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From the Satir Model to the *I Tao*; Reconstructing Family Rules in a Hong Kong Cultural Context

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Abstract

Being a therapist trained in the Satir Model and a Chinese born and educated in Hong Kong, the researcher tried to execute this study drawing on both conceptual resources of the Satir Model and Chinese cultural traditions that go back in recorded history to more than two thousand years. Data for the study was specifically drawn from two four-day Personal Growth Workshops in Hong Kong attended by a total of 53 (42 female and 11 male) ethnic Chinese secondary school teachers. Participants were found to employ strategies to assert their individual needs without leaving the collectivist framework. Elements of a new framework based on the *I Tao* (as found in the classical Chinese *I Ching*) were identified and found to be useful to explain personal growth and reconstruction of family rules within the Chinese hierarchical collectivist culture. Use was made of the “*guas*” of the *I Ching* to describe change as experienced by the participants. Finally, suggestions are proposed for an effective use of the Satir Model within the Hong Kong cultural context and within an *I Tao* framework in four major counseling situations.

Cultural Sensitivity in Reconstructing Family Rules

Family rules, intimately related to personal growth and development, are often grounded in the values of a culture. Although Hong Kong has undergone rapid change over the past fifty years and the people of Hong Kong are known to be pragmatic, efficient, outgoing, global-minded, competitive and adaptive to trends,

this study shows they still hold very traditional cultural values, especially in their families. More than ninety percent of all the family rules listed by participants in the study (Personal Growth Program) were of a collectivist nature, and their subjective experience of the rules was basically positive, indicated by the fact that they wanted to keep most of them.

Experiences shared during program and interviews conducted one year after the program showed that clashes between modern individualist and traditional collectivist values did pose as a source of stress for many participants and there were different attempts to cope with such stress. It also became clear that adopting a drastic approach to deal with stress by radically embracing the new and abandoning the old, would give rise to more stress, and was seldom successful.

In my experience of the personal growth program, the Satir Model did provide participants an interpretive framework, a cognitive map with which they could situate themselves, evaluate their own past and perceive themselves as capable of change (Satir et al., 1991: 106, 158). Through the Satir framework, participants made new meaning about familiar events, saw opportunities for personal growth, and felt challenged to make decisions to change and to set their own agenda for the future

It became evident that with the Satir Model, the basic co-ordinates that provided a sense of direction for change were the assumed values of individuality and equality. To a certain degree, it worked, as Hong Kong people had internalized many cultural values of the West over the past 150 years. But there were also serious limitations. The fact that traditional Chinese cultural values persisted, particularly in the family, cautioned against mechanical and unreflective application of Western theories in local context. Using interpretive frameworks that guide understanding and change in the individualist culture of United States to facilitate change in the collectivist Chinese culture of Hong Kong can be very problematic.

For H.G. Gadamer (1975), knowledge is irretrievably tied to tradition – the ontological condition which makes understanding and interpretation possible. Our social and historical position is the ‘given’ that shapes our experience, our understanding of that experience, and our understanding of the past and the future. Furthermore, our own social and historical position has already been shaped by the past, and it is this that provides the tradition, the ground upon which we, as interpreters, stand.

In line with Gadamer, there is no other way to understand our participants and clients and help them grow and change without entering into their tradition and become familiar with the strengths and resources of that tradition.

Change must survive in cultural milieu. Good individual adjustments in the form of reconstructing family rules are not possible if they do not accord with cultural expectations, particularly in a highly collectivist environment. Duan & Wang (2000: 11) say it very succinctly: “An exclusive focus on improving individual satisfaction without considering the cultural demands will not produce any lasting and effective changes for Chinese clients.” Understandably, what is perceived as “selfish” is not likely to get any support.

Satir was Sensitive to the Demands of Culture

Satir herself exhibited cultural sensitivity. She stressed the importance for parents to teach their children to fit in with the requirements of family living, to balance their needs with those of others, and to fit into the demands of culture. In Satir’s view, children need to develop skills for coping with and balancing the requirements of the three components of Self, Other and Context (Satir, 1983:60) - and context includes culture.

Satir developed her model in the egalitarian, individualist culture of North America. She took her cultural context seriously, focusing first of all on the enhancement of the self and building high self-esteem by strengthening individual abilities to listen, to see, to check meaning, to recognize and express feelings, to feel free to ask and comment, to take risks, to communicate congruently, to take responsibility and to change. These fit in very well with a culture where people treasure individuality and equality, yearn to be free and independent, and seek personal fulfillment. From a strategic consideration, and in keeping with individualist cultural expectations, Satir focuses on the Self first, before including the Other fully into the picture. It is principally at the second level of congruence that Satir encourages people to step out from their individual self, reach out to other and context, and to seek integrity, wholeness and peace in harmony with self, other and context.

The Starting Point is Different

In a hierarchical collectivist culture, such as the one found in Hong Kong families, the context and the starting point is totally different. People are generally expected to give priority concern to the welfare of the family collective, maintain harmony and solidarity within the collective, respect hierarchical order, and

exercise self-restraint. Pursuit of individual needs and asserting individual rights in disregard of the collective is considered selfish behavior. Consideration for the other and concern for the collective are somehow the condition and the context for the satisfaction of individual needs and the pursuit of personal fulfillment. In other words, what Satir put in her second level of congruence must become the condition of change right from the very beginning, at the point of departure.

For those of us who employ the Satir model in the Hong Kong Chinese cultural context, and in order to employ it “in a culturally meaningful and culturally sensitive fashion” (Ivey et al., 1997: 407), it is important not just to help the client become sensitive to context and culture. The therapist himself or herself must demonstrate sensitivity by being ready to adapt or change therapeutic approaches in response to the demands of local culture. For me, employing the Satir Model in Hong Kong and proceeding in the way as it is done in the West, without considering the difference between the egalitarian individualist culture from which it emerged and the hierarchical collectivist culture in which it intends to operate, shows cultural insensitivity. As a Chinese, born of Chinese parents who came from Mainland China, educated, and brought up here in Hong Kong, and having learned and used the Satir Model for nearly twenty years, I must confess that I have been that culturally insensitive trainer and counselor.

I am not saying that at the level of counseling and training, no local person has ever benefited from my use of the Satir model. On the contrary, I have assisted in the change of many people through the use of the Satir Model. Many people became more confident and free in their handling of emotional and practical issues in life. This was especially with those who received a Western education and adopted values of equality, freedom and independence in their dealing with interpersonal relationships, and whose family members also shared similar values.

But for people who came from and/or lived in traditional Chinese cultural contexts, things were quite different. It was in the course of completing this dissertation, particularly in the process of reflecting on the interactions that took place during the program, and of interviewing some of the participants one year after the program, that I discovered that some participants withdrew from taking part in certain activities, and for some of those who did take part, change did not last. It was then that I began to reflect on the problem of cultural sensitivity and on the need for developing culturally relevant models in counseling and therapy.

From Etic to Emic Approach

The terms *etic* and *emic* were originally used by Berry (1969) referring to initiating research in a different culture, now used to describe different approaches to cross-cultural counseling. While *etic* refers to concepts originating from the investigator's culture, modified for interventions in culturally different counseling encounters, the *emic* approach is based on notions and experiences indigenous to the client's culture, analyzed, processed and then incorporated into modern therapeutic interventions (Draguns, 1996: 6).

The *etic* approach can take two different forms: 1. culturally transforms itself, and adapts itself to the client's culture; and 2. helps the client learn and adapt to the cultural values inherent in the approach adopted by the counselor.

When Duan & Wang (2000:2,9) proposed that Western counseling practices should "be culturally transformed to serve the needs of Chinese people", that an individualism-based counseling practice should be transformed culturally to serve people in a primarily collectivistic society, he was proposing an *etic* approach of the first type that adapts to and operates within the cultural framework of the Chinese people.

When the concept of 'culture broker' is used to describe the therapist as someone who introduces the client to new values and beliefs that will enable him or her to adjust to an ever-changing lifestyle, it is referring to an *etic* approach of the second type. This is done, for instance, by emphasizing equality between men and women, the right of every individual to present his or her opinion, and the importance to be assertive and independent (Tseng, Lu & Yin, 1995: 290). Until recently, this has been the approach I have adopted for the past twenty years in my training and counseling practice, and to which I am proposing to make a change.

Personally, with the help of the Satir Model, I have grown as a person. I have also helped many people grow. At this point, however, I intend to return to my own cultural roots. It does not mean that I will then adhere to and confine myself within the traditional cultural framework. The Satir Model will continue to stay with me, inspiring me and reminding me of certain universal, human values represented by the model.

For me, an *emic* approach is grounded in and draws inspiration and resource from our own culture, while remaining open to the influence and stimulation of models developed in other cultures. It recognizes our tradition of hierarchical collectivism, while respecting and protecting individual quests for equality, freedom and independence. It is linked to its traditional cultural sources, but also seeks to be connected with healthy humanist forces in other parts of the world, and draws from both wisdom and strength to face the challenge of the twenty-first century.

The *I Tao* Framework

The emic approach to counseling in the local Chinese cultural context that I propose is the *I Tao* framework, which has the following major characteristics:

1. It is based on the Tao as manifested in the commentaries on the *I Ching*. It rests on the philosophy of the *yin* and the *yang*, equal, complementing, in interaction, in opposition and in union with each other. The *I Tao* represents the one principle and life force that animates the whole universe, harmonious and dynamic, orderly and open to change, in union and in diversity, peaceful and full of vitality, persisting and constantly changing.
2. It provides a direction for change at specific times and circumstances, taking into consideration both collectivist and individualist needs.
3. It provides a cultural analysis of roles and role relationships in the hierarchical collective, and strategies as to how the roles and relationships at a particular time can be best handled
4. It is open to other humanistic systems that share basically similar values and orientation, including the Satir Model.

In the counseling situation, the *I Tao* framework is first and foremost concerned with change in the context of harmony within hierarchical collectivism. As a second step, it is concerned with change beyond hierarchical collectivism, towards equality and difference.

Change in Harmony within Hierarchical Collectivism

This is the first level of change. At this level, the major consideration is to achieve change within the context of harmony, without challenging the hierarchical order or the collectivist orientation of the system.

Harmony is a central concern in Chinese society. 'Harmony is fortune, and disharmony is misfortune' (Tang Hua, 1994 : 108). Many of the participants' family rules reflect this concern.

In theory, for the Chinese, opposites must come together in harmony, and when they do, they balance and complement one another (Xu zhi rui, 1994 : 88). The

coming together of all things in harmony, in the natural as well as in the human order, is our ultimate dream.

In historical experience, however, this dynamic view of harmony as balance between opposites often got distorted, as the popular static and rigid concept of harmony gained ascendance, and exaggerated emphasis was given to maintaining the status quo. Many Chinese proverbs reflect this attitude -- for example, 'Make a large issue into a small issue; a small issue into no issue' (Tseng, Lu and Yin, 1995: 292).

In the name of seeking harmony and stability, contradiction is suppressed, subjection of one's will to external power and authority is encouraged, compromise is praised, change is resisted, and independent critical thinking is stifled. One is bound by family rules to stay and keep within the defined limits of role expectations, not to fight back, not to compete and ask directly for what one wants or speak directly to the issue, not to cross limits, and if others cross one's boundary, give in and keep peace. One is also expected to speak round the issue, hint at things, and hope others would understand and then respond favorably. With this understanding of harmony, subjective will is weakened or totally subjugated (Zhang Qicheng, 1999 : 204).

Under these circumstances, for change to be effective, a dynamic view of harmony cannot be assumed, but has to be worked towards, gradually.

Three Strategies

Three strategies can be identified to achieve change without disturbing harmony. These include: keeping in the middle, appropriate timing, and attending to the small and significant (Table 1). Many Chinese, including Hong Kong Chinese, consult the *I Ching*, and through divination, use the *guas* to guide their daily activities. Here, I also recourse to the wisdom of the *I Tao* as manifested through the *guas*, without engaging myself in divination.

Table 1. Guiding principles for change within Hierarchical Collectivism

PRINCIPLE	USE OF <i>GUAS</i>
Keep in the middle	<i>Restraining (Jie)</i> :Don't go beyond proper limits. <i>Humbleness (Qian)</i> : Be humble, retreat at the appropriate moment.

	<i>Needing (Xu)</i> : Don't take risks and incur trouble.
Change in appropriate time and situation	<i>Keeping Still (Gen)</i> : Know when and where to stop and to advance <i>Abolishing the Old (Ge)</i> : If time is not right, don't change. Change at the right moment, there is no regret.
Attend to the small and significant	<i>Contemplating (Guan)</i> : In order to know others and self, be attentive to small, significant matters. <i>Contention (Song)</i> : Solve the problem before it develops into contention.

Note: Names of *guas* (in English and Chinese) quoted in this table are listed in italics.

Keeping to the Middle

Keeping to the middle means coming to meet the other at the medium point. It means acting firm but not pushing, not taking risks or incurring trouble (*Needing*). It means not going beyond proper limits (*Restraining*), being humble, retreating at the appropriate moment (*Humbleness*), and not provoking unnecessarily strong reactions from the other. Any hurts or losses incurred will be kept to the minimum.

In the counseling situation, I often come across clients who insist on a certain family rule, or a certain principle or certain right, without considering the harm it might create to themselves or to others. They sometimes do not take into consideration the hierarchical collectivist order in which they are in, and often take issue with a particular rule that bothers them. Eventually, they get hurt even more.

The wisdom of keeping to the middle is to balance the pros and cons relating to a particular situation. One participant, Renee, for instance, could not tolerate the untidiness on her husband's desk. But, instead of giving in to the temptation to enforce her family rule about neatness by proceeding to clean the desk against her husband's wishes, she checked and restrained her inclination. She stopped at the limit, and refrained from provoking a strong reaction from her husband, for the sake of a cordial, marital relationship.

The Appropriate Time and Situation

Attention to time and context is an essential part of following the *I Tao*.

Knowing the importance of time and situation, and able to identify the appropriate time and situation before one takes any action for change is one of the fundamental conditions of a successful following of the *I Tao*, and for change without losing harmony.

Time and situation often determine which type of behavior is permissible and which prohibited. Dealing with things as they are in their moment and at their appropriate time, efforts will not be in vain, and there will be no regret.

The clinical implication of this is evident. It is important to choose the right time and the right context to initiate change. For a long time, Henry, another participant, had wanted to move out of the family and to live away from his mother, with whom he had lived ever since he was born. He chose to move out to a new apartment when he got married, and he chose the right time. It is culturally acceptable and even encouraged for a son to move out and establish his own family as an indication of his coming of age. It turned out, in Henry's case, that not only did he not encounter any objection from his mother, he also got financial support from her to pay his down payment for the new apartment.

Attending to the Small and Significant

The follower of *I Tao* identifies and studies small occurrences in order to understand the deep essence of things. Change in context of harmony means knowing the small and significant indicators of hidden developments (*Contemplating*), and take appropriate action, which can be preventive, solving the problem before it develops into a serious contention (*Contention*), or developmental, taking the first small step as part of a bigger plan for personal and family development.

In training and counseling practice, it is important to be able to help the client identify the small and significant indications of what is to come. It is also important to be able to help the client move 'in small and significant steps': small, not hitting at the essence or global structure too soon, and so more easily accepted as feasible and workable by the person directly involved; significant, that which leads to what is perceived as "positive" change. The move will be gradual, and so no drastic upheavals and threats to people or to existing order. In the long run it will be more effective. It builds up self-esteem, confidence and strength at every successful turn, and when the right time comes, the person will deal with the deeper structural issues.

Accommodating Both Collectivist and Individualist Needs

Chinese, including Chinese in Hong Kong, have been taught in the family as well as in the school to sacrifice one's smaller self (*xiaowo*) for the sake of a "larger self" (*dawo*). As a result, the 'I' is suppressed. Things connected with 'I' are often subsumed under 'we' (Lau, 1996: 360), creating stress for the individual.

To respond to this kind of situation Western psychology advocates assertive coping, and making discrete separations between 'I' and 'others'. In gestalt therapy, for instance, there is the famous assertion by Perls (1969): "I do my thing, and you do your thing. I am not in this world to live up to your expectations and you are not in this world to live up to mine" (Leung and Lee, 1996: 442).

Here I propose a different path for the Chinese for fostering personal growth and individuality, taking into full consideration the collectivist nature of Chinese culture. Instead of separating 'I' from 'others' and stepping away from 'we', I propose change to take place by giving full attention and respect to 'others' and to 'we'. In my view, in a collectivist society, assertion of individuality in total disregard of or against the collective is often counterproductive. To be productive, individuality must accommodate the collective, in the hope that the collective will respond likewise. The two must be kept together in full perspective; one is never allowed to be present without the other.

Like the *yin* and the *yang*, collectivism and individualism are interactive and procreating, in conflict and in union with one another. The question is not one of choice between the two, of choosing *either* one *or* the other. The option is to have both, accommodating one to the another.

Clinically, this applies particularly to those at the bottom of the hierarchical order. As we have seen, most family rules are collectivist oriented. Any change that they initiate for protection and promotion of individualist needs, which they hope to be accepted and lasting, must take place within the context of collectivism. And this can be done in the following ways (Table 2): by caring for both collective and self, as well as differentiating and balancing between role-self and individual self, being at the same time obedient and self-respectful, as well as self-restrained and free.

Table 2. Accommodating both collectivist and individualist needs.

HIERARCHICAL COLLECTIVISM	CHANGE IN CONTEXT OF HARMONY
Collective welfare comes first	Care for collective and care for self
Identify blurred between role-self and individual self	Differentiate and balance between role-self and individual self
Obedient to authority	Obedient and self -respectful.
Self Restraint	Self-restrained and free

Care for the Collective and Care for the Self

In Chinese society, individuals do not exist as independent entities, but are linked to a family network. The objective of individual existence is to extend and manifest the glory of the family (Zhuan yau jia, Yang Guoshu , 1991:135). Many family rules are there to make sure that the overriding concern for the welfare of the collective is appreciated by all members of the family.

If we go back to Confucian teaching, we find collectivism and individualism intimately related. Self-actualization and self-sacrifice for the common good are not mutually contradictory goals, and seeking the good of the whole community can be the basis of security and happiness of individuals and families. Filial piety does not demand abandoning one's own good for the sake of parents'. The needs of both can be taken care of at the same time (Yeh guan fei, Yang Guoshu, 1991 : 109).

Confucian philosophy stresses the idea of building a harmonious order by 'beginning with self.' This is clearly shown in the two statements: 'Do unto others what you want others do to you', and 'do not do unto others what you do not want others do to you'. There doesn't need to be conflict between individuals interests and interests of others. The two can be compatible. That is the foundational principle of human relations (Yeh guan fei, Yang Guoshu, 1991 : 110).

This theory, however, is understood and practiced by only a limited number of people. For the majority, meeting the needs of one means sacrificing the needs of the other. Filial towards parents means suppressing the self. The two do not co-

exist (Yeh guan fei, Yang Guoshu, 1991 : 110).

A way must be found to put theory into practice, to affirm the importance and meaning of the collective, the ‘larger self’, at the same time providing space for individual growth and development. One way of doing this is to go back to the *I Tao*, which, guided by its *yin-yang* concept, accommodates both collectivism and individualism.

In this aspect of accommodating both collectivist and individualist needs, the Satir Model, particularly in its conceptualization of congruence which takes into consideration the different needs of Self, Other and Context, and where context includes culture, resonates with the *I Tao*. In the Chinese culture, the *I Tao* provides a concrete way of how this can be handled.

From Caring for the Collective to Including Care for Self.

Change comes when one begins to also assert and look after his or her own needs, without relinquishing his or her responsibilities for the family. The idea is to be able to care for self while at the same time caring for collective, and establish a balance between one’s role self and individual self (Table 3).

Table 3. From caring for the collective to including care for self.

DIRECTION	USE OF <i>GUAS</i>
Care for collective and care for self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="576 1272 1321 1375">➤ Nurturing the self <i>Nurturing (Yi)</i> Balance nurturing self and serving people <li data-bbox="576 1420 1321 1704">➤ Know when and where to advance and stop, and to let go <i>Initiating (Qian)</i> know when and where to set limits <i>Keeping Still (Gen)</i>: know when and where to stop <i>Retreat (Dun)</i>: know when and where to draw back and retreat <i>Approaching (Lin)</i>: know when and where to tighten or loosen control.

Note: The names of the *guas* (in English and Chinese) quoted in the table are in italics.

Nurturing the Self

While there is a strong Confucian emphasis in most family rules of Chinese

families on sacrificing self for the sake of the collective, the *I Tao* integrates caring of self and caring for the collective. Going back to the *I Tao* means restoring the art of self-care in the context of working for the good of the collective. Indeed, serving others and taking care of self do not have to contradict one another. One nourishes one's body, in order that one can better serve the people (27th *gua Nurturing*) (Chen Guying, Zhao Jianwei, 1999 : 256). There is also a Chinese tradition that allows pursuing one's individualist interests at the same time fulfilling obligations to the collective.

The well-known Chinese scholar Yan gave 'nurturing life' the same status as seeking meaning for life. In his view, "life must be nurtured, though not without principles" (Yan Zhitui, 1993: 223). A balance should be established between maintaining and nurturing life on the one hand, and living life with meaning and principles on the other. Working for the good of the collective is not the only and ultimate meaning of life.

I came across many clients who gave their whole lives to the family, and seldom spent time for self-care. I did not ask them to focus on self-care and abandon all family responsibility. I asked them to set aside a little time, go to a concert with the spouse or go to a movie with a friend, or take a walk alone in the park or at the beach, etc. This kind of small beginnings often initiates a series of positive changes in promoting individual emotional and mental well being, at the same time not threatening existing relationships in the family.

In drawing up his family rules, Yan made a detailed list of the different ways to nurture the self. These included paying attention to waking and sleeping hours, food, herbal medicine, clothing in different seasons, exercise, hobbies as well as cultivating proper attitudes towards life (You Yazhi, 1991:180-184; Yan Zhitui,1993:335). On the last point, knowing when to advance and stop, and when to let go deserves attention.

Know When to Advance, Stop, and Let Go

Having spent most of his life holding senior positions under different emperors, Yan seemed to have grasped the essence of power politics in the courts, and became skeptical of the avowed motives. Among the admonitions he gave to his descendants was the admonition 'to know when and where to stop' (52nd *gua Keeping Still*), 'to be contented' and to 'give in'. He advised his descendants not to take a position that is too high or too low in the courts, but stay in the middle. For

Yan, going up high means taking bigger responsibilities for the collective. The higher one goes, the greater danger one is exposed to, and there is a point where one must stop. Knowing when and where to stop brings blessings. This way, life will be nurtured and catastrophes to them and to their families will be avoided (Yan Zhitui, 1993).

Confucian morality emphasizes responsibility, commitment and sacrifice for the greater good. The *I Tao* advocates balance. According to the *I Tao*, the apex, the culmination of strength and success, marks the beginning of decline. When one reaches the top, one is lonely, unsupported and unstable. One must not advance all the time; one must also know when to stop and to retreat. One must not commit oneself to too many responsibilities and one must also know when to let go (35th *gua* 'Jing' *Proceeding Forward*) and when to draw back (33rd *gua* 'Dun' *Retreat*). One cannot gain all the time; one must know how to bear loss (Huang, 1998: 37 on the *Qian gua Initiating*). One must know when to be strict and when to be lenient, when to make life hard and when to make life easy (19th *gua* 'Lin' *Approaching*) (Chen Guying, Zhao Jianwei, 1999: 187).

The spirit of the *I Tao* is to recognize the limits of each situation; be of caution, and not rush to take risks. Progress should be gradual, and one must be humble and lenient. Don't go too far, or pose threats to others, or else, others will strike back (Xu zhi rui, 1994: 80).

According to the *I Tao*, to do right, we have to do different things at different times and at different stages of our lives. When the children are still young, as parents or as elder siblings, we have responsibility to take care of them. When they are grown up, it is time to let go.

In the case of my client Ling, following the Tao meant relinquishing the power to make decisions for the whole family. While maintaining concern and love for the family, she was challenged to allow her younger siblings to independently take care of their needs in their own way. Being married, it was also time for her to attend to the needs of her own family. This did not mean giving up on her family of origin, nor did it mean abandoning her younger siblings. This was to allow them free space to make decisions on their own and for them to grow. The point was to be able to balance self-care and care for the collective.

The Chinese have a saying: 'take a step backward, and the view changes in front of you; the sea will be wider and the sky more spacious', and 'as long as the green hill is there, there is no fear for lack of firewood'. As long as the individual is alive and well, there is hope for the collective. The concept of self-care is there as part of Chinese culture, and can be made to balance the sometimes excessive and overwhelming demands of the collective on the individual.

Differentiate and Balance Between the Role-Self and Individual Self

There is a tendency for Chinese to have their identities blurred between the role self and the individual self. For many, their role becomes their identity. Being father, mother or son, for instance, becomes the defining factor for their individual selves, and there are numerous family rules to this effect.

Within this context, self-actualization is achieved by meeting prescribed obligations and responsibilities attached to the role that the individual occupies. As the individual finds himself or herself in different roles, self-realization is achieved through fulfilling the obligations and responsibilities of the different roles, in family, society, state and world (Tu, 1994: 182).

Problem arises when people live up to what is expected of them in their roles under pressure, rather than responding to what they individually want and need. They define themselves according to what the collective expects of them, not according to what they expect of themselves as individuals. They conform, hoping to be accepted, suppressing and discounting their own feelings, ultimately losing their identity.

Table 4. Differentiate and balance between role-self and individual self.

DIRECTION	USE OF <i>GUAS</i>
Differentiate and balance between Role-self and Individual self	Respect role prescriptions <i>Treading (Lu)</i> : Respect moral order; Respect authority; <i>Keeping Still (Gen)</i> : Keep within limits defined by the role
	Attend to individual internal dynamics <i>Conjoining (Zian)</i> arising from the heart and the mind; <i>Persevering (Heng)</i> giving support and generating long-lasting relationships

Note: The names of the *guas* (in English and Chinese) quoted in the table are in italics.

In therapy, the client can be assisted to differentiate and to seek balance between role and individual selves (Table 4), the role self being linked largely to the collective, and the individual self to the inner core and dynamics of the person. In the same manner, he or she may also have to learn to differentiate and balance between role and individual relationships, balancing the rules that prescribe role

demands and role limits with rules that attend to personal relationships and to the individual's internal dynamics.

One of the participants, Richard, had a problem in relation to his mother. In his role as son, he felt he needed to show his mother that he loved her more than any other person in the world, including his wife. To correct that, he did not need to be asked to abandon his role-self as son, because doing that, he would be abandoning a very important part of his own identity. What he needed to do is to balance his role self with his individual self. This can be done by strengthening his personal individual relationships with his wife and son, which in turn will enable him to focus, in addition to role relationships, also his individual relationship with his mother. Richard needs to be helped to respond not just to external role demands and expectations. He needs to learn to respond to his mother out of genuine concern, from the heart, as an adult and a caring son. In Chinese tradition, there is a position from which this can be achieved, and this takes us to the next section.

Obedient and Self-Respectful

From the perspective of individualism, conforming to rules relating to care for others and obedience to authority is often seen as “indicator of a weak ego” and connected to “low self-esteem”, “self-disliking and psychological weakness” (Duan & Wang, 2000:14).

In Chinese society, where “almost all social acts are role interactions and role interactions are based upon role complements” (Yang, 1995: 25), where role-players “depend on each other motivationally, emotionally, and behaviorally” (Hsu, 1953), where relationships are “based on mutual and complementary obligations” (Hofstede, 1991), acts of concern for others and mutual beneficence are highly regarded. In such society, those very characteristics that are considered weaknesses in other societies, become indicators of an individual's psychological strength. In therapy, there is no need to convert strength into weakness in order to achieve change.

It must also be noted that at this level of change, equality, as assumed in the Satir Model, cannot be assumed here. Assuming equality means rejection of existing hierarchical relationships and that will likely lead to breaking of relationship, disruption of harmony, and conflict.

Applied to counseling, it may be advisable not to encourage the client to challenge authority, or fight for independence and equal rights while in pursuit of individual fulfillment. In a context very much conditioned by tradition, and at a

time when the client is still not yet ready to affirm equal rights and dignity, there are other ways to achieve change.

From ‘Being Obedient to Authority’ to ‘Being Obedient and Self-Respectful’

In this case, change comes not from changing or challenging the authority structure of the system. That remains intact and untouched. The individual seeks to protect him or herself and assert his or her own needs by appealing to the culturally prescribed responsibilities attached to the roles within the system. This is done by resorting to ‘proper position’, and by becoming self-restrained and free (Table 5).

Table 5. From being obedient to also being self-respectful

DIRECTION	USE OF <i>GUAS</i>
Act in accordance with proper position ✧ Appeal to reciprocity ✧ Acknowledge limited responsibility ✧ Adult Child: ability to care for parents	<i>Household (Jia Ran)</i> : Each performing according to role prescribed <i>Treading (Lu)</i> : Each fulfilling duty according to position in moral order
Self-restrained and free ✧ Return to the heart, become connected and whole ✧ Move forward by bending oneself	<i>Confining (Kun)</i> : The body might be imprisoned, but the heart can be free and connected. <i>Keeping Still (Gen)</i> : When one is in charge, one can ride in style. When one is not in charge, one crouches to move forward.

Note: The names of the *guas* (in English and Chinese) quoted in the table are in italics.

Acting in Accordance with Proper Position

In the Chinese family, ‘proper position’ determines duties and responsibilities of each and every role in the family. This is almost always clearly spelled out through family rules, determining, for instance, the duties and responsibilities of children towards parents, and of the younger towards the elder siblings. Here, the idea is to appeal to its related principle of reciprocity, limited responsibility, and the

active and assertive role of an adult child to take care of his or her parents (Table 5), in order to protect individual interests and welfare, elaborated as follows:

Appeal to the principle of reciprocity

In a hierarchical structure where family rules sanction the authority and privileges of senior members, junior members often have to suffer. My proposal here is to appeal to the principle of reciprocity to protect the junior member from excessive demands from the senior or collective, as well as to promote change in relationship in the direction indicated by the principle, and to do this without challenging the authority structure. The experience of a participant, Andre, is illustrative of this point:

In the mind of Andre, his parents did not do their part properly as parents. He felt he had been so ill-treated by his parents that, as their son, he felt no responsibility towards them. For him, if parents had not done their part, filial piety should not apply to the son.

In Andre's case, he was appealing to this principle of reciprocity inherent in roles, and using it in the negative sense. It legitimized his taking a position that segregated him from his parents and protected him from further hurts from them, and that gave him a peaceful conscience, without feeling he was being un-filial. Lee Fai, another participant, used the same principle not only to protect himself but also to elicit a positive reciprocal response from his elder brothers and sisters in sharing family responsibility.

Acknowledge limited responsibility

When a person is made to shoulder an excessive amount of responsibility within a family, the least this person can do is to acknowledge his or her limitations in his or her role, directly appealing to the principle of proper position, and indirectly asking other members in the family to take their share of responsibilities.

Lee Fai was trying to defend himself from the unreasonable demands of his elder siblings. He protected himself from bearing a disproportionately large share of the family burden by drawing the line beyond which he could bear no more, but without posing any threats to the existing order. He was saying to his elder siblings something to this effect: "I have done this and this and this, and now, this is the maximum I can do, and no more. I have done more than my role demands of me. If you see anything else that needs to be done for the good of the parents, please do. The burden that I am now carrying is already more than I can bear." While acknowledging his responsibilities and limitations, he was also appealing to the others to take their share of responsibility, without directly challenging their

authority.

The adult child remaining as the caring son

According to the traditional practice of filial piety, a son is a son no matter how old he is, and he is expected to obey his parents, in some cases to show that he loves his parents more than he loves his own wife and children. Sometimes parents get so much involved in the marital relationship of their son, that they ruin the son's family. In such situation, the genuinely filial son is not to obey the destructive demands of his parents, as this will lead to breaking his own family, his own heart, and in turn the hearts of his parents. What he needs to do is to use the position that he enjoys as the adult child in the family, and to take an active and assertive role to create healthy and respectful relationships - for himself, for his family, as well as for his parents.

According to Chinese tradition, when one gets married and establishes one's own family, one becomes an adult. Although one's position vis-à-vis one's parents does not change, attaining adulthood and being head of one's family confer a new and special status, especially when the parents have grown old. When one is still a child, one is taken care of, and taught by parents. When parents get old, the child who is now a grown up person is in a position to take care of the parents in return, and to provide them new information and teach them new ways so that they can adapt to the changing world.

In the position of an adult child, he or she can assert in a caring way. For instance, when the parents insist on teaching their grandchildren in their traditional way, the adult child does not have to appeal to the rights of a father, confront the parents, ask them to stay away from their children, and become 'un-filial'. He or she can appeal to parents' desire of wanting to have more capable and intelligent grandchildren, and say, "You want our generation to be better educated and more capable than yours. You also want your grandchildren to be more capable than we are when they grow up. Now we are learning new ways of child-rearing that contribute to better personal and intellectual development." If parents show interest, the adult child can share with them the new ways. If parents do not show any interest, the message should have already been taken. Hopefully, they will be more respectful of a different way of raising a child.

There is a time to be fed and to be taught by parents; there is also a time to feed and to teach the parents in return. This is what is also accepted and expected of filial piety in Chinese culture. In this position, one can be filial, protect one's own family life, and enhance the relationship with parents even more.

Becoming self-restrained and free

For the follower of *I Tao*, the practice of *Restraining* ('*Jie*' 60th *gua*) is considered to have positive functions. To restrain means to 'set the bounds', 'to limit, to economize, or to save', not over-spending, or let everything come out from the mouth without screening, or saying more than what is warranted. Self-restraint also has to do with moral principles. When self--restraint is put into practice, "Then resources will not be exhausted, and people will not be hurt" (Huang, 1998:464,466).

Self-restraint in expenses and in moral behavior is a virtue extolled in traditional Chinese culture. Many family rules are established to this effect. Apart from virtue, strength and power are also associated with self-restraint. "It is the strong and the firm who can practice self-restraint" (Cheng yi, 1989).

This spirit, however, has been much distorted. Under the weight of traditional hierarchical order, and for the convenience and expedience of those in power, subordinates, particularly children and women, have to learn to restrain and suppress themselves. What was inner directed now becomes external imposition.

When imposed restraint becomes a way of life, the person is no longer able to live and act freely even when restraints are no longer there or called for. The focus in therapy then, is to recover the strength that is inherent in the behavior and to work for change towards greater self-respect and flexibility.

There are two ways of dealing with this issue without confronting whoever imposes the restraints. These include: Returning to the heart; and learning the art of the caterpillar - bend to move forward.

Returning to the heart

When a person feels trapped in an oppressive structure, and sees no way out, the first thing that needs to be done is not to try to tackle the problem, but to free the heart. One's body may be imprisoned, but one's heart, one's thoughts and memories cannot be imprisoned or freed by anyone except oneself. Getting connected to one's positive experiences and good feelings in the past can help one to find energy to free one's heart. Once the heart is free and connected, no difficulty in life is insuperable ('*Kun*' 47th *gua* *Confining*).

Andre is a typical case of someone imprisoned in his own bitterness and hopelessness, and in his rule regarding living a rational life and suppressing emotions. What he needed most was to get re-connected with his heart, where his feelings and his energies were, and to free himself from his own bondage.

Bend to move forward

I Ching talks about contraction and extension, as being two sides of the same coin, like *Qian* and *Kun*, firm and yielding . The two poles complement and enhance one another. One often has to bend one's way, or bend one's back and contract, in order to reach straight for a target (Tang li quan, 1989:40).

Like the caterpillar, which contracts in order to extend, or the dragon or snake which hibernates in order to wake to life again when spring comes, a person sometimes needs to "go backward in order to go forward" (*Lun yu*: scroll 5、 *Zhi Hahn* section 9).

The 52nd *gua* 'Gen' Keeping Still has this to say, "When one is in charge, one rides in style. When one is not in charge, one crouches to move forward" (Tang Hua, 1994: 362).

As polar opposites, contraction and extension are also mutually complementary. Like dealing with the *yin* and the *yang*, the firm and the yielding, a follower of the *I Tao* does not choose either one from the two poles, but tries to keep both, and live within the tension between the two. Choosing either one leads to physical and psychological pathology.

The problem arises when family rules emphasize contraction to the exclusion of extension. In such families, one is made to bend oneself so much and for so long that the ability to extend is lost. Henry's practical inability to face his parents to get what he wanted is one example of a person who lost his ability to extend forward after bending himself for years. The aim of therapy then is to recover the ability and the strength to extend - to stand straight and to move forward - as well as the freedom to choose when to contract and when to extend, without disturbing harmony in the hierarchical structure. As these are concepts well situated in Chinese tradition, they are easily understood by the Chinese participants.

Change Towards Equality And Difference: Beyond Hierarchical Collectivism

In Chinese society, for any change to take place smoothly, it has to take place in the context of hierarchical order, harmony, and continuity with the past. Embracing the values of equality (as against hierarchy), difference and individuality (vis-à-vis collectivism), and discontinuity (as against continuity) are still challenges to be faced by this generation of Chinese (Table 6).

Table 6. Change beyond hierarchical collectivism

DIRECTION	USE OF <i>GUAS</i>
Equal and Different	Recognize and interact with the other and opposite as equal and different; establish dynamic balance between the two <i>guas</i> : <i>Qian</i> and <i>Kun</i> , <i>Initiating</i> and <i>Responding</i>
Break to continue	Make a resolute and determined break from the past (' <i>Ge</i> ' 49 th <i>gua</i> <i>Abolishing the Old</i>); embark on a new beginning (' <i>Ding</i> ' 50 th <i>gua</i> <i>Establishing the New</i> 鼎)

Equal and Different

The concept of the *yin* and the *yang* being equal and different, mutually opposing yet coming together in union, provides a new and dynamic way of looking at human relationships. From this perspective, people in dyadic relationships are reminded to avoid taking extreme polarized positions by recognizing and respecting the self and the other as equal and different entities. This, however, is a dimension lost to traditional Chinese culture.

Restoring this cultural dimension represented by the *yin/yang* concept means that people no longer have to seek self-care or self-respect in a roundabout way. People can and should be themselves when interacting with each other, can and should affirm their own and other's equality and difference. Opposites can and should remain opposites for communication to lead to mutually informing, responding, connecting and fostering relationships. Only this way can there be genuine human interaction.

In counseling, I came across people, especially people in positions of authority, who saw things only from their own perspectives, refusing to recognize the legitimate existence of perspectives other than their own. I also came across spouses in marriage who insisted on a particular family rule, totally rejecting the family rules of the other party, just because these rules were different. I also came across people who achieved success after many years of hard work and who tolerated no one seeking achievement through means other than hard work. What these people needed to learn in order to experience personal growth and to make life more meaningful was to recognize and appreciate the other as other, and interact with the other as an equal.

Renee, one of the participants, for instance, must not only be concerned that negative reaction of her husband might ruin their marital relationship, and so tolerate his making a mess of his desk. She must also learn to respect her husband

as an equal partner.

Break to Continue

Apart from equality and difference, the lost dimension also has to do with continuity/discontinuity.

For the Chinese, change is cyclical. It is open to the future, but at the same time it is also tied to the past. Chinese like to speak of “inheriting from the past, and breaking new ground for posterity”. It is never a complete break from the past. It breaks, at the same time it also continues.

The constant emphasis on maintaining continuity and achieving discontinuity in the context of continuity makes it difficult for Chinese to make a clean break from the past, and by analogy, to make a clean break from parents, teachers, etc, to establish an independent identity and to face the challenge of the now and the future.

According to the *I Tao*, however, there is change in continuity, and there is also change in discontinuity. The breaking moment can be a resolute and determined one, no looking back, no wishy-washy kind of farewell to the past. One must let the sun set, resolutely and determinedly, and not try to hold it back, if one wants to see the moon. At the moment of sunset, one is never absolutely certain that it will come up again the next morning. Past experience says it will. But until tomorrow comes, one is never certain. If one wants to see something new, this is the price one has to pay. Any movement forward in history is a step taken with risk. Continuity with the past is not guaranteed.

The two lines that form the basic structure of the *gua*, the continuous, firm line — and the broken, yielding line ~~together~~ form a very succinct and telling symbol of the meaning of the *I Tao*. While western civilization emphasizes difference and discreteness, with individuals broken and separated by boundaries, the Chinese civilization is a civilization of “*I*”. In theory, it is broken and at the same time continuous.

In the west, when change involves conflict, it is not avoided. If there is need for a complete break from the past in order to achieve something new, the past is buried, and things move forward. This dimension is also present in the *I Tao*. In the *yin/yang* philosophy, opposite qualities must remain opposites, different, and must maintain their differences in order that their union be fertile and dynamic. The *I Ching* also condones change through revolution, and approves complete break from the past and creation of something totally new (49th *gua* *Abolishing the*

Old) and *Ding* (50th gua *Establishing the New*). Wang Bi's comment on this gua is "changing at the right moment, there is no regret" (Gu Wenbing, 1996 : 182).

In theory, there is equality, difference and discontinuity. In practice, however, this is a lost dimension. Most of our family rules make stipulations to the contrary. Consistent and constant emphasis on harmony, on sacrifice of the individual self for the good of the collective, on obedience to authority, on maintaining tradition and continuity, have created a one-sided view of change. Change can only be carried out in the context of harmony, not conflict, hierarchy, not equality, continuity, not discontinuity. Any new development must maintain a link with the past. There is never any clean and complete break from the past. And the new is never totally new. In making any change, the Chinese are careful not to take risks that might jeopardize their relationships with the past.

Recovering the Lost Dimension

The dimension that has been lost is to be recovered. Not that all Chinese must accept the lost dimension as their objective for change, but that it can be seen as one more possible option. It will be difficult for one who is at the bottom of the hierarchy or one who is located at the inferior end of a dyadic relationship to initiate change based on assumptions of equality, difference and discontinuity. And the difficulties are understandable.

For those who occupy authority positions in the hierarchy, parents for instance, if they were willing to initiate change and to recover the lost dimension of the *I Tao*, new relationships will emerge in the family, with less pain for all parties concerned. By respecting children's independence, freedom, difference and right to discontinuity, there will be in the end greater enhancement of solidarity, harmony, and continuity.

After her family reconstruction, Ling, for instance, terminated her controlling relationship with her younger siblings and became more respectful of their desires to be free and independent, to be able to make their own decisions about their own lives, to take part in decision-making in the family, and to have their voices heard. Relationships in the family began to change.

In the case of Seraph and Elton, this newly married couple jointly decided that both should have a part in housework. They bade farewell to their past family rules and relationship patterns, and put into practice new family rules, which were different from those in their family of origin. For newly married couples like them,

given proper assistance, and through a process of honest, open and congruent sharing, they should be able to break from a pattern of the past that hindered personal growth, establish new relationships based on mutual respect for equality and difference, and jointly take a confident step into the future.

Recommendations

Cultural Sensitivity

Here, I propose five points as recommendations to counselors and therapists who intend to use the *I Tao* framework in counseling in the local Chinese context:

1. As counselor, examine your own family rules and the value assumptions behind them. Ask yourself if you are a hierarchical collectivist or an egalitarian individualist. Compare your own values with the values assumed in the *I Tao* framework. Is there any discrepancy between the two? Are you capable of making a both/and instead of an either/or choice between authority and equality, collectivity and individuality? Are you prepared to work within a system dominated by hierarchical collectivist values, and seek to bring individuality, equality and personal freedom into the system?
2. Examine the family rules of your client and the assumed cultural values behind them. Is your client a hierarchical collectivist? Does he or she identify with the welfare of the collective? Is he or she ready to sacrifice own interests and needs and restrain own desires for the sake of peace and stability of the collective? Or is he or she more inclined to pursue individual fulfillment and accomplishment, asserts equality and freedom, and ready to take risks for personal growth and development? Are his or her significant others hierarchical collectivists?
3. Compare the value orientation of your client with that of your own and the *I Tao*. Be aware of any discrepancy that may exist between these value orientations. Make it a point in counseling to take the value orientation of the client into full consideration, and begin where he or she is.
4. *Follow* (17th *gua* 'Sui'), rather than lead. Do not attempt to impose your values onto the client. Trying to lead a cow by the nose (Chen Guying, Zhao Jianwei , 1999:170) gets one nowhere. Set the cow free; guide the cow by following its natural instincts and using its own resources. The idea is to be attentive to the internalized values of the client. Work with them instead of against them.

If you find difficulty working with a particular type of clients, check if this has to do with discrepancy in value orientations.

5. Free your heart from its thicket of thorns (47th gua, '*Kun*' *Confining*).

The body may be trapped, but the heart can be free. When you feel trapped, frustrated or despaired, totally lost as to where to go or what to do to help the client, you may want to open yourself to new horizons, and rediscover hope. To do this, it is important for you to go back to the heart, get connected with your own center and with the universal life force, and if you profess a faith, pray. When your heart is free, you are likely to open up new vistas and see new possibilities.

Approaches for the Satir Model in the *I Tao* Framework

As a cosmopolitan city ruled by the British for more than a hundred and fifty years, inhabited by a population more than ninety per cent of which can trace their origins somewhere in Mainland China, Hong Kong is marked by conflicting characteristics, open and reserved, progressive and conservative, equal and hierarchical, individualist and collectivist, all at one time. For the counselor, it might be important to identify different counseling situations, with different clients faced with relationship problems with different kinds of significant others.

1. The first type of counseling situation is one where both the client and his or her significant other are hierarchical-collectivists. It is evident that any change in family rule in this kind of situation has to take place within the framework of hierarchical collectivism, meaning care of self can emerge only in the context of care for collective, and respect for self in the context of respect for hierarchical order and obedience to authority. Any one-sided emphasis suggested or hinted by the counselor on asserting individual rights and freedoms and satisfying individualist needs without care for the other, might be rejected by client as being culturally insensitive, or if accepted by the client, might lead to his or her condemnation by his or her significant other as being selfish or uncaring.

2. The second counseling situation is one where the client is hierarchical collectivist while the other is egalitarian individualist. The client has to be helped to become aware of his own individual needs, expectations and yearnings, and learn to express them in order for them to be satisfied. In this situation, the counselor needs to work on client's self-care and self-respect. It must be also noted that care for collective and obedience to authority will always be at the back of the client's mind. They will not be, and they don't need to be, suppressed. In

circumstances where demand is made on the client to shoulder excessive collective responsibilities, whatever sacrifice the client has made for the collective can be used to strengthen the client's case for self-care, by appealing to limited responsibility and ability or by appealing to the principle of reciprocity.

3. The third counseling situation is one where the client is an egalitarian-individualist while the other is hierarchical collectivist. In order to lessen the pain and conflict that change on the part of the client might bring, it is appropriate to consider, as with the first situation, tackling the relationship problem keeping both collectivist and individualist needs in full vision. The only difference in this situation is that there is probably no need for the counselor to help the client become aware of his or her own needs and aspirations, as the client is an egalitarian individualist.

4. The fourth counseling situation is one where both the client and the significant other are egalitarian individualist. In this situation, counseling can proceed based on principles of equality and difference, with the counselor employing the Satir Model or the *I Tao*, depending on the kind of cultural background and terminology the client is most familiar with.

It must be noted that the above descriptions of counseling situations in relation to cultural value orientations of the client and client's significant other are broad descriptions that constitute a way of locating the general cultural situation in which the counseling process takes place. In actual counseling, each situation is unique, and is much more complicated than what the four situations purport to describe.

Compatibility of Conceptual and Practical Tools

In my view, the humanitarian concern, the concept of change and the ultimate objective of the Satir Model as presented in its third level of congruence (the spiritual Self), are very close to those of the *I Tao*. Much of the Satir Model is compatible with and can continue to be used within the *I Tao* framework. Obviously, the Satir model cannot be lifted out of its egalitarian individualist context and applied to participants and clients who are hierarchical collectivists. The realities of hierarchical collectivist culture must be taken into full consideration.

My recommendation to the culturally sensitive counselor who is trained in the Satir Model and who intends to work within the *I Tao* framework is to use the Satir Model with caution.

As the *I Tao* framework does not yet have psychological analysis or vehicles

of its own, and as it shares similar basic orientations and objective with the Satir Model, much of the conceptual and practical tools of the Satir Model can continue to be used.

Here I list what I consider important concepts and tools that can be used in the *I Tao* framework.

First of all, practically all the basic Satir beliefs can be accepted into the *I Tao* framework; the obvious ones include:

1. People have internal resources and abilities they need to manage and grow and to connect with and validate their own self-worth.
2. High self-esteem is the major goal in the therapeutic process.
3. When we deny our feelings, we drain the energy that belongs to us. Reclaiming responsibility for our feelings and re-owning our feelings empower ourselves.
4. Instead of hoping other people will change, recognize that it is only ourselves we can change.
5. Change is possible only in the present, and when we have a new perspective.
6. We cannot change past events, only the effect they have on us. Any past learnings that are unsatisfactory and painful can be replaced with new learnings.
7. Our goal in moving toward wholeness is to accept people, including our parents, as people, and meet them at their level of personhood rather than only in their roles.

The other conceptual tools that can be used within the *I Tao* framework include: the Iceberg Metaphor on levels of Change; the concept of Self, Other and Context; Stages of Change; the Hierarchical Model and the Growth Model.

The following practical tools can also be incorporated into the *I Tao* framework: Experiential Learning; Use of Self and the various Vehicles of Change, including Meditation, Family Map, etc.

The caution mentioned above has to do mainly with the difference in the value assumptions of the culture of origin of the two different frameworks. While the Satir Model is grounded in and intimately connected to the North American culture of egalitarian individualism, and takes egalitarian individualist values as its starting point, counseling and therapy with Hong Kong Chinese using the proposed *I Tao* framework takes place in a Chinese hierarchical collectivist context, and takes hierarchical collectivist values as its starting point. Because of this difference, equality and individuality, which the Satir Model assumes as basic values, cannot

be assumed in the Hong Kong context. That means certain forms of communication in the Satir Model, including first level congruence, direct expression of feelings, and five freedoms have to be handled very carefully here.

Use of the Satir Model in the Four Counseling Situations

There are myriads of ways of using the basic beliefs as well as conceptual and practical tools of the Satir Model, each on its own or in combination with other beliefs, conceptual or practical tools, in the process of counseling using the *I Tao* framework. Here, I outline what I consider to be major considerations in using the Satir Model within the *I Tao* framework (Table 7), and within the context of the four counseling situations described above.

Table 7. Use of the Satir Model in the *I Tao* framework in four counseling situations.

		OTHER	
		Hierarchical Collectivist (HC)	Egalitarian Individualist (EI)
CLIENT	Hierarchical Collectivist (HC)	<p>1. Within HC Connect to yearning for self-care and self-respect, with respect for Other and Context. Equality cannot be assumed; hierarchical structure not to be touched.</p>	<p>2. Between HC and EI Connect to yearning for self-care and self-respect, with respect for Other and Context. Learn congruent communication.</p>
	Egalitarian Individualist (EI)	<p>3. Between EI and HC Achieve self-care and self-respect, with respect for Other and Context. Equality cannot be assumed; hierarchical structure not to be challenged.</p>	<p>4. Within EI Both equality and individuality can be assumed. Achieve self-care and self-respect, with respect for Other and Context. Learn congruent communication.</p>

In the first counseling situation, where both the client and the significant other are hierarchical collectivists, and where the *I Tao* framework sets the goal for accommodating both collectivist and individualist needs, the Satir Model can be very effectively used to help the client connect to his or her yearning for self-care

and self-respect, while maintaining respect for Other and Context. It must be stressed, however, in facilitating reconstruction of family rules, extreme caution must be exercised in assuming the Satir principle of equality, and in challenging existing hierarchical structure. Consideration should be given to achieving the apparently contradictory goal of self-care and self-respect in the context of respect for other and for the existing hierarchical order.

In the second counseling situation, where the client is a hierarchical collectivist seeking to meet his or her individualist needs in relation to the other who is an egalitarian individualist, the Satir Model can be effectively used to facilitate reconstruction of family rules by helping the client connect to his or her yearning for self-care and self-respect. Since the other is an egalitarian individualist, the client can be taught to reformulate rules based on congruent communication and principles of equality and individuality.

In the third counseling situation, where the client is an egalitarian individualist and the other a hierarchical collectivist, awareness of the client for self-care and self-respect can be assumed. In this situation, the Satir Model can be employed to facilitate reconstructing family rules by helping the client achieve self-care and self-respect, while maintaining respect for Other and Context. Since the other is a hierarchical collectivist, one must exercise caution in assuming the principle of equality and in challenging hierarchical authority.

In the fourth counseling situation, where both client and other are egalitarian individualists, equality and individuality can be assumed. The Satir Model can be used to help client reconstruct family rules on the basis of congruent communication, personal fulfillment, equality and difference.

Given limited experience of using the Satir Model within the *I Tao* framework, I cannot yet at this stage pre-determine in detail what form this will take as it evolves. I firmly believe, however, that in an ongoing process of practice and reflection, as well as in an interactive sharing process between co-workers, not only will the Satir Model assume a new life within Chinese culture, the *I Tao* framework will also develop, and will find new and effective ways of helping local Chinese, as they struggle in the transition from the traditional to the modern, and keep the best of both.

A New Journey Has Begun

Looking back on the Personal Growth Program which has informed my study, and with faces of participants popping up in my mind, I have a strong feeling

that during those four days, I was not a lone traveler in the midst of other travelers. I was one with them, hand in hand, on an interactive journey of self-exploration.

According to Neumann (1992), who did a study on 'Finding Self in the Recollection of Travel', travelers can identify in a tourist spot - such as the Grand Canyon - the "biographical coordinates of family, self and other," "a stage for enacting situations and events that mark the development and meaning of relationships" that carry itself into "the routine of their daily lives."

In a similar way, new meaning and relationships that developed during our program continued into the daily lives of a number of participants. For some, a bonding of friendship was established, and they continued to meet after the program. For many of them, the four-day journey had a somewhat lasting significance, and became a point of reference and a reminder of 'what is possible' as they journeyed on in life.

For me personally, the four days was part of a three-year journey in interpretive research. It marked my new coordinates in life. Apart from pointing to a new direction in my future as a professional trainer and counselor, it also opened up an agenda for further interpretive research.

Studies on strategies employed by Chinese over the centuries as they struggled to attain individual growth and fulfillment within a framework of family rules that is hierarchical collectivist oriented could be very illuminating. Research on such strategies by studying, for instance, novels such as *Dream of the Red Chamber* might yield fruitful results. Developing criteria for choosing a particular *gua* or *guas* to explain a situation or using the sixty-four *guas* to assist modern day Chinese in personal growth or in reconstructing family rules might be another very meaningful project. Many new possibilities are opening up.

Reconstruction of family rules has to do not just with family rules. More importantly, it has to do with the reconstitution of self and of human relationships. It has to do also with the reconstitution of culture, as we draw on resources of our own and other cultures. Indeed a new journey has begun. And the prospect of working with local and international culturally sensitive counselors, therapists and researchers is indeed exciting, and stirring with new dreams and visions.

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