as a "teacher." In conjunction with this change, cultural attitudes that learning, especially of interpersonal skills, is not an adult task must be challenged. With the gradual erosion of many entrenched attitudes, the direct training of interpersonal skills to all people experiencing difficulty in living in this complex world is beginning to take shape. Doubtless, as the movement takes more definite form, other and more complete historical perspectives than this will be delineated. Still, the movement is on, and alternative uses of microcounseling and interviewing training are cited as some of the forerunners of the psychoeducator model.

SECTION II

THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND SKILLS OF MICROCOUNSELING

The first section, with its definition of the structural and conceptual components of microcounseling as well as its discussion of the historical-theoretical base of the paradigm as both an educational and therapeutic modality, has set the stage. Microcounseling is a conceptual framework representing an array of skills and qualitative conditions associated with effective helping. This section presents the many skills of the microtraining framework with specific illustrations of the skills within an actual interview. Data presented here are primarily in a white middle-class framework, and cultural considerations will be examined in Chapters 8 and 9.

Basic to all microcounseling skills are the concepts of attending behavior and attention which are explored in detail in Chapter 3. Simply put, *clients in the helping process talk about what helpers listen to.* This chapter explores the process of listening or attending and points out how nonverbal and verbal attention patterns influence the behavior of the helpee.

Chapters 4 and 5 present the microtraining skills of attending and influencing. An overview of these skills may be found in Figure 1 (Chapter 4). Skills such as open and closed questions, paraphrasing, and reflection of feeling are explored in the chapter on attending skills. The chapter on skills of interpersonal influence stresses such concepts as effective self-expression, directions, self-disclosure, and interpretation. Within both chapters, the interview is presented as a process of interpersonal influence, and emphasis is placed on locating and recognizing what a helper does consciously and unconsciously to determine what happens in

a helping session.

Empathy is an important but all-too-vague construct of the helping professions. Chapter 6 examines empathy and presents new conceptual frames from microtraining to operationalize empathy, respect, immediacy, and other "core facilitative conditions" of the helping process. Also, Chapter 6 starts to give attention to the issues of alternative theoretical orientations to counseling and psychotherapy and provides a beginning discussion of some of the dimensions of helping which appear to transcend differences in theoretical orientations. This point will be elaborated upon in Chapter 7, where the microtraining skills used by different helpers will be considered. At this point, it appears that helpers of different schools use vastly different microtraining skills but often (but not always) come together when qualitative dimensions of helping are considered.

Some readers will find it helpful to read Appendix III concurrently with Chapters 4, 5, and 6 of this section. A typescript of a demonstration interview is presented which provides specific illustrations of most of the concepts discussed.

Finally, it is important to state that the skills listed here represent only one presentation or categorization of verbal and nonverbal dimensions of helping. While we have found this particular conceptualization of skills useful and fruitful for training and research, we are also aware that other frames for conceptualizing helping exist. We have found that each person who uses the *technology* of microtraining operates best when he or she adapts existing skills or revises *conceptual frame or theory* to fit special needs and interests. Do not let the discussion in the following chapters limit the potential of the technology for identifying new dimensions for analyzing and teaching the helping process.

Chapter 3

ATTENDING BEHAVIOR: AN UNDERLYING CONSTRUCT OF MICROTRAINING

MICROTRAINING PROCEDURES focus on specific skills and behaviors which can be defined, seen in operation, practiced, and evaluated. Rather than confuse the interviewing trainee with an overwhelming amount of data, the component-skills approach breaks interviewing into workable and observable dimensions.

The basic question asked by the research team (Ivey, Normington, Miller, Morrill, Haase, 1968) who first explored this area was What *are* the specific component skills of counseling? The search for skills to teach within the microcounseling framework began in traditional interviewing, counseling, and therapeutic texts. Many descriptions and theories were examined, but none was sufficiently specific or behavioral to be taught as a microtraining skill. The search next centered on direct observation of interviews, but these original efforts in observation proved fruitless. It was easy to rate an interviewer as "good" or "bad" but almost impossible to decide on what behaviors were indicative of effective counselors.

The breakthrough which resulted in the concept of attending behavior occurred with one of our secretaries, whom we shall call Mary. Frustrated with our lack of success in identifying skills of counseling, we decided to teach some interviewing skills to our secretary, who was unfamiliar with counseling procedures. Mary was asked to talk with a volunteer client and attempt to interview him; the session was to be videotaped. Mary began with "What's your name? Where are you from? What year in school are you?" The client responded pleasantly and positively, but after he

answered the third question, an awkward pause occurred. Mary appeared tense and uncomfortable; her eyes wandered about the room as she searched for something new to say. Shortly, she dredged up a new question, and the interview proceeded for a short time until another awkward break occurred. The interview continued in this stilted fashion for the remainder of the five-minute session. On only one occasion did Mary seem at ease; the client asked her a question and Mary momentarily forgot herself, relaxed, and talked about herself. While this may be appropriate social behavior, it is generally not considered interviewing.*

Mary illustrated many of the behaviors of the beginning counselor. She focused on herself and her responsibility for conducting the interview to the extent that it was almost impossible for her to listen to the client. Awkward pauses, loss of eye contact, physical tension, and talking about oneself rather than listening have been noted as common characteristics of the beginning interviewer.

After the first five-minute session, Mary received impromptu microcounseling training. While no written manual describing what was to be called attending behavior was available, we talked with her about finding a more comfortable, relaxed position and maintaining eye contact with the client so that she could communicate attentiveness and interest. Mary was instructed not to add new topics but simply to ask questions or make comments concerning something the client had already said. A videotape of experienced counselors was shown to Mary stressing these three concepts: (a) a relaxed, attentive posture, (b) eye contact, and (c) verbal following. Mary then viewed a videotape of the first session and analyzed her performance with the help of the supervisors. It might be observed that when we saw Mary failing to exhibit specific interviewing behaviors, it became possible to identify and teach them to her.

Following the training session, Mary returned to reinterview the same client. After a brief moment of artificiality, Mary began

*However, later research and evaluation suggest that talking about oneself at appropriate times may be a most useful interviewing skill (Higgins, Ivey, and Uhlemann, 1970; Ivey and Gluckstern, 1976a,b).

to respond in highly impactful ways. In fact, she looked like a highly skilled, experienced counselor. The change was not only dramatic, but when we began to consider the twenty minutes of training it was almost shocking! We have had less change of behavior in some practicum students in an entire year. A pause occurred when the student had exhausted the last question, and Mary's lack of training in counseling skills again became apparent; however, after a short struggle, she asked a question regarding something that had been said earlier in the session, then relaxed, and the interview continued smoothly.

Interestingly, the behaviors learned in the interview generalized to other situations. The following Monday, Mary could not wait to tell us about attending to people over the weekend. She had developed a new behavioral repertoire which was reinforced by a new kind of excitement and involvement with other people. Generalization to some degree is expected, since Mary is of the white middle-class culture and microcounseling concepts of attending behavior were generated from class-related helping theories of the meaning of verbal and nonverbal communication. However, it is important to note that attending behaviors vary cross-culturally. Discussion of the need to adapt the training to specific cultural demands is not warranted here since it is presented in a subsequent chapter. Suffice to say that patterns of verbal following, eye contact, and nonverbal communication are culturally related. Hall's primer of cross-cultural communication, *The Silent Language* (1959), is basic reading for any professional helper who would teach communication skills to other groups or truly understand the nature of communication in any helping interview. The fact is that patterns of attending and communication differ widely from culture to culture and from individual to individual. Thus, for the most part, the remaining section of this chapter will present attention as studied within a white middle-class culture.

Further, the stress in this chapter is on three channels of communication: eye contact, nonverbal communication, and lexical usage. Other channels of communication such as vocal intonation, speech rate, use of different languages, proxemic and space vari-

ables, and time sequence are not discussed. These variables are culturally important and may even take precedence at times over the three central dimensions of attending behavior stressed in this section, particularly in cross-cultural situations. For practical purposes in training both helpers and individuals in communication skills, we have found that stress on the three components of attending behavior is sufficient. As workshops and training progress, trainees begin to develop intuitive and practical knowledge in other channels of verbal and nonverbal communication. For further examination of these issues, Hall (1959; 1976), Mehrabian (1972), Wiener and Mehrabian (1968), Birdwhistell (1967), and Ekman, Friesen, and Ellsworth (1972) provide helpful data. Scheflen's (1973) in-depth analysis of psychotherapy transactions is perhaps the most relevant.

ATTENTION AS A POTENT REINFORCER

Rogers (1951, p. 349) has made the following statement:

> In work with various groups it has been sobering to observe how little the members attend to what others say. Without attention there can be no understanding and hence no communication. Apparently the act of attending carefully to another person is a difficult task for most people. They are usually thinking what they will say when the speaker stops.

Rogers goes on to point out that attending to a person is not enough; one must demonstrate to the other that one *has* listened. He suggests looking at the speaker and nodding one's head as giving some proof that one has listened. "If, however, the leader paraphrases the speaker's comment, he thereby furnishes conclusive proof that he has attended" (p. 349-350).

An important aspect of establishing a relationship with the client is being aware of, and responsive to, the communications of that individual and communicating this attentiveness. The communication of attentiveness is a potent reinforcer in counselor-client interaction and plays an important role in the establishment of a relationship. Skinner, in *Science and Human Behavior* (1953, p. 78), has discussed the concepts of attention as follows:

> The attention of people is reinforcing because it is a necessary condition for other reinforcements for them. In general, only people who are attending to us reinforce our behavior. The attention of someone who is particularly likely to supply reinforcement—a parent, a teacher, or a loved one—is an especially good generalized reinforcer and sets up especially strong attention-getting behavior.

The research literature strongly supports the value of attention in promoting human behavior change. For example, Allen, Hart, Buell, Harris, and Wolf (1964) demonstrated that teacher attention was maintaining the peer isolation of a nursery school pupil. When the teachers switched their approach to giving the child attention when she was interacting with other children but not when she approached the teachers, her isolation behavior disappeared. Kennedy and Thompson (1967) used attention to modify the behavior of a hyperactive first-grade child. Whitley and Sulzer (1970) used attention to help teachers reduce disruptive classroom behavior. Wahler (1969) has trained parents in the use of differential attention to shape the behavior of "oppositional children." Similar approaches in the use of attention with children have proven equally effective (Quay, Werry, McQueen, and Sprague, 1966; Zimmerman and Zimmerman, 1962).

Evidence for the use of attention as a reinforcer of *verbal behavior* was first provided by Greenspoon (1955) when he successfully demonstrated that a subject's speech may be modified by minimal nonverbal and verbal cues. Extensive research since that time has demonstrated a wide variety of methods through which human behavior may be modified by verbal and nonverbal attention patterns. Excellent reviews of the literature in this field are provided by Bandura (1969), Phillips and Kanfer (1969), Ullmann and Krasner (1965), and Bergin and Suinn (1975).

Content analysis of interview typescripts reveals that counselors either directly or unconsciously selectively condition client responses to suit the counselor's theoretical orientation (Bandura, Lipher, and Miller, 1960; Murray, 1956; Rogers, 1960). Bandura (1961, p. 154) has noted the following:

> . . . the results of these studies show that the therapist not only controls the patient by rewarding him with interest and approval when the patient behaves in a fashion the therapist desires but that

he also controls through punishment in the form of mild disapproval and withdrawal of interest when the patient behaves in ways that are threatening to the therapist or run counter to his goals.

A BEHAVIORAL EXAMINATION OF ATTENTION

Despite the emphasis on attention as a generalized reinforcer, relatively little thought has been given to the definition of the *behavioral components* of attending. The three behaviors identified with Mary and subsequently studied by Ivey, Normington, Miller, Morrill, and Haase (1968) are considered important by others as well. The following discussion provides a framework wherein the behavioral aspects of attention may be systematically considered.

Pepyne and Zimmer (1969) have given special attention to integrating *verbal conditioning and the counseling interview*. In their review, they conclude that counseling appears to be emerging as a process in which specific changes in a client's verbal behavior can be predicted as well as explained. Kennedy and Zimmer (1968) found that a paraphrase and a neutrally toned "mm-hmm" utterance were effective reinforcers with respect to self-reference statements; however, "mm-hmm" with an affirming head nod and "I see" were not. They also found that different counselors obtained significantly different results from comparable subjects. This work has been extended by Crowley (1970), Hackney (1969), and Pepyne (1968), who have further demonstrated specific aspects of the conditionability of response classes (topics) in the interview and emotionally laden and nonfeeling-tone statements.

Exline has given detailed study to *eye contact* and visual interaction patterns (Exline, Gray, and Schuette, 1965; Exline and Winters, 1965) and finds that eye contact between people represents generally more positive attitudes. Out of this general finding, a variety of other studies detailing the complexity of eye contact patterns are continually arising. Exline and his coworkers, for example, found that competitive and "Machiavellian" subjects tend to maintain eye contact longer under stressful conditions. If an interviewer comments about an interviewee unfavorably, the interviewee will decrease his or her amount of eye contact.

Ivey and Gluckstern (1974b) point out that the timing of eye contact breaks often illustrates to the careful observer topics which are uncomfortable to the speaker *or* listener.

Physical components of attending behavior also have a research background which justifies their importance. Nonverbal communication patterns have shown themselves to be amenable to direct study (Duncan, 1969). Condon and Ogston (1966) have demonstrated that the physical movements of one member of a group or dyad affect others. Birdwhistell (1967) and Scheflen (1969) as well as Ekman and Freisen (1974, 1975) have demonstrated how to systematize body postures and have shown the importance of nonverbal communication in interpersonal relationships.

The literature on nonverbal communication is ably summarized by Mehrabian (1972). He notes that forward trunk lean and a relaxed body posture are received favorably by the observer and are considered indications of interest. Additionally, a frequently quoted study by Haase and Tepper (1972) found the combination of eye contact, forward trunk lean, closer distance, and positive verbal message was rated as demonstrating the highest degree of empathic understanding. Indeed, they found a positive verbal message was vitiated when not accompanied by nonverbal behavior reflecting good attending skills. A similar study by Bayes (1972) found body, head, and hand movements and smiling to be indicators of high "warmth" ratings. The evidence presented by these studies aptly demonstrates the importance of a formalized interviewing training program including a focus on the nonverbal aspects of an interviewer's behavior.

Individuals give attention to one another by many different means. While these can be divided into a variety of conceptual frameworks, the concepts of attending behavior (eye contact, physical attention, and verbal following behavior) appear to be central aspects by which people relate to, reinforce, and interact with one another. This brief summary of the research literature suggests the power of this means of interpersonal influence. Effectively combining the three dimensions into one larger construct would seem to provide an important vehicle for describing

much of what happens between individuals in the interview, as well as in many of life's other interactions.

Attention is central to the interaction between interviewer and client. Unless the interviewer listens or attends to the client, little in the way of understanding will occur. Too many beginning counselors and interviewers fail to listen to their clients.

Attending behavior coupled with microtraining techniques offers a new approach to many problems. Attending can be taught as technique, but unlike pure technique ("say the client's name at least three times"), attending implies real interaction. In order to engage in the skill of attending to client comments, the person must listen to content. To follow communication of feeling by appropriate changes in voice timbre and quality and by appropriate statements, one must attend to the feeling that is being communicated. The person who is incongruent or attending inwardly rather than to the client will be unable to listen. Once it is initiated, attending seems self-reinforcing and may even provide an approach that can be used regardless of the theoretical framework or applied work situation of the trainee.

Some may question the possible artificiality of attending behavior or other skills suggested in this book. They validly object to seeing life as a series of exercises in which the individual constantly dredges into a "handbag of skills" to adapt to each life situation. Our experience has been that individuals may sometimes begin attending in an artificial, deliberate manner. However, once attending has been initiated, the person to whom one is listening tends to become more animated, and this in turn reinforces the attender, who very quickly forgets about attending deliberately and soon attends naturally. A variety of our clients and trainees have engaged in conscious attending behavior only to find themselves so interested in the person with whom they are talking that they lose themselves in the other.

Polanyi's (1966) concept of tacit knowing discussed in Chapter 1 provides a useful explanation of this phenomenon. As in the golf swing of the talented professional, the specific behaviors of attention have been integrated (unconsciously if you will) into a larger, perhaps more meaningful gestalt. Sparking deliberate and

distinct behavioral acts into a new whole is the relationship (or mutual reinforcement pattern) between the individual who first started attending and the person to whom that individual attends. Koestler (1964) describes similar phenomena under the concept of the habit hierarchy and points out that the bringing together of formerly distinct behaviors into a new whole frees the individual for creative exploration of larger and more complex issues.

In summary, attending behavior could be defined as simple listening. However, the three central aspects of attending behavior provide a specific set of behaviors through which listening may be taught. Too often interviewer trainers have said "listen," without defining what the act of listening is. The counselor should look at the client to note postural movements, gestures, and facial expressions which give important indications concerning the client. Eye contact need not be constant, nor should it be fixed staring; it should be a natural looking at the client. Secondly, postural position and relaxation are important. Unless the interviewer is relaxed, it will be difficult to focus on the client. When a helper is tense in an interviewing session, attention is often focused on personal concerns rather than on the client.

Finally, verbal following behavior demands that the counselor respond to the last comment or some preceding comment of the client without introducing new data. Topic jumping or asking questions in a random pattern is a common occurrence among beginning interviewers. If the interviewer attends to the client's comments and does not add new information, it is surprising how well he or she gets to know the client. In our society, few people really listen to one another; when someone attends to us, it is a powerful reinforcer to keep talking.

ATTENDING, ISLAND, AND HIATUS BEHAVIOR*

Audiotapes of counseling sessions have tended to give the impression that the counseling interview is a continuous process.

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With videorecording, the counseling session is not seen as a continuous unit but as a series of islands and hiatuses.

The island consists of a topic (response class) or a series of very closely related topics, sometimes small, sometimes broad in nature. The island is clearly a unit, and there is almost complete agreement among observers of a tape of the point where the counselor and client reach the end of an island. At this point, a hiatus occurs, a pause or respite. The hiatus may be very short, or it may be extended; it may be represented by the uncomfortable period where the novice therapist desperately searches for something to say while the client anxiously awaits another go-ahead signal, or it may be a comfortable period of reflection between an experienced therapist and the patient in the midst of profitable long-term therapy.

The hiatus appears to be a period of negotiation between the counselor and client, a negotiation in which new response classes or topics are sought. Both counselor and client become acutely aware of both verbal and nonverbal cues during this negotiation. The client in search of a new topic may present possible alternatives to which the therapist has the choice of attending or ignoring (reinforcing or extinguishing). A typescript of this type of interaction might read as follows:

Client: Well, I can't think of anything else to say.
Interviewer: (Silence.)
Client: I think I'll go shopping this afternoon.
Interviewer: (Silence.)
Client: Except I don't like to go shopping alone and all my friends have classes this afternoon.
Interviewer: It's not fun to do things alone.

In this example, possible topics (shopping, class schedule, friends, and being alone) are treated differently by the counselor. By silence, the interviewer extinguishes certain topics. When the interviewer does reinforce the client's last comment by attending, the potentially emotionally loaded topic of lack of companionship is selected. If the client responds to the counselor's statement, the negotiation, and thus the hiatus, is concluded, and a new island emerges.

The island, of course, represents a series of interviewer-client utterances on a similar topic. It appears to flow smoothly until that topic is exhausted and a new hiatus or negotiation takes place.

It is now possible to return to Mary, our secretarial interviewer-in-training. When a topic was launched and Mary was attending, she appeared almost as a professional counselor. However, when a hiatus was reached, her lack of training in counseling skills became apparent. The hiatus called for initiation of new areas, and Mary did not follow one of the counseling or interviewing traditions. If she had, she would have waited for the client to respond (nondirective), initiated an expression of her own feeling state (recent client-centered), directed attention to an early experience (analytic), presented a discriminative stimulus to elicit verbal responses which could be reinforced (learning theory), brought out a Strong Vocational Interest Blank (vocational counseling), or asked a question about previous job history (employment interviewing for job placement).

Mary actually began to talk about an interesting experience in her own immediate past (standard social behavior). However, since she was still attempting to engage in attending behavior, when the interviewee responded to her, she listened to him, reinforced his comment, and once again *looked like* the highly skilled interviewer.

The concepts of island and hiatus in interviewing provide useful speculations for research in counseling and therapy. Some of the contradictory research findings in content analysis of counseling may be explained with these terms. It is possible that those studies showing highly consistent counselor behaviors between theoretical disciplines have focused on behaviors characteristic of islands, and those studies showing differential behavior for counselors of differing persuasions have focused upon behaviors characteristic of the hiatus.

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avoid eye contact but still maintain attention), and verbally attend or follow through with clients.

However, it is equally clear that interviewers, counselors, and therapists of differing persuasions and differing skills do indeed differ. It is likely that they differ in what they attend to or reinforce in the client's behavior. An employment interviewer may notice the nonverbal cues of the interviewee but ignore them if they are not job-relevant, whereas an existential therapist may pay considerable attention to these same cues. An analyst may attend to statements about a person's work primarily in terms of analytic significance. The hiatus or negotiation period provides the clearest opportunity for observation and study of differential reinforcing or attending patterns of interviewers.

The concept of attention provides an explanation for the success of the many varieties of counseling and interviewing approaches. For example, it has been pointed out that an analytic client dreams in Freudian symbols, a Jungian client in mythological symbolism, and a Gestalt client in parts and wholes. The therapist at key hiatus points has simply selectively attended or reinforced the client's verbalizations which support his or her theoretical framework. A Freudian client may have a mythological symbol in a dream, but if mention of the symbol is met by silence on the part of the therapist, it is not likely to figure prominently in the session.

Similarly, vocational counselors demonstrate differential attending or reinforcement patterns. One counselor may attend primarily to past work history and factual information about job progression, noting and reinforcing client comments about skills and competencies developed. Another counselor may attend to client comments related to attitudes and emotions toward the supervisor. Thus, typescripts of vocational interviews conducted from different attentional frames reveal marked differences in content, although both counselors might be very effective in attending behavior.

ATTENDING BEHAVIOR AND INTENTIONALITY

Ivey (1970) and Ivey and Rollin (1974) have discussed the *intentional individual,* the fully functioning person, in the following way:

> The person who acts with intentionality has a sense of capability. He is one who can generate alternative behaviors in a given situation and "come at" a problem from different vantage points. The intentional individual is not bound to one course of action but can respond in the moment to changing life situations as he looks forward to longer-term goals.

Microteaching in interviewing techniques draws on a similar concept. Counselors often cannot act with intentionality; they do not have a sufficiently varied behavioral repertoire and so tend to act in a stereotyped fashion, using one or two types of interview leads. Training in the specific skills of microcounseling gives the beginning counselor a series of behaviors which can be drawn on to facilitate interviewer-client interaction.

The model of the intentional interviewer supplies a general frame of reference for the objectives of an interviewing or counseling training program. Most interviewer trainers wish to help their trainees develop a unique approach to interviewing. While the supervisor may occasionally serve as a beginning model for the novice therapist, the supervisor is most effective when trainees develop their own behavioral repertoire or interviewing style. Fully professional counselors are their own persons. While they understand and appreciate the skills of others, they are capable of making their own unique synthesis in the actual interview.

The specific objective of microtraining is to supply beginning counselors or interviewing trainees with an acquaintance of and experience in a variety of interviewing skills. It is anticipated that no one student needs, nor will be interested in, all the skills which could be taught. Microcounseling, then, is concerned with introducing trainees to a variety of skills in the expectation that each individual will eventually develop a unique and personal behavioral repertoire.*

*Intentionality forms a part of the concept of communication competence and the "culturally effective individual" explored in Chapter 9.

Mary's behavior could also be viewed from the framework of intentionality. When the hiatus was reached during the first session, her behavioral repertoire as an interviewer was limited, perhaps nonexistent, and she had no readily available response. Hence the awkward pauses, talking about herself, and topic jumping. When Mary was given the one additional skill of attending behavior, response possibilities were greatly increased, the conversational islands lengthened, she talked less, and the individual with whom she was talking enjoyed the session more.

As one swallow does not make a summer, neither does attending behavior make an interviewer. Additional skills, practice, and experience would be necessary before Mary could demonstrate fully effective interviewing techniques. Mary's intentionality as an interviewer was increased by adding attending behavior to her repertoire, but it would require more skills to give her more choices if she were to become fully intentional. One cannot be free or make choices unless one has alternatives available.

Then what is the relationship between attending behavior and intentionality? The interviewer's use of attending behavior in the interview determines the direction and content of the session. Zimmer and his students (Crowley, 1970; Hackney, 1969; Pepyne, 1968) and Miller et al. (1973) demonstrated that selective attention or reinforcement profoundly influence what happens in the interview. Through use of attention and the constructs of attending behavior, the intentional counselor can lead the interview in many directions. Through use of selective attention and a variety of behavioral skills, the counselor may be of maximal benefit to a maximum number and type of clients. The one-tool counselor who may lack intentionality, the ability to focus attention, and accompanying behavioral skills is less flexible and less able to deal with new and unusual occurrences during interviews. Further, the range of clients who may be helped is reduced. Unable to attend to the variety of responses and behaviors the client emits, the individual who lacks intentionality is unable to respond to all dimensions of the individual's experience.

ATTENDING BEHAVIOR, ATTENTION, AND OTHER FRAMES OF REFERENCE

Attending behavior is considered here primarily from a behavioral frame of reference. The related construct of attention has been an issue in psychology for a considerable period of time. There are important distinctions between attending behavior and attention as the following definition by William James (1890, pp. 403-404) illustrates:

> Everyone knows what attention is. It is the taking possession by the mind, in clear and vivid form, of one out of what seems several possible objects or trains of thought. Focalization, concentration, of consciousness are of its essence. It implies withdrawal from some things in order to deal effectively with others, and it is a condition which has a real opposite in the confused, dazed, scatterbrained state which in French is called *distraction* . . .

Attention appears to describe the functional significance of attending behavior in that it is a way in which the conscious organization of experience may be described. Much of Luria's (1969) work describing the development of cerebral organization in children could be viewed from a similar frame of reference, although he does not emphasize the term "attention."

Attending behavior is directly observable and measurable, while attention remains a more subtle area of study. It is possible, for example, for an interviewer to be engaging in attending behavior in terms of all physical and verbal manifestations while primary attention is directed elsewhere. The Skinnerian view of attention is one which is best observed in the behavioral relationship of one individual to another. The focus of attention as described by William James, however, remains a more intuitive, inner-directed matter, less subject to direct observation.

The literature on attention has been diverse and has demonstrated a lack of synthesis over the years. Woodworth and Schlosberg (1954, pp. 72-73) made the following comment:

> In spite of the practical reality of attending, the status of attention in systematic psychology has been uncertain and dubious for a long time. Early psychologists thought of it as a faculty or power, akin to the Will. . . . Any such view was strongly opposed by the association-

> ists who wished to recognize as forces only sensory stimulations and association. The Gestalt psychologists have regarded any force of attention as extraneous to the field forces which in their view are the dynamic factors in human activity. The behaviorists have rejected attention as a mere traditional mentalistic concept.

Recently, however, attention has been examined in more depth. Norman (1969) has developed a comprehensive model for attentional processes and presents valuable data on selective attention, the acquisition and processing of information, and memory. Trabasso and Bower (1968) have studied the relationship of attention to learning. Both works summarize much of the literature on attention. A major symposium on attention was held at the 1969 International Congress of Psychology in London. The review by Swets and Kristofferson (1970) should also be cited. It appears that attention as a construct is gaining increasing popularity.

Attention is also an important construct in more esoteric areas of psychology. Maupin (1965), for example, examined the concept of attention in relationship to Zen meditation exercise. Kasamatsu and Hirai (1966) found that the focused attention of Zen exercises resulted in predictable patterns of brain-wave alpha rhythm. Shor (1962) relates hypnosis to concepts of attention. Deikman (1963) discusses mystical phenomena as being founded initially on focused attention and cites hypnotic concepts of automatization similar to the integrative constructs of Polanyi (1966) and Koestler (1964) mentioned earlier. Discussing autogenic training, Luthe (1969) describes many studies in which passive concentration, special types of attention, and related methods have resulted in drops in blood sugar, decreases in muscle potential, changes in peripheral circulation, rise in skin temperature, respiratory changes, and other physical phenomena. Instruction in such inner attentional processes may someday become part of every person's experience.

Biofeedback is still another esoteric area of psychology in which attention plays an important role. The process, for the most part, entails providing the patient with relatively immediate information or feedback of some bioelectric response. Biofeedback training itself has three main goals: (1) the development of increased awareness of some internal physiological function, (2) the establishment of control over this function, and (3) the transfer or generalization of this control from the training site to other areas of one's life. It is obvious that although a conglomeration of variables is operating during biofeedback training, attention is *sine qua non*. As such, attention is becoming important in the treatment of various psychosomatic disorders. Indeed, a review of the clinical applications of biofeedback training (Blanchard and Young, 1974) cites evidence demonstrating biofeedback training to be an effective treatment procedure for such diverse diseases as hypertension, migraine headaches, cardiac arrhythmias, and epilepsy. They conclude that although it would be premature to hail biofeedback as a panacea for psychosomatic and other disorders, the evidence is often interesting and provocative. Since the role of attention is so important in this procedure, perhaps now more than ever instruction in attentional processes needs to become a part of every person's experience.

Attention and existentialism also deserve consideration. The French *distraction* described by William James as a confused, disordered state is closely akin to Roquentin's experience of decomposition in the following passage from Sartre's *Nausea* (1964, p. 128):

> Existence is a deflection. Trees, night-blue pillars, the happy bubbling of a fountain, vital smells, little heat mists floating in the cold air, a red-haired man digesting on a bench . . . In vain I tried to *count* the chestnut trees, to *locate* them by their relationship to the Velleda, to compare their height with the height of the plane trees: each of them escaped the relationship in which I tried to enclose it, isolated itself, and overflowed.

It may be observed that the inability of Roquentin to focus on or attend to his surroundings has been important in his inability to organize his world. Similarly, the inability of the three principals to commit themselves to action in *No Exit* (Sartre, 1946) is another powerful description of the inability of man to maintain attention or commitment to the environment in a focal manner. It is interesting to observe that participants in sensory-

restriction experiments tend to experience problems of attention not unlike those described above (Zubec, 1964a,b,c). Understimulation appears to produce a similar problem in developing consistent attentional processes.

The French existentialists suggest that the way out of man's dilemma is action in an absurd world despite possible awareness that the action itself may be absurd. The route to action is existential commitment or, alternatively defined, the focalization of one's attentional processes to one dimension of the multitude of possibilities which exist in one's environment. The analogy between the existential paradox "to live is to die" and the need for withdrawal from other stimuli if one is to concentrate on one stimulus in James' definition should be apparent.

Intentionality is, of course, a concept prominent in the writing of some existentialists (May, 1969). The more behavioral definition of intentionality presented here may not be much different from that of the self-actualized individual. The truly effective or actualized interviewer will have many alternative behaviors and the capability to engage in these behaviors with satisfaction to self and others. The concepts of intentionality, attending behavior, and attention suggest some areas of agreement, or at least discussion, among differing views of humankind.

Conscious, deliberate attending behavior may be viewed as one route out of the existential dilemma. Consider the beginning interviewer beleaguered by a multitude of stimuli from a talkative client. The interviewer may be unable to organize or synthesize any meaning from the client's comments. Clearly, the client is in control of such a session (even though seeking help from the counselor). The counselor who supplies a variety of leads and responses to the client without any effort at organization may confuse both him or herself and the client. By deliberate focusing on one dimension of the client's experience, the counselor can help bring the interview under control; once the interview has been focused, it is possible to build gradually to the most important and relevant dimensions and to help the client grow.

SUMMARY

Attention and the accompanying constructs of attending behavior provide a comprehensive framework for the intentional interviewer. Counselors of varying orientations and areas of expertise may be distinguished by the issues of content and feeling to which they attend and thus reinforce. As such, attending behavior does not explain varying counseling theories nor does it suggest that one type of interviewing is more effective than another. Attending behavior simply illustrates an important common denominator in a variety of counseling and interviewing approaches. It also provides a systematic way to test the validity of alternative approaches.

More than one approach to human behavior change is effective. At a minimum, there is clinical evidence indicating that approaches as varying as psychoanalysis, trait-factor vocational counseling, and behavior therapy do assist individuals. The important question may be which therapist, with what treatment, is most appropriate, at what time, with what important situational variables, and with what client? If this highly individualistic approach to interviewing and behavior change is accepted, the intentional counselor, who is able to direct responses in a variety of directions, may well be the most successful and facilitative helper.