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Unique outcomes in professional psychology training through an adventure experience

This article focuses on how an adventure programme can be used to address professional development in general, and specifically the professional identity of postgraduate psychology students. The literature study focuses on didactic instruction as well as experiential learning and adventure-based experiential learning. The study was undertaken from a narrative position and narrative analysis was done of postgraduate psychology students' narratives. From the narrative analysis it would seem that the adventure programme created unique outcomes for the students, as their narratives changed from narratives with an individualist character to narratives with more collective tendencies as the adventure programme unfolded.

Unieke uitkomste in professionele sielkunde-opleiding deur 'n avontuurervaring

Hierdie artikel fokus op die gebruik van 'n avontuur-gebaseerde program om professionele ontwikkeling in die algemeen en, meer spesifiek, professionele identiteit van nagraadse sielkunde studente aan te spreek. Die literatuurstudie skenk aandag aan didaktiese leer, asook aan ervaringsleer en avontuur-gebaseerde ervaringsleer. Die narratiewe metafoor het as teoretiese vertrekpunt in die studie gedien en 'n narratiewe analise is op die narratiewe van nagraadse sielkunde studente gedoen. Vanuit die narratiewe analise het dit geblyk dat die avontuur-gebaseerde program unieke uitkomste vir die studente geskep het. Die studente se narratiewe het verander van narratiewe met 'n individualistiese karakter tot narratiewe met 'n meer kollektiewe geneigdheid soos wat die avontuur-gebaseerde program ontvou het.

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The training of students in professional postgraduate psychology programmes is predominantly done within the scientist-practitioner model. This model addresses academic training, practical experience and professional development. Academic training entails students' development of theoretical knowledge in psychology; exposing students to psychological work with clients enhances their practical experience by employing psychological skills, while professional development focuses on the development of students' professional identity and ethical stance (Beyers 1981, Farrell 1996, Phares 1992).

The MA (Counselling Psychology) programme at the University of Pretoria (UP) is based on the scientist-practitioner model. Within the scientist component of the counselling psychology programme, which is also regarded as the researcher component, students are expected to draft a research proposal, conduct a research project and write a research report. This can be done from a qualitative and/or quantitative position. The practitioner component of the counselling psychology programme entails academic training in Fundamentals of Psychology, Psychological Assessment, Counselling Psychology, Community Psychology or Sport Psychology, while practical training (MA first year) and an internship (MA second year) are done at organisations accredited with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA).

The professional development of students underpins the scientist-practitioner model where special attention is paid to the development of students' professional identity as an aspect of professional development. George & Christiani (1990: 12) state:

> the qualities of the counsellor [researcher] as a person, as opposed to what he or she actually does during counselling [research], require special attention.

Simons & Andersen (1995: 450) support this by stating that the most important part of being a psychologist (researcher and/or practitioner) is to "know thyself". Although the professional development component of students is addressed throughout the counselling psychology programme it primarily receives attention during weekly supervision and a yearly adventure experience. Professional development is a

requirement of the HPCSA for students in postgraduate professional training programmes, as well for health care professionals (medical doctors, dentists, psychologists) in practice (HPCSA 2007).

Based on the researcher's observations and experience as co-ordinator (9 years) and facilitator/lecturer (10 years) of the counselling psychology programme it seems that students who enter the counselling psychology programme have a dominant narrative[1] on professional identity (DNPI) of "I am the expert". This implies that within a psychological relationship (personal counselling, career counselling) students often see themselves as active givers of psychological knowledge, also viewed as privileged knowledge, while clients are often viewed as passive receivers of this psychological knowledge. As the counselling psychology programme is shaped by post-modernism in general and social constructionism specifically (Gergen 1985, 1994, 1995 & 1997), students are challenged to deconstruct the DNPI and develop an alternative narrative[2] on professional identity (ANPI) of "I am a collaborator". This implies deconstructing psychological knowledge as privileged knowledge on human behaviour to having equal status with other forms of knowledge, for example, the knowledge imbedded in the experiences of clients, and to deconstruct the role of clients from being passive receivers of psychological knowledge to being active participants in the dismantling of dominant problem-saturated narratives to the construction of alternative narratives about themselves.

The focus of this research was on the construction of unique outcomes by means of an adventure experience for postgraduate counselling psychology students. By participating in an adventure

1 A dominant narrative can be seen as a preferred way-of-being pertaining to various phenomena (age, gender, profession, race, sexuality for instance) that is afforded to people within a specific culture (cf Freedman & Combs 1996 & 2002, Morgan 2000, White & Epston 1990, Zimmerman & Dickerson 1994).
2 An alternative narrative can be seen as an alternative way-of-being pertaining to various phenomena (age, gender, profession, race, sexuality) that is afforded to people within a specific culture and is in opposition to the dominant narrative (cf Freedman & Combs 1996 & 2002, Morgan 2000, White & Epston 1990, Zimmerman & Dickerson 1994).

programme students could be challenged to move from their known comfort zone (DNPI) to an unknown stretch zone (ANPI), therefore allowing for learning to take place (Priest & Gass 1997). A unique outcome can be seen as any experience that allows for the challenging of a dominant narrative, for example the DNPI, and the development of an alternative narrative, for example the ANPI (Morgan 2000). An example of an adventure experience in the health care professions that created a unique outcome was the case of Gaileen Eilers. As a medical doctor she lived a dominant narrative where she saw the medical world as a place where having structure, being in control, striving for perfection, hosting unrealistic expectations, caring for patients and not herself, were the norms. She had also been suffering from depression and an eating disorder for 17 years. After trying to commit suicide she was admitted to a clinic where she received therapy. She said that she gained from each component of treatment, but the adventure experience stood out from the other forms of therapy. The adventure experience allowed her to start developing an alternative narrative that was characterised by allowing herself to accept help from other people, making mistakes does not mean that she is a failure, having control is not the most important thing in life, people have the ability to make the impossible possible, success lies in the process and not necessarily in the outcome, leading a meaningful life requires flexibility, and living in the here-and-the-now constitutes meaningfulness (Eilers 1997).

1. Adventure

In this research an adventure programme was used to generate an adventure experience for students from which they could learn about themselves with the aim of translating what they had learnt about themselves to their professional identity. For this reason this section of the article will focus briefly on two dominant modes of learning, namely didactic instruction and experiential learning.

1.1 Didactic instruction

In the field of didactic instruction there is a teacher, a subject and a learner. The teacher is seen as the expert on a subject and the task of the teacher is to convey subject knowledge to the learner. Furthermore, the teacher also has the task of evaluating the learner (Hovelynck 2001). This method of teaching can be seen as teacher-centred. The basic assumptions of this way of instruction are that students learn because teachers teach, or the programme did something to the person. As one trip participant once told me, "It's like you're trying to open my head and pour in your stuff" (DeLay 1996: 76). Didactic instruction can be done from a cognitive and/or behaviourist perspective (Coleman 1979, Kirk 1987).

1.2 Experiential learning

Experiential learning can be seen as an alternative perspective on learning to cognitive and/or behaviourist instruction (Hopkins & Putman 1993), and can be described as a process in which people participate in specific activities and then reflect on the doing of those activities (Priest & Gass 1997). This form of learning is learner-centred. It focuses on the role of experience in education (Hovelynck 2001). The ethos of experiential learning is encapsulated in the following words by Einstein: "I never teach my pupils, I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn best" (Priest *et al* 2000: 6).

Adventure-based learning, a form of experiential learning, believes that personal growth takes place through reflection on experiences. Furthermore, adventure-based learning involves the use of adventurous activities that provide an individual and/or group with compelling tasks to accomplish (Priest & Gass 1997). Therefore, it can be said that experiential learning is learning through doing with reflection and that adventure-based learning is in essence experiential learning that takes place by using an adventure-based activity. Adventure-based learning can be used within adventure-based programmes for various purposes, such as recreation, education and development, as well as facilitating therapeutic processes (Miles & Priest 1999).

One example of a study that falls within the education and development realm was done by Carlson & McKenna (2000). The aim of the study was to create personal awareness amongst 40 (20-27 years) human movement science students at an Australian university, to allow these students to realise that being a good teacher included academic and sport excellence, as well as personal awareness. To create this awareness the researchers made use of an adventure-based programme, and asked the students to write about their experiences. These written documents were then analysed in a qualitative way, from which the following themes emerged: anxiety, supportive environment, peer-group support, individualising, peer-group influencing, personal outcomes, coping mechanisms, subjective perceptions, goal formulation and professional outcomes.

Another example of research within the education and development field was done by Human (2006). The aim of the study was to allow six postgraduate counselling psychology students (23-32 years) who did their MA (Counselling Psychology) (1999-2000) degree at a South African university to participate in an adventure-based programme as part of their professional development. These students were asked to reflect on their adventure experience in writing and a phenomenological analysis was done on the material. The following themes emerged from the analysis: the students' discovery of physical and emotional boundaries, experiencing anxiety before and during the adventure programme, becoming aware of students' roles in the group, regaining cohesion in the group through an adventure experience and the interplay between personal and interpersonal trust.

The present study is situated within the education and development sphere, as the aim was to address the professional development of postgraduate counselling psychology students by means of an adventure experience.

2. Narrative metaphor

As the students had to make sense of their adventure experience, the narrative metaphor was adopted as the theoretical stance for the research. Narrative can be seen as the primary metaphor available

to people to make sense of experiences (Edwards 1997, Monk *et al* 1997). Johnson (1993: 11) states "narrative is a fundamental mode of understanding, by means of which we make sense of all forms of human action". The narrative metaphor could therefore assist students to make sense of their adventure experience as a unique outcome.

The narratives people construct to help them make sense of their experiences are primarily shaped by history and culture, as narrative is the meeting place of experience, history and culture (cf Crossley 2000, Lock *et al* 2004, Sclater 2003, White & Epston 1990). History implies that when people narrate their experiences they do it by taking past-lived experiences and possible future experiences into account, as past and future fuse into the present narrative (Larner 1998). Furthermore, people also draw on culture when narrating their experiences. According to Cushman (1995: 17-8):

> Culture is not indigenous 'clothing' that covers the universal human; rather it is an integral part of each individual's psychological flesh and bones […] the material objects we create, the ideas we hold and the actions we take are shaped in a fundamental way by the social framework we have been raised in.

Culture therefore implies employing, for example, folk heroes, traditions, discourses, metaphors, rituals, heritage sites and folk tales, in shaping the experiences of people (White 2000). However, narratives are not just constructed by people, but they themselves have a constitutive ability (Phoenix & Sparkes 2006). Andrews (2000: 77-8) writes:

> Stories are not only the way in which we come to ascribe significance to experiences […] they are one of the primary means through which we constitute our very selves […] We become who we are through telling stories about our lives and living the stories we tell.

From the above quotation it would seem that there is a circular interaction between how people construct narratives to help them make sense of experiences, while the narratives themselves have a constitutive character in shaping the lives of people who construct the narratives.

3. Narrative inquiry

The adventure experience took place in October 2002, at the facility of the Team and Leadership Development Centre (TLDC), at Pelindaba, 40km west of Pretoria, South Africa (SA). A ropes course was used as an adventure activity to create an adventure experience for the students. A ropes course consists of two categories: the high-ropes course is a series of elements constructed 12m above the ground and the low-ropes course is a series of elements constructed below 2m above the ground. A limitation of this study could be the fact that only one adventure activity was used with this group of students. Students who are currently trained within this counselling psychology programme undergo an adventure experience for a period of a week, which includes various adventure activities such as abseiling, archery, mountain biking, obstacle course, sea rafting and sea kayaking.

The adventure programme was structured according to the "briefing-activity-debriefing" model, as well as the "challenge-by-choice" principle. Through the "briefing-activity-debriefing" model, the students were firstly briefed on the nature and safety pertaining to the adventure activity and secondly, they engaged in the adventure activity and lastly, once they had completed the adventure activity, debriefing in the form of a discussion took place. The debriefing comprised two components. First, the discussion focussed on the students' experience of the adventure activity itself and secondly, the discussion then centred on the transferability of the adventure experience to other areas of the students' lives in general and more specifically, their training as future psychologists. According to the "challenge-by-choice" principle people live their everyday lives in a comfort zone and rarely put themselves in a stretch or panic zone. An adventure activity, such as the ropes course, is designed to create a perceived element of risk, which required the students to step out of their comfort zone into their stretch zone, but not into their panic zone. Those who participate in an adventure activity choose, through the "challenge-by-choice" principle, how far they want to "stretch" themselves (Rohnke 1989, Schoel *et al* 1988).

The adventure programme began with a welcoming session, which was followed by icebreakers (lap sits, knots and blindfold squares), trust activities (trust circle and trust fall), a low-ropes course activity (wild woozy) and then high-ropes course activities (incline log, postman's walk, multi-vine, pamper pole and trapeze) (Priest & Gass 1997, Schoel *et al* 1988). Although the "briefing-activity-debriefing" model was continuously applied during the adventure programme, the students were asked to write about their adventure experiences at the end of the adventure programme as an overall debriefing.

3.1 Participants

The participants in this research project were the six MA (Counselling Psychology) students (2002-2003) at the UP, SA. The group consisted of one white male, one African female and four white females, while their ages ranged from 23 to 34 years. All six students had already obtained the BA (Psychology) and BA (Honours) (Psychology) degrees. As the students had to participate in the adventure programme as part of their training in postgraduate professional psychology, a form of convenience sampling was used in this research (Guy *et al* 1987: 189). The adventure programme was facilitated by an adventure instructor, who was a white female, 23 years of age with five years experience in adventure facilitation.

3.2 Material

3.2.1 Producing narratives

In a narrative inquiry various forms of material can be used, for example, interviews, annals, chronicles, artefacts, photos, journals, diaries and letters (Clandinin & Connelly 1994). The students were asked at the end of the adventure programme to reflect on their adventure experiences in writing. The following question was posed to them to guide them in the writing up of their adventure experience: "How did you experience the adventure programme as part of your MA (Counselling Psychology) training?" These narratives were used for analysis in the research.

3.2.2   Analysing narratives

The narratives that were produced were analysed by means of narrative analysis. The analysis of narratives can be conducted from various positions depending on a researcher's view of narrative.

First, narratives can be seen as a reflection of the inner world of the students. Here the context in which the narratives are produced is often neglected and language is seen as neutral. The aim of this kind of analysis is to discover the thoughts and feelings of the students as they lie embedded in the narratives, while little attention is given to the context in which the narratives originated (Sclater 2003). Narratives therefore only have a reflective function.

Secondly, narratives can be seen as a discourse constructing the social realm of the students. Here the inner world of the students is denied and language is seen as constructive in that various discursive strategies are employed to negotiate a phenomenon at stake. The aim of this kind of analysis is to understand the performative function of these discursive strategies, while the existence of experience is negated or at most seen as a discursive strategy (Parker 1992). Narratives therefore only have a performative function.

Thirdly, narratives can be seen as the

> … transitional area of experience in which self continually negotiates its position in the world, inscribes itself in relation to the available cultural scripts, integrates past, present and future through acts of remembering and telling (Sclater 2003: 327).

In this approach, the narrative is seen as the playing field where experience, history, and culture meet. Experience is reflected through the performative aspects of history and culture. Therefore, the purpose of narrative analysis is to see how, through history and culture, students "impose[d] order on the flow of experience to make sense of events and actions in their lives" (Riessman 1993: 2). History refers to the backward-forward direction in a narrative between past, present, and future, while culture points to the inward-outward direction of a narrative with reference to the interplay between self and culture (Clandinin & Connelly 1994). In this paper the researcher adopted the approach that lies between narratives as being only reflective on

the one hand or only performative on the other hand. This position postulates that narratives therefore reflect experience through the performative aspect of history and culture.

In this study the narratives of the students were analysed according to the following phases, with the aim of understanding how the students made sense of their adventure experience by means of history and culture:

- Phase 1: Context

  The researcher established the context against which the students' narratives were to be read, being the development of professional identity in postgraduate professional psychology training.

- Phase 2: History

  The students' narratives were read to understand how history was employed to construct the message of their narratives (backward-forward direction).

- Phase 3: Culture

  The students' narratives were read to determine how culture was employed to construct the message of their narratives (inward-outward direction).

- Phase 4: Message

  The reading of the material by means of Phase 2 and Phase 3 allowed the message of the narratives to emerge, as the message is constructed through the interplay between experience, history and culture.

4. Narrative findings

In this section extracts from three of the six students' narratives will be presented. The reason for only portraying these extracts is that all six students' narratives showed movement from narratives with an individualistic character to narratives with more collective tendencies as the adventure programme unfolded. Extracts from the African female student are used, as this student was the only African student in the group; extracts from the white male student are used, as this student was the only male in the group and extracts, chosen randomly, from one of the four white females are used.

4.1 Narratives

4.1.1 Student 1 (S1) (African female, 25 years)

From this student's narrative it appears that she initially strove to be a performer during the adventure programme. However, as the adventure programme unfolded she was also able to allow herself to become a collaborator.

Table 1: Student 1: from 'performer' to 'collaborator'

Adventure narrative Extracts	History (backward-forward)	Culture (inward-outward)
Extract 1: I think it was meaningful to me to have conquered the heights and exceeded the target height so as not to underestimate my own abilities. I expected a challenge in the sense of not letting myself down, not giving up and pushing myself to the furthest extent in order not to be disappointed with myself afterwards. I suppose the reference to an internal challenge reflects my preconceived ideas about individual performance.	Event 1: morning session	From a 'performer' … (During the morning session it seems the student drew on the performance narrative circulating in society to help her make sense of her adventure experience)
Extract 2: I would like to 'let go'. I do not always believe in myself and mistrust my own abilities. I do not always know. I believe that one does not have to have all the abilities and knowledge in order to be successful. I would like my clients to co-construct their own narratives. I do not want to take the lead in my collaboration with others.	Event 2: afternoon session	… to a 'collaborator' (During the afternoon session it seems the student drew on the collaborator narrative circulating in society to help her make sense of her adventure experience)

From the first extract it seems that she initially strove to be a performer during the adventure programme. On the one hand she saw being a performer as "conquering heights" and "exceeding target

heights", which relate to adventure activities that were external to her. By "conquering heights" and "exceeding target heights" she became an external performer in consequence of which she did not "underestimate my own abilities". It appears that the heights of the adventure activity became a test for her abilities. The "conquering heights" and "exceeding target heights" gave an indication that she had passed this test. On the other hand she saw being a performer as "not letting myself down", "not giving up" and "pushing myself", which relate internally to her. By "not letting myself down", "not giving up" and "pushing myself" she became an internal performer in consequence of which she did not experience "disappointment with myself". It seems that she saw the "not letting myself down", "not giving up" and "pushing myself" as a challenge regarding "individual performance".

From the second extract it appears that she was also able to allow herself to be a collaborator during the adventure programme. To be a collaborator meant to "co-construct" and to engage in a process of "collaboration with others". The question could be asked: "What made it possible for her to 'co-construct' and to 'collaborate'?" It seems that she came to the realisation that there were certain prerequisites to be able to "co-construct" and to "collaborate". These were to "let go" as well as to realise that "one does not have to have all the abilities" and "knowledge to be successful". Furthermore, her realisation that "I do not always believe in myself" and "mistrust my own abilities" could influence her willingness to "co-construct" and "collaborate".

From the above it appears that she initially strove to be a performer during the adventure programme. However, the adventure programme afforded her the opportunity to have an experience where she could also be a collaborator. It therefore seems that the adventure experience created a unique outcome for her as it allowed her to incorporate the collaborator experience into her narrative, an experience that is an alternative to the performer position.

4.1.2   Student 2 (S2) (White female, 26 years)

From this student's narrative it appears that she initially tried to be an individualist during the adventure programme. However, as the

adventure programme unfolded she was able to allow herself to be an assistance seeker.

Table 2: Student 2: from 'individualist' to 'assistance seeker'

Adventure narrative Extracts	History (backward-forward)	Culture (inward-outward)
Extract 1: My thoughts about the ropes course centred on my abilities. I will not be able to satisfy the demands of the course. I did not have control over the situation and it left me disheartened, discouraged and in tears; I was so afraid. I did not intellectually know anything about the ropes course beforehand and was thus left with a big piece of uncertainty and fear.	Event 1: morning session	From an 'individualist' … (During the morning session it seems the student drew on the individualist narrative circulating in society to help her make sense of her adventure experience)
Extract 2: I experienced moments on the ropes course where it was ok to 'let go' and 'to be'. The thing that stood out most was my facing fear. I could experience new aspects of myself, new ways of being. This mastery of old fears makes it possible to allow new experiences without necessarily consciously knowing anything beforehand. The ropes course reminded me that it is ok not to always know all the answers, and to ask for assistance.	Event 2: afternoon session	… to an 'assistance seeker' (During the afternoon session it seems the student drew on the assistance narrative circulating in society to help her make sense of her adventure experience)

From the first extract it seems that she initially took an individualist approach to the adventure activity by relying solely on her own intellect and abilities. On the one hand her individualism lay in relying on her intellect by knowing in advance what an event, such as an adventure activity, was about as can be seen in "I did not intellectually know anything about the adventure activity beforehand". However, if this was not possible she was challenged and she experienced

"uncertainty" and "fear". On the other hand her individualism was also very closely linked to relying on her abilities as stated in "my thoughts about the adventure activity centred on my abilities". However, her abilities were also confronted by the adventure activity as can be seen in "I will not be able to satisfy the demands of the course". This lead her to not having "control over the situation" which left her "disheartened", "discouraged" in "tears" and "afraid". Her individualism, as seen in her reliance on her intellect and abilities, was challenged by the adventure programme and potentially opened up an opportunity for an alternative experience to develop, namely that of asking for assistance.

From the second extract it appears that she was able to "ask for assistance" from fellow students as the adventure programme unfolded. She was therefore also able to allow herself to be an assistance seeker. To be able to "ask for assistance" she needed to "let go". The following question arose: "What did she need to 'let go' of?" It seems that the answer to this question was "fear". She realised that "facing fear" and "mastery of old fears" would allow her to "experience new aspects of myself" and "new ways of being", and would make "consciously knowing anything beforehand" unnecessary. It would afford her the opportunity "to be". It also brought her to the realisation that it is not always necessary "to know all the answers", and opened up the possibility "to ask for assistance".

From the above it seems that she initially strove to be an individualist during the adventure programme. However, the adventure programme afforded her the opportunity to have an experience where she was also able to be an assistance seeker. It therefore appears that the adventure experience was a unique outcome for her as it allowed her to incorporate the experience of asking for assistance into her narrative, an experience that is an alternative to the individualist position.

4.1.3   Student 3 (S3) (White male, 28 years)

From this student's narrative it appears that he initially tried to be an adventure leader during the adventure programme. However, as the adventure programme unfolded he was able to allow himself to be a co-adventurer.

Table 3: Student 3: from 'adventure leader' to 'co-adventurer'

Adventure narrative Extracts	History (backward-forward)	Culture (inward-outward)
Extract 1: I was a gymnast in my days and looked forward to "strut my stuff again". I was however uncertain about how I was going to feel about what I do and about what is going to happen. I usually just try to or do it alone when I am uncertain. I realised that I usually take the lead to take away my own frustration and anxiety. I was there with the person should she 'fall'. I climbed up first to help her since she had a fear of heights but in the end we achieved my goal — to catch the trapeze.	Event 1: morning session	From an 'adventure leader' … (During the morning session it seems the student drew on the leadership narrative circulating in society to help him make sense of his adventure experience)
Extract 2: I needed to let go of the ropes so that I could take a new one. Feelings of anxiety, uncertainty and frustration are part of who and what I am. During the day I realised that it is the process that is more meaningful to me than the outcome and that this took away a lot of the anxiety for me. I could just enjoy the moment. Co-adventuring seems more meaningful to me now.	Event 2: afternoon session	… to a 'co-adventurer' (During the afternoon session it seems the student drew on the co-operation narrative circulating in society to help him make sense of his adventure experience)

From the first extract it seems that he initially tried to be an adventure leader during the adventure programme. He started off by stating "I was a gymnast" and looked forward to "strut my stuff again". He introduced the sport of gymnastics as a possible way of making sense of the adventure experience. His uncertainty about "how I was going to feel about what I do" and "about what is going to happen" usually gets him to "do it alone" and to "take the lead". Furthermore, "I climbed up first to help her since she had a fear of heights" could be

seen as an example to "take the lead", while "at the end we achieved my goal" could be seen as "doing it alone" as the goal was not set collaboratively by the two students participating in the adventure activity. He had solely set the goal "to catch the trapeze".

From the second extract it appears that as the adventure programme unfolded he was also able to be a co-adventurer. Becoming a co-adventurer, or as he put it "co-adventuring" required certain things to happen during the adventure programme. He had to acknowledge that "anxiety, uncertainty and frustration" are "part of who I am" and that focussing on the "process" was more important than focussing on the "outcome". Focussing on the "process" and not on the "outcome" alleviated the "anxiety for me". This also made it possible for him to "enjoy the moment".

From the above it seems that he initially strove to be an adventure leader during the adventure programme. However, the adventure programme afforded him the opportunity to experience that he was also able to be a co-adventurer. Therefore, it appears that the adventure experience created a unique outcome for him as it allowed him to incorporate the experience of being a co-adventurer into his narrative, an experience that is an alternative to the adventure leader position.

From the above it can be seen that during the adventure programme the narratives of the three students unfolded from narratives with a very individualistic character to narratives with a more collective character.

4.2 Supervision

The adventure experience allowed the students to gain experiential knowledge about themselves, by means of a culture fair medium (adventure) in an adventure context away from the formal academic setting of the university. However, a fundamental aspect of using an adventure programme is to transfer what is learnt during the adventure programme back to the participants' everyday life (marriage, family, occupation) (Priest & Gass 1997, Schoel *et al* 1988). In this study the adventure experience entered the counselling psychology programme through weekly supervision, as supervision is

the meeting place of academic training, practical work and professional development within the counselling psychology programme. Allowing students to explore their adventure experience in relation to their professional training in psychology (academic training and practical work), with specific reference to their professional identities addresses the professional development requirements as portrayed in the professional guidelines of the HPCSA (2007).

The adventure experience allowed the students to create experiential knowledge through which they could get to "know thyself" (Simons & Andersen 1995: 450). During supervision this could collaboratively be explored further by focusing on the possible impact regarding what the students had learnt about themselves, on their person, the psychological process that unfolds between a client and a student-psychologist, their clients and their relationship with other health care professionals.[3] The following questions could be used to facilitate this process in a collaborative and participatory manner between a supervisor and student.[4]

4.2.1 DNPI/ANPI

The following questions can be explored during supervision pertaining to the students' DNPI and ANPI:

- (S1): From being a performer and a collaborator during the adventure programme, which position is your DNPI and which your ANPI?
- (S2): From being an individualist and an assistance seeker during the adventure programme, which position is your DNPI and which your ANPI?

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3   The reason for focusing on these areas is that supervision in the programme usually focuses on the discussion of a case study with specific reference to the client and his/her narrative, the student-psychologist and his/her narrative, the psychological process unfolding between the client and the student-psychologist and the relationship between the student-psychologist and other health care professionals.

4   These questions only serve as examples and are mainly informed by narrative practice, as the author mainly practises from this perspective. Questions could be explored from various other perspectives, for example, a psychodynamic perspective or a systemic perspective. This could enrich the supervision experience for a supervisor and student.

- (S3): From being an adventure leader and a co-adventurer during the adventure programme, which position is your DNPI and which your ANPI?

These questions focus on professional identity. They allow students to make their own interpretations regarding which narrative is their DNPI and which their ANPI, and how these might interplay in their professional lives.

4.2.2 Person

The following questions can be explored during supervision pertaining to the students' view of how the DNPI and ANPI will influence their person:

- (S1: How would being a performer influence you as a person?
- (S1): How would being a collaborator influence you as a person?
- (S2): How would being an individualist influence you as a person?
- (S2): How would being an assistance seeker influence you as a person?
- (S3): How would being an adventure leader influence you as a person?
- (S3): How would being a co-adventurer influence you as a person?

These questions aim at exploring the relationship between personal life and professional identity. They allow students to contemplate how these two worlds might be managed to ensure that as future psychologists they will live balanced lives.

4.2.3 Process

The following questions can be explored during supervision pertaining to the students' view of how the DNPI and ANPI will influence the psychological process:

- (S1): How would being a performer influence the psychological process between you and clients?
- (S1): How would being a collaborator influence the psychological process between you and clients?
- (S2): How would being an individualist influence the psychological process between you and clients?
- (S2): How would being an assistance seeker influence the psychological process between you and clients?
- (S3): How would being an adventure leader influence the psychological process between you and clients?

- (S3): How would being a co-adventurer influence the psychological process between you and clients?

These questions focus on the psychological process that unfolds between a psychologist and clients (individuals, couples, families and groups). They allow students to explore the impact of their professional identity on their choice of theoretical position(s) and practice(s).

4.2.4   Clients

The following questions can be explored during supervision pertaining to the students' view of how the DNPI and ANPI will influence their clients:

- (S1): How would being a performer influence your clients' experience of you?
- (S1): How would being a collaborator influence your clients' experience of you?
- (S2): How would being an individualist influence your clients' experience of you?
- (S2): How would being an assistance seeker influence your clients' experience of you?
- (S3): How would being an adventure leader influence your clients' experience of you?
- (S3): How would being a co-adventurer influence your clients' experience of you?

The questions aim at assisting students in creating an awareness that professional identity has an impact on clients. As future psychologists they will not be neutral in a helping relationship, but have an influence on the helping relationship due to their professional identity.

4.2.5   Professionals

The following questions can be explored during supervision pertaining to the students' view of how the DNPI and ANPI will influence their relationship with other health care professionals:

- (S1): How would being a performer influence your relationship with other health care professionals?
- (S1): How would being a collaborator influence your relationship with other health care professionals?

- (S2): How would being an individualist influence your relationship with other health care professionals?
- (S2): How would being an assistance seeker influence your relationship with other health care professionals?
- (S3): How would being an adventure leader influence your relationship with other health care professionals?
- (S3): How would being a co-adventurer influence your relationship with other health care professionals?

These questions aim at exploring the influence of professional identity on the relationship with other health care professionals (medical doctors, dentists, physiotherapists). This might contribute to students having a better understanding of who they are within the context of a multidisciplinary team.

By means of these questions the adventure experience can be transferred back to the counselling psychology programme and can be used to facilitate the development of postgraduate psychology students' professional identity, as this is one of the training requirements of the HPCSA (HPCSA 2007). A limitation of this study is that after the MA first year's supervision there was no follow-up during the MA second year (internship). This could be addressed by allowing students to further explore their DNPI and ANPI during their internship year. By involving the psychologists who facilitate the internship supervision in the adventure programme, they will be able to facilitate the continued development of the students' professional identity based on the adventure experience during the internship.

5. Conclusion

This study proposes that an adventure programme can be used to address the professional development in general, and more specifically, to shape the professional identity of postgraduate students in professional psychology programmes. The adventure programme allowed students to experience a unique outcome in that the adventure experience challenged their dominant way-of-being (dominant narrative) and made possible the development of an alternative way-of-being (alternative narrative), which students can translate to the development of their professional identity (DNPI & ANPI) during supervision.

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