

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE FLOW: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

*'Silences' refers to those psychosocial phenomena that have not received any research priority or theoretical attention by the discipline. Silences or the 'containment of critical energy' (Disco, 1979, p. 168) may be regarded as one significant indicator of psychologists' interests and those of the movement to which they may be aligned.*

(Seedat, 1997, p. 264)

This study explores the active manifestation, the in-action of the integration and/or interface of African local knowledges and traditional perspectives with notions of psychology with particular reference to psychology and counselling/ psychotherapy. Through her work in local South African contexts, the author became curious as to how psychology could accommodate and integrate African local knowledges and ways of thinking about the world and healing, and vice versa. In her search for a path of relevance, the author found little to guide her in a context differing from the mainstream. Writings on local knowledge with particular reference to psychology practice and untainted by western thinking, was found to be scarce. The scarcity of literature in this area contributes to the silence emerging from the local context at a time when the profession needs to listen for guidance in its practice. Some possible explanation for the silence will be discussed further in this study.

Local knowledge is often referred to by other terms and bears a certain character. Barnhardt (2002, p. 242) describes it thus:

These other kinds of knowledge have been variously characterized as traditional knowledge, oral knowledge, indigenous knowledge, or practical knowledge, depending on

which body of literature you are reading. Some of the distinguishing features of such knowledge are that its meaning and use are context-bound, it usually has utilitarian value, and it is generally acquired through direct participation in real-world activities. If considered in its totality, such knowledge can be seen as constituting a particular world view, or a form of consciousness.

It is this three-fold value of local knowledge as a form of consciousness that captured the interest of the author. It is these aspects of local knowledge that this study attempts to explore at the interface of psychology in the mainstream.

The study begins with *The Story* (chapter one). *The Story* introduces a juxtaposition of a chiefly western-oriented model of psychology training, and local conditions. The struggles of both therapist and client in the dialectic of these frameworks are described. The study takes up the struggle in the context of the socio-cultural environment.

*The Story*, one of two autobiographical stories presented in this study, has been offered as the first chapter in order to present a perturbation and set a context for the further writings of this study. This white, western author trained in a conventional tertiary institution of a westernised education system in the prevailing dominant paradigm of psychology in the world today at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The prevailing dominant paradigm of the discipline of psychology currently promotes the western scientific method in research, and psychotherapies that have evolved from within mainly western contexts (Fouché, 1996; Lincoln, 2000). Many of the major theories from fields such as developmental, personality and social psychology, comprise content to be found in European (mostly British) and American texts (Fouché, 1996; Lincoln, 2000). This constituted the major bulk of her curriculum.

During her fourteen years of work and practice in the socio-cultural environment of The Story, the author has come no closer to any single understanding of how to practice her profession there than she was the day she entered. However, her ideas have multiplied, complexified and hopefully, become enriched. The challenge has been to accept and celebrate the diversity, the ambivalence, the uncertainty, the unknown, the changing, the hidden and the visible. This study aims to highlight these experiences while giving some small voice to the silent, non-western majority.

### The Context

The context of practice referred to above, could be described as an underdeveloped, underprivileged, possibly ‘Third World’, environment. The author found herself dealing with issues such as witchcraft, ancestry, prayer, spirituality, callings, graveside rituals, naming ceremonies, family lineage, protection and cursing, prediction and interpretation, dreams, *muti*<sup>1</sup>, singing, dancing and drumming. Clients consulted the white doctor on the one side of the street only to leave the hospital and visit the *sangoma*<sup>2</sup> on the other side of the road. The author often could not engage in psychotherapy with her clients without including the voices of the ancestors and the *nyanga*<sup>3</sup>. She found herself needing to understand or at least to be open to understand why sometimes a whole family was prepared to make enormously compromising sacrifices for one child selected out of many. She needed to understand or at least be open to understand why a son could not attend college if the deceased grandfather did not approve. She learned about connecting and community in different ways from what the books told her and from what she experienced in her own life.

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1 Muti: Medicines (herbal and other) used for treatment by the traditional healers

2 Sangoma: Traditional healer “called” to the profession by the ancestors; spiritual healer and herbalist

3 Nyanga: Often used interchangeably with *sangoma*

There came a point where the text books seemed to refer more to discussions in the corridors of the university and provided answers more relevant to exam questions than her practice. Much of what she did with her clients in the context of her practice she had to discover for herself and in conversation with the context (which included others who worked similarly in the context). Texts that did provide some measure of relevancy were those situated at the time on the fringes of the discipline - ecosystemic theories and discussions of matters of epistemologies (Bateson, 1979, 1985; Capra, 1982, 1997, 2003; Keeney, 1979, 1985; Keeney & Morris, 1985b; Maturana & Varela 1980, 1987). However, these are not widely adopted in training institutions in South Africa, they do not much focus on psychotherapy in particular, and they also do not specifically refer to the author's local context of practice which brings complexities of its own.

Originally, the author had intended to discover an appropriate way of working when she first set out the proposal for the study. The more she has spoken and mostly listened to those she has invited to participate and those who invited themselves, the more she has realised that it is the intrinsic diversity, the ambivalence, the uncertainty, the unknown, the changing, the hidden and the visible which must be voiced and consecrated.

The Story thus shifted from its original conception of being an impetus as if it could lead to a benchmark for an appropriate way of working within the complexities of the context. In the duration of the study, the Story came to yield to Other Stories that are documented in chapter three. The task became to discover the flow that links them. The Story, or aspects of The Story, were included in some of the conversations reported on in chapter three, and their Flowing takes on a momentum that allows a future for more meaningful Stories. Through this process some form of ecological value (Lincoln & Guba, 2000) may be encountered.

Lincoln & Guba (2000) suggest that, through a focus on ecological values and reflexivity on contextual factors both in the research setting and within the researcher, a level of spirituality may be attained. They have commented on the shift in research approaches from a history of positivist research to one that may ultimately reflect a spirituality previously devoid from research. The nature of the spirituality and an indication of its possible relevance is probably what Lincoln (2000) refers to elsewhere as "a new and more dignity-oriented form of social science" (p. 10); the need to "study love, honor, altruism, heroism, faith, or any of the great - but largely unobservable - traits of the human spirit" (p. 6); in order to discover "much more, and more than was more important" (p. 6) about humanity.

With the Flow as parameter the researcher re-searched stories and they are presented here as narratives. As with all healthy flows, the Flow is not conceived of as being complete or needing to stop, but it is hoped that the stream will strengthen to a river that will flow into a dam. Dams provide a life source for the ecologies that grow around them.

### *The Approach*

Psychologists in South Africa find themselves battling to establish the profession in the broader community on more than one front. Not only do the specific cultural and socio-political issues seem to be inadequately addressed by mainstream psychology, but also helpers/ researchers in a multi-cultural modernising context working from within a fixed epistemology are paradigmatically closed to the potentialities existing outside the framework. While it is recognised that espousing an epistemology is unavoidable, this study is conducted with an awareness of the need to maximise the flexibility of the boundaries of epistemology from within which the research will operate. Fixed epistemological boundaries not only minimise possibilities of conceptualising human behaviour and healing, but also present the risk of

losing individuals and communities in the areas of non-meaning lying outside the epistemology in which the helper/ researcher works. Issues around the silencing effects of epistemology are taken up further in the study.

Through the process of searching indigenous conceptions and processes of coping and helping interventions within the present shifting social climate, this research moves towards exploring the bridging of western psychology (both modernist mainstream and postmodernist) and local African worldviews in tapping an innate understanding of (South) African cultural perspectives. The research field lies at the interface between the Africanisation of a western discipline and the westernisation of African approaches to the understanding of human behaviour and culturally comfortable ways of dealing with personal and social issues. Natural dichotomies between the two perspectives will be taken up by the research in a way that a sense of the struggle confronting indigenous peoples in a modernising society is accessed and conveyed. In its examination of the cultural nuances of the notions of the western discipline psychology, the study will draw on a heterogeneous population of indigenous South African cultures in a challenging era of cultural, scientific and technological advancement.

While the researcher holds that the indigenous peoples of the population of the country within which the research will be conducted are not homogeneous in traditions, beliefs, customs, language and other possible measures of culture, it is the indigenous, non-western-ness of the peoples which engages the research. The reification of *culture* as a notion or as a variable in this study will be avoided to prevent re-entrenching a different form of ethno-centrism: precisely contrary to the ethos of the study.

#### Area of Focus

This study aims to identify conceptions and processes of coping and helping interventions employed by some (South) African indigenous individuals and communities in the face of challenges presented by rapidly changing socio-cultural contexts within South Africa today. It is intended that this may contribute to the development of an ecologically sensitive psychology in South Africa in an integration of research, training and practice.

Through the examination of the perspective of emerging communities from an indigenous traditional and also an oppressed era, to a modernising world, traditional (South) African cultural conceptualisations of what westerners engage in as *counselling* or *psychotherapy* in their diverse forms will be explored at the interface of modernisation and change. It is suggested that this examination will afford a view of the effects on a local African sense of intervention (counselling/ consultation and other forms of helping), developed in a relational paradigm, by the encroachment of an alternative individualist paradigm. In addition, the study could reveal the merits or demerits of attempting to integrate a local African sense of *psychology* into a modernising society largely influenced by Euro-American individualism. However, the integrity of the study will require the avoidance of an essentialist standpoint whereby the current Euro-American paradigm is replaced with another dominant one. Nevertheless, where cultural perspectives are found to coincide, recognition will be made and these will be incorporated into the study. The study may suggest how approaches to counselling and psycho-intervention can be challenged to shift from an individualist paradigm to take a socio-ontogenetic approach in order to fit with indigenous epistemologies, the mutual fit-ting of western type counselling with indigenous epistemologies being one of the stated aims.

The researcher has built up an extensive caseload as a counsellor in a South African township clinic which also served the adjacent communities. The large majority of her clients presented with problems emerging from the

demands of cultural clashes, shifts and modernisation. One of the stated aims of the study is to identify indigenous conceptualisations around the observed phenomena but without formulating a new ethnocentric approach. It is the processes of the creation of meanings in contexts that is the intended focus of this study and it is envisaged that the re-research, in reflecting the variety of solutions grappled with by the communities, will in itself form an intervention. Because the processes remain the focus of the study, the precise nature of the problems presented in the counselling situation becomes irrelevant. In fact, to attempt categorisation of these problems may lay an epistemological trap for the research. The focus will be rather on the spaces between the problems and the dis-solutions of the problems, where it is hypothesised that the cultural cracks open up.

Thus, the study, through reflection on these processes, will attempt to achieve congruency, and possibly reflect isomorphy with the context of the research, at different levels of process.

### Background

South Africa is presently undergoing intense processes of social change brought on by a whole new political system and transformation of government. Such changes induce significant psychological effects on the population, made more complex by the accompanying cultural integration of a previously segregated multi-cultural society. In some respects the former gap between sections of the population that led 'First World' lifestyles, and those leading 'Third World' lifestyles, is narrowing. Modernisation and technological advancements are encroaching on some rural communities and previously disadvantaged sectors for the first time. All social institutions are being engaged in the change process and thus education and the psychology profession are confronting issues in self-reflexive activities.



In pursuit of the stated aims, this research will penetrate these issues in the discipline at a critical time for local practitioners, trainers and researchers. Yet, while in recent literature much discussion is engaged in around the merits or demerits of directly addressing specific cultural issues, relatively little literature is available detailing research which exposes local African cultural conceptualisations in the primary area of practice of the discipline: counselling/helping and related forms of intervention. Eze (1991, in Peltzer, 1998) asserts that one of the chief reasons for psychology failing to become established as a major service resource in Africa, is the inability of African psychologists to find a fit for psychology, as it exists in the mainstream, to the peculiar African context. At the same time, apart from the specific cultural clashes which may occur, modernisation brings its own psycho-social disorders which are not always amenable to treatment by traditional healers but require some form of psycho-intervention, provided that the intervention is sensitive to the communities with which engaged.

### The Problem Defined

A search of the literature shows criticism for what has been perceived as mainstream, generally indiscriminate western, scientific, positivistic approach of psychology, and of this form of psychology's frequent irrelevance to local cultures (Akin-Ogundeji, 1991; Anonymous, 1986; Atal, 1981, 1990; Azuma, 1984; Bakker & Snyders, 1999; Dawes, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000a; Dorojaiye, 1993; Holdstock, 1981; Kim & Berry, 1993; Lincoln, 2000; Marsella, 1998; Moghaddam, 1993; Seedat, 1997; Seedat & Nell, 1990; Turton, 1986; Vogelmann, 1987). The literature also yields references to psychology as having little impact in Africa (Dawes, 1986; Eze, 1991; Gilbert, 1989; Nsamenang, 1995, 2000; Pelzer, 1998), of being in a state of disillusionment and disempowerment (Seedat, 1997), and as taking an inappropriate individualist approach in certain local contexts (Akhurst, 2001; Mungazi, 1996; Mwamwenda, 1999; Seedat, 1997; Tembo, 1985). Calls for

greater contextualisation and relevancy of the profession have been made (Gilbert, 1989; McAllister, 1998; Nell, 1990; van Vlaerenden, 2001). However, simultaneously, the discipline is pressurised to maintain and/or discover universal and global frameworks (Danziger, 1994; Dawes, 1998). Other voices remind the profession of the need to acknowledge, understand and address the role of cultural variations in behaviour and experience in practice, research and training (Marsella, 1998). These issues will be addressed at greater length in the text of the thesis.

However, it is the contention of this thesis that directly addressing all of the above is possible without any real paradigmatic shift and so could lead to cosmetic solutions. This thesis does not so much search for solutions which could also imply a dialectical<sup>4</sup> approach (viz. African vs. Western; communal vs. individualist; cross cultural vs. universal etc.), but rather seeks dialogical<sup>5</sup> ground for a dis-solution of the problems presented. This thesis looks towards an ecological understanding that may uncover a beneficial evolutionary process description - by implication a context sensitive dynamic process description.

It is further contended that psychology needs to revisit some fundamental premises in order to take a deserving space in the globalised ecology of the world today. Some of the fundamental premises referred to have emanated from the philosophical, scientific and knowledge base contexts out of which the discipline emerged and developed. Some of these premises are examined and explored in chapter four of this study to the extent that they refer to the issues at hand.

Chapter five will critically examine and explore notions of 'African' with regard to psychology and philosophy. Written literature on the content of

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<sup>4</sup> *dialectical* is used here to denote that which allows more than one perspective so that processes are conducted to test the strengths and weaknesses of opposing points of view.

<sup>5</sup> *dialogical* is used here to denote that which involves a dialogue or extended exchange between different

African philosophy and psychology is comparatively not abundant and it has been found that more is documented in terms of discussions and debates as to whether these knowledges exist, how they exist and why they might be oppressed, rather than what they might constitute. An exploration of these notions as they are documented is considered important in order to enter into the theoretical debates around the relevance of psychology in a non-western context. It is considered that these notions form and reflect a certain aspect of local knowledge.

This thesis will focus specifically on the interface of psychology as a discipline, and the South African environment and social context, in putting forward this argument. To this end, chapter seven will engage with The Stories.

### The African, the Global and the Local in Psychology and Philosophy

These concepts are presented against a backdrop of current intense discussions on globalisation and the fit into this picture of small local communities. Boundaries of the world are presently dissolving through rapid advances in technology, - making global communication ever more immediate and more accessible especially to more affluent, dominant sectors of society, emphasising the divide between technologically advanced communities, chiefly of the first world, and local developing communities. A discussion around globalisation and its impact on the discipline and practice of psychology is taken up in the study.

Closer to home, local researchers and theoreticians have commented on the need for relevancy and appropriateness in the theory and praxis of psychology (Berger & Lazarus, 1987; Biesheuvel, 1991; Butchart, 1995; Dawes, 1985, 1986, 1998; Gilbert, 1989; Nell, 1990; Seedat, 1997; Seedat &

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points of view or frames of reference.

Nell, 1992). Debates among writers take approaches varying from urgent calls for indigenous psychologies (Bodibe, 1993; Perkel, 1988; Vogelmann, 1986), denials of the need for indigenous psychologies (Nell, 1990), assertions that psychology as a discipline is founded on universal concepts sufficient for all contexts (Nell, 1990), and warnings that culture specific approaches will simply create an alternative exclusive paradigm of practice and theory (Nell, 1990). However, overall there seems to be a general call for relevance and appropriateness of practice and theory for the local contexts. Literature on these matters is explored and the trends of arguments documented in chapter four.

### Ecologies and Paradigms

Forming part of the argument contained in this thesis are ideas around ecology, the global ecology, and local ecologies that contribute to a global ecology, just as members of a family contribute to the ecology of a family. Definitions of ecology originated in referring to living organisms, their habits and their relationships to each other and to their environment (Capra, 1997).

The physicist, Fritjof Capra, (1997), refers to ecological thinking as that which focuses on the whole, in a holistic or organismic way. He expands on a definition of ecology:

Ecology - from the Greek *oikos* ('household') - is the study of the Earth Household. More precisely, it is the study of the relationships that interlink all members of the Earth Household.... Ernst Haeckel ... defined it as 'the science of relations between the organism and the surrounding outer world'.

The new science of ecology...[introduced] two new concepts

- community and network. By viewing an ecological community as an assemblage of organisms, bound into a functional whole by their mutual relationships, ecologists facilitated the change of focus from organisms to communities and back (p. 33).

The biologist and anthropologist Gregory Bateson (1985), expresses his understanding of ecology in terms of an ecosystem:

An English oak wood, or a tropical forest, or a piece of desert, is a community of creatures. In the oak wood perhaps 1000 species, perhaps more; in the tropical forest perhaps ten times that number of species lives together.... Those creatures and plants live together in a combination of competition and mutual dependency.., and it is that combination which is important to consider (p. 430).

This study will focus on aspects of ecology and evolutionary processes within ecologies, such that it examines the context in which events occur, exploring the idea that the events are co-determined by the context and the activities of the events themselves and how this applies to a particular human socio-cultural ecology.

Many systemic, ecosystemic, and other postmodern thinkers in the social sciences have suggested that psychology needs to return to the context in order to understand human behaviour, which is the subject of the discipline (Aponte, 1976, 1990; Auerswald, 1966, 1971a, 1971b, 1991; Bateson, 1979, 1985; Chrzanowski, 1982; Goodhart & Zautra, 1884; Kelly, 1986; Mulvey & Silka, 1987; O'Connor & Lubin, 1984; Trickett, 1984). In returning to the context in this study, the author wishes not so much to discover solutions to problems, as to move closer to an understanding of the epistemology of the

context. Through an understanding of the epistemology of the context in which behaviour occurs, it may be possible to explore evolutionary and ecological processes. The concept *epistemology* is used here in the sense that it comprises perception-forming principles (Bateson, 1985). More will be discussed about the role of perception in cognition and knowledge in chapter seven.

Solutions to human problems formulated by psychologists working within a western mainstream positivist paradigm usually, historically and effectively bring to the fore solutions congruent with western perspectives and formulated from within a western epistemology that may not always be appropriate to non-western peoples. This study returns to the context in a striving towards taking an evolutionary and ecological approach in order to uncover more appropriate ways of dealing with the stuckness that occurs in the lives of people in the context of the study. Perhaps the research may also come closer to Lincoln & Guba's (2000) "spiritual" qualities in research, in an attempt to reach "much more and more than [is] important" (p.6) about humanity.

Auerswald (n.d.) has commented on the problem-focus of the typical western epistemological programme in mental health centres. The result is a proliferation of 'experts' in a growing multitude of specialities in a costly linear process searching for solutions to ever increasingly complex problems. A hierarchy of expertise is established and 'progress' is made but, he suggests, solutions are seldom arrived at for complex problems. Through exploring ecology, it is intended to open discussions about human behaviour in context with a certain naïveté in order to facilitate fresh, broader and more congruent perspectives on the psychology of local communities. It is hoped that this will lead to the discovery of small worlds of order through a discipline struggling to reform itself in a nation struggling to reform itself.

Conventionally, psychologists measure and assess behaviour from within the value systems of European and North American paradigms. A more detailed discussion of this will be undertaken further on in chapter four. Here, it is commented that the values and therefore the assessments, measures and interventions which are currently used by psychologists and recognised as tools of the profession, may be incorrect or inappropriate for cultures outside of the European and North American ones. Besides the ill fit of the value system of Europe and North America, much of the theory and instrumentation in the discipline of psychology is based on categorisation, a form of fragmentation. It has been suggested that institutionalised fragmentation interferes with any evolutionary process happening within an ecology (Lifschitz & Oosthuizen, 2001). The ultimate result of this interference may be alienation. This thesis suggests that psychologists working with people of a different value system from that of a European/North American one, need to use a different set of tools which may not be tools at all in any conventional sense in psychology.

As mentioned above, it is suggested by some researchers that a large part of psychology as a discipline has become institutionalised (Lifschitz & Oosthuizen, 2001) and thus any ecological evolutionary process has been interfered with. It has also been suggested that knowledge building, - such that more research in psychology builds on previous research so that gaps in information are filled and ultimately the world moves towards a full picture of the knowledge of human behaviour, - yields only small and not necessarily very useful amounts of information, and is subject to what Gergen (1998) has referred to as “historical perishability” (p. 114). This building-block or cumulative notion of knowledge is congruent with an institutionalised approach to knowledge and research. As has been suggested above, the inherent danger here is that knowledge encapsulated in this way can lead to alienation, corrupt value systems and ultimately finds itself obsolete.

Ecological (Auerswald, 1966, 1971a, 1971b, n.d.; Bateson, 1985,

1979) and post-modern movements (Gergen, 1991; Gergen, Lock, Gulerce & Misra, 1996; Kvale, 1992a) have responded to these problems by proposing that a more evolutionary and ecological approach would recognise a possible non-predictability about the progress of knowledge. It would allow for quantum leaps and chaotic patterns. Such is the nature of evolution and ecologies (Gergen, 1998; Prigogine, 1997). Ilya Prigogine, Nobel prize winner and professor of chemistry and physics, with particular interest in evolutionary and complex system processes, refers (1997) to a special issue of “Scientific American” in October 1994, devoted to life in the universe. It reports that at all levels of scientific, biologic and social systems of our universe it is possible to see a process of evolution with regard to instabilities and fluctuations.

One of the aims of this study will be to explore ecological processes within the context studied, and how they might contribute to an evolvment of a contextually sensitive and appropriate psychology, sustaining of human social systems in the broader South African context.

### Hegemony within Psychology

It is argued that the institutionalisation of psychology has resulted in hegemony, arrogance and mystification within the discipline (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991; Holdstock, 1981; Parker, 1999d; Parker, 2000; Said, 1978, 1989, 1993; Simone, 1990, 1993). Professionals entering the discipline from cultures other than that of the male, western, Euro-American, have reported a sense of alienation (Said, 1993; Seedat, 1997). Insurgent attempts to topple this hegemony have come mostly from non-western cultures and feminist movements (Bohan, 1992; Finchilescu, 1995; Harding, 1997; Lincoln, 2000).

As this study is contextualised within a community that is largely non-western, the arguments and issues around the perceived hegemony need be examined and documented. This is done in chapter six together with a



discussion and presentation of arguments for alternative forms of research. The form this study takes may be considered as deviating from the conventional institutionalised approach to research in the discipline. An attempt is made to fit the study with the historically prevailing oral narrative knowledge systems of the context (Bakker, 1996) in which the study is situated. Motivation for this is given in chapter five where African traditional systems of knowledge are discussed briefly, and in chapter six where western paradigms are looked at more closely with regard to the varying fit of some of them to an African context especially with regards to research.

### The Narratives

Case studies and clinical/contextual observations will be drawn upon, and these will, hopefully, contribute to a meaningful discussion of a way forward for the profession. Case studies (stories/ narratives/Other Stories) are set out in chapter three and are interspersed with comments and references to the theoretical discussions to be taken up in later chapters.

As referred to above, the African tradition of knowledge is embedded in oral histories comprising myths, legends, folktales, stories and narratives of various types (Asante, 1985; Bakker, 1996; Boateng, 1985; Hountondji, 1983; Nöthling, 1989; Onyewuenyi, 1991; Serequeberhan, 1991). Thus, it has seemed ecologically proper to present the data of this study in narrative form, and further motivation for doing so is provided in chapters five and six, as mentioned above. The narratives are contrasted with brief diagnostic descriptions of the stories. These provide the kind of information that may be required in order to make a conventional medico-psychological diagnosis of the presenting problems and to design an appropriate treatment plan according to a medical model approach. The narratives also attempt to introduce a dialogical approach, which it is suggested, carries ecological integrity.

The narratives are drawn from conversations with practitioners,

students, clients, and in self-reflection by the author, all of whom lived in some way within the context in which the study is situated.

### Layout of the Text

Chapter one presented The Story as a perturbation for the text which follows, while chapter three shares further experiences and ways of working within the identified context through Other Stories.

Chapter four examines the academic context of the study from a paradigmatic point of view. Some of the criticisms mentioned in this chapter with regard to hegemony in psychology and the subsequent alienation of the non-western, will be explored further to the extent that these ideas have given impetus to this study.

Chapter five, thereafter, will present some debates and voices from what is often referred to as the “African worldview” in psychology and related fields. Both of chapters four and five are expected to create an ecological map of the environment from which The Stories and the study emerged.

Chapter six presents considerations and discussions on the methodological approach taken. This is contextualised within the academic research context and motivated for within the context of the study.

Chapter seven reflects on the narratives and the Flow of the stories, in an attempt to find threads which entwine the stories into processes of ecological, evolutionary and sustainable significance.

Chapter eight attempts to harness the Flow with some concluding discussions.