

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Reticent and artfully veiled, betrayal as a social phenomenon is something we give little consideration to on an ongoing basis, particularly if we are content in believing that our intimate relationships are not in any significantly grave danger of coming under threat. Under these circumstances the possibility for the occurrence of acts of betrayal such as infidelity, therefore, seldom inhabit our uppermost conscious awareness for any length of time, if at all. Furthermore, in the event that thoughts of betrayal by our partners do stealthily creep into our awareness, we may expel them rapidly as a collective of the larger group may remind us of the danger of sowing seeds of suspicion into our relationships. Therefore, the possibility that we will set aside time on a daily basis to contemplate whether our partners have committed or will commit infidelity, is as slim as the possibility that what we would spend time considering whether our feet will respond to our wish to walk or that our friends will greet us with recognition. Consequently, it is in the inherent component of unexpectedness, characteristic of most acts of betrayal, that intense pain, shock, trauma and even death lie dormant until the betrayal has been disclosed or exposed.

The notion of betrayal under most circumstances presents significant challenges to individuals, and we may be seduced into externalising this persistent and insidious social predator of relationships. In addition, we may endeavour to rationalize or deny lesser and greater acts of betrayal whether we are the betrayers, or the betrayed. On the other hand, should we allow ourselves to reflect on the implicit nature of acts of betrayal, we would most likely prefer not to dwell on the conceptualisation of the phenomenon, since betrayal speaks to our inherent potential and ability as human beings to inflict irrevocable harm on others and to destroy relationships, a potential we may prefer to ignore and displace.

In this study, by attempting to explore and elucidate the essential meaning of the lived experience of betrayal in intimate relationships within a Kleinian framework, I have attempted to contribute to a greater understanding of the phenomenon.

1.1. Motivation for the study.

People mostly engage in intimate relationships in the hope that they will be long-term and mutually rewarding experiences. Expectations of a partner, whom at the outset of the relationship appears to be attentive, committed and reliable and is likely to remain that way, are often well founded. Frequently, however, these expectations are short-lived as echoed in the disillusionment of individuals who suggest their partners have changed over time (Couch, Jones & Moore, 1999). Furthermore, hopes that a partner will remain honest and faithful may be permanently crushed by a single act of betrayal that violates and destroys the aspects of trust and loyalty, which are inherent characteristics of intimate relationships.

Engaging in relationships requires a large degree of risk as well as a willingness to explore depths of fragile individual and relational vulnerabilities. As will be examined during the course of the next chapter, belonging or membership of a dyad or collective is a prerequisite for the potential risk of betrayal. Furthermore, belonging as an antithesis of loneliness implies the need for trust in relationships. As a result the lingering possibility of rejection and betrayal needs to be trumped by an unfaltering trust in significant others, that one's identity and vulnerabilities will be embraced and sheltered rather than exploited and abused. Trust is a pre-requisite for group living and indicates greater levels of adjustment and happiness in individuals (Jones, Couch & Scott, 1997).

The lexical definition of betrayal reveals specific emphasis on the violation of trust and loyalty in relationships (see 2.2). While much research regarding betrayal includes these relational violations as inherent to the phenomenon of betrayal, psychological studies appear to focus on the consequences and effects of the phenomenon of betrayal across a wide spectrum of interpersonal relationships, at both micro and macro levels (see 4.1). However, it appears as if little work has been directed at developing a psychology of betrayal and few existing theoretical frameworks in the field of psychology include betrayal as a phenomenon. One reason may be that betrayal is generally considered to belong to classifications of socially deviant behaviour (Ben-Yehuda, 2001) and therefore forms a strong alliance specifically with the field of sociology. However, considering the pivotal role it plays in relationships, betrayal as an aspect of daily relational occurrence requires further exploration in the field of psychology.

Klein's theory as the theoretical framework for this study was specifically chosen for two reasons. Firstly, Klein introduced a shift in her well known emphasis on intrapsychic processes in her theory to interpersonal processes, towards the end of her life in her writings on loneliness (Likierman, 2001). Consequently in terms of identifying an opportunity in Klein's theory to make an original contribution to the field of psychology, I considered this relatively unknown Kleinian space of interpersonal processes, appropriate within which to explore the experience of betrayal in intimate relationships.

Secondly, relevant literature in the field of psychology reveals very little attention to betrayal *per se* as a phenomenon on both an intrapersonal and interpersonal level. This limitation is also echoed in Kleinian theory. Consequently, I was afforded a further opportunity to contribute an alternative and unexplored perspective to Klein's intrapsychic theoretical framework which could enhance my contribution of new knowledge to the field of psychology and in particular, psychoanalytic psychology. Lastly, although the focus of the study is based on betrayal as an *interpersonal* phenomenon, a number of opportunities appear to be facilitated by this study for future research into the phenomenon of betrayal at an *intrapsychic* level.

Boundary violations or risks inherent to relationships are mirrored against trust and loyalty in determining their essential structure, and betrayal consequently acquires meaning as an antithesis of trust. Therefore the theoretical fibres of trust amongst others also serve as a bridge to Kleinian theory as Kleinian literature whilst placing less emphasis on betrayal and infidelity *per se* due to its focus on intrapsychic rather than interpersonal processes however, does include trust during the course of human development. In this manner, an attempt is made to move beyond predefined structures to include concepts usually excluded from Kleinian theoretical constructs specifically within the context of infidelity.

My increasing interest in betrayal as a prominent theme in human relationships evolved as a result of my work as a psychotherapist, working mainly with couples in intimate relationships. In sharing their narratives of shattered assumptions, mistrust, deception and brokenness, I was constantly reminded of the essential fragility of relationships. Committed individuals and couples who favour my consulting-room had earlier shared the mysticism of mutually exclusive intimacy with a significant other. However acts of betrayal in various forms and degrees of depth and

intensity had in many instances permanently ruined any opportunity of restoring this aspect of mysticism to their relationship. In addition, their vulnerabilities which were initially cautiously and willingly ceded to a significant other appeared to be irreconcilably withdrawn and concealed, making their current- as well as potential future relationships problematic.

Essentially, I wanted to understand the nature of the experience of betrayal in intimate relationships- what it is, what it entails and how it could be contained within a Kleinian framework. In attempting to understand the lived experience of betrayal, I did not enter the relationship as an expert but rather as a collaborator in pursuit of the participants' meaning afforded to the experience of betrayal. Consequently, I felt I needed to explore the experience of betrayal in order to gain a greater understanding of this interminable social phenomenon as a facet of intimate relationships as well as attempting to place it within a psychological context (Sciarra, 1999).

1.2. Aim of the study.

The aim of the study is to extensively examine, explore and interpret the individual's lived experience of the relational phenomenon of betrayal in intimate relationships. When reviewing the theoretical paradigm for this study, it became apparent that Klein's conceptualisation of object relations placed a strong emphasis specifically on the intrapsychic processes of individuals with less consideration for their interpersonal processes. Consequently, I identified an opportunity whereby existing theoretical constructs within a Kleinian framework could be elaborated upon and modified. In so doing, new knowledge may be contributed to an existing psychological body of knowledge regarding the experience of the phenomenon of betrayal.

1.3. Overview of the study.

In discovering and describing the essence of the experience of betrayal, a dialogue between the world of experience and the world of psychological fact was required rather than an external view or external validation of the experience. Therefore this study reflects data, which were acquired from descriptions regarding a conscious awareness of the experience of betrayal, represented in the

realities of the participants. Strauss and Corbin's (1990/1998) grounded theory approach was applied to the reduction and analysis of data as well as employed in the generation of new theory.

The study was introduced by asking the participants: **“What was your experience of betrayal in intimate relationships?”** However, within a Kleinian framework, it was also necessary to consider how individuals' intrapsychic processes in an intimate relationship may be reflected in the study. Two further questions were also posed namely, **“What was your experience of yourself before, during and after this process?”** and **“What was the outcome of your relationship with the other party?”**

After much deliberation, however, it became apparent that the present study accommodates interpersonal processes between couples to a larger degree than the intrapsychic processes of individuals. Reasons for this are that in order to do justice to the findings, the length of time spent with the participants as well as the limited scope of the study is unlikely to enable myself as the researcher to reflect an accurate representation of intrapsychic processes of individuals in intimate relationships. However where appropriate, intrapsychic processes have been included in the discussion.

While exploring the phenomenon of betrayal, what is most apparent is that it is interminable and exists by virtue of the fact that human relationships exist. Betrayal is therefore never static as relationships are constantly in motion and this phenomenon will therefore always be an infinite part of human existence. In addition, the potential omnipotence of betrayal resides in the continuous relationship we have with ourselves as well as the social context within which high value is placed on relationships. Therefore, as both betrayers of others and ourselves, we bear the inherent potential for inflicting irreparable harm within a relational context.

1.4. Structure of the study.

The present thesis comprises seven chapters including this introductory chapter. In Chapter Two, betrayal as a relational phenomenon is explored. Specific emphasis is placed on the social nature and construction of betrayal, which also includes latest research in the field of betrayal namely,

betrayal trauma. In addition, infidelity serves as an illustration of an act of betrayal. Prior to the concluding comments of the chapter, trust as an inextricable aspect of betrayal is discussed with particular reference to relevant theoretical frameworks regarding this concept.

Chapter Three examines and explores Klein's development of relevant concepts as well as her contribution of developmental positions are highlighted. Specifically, trust and loneliness, are mirrored against betrayal as a relational phenomenon in the exploration of Klein's theory.

In Chapter Four, the focus turns to the methodological orientation of the study, outlining the rationale for the research and contains a description of Strauss and Corbin's (1990/1998) grounded theory research methodology for data collection, data reduction and generating theory. According to this approach, theory may either be generated initially from the data, or if "existing (grounded) theories seem appropriate to the area of investigation, then these may be elaborated and modified as incoming data are meticulously played against them" (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p.273).

The five participants who participated in the research were assigned letters of the alphabet as pseudonyms and were consequently known as Participants A, B, C, D and E. These participants were previously unknown to myself as the researcher and were requested to participate in the research by my colleagues, via a formal letter stating the nature of the study (see Appendix A).

In addition, the participants were asked to contact myself as the researcher, directly after deciding to participate in the study. Further details regarding the interviews were arranged between the participants and myself as the researcher unless otherwise requested by the participants. The data obtained involved one 90-minute audiotaped interview for each of the participants and Participant E requested a second interview of 90 minutes. During these interviews, one main research question was posed (see 4.1). Two additional research questions were included in the event of the data not being spontaneously revealed by the participants during the course of the interview (4.1).

The interviews were subsequently transcribed verbatim, edited with the view to deleting any data which would identify the participants and sent to each of the participants for verification. Once verified, empirical principles of Strauss and Corbin's (1990/1998) grounded theory were applied with the view to data reduction, analysis and generation of theory.

Chapter Five consists of a presentation of the data analysis and findings for each of the participants. Categories derived from the data were divided into further categories, which facilitated generation of additional theory. Illustrative vignettes taken from the transcribed data were included in some instances to emphasize the findings that were generated during the course of data reduction and analysis. Journal entries made by myself as the researcher, were also included in this chapter to support the findings.

A discussion of the phenomenon of betrayal in intimate relationships from a Kleinian perspective, is presented in Chapter Six with the view to elucidating the essential meaning of the experience of betrayal. The discussion focuses on an amalgamation of the literature survey concerning the phenomenon of betrayal in a psychological context as well as on the findings of the present study. In this manner a comprehensive understanding of the meaning of the experience of betrayal in intimate relationships is facilitated.

Lastly, Chapter Seven includes contributions made to a Kleinian paradigm as a result of this study. In addition, a critical review of the methodology as well as a critique of the strengths and limitations of this study are presented. Concluding comments regarding the participants' experience of betrayal are also presented.

1.5. Conclusion.

This study focuses on and describes the multifaceted aspects of the experience of betrayal in intimate relationships as viewed through a Kleinian lens. The nature of the experience of betrayal unfolded within an authentic encounter with the participants and myself as the researcher, who entered the participant's world, "not as a person who knows everything, but as a person who has come to learn; not as a person who wants to be like them, but as a person who wants to know what it is like to be them" (Bogdan & Bilken 1992, p. 79).

Regarding writing style, the first person has been used extensively during the course of this thesis. The motivation for this is that as the researcher, I wish to remain present in the dialogue. Furthermore, in an attempt to remain gender sensitive throughout the study, the term "mother" is used to identify the primary caregiver in the infant's life. The infant is referred to as masculine in

this study with the intention of facilitating ease of editorial style rather than implying sexism. However, when referring to the male and female research participants, both the masculine and feminine genders will be used. In addition, when examining and describing the participants' experience of betrayal, the term "significant other" refers to the partner in the intimate dyad. The "affairee" refers to the third party in the intimate dyad, also considered to be the rival object.

Lastly, human behaviour across a vast spectrum may be branded as "betrayal" attesting to the versatility of the phenomenon as well as its unyielding nature in the realm of human interaction. Consequently in order to narrow down the vast spectrum of betrayal in human interaction and to meet the requirements of this study of limited scope, I have chosen to focus on the participants' experience of infidelity as a form of betrayal (see Chapter Two) for reasons mentioned in 1.1 of this chapter. In addition, the terms "infidelity" and "betrayal" are used interchangeably as only infidelity as a manifestation of betrayal will be considered for the purposes of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

BETRAYAL

2.1. Introduction.

When engaging in relationships, most people expect they will be treated fairly and cared for by their partner. Furthermore they expect that their partner will live up to the expectations of his or her role and display loyalty, attentiveness and support on a daily basis. Contained in these expectations is an element of hope and a large degree of relational trust that their partners will remain committed and faithful (Jones, Couch & Scott, 1997).

In addition, people come to trust that their partner will *continue* to cherish exclusive and long-lasting feelings of love and respect. Should these expectations not be met, people experience disappointment and may wonder and question what their partners' motives are for failing to meet these expectations (Couch, Jones & Moore, 1999). Consequently, interpersonal transgressions such as infidelity, are precisely the type of events people fear when they risk trusting a partner in an intimate relationship. Even their attempts at reducing the risk of being disappointed and hurt by a partner by relying on their predictability and dependability assumptions of the partner prior to engaging in a relationship, offers no guarantee of lasting commitment and faithfulness as infidelity remains rife (Jones & Burdette, 1994).

A single act of betrayal has the capacity to shatter every expectation that a person has of the partner as being truthful, honest and faithful as it undermines the trust, commitment and love one had in one's partner (Jones & Burdette, 1994). Research shows that when betrayal has occurred, the consequences frequently include a reduction in relationship satisfaction, weakened commitment, inhibition of trust and stunted interpersonal growth. A sense of alienation and threats to the psychological well-being of the individual are also indicated. Furthermore, in many cases the relationship is abandoned (Jones, Couch & Scott, 1997).

As we embark on this discussion, it is important to emphasise that although this study is defined within a psychological context, the inherent nature of the betrayal *per se* is a socially constructed phenomenon. Therefore, the relational context requires that this aspect of betrayal which is addressed in 2.3, be afforded some attention.

This chapter will focus on the conceptualisation of betrayal as a social phenomenon followed by a discussion on the social nature of betrayal as well as the various dimensions of betrayal. Following these two points of discussion, we turn our attention to betrayal in the field of psychology as well as some reference to betrayal trauma. Due to its pivotal role in determining whether an act of betrayal has occurred, the concept of trust (see 2.8) as well as relevant theoretical perspectives within the broader psychological spectrum will be afforded greater attention during the course of this chapter.

2.2. The conceptualisation of betrayal.

At this point I firstly wish to divorce the *construct* of betrayal from an *act of* betrayal. Whilst they may be symbiotically related, to date the inherent significance of the construct “betrayal” has received far less attention. Much literature has emphasised the effects, outcomes, prognosis and forms of betrayal. Why would it therefore seem that the attention has been constantly diverted off the significance of the inherent meaning of the construct to rest on an act of behaviour? One explanation may be that an *understanding* of the *manifestation* of betrayal is more tolerable to our human natures than reflecting on what it entails.

As human beings we seldom reflect or wish to reflect on the darker side of our natures, our potential to cause damage and pain to others. We don’t like to consider ourselves as cruel human beings, capable of destroying relationships. Should this occur, to appease guilt-riddled consciences and make life more endurable, we rationalise and find numerous explanations and justifications for our acts of betrayal, from the less dramatic to the more dramatic. Should reflection occur, by the very nature of the act of betrayal, it occurs retrospectively, and then we as betrayers focus on aspects such as the losses we experience or inevitably being snatched out of our comfort zones. In addition, we manage crises in order to cope with the consequences of our acts of betrayal. Therefore, the consequences are emphasised rather than our inherent *potential* to betray others.

Acts of betrayal such as infidelity, whilst ongoing and often devastating to the parties involved, follow a process and reach an ultimate end. Betrayal as a phenomenon however, has no end, its life is inextricably rooted in the lives of humans and in their interaction. It also has an elusive quality because it is *potentially* hazardous and in all instances possible, but not necessarily probable. It can never be eradicated, merely managed retrospectively. That awareness in itself, like an incurable illness, can be frightening and overwhelming. Furthermore, the word “betrayal” may also appear too evocative and seen as something that lies *external* to our potential. However it is deemed appropriate to this study as an attempt to understand as accurately as possible an individual’s experience of the impact of betrayal specifically in intimate relationships.

In pursuit of the meaning of the term, derivative roots may be found in the Latin concept of “*tradere*”, “to give away or to reveal treacherously“ (Olivier, 1970, p. 59). Contemporary language embraces words such as “to cheat on, mislead, be disloyal to” (Ferguson, 2001, p.50), as synonyms for betrayal. However, these appear to be somewhat superficial in representing the true nature of the meaning of the word. According to Kirkpatrick (2003) the word “betrayal” or an “act of betrayal” is “to deliver up a person or thing treacherously; deceive; a treacherous violation of trust, disloyal or a breach of faith” (p.70). Implicit in the word therefore is the element of treacherous violation of trust and loyalty as well as deceit or secrecy.

2.3. The social nature of betrayal.

Betrayal as an ongoing, universal phenomenon has been recognised for centuries and has been widely described and portrayed in mythology, folklore, legends, and history (Bedier; 1965; Campbell, 1979; Cottle, 1980; Elkins; 1992; Everly & Lating, 2004; Hogan & Jones, 1994; Hurst, 2003; Kolakowski, 1999; Kovach; 1999; Lawson, 1988; Vice, 1992; Weber & Harvey, 1994; Yablonsky, 1979). Shrouded in secrecy, corrupt and callous acts of double dealings, violations of trust and disrespect for human life and relationships, are often skilfully planned and accomplished with calculated intention, resulting in traumatic and even fatal consequences. Judas Iscariot and Brutus are archetypal betrayers (Akerstrom, 1991) and Hamlet, Emma Bovary and Anna Karenina are but a few of the numerous literary characters whom tragically assume celebrity status as the betrayed or the betrayer (Brothers, 1995).

Furthermore, betrayal is a complex socially constructed phenomenon and is a prominent aspect of social life¹. Social life occurs within cultures and societies that human beings orient themselves towards and construct through language. In any one culture, most of the people would reach consensus about specific features of their lives such as facts, which are generally taken for granted.

When trying to establish the way these facts are interpreted and contextualised, the dilemma of a social construction of reality occurs (Ben-Yehuda, 2001). Consequently, various people, reference groups and experts create an intricate and complex spectrum of different constructions and definitions of reality. When examining an act of betrayal for instance, this form of behaviour as a reality in social life is constructed by individuals and given meaning and may be seen as involving the violation of trust and loyalty (Mills, 1970). As indicated in 2.8, trust is a fixed inherent requirement of committed relationships. Loyalty is the product of a relationship over time and is less fixed in the sense that one may exercise choice. When choosing a medical aid scheme for example, the choice of one implies less loyalty to the others. Ormerod (1997) suggests “loyalty is....faithfulness to commitments or obligations, or an adherence to a sovereign, a government, a cause, or the like. It connotes sentiment and the feeling of devotion that one holds for one’s country, creed, family and friends” (p. 55).

In addition, these violations may be objectively described and measured. However, their content and meaning are always contextual. In his classical work on deviance, Becker (1963) suggests that as a result of this tendency, “betrayal lies in the eyes of the beholder” (p.8). This may be the case to some degree, but as Ben-Yehuda (2001) points out, the essential construction of betrayal is restricted by a general structure of violations.

In particular, violations of trust and loyalty invoke some very profound and compelling emotions individuals have about the moral nature of their society and how violators should be treated. Generally both individuals and groups take violations of trust and loyalty seriously. At a group

¹. This interpretation does not refer to the social constructivist paradigm.

level, betraying one's country as in an act of treason for instance is punishable by death in countries such as the United Kingdom and Israel. However, at a more personal level, for instance betraying one's partner, family or friend is not regarded as "criminal" violations of trust and are therefore not subject to punitive measures by the group (Ben-Yehuda, 2001).

When examining betrayal on a personal level, within a cultural context, two requirements need to be met. Firstly the ability to deceive or lie or manipulate and secondly the particular motivation to do so. These two criteria are quite easily met but most people are not continually involved in what would be called "treacherous" behaviour by their various cultures. However, should the two criteria be met, the question people ask is the "cultural why" (Ben-Yehuda, 2001, p. 8), which extends beyond personal motivation. One answer may be found in a cultural aspect comprised of both morality and power namely, socially constructed moral boundaries.

Ben-Yehuda (1989) states that culture may be conceptualised as consisting of numerous symbolic moral universes, each competing with the other for symbolic resources (recognition, influence, support) as well economic resources. In essence this organisation is inherent to a pluralistic society. However, within such an arrangement, morality tends to be a complex and collaborative issue. In addition, further complications arise once various, sometimes antagonistic societies, are accommodated in this conceptualisation. However, cultural structure seen from this perspective facilitates a greater understanding of betrayal at both a personal and a group level (Ben-Yehuda, 2001).

2.4. Dimensions of betrayal.

In spite of the universal structure that differentiates betrayal from other forms of behaviour, betrayal is fundamental to human existence. Numerous dimensions supplement the fundamental construction of betrayal and have the ability to change its structure (Ben-Yehuda, 2001). Dimensions, which are inherent to the structure of betrayal, are secrecy, deception, motivation and group membership. These dimensions are discussed in the following section.

2.4.1. Secrecy.

Secrecy refers to an act of deceptive omission where a person intentionally conceals something from others that the person knows to be true (Kelly & McKillop, 1996). Wegner, Lane and Dimitri (1994) state that “..a secret relationship occurs when at least one member of a pair intends that knowledge of some link between the pair is hidden from one or more people” (p.287). As a result they are often obliged to engage in deceptive practices to maintain the secrecy. In addition, the allure of a secret relationship is fuelled by the element of secrecy and is usually socially targeted. This suggests that secrets involve the interests of those who are excluded and should the secret be disclosed, the target would be at least minimally offended by the existence of the secret (Wegner et al., 1994). In the following section, a discussion of the cognitive and behavioural challenges of secret-keeping is presented.

2.4.1.1. The cognitive burden of the secret bearer.

Why are certain betrayals, which are expertly executed and hidden, at some point disclosed or discovered? The answer may well lie in the cognitive pressure experienced in acts of secrecy and deception. In this regard, Ryle, (1949) states:

“People tend to identify their minds with the ‘place’ where they conduct their secret thoughts. They even come to suppose that there is a special mystery about how we publish our thoughts instead of realizing that we employ a special artifice to keep them to ourselves” (p. 27).

Keeping track of secrets appears to be quite stressful. Intentionally suppressing a secret thought involves much cognitive energy and may in some instances result in an obsessive preoccupation with the secret. Therefore, maintaining the silence requires daily cognitive efforts and resources to meet the continual need imposed on the rigorous mental control of inescapable and persistent thoughts (Wegner, 1994). A cycle of thought suppression and thought intrusion develops around the secret which at some stage proves to be overwhelming for the secret bearer, resulting in disclosure or exposure (Wegner et al., 1994).

When harbouring a secret, the bearer has to continually screen information consistent with the state of mind he or she wishes to maintain as well as screen the information the bearer wishes to hide from others. Wegner (1994) suggests it is a considerable challenge for persons to engage in these dual cognitive processes. The burden for the secret-bearer lies firstly in the vital importance of the secret being continually remembered so as to prevent it from being verbally expressed and secondly, it cannot be thought about for fear of it being leaked (Wegner et al., 1994).

In addition, guilt and anxiety are often part and parcel of keeping secrets. As the mind constantly returns to the secret thought, physiological responses associated with guilt and anxiety have been found to resurface (Wegner et al., 1994). In acts of betrayal such as infidelity where one partner has had a clandestine affair and experiences significant guilt as a result, disclosing the betrayal to his or her partner may grant a significant sense of relief to the person. In theory, this sense of relief may be experienced regardless of whether the relationship is terminated as a result of the affair (Pennebaker, 1990). However, intentionally disclosing a forbidden relationship frequently has adverse group consequences for other people and is a complex decision (Kelly & McKillop, 1996).

2.4.1.2. The behavioural burden of the secret bearer.

Deception of any kind involves a behavioural endeavour from its participants (DePaulo, 1992). Therefore, bearers of the secret must labour strategically to ensure that their verbal and nonverbal behaviours do not disclose the concealed information. Furthermore, there is no guarantee of success in thinking that the amount of effort put into keeping the secret is directly proportional to its safekeeping (Lane & Wegner, 1995). Paradoxically at times it may seem that the greater the effort one puts into hiding information, the more likely one is to reveal the information. This effect has been termed the hyper-accessibility of suppressed information (Wegner & Erber, 1992).

The main reason that persons carry the burden of a secret is for fear of the actual or imagined ramifications the concealed information would bring with disclosure or exposure, not realizing the psychological distress which they place themselves under (Pennebaker, 1990; Wegner, 1989). Motivated by fear of the repercussions, the secret-bearer is constantly on edge whenever there is

the potential for disclosure. Often a slip of the tongue or body in relation to the secret may require some creativity and improvisation in containing possible damage done in unintentionally disclosing information that could alert the uninformed party to the secret (Greene, O’Hair, Cody & Yen, 1985).

Referring to the nature of betrayal discussed in the previous paragraphs, the impact of an act of betrayal is contained in the moment when the kept secret can no longer be concealed by the secret-bearer and is therefore discovered or disclosed. One may say therefore that when pertaining to infidelity as an act of betrayal, this requires a stringent behavioural performance both by the persons involved in the extra-dyadic relationship, who carry the burden of the secret, as well as from any other person who may know of the forbidden relationship.

2.4.1.3. The burden of exclusivity.

Besides the considerable cognitive and behavioural challenge involved in the burden of harbouring a secret between the secret-bearer and the uninformed partner, an additional challenge to the relationship develops as a result of the anxiety and tension brought about by having to keep a secret. Karpel (1980) states:

“The unaware are likely to experience anxiety in relation to seemingly inexplicable tension that develops when areas relevant to the secret are discussed with the secret holders. They may also experience confusion and a variety of negative feelings in relation to the ‘explanations’ they formulate in an attempt to understand this anxiety....Secrets may contribute to a vague but tenacious sense of shame or guilt in the unaware” (p.300).

From this perspective, secrecy creates a circle of insiders and outsiders. In a relationship which houses a clandestine affair, the uninformed partner becomes the outsider and may react by looking for explanations during introspection, becoming more pleasing and accommodating. As these endeavours fail, resentment insidiously grows. Shortly, the effort to gain or regain insider status results in an erratic scramble as the outsider’s attempts fail and his or her sense of worth decreases. On the other hand, the outsider may cope through denial until the ultimate crisis blazes through the denial (Brown, 1991).

If the risk of betrayal exists and is potentially traumatic and dangerous, why then are secrets and confidences shared? Simmel (1950) suggests that secrecy is one of the “great social phenomena peculiar to human beings” (p.330). Without secrets numerous facets of social existence would be impossible. Confidences form social bonds between the confiders and societies and groups they represent. In this manner collusion is created which need not necessarily include direct secrets but rather an exchange of experiences and ideas that others in a group are excluded from but which may well involve them (Akerstrom, 1991). In this form, betrayal of others is used to emphasise the exclusivity or importance of two people or a few members of a group that they feel towards one another. Goffman (1972) states:

“Collusion is a normal and no doubt desirable part of social life...it is probably impossible for interaction to continue among three persons for any length of time without collusion occurring, for the tacit betrayal of the third person is one of the main ways in which two persons express the specialness of their own relation to each other” (p.340).

2.4.2. Deception.

Deception or its synonym, dishonesty, is related to the definitions of moral commitment and interest and is regarded as a manipulation of reality. Violations of trust and loyalty whether conducted in secrecy or publicly essentially involve manipulations of this nature. Simmel (1950) asserts:

“Existence rests on a thousand premises which the single individual cannot trace and verify....but must take on faith. Our modern life is basedupon the faith in the honesty of the other.... If the few persons closest to us lie, life becomes unbearable” (p.313).

Furthermore, Ekman (1992) developed a definition of lies and deception that suggests that a lie or deceit occurs when “one person intends to mislead another, doing so deliberately, without prior notification of this purpose, and without having been explicitly asked to do so by the target” (p.28). He also differentiates between two forms of lying namely, concealment and falsification. Concealment occurs when a “liar withholds some information without actually saying anything

untrue” and falsification occurs when the liar not only withholds information but “presents false information as if it were true” (p.28). While concealment may appear to be less dishonourable, because no false information is fabricated, it has the power to mislead an audience to believe in a reality that is founded on untrue information and suppositions (Robinson, 1996). As Ekman (1992) indicates, given a choice, liars will choose concealment rather than falsification every time. This is done mainly because concealment is much easier to execute and liars are inclined to presume that it is more reputable than falsification.

Within the context of infidelity, deception is regarded as a key element that fuels future distrust between partners. When partners are dishonest with one another, the situation becomes disorienting and bewildering and may destroy the relationship. The extra dyadic sexual relationship itself appears to be less destructive than the deliberate attempt to disorient one’s partner in order to avoid an inevitable altercation over a breach of trust in the relationship agreement (Pittman & Wagers, 1995).

However, in relationships threatened by infidelity, some people consider dishonesty necessary in order to protect a partner from getting hurt. In addition, some partners are of the opinion that the true danger of infidelity lies in being found out rather than being dishonest: “What they don’t know won’t hurt them”. Being dishonest or lying to one’s partner decreases any opportunity of enjoying intimacy, closeness or understanding in a relationship. Telling lies gives one partner a perplexing power over the other that disturbs the balance of the relationship (Pittman & Wagers, 1995). In this manner alarm is created in the partner that may result in frantic efforts to move increasingly closer. Furthermore, Wegner et al., (1994), note that an inherent danger of infidelity exists in that when an established relationship is interrupted, infidelity may well be given an additional boost not necessarily because it is an improvement on the existing one, but rather because it is secret.

2.4.3. Motivation.

An important aspect in understanding betrayal is the motivation of the betrayer. How is one to deduce the motivation behind an act of betrayal? From behaviour? From statements given by the

accused or from both? And then, what if the information provided by the betrayer is incongruent (Ben-Yehuda, 2001). An important issue influencing an explanation of betrayal is the source of information regarding the motivation. Autobiographies, and confessions during arrest and trials are for example regarded as problematic sources of information as the former is perceived as an expression of an unresolved bone of contention and the latter is in all likelihood coerced (Ben-Yehuda, 2001).

One solution to determining the motivation behind the betrayal is to ask whose trust and loyalty were violated? This route inevitably leads to discussions around morality and symbolic moral universes followed by questions regarding power issues in betrayal. However it is also valuable to emphasise and understand the “why” within a cultural context in which it is formed (Ben-Yehuda, 2001).

When considering infidelity in a committed intimate relationship, motivations for these acts of betrayal are often blurred. One may consider for instance why people who accept and abide to societal regulations and rules and who don't generally take risks, will risk compromising important aspects of their lives for a secret sexual encounter? (Pittman, 1989). Some motivations for infidelity include “accidental infidelity” (“it just happened”) and the episode is treated as a careless mistake, sexual innocence (men or women who did not have sexual experience prior to marriage may distrust the quality of their sexual relationship and may question what may be missing from it), curiosity (even if the relationship is sexually rewarding, the individual may become preoccupied with the notion that there is something better, external to the quality of the current sexual relationship) and loneliness (Pittman, 1989).

2.4.4. Membership.

Betrayers present themselves in many guises. From the respected diplomat turned spy who leaks classified information to an adversary, to the scabs who refuse to join other workers in the strike, the informer or snitch in prisons or gangs, to the trusted colleague at work, the unfaithful partner, the gossipmongers and the tattletale in school (Akerstrom, 1991).

In addition, intentionally (such as in the instance of infidelity) or unintentionally (a slip of the tongue), every act of betrayal committed by a betrayer in some instances has the added dimension of self-betrayal (Josephs, 2001).

What distinguishes these classes of betrayers? One significant differentiation is the division between “Personal” betrayal (self-betrayal, infidelity) and “Group or Collective” betrayal (whistle-blowing, human rights violations). On a “Personal” level, instances of infidelity for example, regularly make headline news. Betrayal occurs here due to the assumption of sexual exclusivity being violated as well as trust being violated. Therefore in this category, betrayal suggests that a characteristic intrinsic to key relationships has been violated, often in an intentionally deceitful manner (Ben-Yehuda, 2001).

On the other hand, categories included in the “Group or Collective” classification specifically pose questions of morality, power and motivation. In the case of whistle-blowing, for example, two analytical issues come into play namely, a moral issue which concerns trust, loyalty and concealment and a second issue which concerns power. A moral choice made by a whistle-blower is often seen as threatening and a mark of disloyalty to the organisation. The inevitable happens however and research indicates that power often surpasses morality, exposing whistle-blowers to psychological, social and legal attempts to assassinate their character (Robinson, 1996).

Although this differentiation may not in each instance be easily recognisable, it remains remarkably significant. Furthermore, whilst the classification of betrayal employs the dimension of membership as a main decisive factor, it is important to also bear in mind, that the particular content of membership in groups has a complex nature and meaning is based on the level of perception and construction within a specific culture and context (Ben-Yehuda, 2001).

2.4.4.1. Membership of a dyad or group.

Membership in a dyad or a group is a powerful and significant variable. Firstly members acquire a dyad or group identity and as a result, experience a keen sense of belonging. Secondly by being part of a small or large group, a distinction is made between those in the in-group and those in the out-group. This is directly related to the element of trust in relationship. By definition, members in the in-group are most likely to be trusted rather than members of the out-group.

Information that holds a special value to dyads or groups of people, socially binds them and distinguishes them from groups who do not share that information (Akerstorm, 1991). In this manner, dyads and groups are created such as “Us” and “Them”. Members of these groups may have alternative interpretations of the shared information but only they know the significance and nuances of that information.

The rules and boundaries around “Us” and “Them” groups are determined by mutual backgrounds and knowledge. Once these dyads and groups have been formed, the boundaries around them dictate what is appropriate to share with those outside the dyad or group.

Due to the complexity of modern society, an individual may be a member of many “Us” or “Them” dyads or groups simultaneously. Therefore, the potential for betrayal due to involvement in a dyad or various groups having differing and sometimes conflicting values is characteristic of modern societies (Akerstrom, 1991). The issue of membership however, is of vital importance in determining whether an act of betrayal has occurred. In addition, betrayal is fundamental to the process of socialization. Berger and Luckmann propose:

“...the problem of which “self” is being betrayed at any particular moment, a problem posited as soon as identification with different significant others includes different generalized others. The child is betraying hispeer group by being a “square” young scholar and his parents by stealing an automobile, with each betrayal concomitant with ‘treason to himself’ in so far as he has identified with the two discrepant worlds” (cited in Akerstrom, 1991, p. 4).

This aspect brings us to the morals and values of a dyad or a group acquired during the process of socialisation. An important aspect should be noted here. At the dyad or group level, the social nature and structure of betrayal in every instance means that crucial violations of both trust and loyalty have occurred (Ben-Yehuda, 2001). Therefore, the morals of members of a dyad or a group are in most instances questioned when betrayal occurs. This may be due to the fact that betrayal is usually associated with intent and purposefulness. Although, justifying themselves by suggesting for example “it was beyond my control” or “I fell in love”, people make deliberate choices regarding their behaviour, even if it means that they succumb to the pressure they are placed under, whether externally or internally.

It is also relevant to briefly refer to an individual's membership of a small or large group from a psychoanalytic perspective, given the Kleinian framework chosen for this study (see chapter three). This aspect is addressed in the ensuing paragraphs.

2.4.4.2. Membership of groups: a psychoanalytic perspective.

Within the field of psychoanalysis emphasis has also been directed towards the significance of groups in the formation of an individual's personality and functioning. In this regard Freud's theory, particularly regarding the Oedipus complex indicates the major significance of the family group in the development of the human being (Brown & Zinkin, 1994).

Alternatively, Melanie Klein's theory places little emphasis on the significance of groups in an individual's functioning and within society. However, her hypotheses specifically regarding early object relations, psychotic anxieties and primitive defence mechanisms, lend understanding to the fact that the infant belongs to a family group from the beginning of his life, and that his initial contacts with his mother and other persons in his environment are of profound importance for his ultimate development (Brown & Zinkin, 1994).

Bion in his seminal work on groups, suggests that human beings are inherently gregarious, therefore they cannot avoid belonging to a group. Even in isolation, no individual can be considered marginal to a group, when belonging to a group consists of behaving in such a way as to give the impression of not belonging to any group. However, in extending Klein's work, he also did not place much emphasis on the significance of society in an individual's functioning within a group (Brown & Zinkin, 1994).

However, Foulkes who pioneered group analysis as a method to extend psychoanalysis emphasised the significance of society's influence on the individual's functioning (Brown & Zinkin, 1994). Whilst a detailed consideration of Foulkes' theory or any of the other theorists mentioned in this section with the exception of Klein, does not fall within the scope of this study, it is relevant to briefly include some of their ideas, as betrayal is regarded as a social phenomenon. Whereas the focus of attention with the field of psychoanalysis was on the internal world of the individual,

Foulkes suggested that the individual is in a constant, dynamic interplay with others in various kinds of social groupings. Therefore, the individual and society are inextricably interrelated as the individual occupies a nodal place in the social network (Brown & Zinkin, 1994). Furthermore, Foulkes (1964) developed the universally acknowledged concept of the matrix. The matrix, derived from the Latin word “mater” meaning mother, is a metaphor of nurture and growth. According to Foulkes:

“ The matrix is the hypothetical web of communication and relationship in a given group. It is the common shared ground which ultimately determines the meaning and significance of all events and upon which all communications and interpretations, verbal and non-verbal rest” (cited in Brown & Zinkin, p. 292).

Furthermore, he suggested that the matrix is within us and outside us, extending from the microcosm of the individual psyche to the macrocosm of the social world and beyond. Foulkes (1975) suggested that the workings of the individual mind could be described as a personal matrix, as opposed to the group, which represented the dynamic matrix. In his later work, Foulkes gestured towards the foundation matrix, which he suggested was “based on the biological properties of the species but also on the culturally firmly embedded values and reactions” (Brown & Zinkin, 1994).

Society for Foulkes does not lie outside the person but rather is internal and penetrates to the innermost being of the individual. Thus within a given culture, individuals are rooted together in a foundation matrix, sharing not only a common language but also unconsciously holding common assumptions regarding the most basic of life processes such as sleeping, feeding and assumptions as to the nature of their world (Pines, 1994).

In particular, Foulkes (1975) asserted that each individual has a need for communication and for reception. Therefore language is a shared property of the group and originates in our needs for communication, survival and adaptation. This suggests that the individual is embedded at the deepest level in the culture into which he or she is born and remains unconscious of the immense social forces that have shaped and moulded him or her (Pines, 1994).

Culture is present before a person is born. An individual's identity develops within a cultural framework and cannot be separated from it. It is within a culture that a person will develop their identity, defined by symbolic marks conferred on them inside the primary family group and subsequent social groups. In addition, four major psychic functions for culture are emphasised: 1) maintaining the individually undifferentiated basis of psychic structures necessary for belonging to a social whole; 2) guaranteeing a set of common defences; 3) giving points for identification and differentiations which guarantee the continuity of the distinction between the sexes and the generations; and 4) constituting an area of psychic transformation by providing signifiers, representations and modalities for treating and organising psychic reality (Pines, 1994).

Consequently, the double dimension of culture, which defines and contains an individual is transmitted in the family group and socially organised groups or institutions. Cultural models are transmitted during the first months of life through holding, nursing, songs, rhythms, bodily contact and games and are incorporated in the communication of mother and infant. This establishes a state of "sameness" and of fusion with others in the unit, which will bind the infant and the later, individuated person with the group to whom he belongs. As indicated in chapter five of this study, the significance of belonging is a central phenomenon, which emerged as a result of the participants' experience of betrayal.

2.4.4.3. Betrayal of the dyad or the group.

Betrayal occurs when one member of a dyad or a group in some manner violates the boundaries of that dyad or group. However recognising the context within which betrayal occurs is imperative. What was the motivation behind the betrayal? Was the betrayal a discrete incident or ongoing? In some instances, such violations have greater impact than others however, in essence whether resulting in major repercussions or exerting an impact to a lesser degree, the behaviour remains the same in that a boundary violation of the dyad or the group has occurred (Akerstrom, 1991).

Violation of "Us" boundaries may occur in several ways. Verbally passing on information or not passing information on verbally may be an act of betrayal. Furthermore, a person may expose or embarrass the other member of the dyad or members of the group by revealing secrets to outsiders (Goffman, 1959). Also, a person may behave in such a way as to hurt a partner or member of the

dyad or the group, which will then be regarded as betrayal. Should an element of secrecy feature in such a betrayal, this is in some instances regarded as “back stabbing”. Rejecting the dyad or the group thereby undermining its value, may be the ultimate betrayal. Betrayals of this sort include infidelity and divorce (against the dyad) and maintaining a position of neutrality in the face of conflict (against the group).

In addition, revealing secrets of a member of a group, or a group as a whole, ridicules the sacredness of commonality. Violating a boundary in this manner often does much damage to the exposed party and destroys the uniqueness shared in interpersonal relations. Privacy is seen as a sacred symbol of a dyadic or group. Richardson (1988) in his study of women involved in extramarital affairs found that when it is not possible to indicate a sense of belonging through external validation, an indication of belonging to an “Us” may be invested in possessions or rituals. Each woman in the study had a way in which she established an “Us” such as private language, phone codes, special jokes, time slots and shared objects. The objects could also take on a semi-sacred quality and although they were not necessarily hidden, their symbolic meaning was concealed. If for example, one of these women overheard her partner derisively ridiculing these objects, this violation of the “Us” would have the potential to destroy the relationship.

2.5. Betrayal within the field of psychology.

Empirical work in the field of psychology and in particular psychotherapy, has paid some attention to manifestations of betrayal in human relationships such as the emotional effects of child abuse (Godbey & Hutchinson, 1996), infidelity in intimate relationships (Milholland & Harris, 2004), retrenchment (Morrison & Robinson, 1997), abuse of power in religion (Gartner, 2004), degenerative and terminal diseases (Imes, Clance & Gailis, 2002), deliberate sabotage of reputations in organisations (Hogan & Jones, 1994) bribery in politics (Everly & Lating, 2004), at government level (Markstrom & Charley, 2002) and international level (Wadley, 2003).

Also, much psychodynamic thought around the stages of pre-Oedipal and Oedipal development are located in the legend of Oedipus Rex which tells of hatred and betrayal leading to torment, abandonment and deprivation of human companionship (S. Freud, 1923). It appears however as if

the concept of betrayal as a critical relational occurrence as well as the experience of betrayal as a lived phenomenon within the field of psychology remains less explored. In addition a review of psychological literature reveals no specific theory regarding the concept of betrayal at present and an understanding of the term appears to be somewhat limited (Finkel, Rusbult, Kumashiro & Hannon, 2002).

In recent years some research on betrayal has focused on the trauma associated with various forms of betrayal such as physical, emotional or sexual abuse in children. Freyd (1996) introduced the terms “betrayal trauma” and “betrayal trauma theory” in order to explain the significant implications and psychic pain at the heart of betrayal. Now we turn our attention briefly to the occurrence of trauma as a result of betrayal, in the ensuing paragraphs, in order to gain an increased understanding into the essential nature of this phenomenon.

2.6. Betrayal trauma.

Victims of rape, torture, and childhood sexual abuse have the additional burden of coping with intense experiences of distrust and human betrayal (Davies & Frawley, 1994; Freyd, 1991; 1996). Referred to as malignant trauma, these experiences at the hands of other human beings instil shock, horror, powerlessness and overwhelming anxiety linked to death. Cooper describes this kind of trauma as a “...psychological event which abruptly overwhelms the ego’s capacity to provide a minimal sense of safety and integrative intactness” (cited in Shapiro, 1995, p. 43) and frequently occurs in relationships of dependency or power. Freud’s earliest formulations include the notion that the basic “feature of trauma entailed the condition that the psyche is flooded by stimuli, the consequences of which were disorganizing effects on cognition, irritability, psychological confusion and disruption of such physiologic cycles of sleep” (Shapiro, 1995 p. 43). Here the violation of a fundamental sense of trust is noteworthy. This sense of trust that is betrayed in malignant trauma shatters the belief that “I am cared for” and “I am of value”. Amery in his essay on torture suggests:

“With the very first blow that descends on him he loses something we will perhaps temporarily call ‘trust in the world’. Trust in the world includes all sorts of things....But

more important as an element of trust in the world...is the certainty that by reason of written or unwritten social contracts the other person will spare me” (cited in LaMothe, 1999, p.1201).

In addition, the absence of trust in malignant trauma is intimately linked to the absence of faithfulness of fidelity. During the course of human development, the infant’s ability for faithfulness is dependent on the initial fidelity of the parent. Constancy of respect, response, recognition and commitment to the infant’s self, desires and needs is the environment in which human trust is cultivated. In this manner, the child’s sense of self and identity are formed leading to the capacity for intersubjectivity or shared reality (LaMothe, 1999).

Infidelity as opposed to fidelity in marriage or committed relationships for example may be very painful experiences creating mistrust but may not necessarily be traumatic (LaMothe, 1999). However, an unfaithful person is at some level aware that he or she has betrayed someone, another self, suggesting that both fidelity and infidelity presuppose an awareness of selves. In malignant

trauma, the core relationship between faithfulness and unfaithfulness as manifested in human relationships is lacking. In this regard Amery writes, “Frail in the face of violence, yelling out in pain, awaiting no help, capable of no resistance, the tortured person is only a body, there is no self, no person, only a thing without power and control whocan no longer feel at home in the world because he has experienced the absence of faithfulness and trust in human relations” (cited in LaMothe, 1999).

Freyd (1996, 1999) also proposed the concept of “betrayal blindness” which occurs in betrayals, which are not usually considered “traumas”. This would apply for example to instances of infidelity in romantic relationships as well as inequities in organisations. Betrayal blindness is the unawareness, “not-knowing” and “forgetting” displayed by individuals towards betrayal and manifests in order to preserve relationships, institutions and social systems upon which they depend. In this regard, infidelity is discussed in the following paragraphs as an example of an act of betrayal.

2.7. Infidelity: an act of betrayal.

The pursuit of love has been regarded as “noble” for many centuries and much support and interest is offered to those who are prepared to experience life’s greatest joys and tragedies in the name of passion. Faithfulness, whilst commendable is depicted as lacklustre and bland. Faithlessness on the other hand appears to suggest energy, vibrancy, and excitement in the endeavour to feel “alive again”. The added promise of brokenness and possible tragedy as a result of forbidden passion does not deter from the attraction or willingness to take immense risks or be prepared to make equally immeasurable sacrifices should these acts be exposed.

A wealth of clinical literature has addressed the treatment of infidelity in marital and intimate relationships (Atwood & Seifer, 1997; Brown, 1991; Glass & Wright, 1992; Gordon & Baucom, 1998; Humphrey, 1983; Kell, 1992; Lusteran, 1998; McCullough, Worthington & Rachal, 1997; Pittman, 1989; Silverstein, 1998), however few of these approaches have been grounded in empirical research. Rather, therapists have offered insights based on their clinical experiences. In addition, very little research has explored the aftermath of infidelity in relationships, the process of disclosure of an affair or the resulting emotional reaction, the process of interaction between the couple dealing with an affair or the healing between couples after an affair (Olson, Russel, Higgins-Kessler & Miller, 2002).

Although many views regarding the inherent meaning and essence of infidelity have been offered, the depth and complexity of this act of betrayal is exacerbated by the unique experience of the individual. One may for example debate the exact moment in time when infidelity may have occurred: Is it the silence on the other end of the line when answering the phone, the first late homecoming, an “anonymous” short message on a cellular phone, or is it the first sexual encounter which occurs outside a relationship? Could one alternatively argue that it was in fact the moment of original fantasy, which facilitated the seed of intention and eventual manifestation of this act of betrayal? Similarly, one may debate the process of infidelity: Is it the first twinge of anxiety and new-found neediness in reaction to increasingly absent and emotionally vacant responses from a previously attentive partner? Or is it the continual indiscreet and obvious interest and open admiration for a close friend who shares family gatherings?

Infidelity is widely defined across various disciplines, between marital partners and unmarried couples. Seen from the perspective of an act of betrayal, infidelity speaks of “treachery, adultery, and unfaithfulness, especially to the marriage vow” (Kirkpatrick, 2003, p.70). However primary to this definition, infidelity invites a breach of trust specifically with regard to the contract between couples regarding sexual exclusivity in their relationship (Pittman & Wagers, 1995). Furthermore, infidelity fuels an individual’s fear of abandonment.... “a feeling so basic and primitive it goes to the core of our being” (Brown, 1991, p.1).

By definition, infidelity or an affair is a sexual involvement with someone other than the spouse or committed partner (Brown, 1991). The key elements are extramarital or extra dyadic, sexual and secret. An affair may be seen as a symptom of problems in the couple’s relationship. Exposing or disclosing the affair results in a crisis in the relationship. The most threatening aspect to the dissolution of the relationship is not the act of betrayal in other words, the affair itself. Rather the feelings of betrayal and helplessness are seen to be greater causes of breakdown of the relationship (Brown, 1991). Notwithstanding, betrayals are often the main motivation for couples seeking therapy or divorce (Gottman, 1994).

Infidelity passes through six stages (Brown, 1991). Firstly a climate needs to be created in which an affair may develop. Differences, issues, hurts and dissatisfactions are denied, ignored or unresolved facilitating an appropriate climate. The second stage of infidelity is the actual betrayal, when the dissatisfied partner gradually engages in an affair through a series of small choices. Denial is a central feature of this stage with the betrayer denying the affair and the partner initially ignoring the signs of the affair. Thirdly, the affair is revealed either by exposure or disclosure and the couple are confronted with a turning point in their relationship because their perception of themselves and their relationship has changed irrevocably. A crises in the relationship heralds the fourth stage, marked by the partner’s obsession with the affair as the central problem to the relationship. At this stage the couple is faced with the decision to address or bury the underlying issues. Should they address these issues, rebuilding of the relationship may commence leading to the final stage, which may involve forgiveness and reconciliation (Brown, 1991; Gottman, 1994).

Terminology used when referring to infidelity indicates the betrayer as the “infidel” (the person committing the affair). The term’s dual meaning also refers to a “non-believer” or “one who does

not keep the faith”. Terms in literature used to refer to the betrayed partner tend to be negative, for example “cuckold”. For the purposes of this study, the betrayed partner will be referred to as the “partner”. The affair partner is referred to as the unmarried other where appropriate or the *affairee*. This term suggests unreality, impermanence, illusion and enchantment, rather than “lover”, since “love” is considered to be irrelevant in the dynamics of infidelity (Brown, 1991; Glass & Wright, 1992; Pittman, 1989; Pittman & Wagers, 1995).

In addition, although affairs generally involve sex, they also have little to do with sex. Rather, they are in some instances regarded as having much to do with keeping fear, emptiness and anger at bay (Brown, 1991). In Pittman’s words, the “essence of an affair...is in establishing a secret intimacy with someone....Infidelity isn’t about whom you lie with. It’s whom you lie to” (cited in Ben-Yehuda, 2001, p. 47).

Infidelity embodies an element of fantasy, of making a dream come true, often overriding reasons for resisting engagement in an affair such as fear of AIDS, guilt and the anticipation of the partner’s pain, rage and termination of the relationship. Sexual behaviour is generally high risk as few precautionary measures are taken against sexually transmitted diseases or pregnancy. It appears as if the fantasy of the affair offers protection against reality. Partners of infidels are consequently also at greater risk for contracting sexually transmitted diseases or AIDS, particularly in instances where the affair continues for a lengthy period of time (Brown, 1991).

A further element that sustains an affair is that it is considered to be a protected relationship. Inevitably the *affairee* protects the infidel in both their interests and vice versa. In addition, the affair does not have the daily concerns and chores of a marital relationship for example, nor the pressures of living intimately with another person over time. It is a secret relationship which may be sustained by one or two other confidantes who are selected for their ability to act supportively and to bear the secret. Secrecy shields the relationship against external pressures.

Notwithstanding attempts to shield the secret relationship, the partner unknowingly intrudes on the affair. Priority still needs to be given to the partner with regard to public appearances, celebrations, finances and family crises. The infidel is therefore constantly pursued by the shadow of the marriage or relationship and is divided between meeting the demands of the partner and the

affairee in his or her allocation of free time. The very notion that the infidel has a secret relationship implies some reference to the partner. Should infidelity in a relationship continue over time, changes such as illness, death, a child leaving home, a grandparent coming to stay, or a new home or job will also have a significant influence on the affair (Brown, 1991).

As the affair progresses, dissatisfactions at home become more evident. However, the infidel still attempts to conceal the affair but may not be able to maintain the increased cognitive and behavioural energy levels required in keeping the secret (2.4.1.1). Those with a greater degree of guilt about their infidelity and/or greater ambivalence about their existing relationship, generally offer their partners many clues about their affair, which the partner addresses or chooses to ignore (Brown, 1991).

Infidelity may be very brief or it may continue until either the infidel or the affairee dies. Generally, short-lived affairs are ended by the infidel. Others may come to an end or continue when they are discovered by the partner. The greatest number of affairs may last from a few months to a year or two. Beyond that time period, the infidel and partner terminate their relationship or in very few instances, the infidelity becomes an accepted arrangement contained within the existing relationship. Sometimes the infidel is overcome by guilt and confesses to the affair. Alternatively, the partner is informed by a friend or acquaintance of the affair and the infidel is exposed. Lastly, the partner may find indisputable evidence against the infidel such as credit card charges or hotel receipts and the affair is revealed (Brown, 1991).

Importantly enough, revelation of infidelity frequently results in validation of information rather than learning new information. Although Lawson (1988) suggests that very few partners who were told of an affair denied ever suspecting their partner or recognising clues to the effect, clinical experience suggests that the partner has subliminal knowledge of an affair, often being able to name the affairee when the infidelity is exposed, although before the affair was exposed, that knowledge was not conscious (Brown, 1991; Glass & Wright, 1992; Moultrup, 1990; Richardson, 1988).

The phenomenon of betrayal is by definition not a linear relationship. Although often referred to as “love-triangles”, instances of infidelity do reflect a triangular arrangement. However, betrayal

may also occur between individuals without the involvement of a third party. Expectations, which are not met, for example may be seen as forms of betrayal and may exist between friends as well as couples. In addition, the roles of the betrayed and the betrayer are complex. In certain instances an individual may feel responsible for both roles. Warren (1986) conducted a study of female mental patients and found that in many instances both they and their spouses saw themselves and their partners as betrayers. The men felt they had betrayed their wives by having them committed whilst simultaneously feeling that their wives had betrayed them by becoming ill. Their experiences were emulated by their wives who felt they had disappointed their husbands by becoming ill while intermittently blaming them for committing them to hospital.

Not all affairs end in the termination of the relationship between the betrayed and the betrayer. In these instances, once the affair has been revealed and the partner's obsession contained and redirected, the couple may wish to start the process of reconstruction. Difficulties facing this stage of the process include the recurrence of the affair, resolving issues by deciding prematurely about the future of the relationship, enduring denial and the avoidance of underlying problems and the partner's limited perception that the significant problems lie with the infidel (Brown, 1991). Should this process evolve successfully, a stage is reached where both the infidel and the partner forgive one another for their mutual iniquities and betrayals. On the other hand, should this process be less successful, forgiveness and closure may occur much later during the course of reconstruction. An important window period occurs directly after the affair is revealed which significantly influences the outcome for the individuals and the relationship (Brown, 1991; Humphrey, 1983; Whisman, Dixon & Johnson, 1997).

The following section addresses an antithesis of betrayal namely, trust. Trust is introduced into this section for two reasons. Firstly, as discussed in the ensuing paragraphs trust is tightly woven into the tapestry of human relationships and plays a crucial role in determining whether an act of betrayal has occurred. Secondly, as will be discussed in chapter three of this thesis, a fundamental premise of Kleinian theory is that the mother-infant relationship lays the foundation for all future relationships. Consequently, the development of trust in childhood and in adult intimate relationships is implied by definition. Furthermore, in the absence of a Kleinian theory of betrayal, the development of trust in a Kleinian context in the primary mother-infant relationship speaks to the inherent structure of betrayal.

Theories, which specifically focus on the development of trust in the primary mother-infant relationship, are also included in this section and serve to emphasise the significance of trust in interpersonal relationships. In this regard, reference is made to the theories of Ferenczi, Erikson, Suttie, Mahler, and Winnicott in order to create a psychological context against which the inherent nature of betrayal may be considered. Furthermore, as Klein's mentor, Ferenczi's theory of the development of trust is most likely to have had some influence on her epistemological and ontological thought (see chapter three). Some theoretical reference is also made to trust within a Kleinian framework however, this aspect of her theory is addressed in greater detail in chapter three of this thesis.

2.8. Trust.

Whilst the experience of betrayal remains the subjective property of an individual, one main element inherent in interpersonal relations speaks to an antithesis of betrayal, namely trust. Trust is emphasised in the interpersonal nature of relationships and may be regarded as the sine qua non in functional human relationships (Jones, Couch & Scott, 1997). Specifically in intimate relationships, should this trust be violated, devastating consequences and even tragedy may occur. In this regard Rich states:

“When we discover that someone we trusted can be trusted no longer, it forces us to re-examine the universe, to question the whole instinct and concept of trust. For a while, we are thrust back onto some bleak jutting ledge, in a dark pierced by sheets of fire, swept by sheets of rain, in a world before kinship, or naming, or tenderness existed, we are brought close to formlessness” (cited in Brothers, 1995, p.3).

Consequently, an act of betrayal destroys the essential element of trust, which is required to hold relationships together (Misztal, 1996).

Defined as a behaviour or attitude that permits risk-taking behaviour (Luhmann, 1988), trusting another person involves allowing oneself to become vulnerable in order to experience intimacy (Gambetta, 1988; Rempel, Holmes & Zanna, 1985). Also referred to as relational trust (Jones et al., 1997), this form of trust is derived from an individual's participation in specific relationships

and interpersonal exchanges such as intimate relationships. However accepting such a position and then experiencing a negative outcome is likely to reduce an individual's willingness to risk trusting the same partner in future. In addition, this may also influence an individual's willingness to trust other people.

Therefore, by allowing oneself to become vulnerable in a relationship with another human being, the potential for harm to one's well-being increases. However, regardless of the potential risks and resulting damage should an act of betrayal occur, human beings continue to engage in relationships and seek intimacy, suggesting a fundamental need for human connectedness (Jones et al., 1997). In close and intimate relationships, trust has been tied to relationship satisfaction (Jones, 1991), conflict and conflict resolution in relationships (Collins & Read, 1990), attachment (Simpson, 1990), love (Rempel et al., 1985) and commitment (Fichman & Levinthal, 1991).

Seligman (1997) distinguishes between confidence and trust. He suggests that confidence is displayed when expectations are clear and roles have been clarified. Trust on the other hand is required when one does not have confidence. Furthermore, Coleman (1990) asserts that trust involves expressions of confidence within a particular set of relations. Establishing this confidence specifically in close and intimate relationships needs time and is subjected to sets of behaviour and verbal expressions that can increase or decrease the element of trust. Consequently, "...the trustee may engage in actions explicitly designed to lead the potential trustor to place trust" (p. 96). Earlier Durkheim (1933) and Simmel (1950) inferred that social exchanges involving trust range from intimate relations to monetary loan, trade, law, science and politics amongst others. They suggest that trustless societies will experience their existence as highly problematic.

2.8.1. The concept of trust and psychoanalytic theory.

In the field of psychology, the concept of trust remains central to personality development. Research and the literature on trust have not focused extensively on violations of trust per se and a gap appears. Rather, research regarding trust has primarily emphasised its importance as a necessary precursor to social interaction and the development of particular relationships. In addition, research on trust has emphasised its role in greater adjustment and happiness of individuals (Deutsch, 1958; Erikson, 1950/1963; Rotter, 1967; Wrightsman, 1974).

2.8.1.1. Sandor Ferenczi: The confusion of tongues.

Within the psychoanalytic domain, Sandor Ferenczi, (see chapter three) one of Freud's most devoted and loyal disciples first referred to the betrayal of trust by adults of children. In a speech entitled, "Confusion of tongues between adults and the child: the language of tenderness and of passion" in 1933, Ferenczi introduced the idea that "...people thought to be trustworthy such as relatives....governesses or servants...misuse the ignorance and innocence of the child" (1933/1955, p. 161). In so doing, Ferenczi challenged Freud's rejection of his own "seduction theory" in favour of his "Oedipal theory" and argued that neuroses were caused by the mistreatment of children by trusted adults. However, sexual abuse of children was not according to Ferenczi the only cause of psychopathology. Psychopathology could also develop as a result of rejection or the withdrawal of love (Brothers, 1995).

The element of trust per se in individual development was not of crucial importance to Ferenczi. His major contribution lay in addressing the gap in Freudian theory, regarding the betrayal of trust, emphasising the importance of the patient being able to develop a "confidence in the analyst" (Ferenczi, 1933/1955, p.160). He appealed to therapists to recognise the vital importance of betrayal and trust in the relationship between trauma and trust disturbance and the uses of trust in psychoanalytic treatment.

Although Ferenczi's findings regarding trust and betrayal were fervently rejected by most of the leading contemporary analysts of his time, Michael Balint, one of Ferenczi's analysands succeeded in publishing Ferenczi's speech posthumously as a paper in *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*. Like Ferenczi, Balint did not focus his energy on the concept of trust per se. Rather, he developed Ferenczi's understanding of sexual abuse in childhood and proposed that the resulting trauma has a "three-phasic structure" (1969, p. 432). In addition, he concurred with Ferenczi regarding the nature of the relationship between a child and an adult. Balint (1969) suggested: "Although frustrations in their relationship may lead to irritation and even to rages at times, the relationship between the child and the adult is mainly trusting" (p. 432).

Further major theoretical contributions describing the development and importance of trust in human personality and relationships have been recognised. Among these, theorists such as Erik

Erikson, Ian Suttie, Margaret Mahler and Donald Winnicott have placed special emphasis on trust in their theoretical formulations (Brothers, 1995). Due to the pivotal role trust plays in the conceptualisation of betrayal, it is significant to briefly refer to the core tenets of these theories. It does not lie within the purpose or scope of this study to critically evaluate these theoretical formulations on trust. Consequently the core tenets of these theories may be seen as being presented somewhat puristically. The aim of this section however, is to emphasise the significance of trust in human relationships from a brief psychoanalytic perspective as trust in Klein's theory is not afforded extensive attention.

2.8.1.2. Erik Erikson: Basic Trust.

“The general state of trust....implies not only that one has learned to rely on the sameness and continuity of the outer providers but also that one may trust oneself and the capacity of one's own organs to cope with the urges; that one is able to consider oneself trustworthy enough so that the providers will not need to be on guard or to leave” (Erikson, 1968, p. 102).

Erikson was possibly the most influential theorist in establishing trust in the psychoanalytic domain with his conceptualisation of basic trust. As the “first component of a healthy personality” (1964, p. 50) and “the most fundamental prerequisite of mental vitality” (1968, p.96), Erikson suggested that psychosocial development follows an eight-stage process ranging from infancy to old age. At each of these stages a crisis evolves which requires that the individual masters a specific developmental task. The first of these crises is basic trust versus basic mistrust (Brothers, 1995). A sense of basic trust is experienced in the infant's first year of life and is more dependent on the quality of the relationship with the mother than on the amount of nurturance provided (Erikson, 1968). Trust is not innate in human beings. Instead, trust is instilled in children by mothers who are sensitive to their needs and who more importantly, convey a “firm sense of personal trustworthiness within the trusted framework of their community's life-style” (Erikson, 1968, p. 103).

Furthermore, Erikson (1968) emphasised the significant contribution of basic trust to a “sense of identity” (p. 208). According to Erikson identity is “a conscious sense of individual

uniqueness...an unconscious striving for a continuity of experience, and...a solidarity with a group's ideals" (1968, p.208). The trustworthiness and mutually trusting experiences experienced in the mother-infant relationship gives rise to the earliest sense of identity. However, should there be disturbances in these experiences, the ability to integrate a sense of identity in adolescence is hampered (Brothers, 1995).

In addition, Erikson (1968) suggests that the absence of basic trust is responsible for the most severe forms of psychopathology, including infantile schizophrenia and schizoid and depressive states in adults. The re-establishment of trust therefore is a fundamental requirement in the therapeutic relationship. Furthermore, Erikson (1964) suggested that in ontological terms, basic trust is the source of hope and faith of which religion is the rite de passage to serve the ritual restoration of a sense of trust in the form of faith.

2.8.1.3. Ian Suttie: The Love-relationship of trust.

Although until recently largely ignored by the psychoanalytic community, Suttie's deep understanding of the significance of trust in psychological life and its role in the therapeutic relationship deserves acclaim. In addition his theoretical formulations around many of the central concepts of object relations theory and self-psychology are seen as a major contribution to the field of psychology (Brothers, 1995).

Rejecting Freudian drive theory, Suttie argued that the need for human companionship is innate and central to an individual's development and that "mind is social and society is mental" (1935/1988, p. 13). He recognized love and affection as opposed to Freud's view of sublimated sexuality and Freud's conceptualisations of anger and hate as expressions of a primary destructive drive were understood by Suttie as functions of self-preservation (Brothers, 1995). The mother's responsiveness to the infant's love is crucial for the preservation of self-experience. When reaching adulthood, the child's self-preservative dependency on the responsiveness of others has undergone a developmental change but persists in the form of the need for companionship (Bacal & Newman, 1990).

Suttie (1935/1988) did not frequently refer to betrayal of trust in his writings of normal and pathological development although his acknowledgement of the significant role it plays in preserving self-experience is evident. In describing the emotion of fear as “an appeal to the mother”, Suttie (1935/1988) noted: “Where the child is afraid, it is reassured by her confidence and serenity and not by her indifference and neglect, which is perhaps the worst of all for the child. Neglect of the fear-appeal is extremely traumatic” (p.24).

In addition, Suttie (1935/1988) observed: “The mother-child relationship.....is a true, ‘balanced’ symbiosis; and the need to give is as vital, therefore, as the need to get” (p. 53). Distrust is likely to occur when the child’s needs are met reluctantly. “One of the most grievous of possible experiences is that of having to accept grudging service, since the unwilling servant shows no satisfaction in our pleasure- rejects our love responses and manifestly refuses to love us. A natural outcome of such an experience is a distrust of love-relationships” (Brothers, 1995, p. 15).

Suttie was one of the first psychoanalysts to recognize the centrality of trust in the therapeutic relationship and in human life (Brothers, 1995). He regarded psychopathology as a “disturbance in the love of life” which could be treated successfully only when the patient enters “the love-relationship of trust” (Suttie, 1935/1988, p. 211). Here, Suttie provided specific therapeutic techniques for creating trust, specifically warning against passivity and neutrality of analysts as well as “authoritarian” measures such hypnosis, suggestion and persuasion which compelled the patient into “normal” ways of thinking and behaving. In this manner he indicated his perceptiveness regarding the “intersubjective” nature of the therapeutic relationship (Brothers, 1995, p. 16).

2.8.1.4. Margaret Mahler: Trust as the “Midwife” of Psychological Birth.

Margaret Mahler’s work had a significant influence on American psychoanalysis. Although she did not offer an original conceptualisation of trust, her theoretical formulation of an individual’s “psychological birth” (Mahler, Pine & Bergman, 1975) includes concepts of “confidence” (Benedek, 1952) as well as Erikson’s concept of basic trust (see 2.8.1.2).

In describing the development of the child, Mahler (1967/1986) proposes phases leading to differentiation of self and others. The first weeks of life are marked by “a normal autistic phase”

followed by a “twilight stage of still primary narcissism” or a symbiotic phase characterized by a “need-satisfying object relationship” (p.219). She asserted that successful symbiosis is dependent on the mother’s genuine availability and predictability rendering her trustworthy. Flagrant failures in providing trustworthy maternal symbiotic satisfaction may lead to relentless pathology for example, autism or symbiotic psychosis (pervasive developmental disorder). However, less significant failures in symbiosis could lead to major difficulties in the child’s development of confidence and trust as well as in later development.

Specifically during the onset of the separation-individuation phase, which coincides, with the peak of the symbiotic phase in the third quarter of the first year of life, the first steps toward breaking away from psychological unity with the mother are taken. This phase is subdivided into phases of differentiation, practicing, rapprochement and object constancy. Initially, reactions to strangers greatly mirror the quality of the infant’s confidence and trust that develop during symbiosis. Mahler (1972/1986) asserts:

“In children for whom the symbiotic phase has been optimal and “confident expectation” has prevailed, curiosity and wonderment are the predominant elements of their inspection of strangers. By contrast, among children whose basic trust has been less than optimal, an abrupt change to acute stranger anxiety may make its appearance; or there may be a prolonged period of mild stranger reaction, which transiently interferes with pleasurable inspective behaviour” (p. 225).

Later sub phases such as the infant’s increased motor abilities appeal to the mother’s availability as a “home base” for “emotional refuelling” (Brothers, 1995, p. 24). The importance of the mother’s self-confidence is also stressed during this period and the infant becomes increasingly aware of physical separateness from the mother, leading to increased separation anxiety. In reaching the final sub phase of object constancy, the infant needs to achieve individuality and some measure of object constancy, which is greatly dependent on his previous integration of trust and confidence in his mother’s ability to gratify needs and relieve anxiety (Brothers, 1995).

2.8.1.5. Donald W. Winnicott: The psychological locale of trust.

“The potential space between baby and mother, between child and family, between individual and society or the world, depends on experience which leads to trust. It can be looked upon as sacred to the individual in that it is here that the individual experiences creative living” (1967/1992, p. 96).

Winnicott’s contribution to an understanding of the realm of psychological life known as the potential or transitional space in which trust has its origin is invaluable (Brothers, 1995). His discovery of the potential or transitional space elucidates a source of cultural experience, creative living and play, which reflects the inner world of the psychological experience and the environment (Winnicott, 1967/1992). He notes: “From the beginning the baby has maximally intense experiences in the potential space between the subjective object and the object objectively perceived, between me-extensions and the not-me” (1967/1992, p.100).

Trustworthiness, which is the dependability and reliability of the mother’s ability to effectively meet her infant’s needs was of central importance to Winnicott to such an extent that he suggested that the mother’s love is “displayed or made manifest as human reliability”. Furthermore, “..the potential space happens only in relation to a feeling of confidence on the part of the baby” (1967/1992, p.100), and in turn the baby’s confidence develops as a result of the trustworthiness of the mother and the environment (Brothers, 1995).

According to Winnicott (1967/1992), a further important aspect associated with development is the establishment of an autonomous self. Prior to reaching this stage, the baby needs to be able to distinguish between the “not-me” and the “me” (p. 109), brought about by the mother’s trustworthiness in being able to adapt to changes in her developing baby’s needs.

Furthermore, Winnicott was acutely aware of the vital importance of trust in the therapeutic relationship as well as in the setting in which therapy would be conducted. Therefore, he extended his formulation of the “holding environment” which reflected all the ministrations of the “good-enough” mother, to include the analytic setting (Brothers, 1995). In his view, relaxation belonging

to trust and the professional reliability of the therapeutic setting were seen as paramount to free association in the treatment of adults or to spontaneous play in the treatment of children. He advised against premature interpretations that could interfere with “the natural evolution of the transference arising out of the patient’s growing trust in the psychoanalytic technique and setting” (Winnicott, 1960, p.86).

2.8.1.6. Melanie Klein.

In the Kleinian theoretical framework chosen for this study, Melanie Klein’s focus was not devoted to the development of trust in the human personality. However there is some evidence of recognition of the importance of trust in her work (Klein, 1952a/1997). As an analysand and mentee of Ferenczi (see chapter three), Klein is also likely to have benefited from his emphasis on trust (Ferenczi, 1933/1955), in the formulation of her theory.

According to Klein developing trust in the good object as a result of good or positive experiences, facilitates integration of the ego and synthesis of the object (Klein, 1952a/1997). Within the internal world of the developing infant therefore, the experience of good internalised objects allows the infant to experience trust, confidence and security (Klein, 1952b/1997).

Furthermore, in her conceptualisation of the idealisation of the primary good object, Klein suggests: “...the breast in its good aspect is the prototype of maternal goodness, inexhaustible patience and generosity as well as of creativeness. It is these phantasies and instinctual needs that so enrich the primal object that it remains the foundation of hope, trust and belief in goodness” (Likierman, 2001, p. 96). Klein’s contribution to personality development is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three of this thesis.

2.9. Conclusion.

This chapter focused on the relational phenomenon of betrayal. However as indicated, a discussion of limited scope was required as betrayals have numerous guises which they relentlessly employ in shadowing human interaction on a daily basis. By emphasizing the vast spectrum across which prominent and less prominent role players are lured to participate in dramatic and less dramatic

acts of betrayal, the centrality and disturbing frequency of this relational phenomenon in human relationships was highlighted. Notwithstanding infrequent or frequent occurrences, simple or complex, severe or less severe acts of betrayal share a universal structure in that they involve social interaction presumed or directly observed of persons who are considered as sharing similar cultural backgrounds and the same cultural goals.

Betrayal occurs when two significant violations of expectations take place namely violations or breaches of trust and of loyalty. Furthermore, although betrayal comprises multiple dimensions, the violation of both these variables of intersubjectivity differentiates betrayal from other forms of human behaviour. Betrayal also implies that group boundaries have been violated due to persons from the in-group disregarding their moral obligations and commitments to the dyad or the group (Ben-Yehuda, 2001).

Classes of betrayal distinguish whether betrayal is personal or representative of group behaviour, which in turn, are subjected to finer levels of analysis. Motivation and context are important aspects to be considered when refining the analysis of betrayal. A further crucial variable to be considered is the existence of secrecy, which by implication suggests deceit. Issues such as deception, lying and making others believe in a false reality are considered to be secondary variables in betrayal (Akerstrom, 1991).

The threat potential of betrayal is also considered significant. Betrayal on both the personal level and group level elicits intense emotional reactions, particular if such relationships are already in the throes of conflict. At a personal level, infidelity for instance seriously challenges and threatens the identities and sense of belonging of individuals within the dyad. Betrayal of the group, for example in cases involving treason, usually carries severe punishments due to its threat potential (Bakeless, 1959/1998).

Furthermore, betrayal poses fundamental questions of boundaries and power. In particular, moral boundaries are highlighted as trust and loyalty are basic moral issues. On the other hand, morality is significantly influenced by power. Particular moral claims and the resulting reactions of society depend on power and its usage. The threat of betrayal therefore, entails an exploration of challenges to morality as well as power. Furthermore, when secrecy is involved in the act of betrayal, an element of deceit compounds the existing moral issue.

Current emphasis on betrayal specifically focuses on the resulting trauma and indicates the abuse of power in relationships (Freyd, 1996; 2003). The severity of traumatic betrayals spans a wide spectrum from childhood abuse, rape to holocaust survivors amongst others. Betrayals such as infidelity however are not conventionally regarded as traumatic but carry much psychic pain and pose many challenges to individuals' functioning and in particular, to their psychological well being (De Prince, 2005; Jones et al., 1997). Extensive research on infidelity in intimate relationships however appears to focus on models for treatment in particular as well as on the emotional consequences of betrayal such as atonement, revenge, reunion, mistrust and hate (Lawson, 1988). Greater detail regarding the consequences of infidelity is provided in the discussion and integration of the research findings in chapter six of this thesis.

In addition, much emphasis has been placed on acts of betrayal such as deception (Couch, Jones & Moore, 1999) and organisational delinquency (Giacalone & Knouse, 1990), yet the focus on conceptual and definitional aspects of betrayal as a universal construct has only recently been afforded greater attention (Baumeister, Stillwell & Wotman, 1990; Leary, Springer, Negel, Ansell & Evans, 1998; Metts, 1994).

In order to establish a context for the lived experience of betrayal in intimate relationships, an overview of the seminal work of Melanie Klein will be given in the following chapter of this thesis.