life when that self--Kris--was getting threatened, getting lost, getting . . .?)

"Oh, definitely."

(When was that?)

"Oh, all the time. [laughs] Why do you think I have to journal? [laughs] Aw, geez--well, um, do you want big ones? Or do you want--yesterday morning? See, I think, when I'm talking about this it means you're living on the edge all the time--you know? What it is, is you come to the point in your life when you realize, yeah, it's walking like a tightrope. And so, um, which is a good place to be and an awful place to be then. I don't know, so like I say, yesterday morning, I can say I can be lost, you know yeah then, that's why I need that time for journaling, yeah, it makes the difference of making the day make sense or being lost. Real easy, yeah."

(Are there certain kinds of things that make it easier for Kris to get lost?)

"Ahh, anger--yuh. If I, um, I'm just working through all this so that's why it's easy to answer these questions. Um, I have a lot of guilt about Dad. You notice as I talk about my childhood, I'm talking about--well, that was Sweet-Kris, see--I grew up not to feel anger. Always be the sunshine of the group and the whole bit. So, when I feel anger and there's lots of anger in coming back and being with my family and having them to expect that so I'm face to face [slapping sounds] with it every single day. And their wanting me to be also. And I can't/will not go back. And so I'm coming face to face with anger all the time. And, um, I feel real guilty about that. And as each time, though I'm getting--that's why I need to do the journal everyday, because God accepts me just as I am and that gives me either I can say 'Oh yeah, I can accept you just as you are--I like you this way you know. I like you to feel anger. That's good and normal and healthy' and so that's from about two and one-half years of working on that."

(What do you do with the anger? Your journal . . . What else?)

"That's one thing. Physical exercise, uh, physical shape, I've been in my whole life . . . everything--just went out and ran or rode my bike. In small town, I would just geez--run five or six miles and then I'd go over and exercise. Um, I think maybe let it come. You know that was a huge step and it still is. Just plain let it come. And when I journal it, I write it out or I'll even just let it

come out of my mind and being able to hear myself say it, okay, and then see--see that it's not so awful. The biggest thing is there's a barrier to anger, you know, like it starts coming and there's this [slapping sound] barrier and that's the bad part--that's the part where you get lost. Once you go past the barrier and coming out--it starts making sense you know, you start looking at it and saying 'That's a normal situation. If someone does this, you do get angry--you know, that's normal/that's okay/that's healthy.' Once I can see that about anger it tends to be okay. Then I can say, okay, 'Do you need to go to the person and do I need to talk to that person about it? Is it something that doesn't need to be talked about at all, just needs to be accepted?' Something that needs to be worked off. That makes the difference."

(Any places that stand out? All the places you've been. Any real strong memories of places?)

"Independence Pass. And the mountains. Um, places, uh, I loved the most. The most outstanding. You want any more? You want more than that?"

(Is there another one?)

"I like Florida okay, but no, I guess, the mountains are. That's why I get homesick for the mountains. I love the mountains."

(You've mentioned religion a couple of times. That's an important thing?)

"Definitely. I don't know if it's religion. Religion isn't a good name for it. Un, relationship with God. Yeah!"

(Do you belong to any kind of organized church?)

"Yeah, I'm Roman Catholic."

(But you wouldn't call that religion. You'd call that "relationship with God."

"Well, I don't know if so much of my growth has been from the Catholic Church or out of frustration with the Catholic Church. I think the church is really turning around, you know, it's starting to get more one-to-one relationship with God and really enhance and grow that. The journaling class I'm taking now is sort of cynical, you know. Um, but like the group I was telling you about in Chicago--that came out of pure frustration just to go over there (to church) and have people give you dirty looks if you walked in a few minutes late and just being really frustrated with the whole experience knowing that God had touched me in my growing up years, but not seeing Him very well, uh, the mass has always been, you know, really good for me, but as far as . . . no, no, I went through a real questioning period of even if there was a God because I feel so upset with the church so, I still consider myself Catholic. I find my expression, you know, that communion is really important to the Eucharist is very much of my God--is very, very much present in that I mean He's [God's] like

minister. I guess the expression of, um, the Episcom, and Episcopal minister is the one who set up the religion program in Davenport. I guess that my learning about God through other people has always been through, uh, people's serving me by caring for me in a very real way and I don't feel that the Catholic Church has an awful lot set up with that on a parish basis. . . . A friend now setting it up for battered women and all that but I think people living right down the street, people living right next door need to be listened to and cared for and there isn't much of that set up for them. So. . . ."

(If you could live any place you wanted, where would you live?)

"I don't know--that one. You know, you're talking--I have moved all over and as far as place goes that's hard. I would . . . if you're talking about just physical--I'd love the mountains. If you're talking about--I think the place I've been the happiest is Chicago. I hated Chicago itself, the people there though were really good. And uh, I still love them, they're still so close and dear to me. So . . . but I don't think I'd say I'd wanna move back there."

("Kris" rescreened in the Intrinsic Experience Questionnaire . . . mention the times when that happens.)

"Journaling and meditation."

(Tell me about meditation.)

"I don't know what there is, I don't know--do you meditate ever?"

(Sure, but I don't know what it's all like for you.)

"Mmm, well, for me mediation is--I do it with scripture and um, adjust my whole body to relaxing and um, just real silence--[sigh]--and being at one, you know, with uh, you know, it takes all different kinds of uh, I guess when I like it best is when I'm just, I feel at one with God. So I feel in touch with Him, just that deep love and that deep acceptance so I can completely lose myself and that it's very liquid. It's solid, it's strong, it's more real than what's all around me really. Other times--there's other times too that it's, uh, . . . [sigh] oh, like when I'm talking about yesterday morning or if I'm getting in touch with something or sometimes it'll bring up the anger in me, and uh, the feelings are very, very strong or whatever and there being able to work that through meditation--to a place of peace or just plain acceptance of uh the fact that I'm not at peace and I can't be at peace and no matter what I try, it's just dry and just being able to accept that and seeing it as a problem."

(What's it like to be doing it?)

"Just really good--exciting, wide open, more than one way to go. Really good."

(Are you thinking at all?)

"No, you feel it. It's like, uh, oh, it's just like a big ocean you know, like, you just feel that I think sometimes when I get involved in the day that it'll never end--it can be humdrum and boring and heavy and so the meditation time is getting back in touch with the part that's creative, the part that uh, is always growing, being able to see present that in everyday, so that when I'm actually meditating--no I don't think you think it--it's more of a just a sense of it, you know, sometimes it's just simple one or two sentences that go right to the heart of it. You get just [zoom sound] right to the center, you know, no junk, just right down."

(Are you aware of your body then?)

"If you're talking about when I'm meditating. You really can, you know, which isn't that often when you really . . . (then you're not) no." [sigh]

(Then other times you are . . .?)

"Oh yeah, you can be aware, just how good and relaxed it feels or the fact that your toe doesn't relax, just won't relax or your neck won't relax or your chin won't relax and no matter what you do, you can't get it relaxed. So you just forget about it and go on."

(How long does it last? And what's time like when it's going on?)

"I really would have to time myself in order to, 'cause I could, I could you know, you could spend a long time in it, so I just get up and schedule myself. Was doing it before, I went to bed uh, and that doesn't work any more with the baby--I'd be up all night."

(What about when it ends?)

"Well, like I say, it depends upon what you're talking about--if I am free to just do that, it just kind of ends when it's kind of done, you know. You just feel like it's kind of done, it's over with and it's time to move on with your day and get on with the basics that need to be done. Um, otherwise, you know, I do time myself and I'll just open my eyes and look at the time and 'Okay, time to get up and get going, so.'"

(Can you make it happen if you want it to, will it?)

"I can . . . do all the things that allow it to happen. But if I try to make it happen, it doesn't work. I will be--I'm railroading it so I can make myself present to an experience whatever it will be and that's what I do and the rest of it just kind of falls into place. It just happens or doesn't. I tend to want go be very much in control of my life so I have a hard time letting go and just letting whatever happen and rather than me trying to go for the optimum of the experience rather than just maybe today's not

supposed to be hot? Maybe it's just maybe I need to get in touch with just anger or sadness, whatever."

(Several times you have mentioned acceptance.)

"Well, I don't feel growing up--that's I said you know, I think what I'm coming to head to head with right now um, I don't feel growing up there was an acceptance for just who I was--it was more of an acceptance of who they wanted me to be. Uh, and I was very adept at that and so it would almost kill me to disappoint my father. He'd just give me a dirty look. And so I find, I'm carrying that around on the inside of me--so the beginning of that was with community, the group I mentioned and they started that, you know just plain accepted me. And when they started I'd be grumpy sometimes around there and "eh" that was okay. So that kind of started it. Now I think I'm at the point where I'm having to deal with me inside of me."

(How is journaling different from meditation? The experience of it.)

"Well, I can record what I meditate, you know, or what happens during the meditation. But beyond that it's, um, you know, sometimes it's conversation. You know, maybe a half-hour conversation with myself which isn't necessary--I can get completely lost in it, you know, and lose all sense of time but, uh, there isn't that letting go of myself to someone else--to another. You know, there isn't that release sometimes. When it's really good that's what, where

you're aiming for, but sometimes you just can't. And so maybe four or five days before I can finally just let go. Um, especially right now, when I feel anger coming I don't want it to come and so I'm busy trying to control that you know, so it'll be conversation for three or four days in a row and then maybe the fourth day I'm finally going okay let it go and then it's liquid again."

(Does it matter about the place for journaling?)

"No, I can be just about . . ."

(What makes good or bad places?)

"Quiet, but, you know . . ."

(Journal at home or any place?)

"Any place."

(How about meditation?)

"Ah, meditation really, you know, it's much better if it's quiet, but I recently--there's a quiet in me that happens with meditation and I'm learning more about being able to do that--in the midst of a busy room and in the midst of rushing from one appointment to another, but as far as really being able to meditate--just but the quietness, you know, the kind of quietness that comes. I'm learning to do that better in the midst of things."

(Are there favorite places to meditate?)

"Oh--our living room, see in our house right now, we're in the woods. We walked into that house and that room was just filled with peace; I mean just really good room. And it's got--these people had to get rid of it--aw, it was just really nice. It felt . . . two-story wall windows looking out on the woods and it's just really good."

(Makes it good--windows?)

"Yeah, just outside it's just . . . it's open and airy and the trees are changing all the time and the birds are out there and the clouds. It's just a good room. Very peaceful and nice. The people that built it--we happened to accidentally meet later on and you could tell they were up on the lot and they sat and looked out and they said, you know, let's put it this way, so we can see this. It's been built with love and care and it's just a good room."

(When did you first meditate?)

"Oh, about five or six years ago, in a group in a room full of people that type of thing--where you, they would teach it to you or you just do meditation type prayer."

(When did you first journal?)

"Two and one-half years ago."

(Did you ever have these kind of experiences before then?)

"Oh, yeah. Just yeah, just with Bob and just yeah. Just being present and being with one another is always--he's just really neat. Just meeting him--the first time I met him! There's such acceptance from him and I was able to be myself and yeah. So, just being with Bob, definitely."

(Just being with him anytime?)

"No--when we really can be together. Really be together. I feel really good when he's with me--I just--that's really good. But it's much better when we can just really--the kids are gone or it's late at night and we can be together. Yeah, I guess when there's just nothing else on our minds and we can just spend time with one another that's really good no matter what we're doing if it's talking or being in bed together, whatever it is, then that's just really. . . ."

(Any other times come to mind?)

[Sigh] "The mountains. I'd get lost, in the mountains. Music, you know. Ah, when? I think of growing up."

(Growing up?)

"When I think of growing up, like music, when I think of being able to get lost in experience all my life--I think

of music--I've always gotten lost in and running you know, as a kid and the wind blowing in your hair or riding a bike or all those kinds of experience where you just let yourself go to everything around you just goes good, you know, yeah."

(Of all the times the most prominent are meditation and journaling? Do you wonder why?)

"Probably because those are the ones that are there--they're my mainstay, they're there everyday for me. So they're the most constant right now--for me. I think yeah."

(Can you talk a little bit about place? Have you ever found any places you couldn't meditate?)

"Just places where it's really hard for me to be. Just like probably with my family--oh, this is just awful! Ah, sometimes when we go on these trips. And I get two or three days in and you're just running and going full blast with all these people and taking care of every hundred and one things and I start worrying about what they think about me and all this and then I can't relax. Yeah, definitely so any of those kinds of places, that's probably the hardest. So it isn't as hard to do like in a crowded train station or something like that--I could separate myself from that. I have a hard time separating myself from places where it gets really busy, it's very intense and very strong, and I start worrying about what everybody's thinking about me--am I okay, or not okay--and that's the hardest time 'cause I

don't want to let go because I'm trying to keep everything together to make sure it's coming out okay. Yeah, so that's the hardest time.

(How about physical places?)

"I just don't really do it that way you know, I just kind of have to do it wherever I'm at and um, like I say, the environment would be more that in terms of what was happening not in terms of place--not in terms of you know, what the couch was like, or what the room looked like or anything like that."

(Or whether there were other people there or not?)

"It would depend upon what those other people were doing and what they meant to me, yeah. What they expected of me."

(Do you journal because of what it does for you or because you like doing it?)

"Both!"

(Is one more important?)

"I think consistency is really important for me right now, because, like I say right now, I'm coming up in touch with a lot of anger and so I would choose to run away from that. If I do let it go like three or four days, then I'm doing it because I want to--even if I'm coming face-to-face with things I don't want to face because I do feel much

better afterwards. So I would say overall, period, it's just because it is so good. It is just, yeah, it's just really good time."

(Same thing with meditation?)

"Yeah."

(Is meditation good for yourself or does it have another purpose?)

"The only purpose would be to grow more for myself, you know, to get more in touch with myself, but out of? Pure and simple joy, I think there's both with it, you know, I think the pure and simple joy comes and then you see yourself growing and so you go back to it. So there's something you go back to, it just out of pure saying, "It works and [you] need to keep doing that. Experience--just 'cause I love it."

(What experience in your life sounds like doing it for itself most?)

"Oh, that's hard. Lots of little things really come in, but experience in my one experience in my life that I just did because I just loved it. When you say that--what comes in my mind is bicycle riding and that kind of thing, but if I can separate that out into one experience--I just you know, yeah--physical just releasing, I like that. The wind blowing in my hair just no purpose yeah, or like I said just sewing, but that often will take--it takes both--see

with all those things, even painting, if I can get lost in the joy of doing it, it's just a whole different experience than when all of a sudden it becomes something I have to do; like bicycling, I can start thinking, 'Its good for you and it's healthy,' then it becomes heavy. But if I can get in touch with that just doing it just for the joy of doing it--and I don't think--I know I wasn't raised with that--I don't think I was raised with permission to do that and so, I think reinforcement for that is fairly recent in my life, you know."

Kris and Helen are two very different women. They live in different worlds economically, educationally, and emotionally. Yet both report experiences which fit, for them, the dimensions of intrinsic experience.

A key finding of this research is that while the form or activity of intrinsic experience may vary widely from person to person, the experience itself can and does occur in the lives of the rich and the poor, the urban and the rural, the conflicted and the integrated, the musically and artistically adept and those not adept at the arts. It occurs in the lives of the highly accomplished, whom Csikszentmihalyi examined, as well as in the lives of many who are generally seen in a far more pedestrian light. Later we will argue that the conventional categories for viewing what is seen as similar to intrinsic experience: arts, music, letters, meditation, certain outdoor activities, etc., are highly limited and deny us the ability

to see a particular richness in the lives of many who do not wear the clearly identified badge of a "Defined Appropriate" activity. For now we need only document that such experience has an occurrence which is often overlooked and neglected in the lives of everyday people.

Secondly, it is important to remember the path that has led us to this research. We began our consideration from a review of the psychological and sociological literature on experiences which people had for their own sakes, in and of themselves, for themselves. We extracted dimensions of that experience from the literature and utilized those dimensions in qualifying and recruiting respondents for this study. Literature on leisure and play was most useful in our background review and in generating the dimensions which are the foundation of this research.

Yet we find ourselves examining not play, but a range of experiences, some of which have a decidedly serious, indeed difficult, tone to them: identity, alcoholism, self-worth and esteem, women's roles, death, etc. A consideration of intrinsic experience leads us directly into centrally important issues in people's lives, not experiences which are peripheral in any way. We say this here not to disparage leisure or play experiences but rather to suggest that they may have an importance far beyond that usually ascribed to them. Experiences which are generally seen as very "far away" from leisure and play may have an importance which is similar in psychological structure and

meaning to leisure and play experiences. In short, we are suggesting here that normative categories of experiences and its meaning, e.g., "work", "play", etc. may be not only of limited use but may also be confounding our ability to understand the experience of people.

In examining our interview material with Kris and Helen, a number of common and interrelated dimensions emerge. We will first look at these dimensions and then proceed to discuss their implications. The dimensions we shall examine are: The Life-Context: a) Constraint, b) Adversity, and c) Obscuring of Me; The Experience Itself: a) Change, b) Achievability, c) Acceptance, and d) Me as Me: Integration of Self; Intrinsic Experience and Life-Context: a) Conflict in Context, and b) Scripts and Roles; The Experience of Self: a) Integration, b) Freedom, c) "Me" as Different, d) Potency, and e) Involvement of Self; and Intrinsic Experience and Place: a) Suspension from Difficulty/Role Constraint, and b) Intrinsic Experience, Place, and Self.

The Life-Context

Csikszentmihalyi's subjects were interviewed without an examination of their life-context. Within this research we paid considerable attention to the life-context of our respondents. Within that life-context we generally (exceptions will be discussed in Chapter 4), found

constraint, adversity, and an obscuring of self/me. We can look at these issues in the lives of Kris and Helen.

Constraint

Both Kris and Helen talked of the various constraints affecting them in their lives:

Kris	Helen
"It would almost kill me to disappoint my father."	"Mom was very strict. I was held close to the house until I was 15."
"My husband. I'm getting a lot more involved with his work, which is not the way I wanted to go . . . it is not what I choose to do."	"Lately it's becoming overbearing [family]."
	"My mother told me what to do. At home I was pressured all the time."
	[Husband's alcoholism] "When I go up there the first time, the finger was pointed at me. You've got the problem . . . you need help."
	"For a while I was stifled, I'm stifled still . . . ."

Adversity

Kris	Helen
"My little sister went to the hospital yesterday. They think she has cancer.	"Raising kids is hard now [children's legal problems] . . . I've been having a hard time communicating with them."

"We've moved a lot . . . through our moving experience we've gone through the grief experience many times."

"Husband's alcoholism."

"I got pregnant in high school."

"Friends have lost children to cancer."

"We left our dear friends, they were almost family. Their 18 year old was dying of cancer. It's the moving. You put in time, develop relationships, then start over."

Obscuring of Me

Kris	Helen
"I get uptight, hassled by the kids, you lose yourself."	"I wasn't even able to wash my hair alone until I was 14."
"I don't feel growing up there was an acceptance of who I was rather it was who they wanted me to be."	"I haven't had a lot of time for myself."
	"I didn't have too much to tell because I didn't have a chance to do a little on my own before I entered motherhood and wifehood."
	"I just feel like I've never done anything."
	"I could never tell [mother] what I wanted, I needed, what I felt. My husband is still this way."

We are not suggesting that these dimensions are unique to "Kris" and "Helen"; our purpose here is to delineate a

context which frames the subject of our inquiry: intrinsic experience. We turn to an examination of the intrinsic experience itself and then proceed to an examination of the relationship of this context to intrinsic experience.

The Experience Itself

Kris's primary intrinsic experiences were meditation and journaling. Helen's were her Oregon experience, her experience of her husband's alcoholism, and her one year work experience. Within these experiences, let's look at four dimensions: "Change", "Achievability", "Acceptance", and "Me as Me: Integration to Self".

Change

Kris	Helen
"Journaling probably came from moving. That made a real change in my life."	"I did work once, as a secretary/receptionist on a grant. It only lasted a year."
[Meditation] "It feels exciting, wide open . . . all the ways to go. It's like a big ocean that you feel . . . meditation is getting back in touch with the part that is creative.	"So Mom sent me to a Christian High School in Oregon."
	[Alcoholism] "I was unsure of myself. Not knowing what I was expected to do, I felt totally different."

"Change" is a large category and clearly there can be different kinds of change occurring in the experiences of these two women. But a disruption of the status quo or the

experience of incongruity categorizes the experience of these women as well as of many respondents in this research. It is interesting to note here that, as we have seen earlier, the experimental psychological literature on incongruity (e.g., Berlyne (1960)) as well as the work of Piaget (1965) and a host of other writers on novelty makes a contribution to our analysis at this point which we shall consider in more detail later. Berlyne (1960), for instance, refers to an "optimal level of incongruity", raising the question of what makes an experience optimally incongruous rather than too boring or overly stressful. Within the current data, two factors seem to be important in this regard: achievability and acceptance.

Achievability

Kris	Helen
[Journaling and Meditation] "They are there everyday, my mainstay. They're constant."	"I did things I didn't think I ever could do. I was able to get up and give a performance alone, speech. To this day it amazes me that I did this. I was so relaxed and unafraid."
"I can journal any place."	"I put my whole soul into it when I proved that I could do it and they're telling me you're doing fantastic."

Acceptance

Kris	Helen
"That would be the only thing that I would listen to me	"I felt totally accepted by everybody there, the

without any judgment whatsoever."	teachers, the dean. Before I was accepted I was negative. Once I felt I was important, I was me."
". . . with God and how he sees me, loving and accepting . . . deep love, deep acceptance . . ."	"I wasn't afraid of disapproval."

Acceptance was a key hallmark of the intrinsic experiences of Kris and Helen and is a key characteristic of intrinsic experience in this research. As we keep in mind that we are developing a portrait of intrinsic experience within a life-context of constraint, adversity, and an "obscuring of me", the report of a feeling of acceptance is a concomitant of a key characteristic of intrinsic experience: "Me as Me: Integration to Self.

Me as Me: Integration to Self

Kris	Helen
"I'd feel better, like myself better."	"But yet I found myself more fulfilled."
"Meditation is getting back in touch with the part that is creative."	"It was the best year of my whole life . . . I was a top student out there, much better than I was at home."
"Daring to be me . . . can you imagine at this age to be fighting through this head on."	"Once I felt accepted I was important, I was me. I was getting credit for being me. I felt that I discovered myself for the first time. I wasn't afraid to be me . . . I proved myself fully with what I was worth. It was a lot."

[Ever get lost?]	"Why do think I have to Journal?"	"I felt good about doing what I did. And I was rewarded for it too. I was complimented for it. I really accomplished something."

Intrinsic Experience and Life-Context

It is important to point out that the dimensions of life-context and the dimensions of intrinsic experience are highly interrelated. Intrinsic experience "speaks to" life-context; it is not independent of it. Helen felt "cheated", conflicted, beset with problems. Yet within her intrinsic experiences she not only did not feel those issues, she felt "important, satisfaction, needed, valuable." Kris felt "torn, grief, loss . . . journaling probably came from moving."

We would be inaccurate, however, to see the intrinsic experiences of Kris and Helen as a simple reaction or response to adversity or constraint. To examine this, it is important to look at the nature of the adversity of constraint in the life-context itself and the conflict within that context.

Conflict in Context

Both Kris and Helen are notable for the way in which they value both sides of the contradictions which are so important in their lives.

Helen

"On one hand"	"On the other"
[family] "Right now I have full devotion there."	"I feel cheated."
"I did work . . . it was the most rewarding time in my life."	"I could see the kids needing me and I felt guilty, too."
"I have a good family. No divorces."	"I have daydreamed about going to school, finding my own apartment, having my own job."

Kris

"On one hand"	"On the other"
"My husband. I'm getting a lot involved with his work."	"Which is not the way I want to go."
"It's moving. You put in time, develop relationships, then start over [husband's career moves].	"I feel really good when he's with me."
"If I can get lost in the whole joy of doing it, it's just a whole different experience."	"But I wasn't raised with permission to do that."

These contradictions are clearly embedded in a large social structure which generates social script and roles and a set to expectations which accompany those social scripts and roles.

Scripts and Roles

As we have seen earlier, contradictions are characterized by feelings of constraint, adversity, and critical obscuring of me.

It is important to see that neither choice (e.g., ending marriage to remain with close friends, leaving family to work), was acceptable for either Kris or Helen. To make either choice was to violate some strongly held beliefs and values both women held important: family, marriage, children, etc. Yet, as we have noted earlier, "Obscuring of Me" was a very important component of life experience.

This is a critical point which we shall examine further in this discussion. Strongly held values, scripts, and normative role expectations are defined as critical to one's self and yet the result of such definition is the obscuring of me or self. Indeed, it is our hypotheses that it is the "Me" or self which is the key issue or risk within context contradictions.

There is a considerable and growing body of literature which considers such contradictions (see Gilligan 1982 or Schecter 1982) and finds their root in larger social-structural definitions of sex roles. It is important to point out that these data consistently find women faced with contradictions which cohere not to "psychological make-up" but to contradiction not resolved in the larger social structure.

Kris and Helen have thus defined a "band" through which their lives must "fit". On the one hand, each subscribes to a set of norms and scripts and defines these as important to her existence. On the other hand, an obscuring of me, a loss of sense of self, is unacceptable. The theme of self apart from, yet within, culture is hardly a new one. What is interesting is that we find ourselves facing it squarely from a consideration of intrinsic experience. This leads us to a consideration of the integrative nature of intrinsic experience.

The Experience of Self

Integration

As we saw earlier ("Me as Me: Integration of Self"), both Helen and Kris reported quite literally finding themselves feeling more fulfilled, liking themselves better, staying in touch with themselves more strongly than previously and, thus, positively experiencing Me. Such feelings are a predominant characteristic of respondents in this study. As we will see, respondents vary in whether or not they resolve contradictions within their lives in a tangible, visible way. But an integration to me is characteristic of many of those who report intrinsic experience. From within that integration to me individuals then re-encounter their life-context. Kris reports an on-going usage of meditation and journaling quite literally in dialogue with her life experience. Helen reports the

critical role that her working experience in Oregon and her husband's alcoholism played in her experience of herself in confronting the difficulties of her everyday life.

There is a strong Me or Self component to intrinsic experience in both Kris's and Helen's report.

Kris	Helen
"That would be the only thing that would listen to me without any judgment whatsoever."	"Yet I found myself more fulfilled."
"I'd feel better, like myself better."	"Once I felt accepted, I was important, I was me. I was getting credit for being me."
"Meditation is getting back in touch with the part that is creative."	"I had a different image of myself."
"I'm at the point to do it with me."	"But out there I felt I could be me without anybody criticizing me."
"So I'd sit and write there for a week about how angry I was."	"I learned I could be stronger in it."
	"But still I was able to be myself without any fear."
	"I knew who I was out there and I could still be that person."

Within Helen's and Kris's interviews we find the basis for a number of self-related sub-themes: freedom, "me" as different, potency, and involvement of self.

Freedom

Kris	Helen
"It feels exciting, wide open, all the way to go."	"At home I was told I couldn't make decisions. Here, I wasn't afraid to be me."

"Me" as Different

Kris	Helen
"Meditation is getting back in touch with the part that is creative."	"I had a different image of myself."

Potency

Kris	Helen
". . . solid, strong."	"I learned I could be stronger."

Involvement of Self

Kris	Helen
"I have time to myself or I'd spend a long time at [meditation]."	"Put my whole soul into it."

Surely, "Me" or Self plays a critical role in this research and emerges as a central theme. This raises an interesting conceptual issue. We are examining experience conceptualized in and of itself, for itself, for no other purpose but itself. In examining such experience, we could easily argue that these reports on intrinsic experience are

functional to self and that in this framework self is the primary focus of the experience. Helen's transcript cannot convey the incredulous look which served to state, "Are you kidding, of course it's important I get paid." Yet we note also that Helen had previously volunteered to do the job for free. This would suggest that experience in and of itself, for itself, might well be examined in relationship to self, with externals such as extrinsic benefits important primarily in their ability to support self. Thus, Helen may not have able to return to volunteer at a job when she had been paid because the externality of money may have been defined as important to self-experience. At any rate, the theme in this research of self will be an important one in considering intrinsic experience. This in itself is a major finding of this research. Intrinsic experience is, for many, a time when self breaks through normative social experience and is accompanied by a number of strong affective concomitants. (See Chapter 4: Variability in Intrinsic Experience.) With this background, we turn to a consideration of intrinsic experience and place.

Intrinsic Experience and Place

Place may or may not be an important consideration in our understanding of intrinsic experience. Kris and Helen talk about place in their lives:

Kris	Helen
"Our living room in the woods. Two story wall of windows, looking out on woods. Open and airy and trees and birds. It's built with love and care."	"The place was beautiful. It was a nice dormitory in the mountains."
"I like quiet."	"I like to see things, places . . . I just feel like I've never done anything."
[Can't meditate] "Places me where it's hard for me to be me like with my family . . . oh, this is just awful."	"There's an hour and a half on Friday when everyone is away . . . comfortable living room where I can just sit down and be myself."
"I don't do it that way. It's whatever I'm at, not the place."	"I can still see the mountains and ocean. It was a nice place to live, the climate, the mountains, the town, the smell."
[People and place?] "It depends on what they are doing and what they mean to me."	[Of any place] "I'd live in Oregon."

There are several themes which we hear in Kris and Helen's description of place which will recur in this research. These are: a) suspension from difficulty, b) role constraint, and c) intrinsic experience, place, and self.

Suspension from Difficulty/Role Constraint

Helen discussed her experiences as occurring away from her home involvement and specifically a mother who she saw to be overly restrictive. Kris tells us she can't meditate in "places where it's hard for me to be me like with my

family." Both Kris and Helen tell us that the experience of place as non-judgmental is important. Helen tells us that "out there I could be me without anybody criticizing me." Kris tells us that within the journalizing experience that "that would be the only thing that would listen to me with no judgment whatsoever and that meditation does not occur in 'places where it is hard for me to be me.'"

Intrinsic Experience, Place, and Self

Both Helen and Kris talk about the relationship among their experiences, place, and self.

Kris	Helen
[Where can't you meditate?] "Just places where it's really hard for me to be."	"I discovered myself for the first time in Oregon."

We note that Kris's favorite physical place is Independence Pass in the Rockies and that she loves the experience of mountains.

It is important to point out here that physical location, as opposed to place as separation from everyday experience (See Chapter 5), does not always or necessarily seem to play an important role in intrinsic experience.

Kris tells us that she could journal anywhere and quite explicitly tells us that what is primarily important to her is "wherever I'm at, not the place." While we will see similarities in the relationship of Intrinsic Experience and Place, in different places, (Helen's job and in her

experience of Oregon), there is little evidence that the physical location per se was important. This is also true of her experience with her husband's alcoholism, when the place itself is quite secondary to its being removed from her everyday environment.

We are thus suggesting that place and intrinsic experience have a relationship to one another which must be understood, not only in terms of place per se, but also in terms of characteristics of the place (separation, change, supervision). In Chapter 5, we shall examine the range of these relationships and suggest on overall framework of the relationship between intrinsic experience and place.

The suspension of roles is a key characteristic of place experience. Both Kris and Helen talk about their experience of place within the intrinsic experience as nonjudgmental. Helen tells us that, "Out there I could be me without anybody criticizing me." Kris tells us that within the journaling experience, "That would be the only thing that I would listen to me without any judgment whatsoever;" or that meditation does not occur in "places where its hard for me to be me."

Both Kris and Helen evidence a considerable strength of identification with the place of intrinsic experience. Kris tells us lovingly of her "living room in the woods". Helen repeatedly talks of the importance of Oregon in her life, "I can still see the mountains and the ocean." Of any places she might live, Oregon is where she would select. "Like I

say, I was stifled for a while, but I still revert back to the growth in Oregon. It helps me 'cause I look back and say I did it out there, I knew who I was out there, and I could still be that person. . . ."

Finally, both Kris and Helen tell us of their experience of place as integrative to self. Helen felt that "I discovered myself for the first time" in Oregon. She tells us of a very brief time experience she has: "There's an hour and a half on Friday when everyone is away . . . comfortable living room where I can just sit down and be myself." Again, Kris tells us that she cannot meditate in "places where it's hard for me to be me," and that within the meditation experience in her living room in the woods, "it feels exciting, wide open . . . all the way to go, you feel it, not thinking. It's like a big ocean that you feel. Meditation is getting back in touch with the part that is creative."

CHAPTER 3

Life-Context and Intrinsic Experience

A key question in this research is to explore what intrinsic experiences occur in the lives of everyday people. The overwhelming indication is that intrinsic experience does not occur very often in the lives of the population. Note that we are very cautiously using the word "indication" here. Overall, of people who were administered the screener, 8.6%, 23% and 3.9% in "Woods Town", "Big Town", and "Farm Town" respectively, qualified for participation in this study. If this screener was definitely the criterion, and the only criterion for defining intrinsic experience, and if we can discount rejections due to interviewer error, telephone recruiting, and communications factors, we could say that these figures represented accurate incidence figures. As we reported in Chapter 1, respondents who failed the screener and who were invited in could not report anything in their lives resembling an intrinsic experience. This was further supported by our finding in all locations that misscreened respondents, people who reported for the study and failed the screener during the interview, also could not report what we have defined as an intrinsic experience.

At a minimum, we can say that intrinsic experience does not seem to have a generalized incidence in the population. Among those respondents who did evidence both high agreement with the occurrence of intrinsic dimensions in their lives and for whom these dimensions all cohere to at least one experience, what are our findings?

Appendix C summarizes the reports of intrinsic activities for the overall sample. Two immediate findings strike us on examining this list. The first is that both work and non-work related items appear. While many of the activities are more traditional leisure activities, many are not. The second finding is that many of the activities or experiences that appear on this list are those of very difficult times: death, divorce, alcoholism, illness, etc.

Beyond this, the range of experiences or activities that are reported is striking in its breadth. It is, indeed, so comprehensive as to lead us to wonder whether or not virtually any activity or experience is a candidate for providing intrinsic experience.

What is important here is to remember that these activities or experiences were respondent-generated in response to a set of five psychological dimensions employed in the screening-in. What ties these experiences together for these people is that all experiences share this common set of psychological dimensions for the respondent concerned.

This supports our earlier suggestion that it is the quality of the experience, not necessarily its content or form, that is of importance. A time or activity framework, therefore, is not particularly useful in examining what we call intrinsic experience. Csikszentmihalyi started with an activity framework (rock climbers, chess players, rock dancers, surgeons) and found that similar dimensions were common among these activities. This research started with the psychological dimensions and finds activity itself to be of minimal importance. The activity is a vehicle for an underlying experience.

We can see further support for this point when we look at age and location variability in the sample. The very fact that there is variability by age and location in the activity of intrinsic experience supports the argument that intrinsic experience interacts with context. Activity may vary, but the quality and dimension of the intrinsic experience remain constant.

Age

An intrinsic experience in all likelihood changes as life-context changes. Appendix C summarizes reports of intrinsic experiences by age. Appendixes represent activities of each cohort. Multiple mentions reflecting same sex and past versus current experience are listed only once. Sex, for instance, is mentioned repeatedly by females and is indeed a leading activity reported for intrinsic

experiences by females. As we see, however, it is not mentioned by females ages 59 and over. (It is interesting that only one male, age 77, in the overall sample reports sex as an intrinsic experience, a finding we shall discuss shortly). Similarly, women at all three age breaks prior to 59+ report both the birth of children and having children as an important experience for them. Women 59 years of age and over do not report this as an intrinsic experience. Similarly sports and camping are reported by women under 46 but are not reported by women over this age as intrinsic experiences. We strongly hypothesize that twenty years ago women in their 60s today would have reported a different set of intrinsic experiences, and that women in their 30s today may well report a different set of experiences or activities in the future. These data suggest, therefore, that the intrinsic activity itself is clearly age-related and variable.

Location

Appendix C summarizes category of intrinsic activity by location. Overall, the differences in the sample by location are relatively restricted. We do not find children listed as an intrinsic experience in "Farm Town" and "Woods Town". We do <u>not</u> find camping or vacation listed as intrinsic experiences in "Woods Town". While it is outside the scope of these data to explain why experiences were not listed in different locations, we do note that when

respondents in "Woods Town" were asked about vacations, they laughed and told us that "Woods Town" was in the midst of a major economic depression and money was not available. Moreover, "Woods Town" is within minutes of the largest wilderness area between the western and the eastern seaboard. Could it be that camping does not provide the "change" we examined in the previous chapter?

Summary:

The overwhelming indication of these data is that type of activity is largely independent of intrinsic experience itself, and that specific activities are important only as vehicles for the underlying dimensions of intrinsic experience.

Examinations of activity per se is largely irrelevant. Intrinsic experience can cohere to a variety of forms of activities; it is the qualitative nature of the experience itself that is the point. The Appendixes contain summary tables of activity primarily to allow the reader to understand the considerable range and diversity of activities that emerged as vehicles for the underlying dimensions of experience in this research. We hypothesize that continuing research might well develop these as well as other activities as intrinsic experience vehicles, yet any activity which was intrinsically experienced would share the dimensionality of intrinsic experience.

These data, particularly variability in age, sex, and location, suggest strongly, as we have argued, that intrinsic experience itself bears a strong relationship to life-context. Let's turn, then, from our examination of the context of activity to an examination of context and intrinsic experience.

Context and Intrinsic Experience

We can best examine the relationship between context and intrinsic experience by using two case studies: Mary and Bill. Mary is in her early 30s; Bill is 22. We select them because they are representative of the pattern of the majority of respondents in this research. Both fit the pattern of dimension and themes we portrayed in Chapter 2: Constraint, Adversity, Obscuring of Me, Script and Role Issues, Conflict in Context, Me as Me and Integration to Me. We will present the data here, however, in a different format in order to emphasize the importance of context.

"Mary"

By any standards, the context of Mary's life has been difficult, culminating in many years of struggle with what she reported was diagnosed as anorexia nervosa.

> "It was awful, sort of like being an alcoholic. I starved myself. I felt rejected. It was a vicious cycle. My husband didn't know how to handle it. I go up and down, take speed and diet pills. I didn't drink, it had too many calories. I had three kids. My husband's a sheriff, gone away a lot.

> It was frustrating, yet I kept my sanity. I got up at 3 or 4:00 a.m. to work out. I had to get up that early because the kids needed me for daytime."

Mary shows evidence of considerable role constraint and tells us of typing for a court reporter while at the same time experiencing:

> ". . . a lot of guilt about not being at home, yet I'm starting to feel that I'm worth something."

She clearly sees her work:

> ". . . is some time of self-esteem, accomplishment, so I don't just sit with the kids."
>
> "The money is no big deal, in fact my husband kind of looks on this as some plaything . . . which is a problem."

She feels that in her work she is:

> "being used, taken advantage of."

Children are even mentioned repeatedly, as is <u>her</u> responsibility for them:

> "I was stuck at home with kids . . . he could just go."
>
> "I needed to be at home, we saw in [another town] that kids were in trouble when parents were never home. [My husband felt this way] I feel guilty [if I'm not home]."

Mary describes her childhood as:

> "Rejection, unemotional, uncaring."
>
> "Parents never really wanted to know how I'm really feeling--looks good outside, no inside."

It is important to note two important factors. One is that the interviewer receives this information in response

to the question "Tell me about yourself" and a very limited set of general probes such as "What are three words that describe your childhood?" The contextual information we are provided is whatever is most currently pertinent and salient to the respondents. They are free to spend their time in the interview telling us about anything: positive, negative, or neutral.

The second point is that we could have omitted the context discussion completely and simply begun the interview by looking at the intrinsic experience(s) itself. Csikszentmihalyi, of course, had done this deliberately, out of his desire to focus on the experience itself. This raises an interesting epistemological question regarding the boundaries between phenomena and context. We could easily argue, for instance, that any placing of boundary between phenomena and context reflects an analytic assumption generated a priori by the student of the phenomena. Moreover, we could argue that such a perspective is subject to the limitation of a priori analytic assumptions. As it does not emerge from the native categories of this respondent, it can be incomplete, misleading, or even false. The respondent may well "chunk" together what have been defined as "phenomena" and "other" data. Such is clearly the case, we will argue later, as we compare this research to that of its only earlier model, the work of Csikszentmihalyi. It is the reason why we present some differences in analytic categories and why at the conclusion

of this research we will end up in a very different place from his work. The relevance of these points is important as we review Mary's context report above and proceed to a consideration of her intrinsic experience. Mary's intrinsic experience was her "coming out" from anorexia nervosa.

> "The sense of freedom! I was out of bondage."
>
> "I didn't realize what bondage was. I couldn't relax."

There were two major factors on this day for Mary: a psychologist and religion. Mary talks about her psychologist.

> "He looked me in the eye . . . I was important for him . . . he would just listen to me!"

and religion:

> "The Lord was here too. The Lord took me gradually [off pills]. I couldn't have done it on my own."
>
> "When isn't He there for you? When doesn't he listen to the accepted me?"

Mary recalls experiences within the depression and anorexia which met the dimensions of intrinsic experience for her:

> "Nobody else existed. You were out of yourself. I'd lock the bedroom door, turn the stereo up. The kids were home; I was in the bedroom."

Through the experience, Mary tells us:

> "I still get resentful. But I know how to handle it now."
>
> "You have to be a servant when you become a wife and mother. You have to get to a point where you don't resent the role."

"I've started opening up and sharing how I do feel, even though people don't always want to hear."

"I'm now more capable of sharing feelings, even if it hurts. Before I wouldn't."

"I feel better about myself."

"My self-image is improving."

These are three main components to Mary's context story: a) Role constraint, b) Nature of relationship to husband, ("Guys are so blind to the needs of women.") and c) Struggle for self-esteem. We note Mary's intrinsic experience responds reflexively to each of these three component dimensions.

	ROLE CONSTRAINT	STRUGGLE FOR SELF-ESTEEM	NATURE OF RELATIONSHIP TO HUSBAND
Report of intrinsic experience	"Freedom, out of the bondage."	"I feel better about me, myself. My self-image is improving."	"I was important enough for him [Psychologist] He would just listen to me."

At a minimum, we can see a strong context-experience relationship operating in Mary's life. The relationship is a reflective one and characterized by: a) the transformation of perceived constraint into freedom, b) generally, a creative role-breaking quality (see Chapter 4), and c) the search for individualization or its characteristics (see Chapter 4).

There is a strong creative quality to the reported intrinsic experience in this research; a sense of "transformedness" from constraint to a relief of constraint, at least from the perspective of the respondent. Mary's "coming out" of anorexia is "creative for her" in restricting a very constrained experience to allow her a very positive experience of herself. This creative transformation is characteristic of the predominant pattern of intrinsic experience context relationship in this research (we will discuss variability in Chapter 4).

The context intrinsic experience relationship need not always be one that would be labeled positively. Yet our attempt here is to examine the context-experience relationship and not to talk about its consequences.

"Bill"

To study this, we will examine the life-context of respondent Bill.

Bill, 22, went briefly to vocational school after high school and then joined the Air Force for two years. After the Air Force, Bill got into considerable financial difficulty from which his parents "bailed me out". Bill drives a beer truck, an irony as we shall shortly see. He recently married a woman with two children--"there's another on the way." Bill repeatedly tells us:

> "I'm trying to get back to the way I used to be."

The way he "used to be" was when he was 17:

"I could get things done, I had a mind of my own, I was happy, forceful."

"I'd like to get away from the time clock and really make a living. Nothing in the checking account."

Bill continually expressed self-deprecation that he couldn't be who he knew he "ought" to be:

"forceful, assertive, competent."

He professes a problem with alcohol, but does not see himself as an alcoholic:

"I don't want to stop drinking completely."

Bill's intrinsic experience? Alcohol.

"When I get hammered, I have my ideals back again."

"I feel powerful."

"I feel happy, forceful, strong, a man who makes up his own mind. I can deal with anything head on. I can get the job done when I'm asked to."

"After work, I go to the bar. My problems seem less. I feel I'm able to communicate better. Problems slide by. I'm not worried about the day at work or what lies ahead."

"It makes me happy. It makes me feel kind of important. I do impressions; I'm the center of attention. I can talk to anybody. I feel elite. Like I have more money than I know I have. Like I'm older (I think I'm immature)."

"When I'm there I'm being me when I was 17, when everything meant something, when I wanted to get things done."

With Bill, the relationship between life-context and intrinsic experience is strongly reflexive. We cite Bill as an example only to focus on the necessity of examining the

life-context intrinsic experience relationship on its own terms and not in terms of some function or benefit outside of it, for which, in a sociological sense, the intrinsic experience may be dysfunctional.

We can go through our sample, case by case, and in a predominant number of cases delineate a similar life-context intrinsic experience relationship pattern to that of Bill and Mary, that is, a considerable relationship between life-context and intrinsic experience.

We can perhaps best demonstrate this relationship more fully by turning to an examination of reports of the intrinsic experience itself within our overall sample. Here we can look within the themes we identified in Chapter 2. Let's begin with "change". We can discern under "change" three sub-themes: a) "Away from role constraint", b) "Away from difficulty", and c) "Being here".

Intrinsic Experience Away From Role Constraint

> "There are no demands, no judgments. It's only me, not other people who I'm trying to make happy. I'm just pleasing myself."
>
> "My family is the most important thing to me and I feel most free when I'm away from them."
>
> "It's something important to me other than my family."
>
> "In time with the kids, it's wanting them to feel good about themselves. Sex is different. I want. It wasn't for anybody but me. I did it for myself. It's one time when the kids

> aren't going to make demands. I don't have to be responsible to anybody."
>
> "We were away from the kids. There were no time constraints. I was very free, totally free."
>
> "A bed in a motel is more exciting. I can stop thinking about the kids--if they'll walk in, if they need something."
>
> "We're really getting away from home."
>
> "It had nothing to do with my husband."
>
> "The sex is just for me, not the kids."
>
> "I have to be off by myself. I don't want anybody there. This is my experience; it's mine alone. It's an intense feeling of satisfaction that I don't want to share with anybody else."

There is a very strong theme in intrinsic experience reports of being away from: kids, husbands, others. Our point here is simply to note that the "away from-ness" of intrinsic experience is fully intelligible only in its relationship to life-context.

For other respondents, there is the sub-theme of "away from difficulty":

> "I left my worries at home."
>
> "Carefree."
>
> "Out in the garden I can forget everything, forget myself completely."

Again we see the "over against" nature of report of intrinsic experience. A third sub-theme is "experience of being here":

> "I don't think about anything at home--or the kids. It's a feeling of now."

"Nothing else mattered except being there."

"I don't do it for the money. I do it 'cause I need to. It's my baby."

"I live for the moment."

"I was at peace with the world. I was living for that moment. I felt wonderful. All I was thinking about was myself. I was living for right that minute."

There is, in these quotes, an implicit recognition of the moment as opposed to the experience of the life-context.

"I am away," respondents tell us from the constraint of my life-context to an experience of here or the moment. Let's flesh out that experience more fully and continue by reiterating briefly the themes of acceptance and achievability:

Acceptance

"I can be supportive of myself and admit I'm okay."

"I felt someone truly cared about me. That someone could love me."

"I know that what I've tried to do has worked, and I don't need anyone else to confirm it or validate it."

"I can be readily accepted."

"I feel loved, peaceful, happy; I think I'm a wonderful person."

Intrinsic experience is generally accompanied by feelings of acceptance; either of one's self or from others.

Achievability

> "If the project is too difficult or it's risky, then it's harder to achieve that floating feeling. But sometime I do have this experience working on a very difficult project."
>
> "If someone had told me ahead of time what I would go through, I would have said that I couldn't do that. But I did do it. It gives me self-confidence. I can do it."
>
> "Finally, I believed, there wasn't any doubt this time I'd be healed. You have to work at it. These experiences don't just come along."

The intrinsic experience is achievable; it is within the abilities of the respondent to accomplish it. This is highly related to a sub-theme we will explore later on.

Another theme of intrinsic experience is "integration":

> "All my feelings came back to me. I cried and I cried. And I remembered it all."
>
> "I knew everything was right with the world."
>
> "It's a transcendental feeling. Everything seems to be coherent and peaceful."
>
> "It enables me to stay home with the kids."
>
> "I needed to work. It helps me be first an individual and second a mother."
>
> "I can get in touch with myself."

Here again we see a dialogue between intrinsic experience and life-context, wherein there is an integrative function within intrinsic experience, sometimes between the individual and conflicting roles or expectations, and

sometimes within our individual and self-generated expectations or needs.

In Chapter 2, as we considered this integration in the cases of Kris and Helen, we argued that it is not necessarily to one role or the other, but to self. If we explore our data more carefully on this point, we find four important sub-themes under "me as me" or "integration to me." These are: a) freedom, b) me as different, c) potency, and d) involvement of self.

Freedom

> "I can let loose, it's who I am."
>
> "I'd been set free."
>
> "I make sure that I go to concerts, that I take this time for myself."
>
> "I feel relaxed, happy, a little more glamorous, a little reckless. I feel free, no cares in the world."
>
> "Sometimes I'm able to lose my inhibitions and do just what I want to."
>
> "It was important to me to be doing something that wasn't for anybody but me."
>
> "I'm not on guard. I can be who I am."
>
> "I feel free, no cares in the world. I'm living for the moment. I do it strictly for me. I was doing this just for me."

The sub-theme of "Freedom to Be Me" is a strong one in these data. Again, freedom to me is implicitly, often explicitly,

"freedom from" a life-context consideration, either role constraints or personally imposed restrictions.

Me as Different

The intrinsic experience is a time when the experience of "me" is seen as "different" from the experience of "me" in the prevailing life-context:

> "I think when I'm gone I'm a different person than when I'm okay."
>
> "Helps me take my mind off everything."
>
> "It's a whole different world. It's so apart from me!"
>
> "I think of Vegas. I think of Carmen Miranda with the basket of fruit on her head, wearing a sexy shirt with her legs showing. I'd like to be like her--to bounce around, be a little sexy, gay, outspoken, naughty."
>
> "I'm a nice person, trustworthy, a good friend, a very good mother, but that's not really a description of me, is it?"

Potency

We use the category label "potency" here because it seems to best represent the feeling respondents were conveying when they spoke about this dimension. "Self-esteem" is another possible label for this category.

> "I feel stronger. I'm taking more change of my life and doing things."
>
> "I'm perfectly content with myself. I feel intensely gratified by myself. I'm just happy with what I've done."
>
> "I feel as though nobody could conquer me."

> "I got stronger through the experience. I'm tougher than I was. I learned about my strength. Until you go through it, you don't realize the strength you do have."
>
> "I've gotten to be a stronger person."
>
> "I found out I could support my kids by myself. I'm taking more charge of my own life and doing things."
>
> "It gave me so much confidence it showed me I could handle new things."
>
> "Everything reflects back to me in some way, I felt important. I helped someone. I taught the kids."
>
> "I feel great about myself. I like myself."
>
> "I have control of myself now. I don't need anyone else to tell me I'm good or that the play has come out right."

Again, we find the potency sub-theme quality of "over against" the prevailing life-context. Moreover, as in the other sub-themes, we find a quality of "within-ness" to the experience <u>itself</u>: within the prevailing context there is the particular context of intrinsic experience.

<u>Involvement</u>

We might also label this category "forgetting the role defined--constrained me."

> "I don't even think of me then. I'm totally engrossed; I'm not thinking of me, or anyone around me. I guess you could say I'm swept away. It's a feeling of total enjoyment. I feel like I'm weightless, floating, I'm excited and exhilarated. I'm not thinking at all or aware of my body."

"It's like being apart from myself, of being someone else besides me."

"Out in the garden I can forget everything, forget myself completely."

"I'm oblivious to what's happening around me. I feel like I'm part of the story."

Once again, we see the dialectic between intrinsic experience and prevailing life-context as well as the "intrinsic context", the "on its own-ness" of experience. What do our themes and sub-themes tell us about context intrinsic experience?

Summary: Context and Intrinsic Experience.

Intrinsic experience takes place within life-context. It takes place within the context of role constraints both socially and personally defined. As such, it can only be fully understood in relationship to those contexts. Only by examining intrinsic experience in context can we fully understand its differentiation from context. We can only see the separateness, the "over-against-ness" of intrinsic experience when we examine it contextually.

In a dialogue with life-context, intrinsic experience is the experience of self as free and potent. It is an experience of integration of what are often conflicting roles or expectations, not to one choice or another, but to self. That experience is generally an extremely powerful one.

Its importance to people can best be understood by returning to our respondents. Some recount intrinsic experiences of twenty years ago in vivid detail. Listening we feel they must have happened yesterday. For others:

> "I treasure it. I'm able to take a deep breath."
>
> "I just cry out for that time again."
>
> "But this work is almost the reason for my existence."
>
> "I don't know what I'd do with myself if I couldn't either read or listen to music. I just don't know what I'd do."

With our respondents, we come to understand this space we call intrinsic experience with both appreciation for their experience and perhaps saddened by the understanding of self's small space within the context of culture. A formal dissertation cannot begin to convey the emotional importance of these experiences within the lives of our respondents. More than a few respondents cried during our interviews. We had begun by looking for experience in and of itself, for itself, and for no other purpose but itself. And that is exactly what we find: the experience of <u>self</u> within the context of culturally defined roles and expectations.

CHAPTER 4

Variability in Intrinsic Experience

Thus far in our discussion we have been using the term "predominant pattern" in our discussion of intrinsic experience. Are there variations in intrinsic experience? We find that there are two major patterns of variation to explore: a) past versus current experience, and b) sex and role variation.

Past versus Current Experiences

One pattern of responses indicated that the experiences being discussed had occurred once and some time ago:

> "When I was a football referee, fifteen years ago."
>
> "A play I was in four years ago."

Others discussed an event which was current in their lives:

> "Making love."
>
> "Bowling."
>
> "Listening to music."

Generally, respondent reports that all their intrinsic experiences fit one of these two patterns. Let's consider in depth two respondents who fit these patterns.

Past Experience Pattern: "Betsy"

Betsy is a married 32 year old woman who lives in "Big Town". She is the mother of two children, 3 and 13 years old, resulting from two marriages. She talked of several experiences which echoed the dimensions she had been presented: a) having children, b) death of a friend's mother when she was in second grade, c) taking a Saturday off with women friends, d) vacation without husband or children, and e) a play at a community theatre four years ago. The play, in which she had the lead, dominated the interview. Note that her experiences are all past experiences, though she is contemplating another vacation without husband or children. In the following transcripts, Betsy tells us about her life-context, echoing our earlier analytic categories of Constraint, Adversity, and Obscuring of Me.

Constraint

> "When I stopped working after my second child I found it too stifling . . . I can't find more part time work . . . I start to feel a little hemmed in when I'm not working and making a little income of my own. I think I don't have a right to make decisions if I'm not contributing . . . I feel that I have to be responsible to my husband and children. I'm always having to answer to people."

Adversity

> "Best friend's mother died of cancer when I was very young."
>
> "Lost my job. . . ."
>
> "Divorced, single mother . . . I felt so guilty about having to work and leave my daughter in day care."

Obscuring of me

> "I lived with my parents, answered to them. Got married, answered to him. Had a child, answered to her. Always had someone depending on me. I always was dividing myself up into other people."

We note the "pushing off" quality in Betsy's life, directly considering herself in relation to others and the pressures of their lives. Against this "pushing off" characteristic, we can look at Betsy's report of intrinsic experience in more detail. Again we find our earlier analytic categories of Change, Achievability, Acceptance and Me as Me appropriate. Betsy is focusing on her theatre experience.

Change

> "I had never done anything like this before."
>
> "I didn't think about it, just jumped in and did something completely new."

Achievability

> "I was astounded that I'd done that well."
>
> "It gave me so much confidence. It showed me that I could handle new things."
>
> "It was a real challenge. It was an accomplishment."

Acceptance

Within the context of the play itself, Betsy speaks of the support she received from others in support of what she had chosen to do:

> "My husband came for three nights of the four that it showed."
>
> "The director encouraged me as much as he could. He'd circle auditions in the paper for me and told me to keep going."
>
> "I got a lot of attention from relatives and people I work with."

Note that Betsy's acceptance generally is felt in relation to others. She herself is standing out from others on her own, yet she is supported by others: husband, director, relatives.

Me as Me

> "I was doing this just for me."
>
> "It was important to me to be doing something that wasn't for anybody but me."
>
> "I felt important at that time. I was important to the play and to those people."

"I felt great about myself."

Betsy clearly reports the experience of herself, the "I" or "Me" constraint within the play experience. What is interesting about the quality of her report as we examine her experience is that it is experience of herself: "It was important to me to be doing something that wasn't for anybody but me" as opposed to the "pushing off" we noted in her experience earlier: "I lived with my parents, answered to them, got married, answered to him."

If we continue to examine Betsy's experience as an exposition of the nonrecurring pattern we can look more carefully at the relationship of life to intrinsic experience.

Conflict in Context

> "The play took away from what I could do at home."
>
> "My husband was jealous too. I was gone a lot, although he was proud of me."
>
> "I can't be and do what I want for me. I've never been on my own. I've never had the chance to do whatever, or nothing, or everything."

Betsy, like many respondents in this research, encounters conflicts because she experiences contradictions between her experience of self and dictates of her context. Each are experienced as very important to her, and she encounters difficulty in the acting out in fear of the consequences of choosing one side of the contradiction as

opposed to the other. A key characteristic of respondents who evidence a nonrecurring pattern of intrinsic experiences is that contradictions within their life-context extend into the experience itself. This may be one clue as to why the experience does not recur. On the one hand Betsy needed to "break out" of the constraints of her life; on the other hand, she fears the consequences of those constraints and that contradiction intruded upon her play experience.

Scripts and Roles

> "[The play] . . . had nothing to do with my husband. I was involved with something not connected to him. And I think this made him feel insecure."
>
> "It was asking a lot of my husband and daughter to let me do this for just me."

Betsy clearly felt that she was violating to some degree her allegiance to her husband and daughter. Her dichotomy is a clear one. Yet within the experience the choice between play and family is resolved in favor of "Me", as we shall see below. What is interesting about Betsy, however, is to question why the experience has taken place once and has not been repeated.

> "I was totally involved . . . I got involved, I concentrated. I was working . . . first script, then dinner, then rehearsal, then socializing with the cast."
>
> "It was important for me to be doing something that wasn't for anybody but me."

> "[My husband] He'd let me do it again, as long as I didn't do it as a constant thing."
>
> "He sure wouldn't have married an actress."
>
> "The only way I could do it was to be totally involved."

Here we clearly see the conflict between what we might label the "externalities of self" (self living in the world/and the "internal self"). This is, of course, an analytic distinction as Betsy lives in the world as one self experiencing the contradictions between her husband's need for power and control on the one hand and her own self need--including her relateness to her husband--as an essential element of self (see Gilligan 1982). In this light, Betsy's experience of self in her acting experience contrasts painfully with her comment that her husband "sure wouldn't have married an actress."

Integration to Me

Yet within the experience itself, the integration is not to the play or the roles that are in conflict, it is to "Me".

> "I felt secure about my abilities; this was something I could have."
>
> "I was doing this just for me."
>
> "I felt great about myself."

Again, this integrative pattern seems to be similar to many respondents in this study. No matter what path respondents have taken to get there, and no matter what the conflicts

are outside the experience itself, patterns of intrinsic experience often converge at this point. We now turn to our other major pattern of intrinsic experience: the current pattern.

Current Experience: "Georgia"

Georgia is a 30 year old married woman with three children. She worked as a secretary until the birth of her second child. Georgia tells us of three intrinsic experiences: a) her ceramics business, b) sex, and c) pride in children. While her discussion of her ceramics business dominated the interview, sex and her children both seemed to have a great deal of importance for her. Georgia lives in a distant suburb of "Big Town", having moved from a large urban area a few years ago. At first, the outlying suburb seemed very remote and far away to Georgia. The move was made at her husband's request.

Constraint

> "We take outings, go camping, go to the zoo, cross-country skiing. But we can't do this often because of family ties. We do things with the family or not at all."

> "I love to go to the beach with friends and the kids. We can really relax. But it's just not the same as when I leave the kids home and go with my friends. The family responsibilities aren't there. There's no preparation, packing, etc. I can have the freedom of being out of the routine of normal daily life."

Adversity

Georgia reports a minimum of adversity beyond the role constraints she experiences in relationship to her family.

Obscuring of Me

> "My family is most important to me. Yet the time I spend away from my family is when I feel most free, most me."

As with Betsy, we note in Georgia a characteristic quality of "pushing off". Both women report experiencing constraint in their family life. Beyond this similarity of shared constraint of family roles, we do perceive a more significant sense of constraint--a lack of choice in Betsy that we do not sense in Georgia:

Betsy	Georgia
"I found it too stifling."	"When I leave the kids home."
"I can't find more . . . work."	"The time I spend away from my family."
"I think I don't have a right to make decisions if I have to be responsible to . . . ."	
"Got married . . . answered, had child . . . answered."	
"I always was dividing myself up into other people."	

We continue examining if this observation is supported as we study the character of Georgia's intrinsic experience: Georgia established a ceramic business at home.

Change

> "I was working again. I was accomplishing something through my work."

Achievability

> "I didn't know I was capable enough to teach the class. But I learned it--even though it was very demanding."

Acceptance

> "I can be really accepted."
>
> "I like myself."

Me as Me

> "I'm not on guard. I can be who I am."
>
> "I'm creating something, making it just the way I want it to be. I feel most myself putting time into creating."

The quality of both Betsy's and Georgia's responses relative to "Change" and "Achievability" seem similar. For both women mastering the activity involved in their experiences was a change from the status quo of their lives.

Conflict in Context

> "Sometimes the amount of time the business (ceramic studio) takes away from my family is hard."

Georgia, like Betsy, experienced some degree of contradiction between her intrinsic experience and the role constraints of her life. Importantly, however, while

Georgia moved to the outlying suburb because of her husband's wish, he (unlike Betsy's husband) has not expressed barriers to her ceramics business (he did initially). Both women express concern about the impact of their intrinsic experience on their perceived role obligations. For Betsy, however, that concern is reinforced explicitly by her husband while Georgia does not report pressure from her husband. Her relationship to her husband is not the only differentiating factor here. By further perception of how Georgia approaches this contradiction, we should gain a deeper understanding of why she has continued her experience while others have not.

Scripts and Roles

> "I needed to work. It helps me be first an individual and second a wife and mother. I have to be active, busy, providing. I can't be alone. That's my nature. And the work fills these needs."

> "Upstairs is the living area, where I'm with my husband and kids. Downstairs is for me, my business where I can work independently."

Georgia has quite literally organized her life so that the conflict between family role constraints/allegiance on the one hand and her experience of ceramics on the other hand, are integrated:

> "It's convenient, it makes it possible for me to do ceramics and take care of my family. I know they're right upstairs and if there were any problems, I could leave and go help out."

> "With my business downstairs, I can extend the child care role for my husband. This helped me make the break from being totally responsible for the children."
>
> "The kids understand that they're not to come into the basement when classes are in session. And they follow this."
>
> "I don't have to be responsible to anybody."

And as we noted, importantly:

> "At first my husband was negative. He was worried about people coming into the house during private, family time. Then he was much more positive and supported me."

We find that the ability to organize the occurrence of the intrinsic related activity in a way that is compatible with contradictory pressures is an important reason why Georgia and other respondents who report recurring experience are able to continue having the experience while others are not.

Integration to Me

> "I don't do it for the money. I do it 'cause I need to. It's my baby."
>
> "These experiences are rewarding, satisfying. I see that I help other people. Everything reflects back to me in some way. I helped someone. I taught the kids. I helped make the sex something we benefit from."
>
> "I'm not on guard. I can be who I am."
>
> "I like myself."

Georgia has not chosen within her intrinsic experience between her family on one hand and work on the other. She has chosen herself:

> "Upstairs with the family I'm just thinking about my next responsibility. I'm always okay planning for the day ahead. Downstairs I'm able to learn about how others live their lives. I feel like my day is completed. Even though I'm with other people it's like my time alone."

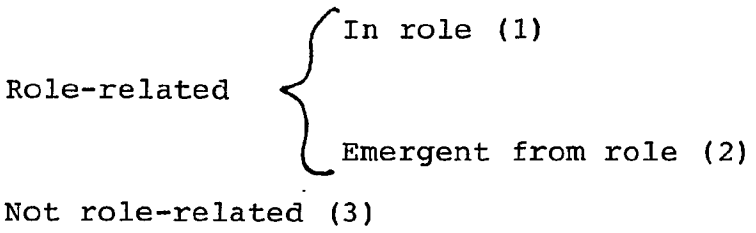
Current and Past Intrinsic Experience

The quality dimensions of both these intrinsic experiences were highly similar. The intrinsic experience within itself does not vary as a function of when it was in time or if it is current or not. What is variable is whether the intrinsic experience can be integrated into the life-context. Georgia was able to sustain her experience very elaborately, quite literally integrating it into her life-context. Betsy was quite pointedly not able to achieve this integration. It is not surprising, therefore, that the quality of Betsy's remarks about constraint are of a person expressing less freedom and choice.

We thus conclude that intrinsic experience itself is characterized by multiple dimensions which recur with regularity within that experience. Intrinsic experience very definitely interacts with life-context and the integration of that experience into life-context is variable. Our next question is, how does sex and role relationship affect intrinsic experience?

Role Relationships and Intrinsic Experience

As we indicated earlier, variability exists between men and women relative to the relationship between roles and intrinsic experience. For both sexes, we can chart the three types of patterns which emerge from these data as follows:



By "role-related/in role" we mean the individual's own primary role definition, e.g., "I'm a housewife and a mother" or "I'm an accountant." By "role-related/emergent from role", we mean a role-related experience in which the individual experiences self in addition to role. Sex is a recurring example of this pattern. By "not role-related", we mean an activity outside the individual's primary role description.

In women, the predominant patterns are "role related/emergent from role" (2) and "not role-related" (3). For that reason, we have spent considerable time delineating the "role-related/emergent from role" pattern to join our portraits of Helen, (Chapter 2) and Georgia, (Chapter 3) as well as the "not role-related" pattern in our portrait of Betsy (Chapter 3). Both patterns utilize the dimensions of

Constraint, Adversity, Obscuring to Me, Change, Achievability, Acceptance, Me as Me, Conflict in Context, Scripts and Roles, and Integration to Me. We turn to an examination, by contrast, of the "role related/in role" pattern.

Role-Related/in Role Pattern in Research

What is different about women who evidence this pattern? The primary difference is the absence of report of Constraint, Adversity, Obscuring of Me, and Conflict in Context as well as reports of "Me and Me" and Integration to Me. These women vary in age across our age groupings. Typically, they will tell us that:

> "I'm a housewife and mother and I'm very satisfied."
>
> "I'm happy the way things are."
>
> "I'm alone from 8:30 to 4:00 every day. Still there's always something to do, someone needs their favorite jeans repaired."

These respondents are happiest when:

> "The family is enjoying an activity together, when everything is going really smoothly."

Their reported occupation is:

> "Taking care of the house."
>
> "Full-time mother."

Some also, however, hold full and part-time jobs as nurses or teachers or secretaries.

Reported intrinsic activities are:

"Making bread, cookies, and cake for myself, husband, and neighbors . . . a good feeling, really enjoying it, good for your soul, makes me feel good inside to do something for somebody else."

"Washing clothes, cleaning the house . . . just like a tonic."

"Going to church."

"Doing good things for my husband like making a good meal."

"Painting faces and flowers on mugs and giving them to others."

"Sewing, it's good to be able to do something . . . gives me a feeling of effervescence."

"Working on the house, mindless jobs, daydreaming about what the house will look like."

"Birth of my child, natural childbirth. I was 20, long labor and pain, created a bond, made me become responsible."

"My husband's brother's death; he really needs me."

"Birth of my children . . . it made me a complete person."

"Just being busy around the house."

and, importantly, (sometimes) sex.

The key difference between these women and women who evidence the "role related/emergent from role" or the "not role related" pattern is that in addition to <u>not</u> experiencing Adversity, Constraint, Conflict in Context, or Obscuring of Me they also do not experience "Me as Me" or Integration to Me. Between role and experience there is no

intervening construct of "Me" or Self, rather Me is defined as isomorphic with role (fulfilling social definition).

"I'm a housewife and a mother."

Thus, it is important here to distinguish between report of experience which mirrors the psychological dimensions of intrinsic experience and intrinsic experience of <u>self</u> as a construct differentiated from either role or experience. In the "role-related/in role" intrinsic experience, "self" is defined in and by the role and is not differentiated from the experience.

Men's Role and Intrinsic Experience

Overall, men and women share the same patterns of relationship between roles and intrinsic experience.

Role-related
- In role (1)
- Emergent from role (2)

Not role-related (3)

The difference is that for women patterns (2) and (3) are predominant, while in men the "role related/in role patterns" predominate. Men largely report intrinsic experience as both role-related and from within role, (1) while women mainly report intrinsic experiences emergent from role (2) or not role-related (3).

Perhaps the first point which needs to be emphasized regarding men in this research is that there were not many of them. We interviewed a total of 18 men: 4 in "Big

Town", 5 in "Farm Town", and 9 in "Woods Town". While we cannot make statistically projectable statements about the incidence of intrinsic experience in adult males, we can say that we had more difficulty finding men than women.

The dialectical tension between role constraint and self-experience which many women find as intrinsic experience does not exist for men. Rather, for men, intrinsic experience takes place within prescribed role, and self must emerge within role as opposed to in juxtaposition to role. It is our hypothesis that this focusing on prescribed role relationship and absence of dialectical tension between role constraint and self-experience makes the occurrence of intrinsic experience in men more difficult. Their intrinsic experience must generally be found within the role, and the role may constrain the intrinsic occurrence. As men and society have considerable valuation of role definition and its importance and little valuation or even awareness of intrinsic experience, it is not surprising that we have more difficulty finding male intrinsic experiences. There is, of course, a temptation to define men as "freer" (and indeed in this sample men often do not report role constraint). Whether however relative lack of role constraint is occurring or whether the role constraint is more complete is another question. Indeed, this is another critical point at which to re-examine what we earlier discussed as the contradiction between "internal self" and the externalities of self. Men clearly gain

considerable status from work, while women find work a much less rewarding status-giving place (see Schechter 1982). Clearly there are great differences in societal valuation of men and women following culturally defined roles (housewife versus breadwinner).

These data are certainly consistent with research which has found sex role variable between role and its valuation. What is important here is our finding of its consequences for self-experience in men and women and specifically its consequences precluding as a barrier to men's intrinsic experience. We turn to an examination of men. In doing so, we encounter two patterns: "Role related/in role" and "Role-related/emergent from role".

Role Related/in Role Intrinsic Experience

Men who fit the "through role" intrinsic experience pattern (through culturally defined work role): a) do not express adversity, constraint, or "Obscuring of Me" (reflecting cultural valuation of their work), b) value work, c) have found "achievement" through work, and d) express feelings of competence and control about their work role.

Valuation of Work

> "I know I'm lucky to have this job. I can't imagine what I'd do if I didn't have the opportunity to work."
>
> "I need to be working, to be doing something of value--otherwise I can't

be self-respecting. I need to be contributing something and functioning as part of a group. Otherwise, I feel like a nobody."

"Achievement" Through Work

"I really had a feeling of accomplishing something."

"I made a motorized bike for a woman who became the best 'Avon' lady even though she was handicapped."

Feeling of Competence and Control About Work Role

"I know that what I've tried to do has worked and I don't need anyone else to confirm or validate it."

"I love to work hard and play hard."

Beyond the addition of these three dimensions and the relative absence of Constraint, Adversity and Obscuring of Me, a critical question arises: Do men who fit the "role-related/in role" experience pattern mirror the pattern established earlier of Change, Achievability, Acceptance, and "Me and Me"?

In a word, no. We can perhaps best explain this by referring to "Henry".

"Henry"

Henry is in his 60s and is currently a deputy sheriff with the county police. Prior to assuming this role six years ago, Henry tells us that he spent:

"Thirty years, three months, eight days in the military. I would like to spend another ten years."

Henry had been to Iwo Jima and to Da Nang (for which he volunteered). He had spent night after night either loading bombs on airplanes or flying missions over North Vietnam. He loved combat:

> "There's always something going, time moves so fast, you got orders, you've got to make the best of it."

Every time the interviewer tried to move the questioning away from the military, he failed dismally. It was clear the Henry was bound up in his military experiences. Even stories that began in the present tense quickly ended up there. What could Henry's intrinsic experience be? Defusing bombs. Clearly Henry's experience of defusing bombs met the screening criteria. Equally clearly was that the experience involved:

Change

> "The tension, all of a sudden, you didn't have time to think about anything else except what's in front of you."

Achievability

> "You've had the training, you hope you're up to what's been done . . . after 15 years I'm still alive. Others are dead."

Acceptance

> "It's always done as a team, each one watched the other, we worked close together."

Note absence of Acceptance for "Me". The interviewer asked Henry, "How did you feel about you?" Henry paused:

> "I never gave it a thought, just like parking a car."

Henry and other men who report "role-related/in role" intrinsic experience tend not to talk in terms of "Me" or "Self" and understand intrinsic experience as an experience rather than an experience of self. It is probable that Henry's experience in bomb defusing is and was an experience of identity standing out from role (bomb squad from general military), but if that is so, it is an experience we must derive analytically, for Henry does not consciously report it.

The key point here is the differentiation between experience and experience of self. A male who experiences the characteristics of intrinsic experiences through role may well not experience self as discriminated from the role, because the role is his definition of self.

We hypothesize that the role of Change and Adversity/Constraint in creating "space" between experience and role is filled with the constraint of "Self" or "Me" within intrinsic experience. If there is no "space" between experience and role, there is less "space" in which self can be experienced. This squarely raises the issue of the criteria of self and its relationship to social structure, a question which will be central to the conclusion of this research.

By contrast, there are other men who evidence a pattern which is role-focused on the one hand, while on the other hand extremely similar to that of women, reporting a considerable degree of Constraint, Adversity and Obscuring of Me. We can label this pattern as "in role/emergent from role". We turn to John, a architectural student and planning advisor in "Big Town".

"John"

We will utilize our established dimensions.

Constraint

John had entered the Navy right after his parent's divorce when he was 18.

> "I went into the Navy to get away from my family, during the time around the divorce. I didn't like my life, wasn't in much of a position to change it, and joined the Navy because it was the only thing I could do. I didn't leave because I didn't want a dishonorable discharge. The worst experience of my life was the Navy. They really brainwashed us and said that we could be individuals."

Adversity

> "My parents were divorced when I was 18. My father withdrew from me completely and didn't even come to my wedding. I'm bitter. I have no sympathy or understanding of why he did it."

> "My sister died when I was 15. I don't think I really believed it happened until I was 18 or 19 and had joined the Navy."

Obscuring

"Most of my life I wasn't able to live for myself. First I lived for my parents and things went bad. Then I went into the Navy and lived for them. Then I went to college and lived for school."

John's intrinsic experience is his design work.

Change

"When I'm doing plans of buildings, I can put myself into the picture and transform the drawings from 2D to 3D. I can take a walking tour through my design and imagine what it's like in that space. I call it 'floating'."

Achievability

"If the project is too difficult or it's risky, then it's harder to achieve that floating feeling."

"I'm becoming more confident in my abilities."

Acceptance

"I can be supportive of myself and admit, 'Hey, that looks good.'"

"I can be a problem solver--someone who can make things work for other people when they have a problem. I feel that I can really be participating."

"Me as Me"

"I'm more confident in myself. I'm comfortable in the work."

> "It's a good feeling; you have time to yourself."
>
> "I think of myself as a planner . . . it's disciplined work, but it gives me the freedom I've never had."
>
> "I'm confident and comfortable with myself. I feel happy and peaceful."
>
> "When I'm feeling floating, I get in touch with all kinds of experiences from across my life."

John has found within his intrinsic experience a conscious experience of self. His experience takes place within role, yet the role and the experience are mediated by an experience of self. Thus he tells us that:

> "I get so involved in a design that it will occupy my whole thought, my <u>entire self</u>."

At the same time, he is also telling us that:

> "It's a good feeling--you have time to be <u>yourself</u>."

John <u>does</u> report experience of self, yet unlike Henry, he also reports the occurrence of Constraint, Adversity, and Obscuring of Me in his life-context. Henry does not report self-experience; John does report it.

It is our finding that the experience of self in men is dependent (paradoxically) on the occurrence of constraint in the life-context. For intrinsic experience in men to be intrinsic of self, the experience of constraint must occur to create "space" between role and experience, as we suggested earlier. If role and experience are isomorphic, no constraint results. If no constraint exists, no intrinsic experience of self results either. Self as a

mediator between role and experience emerges only in dialogue with constraint.

Summary: Variation in Intrinsic Experience.

Men and women are different in their predominant patterns of intrinsic experience. Men predominate in "role-related/in role" experience, women predominate in "out of role" or "emergent from role" experiences. Yet we note two important convergences:

(1) Both men and women who experience "role-related/in role" intrinsic experience do not report experience of me or self within that experience, but rather self and role tend to be isomorphic.

(2) For both men and women, report of the experience of awareness at some point in the life-context seems to be a key factor in whether or not report of self-experience occurs. These data suggest that the experience of constraint may be important in "creating space" between role and experience, a space which is filled by "self".

Additionally, we find that the ability to structure or organize the occurrence of intrinsic experience in order to allow its recurrence in life is a critical determinant of whether it will be experienced as an on-going phenomena or as "something in the past". Individuals who are role-defined can and do structure their life around a role which may provide them intrinsic experience but does not provide intrinsic experience of self. People who report the

experience out of role do report intrinsic experience of self, but sometimes are not able to allow the experience to recur over time.

Thus, we find men in this study to be more role-defined in their intrinsic experiences and to less frequently report intrinsic experience of self. Women tend to be less role-defined in their intrinsic experience, yet may report that the occurrence was at a time in the past and does not recur. Role can be both anathetical to intrinsic occurrence on the one hand and sustaining of experience on the other. Substance of both intrinsic occurrence and self are the issue and it is around this issue that variation in intrinsic occurrence happens.

CHAPTER 5

Intrinsic Experience and Place

In the last two chapters we examined the relationship between intrinsic experience and life-context. In this chapter we will look at the relationship between intrinsic experience and another context, that of place. Thus far we have found that a very definite relationship exists between life-context and intrinsic experience. We can only fully understand the phenomena of intrinsic experience if we examine it contextually. In this chapter, our objective will be to broaden that contextual analysis.

Home and Intrinsic Experience

We begin with a very basic analytic theme. Respondents report experiences which occur at home (e.g., sewing, baking, art, and sex), experiences which occur away from the home (e.g., vacation, sport, special event), and experiences which are reported as independent of place (e.g., death, religious experience).

What is interesting is that women report all the patterns (home, away from home, independent of place) of intrinsic experience while men, with two exceptions, do not report home as a locus of intrinsic experience. This finding is fascinating when we remember the relative

difficulty we had in finding male respondents who reported experience of the dimensions of intrinsic experience and recall our analysis of past versus recurring intrinsic experience in the last chapter. Moreover, we observed that the ability of a person to organize and structure intrinsic experience into his or her life was critical in terms of the recurrence of the experience.

It is interesting that as we examine male intrinsic experience and place that the two men in our sample who report on-going recurrence of intrinsic experience report the occurrence of intrinsic experience within the home. Other men report intrinsic experience as an intermittent or nonrecurring event (e.g., Frank who lives in "Big Town" but occasionally goes fishing, or Don: "When I direct a plan that really works" or Richard: "When my wife died").

Is this relationship between home and intrinsic experience true of women? We certainly recall it is at least partially true of Kris and Helen in Chapter 2 and Georgia and Betsy in Chapter 4. Georgia was a particularly direct example of the relationship between recurring intrinsic experience and place, having located her ceramics business in her home.

In one pattern of responses, home is a place of importance for the on-going recurrence of intrinsic experience and holds true for women as well as men. Exceptions are church attendance or job involvements which provide on-going recurring intrinsic experience for some

women. Interestingly both of these are directly place-related. In another pattern of responses, home is not the place of intrinsic experience. Interestingly non-home intrinsic activities tend to be related to past or intermittent intrinsic experiences.

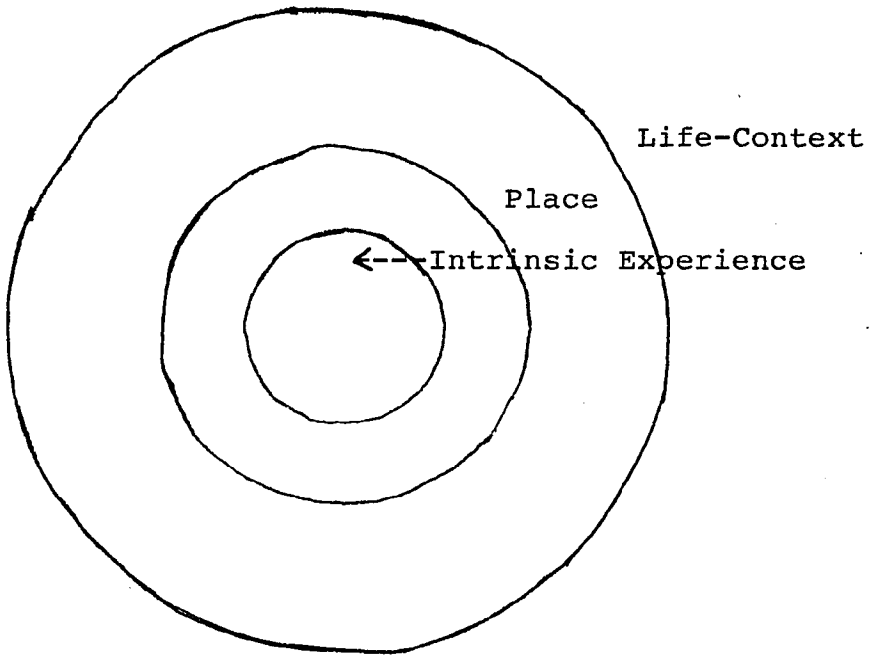
Non-Home Intrinsic Experience and Place

Men report a limited number of non-home places for intrinsic experience: a) far away, as on vacation or trip; b) work; and c) sport location. Additionally, men report several experiences as not place-related: a) alcohol, b) relationships, and c) work-related. Women report the following categories of non-home places for intrinsic experience: a) being far away, b) performing, c) concerts, theatre, or special event, d) relative's house, e) sporting event, f) hospital, g) social event, h) work, and i) church. Additionally, women report some experiences as not place-related: a) death, b) alcoholism, and c) worship or prayer.

We thus see that there is a relationship between the recurrence of intrinsic experience and whether it occurs at home or away from home. We hypothesize that location is related to whether a person can so structure and organize the surroundings of intrinsic experience to allow it to occur recurrently or infrequently.

Our question is: what is the relationship of intrinsic experience to place per se? More accurately, we have

already shown that intrinsic experience is a contextual phenomenon. Our question is thus to understand the relationship among life-context, intrinsic experience, and place. Schematically:



We begin to address this question by reading about Bonnie.

"Bonnie"

Bonnie is in her early 70s.

> "I'm the oldest of five girls. I took over our younger sister and revised her myself . . ."
>
> "I never married because I just figured that someday my Mom and Dad would need taking care of."

Bonnie took care of her father and then her mother:

> "I hope I never have to go to a nursing home. [Bonnie took her mother home.] I worked through the day, took care of her at night. I was so tired one night, I passed out."

Such behavior, Bonnie tells us, is consistent with her whole life:

> "I live for other people and for helping others. I wanted to be a nurse, but Dad wouldn't let me. I wished I had been."
>
> "Helping others, be they aunts or uncles, nephews to college . . . money doesn't mean anything to me except having a roof."
>
> "I have a sister in Phoenix . . . I was afraid something would happen to her (so I didn't go on vacation). I would feel guilty to know that I had gone off and left someone knowing that person is depending on me."
>
> "My mother took care of her mother until she passed away. I stayed there and took care of my mother . . . one of the things we're put on earth for is to do for others. That's been the main thing in my life."
>
> "Taking care of family is what the good Lord put me on earth to do."

We see in Bonnie the now familiar themes of Constraint, Adversity and Obscuring of Me. We continue from this view of her life-context closer to her intrinsic experience:

> ". . . I always thought Dad and Mom would be here forever. . . . After Mother died, I became very sick . . . I was taken to Minneapolis. My brother was in the hospital here . . . he died just before my surgery. That was the worst thing."

Bonnie was in the hospital for several weeks. Her intrinsic experience was her hospital experience; the place

of her intrinsic experience was the hospital. Here is her description of the experience and her description of the hospital at the same time:

DESCRIPTION OF EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION OF PLACE
"I felt like a different person."	"My first room was on the top floor in the corner. I hated how sterile it was. It was cut off from everything. Then I had a private room. I liked my room. I didn't want to be with others, just lay there and get well by myself."
"I wasn't afraid. You're the surgeon and I've got a man above. What will be will be."	"It was a comfortable, friendly, and peaceful room. I'd ask for it back because that room became part of my life. I'd always had a room by myself. If others were there, they were intruding on things that were my own."
"I got a lot of attention. I had five doctors and many nurses taking care of me. I looked forward to the nurses."	"This was where I got my new lease on life, peaceful, restful, quiet."
"If I was supposed to live, I would."	"In the hospital, no one was depending on me."
"I was by myself in my room. I knew everything was right with the world."	
"I had a peace with the world. I was living for that moment. I felt wonderful. I wasn't thinking about tomorrow, I was thankful I was alive."	
"I was glad relatives weren't there, they ask questions . . . I'd feel confusion . . . too many people	

talking." [Bonnie prohibited visitors]

"I don't want to burden other people with my problems."

"All I was thinking about was myself. I was living for right that minute."

"I wouldn't hesitate to have the experience again."

This is the only intrinsic experience Bonnie could report ever having. It happened five years ago and has not recurred. Bonnie clearly found the experience to be a positive one. We can see the reflexive pattern between life-context and intrinsic experience. Bonnie as caretaker is now being taken care of. What is fascinating about her experience is the way in which the place relationship so fundamentally mirrors the intrinsic experience:

INTRINSIC EXPERIENCE	PLACE RELATIONSHIP
Suspension of self-denied caretaker role	Isolation suspends definition of Bonnie as caretaker
Permission to focus on self, suspending caretaker role	Visitors excluded
Focus on self suspend focus on other	Private room
Safe, secure	Presence of nurses and doctors
	Room peaceful, quiet, restful
	Hospital

We find in Bonnie a strong theme of intrinsic place relationship which is that of suspension. The hospital itself suspends everyday roles, expectations, and

definitions, both social and personal. Hospital protocol allows Bonnie to not see visitors. Her private hospital room limits interaction of place, roles are suspended, and Bonnie has a positive experience of "Me". Let's examine suspension in our broader sample and in doing so search for sub-themes.

Place as Suspension in Intrinsic Experience

The theme of place as "suspension" is a strong one in these data. Let's examine its varieties:

Place as Suspension from Difficulty:

> "It hurts very much to see him the way he is . . . I'd love to travel all the time . . . [on trip], I feel like a different person."
>
> "I could be completely relaxed. There were no pressures, no worries."

Place as Suspension from Role Constraint:

> "No one talks to you or makes demands on you."
>
> "Wouldn't have to behave all of the time at home."
>
> "There was no one on the beach. Just the two of us and nature. We had no responsibilities or obligation to anyone."
>
> "The play took me away from home . . . . "
>
> "I mean I know it's not the same at my mother's house or at my mother-in-law's. I just feel funny there. It's much better at our place."

"It has to be away from home, but not too far away. Just far away from kids and relatives."

"Bed in a motel is more exciting. I can stop thinking about the kids--if they'll walk in, if they need something."

Within place as suspension from role constraint there is an important sub-theme: that of place as nonjudgmental. This is a strong sub-theme throughout these data and is wonderfully exemplified by Frank whose intrinsic experience is fishing. When fishing, Frank tells us:

"It doesn't even matter if there are fish around or if I catch any. It's just not important."

Place as Suspension from the Ordinary

"It's totally relaxed there. You're back to nature, not rushing. You're away from the rush and daily hassle. You hear the sounds of the ocean."

"Up at the lake--that's where it's the best. It's just different. The surroundings are different for one thing. And were wet for another. We're at the lake and in the lake, if you know what I'm saying."

"I feel like I'm a suspended spot in the ozone."

"My ideal vacation would be far away in the South Sea Islands."

Place as Suspension from Interruption

"Distractions, like to take away from this experience."

"The ideal place for praying. Under a tree, no interruptions, quieter. The

> more quiet and empty the lake, the better I feel. The more I can get away from it all."
>
> "I need a quiet comfortable spot to feel that floating sensation."
>
> "I can't handle too many interruptions."
>
> "Sometimes when I'm trying to get into my work at school I find other people disturbing if I'm not able to block everyone out."

Place as Suspension from Others

> "I have to be by myself. I don't want anybody there. This is my experience, it's mine alone; usually I can find somewhere to be alone in the middle of the lake. It's just me, the Lord, and the fish, if they are there."

These themes are generally representative of both Bonnie's experiences and the intrinsic experience/place relationship for respondents who report intrinsic experience: Out of home.

Here we are faced with a key issue: Do the themes we find in examining place as suspension in our data hold up as we look at home as a place for intrinsic experience? This is an important issue as we recall our earlier finding of a relationship between home as a place of intrinsic experience and whether or not that experience is current in our respondents' lives.

Home as a Place for Suspension

> "Out in the garden I can forget everything, forget myself completely.

> I just like being out there. I just love nature, enjoy what it produces."

There is very limited report of the home as a place where difficulty can be suspended. Respondents do not in general see it as a problem suspension place. This is doubly fascinating as we recall that respondents who reported immersion in a primary role such as homemaker generally do not experience Adversity or Constraint. These respondents further reported intrinsic experience as an experience as opposed to an experience of self. We shall return to this relationship later in this chapter.

Home as Place for Suspension of Role Constraint

Our data overwhelmingly indicates that home is a key locus of role constraint. Indeed, as one women told us:

> "Once I get into our new house, I'll never get out. So I need to take this trip before we move."

There is a paradox here, however. We hear from many respondents that:

> "I'm most myself at home."
>
> "I'm me in the kitchen."
>
> "I'm most myself in the family room."

This statement is often quickly followed by:

> "But I'm most free when I'm away. . . ."

For respondents who do not experience Adversity and Constraint and who frequently report home as the place of intrinsic experience, the theme of suspension of role

constraint there is inappropriate. The one exception is sex, which is sometimes experienced intrinsically at home.

> "It's one time when the kids aren't going to make demands."

For others we are left with the paradox of, "Most myself at home", while "Most free away. . . . " We will return to this paradox later.

Home as Place of Suspension from the Ordinary

Quite the antithesis appears to be true as we listen to respondents who discuss home as a focus for intrinsic experience. Here we find two counter sub-themes: familiarity and accessibility.

Familiarity

> "Familiarity is important to me."

> "I need to be surrounded by things I'm familiar with . . . a really familiar environment."

Accessibility

> [paints the dining room] "It's convenient, has light, a big surface, close to kitchen, water for paints."

> [where most yourself] "My kitchen. It's my domain. I talk to my friends, my husband there."

Respondents who report intrinsic experience at home will generally report that they "Stay busy with endless tasks around the home." "There's nothing more we could want. We'd live right where we do." "I do anything to keep busy

with my hands--knitting, crocheting, craftsy things." "I'm alone from 8:30 to 4:00 everyday. Still, there's always something to do. Someone needs their favorite jeans repaired."

These respondents are involved with their experience within the context of the home. They generally define themselves as housewives and we find a reciprocity between self-defined role (housewife) and home as the physical environment of intrinsic experience.

Home as Place of Suspension of Interruption

As with role constraint, respondents report considerable concern with interruptions to intrinsic experience at home:

> "It's too congested, there's constant traffic."
>
> "The kids, there's always the kids."

Respondents who do not report interruption at home as a constraint to intrinsic experience generally do not have children, live alone, or have structured the home environment to limit interruptions:

> "It's a good, suitable place. We have boundaries and limits where the kids should and should not be."

Home as Suspension of Others

Suspension of others and the experience of privacy is reported by some respondents as a theme when we examine the intrinsic experience-home relationship in these data:

"The back of the house abuts on the woods; there's a little pond. We can pretend we're somewhere else. It's very private. I'm not on display as in my living room at the front of the house."

"I like being alone, by myself when John's at the lake and the kids are in bed. I find that very peaceful."

"The bedroom is private, very private."

"I feel most secure when we make love in the family room. There's a fireplace which gives some romantic atmosphere. We're alone. It's completely private. I feel comfortable there."

However, as we have seen repeatedly through these data, the social nature of intra-family role constraints is a barrier to privacy in the home for many.

It is clear, therefore, that the home has a number of limitations as a place for intrinsic experience for most men and many women in these data. It has limitations as a setting to allow suspension from difficulty, role constraint, the ordinary, interruption, and others. These are factors which are important place-related concomitants of intrinsic experience for many.

We face here what on the surface appears to be a contradiction: a) Home has significant limitations as a place for intrinsic experience; and b) Home <u>is</u> a place for intrinsic experience for pattern of respondents; these respondents tend to report their intrinsic experiences as a current part of their lives. What is it then about the home that allows it to be integral to the place intrinsic

experience relationship for some respondents? Again we listen to our respondents:

> "Working on the house . . . contentment, it's me being able to accomplish something people always told me I couldn't do . . . not being lazy . . . I feel guilty when I relax . . . the house reminds me of my childhood, my family, it stabilizes my relationship with my husband . . . I'm working to build something . . . with my hands."
>
> "I love taking care of my house . . . I'm most myself when making a quilt. It makes me feel good inside to do something for somebody else."
>
> "This state is most like me. It welcomes people with open arms. Kids come in and enjoy themselves, play, dress up, and explore the attic. That's like me. I feel children and I like to help children find a way to enjoy themselves. The place was really a part of my life. I helped build the place with my husband. We put ourselves into it. It was beautiful with woods and wildflowers. I would tend the garden. The neighbors were so caring. Before my husband's death our home was the most important place to me. Afterwards, he wasn't there; it wasn't so important."
>
> "My home is the place most like myself."
>
> "I'm most me in my bedroom."
>
> "I'm most myself in the kitchen. It's the center of where I am."

Home is where many people and particularly women, spend their time. It offers limitations as a place for intrinsic experience. Respondents often report, "But I'm most free when I'm away." It often can be and is structured to allow for suspension of others and privacy. Yet it often presents considerable role constraint and interruption, and as an

"ordinary" or prevailing environment, it provides limited suspension or incongruity.

If it is not an ideal host environment for intrinsic experience, it is the one where people (particularly women) have to experience intrinsic experience within, because it is the big environment of their lives. Home is further a statement of self. It is a place where respondents identify with themselves, or find that they cannot. There is little in these data to suggest an intrinsic meaning to the place of home itself. That meaning is created by our respondents, generally within a larger social context of normative expectations and roles.

Yet here we return to the paradox mentioned earlier in this chapter: if, as we argued in Chapter 4, constraint was necessary for intrinsic experience <u>of self</u> and if place-related constraint is a barrier to intrinsic experience, then intrinsic experience of self is made more difficult in the home. As we have seen in the chapter, such constraint must either be eliminated from home, or the home must be very carefully structured to limit it. It is for these reasons, we hypothesize, that we find such considerable report of intrinsic experience <u>outside</u> of the home.

Here we return to a second question, that of explaining the relatively low incidence of intrinsic experience in the population. As we suggested in Chapter 4, the ability of an individual to structure and organize the intrinsic

experience in such a way as to allow it to become recurrent within the life-context is critical. If the activity which is the vehicle of the experience is in conflict with the life-context or is so structured as to make its recurrence difficult or complicated, the experience may well not recur. As we have seen in this chapter, an important relationship exists between intrinsic experience and place. If home is not able for many to provide the elements necessary for intrinsic experience and if home is a prevailing place for many, then this is one reason why the incidence of intrinsic experience may be limited.

Intrinsic Experience, Place Identification, and Self

We argued above that home was highly-related to self for some respondents (primarily in "role-in role" experiences) and that an accompanying element in that relationship to self was a social role definition which defined self (e.g., homemaker, mother). This suggests that self is, indeed, isomorphic with the role and place definition and does not emerge from it for those respondents. Both the person-place relationship and the role-self relationship are immersed within a social belief structure of what is important and salient in the world: generally a traditional belief system defining the proper rules of men and women and their experience.

What of the balance of our respondents? Is there a relationship between their report of intrinsic experience and place identification and self?

> "It's almost the reason for my existence."
>
> "I try to set up my classroom as far as how I want to deal with a classroom situation. Kids love to have art work hang from the ceiling. I think you would feel welcome, that there would be a warm, lovely feeling . . . I can be 95% me there."
>
> "It's calm, clean, quiet, not like at home. Other people aren't there. I can get in touch with myself."
>
> "My state says: "You're gonna have to take care of me, till me, work the soil. You'll have to be a strong person to make it here. It's gonna be hard . . . I identify more with my state. It's more representative of my life."
>
> [Bartender] "I feel like I own it. It's like my house, keep it clean and responsible."
>
> "I think when I'm gone I'm a different person than when I'm at home."
>
> "I can let loose there. It's who I am."
>
> "I'm . . . my philosophy is to avoid conflict--even when you have to bend a little . . . I love fishing."

When intrinsic experience is experience of self, then environment or place of intrinsic experience becomes a place for self. For some respondents, home is this place. For others, home either presents barriers to self-experience or other places are more congruent with the experience of self.

Place is important in intrinsic experience as a place for self.

I should like to end here, with the theme of a place for self. That would be to disregard, however, a powerful dialectic which runs throughout our data:

"I feel most at home in my living room."

"I feel most free in the mountains."

Clearly many of our respondents experience a contradiction between their normative social role definition and the place of intrinsic experience.

Throughout this discussion the reader has no doubt been struck by this paradox. Respondent after respondent reports the constraint of family, marriage, and role definitions--then subsequently reports relinquishment of those constraints. Why we ask, doesn't Helen (Chapter 2) or Betsy (Chapter 4) simply break free of their roles as wife and mother for a career or the possible and rewards of theatre? Why doesn't Bonnie (Chapter 5) tell her family and relatives that she is no longer in the caretaker role?

Ultimately, these are very large questions which have received considerable comment politically and psychologically. We would discuss them in terms of resulting alienation and schizoid behaviors. Within these data, however, we can only suggest that within the dialectic of:

PRESCRIBED	PERSONAL
Prescribed Social Role	Personal Definition
Role Constraint	Personal Choice
Social Pressure	Personal Expression

lies the domain of intrinsic experience. It postulates not an either/or choice which is (rightly or wrongly) unacceptable to the person, but an integration to a "Me" or self which reconciles the contradictions of culture in favor of self. And to that place we give our love.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

We began this research by defining intrinsic experience as experience in and of itself, for itself, for no other purpose but itself. We conclude that intrinsic experience is the location of self. This conclusion was not envisioned by any stretch of the imagination at the outset of this research. It is repeatedly and strongly supported within these data and rather than re-summarizing these findings, I will use this concluding chapter to put these data themselves within a broader social and psychological context. In doing so, I will attempt to frame intrinsic experience within the psychological context and tradition of self by introducing literature on self and its place in life-context.

As in any exploratory research, a word of humility is appropriate here. This research raises a number of questions relative to population variation, variability by culture, and a more detailed examination of persons who do not experience this phenomena in their lives. Our purpose here is to delineate a fertile area for future exploration and examine the dimensions of that phenomena. We have been bold in offering an hypothesis which, as in all original

work, must be confined and extended in continued research. Within the sample examined, the hypothesis and findings are consistent. Their weighting as well as their variability across various populations must await future research.

As we suggest that intrinsic experience is the location of self, our first question is : "What is self?" Clearly, our data strongly suggests that self is different for men and for women. This finding is amply supported by a review of literature on men and women. Carol Gilligan of the Harvard School of Education emphasizes the concept of relatedness as central to self in women:

> The conflict between self and other thus constitutes the central moral problem for women, posing a dilemma whose resolution requires a reconciliation between femininity and adulthood. In the absence of such a reconciliation, the moral problem cannot be resolved. The "good woman" masks assertion in evasion, denying responsibility by claiming only to meet the needs of others, while the "bad woman" forgoes or renounces the commitments that bind her in self-deception and betrayal. It is precisely this dilemma, the conflict between compassion and autonomy, between virtue and power, which the feminine voice struggles to resolve in an effort to reclaim the self and to solve the moral problem in such a way that no one is hurt.1

Gilligan considers integration, attachment, inclusion, and relatedness as critically important to self in women.

Kohlberg (1969, 1971, 1972, 1976), Erikson (1968), and a venerable male tradition in psychology have emphasized differentiation, separation, and increasing autonomy as critical concepts in the consideration of self. Robert

Kegan (1982), also of Harvard, has proposed that self is a "Helix" of evolutionary truces among five self's: the impulsive, imperial, interpersonal, institutional, and interindividual. The self, for Kegan, is a truce among these selves which is renegotiated throughout the life cycle. His conceptualization applies to both sexes.

Contemporary academic psychology thus offers us three frameworks from which to consider self: a) self over-against other; b) self related to other; and c) self over-against and related to other. We could begin a laborious search for commonalties among these traditions of self, or we could like Kegan begin to search for an interactionist's viewpoint among the various perspectives (hopefully acknowledging the possibility that self is quite different for men and women within the culture).

Yet it would seem more reasonable to begin from the viewpoint that the key issue raised in this research and the literature cited above is basically "What is life about?" Or to put the question more elegantly, can we address the question of self without addressing first the question of the metaphysics of teleology of self? Self clearly exists within a cultural context, a context which defines concepts such as "power", "morality", "purpose", and "meaning". Different viewpoints on these issues and the role of persons and gender relative to them lead to very different viewpoints on self; witness the literature we have earlier discussed. Gilligan leads us through feminism, ultimately,

to a very different viewpoint on the relationship between self and others. Different viewpoints have very different implications for institutions and education. Gilligan would lead us to focus on the primacy of the issue of survival for women in the culture and the consequences of male control for women's self. Kohlberg leads us to a strongly contrasting view of life and purpose.

To raise the question of self without first addressing the issue of purpose is to consider the issue of self as if there exists a naturally occurring normative context or criteria structure in the world for concepts such as "power", "morality", "purpose", and "meaning". Disciplines such as philosophy and theology realized long ago that such a criteria structure did not exist and it is perhaps time that psychology should do the same. Any resulting dogmatism could be no worse than the contextual babble which fills our journals today.

This focuses us on the question of what we will call the "third context" for consideration of self, that is, envisioning self as contexted both culturally and by gender. We will then raise the teleological question of what self, cultural context, and sex are contexted within. Considerations of this context leads us into literature out of the mainstream of academic psychology.

The Third Context

> The self is a relation which relates itself to its own self, or it is that in

> the relation (which accounts for it), that the relation relates itself to its self; the self is not the relation but (consists in the fact) that the relation relates itself to its own self. Man is a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, of the temporal and the eternal, of freedom and necessity, in short, it is a synthesis. A synthesis is a relation between two factors. So regarded, man is not yet self.2

S. Kierkegaard (1843) and Ernest Becker (1973) have both written brilliantly on the issue of the third context for self. We find two phases within their analyses of self: a) the process of self; and b) a teleology of self. For both Kierkegaard and Becker, the process of self concerned the manner in which an individual arrived at an understanding and experience of his or her own self. Their teleology of self involves the concepts of possibility and freedom and for both writers these concepts deliver us out of the purview of traditional psychology and into the areas of religion and spirituality. It is worthwhile to briefly review their examination of the process of self both because of its intrinsic brilliance and because it casts an interesting perspective on the data of this research.

Kierkegaard states ". . . for to will to be that self which one truly is is indeed the opposite of despair."[3] The self would will to be other than that which it truly is in order to avoid the terror, perdition, and annihilation which dwell next door to every man. Thus, for Kierkegaard, we lie about ourselves and that lie is the focus of our character. The consequences of the lie is the denial of possibility.

Kierkegaard's embodiment of this pattern of lying in order to avoid the anxiety of life was the "immediate man":

> His self or he himself is a something included along with "the other", in the compass of the temporal and the worldly . . . thus, the self coheres immediately with "the other", wishing, desiring, enjoying, etc., but passively . . . he manages to imitate the other men, noting how they manage to live and so he lives after a sort. In Christendom, he too, is a Christian, goes to church every Sunday, hears and understands the parson, yea, they understand one another; he dies, the parson introduces him into eternity for the price of $10 -- but a self he was not and a self he did not become . . . for the immediate man does not recognize his self, he recognizes himself only by his dress . . . he recognizes that he has a self only by externals.4

Kierkegaard warns us repeatedly that there are significant reasons why the immediate man would avoid the anxiety of confronting his lies and journeying to access his "true self". "Possibility" of freedom, he tells us, is a frightening thing. He delineates the role of too much freedom in the etiology of significant mental illness as well as in what we would today call "normal neuroses". Kierkegaard is clearly telling us that we can access neither freedom nor self without confronting a difficult psychological process whose hallmark is anxiety. He is also quite clearly telling us that self resides within freedom. "Anxiety is the dizziness of freedom."

Quite clearly, Kierkegaard is arguing that it is imperative that people pass through a difficult psychological process immersed in anxiety in order to arrive

at the freedom of self. Freedom is the "third context" of self for Kierkegaard and it results from proceeding through this psychological process. Self does not exist independently of freedom for Kierkegaard. Yet the process of achieving self may be quite painful: "The direction is quite normal . . . the self must be broken in order to become a self".[5] Here Kierkegaard leaves psychology and comes to the "doorstep" of religion. He thus provides us with an analysis of process and teleology of self. Process focuses on anxiety. Teleology focuses on freedom.

Kierkegaard and Becker both focus on a process of self-emergence in which the individual is lifted away from the "immediate" perspective and external man in order to become a self. Kierkegaard is quite explicit here that this self must be constituted "in relation to itself" and that such a self does not automatically emerge from the process of child development. Rather a process must be passed through, and "the self must be broken in order to be a self."[6] Both Kierkegaard and Becker argue that the necessity for this process is an endemic part of the human condition and of the nature of the child's adaptation to the world. The question of the ontological status of this world view is a large one; whether or not it represents a viewpoint regarding how the world should be versus how it is represents a penetrating and difficult question.

These data, however, support this analysis as a picture of the emergence of self in culture. As we consistently

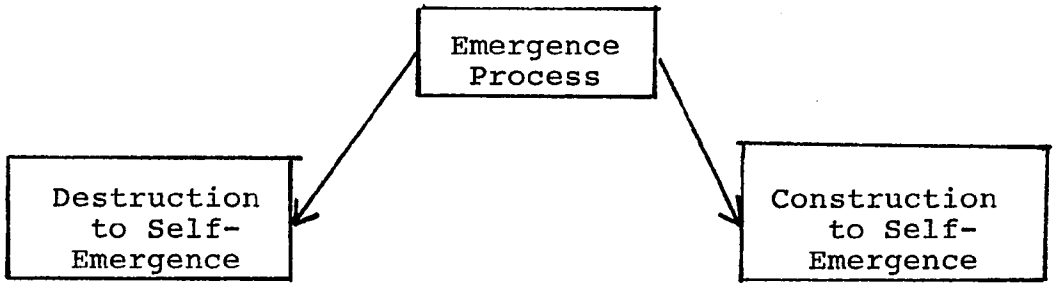
argued, respondents who experienced intrinsic experience of self had passed through a difficult period of adversity, constraint, and obscuring of self at some time in their life, and the absence of a report of these factors was markedly different for respondents who did not report intrinsic experience of self. While we cannot make a time determined, causal argument here, our data argues that at some point adversity functioned to disrupt the safe, comfortable, secure patterns of Kierkegaard immediate -- external man and was a critical component in a process in which self emerged, quite literally, out of context (through in dialogue with context). Returning to our case studies:

	ADVERSITY	INTRINSIC EXPERIENCE
Helen:	Childhood difficulties	School in Oregon
Betsy:	Divorce, stopping work, family situations	Play
Kris:	Moving, loss, separation	Journaling and meditation
Mary:	Anorexia nervosa	Religion
Georgia:	Family constraints	Her business
John:	Parental relationship, death, Navy	Design work

Note that in each case the respondent contexts his or her intrinsic experience of self within the adversity and constraint of his or her life.

If, then, the theoretical framework provided by Becker and Kierkegaard frame an understanding of our data, contexting self emerges itself as a basic process in human

development. A second question is raised: if self emerges from cultural embeddedness in dialogue with culture, as our data clearly portray, then the nature of the relationship of self-emergence within culture can either facilitate or impede self-emergence. Put simply, if we accept the analysis of the reality of an emergence process as endemic to the human condition, the nature of the dialogue of that process with context can either facilitate self-emergence or be destructive to it:



Our question here concerns what our data tell us about self-emergence in this culture, both constructively and destructively.

"Constructive" and "destructive" are both, of course, evaluative, moral terms implying a value structure for self. Our data readily provides such a framework, suggesting multiple dimensions of self-experience as criteria for our analysis. To review, these dimensions are: a) Acceptance, b) Integration to Self, c) Freedom, d) Me as Different, e) Potency, f) Involvement of Self, g) Experience of Being Here, and h) Self as Separate. Our question is, therefore, what does our data tell us about the dialogue between the self-emergence process and culture that is either

constructive or destructive to self-experience as defined in the dimensions discussed above. Unfortunately, our data has a great deal more to say about what can be destructive to this relationship.

Women encounter a plethora of barriers centering on male control which are explicit and implicit to their experience. Betsy truncated her further involvement in play experiences at least partly in reaction to her husband's statement that he "wouldn't have married an actress." Kris had repeatedly followed her husband's career moves, often resulting in painful consequences for herself.

Women further experience a societal contradiction between their values as women, focusing on a definition of self encompassing both relatedness and individual experience, and the considerable functional difficulties of living out this definition of self in a culture which is not structured to facilitate such self. Georgia may have been able to arrange her ceramics business in her basement with her family upstairs, balancing metaphorically her individual and her relatedness component of self, but for other women arranging the world in such a way is not only difficult, it is often precluded by a culture organized on values not their own.

Moreover, as we have seen repeatedly, women's awareness and valuation of their own self-experience and definition is variable. We often hear women cutting short their self-experience out of a perception of family or other

needs. We do not hear a clear or consistent valuation of the primary or legitimacy of their own self-experience, rather, often, we hear of concern with "self-ishness". In short, these data delineate the barriers encountered by women in the process of self-emergence, focusing on both a value structure and a resulting social structure which is often incompatible with such a process. And yet here is a paradox. Seventy-five percent of our respondents were women in this study which began as an examination of intrinsic experience and found intrinsic experience to be an examination of intrinsic experience of self.

Our analysis cannot at all support the value structure that results in the contradictions women face. It does suggest, however, that some women may be using the dissonance of such contradictions as leverage in the self-emergence process, allowing them to "take on" psychological process of self-emergence rather than remain embedded in a cultural definition of self incompatible with her-self.

While our sample of men is quite small, in itself an interesting finding, these data have little that is not destructive to say about the emergence of self in men. By and large, self does not emerge in men in our sample but rather a definition of self embedded in cultural role is reified. While men certainly seem to possess cultural power, control, and status, they have also paid a considerable price for these prerogatives and have generally

not, in this research, proceeded through a psychological process of self-emergence.

The reader may well be troubled by the finding that adversity/constraint difficulty emerges from these data as a constructive component in self-emergence while power and control emerge as potentially destructive. This could be interpreted as support of the lack of power or control in a "real world" where such control dictates survival. Our data could also be seen as an indictment of culture. The issue is clearly one of valuation and so I will conclude with a statement of values emergent from this research. These data argue that as we examine what is constructive to self emergence we find that the experience of "Adversity/Constraint/Obscuring of Me" are important components. Here is a critical question. Why persist through such adversity, through the emergence of self-process? What is constructive in persisting through the process of self-emergence?

Our first answer to this question is a very pragmatic functional one: can an individual so structure his or her intrinsic experience, the manifestation of self-experience in the world, in such a way as to allow it to occur? "Can" here refers to both the individual's ability to create such a structuring as well as to whether important others in the individual's life function as barriers to self-experience. Formidable political, economic, and sociological barriers occur to mitigate against such structuring. Helen and Betsy

were able to structure and integrate intrinsic experience into their lives for a time, yet could not maintain such integration within the structure of their lives. Kris, Mary, Georgia, and John have been able to structure their lives in a way that allows for the manifestation of self in intrinsic experience in their lives. All have either received family support or made the occurrence of such support secondary to the dictate of their own experience.

In describing such structuring we are not addressing the question of why it occurs. In portraying the role of family or network in such structuring, we are noting only the absence of barriers to intrinsic experience of self, not an explanation of the "pull" toward experience of self from its embeddedness in culture.

Thus a "functional" answer does not fully address our question. Why persist in the experience of self manifested through intrinsic experience in a world which is not supportive of such experience? Do the "reward values" of the dimensions of self-experience (Acceptance, Integration to Self, Freedom, Me as Different, Potency, Involvement, "Being Here", and Separation) really "outweigh" the negative concomitants of self-consciousness, adversity, anxiety, and separateness that self-experience entails?

We find it highly doubtful that respondents embarked on the intrinsic experience process with a clear sense of "reward values" to be enjoyed in that experience. The extreme example of this point is made as we consider those

whose intrinsic experience involved illness or death. Nor can we argue that "reward value" was necessarily operative within the experience; our interviews were as filled with pain as they were with joy. It is illuminating to consider the contribution of Maslow at this point.

The work of Maslow (1968) is closely allied with the findings of this research. Yet important differences exist. At first glance, Maslow presents an analysis of "peak experiences" which is strikingly similar to the dimensionality of intrinsic experience we have explored in this research: "Activity . . . enjoyed . . . intrinsically, for its own sake."[7] Maslow's method was to explore such "peak" experiences, generated by asking respondents:

> "I would like you to think of the most wonderful experience or experiences of your life; happiest moments, ecstatic moments, moments of rapture . . ."8

Maslow derived several dimensions from examination of reported experiences which mirror the dimensions uncovered in this research:

1. ". . . experience . . . seen as a whole . . . detached from relations, from possible usefulness, from expediency, and from purpose."

2. ". . . the percept is exclusively attended and fully attended to . . . total attention."

3. ". . . non-comparing cognition or non-evaluating or non-judging cognition."

4. ability "to perceive the world as if it were independent . . . ."

5. ". . . seems to make the perception richer."

6. ". . . perception can be relatively ego-transcending, self-forgetful, egoless."

7. ". . . self-validating, self-justifying moment which carries its own intrinsic value with it."

8. ". . . disassociation in time and space."

9. "The emotional reaction in the peak experience has a special flavor of wonder, of awe, of reverence, of humility . . . ."

10. ". . . polarities and conflicts are fused, transcended or resolved."

11. ". . . acceptance . . . ."

12. ". . . idiographic and non-classificatory perception."

13. ". . . loss of fear, anxiety, inhibition, defense and control . . . . "

14. ". . . parallelism or isomorphism between the inner and the outer."

15. ". . . integration . . . ."[9]

The consistency among these dimensions and the dimensions of intrinsic experience we have examined is striking.

Yet looking beyond the dimensions we have just reviewed to Maslow's overall conceptual structure, a major disparity between our research and Maslow's emerges. Reading Maslow and reflecting on his hierarchy, we are troubled by the preconditions for "peak experiences" in his model. Can anyone who is not a part of the upper middle class meet the preconditions for the Maslow's peak experience? Are not

Maslow's peak experiences an element in a class-based theory favoring those who have succeeded economically? Is "self actualization" class actualization? Conversely, we find in the current research an appreciation for the variety of ways people can find intrinsic experience of self within their lives, rich and poor, urban and rural, young and old.

Moreover there is a paradox in Maslow's discussion of peak experience as part of growth which is not resolved within his writing. In addition, our current data directly addresses this paradox and comes to an alternative conclusion. This paradox focuses on adversity in the life-context and its interaction with intrinsic experience.

Maslow is clear that "peak" experience is universally, necessarily, and unequivocally a good thing:

> "The peak-experience is only good and desirable and is never experienced as evil or undesirable."10

Indeed, Maslow's examples of intrinsic experiences are all wonderfully positive experiences: mothering, love, parenthood, mystic or oceanic feelings, creative, therapeutic, or intellectual insights, orgasmic or athletic experiences.

Clearly adversity plays no constructive role in Maslow's concept of peak experience. Yet here we are confronted by the considerable similarity between the dimensions of Maslow's peak experiences and our intrinsic experiences including the importance of adversity, often very painful and shattering experiences such as loss and

death. Certainly our sample provides examples of "Maslow-like" peak-experiences (sex, meditation, etc.) yet we also report a range of experiences which were by no means "good and desirable". Our finding of adversity was directly counter to Maslow's perspective regarding pain and adversity.

It strikes us that Maslow himself was ambivalent about this point. He was, of course, very aware of experiences of pain and adversity and talks of the importance of these experiences.

1. ". . . the necessity of discipline, deprivation, frustration, pain, and tragedy. To the extent that these experiences reveal and foster and fulfill our inner nature, to that extent they are desirable experiences."

2. "The question of desirable grief and pain or the necessity for it must also be faced. Is growth and self-fulfillment possible without pain and grief and sorrow and turmoil?"

3. "The most important learning experiences reported to me by my subjects were very frequently single life experiences such as tragedies, death, traumata, conversions, and sudden insights which forced change in the life-outlook of the person . . . ."[11]

What is missing in Maslow is the linkage between the reality and importance of adversity and "peak experiences" and the developmental role of adversity in the formation of "peak-experience". Our data argue that adversity plays a very catalytic naturally occurring role in the overall

system which allows for experience in and of itself. It provides a directional answer to a question which is perplexing in Maslow: how did healthy people develop the "detachment" and "resistance to acculturation" that is so central in Maslow's theory (as well as in the current research)? The answer is that adversity creates a wedge between self and role and is an integral and necessary part of the developmental process that allows for intrinsic experience.

I suspect Maslow would ask us at this point whether we were simply arguing on behalf of what he terms a "deficiency-maturation" approach. The respondents in the current research did not seek out adversity. Rather, they used it, transformed it, found triumph in it--if only for a moment.

Maslow saw such experiences as "acute identity experiences". We agree with him. Our disagreement is about how such experiences develop. We could be accused of being more negative then Maslow. We believe we are more optimistic and that he was too. Such a perspective radically alters our interpretation of the role of adversity and loss in human life, indeed it expresses a deep optimism about the creative potential inherent in adversity. We might even speculate here on the deeper unity of loss and growth as concomitant components in the process of self-emergence. Along with Maslow, we are "increasingly impressed with the fact that tragedy can sometimes be therapeutic, and that

therapy often seems to work best when people are driven into it by pain."[12] Much of existentialism is best understood as a dialectic encompassing both tragedy and joy, and our research provides an examination of that dialectic. This is essentially an optimistic perspective, for it argues that adversity and loss are not properly understood as entities in and of themselves but rather are important components in a larger system and purpose: the creative evaluation of self. Loss functions in these data to provide an openness to questions of purpose and meaning, dimensions of experience often avoided or obscured in "normal" times (and generally avoided in the social sciences), it provides an explanation for why people "leave" Maslow's domain of safety and proceed in growth. Clearly, a functionalist interpretation is neither faithful to nor explanatory of our data. It can provide some factors which are barriers and some which are constructive to the emergence of self within intrinsic experience, but it does not offer us an interpretation of what is constructive to self-emergence or why individuals persist in such a process out of an intrinsically generated commitment to self. These data suggest an answer to this question: an answer based in and of it self, for unto itself, grounded intrinsically in itself, for no other purpose but itself.

The work of Maslow and this research converge at this point. Maslow posits a dialectic between Safety and Growth and places considerable emphasis on self-sufficiency,

self-containment, autonomy, aloneness, self-validation, self-justification, self-sufficiency, self-actualization, and the person apart from culture.

In the introduction to this research we introduced the idea of "Partitioned Place" and play, citing a lovely passage from Huizinga:

> "All play moves and has its being within a playground marked off beforehand either materially or ideally, deliberately or as a matter of course. Just as there is no formal difference between play and ritual, so the "consecrated spot" cannot be formally distinguished from the playground. The arena . . . the magic circle . . . are all in form or function play-grounds, i.e., forbidden spots, isolated, hedged round, hallowed, within which special rules obtain. All are temporary worlds . . . dedicated to the performance of an act apart."13

In the "peak experiences" of Maslow, the "autotelic experiences" of Csikszentmihalyi, or the "intrinsic experience" detailed in this research, we find convergence on the experience of self apart, isolated and by itself. This is perhaps the appeal of play: to create a space apart in which the self can live and express itself within a "magic circle" and apart from the world. Intrinsic experience is experience partitioned from the cultural forces oppressive to self. It is a place known in valuation and antithetical to the prevailing winds of culture. It is not necessarily a functional place.

Implications

To examine the related implications of this research for such areas as play, recreation therapy, or environmental psychology is to run the risk of attempting to make our information functional within another area. Since this viewpoint argues for experience which is not functional but understood in and of itself, for itself, we can easily run the risk of violating our own underlying basic premise of interest. It is possible, however, to examine experience or phenomena within each of these areas on its own terms and, indeed, a tradition exists in play, recreation therapy, and environmental psychology which has taken this approach.

Play/Recreation

Certainly the dominant viewpoint in the play literature is not an intrinsic one but rather a functional-instructional approach. (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1970; Behoff, 1972; Erikson, 1950; Piaget, 1951, 1965; Roberts and Sutton-Smith, 1962, 1966.) However, a relatively small body of literature examining play in itself exists including Meyersohn, (1970); Huizinga, (1950); Csikszentmihalyi (1971, 1975). What is most striking in the "intrinsic" play literature is its similarities with key dimensions within the current research:

1) Quality of orientation rather than behavior or activity;

2) Separate, contrasted with the routine, distinctiveness from ordinary life;

3) Defined within itself, beginning, end; and

4) Experience of merging of cognition and action, a coming together.

It is striking to note these key parallel dimensions in an examination of experiences with our current research that seem to be the antithesis of play such as loss or death. This would suggest that play is related to a more encompassing phenomena which we would suggest might be termed the simultaneous experience of independence and integration or "merging apart." Within this phenomena a sense of self is experienced, and this experience may be an aspect of what is so compelling about play.

In this regard it is interesting to remember Huizinga's thesis that "what play really is, leads us deep into the nature and origin of religious concepts . . . the concept of play merges quite naturally with that of holiness."[14] Huizinga is arguing that the experience of play is an extremely powerful and important experience closely allied to "ritual and sacrament", an experience set apart from the ordinary everyday world yet transpiring within it. He speaks in terms quite apart from those of psychology such as "mystic unity", "merging", "essential overness".

Regardless of the reader's viewpoint on religion or mysticism, the correspondence between the "merging apart" of play and the experience of "holiness" or "mystic unity within religion is an interesting one. Are there underlying dimensions which the phenomena of play and of religious experience share? Our research suggests there are

underlying dimensions to which these experiences cohere. Both can be fundamental experiences of self, and the self-experience, not activity or content, is what makes the activities of play and religion important. Play can thus take on an importance more than any functional role ascribed to it in the play literature (e.g., problem solving, cooperation, language, creativity). Play can function as an intrinsic experience in which self is experienced within yet apart from culture or role, if only for a time. We are reminded of a young woman, a respondent in "Farm Town", who experienced both psychological and physical brutality in her life and for whom softball was her (only) intrinsic experience. I hope her life has changed. I hope too that she is still playing softball.

Therapy

In The Drama of the Gifted Child, Alice Miller delineates the life situation faced by the child of narcissistic parents. Such a child has missed the experience of his or her own childhood, and instead has been coerced into attempting to live out the unmet narcissistic needs of his parents. The work of therapy for such a person is to mourn the childhood that he or she never had and to recover feelings and experience of self obscured in such a childhood. We find this description of individual connection to experience precluded by environmental circumstances to be compelling. Adults who as children

never had a primary experience of trust, being a child, being parented, accepted, nurtured, or even loved are certainly the focus of a variety of schools of therapy, from Gestalt to classical Freudian approaches.

Yet in work such as Miller's we are left with the question of how the individual finds experiences with which to identify when they were never a part of his or her developmental repertoire. For the adult who has never experienced the feelings of basic trust as a child, identification with such experience poses formidable difficulties. How does a therapist explain trust or love or what it means to parent or be parented? How does a therapist impart basic experience which is learned as part of the developmental sequence in childhood to a client for whom that developmental sequence never contained such experience? There is a critical "leap of faith" in the therapeutic process where the client acquires the understanding of "experience" he or she has never had, replacing behavior patterns developed to provide an approximation of the client's "incorrect" and maladaptive "idea" of what such experience is. The mechanism of educating the client regarding the <u>experience</u> of the maladaptive consequences of the approximated, maladaptive behavior is clear. What is less clear is the process by which the client expresses the experience he has never had. Clearly the therapist cannot meaningfully explain to the

client what trust or love is. It is the experience of these feelings which is critical.

Intrinsic experience provides a rich reservoir of experience of self which can be utilized in the therapeutic process. Our respondents in this research repeatedly evidenced involved connection to the intrinsic experience as a powerful experience of self and its concomitants. Such experience can thus provide a "bridge" in the therapeutic process allowing a connection to experiences which did not occur as part of the developmental sequence.

We might use a hypothetical example based on Betsy (Chapter 4) to illustrate this point. Let us assume that Betsy is experiencing conflict in her role of wife and mother, desiring a sense of personal autonomy which conflicts with her "duties" to her child and husband. Let us further assume that Betsy is abusing alcohol, and this abuse has led her to start therapy. On entering therapy, Betsy and the therapist explore her life history and find that her childhood afforded a very limited sense of personal control, and her parents were inconsistent and abusive. The therapist helps Betsy to understand that her alcohol abuse is a maladaptive attempt to experience such autonomy. It's effective in the short term but has destructive consequences. The therapist is now confronted with the task of helping Betsy develop a sense of such autonomy with positive consequences. Here the therapist can utilize the experience of therapy itself, allowing the therapeutic

process to provide a model of the experience which is the goal of the therapy (Neill and Kniskern, 1982). If the behavioral experience is one which can be easily modeled in the therapeutic process, such modeling may be effective. The task remains to integrate such behavior into the context of the client's life. Alternatively (or additionally), the therapist can utilize Betsy's intrinsic experience (with the concomitants of self-experience including autonomy) as an involving, understood model of personal autonomy which has occurred serendipitously in her life. Such an experience provides a specific instance of the experience of autonomy which offers a base from which to generalize a move toward new behavior. Additionally, Betsy's experience of autonomy occurred in the context of her life rather than in the more constrained context of therapy. This allows the intrinsic experience to provide metaphors regarding how desired experience can be integrated into current life.

There is little doubt that therapists from a variety of schools utilize naturally occurring life experiences as models from which to generalize in building adaptive behavior patterns. Utilization of the concept of intrinsic experience provides a directly accessible vehicle to an important source of experience.

Environmental Psychology

Environmental psychology emerged within the Zeitgeist of Contextualism which swept the field of psychology in the

1960s. As such, environmental psychology offers a perspective from which a given phenomena is addressed.

Within this research, we have examined various contexts of the phenomena of intrinsic experience. We find that environment-defined characteristics of physical location per se, in and of themselves, provide limited explanatory assistance in exploration of intrinsic experience.

Intrinsic experiences take place at home or away from home, indoors and outdoors, with other people or alone. Place is sometimes seen as an important element in the intrinsic experience and sometimes seen as irrelevant.

Our analysis centers on experience of self as the primary context from which to understand intrinsic experience. Thus we find experience of a sense of self and its concomitants: freedom, me as different, potency, involvement, being here, and separateness recurring regularly throughout these data. As we examine the relationship between self and the physical environment, "suspension flow" emerges as a recurring characteristic of intrinsic experience. Within this "suspension flow" the possibility of sense of self apart from role and culture emerges.

We might borrow a term from Erikson (1968) and define this state of suspension as a moratorium. For Erikson, a moratorium was a psychosocial phenomena: "a period when the young person can dramatize, or at any rate experiment with, patterns of behavior which are both juvenile and adult

. . . ." "A true moratorium, of course, takes the pressure out of time as it provides leeway for timeless values."[15] For Erikson, such a moratorium is a critical and essential aspect of identity development.

A moratorium in our research occurs as the interaction between self and place. This conceptualization is closely allied with the research of Wolfe and her colleagues on privacy. This research found that the understanding and experience of privacy is a function of the interaction between environmental, interpersonal, and self-ego elements. Wolfe (1977) found that children and adolescent concepts of privacy contain multiple elements: "aloneness, information management, being unbothered or disturbed, controlling access to places, autonomy/choice, doing and thinking alone, quiet and self-evaluation/self-protection."[16] A given environmental circumstance, (e.g., suburban vs. urban location) affects which dimensions of privacy make up a given individual's experience of privacy. Put another way, environmental circumstances can facilitate or impede <u>what is possible</u> regarding privacy for a person. An adolescent in a urban setting may be more limited in terms of "availability of the outdoors as an alternative place for privacy"[17] while the more suburban or rural child may find leading a non-normative life style more difficult.

In the current research, both individual definition of self as within role or outside of role definition as well as characteristics of place were critical determinants of what

was possible in intrinsic experience and whether the intrinsic experience was an intrinsic experience of self. Men who defined self within role definition tended to not have intrinsic experience of self. Moreover, we hypothesized that the relating limited participation of men in our research into intrinsic experience was a function of the isomorphism between men's self-definition and normative male role definition. Additionally, we found that the limitations of home in providing the characteristics of separation, even as it functions as a prevailing physical environment, depresses the recurrence of intrinsic experience.

We find considerable variability in place per se of intrinsic experience. We do find, however, that the place of intrinsic experience is a place of suspension or what we might term a "Partitioned Place". A "Partitioned Place" is the host for a moratorium and is defined by the quality of the experience it supports and not necessarily its physical characteristics. In the theoretical paper cited earlier, Huizinga summed up the meaning of a partitioned place, not on its physical properties per se, but rather on the qualities of experience of the experience within that place.

In our research, for both Wolfe and Huizinga, the meaning of place becomes clear not necessarily from an analysis of its physical characteristics, but rather from an understanding of its meaning as an element within the qualities of the experience it surrounds.

As we have discussed, the concept of intrinsic experience is useful for various domains of psychological inquiry. Contemporary psychology, however, is limited in its consideration of the issue of purpose or the purpose of self and the values which are the concomitants of purpose. Thus at this point we "leave" psychology and enter the area of valuation, and thus conclude with a statement of values emergent from this research.

Toward an Ethic of Self

There is a recurrent theme in these data that a focus on self is not necessarily perceived as a good thing. Respondents tell us they don't want to be "selfish" or "self-centered". Yet, conversely, there is overwhelming evidence that self is not only an overwhelmingly positive human experience, it is central to the life focus and direction of respondents who experience it. In the end, we can only conclude that there will probably always be a dialectical tension between self and world. Such a tension seems to be endemic to the naturally occurring conflicting rights and needs arising from the location of the self in the context of multiple selves.

The real issue is not an either/or resolution of the dialectic but a fundamental appreciation of the primacy of self within the dialectic: the ability of an individual who feels free, potent, strong, and involved to live in a way which is nurturing both to him or herself and for others. We

are quite clearly suggesting that self and its concomitant freedom comprise an ideological structure for psychology and possess an intrinsic normative structure good in and of itself for itself.

What is most interesting in these data is that an extremely diverse group of respondents have arrived at the location of self through experience or activities which were generally not understood as primary experiences of themselves nor valued as such. One can only wonder at how the individual experience of these activities might have been affected had they occurred in conscious awareness of the primacy and valuation of self. Would women who truncated self-experiences because of family pressures have done it so readily? Would men who feel the right to control the truncation of those experiences act as readily? Would men and women who define their "selves" through role so easily accept such definition of self or would people demand more out of their culture, out of their "selves"?

The awareness of valuation of self and experience in intrinsic experience is a value which grows from these data. Kierkegaard stated it as a psychological imperative in 1849: "To have a self, to be a self is the greatest concession made to man. It is also eternity's demand upon him."[18] Helen (Chapter 2) stated it equally well:

> "Once I felt accepted, I was important, I was me. I was getting credit for being me. I felt that I discovered myself for the first time. I wasn't afraid to be me . . . I proved myself

> fully with what I was worth. It was a lot."

Our respondents have come to the experience of self via a variety of routes: loss, grief, alcohol, drug abuse or addiction, art, the mountains, or in simply being alone. Some have intentionally answered Kierkegaard's call. Others do so with little conscious knowing.

And then there are the others, who heed it not at all.

APPENDIX A

Screening Instrument

There is a wide variety of emotional experiences and happenings that people, to one degree or another, experience or don't experience while going through life.

I will read you several statements. Each describes such an experience or happening. By using a scale from six to one please tell me to what degree each statement describes an experience or happening that you yourself ever experienced. The more a statement describes the way you felt, the higher the number you would give it; the less it describes, the lower the number. Remember you can use numbers from six to one.

Category A: Merging of Action and Awareness

1. You don't have all sorts of different, conflicting kinds of demands on you. _____
2. It's like the usual rules are suspended. _____
3. It's like you're a part of something else. _____

Category B: Self-consciousness

1. It's one of the few ways I've found to live outside my head. _____
2. There is a feeling of total involvement. _____
3. You yourself are in an ecstatic state to such a point that you feel as though you almost don't exist. _____

Category C: Experience for Itself

1. I did not want to receive a material reward for this. _____

2. I do it because I love it. _____

Category D: Heightened Awareness

1. You don't see yourself as separate from what you're doing. _____

2. Your concentration is very complete. Your mind isn't wandering. You're not thinking of something else. _____

3. The only thing that's in my mind is what I am doing. _____

Category E: Centering of Attention

1. All I can remember is the past thirty seconds and all I can think ahead to is the next five minutes. _____

2. I don't seem to hear anything; the world seems to be cut off from me, and all there is to think about is what I am doing. _____

3. Problems are suspended . . . other people and things seem to have less significance. _____

AFTER EACH CATEGORY:

IF ANY OF THE ABOVE STATEMENTS IS RATED BY EITHER 6, 5 or 4 CONTINUE WITH THE FOLLOWING CATEGORY. IF NOT, THANK THE RESPONDENT, TERMINATE, AND TALLY.

[FROM EACH OF THE FIVE CATEGORIES, SELECT THE ONE STATEMENT WITH THE HIGHEST RATING. (IF MORE THAN ONE STATEMENT IS RATED 6, SELECT THE FIRST ONE RATED 6 AND SAY:]

Can you think of a time when all the statements above described the same experience?

Yes . . . . 1 (RECRUIT)

No . . . . 2 (TERMINATE AND TALLY)

Did the experience occur

1. In your everyday environment? . . . . . ____ 1

2. Away from your everyday environment? . . . ____ 2

The experience might be similar to or different from your day to day experience. Using a scale from 1-6, where 1 indicates highly similar to your everyday experience and 6 indicates highly different from your everyday experience, what would you say this experience is?

1.2.3. = SIMILAR (CHECK QUOTA)

APPENDIX B

Interview Guideline

SECTION A: The Context of the Person

Purpose: General background context. Utilization of many factors not discussed in the literature concerning intrinsic experience BUT important in psychology and environmental psychology.

1. Let's begin by having you tell me a little about yourself.

    a. Occupation

    b. Description of work

    c. How you feel about work

    d. Family/relationship network

    e. Travel experiences in last 3 years

    f. Description of childhood

    g. Education

    h. Hobby/leisure time activities

    i. When are you happiest? Where is that?

2. Environmental history

    a. Childhood environments/earlier adult environments

    b. How long lived in current environment

    c. Places that stand out, that you have memories of

    d. Current places

        1. Describe home
        2. Weekly schedule
        3. Work
        4. Weekends
        5. Vacation
        6. Other?

3. Idealized life/environment

   a. If you could live any kind of life you wanted, what would it be?

      1. Who else would be there?
      2. What would it be like?

   b. If you could live in any place where would it be? Describe it.

      1. Would you live there all the time?
      2. How is that place different from where you live now?

SECTION B: The Context of Intrinsic Experience

(PLACE SCREENER IN FRONT OF RESPONDENT)

Purpose: Direct exploration of intrinsic experience and intrinsic experience and place.

1. You indicated on the questionnaire that you experienced many of the statements listed here--and many at the same time. Tell me about that time.

2. Go to that time in "your head" right now. Can you? Is it difficult? Describe to me as much as you can what it's like to be you then.

   a. Who's there? Does it matter?

   b. Where are you?

   c. What are you doing?

   d. What are you thinking about?

   e. Are you aware of your body?

   f. How long does it last?

   g. What ended it--does it end?

   h. Are there other times when you feel like this?

   i. How often does this happen?

4. When did you first have this experience?

(REPEAT 1-4 FOR OTHER SIMILAR EXPERIENCES, IF ANY.)

5. Are there other experiences like this that you used to have but don't have any longer? [Experience must have screener characteristics.]

6. Are there things that get in the way of having this experience? Can you think of a time when something intruded upon it?

7. What is it like to go from the other experiences of your life to this specific experience? What is that like? Think of a time of going from one to the other.

8. Would you like to spend more time doing this?

9. If activity was skilled or competitive, probe into learning of skill, nature of competition.

10. Do you ever think about this experience during other times? Does it have any influence on what you do or think about in the rest of your life?

SECTION C: The Context of Intrinsic Experience and Place

1. I'd like to focus more on this experience by having you describe for me the place or places in which it goes on.

   a. Describe in detail

   b. Where are we

2. REPEAT FOR OTHER EXPERIENCE MENTIONS

3. Is the place important for that kind of experience or could it happen anywhere? If so, what about it? If not, why?

APPENDIX C

Intrinsic Activities in Overall Sample

Report of Intrinsic Activities

Alcoholic treatment	Faith	Reading
Alcohol	Fishing	Relationship
Animals	Girlfriend	Referee
Birth	Getting away	Riding
Beauty pageant	Gambling	Sex
Bartending	Gardening	Softball
Bomb defusing	Home life	Sailing
Children	Home	Skiing
Ceramics business	Illness	School
Camping	On lake	Singing
Cooking/canning	Music	Selling
Church	Making things	Taking care of parents
Concert or theatre	Pottery	Vacation
Drafting	Painting	Work
Divorce	Prayer	Past work
Day care	Play	Wedding day
Death	Racketball	Start new business
Drugs	Religion	Worship

REPORTED INTRINSIC ACTIVITIES OF AGES 20-30

	ACTIVITY		GENDER	
	Current	Past	Male	Female
Drafting	X		X	
Children	X			X
Sewing	X		X	
Sex	X			X
Day care	X			X
Birth	X			X
Beauty pageant		X		X
Death	X			X
Drugs		X		X
Softball	X			X
Family member in treatment	X			X
Alcohol	X		X	
Ceramics business	X			X
Camping	X			X
Work		X		X
Girlfriend		X	X	
Sailing	X			X
Illness	X			X
Bartending	X			X

REPORTED INTRINSIC ACTIVITIES OF AGES 31-45

	ACTIVITY		GENDER	
	Current	Past	Male	Female
Racketball	X		X	
Music	X		X	
Work	X		X	
Death	X			X
Church	X			X
Wedding day		X		X
Vacation		X	X	
Ceramics	X			X
Children	X			X
Prayer	X			X
Sex	X			X
Sewing	X			X
Religion	X			X
On lake		X		X
Camping	X			X
Alcohol		X		X
Past work		X		X
School		X		X
Gambling		X		X
Play		X		X
Reading	X			X

REPORTED INTRINSIC ACTIVITIES OF AGES 31-45 (Continued)

	ACTIVITY		GENDER	
	Current	Past	Male	Female
Skiing	X			X
Pottery	X			X
Painting	X			X
Faith	X			X
Birth		X		X
Work	X			X
Home life	X			X
Cooking/canning	X			X
Fishing	X			X
Taking care of parent	X			X
Vacations		X		X
Getting away		X		X

REPORTED INTRINSIC ACTIVITIES OF AGES 46-59

	ACTIVITY		GENDER	
	Current	Past	Male	Female
Start new business	X		X	
Death of wife		X	X	
Music	X			X
Reading	X			X
Animals	X			X
Birth of Child		X		X
Concert or theatre		X		X
Theatre	X		X	
New relationship	X		X	
Divorce	X		X	
Alcoholism		X		X
Singing	X			X

REPORTED INTRINSIC ACTIVITIES OF AGES 59 AND OLDER

	ACTIVITY		GENDER	
	Current	Past	Male	Female
Bomb defusing		X	X	
Illness/death		X		X
Promotion in past		X	X	
Fishing	X		X	
Music	X			X
Reading	X			X
Religion	X			X
Death	X			X
Gardening	X			X
Death		X		X
Making bikes for handicapped	X		X	
Selling		X		X
Riding in mountains	X		X	
Making love		X	X	
Alcohol		X	X	
At home	X			X
Church	X			X
Sewing/baking	X			X
Worship	X			X
Past work		X		X
Baking	X			X
Housework	X			X
Referee		X	X	

CATEGORIES OF INTRINSIC EXPERIENCE IN OVERALL SAMPLE BY AGE AND GENDER

CATEGORY	20-30	31-45	46-59	59+	FEMALE	MALE
Past work-related		X		X	X	X
Illness/death	X	X	X	X	X	X
Current work-related	X	X	X		X	X
Sex	X	X	X	X		X
Traditional hobby/ leisure/fishing/ gardening/out of home		X		X	X	X
Religion-related		X		X	X	X
Doing for others		X		X	X	X
Alcohol-related	X	X	X	X	X	X
Being at home	X	X		X	X	
Sport	X	X		X	X	
Single significant past event	X	X			X	X
Birth of children	X	X	X		X	
Camping	X	X			X	X
Lived another place		X			X	
Games/gaming	X				X	
Arts/music/theatre		X	X	X	X	X
Drugs	X				X	
Family problems	X				X	
Relationship	X		X			X
Identification with animals			X	X	X	
Counseling			X		X	

CATEGORIES OF INTRINSIC EXPERIENCE
IN OVERALL SAMPLE BY PLACE

CATEGORY	"Big Town"	"Farm Town"	"Woods Town"	F	M
Past work-related	X	X			X
Illness/death	X	X	X	X	X
Sex	X	X	X		X
Leisure outside of home	X	X			X
Leisure in home	X	X	X	X	
Religion		X	X	X	
Doing for others	X	X	X	X	X
Vacation-related	X	X			X
Alcohol-related	X	X			X
Sport	X	X		X	X
Single significant past event	X		X	X	
Birth of children	X		X	X	
Children	X			X	
Camping	X	X		X	X
Lived another place		X		X	
Games/gambling	X			X	

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