

CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND SUGGESTIONS

6.1 Introduction

The empirical research component took place during the June-July school holiday, 2004, in a room at the Centre for Adult and Child Guidance of the University of Pretoria – the institution that identified and referred Lukas to me.

In April 2004, I established telephonic contact with Lukas and in May 2004, I made an appointment to show the conceptual video to his parents, in order to clear up any issues they might need to have addressed. After the video was shown, the parents expressed their approval and gave Lukas the option to decide for himself. He indicated that he was still interested.

His parents were glad to hear of his commitment to participate, because they felt that his introvert nature needed to be challenged and they secretly hoped that he would reveal more of his “private world”, so that they could also understand him better. They offered to have him at the venue on time each morning.

6.2 Description of Participant

He is a 16-year-old Grade 11 Afrikaans learner and has a keen interest in art and creativity. He could not take Art as a subject, due to reasons beyond his control but seems determined to make it part of his future career, in some capacity. He expressed a keen interest when he heard the process involved a measure of art-making. He co-operated without any problems and arrived at every appointment without fail.

6.3 Setting and Duration

It was an “island”-style counselling, which lasted three and a half days (26 hours). The room was not very large but it was neutral territory that could serve the purposes of the research process and accommodate the media being used.

Initially, the intended time span for the empirical research would have been two weeks with morning sessions only but we decided to attempt to complete the process in four full days. This was done to save time, so that Lukas could have more of his holiday time as to cut down on transportation. During these three and a half days, Lukas and I had time to get to know each other better between the steps, seeing that we had time to walk to the shops for photocopying and we had lunch together almost every day.

In order to secure the camera footage, it was decided to videotape every video section (or video exercise/ expressive construct) twice. Each video recording exercise was, therefore, repeated on a second videotape. The two tapes were labelled with our respective names. Lukas took his videotape home every day and I took the other, in order to ensure that video material did not get lost and render the research process void of evidence.

6.4 Manual

I decided to design a manual in which the steps were explained and, in some cases, illustrated. The questions for discussion were stipulated and space was provided for the participant to record his thoughts in writing. The rationale was that it could possibly reduce the stress level of the participant and I could use my copy as a vehicle to record the progress of the process. (The manual is included in full in **Appendix D.**)

6.5 Table of Arts Therapies in the Process

Table 5 illustrates the “interconnectedness” and transitions between the various therapeutic activities and gives a visual overview of how the different arts therapies to which the participant was exposed, were employed.

STEP	TOPIC (HEADING)	ACTIVITIES
1	Introduction	Writing
		Video recording (drama elements)
2	Monoprints	Art-making
3	Brainstorming – Life Issues	Writing
4	Labelling – Life Issues	Writing
5	Insight	Writing
		Video recording (drama elements)
6	Collage – Future	Collage
		Writing
		Video recording (drama elements)
7	Photo Session	Photography
		Humour
		Video recording (drama elements)
8	Collage – Identity	Collage
		Video recording (drama elements)
9	Collage Comparisons	Writing
10	Photos	Photos and photography
11	Photo Ball	Art-making
		Writing
		Video recording (drama elements)
12	Clock face Design	Art-making
		Writing
		Video recording (drama elements)
13	My Contribution to the World	Writing
		Video recording (drama elements)
14	CD Cover Design	Art-making
		Writing
		Video recording (drama elements)
15	Conclusion	Writing
		Video recording
16	FINAL SCREENING	

Table 5: Interconnectedness between the different therapeutic activities

6.6 Step-by-step Report-back and Analysis

(a) Introductory orientation

I handed Lukas his manual with his name written on it and we paged through it to ensure he had an overall view of what the process entailed. I explained to him why I had organised the room the way I did and asked him whether he had any suggestions. The

light was adjusted to suit him and his workstation desk was moved slightly to make it more comfortable for him.

(b) The empirical research process and reporting

Please note that the writing in italics refers to the step descriptions in **Chapter 5**, which are in the manual Lukas uses. The rationale for including it here *again* was to locate the process and provide the background for Lukas's responses and counsellor remarks.

STEP 1: Introduction

Write a paragraph in which you provide an overview of your (present) circumstances and your present state of mind. Explain what you would like to achieve with this process or counselling programme. (What is it that you would like to learn about yourself?)

After you have completed the paragraph to your satisfaction, you will explain it first to the counsellor, so that blurred meanings can be corrected, before you explain it to the video camera.

Counsellor observations and remarks:

Lukas was slightly uneasy but he did not hesitate and started immediately, spending about 10 minutes to construct the paragraph. The paragraph was very neutral and only a few language errors were corrected. The discussion that took place around the completed paragraph was very brief and it was clear that Lukas was satisfied with his self-introduction. He refused to add anything extra. It was clear from the beginning that he was not someone who easily provided "extra" information about himself and he held this stance throughout the process.

To the camera (edited introductory paragraph):

" I am in Grade 11 and relatively happy with my life but find that I regularly sway between two worlds, namely the real world and my own thoughts. I find

that I struggle to articulate my thoughts. I find too, that if I am not busy with the fight for survival, I wander about in my own thoughts, trying to discover who I really am.

Because I do not really know myself, I am unsure of the career I would like to follow one day. I aim to relieve the uncertainty regarding my future with this programme. When I am in nature, away from the everyday rush, my two worlds become one, and then only do I find peace and rest in my life."

For discussion:

- *How did you experience the explanation you made to the camera?*
- *Are there any interesting remarks or impressions that you would like to record in writing?*

Lukas's responses to the questions:

He experienced the explanation as uncomfortable and did not want to record anything in writing.

Counsellor observations and remarks:

Lukas handled the video introduction well and did not seem to have trouble looking into the camera and reading the paragraph as it was rehearsed. He appeared in control, even though he remarked that he had found it uncomfortable.

He seemed to want to get it over with as soon as possible but, at the same time, a sense of achievement was evident in his behaviour. It was as if he wanted to say he actually enjoyed it but he was not prepared to admit it. This "element" of being brave and secretive was revealed here for the first time. He was not sure whether it was good or

bad. During the process he made brave advances but, at strategic points where greater self-disclosure was called for, he held back.

The layout of the room was a temporary environment and was very “cramped”. The way the furniture was arranged to accommodate the light was rather intimidating. He was literally sitting in a corner with a large desk in front of him and there was no other alternative for the layout in the room.

STEP 2: Monoprints

You will make two prints on the glass panel (as explained by the counsellor), after which you will decorate the two prints in two different ways with pencils and ink.

For discussion:

- *How did you experience the making of the prints?*
- *Have you ever made a print before? Can you see other uses for this art technique?*
- *Which colours are your favourites and which did you use the most?*
- *How do you like the colour photocopy?*

Lukas’s responses to the questions:

He found making the prints enjoyable, had never made a print before and expressed an affinity for cold colours (and black). He remarked that the photocopies seemed very professional.

Counsellor observations and remarks:

It was very clear that Lukas had an affinity and gifting for art. He learned very quickly and reacted favourably to my instructions. After he was shown how the prints are made, he started immediately, with a willing attitude, and did his drawing in the wet paint without hesitation to complete the first print (**visual construct 1**). He seemed very much

in control and worked very carefully and methodically. He knew exactly what he wanted and completed the first print with a clear sense of perfection and satisfaction.

Visual Construct 1 reveals a controlled, *mandala*-like design, which is accentuated by the black pencil outline and the five strategic spots.

Visual Construct 2 reveals his ability to improvise. He wanted to create texture and made use of the odds and ends available, creating a satisfactory print. The patterns on the second print are still very organised and controlled. Once again, his controlled nature can be seen in the repetition of the patterns he added.

It was clear from the aesthetically crafted prints that he enjoyed art-making very much and that the rich quality of his artworks was lacking in his verbal responses. When he was engaged in the art-making process, he seemed *alive* and *resourceful* but when he had to communicate within the framework of the manual, I felt that his verbal responses lacked conviction and depth.

STEP 3: Brainstorming Exercise

Write down all the different issues and aspects [dreams, fears, goals, work, assignments, problems...] of your life on separate stickers (as explained by the counsellor). Headings that may assist you to remember the different aspects of your life will be supplied, if it appears that you have exhausted your thoughts (too early). When you and the counsellor are satisfied, you will copy the same list of issues onto a second set of stickers, using a different colour pen.

For discussion:

- *How do you feel now that you have tapped your mind? Do you feel in any way different about all the various aspects of your life?*
- *Are there any important tasks or elements that are catching your attention? Things you have forgotten about?*

Lukas's response to the questions:

He said he felt a bit calmer, because he could send everything that was drifting inside his head "somewhere" (**visual construct 3**). He felt that the exercise gave an overview of what he had and where he wanted to go. Here are the words or aspects he listed:

Addiction is a weakness
Animal expenses
Animals
Art
Breakaway from school
Clear my head
Computers
Creativity
Everything has a deeper meaning
Fly-fishing
Fly-tying
Freedom
I am different
Individualism
Introvert
LAN (Computer games)
Life is a gift
Life is unfair
Life is unpredictable
Life needs to be lived
Live on an island
Love others as you love yourself
More plants
Move from city
Music moves the soul
Nature
Nature brings tranquillity
News media is large source of corruption
Pacifism
Peace and rest in my life
People are superficial and materialistic
Photography
Relax my mind
Respect
School stress
Subject choices
Thought life
Uncertain about the future

You are what you think you are

Counsellor observations and remarks:

He came prepared, as requested. He had started at home already but it seemed as if he was struggling at first to pinpoint the various issues. It was clear that he was a young man of resolution, because after he decided that the list was complete, he was adamant not to add anything more.

Initially, I was a bit disappointed to see that, according to me, his aspects were too few, but then realised that a teenager might not have as many issues as an adult.

When I look at his aspects, a **sense of deep thought** and a **search for meaning** seem to prevail over the list of words. Another longing that comes to the fore is the thought of “escape” and being released from the present “unfair” situation. His introvert nature seems to be evident because there is hardly any reference to people, only to animals.

Some of the issues may really be seen as red lights, because there seems to be a hidden message of “despair”, if one wants to interpret it as such, especially with regards to aspects such as: *addiction is a weakness, breakaway from school and life is unfair*. I did not stop during the process to probe into these aspects, because this process is intended to allow the client to confront himself by means of the visual and expressive constructs.

STEP 4: Organisation and Layout of Issues and Aspects

You are going to take one set of stickers and stick them onto the colourful monoprint background. The other set of stickers will be separated and grouped and headings of your choice will be supplied. These will be stuck onto the two-tone monoprint background. The second step should enable you to view the separate sections (and the relevant issues) of your life at one glance.

For discussion:

- *How did you experience the execution of this step?*

- *Do you feel any different about the various sections, aspects and issues of your life?*
- *Do you think you have gained a greater measure of insight into your personal world by means of the visual layout?*

Lukas's responses to the questions:

He did not comment on the execution of the step but found it interesting to see that all his separate issues actually fitted in somewhere. He did not feel at this point that he had gained significant personal insight. He organised the issues as follows:

Life

Addiction is a weakness
Everything has a deeper meaning
Life is a gift
Life is unfair
Life is unpredictable
Life needs to be lived
Love others as you love yourself
Nature brings tranquillity
News media is a source of corruption
People are superficial and materialistic

School and Career

Art
Computers
School stress
Subject choices
Uncertain about future

The near future

Animal expenses
Break away from school
LAN
Peace and rest in my life

What I want from life

Animals
Live on an island
More plants
Move from city
Nature

Who I am
Clear my head
Creativity
Fly-fishing
Fly-tying
Freedom
I am different
Individualism
Introvert
Music moves the soul
Pacifism
Photography
Relax my mind
Respect
Thought life

Counsellor observations and remarks:

He did not struggle to find the connections between the issues and easily grouped them, supplied the headings and organised them carefully before he stuck the stickers (**visual construct 4**). The layout reveals an affinity for order and it reveals that most of his aspects deal with “Who I am” and “Life”. These two categories seem to reveal that he has strong moral values and is involved in a deep thought process regarding the fact that he is “different” in an “unfair” life. Even though some aspects are more positive, he seems to have ambivalent feelings towards people and life. His predominant feeling towards his world could be one of “suspicion”. He feels that he is, or could be, searching for a “deeper meaning” that should be, attached to “everything”. The layout and headings reveal that, at this stage of his life, he is very contemplative.

STEP 5: Insight

For discussion:

- *Do you feel that your thoughts are now better organised? What is the feeling that you are experiencing at this moment regarding the many aspects of your life?*
- *Where do the greatest challenges, problems, joys and ... lie according to the previous exercise?*

Lukas’s responses to the questions:

He did not have anything to say and his response to the questions is captured in the video-recorded sentence below.

Counsellor observations and remarks:

I was disappointed in his response to the questions, because the aspects of his layout had so much material that I felt he could have commented on. He remained untouched, however, and seemed distant from the layout he had completed. I wanted to challenge him at this point regarding some aspects of the layout but decided to respect his inner borders.

Record a few impressions regarding the “organised” aspects on paper of which you want to remind yourself. In other words, you need to write a short message to yourself regarding the “things” you regard as important, so that you may live a more effective life according to your judgment. Once you and the counsellor have agreed upon the message, you will explain it to the camera.

To the camera:

“I realise now that I need to pay more attention to my school life and my career possibilities, in order to reach the things I hope to have in my future more easily.”

Counsellor observations and remarks:

He wrote the paragraph very quickly and was not really interested in adding anything else. This paragraph seems to be rather self-protective, because he very “conveniently” disregarded the other “deeper” issues and only focused on the more neutral elements, such as school and career aspects.

He read each heading and the list of aspects underneath them to me and I asked the meaning of issues which I did not understand but I did not provide any “advice”. I

wonder, therefore, what it was that led him to making the abovementioned camera statement. Perhaps it was really the foremost issue on his mind, or he knew that school life and studying were the issues foremost on his parents' minds and, therefore, all adults' minds and just wanted to get me off his back, so that I wouldn't delve into deeper issues.

STEP 6: Future Collage

Page through the magazines that will be provided and tear out the pictures that speak to you regarding your future – or seem like elements you would like to see in your future. You must imagine that you can see these images come to life over the next months, years and decades.

Once you have collected enough images and pictures, cut them to the desired size, evaluate them, organise them on an A3 page and then stick them on. Afterwards, a colour photocopy will be made and then you will label (or clarify) them and explain them to the counsellor.

For discussion:

- *Explain the great challenges your future holds.*
- *How does it feel to see your possible future like this in front of you?*
- *Which images do you enjoy looking at the most and which ones provide you with great inner joy?*
- *Which goals would you like to reach first ... and later?*
- *Which goals are almost “impossible”?*
- *If you had to choose one symbol or image with which you could associate your idea of your future, what would it be?*

Lukas's responses to the questions:

He felt that his greatest challenge was the career decision he had to make and that it was quite frightening to see his future like that.

He seemed to have second thoughts about the impression it created and remarked that nobody could see into the future. He added that his future seemed “very blue”, referring to the predominant colour of his collage (**visual constructs 5 & 6**) but there could also be an underlying negative “blue” connotation to the statement, seeing that he appeared to be under some pressure to make the “right” career decision.

He admitted that it conveyed his love for nature and creativity, as illustrated by the images of the waterfall and the fish. These two images also symbolise a freedom to discover.

He prioritised his goals as follows: expanding the mind by studying, touring to China and moving to the country. Touring to China and moving to the country may exchange positions. He regarded the tour to China as the most impossible goal and studying as the most difficult goal.

He chose the blue rock with the painted blue leaves as the symbol into which he could fit his whole future. The reason for this is that his future lies like a huge mountain before him but, fortunately, it has a touch of art. The blue represents water, and, once he has completed his studies, he will have a firm *mountain*, which is the firm *foundation* from which he can then launch his career or endeavours. The labels of the images that were labelled are listed below with the relevant images.

Dive or snorkel in tropical waters (Diver and fish)
Expand my mind (Eyes and camera)
Fishing in the mountains (Mountain silhouette)
Live in old-time house (Double-storey house)
Move from the city to the country (Village)
Move to the country (Farm scene)
Role that art will play in my life (Painted rock with camera)
Study (Books)
Take art course (Artist painting)
Tour to China (Aeroplane)
Visit Lesotho (Waterfall)

Explain the five most important images – as you experience it now – to the camera. You may first want to rehearse your explanation on paper.

To the camera:

- "1. I need to study and increase my knowledge.
2. Thereafter, I want to discover the world, specifically Lesotho, Mozambique and the Middle East.
3. Later in my life I want to retire in a small town in the country."

Counsellor observations and remarks:

Lukas selected the images carefully, cut them to size, planned the layout and labelled the images. The imagery seemed to spark a response in Lukas that was not there in the previous step, because he seemed more open. He also appreciated the photocopy that was made. I think that Lukas started relaxing at this stage and he was clearly more at ease.

STEP 7: Photography Session

A photographer, or the counsellor, will take two portraits of you. One portrait will be "serious" and the other will display your humorous side. You can decide about the themes of the second photograph by the items you select to bring to the studio.

Counsellor observations and remarks:

It turned out that Lukas had his own "professional" camera and was a keen photographer himself. I requested him to bring the camera for me to take the pictures. He liked the idea and brought his camera bag, lenses and filters. The session was enjoyable but I could see that he did not like posing that much. I allowed him to take pictures of me too. It was an excellent time for building rapport and coming into each other's personal spaces.

He seemed to enjoy the humorous picture and posed without much encouragement. He displayed a duality. I felt he was pretending not to like the photos being taken but he seemed to invite it too. Various filters were used to create different effects.

After the photos were taken, he tried to remove the film to have it developed and he opened the camera too early and felt very bad. I reassured him that it was all right, because we could always take it again.

An hour later, we had the professional-looking portraits and he decided on the two best ones (one serious and one humorous). We put them into frames he chose and it was clear that he was delighted with the photographs. When they were placed on the desk facing him, however, he turned them towards me, because he said they were “talking” to him. I found this step to be a relaxed situation that lent itself to personal disclosure in a quiet way.

For discussion:

- *How did you experience the photography session?*
- *How would you prefer your family to see you?*
- *How would you like to be seen by your friends and peers?*
- *Who do you most frequently disclose your humorous side to?*
- *Look at the humorous photograph and pretend it's not you ... what do you see?*
- *What did you want to convey about yourself with the humorous portrait?*
- *What makes you laugh?*

Lukas's responses to the questions:

He experienced the photography session just as “OK”, because he does not like being the object of a photograph and he would like his family to see him photographed where he has achieved something, for example, at a memorable site or with a big fish in hand. The impression he prefers his friends and peers to have of him is that of the faithful, clever guy whom they can trust (**visual construct 7**).

He reveals his humorous side most frequently to his mom, because she is the one who “bothers” (or talks to) him the most, as she asks what seems to be wrong all the time and she is the one who appears to be most interested. His humorous photograph (**visual construct 8**) made him think of someone sporty, who likes fishing, hunting and photography. With his humorous photograph he shows his favourite colours, namely, black and blue. He mostly enjoys jokes that do not belittle people, comics and satire.

You may read a joke into the camera or tell briefly what it is that you find funny or humorous, in general.

To the camera:

“Generally I find the most simple jokes the funniest. Wordplay and stories with a surprising ending are funny too but the best jokes are those we find in magazines, like this one in Reader's Digest of October 1999: 'A table near a waiter please.' ”

STEP 8: Identity Collage

This step is a repetition of the methods used in STEP 6 but this time you will collect images or pictures that will represent you as a person. Your collage must answer the question: “Who am I as a person?”

For discussion:

- *What captures your attention immediately when you look at your “ID collage”?*
- *Did you learn anything about yourself you were not aware of?*
- *Name your ten best qualities that appear from the collage.*

If you would like to address or encourage yourself at this stage, what would you say? Prepare a paragraph in which you encourage yourself, or you may simply explain a few of the images you like most to the camera.

Lukas's responses to the questions:

His attention was drawn to the great number of nature and art pictures. He saw that there were non-rigid images on the right and rigid images on the left. He learned that he was more organised, neater and more of a perfectionist than he thought. He listed three strengths, namely neatness, creativity and a good sense of humour. The images that were labelled are listed below with the relevant images.

Art (Painting and glass-engraving pictures)
Beauty of nature (Sea scene)
Create a garden (Garden)
Deeper meaning to life (Patterns of stars)
Fly-fishing (Fisherman)
How wonderful is creation (Sunset)
Humour (Cartoons – cockroach and Indian)
Love for pets (Parrot)
Tranquillity (Bright sun through clouds)

To the camera:

"When I look at my identity collage, then I note the following:

- I am neat, creative and humorous
- I realise that, if possible, I need to choose a career in which I can combine nature and creativity."

Counsellor observations and remarks:

He completed this exercise with the same measure of attention to detail he revealed in his Future Collage (**Step 6**). Once again, **visual constructs 9 and 10** illustrate a lack of social involvement and an overemphasis on his interest in nature. A sense of peace prevails and a feeling of space surrounds the collage. It is a very neutral identity "collage" that gives evidence of his preference for an ordered inner identity that does not

seem to have any surprises. The addition of the image labelled “deeper meaning to life” could be proof of the fact that there seems to be something that he wants to discover or understand, or that there is something through which he filters his reality. A sense of “suspicion” regarding the appearance of his reality may be underlying the very “tranquil” portrayal of his reality.

STEP 9: Comparisons between the Future and Identity Collages

The two collages will be placed next to each other and comparisons and observations made. You will explain what you see in each collage and how these observations relate to each other.

For discussion:

- *How does your identity compare with what you would like to achieve in the future?*
- *Do you detect any contradictions?*
- *Do you think you will have to make any adjustments to reach your goals?*

Lukas’s responses to the questions:

He saw nature and art recurring in both and felt that the major “contradiction” in his collages was the fact that studying was not part of his personality. The effort to study harder would be the major adjustment he had to make.

Counsellor observations and remarks:

He took a lot of time and effort with the layout of the collages but, as indicated earlier, he did not really say all that much when it came to the discussion. He quickly assessed his constructs and arrived at brief answers. He didn’t seem prepared to look for deeper or more things to say, even though he himself kept referring to the deeper meaning that should be attached to everything.

STEP 10: Photos

You will bring certain photographs to the counselling workshop, including the photographs that you took especially for this step. The counsellor will, in good time, inform you about what needs to be done.

For discussion:

- *How important is it to you to take photographs or record important events in your life?*
- *How did you experience the photographic journey you undertook to complete this assignment?*

Lukas's responses to the questions:

He remarked that he did not document important stages in his life and that he relied on his good memory when he wanted to call things to mind. The only problem was that he did not seem to remember his schoolwork so well.

Counsellor observations and remarks: Lukas only brought six photographs for this step. I informed him of this part of the process (and its link with **step 11**) on the very first day and he assured me that he had enough photographs to work with and that he did not need to take any additional photographs. The previous night, when he was going through his albums, he could only find six “workable” photographs.

STEP 11: Photo Ball

You select the 20 most important photographs you will use to represent your world. Thereafter, colour photocopies will be made that can be cut and pasted to form the ball. The counsellor will assist you in this regard.

For discussion:

- *What were you thinking of when you selected the pictures?*

- *What can you say about your everyday life when you look at the photographs?*
- *Is there something that upsets you about your world?*
- *Is there anything lacking in your world?*
- *Do you detect an overemphasis or underemphasis anywhere of elements you regard as important?*
- *Choose those photographs that make you happy.*
- *How did you enjoy the construction of the ball?*

Lukas's responses to the questions:

He chose photographs that told him about himself (**visual construct 11**). His everyday life seems to be filled with routine, nature and his family, which plays a great role. He was sure that nothing was upsetting, either over or underemphasised, or missing from his world and commented that it was his little world and that was it.

The images in his world that were dear to him were those about fly-fishing, nature, fish, his dog and sweet things to eat. He found the construction of the ball both complex and simple. The 20 images or photographs he chose were the following:

School

A boy studying
Building
Test tubes

Family and friends

My brother and I
My friends and I
My mother in front of a tent

Things I enjoy

Bicycle
Cake
Camera
Computer
Dog
Loudspeakers
Television

Nature

A diver

As a baby smelling flowers

Fish

Flowers

Fly-fishing equipment

Mountain

Previous house

Explain the core elements of your world briefly to the camera, or comment on the joys in your life.

To the camera:

"Most of my photos represent the roles nature, friends and family play in my life."

Counsellor observations and remarks:

Seeing that Lukas did not have enough photographs for the exercise, I decided to use the six photographs he brought and to add magazine images that represented the elements he still needed to build his world. The magazine images worked quite well but they lacked the personal involvement or personal connotations that a photo carries.

It became clear as Lukas was constructing the ball that he is, indeed, gifted when it comes to craft-type activities. He chose the paper for the ball, which had a marble effect with a blue tone, revealing once again a preference for calm elements. He tackled the task very methodically and was clearly concerned about the appearance of the ball. He openly expressed his satisfaction at the completion of his "world".

At this point, he did not seem to be fully interacting with the display of his world and seemed to be merely using pat answers that were easy, which may have been the result of emotional and physical fatigue.

STEP 12: Clock Face Design

All the previous steps will briefly be revised to make this step meaningful. In view of all the important organised aspects or issues of your life, your expectations of the future and your identity, how do you think you need to spend your time, in order to achieve your aspirations?

You are now going to design an “inspirational” clock face. The counsellor will assist you by showing an example. When you have completed the design, a colour photocopy will be made that will be laminated and then a clock mechanism will be inserted, so that you can make good use of it!

For discussion:

- *What is your favourite pastime?*
- *How do you generally spend your time?*
- *How do you divide your hours?*
- *Do you participate in activities that exercise your body?*
- *Did you gather any new insights? Explain.*
- *How personal and meaningful are the clock images to yourself?*

Lukas’s responses to the questions:

He enjoys playing computer games and spends most of his time at home in front of the computer, or watching television or sleeping. He divides his hours mostly into the following sections: eating, doing homework, watching television, talking, doing homework, more television and then studying. He added that he never really studied for tests. Taking part in physical activities did not seem to be very important. Riding his bicycle or walking to school and back, fly-fishing and playing with the dog seemed to be sufficient activity for him. Some evenings he does push-ups and sit-ups.

He remarked that he had not gained any new revelation or insight, that he was concerned about his future and that he should have taken Art as a subject. He felt very proud looking

at the clock face, however, because it seemed as if there was **something deeper, a hidden meaning to life**. He added that he could not paint very well but that he could draw very nicely.

The design displays 60% personal and 40% general images (**visual construct 12**). Yellow represents the present and it reminds him to concentrate on his studies and on which career he would like to follow. Blue represents the desire to travel to distant countries. Green speaks of nature and the role it will play in his future. Red and black refer to the role Art will play in his future.

Counsellor observations and remarks:

Lukas seemed very committed to the practical demands of this step and he did not want to join me for lunch because he wanted to complete the construct. It seemed that he was not prepared to settle for anything less than perfect. I offered to buy his lunch for him after I had made some photocopies and then we could share a short lunch in the counselling room.

He took time to carefully mix the paint until it was exactly what he wanted. When it appeared that the white pencils I had available were not to his liking, I offered to buy white ink that could be used with an old-fashioned dipping pen and he expressed his need for it.

Once again, Lukas referred to **something deeper, a hidden meaning to life** but he did not attempt to clarify the statement. When one looks at the clock design, it once again appears to be very neat and organised but with a freedom, revealed in the blue and black brush strokes, surrounding the very controlled centre that holds the images. According to Lukas, the “scary” yellow eyes represent the animal kingdom but, to me, it could also be indicative of the **something deeper, a hidden meaning to life**.

He was very excited to see the finished clock and to see that it actually functioned as a real clock. He told me that he knew exactly where he was going to mount the clock on the living-room wall.

Explain the meaning of your clockface images to the camera.

To the camera:

"Yellow represents the present. I need to concentrate on my studies and decide which career I want to pursue.

Blue represents one of my great goals, namely to travel to other countries.

Green represents the role that nature will play in my life.

Red and black represent the role that art will play in my life."

STEP 13: My Contribution to the World

Seeing that you have now had the opportunity to look into the core of your personality and interests, you will now look away from yourself and regard the world or society that is "out there".

For discussion:

- *Name the talents you have with which you could enrich the lives of others.*
- *How could you utilise your talents to serve mankind?*

Lukas's responses to the questions:

He remarked that he was creative, neat, organised, honest and trustworthy. He could serve society by creating neat environments for people.

Explain to the camera what contribution you can make to yourself and society.

To the camera:

"I want to enrich the worlds of others and myself by creating a neat and colourful plant-green environment that will instil peace in people."

Counsellor observations and remarks:

At this point, I felt he was giving pat answers and that he was not responding from deep within. This could have been because he was emotionally drained after all the effort he had put into the painting of the clock face. It became clear that he was becoming eager to finish the process. (Perhaps a group environment with music and other aspects to provide a bit of light relief could combat the emotional "exhaustion".)

STEP 14: CD Cover Design

The colour photocopies that were made throughout this process will now be used to decorate the CD case that will contain the edited process – eventually. You are free to use other images or pictures, if you wish. The purpose of this exercise is to summarise the impressions you gathered during the process and to illuminate your personal goals. The counsellor will explain the details and show an example.

For discussion:

- *How did you experience this "summarising" exercise?*
- *How do you feel about the personal motivational thoughts you addressed to yourself? (Do you think they indicate your personal course accurately?)*
- *Can you recognise any humorous aspects of yourself in the CD case cover?*

Lukas's responses to the questions:

He found this exercise easy and he addressed the following motivational thoughts to himself:

- Always be positive
- Believe everything is possible
- You are what you think you are.

The pattern in front creates a feeling of smoothness and peace (**visual construct 13**). It creates the idea that all of life is connected and that there is a deeper meaning to life than the mere everyday routine of modern living.

Counsellor observations and remarks:

I was a bit disappointed with the results of his motivational messages to himself but, when I thought about it, I realised that I should not be surprised, because writing and language-related issues were not his favourites. (He likes writing poetry, his mother told me later.)

Explain the most interesting aspect of your CD case cover to the camera.

To the camera:

"This is my CD cover. The most important aspect is the pattern in front. It depicts a peaceful, flowing feeling that also creates the idea that there is a deeper meaning to life, other than the everyday routine of modern living, and that everything is tied together."

STEP 15: Conclusion

Prepare a concluding camera appearance in which you explain what you have learned about yourself throughout the process. (Compare the notes of the introduction and conclusion and decide if you have benefited from the process.)

To the camera:

"During this process, I came to know myself better and I gained more knowledge regarding the career I wish to follow."

Counsellor observations and remarks:

It was apparent that his fear for the camera has decreased and that he had become more comfortable with its presence and that he was visibly eager to conclude the process. After the concluding performance was done, a display of the constructs was made – with the help of Lukas and this was videotaped a concluding scene.

I requested Lukas to read a few inspirational thoughts (voice only) to use as an audio “backdrop” over the construct display. He chose the following:

To the camera:

“Gossip needn't be false to be evil.
There is a lot of truth that shouldn't be passed around.
The loss of capacity to be amazed is called routine.”

After the inspirational thoughts were recorded, Lukas completed the post-EPI test. It took him 15 minutes to complete the test.

STEP 16: Exhibition and On-screen Viewing

The screening took place five days after the counselling process had been completed. (The video was edited during the five-day interval.) Before the screening took place, a display was made of the constructs and my promoter and Lukas engaged in dialogue around these constructs. The client appeared relaxed and answered the questions that were put to him with the greatest of ease.

Lukas, my promoter and I watched the edited video together and Lukas was clearly at ease with his screen image and the imagery depicted. Afterwards, he answered questions as if he was discussing something very natural. A list of questions was put to him and he was very co-operative! He was delighted with the end result and he called it “inspirational”. He did not have a problem with the background music that was chosen but suggested that it would have been a privilege to sit in on the editing process and choose the music himself.

6.7 Interview with Lukas's Mother

Lukas's mother requested a meeting with me to discuss the edited video and the process her son had completed. In the interview, she suggested that her son did not reveal much about himself, although he had enjoyed the artistic nature of the exercises. She wanted to know if I agreed with her observation. I agreed to a degree and said that I felt he could have said a bit more in our counselling discussions and that, in most cases, he had chosen a very neutral stance. The mother remarked that he was an extreme introvert.

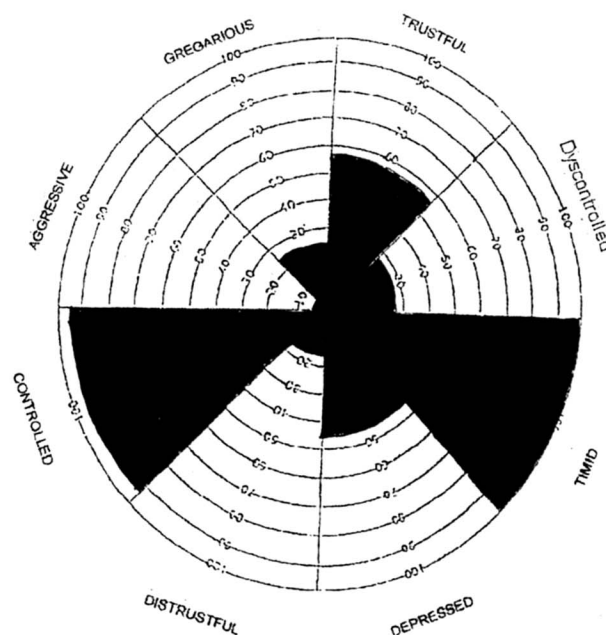
I mentioned to her that, for an introvert person, he had been very brave to undertake the research process. I went back to her a week later to show her the results of the EPI tests. She was very pleased to see the results.

6.8 Permission – Viewing of Edited Video

I requested permission to show the video for educational purposes. The parents said that they did not mind and that they would agree if Lukas were comfortable with the request. He heeded to my request and seemed at peace with his decision. The parents and Lukas signed the document I presented, in which I formally requested their permission to screen the work that had been done.

6.9 EPI Test Results – Analysis of the Possible Impact of the Process

6.9.1 Pre-test

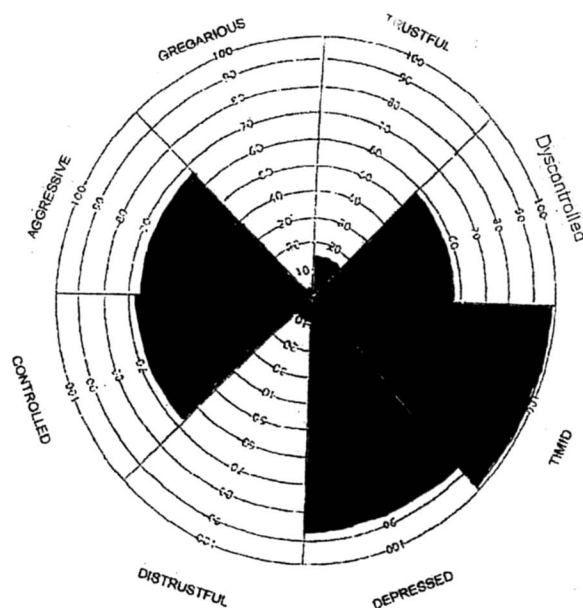


Interpretation

According to the **Pre-test Profile**, Lukas is apt to be **timid** and **controlled**, which means that he possesses a weak risk-taking stance, possibly the result of uncertainty. His attitude towards risk-taking is scaling down his field of experience considerably. This may also be indicative of a low self-image. It is important to note that “timid” and “controlled” are the only two emotional fields in which he participates fully.

According to the profile, he suppresses the following emotional fields: Gregarious/ Depressed and Trustful/ Distrustful. This indicates that he is either not sure of his own emotions regarding these fields or that he deliberately ignores them. In his social interactions, he only displays the image of a controlled, timid individual and, as a result, his peer group members and teachers may be uncertain as to how to relate to him emotionally. Lukas, in turn, can interpret the uncertainty surrounding him as being indicative of the fact that he is not popular or acceptable to others. This profile reveals little self-insight and a lack of self-knowledge.

6.9.2 Post-test



Interpretation

According to the **Post-test Profile**, Lukas still appears timid but meaningful changes did occur. Lukas's dyscontrolled dimension rose from 28% to 58%. This change caused the controlled dimension to decrease from 98% to 68%. Interpreted practically, it points to the fact that he is now expressing more of his own emotions and feelings. Dyscontrolled refers to being adventurous, in other words, to risking more and being less uncertain. His increased willingness to take risks is further strengthened by growth in the aggressive field, which went from 4% to 67%.

In contrast to the **pre-test** – before therapy started – he is now more in control of himself, possesses a greater willingness to take risks and displays greater self-knowledge. According to this, the arts therapy process appears to have been instrumental in providing him with greater self-insight and self-knowledge.

6.10 Conclusion

This chapter attempted to provide insight into the practical implementation of the process outlined in **Chapter 5** and to illustrate the nature of the expressive and visual constructs resulting from the process being employed to address the needs of a client. **Chapter 7** will evaluate the research process with regards to the hypotheses stipulated in **Chapter 5** and summarise the study.