

A COMPARISON OF ATTITUDES IN ZEN AND  
EXISTENTIALLY BASED COUNSELING

by

DAVID NORMAN EYLES

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Supervisor: Associate Professor Vance Peavy

### Abstract

This thesis compares selected attitudes of existentially based counseling with selected attitudes of Zen and considers what implications this relationship has for counselors.

The attitudes examined are ones that might be encountered by a counselor in his readings of readily available literature. These attitudes are not considered in the context of formal philosophy or the possibility of their absolute truth, rather, they are viewed in the context of how they may relate to the counselor and his practice.

The attitudes examined in this thesis are those held in regard to view of man, his ideal state and conditions for achieving an ideal state. Primary sources for attitudes of existentially based counseling are the writings of two recognized existential counselors, May and Van Kaam. The atti- <sup>not full</sup> <sup>names</sup> tudes of Zen considered are primarily those written by Watts and Suzuki, both prominent authors in the area of Zen and Eastern philosophy.

The attitudes compared in regard to view of man are considered in light of an ontology pertaining to what is viewed and a phenomenology pertaining to how it is viewed. <sup>diff words</sup> The unified nature of man, his relationship to the world, and his possible anxiety are also considered.

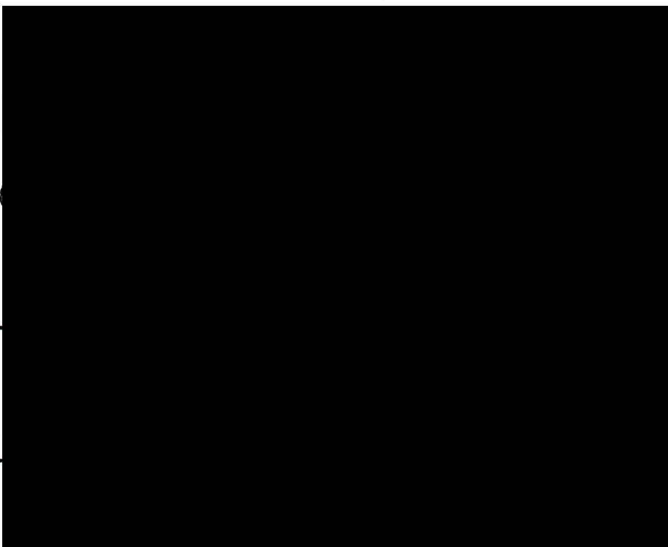
The comparison made between existentially based counseling and Zen results in a finding of some basic similarities between their attitudes. Both systems are concerned with man and his attainment of freedom. Also, both Zen and existentially based counseling emphasize the wholeness of man and his interdependent relationship with the world.

The correspondence found between existentially based counseling and Zen attitudes has implications for the theory and practice of counseling. The unification of man and his world found in Zen may serve to balance objectivity and compartmentalization found in traditional Western psychological theory. For counseling practice Zen attitudes such as those held in regard to unity and experience may help a counselor accept and understand his client.

Dr. R. V. Peavy

Dr. M. McHugh

Dr. J. Woods



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In North American counseling literature there seems to be an increase of interest in philosophy (Peterson, 1970). Indeed the attitudes and beliefs held by the counselor have been found to significantly affect the counseling relationship (Watley, 1967). *why is \*relevant*

As shown in the following pages, literature concerned with counselor attitudes has made increasing reference to the attitudes of Zen. Among these comments on the psychological implications of Zen, reference has also been made to its existential nature. The question thus arises, what is the relationship between Zen and existentially based counseling?

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this thesis is to compare selected attitudes of existentially based counseling with selected attitudes of Zen, and to consider what implications this relationship has for counselors. For the purposes of this thesis, the following is to be considered the

#### Statement of the Problem

What correspondence is there between stated attitudes in existentially based counseling and stated attitudes in Zen?

### The Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in establishing a relationship between Zen and existentially based counseling. Knowledge of the attitudes of existentially based counseling and Zen may provide the counselor with further insight through the contrast and similarities made evident between the two. An awareness of these attitudes will be significant through their providing a different perspective which may stimulate critical consideration of, or serve as a valuable addition to, a counselor's philosophical position.

Sato (1970) states that "it is our important task to develop new ways of personality refinement by integrating traditional Zen . . . and Western researches on personality change" (p. 4). Sato further suggests that a concrete problem to investigate would be "Psychotherapy in the West and the Oriental wisdom on human nature" (1962, p. 66).

As shown in the Review of the Literature, numerous references have been made to the importance of the attitudes of Zen to counseling. However, no more than a relatively brief mention has been made of the relationship between Zen and existentially based counseling. This thesis is significant in that it examines this relationship

In Dean's (1965) view, Eastern spirituality can make a contribution to therapy in the West. He believes that healing factors are intrinsic in Eastern spirituality and that the time is ripe for us to integrate them into our present

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psychotherapeutic resources.

One way in which Thorne (1960) sees Zen as being valuable to clinical psychology is through its emphasis on immediate experiencing. Thorne sees the directness of the Zen experience as being a needed influence on the Western tendency towards high level conceptualizing.

Laing (1967) comments on the similarity between a Zen Master and a therapist; similarly Jourard (1969) speaks of a "new specialist being called for in our time," one who is "awakened and liberated in the sense of the Zen masters or Taoist teachers" (p. 5).

Ornstein (1972) sees value in the wider perspective of man provided by the East while Naranjo (1972) writes of the importance of the Eastern way of "sensing and feeling rather than understanding reality intellectually" (p. 224). For the future, Sato (1968) predicts an "increased use of the fundamental wisdoms in Zen teaching for modern education and personality formation in the coming world" (p. 20).

#### The Increase of Psychological Interest in Zen

During the past twenty-five years, counseling related literature has reflected an increasing interest in the attitudes of Zen. For example, in a psychological review of Zen, Maupin (1962) finds a growing body of literature by psychologists and psychiatrists on the psychotherapeutic aspects of Zen. In Maupin's opinion, Zen concepts will have an increasing utility to Western psychotherapy.

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In another review of the psychological literature, Berger (1962) finds an increased interest in Zen among American psychologists. This growth of interest is also found by Sato (1968) who travelled and spoke on Zen in the West for twelve years.

Why the increasing attention to Zen by Western psychologists? According to Van Dusen (1958a), the whole development of Western psychoanalysis has been "a gradual gathering in of a man who was projected into segments" (p. 229). To Van Dusen, Zen exemplifies the stable position that Western psychoanalysis, through this "gathering" process, is aiming at.

Haimes (1972) has examined similarities between non-Freudian psychotherapies and Zen. To her they share a concern for the total personality of the individual and "their goals and systems appear fundamentally compatible" (p. 25).

#### Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined according to the meanings which they are meant to communicate in the thesis.

Patterson (1974) points to the lack of successful differentiation between counseling and psychotherapy. The two terms have been used interchangeably by authors beginning with Rogers (1942) and they are so used in this thesis.

Existentially based counseling is a therapeutic process wherein the therapist has an existential viewpoint. Rather than being a specific school of psychology the existential

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point of view embraces an orientation of attention, an attitude towards therapy (May, 1961, p. 19; Van Kaam, 1966b, p. 11).

In the context of therapy, existentialism means "centering upon the existing person; it is an emphasis on the human being as he is emerging, becoming" (May, 1958, p. 16). The term "existence" is from the Latin root "existerere" and literally means to stand out or emerge (May, 1967b).

Existential psychotherapy is based on the attempt to "see the patient as he really is, to find the patient as a human being rather than as merely a projection of our own theories about him" (May, 1967b, p. 2). Such existential counseling is primarily a human encounter (Van Kaam, 1966a). Emphasis is on the present situation the client is in and the reality of the counselor as a human being (May, 1967b).

Zen is a way and a view of life which does not belong to any of the formal categories of modern Western thought. It is not religion or philosophy; it is not a psychology or a type of science. It is an example of what is known in India and China as a "way of liberation" (Watts, 1957, p. 3; Suzuki, 1969, p. 39).

The basic idea of Zen as stated by Suzuki (1949, p. 44) is to "come in touch with the inner workings of one's being" and to do it in the most direct way possible. In Zen it is important that man be free of unnatural encumbrances. As Suzuki (1969, p. 41) states, "if there is anything Zen

strongly emphasizes it is the attainment of freedom."

Though Zen is a product of Buddhist tradition, practitioners of Zen deny that Zen itself is "a religion" or, indeed, confined to Buddhism and its formal structure (Merton, 1968). Zen's simplicity, directness, pragmatic tendency, and connection with everyday life "stand in remarkable contrast to the other Buddhist sects" (Suzuki, 1969, p. 37). The attitudes of Zen reject the constraints of formal religion. As Suzuki (1969) points out, Zen is "emphatically against all religious conventionalism" (p. 40).

Attitude. The concept of "attitude" is of central importance to this thesis. In a non-psychological, philosophical sense the attitudes considered in this thesis might be more accurately described as theories. However, as the concept of "attitude" is widely used as a technical term in psychological literature, it is so used in this thesis. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, attitude is defined as: a deliberately adopted, or habitual mode of regarding the object of thought. The term will be so used in this thesis.

#### Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to a consideration of attitudes which might be encountered by a counselor in his readings of readily available literature. The examination of Zen attitudes is done with a view towards their relevance to counseling philosophy, not to the practice of Zen meditation, etc.

While of a philosophical nature, this thesis attempts to deal with that philosophy which might be relevant to the practice of a counselor rather than the formal philosophy of an academic. The attitudes considered are therefore not viewed in relation to their ultimate truth but in relation to counseling practice. *good.*  
*repetition*

The attitudes of existentially based counseling considered in this thesis are primarily those articulated by Rollo May and Adrian Van Kaam. Rather than being members of a specifically defined school, May and Van Kaam are representative of a developing orientation or movement whose attitudes are existentially based (May, 1967b; Van Kaam, 1966b). They both have published extensively. Their works are widely available and are recognized by others in the field as expressing an existential point of view (Arbuckle, 1965; Beck, 1963; Carkhuff & Berenson, 1967; Peterson, 1970).

The attitudes of Zen to be considered will be primarily those written of by Suzuki and Watts. Watts was the first to examine the link between psychology and specific Eastern philosophies (Haimes, 1972). Many authors (Blyth, 1960; Humphreys, 1971; Linssen, 1958; Weil, 1972) support Ben-Avi's (1959, p. 1816) statement that Suzuki has "become the foremost authority and interpreter of Zen Buddhism to the Western world."

Sato (1968) writes of Zen being introduced to the West by Suzuki and Watts. Berger (1962) in an article in the

Journal of Counseling Psychology also recommends both Suzuki and Watts as sources for those who wish a more comprehensive account of the history and concepts of Zen.

There are relatively few articles on Zen which have appeared in psychological journals. However, for those authors who are so concerned, Watts and Suzuki seem by far the most popular sources. In seven articles which examine the psychological implications of Zen, all but two make reference to Watts and all but one to Suzuki. In all there are 10 bibliographic references made to Watts and 18 made to Suzuki.

#### Method

The method used to examine the problem in this thesis is secondary analysis. That is, the literature examined is one step removed from, or about, the attitudes considered rather than being the attitudes themselves. The following procedure has been followed in this thesis.

First, an examination of the literature of existentially based counseling for selected attitudes has been made. Primary sources are the writings of May (1958, 1960, 1967a, 1967b) and Van Kaam (1962, 1966a, 1966b, 1967). The attitudes selected are those held in regard to: (a) view of man, (b) ideal state of man, and (c) conditions for achieving an ideal state.

Second, the literature of Zen has been examined for selected attitudes. Primary sources are the writings of

Suzuki (1949, 1953, 1955, 1962, 1970, 1971) and Watts (1957, 1958, 1961, 1962). The selected attitudes are the same as above.

Third, a comparison of the selected attitudes of Zen and existentially based counseling in the context of psychology, culture and history is made.

Concluding the thesis is a discussion of the compared attitudes with reference to their implications for counselors.

### Review of the Literature

This review of the literature includes books and articles which consider in some aspect the relationship between Zen and psychotherapy. First considered will be works relevant to Eastern psychotherapy. Secondly, literature which deals with the relationship between Zen and Western psychotherapy will be examined. Finally, works relating Zen to psychoanalysis and existentialism will be considered.

Table I following lists those authors who have written of psychology and the East.

#### Zen and Psychotherapy in the East

Yokoyama (1968) and Kora and Sato (1958) have written brief histories and descriptions of Morita therapy. Morita therapy was originated by Dr. Shoma Morita (1874-1938). Though the origin of Morita therapy was not directly influenced by Zen, its development to some extent was. It is considered to be a "psychotherapy in the way of Zen" because it has "so many points in common with the Zen mode of

TABLE I

## Articles Relevant to Psychology and the East

	Western psycho- logical philosophy	Western concepts & Eastern therapy	Morita therapy, describes	Morita therapy, history	Other Eastern therapy	Value of Zen teachings	Value of meditation	Eastern concepts and		
								Western therapy	Psychoanalysis	Existentialism
Becker (1960)									X	
Ben-Avi (1959)	X							X		
Berger (1962)								X	X	
Dean (1965)	X							X		
Hisamatsu, Nishitani, DeMartino, Kataoka, Sato & Toyomura (1963)	X									
Hora (1969)										X
Haimes (1972)							X		X	
Huber (1965)	X						X			
Kasamatsu & Hirai (1963)						X	X			
Kelman (1960)	X								X	
Kelman (1959)	X									
Kirsch (1960)								X	X	
Kohyama (1966)										X
Kondo (1958)						X	X			
Kondo (1952)					X	X				
Kora & Sato (1958)			X	X						
Lederer (1959)								X		
Lesh (1960)							X			
Linssen (1958)	X									
Maupin (1962)							X	X	X	
Miura & Usa (1970)		X	X							
Miyamoto (1960)								X		
Noonan (1969)		X								
Ondo (1962)							X		X	
Ruesch (1961)						X		X		
Sato (1970)	X									
Sato (1968)	X					X		X		
Sato (1965)	X				X					
Sato (1963)	X									
Sato (1958)								X		
Strunkard (1951)	X							X		

Table I contd.

	Western psycho- logical philosophy	Western concepts & Eastern therapy	Morita therapy, describes	Morita therapy, history	Other Eastern therapy	Value of Zen teachings	Value of meditation	Eastern concepts and		
								Western therapy	Psychoanalysis	Existentialism
Suzuki, Fromm, & De Martino (1960)					X			X	X	
Takeuchi (1965)		X								
Thorne (1960)	X					X		X		
Van Dusen (1958b)								X		
Van Dusen (1958a)	X							X		
Watts (1961)	X									
Wolf (1957)						X		X		

thought" (Yokoyama, 1968, p. 182).

Kawai and Kondo (1960) as well as Miura and Usa (1970) have also written of Morita therapy. The latter two authors emphasize this therapy's similarity to Zen in its attitudes towards acceptance and obedience to nature. Miura and Usa (1970) as well as Noonan (1969) all mention similarities between Morita therapy and Frankl's Logotherapy, particularly in relation to the idea of paradoxical intention.

Sato (1965) and Takeuchi (1965) discuss the "Naikan" method of personality change which involves introspection and "sitting" in a similar way to Zen. Kondo (1952) also writes of a "kind of shortened Zen training being used as an effective therapy of neurosis" (p. 14). Later Kondo (1958) writes of the great therapeutic value of Zen teaching. In this article he tells how Zen sitting leads to self-realization, stability and security. Ruesch (1961) writes of using Zen readings in therapy and Miyamoto (1960) considers the similarities between Zen experience and play therapy in the way they both foster growth experience.

Kasamatsu and Hirai (1963) as well as Sato (1965) write of psychological interest in Zen and of the use of Zen meditation. Though they don't believe that such meditation can take the place of psychotherapy, they feel it may be useful as a supplement. Jack Humber is a Western psychologist who undertook Zen training in Japan. \* In his (1965) book, he writes of how this experience benefited him as a therapist.

Also a study of counselors by Lesh (1970) finds that Zen meditation improved their empathic ability. ~~\*~~ Brammer (1973) also finds meditation valuable in slowing down a client as well as encouraging the client's awareness.

### Zen and Western Psychotherapy

One of the first articles to consider the relationship between Zen and Western psychotherapy was written by Stunkard (1951). In this article he considers the interpersonal aspects of Zen and relates them to psychological concepts such as transference and resolution of narcissism.

Most articles relating Zen and psychotherapy seem to have been published since the middle 1950's, the largest number of them appearing in the journal, Psychologia. This international journal of psychology serves as a channel of communication and feedback from the East to the West and as a forum for international discussions.

Peterson (1970) finds a close similarity between the attitudes of Zen and May's existential psychology in the balance between subjectivity and objectivity which is stressed by both. Berger (1962) writes of Zen anticipating the modern existentialist concern with the subject-object split. Berger sees this "split" as preventing the scientist-subject, who relates to a man as an object to be studied and abstracted about, from relating to this man instead as a "total human being" (p. 123).

A comparison is made by Van Dusen (1958a) between

existential or dasein analysis and Zen. He writes of both Zen and dasein analysis emphasizing the present as well as concentrating on "real life experience rather than thoughts about thoughts about life" (p. 229).

Sato (1968) is the author of a thorough consideration of Zen and the West. He describes Zen concepts and training as well as the research history and psychotherapeutic implications of Zen. The bibliography following this article is comprehensive. In later articles Sato (1963) calls attention to oriental wisdom on human nature and (1970) the need to integrate the teachings of Zen into Western psychotherapy.

Lederer (1959) considers Zen a primitive psychotherapy; he is struck by the economy and accuracy with which Zen sums up the purpose of Western psychotherapy. Thorne (1960) speaks of the wisdom Zen has to offer psychology and describes Zen masters as "in effect, real psychologists dealing directly with the behaviors which are the subject matter of psychology" (p. 453).

Van Dusen (1958a) and Dean (1965) write of the importance of Zen in the West. Van Dusen (1958b) further attempts to show the practical value of Zen concepts for psychotherapy. Wolf (1957) comments on the psychological relevance of Zen and Ben-Avi (1959) writes of the importance of the Zen concepts of immediacy, concreteness and dedication to the Western psychologist. Sato (1958) also discusses the use in therapy of Zen concepts such as emphasis on the present and

flexibility.

### Zen and Psychoanalysis

Becker (1960), in part of his doctoral dissertation which was published in Psychologia, gives a critical view of parallels drawn between Zen and psychoanalysis. In an article that reviews the literature which relates psychology, particularly psychoanalysis, to Zen, Haimés (1972) concludes that Zen has been most thoroughly "analyzed."

Maupin (1962) considers Zen concepts such as the use of the koan, satori, meditation and intuition. He then relates these to psychoanalytic concepts. Kelman (1959) writes of Eastern influences on psychoanalytic thought, Kirsch (1960) also discusses affinities between Zen and analytical psychology. Berger (1962) speaks further of psychoanalytic interest in Zen when considering Zen concepts in relation to counseling.

Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis by Fromm, Suzuki and De Martino (1960) is perhaps the most well-known book on this subject. Much of this work is devoted to a description of Zen attitudes and their cultural context. The relationship of Zen to psychoanalytic concepts is also examined. In this book, Fromm concludes that Zen, though having many differences, may serve as a valuable influence on psychoanalysis.

### Zen and Existentialism

In a search of the literature, no articles were found

on the relationship between Zen and existentially based counseling. Two related articles are written by Hora (1959) and Kohyama (1966). However, Hora is concerned primarily with Taoism and Kohyama deals mostly with philosophical history.

Though concerned with existentialism, Kohyama limits his examination primarily to some ideas of those whom he considers to be pioneers of the European existential movement. Likewise his consideration of Buddhism is limited to a brief view of its philosophical history. The English translation of this article offers some difficulty.

In an article entitled "Tao, Zen and Existential Psychotherapy," Hora (1959) writes of some attitudes of Western psychotherapy and the East. Hora speaks of the "way of psychotherapy" which he sees as somewhat similar to the Taoist "way or Tao of Life" (p. 236).

While not specifically examining the relationship between attitudes of Zen and existential therapy, Hora does note some which appear similar. Particular among these attitudes are the ideas of healing through change of view, awareness, and transcendence of the subject-object dichotomy.

## CHAPTER II

### ATTITUDES OF EXISTENTIALLY BASED COUNSELING

In this chapter three types of existential attitudes are examined; view of man, his ideal state, and attainment of that state. The existential view of man is considered in light of an ontology pertaining to what is viewed and a phenomenology pertaining to how it is viewed. Following this, the unity and alienation of man are discussed.

The second section of this chapter deals with the existential view of man's ideal state, his freedom and limitations. Finally, consideration is given to existential attitudes towards attainment of man's ideal state. In this section how the counselor helps this attainment and how other factors may hinder it are examined.

#### The Existentialist View of Man

May (1967a) considers how man is perceived to be of critical importance, not only to existentially based counseling, but to psychology in general. For instance, is man to be seen as a controlled robot, or is he to be seen as possessing free will? May emphasizes this point dramatically with his statement that the future "battles between approaches to psychology . . . will be on the battleground of the image of man" (p. 90).

## Ontology and Existentialism

"Ontology" is a metaphysical term and may be characterized as the study or meaning of being (Byrne & Maziarz, 1969). May (1958) defines ontology as "the science of being (ontos, from Greek 'being')" (p. 14).

Existentially based counseling is concerned with man in an ontological context (May, 1960, p. 72). One of the aims of such therapy is to gain an understanding of what it means to an individual, to be a man (May, 1958).

Man in the existential view is a unique being (Van Kaam, 1966b). "Being" is considered to be that which is left of a person if all the drives, instincts, mechanisms, etc. are taken away (May, 1958). May describes being as

that which constitutes this infinitely complex set of deterministic factors into a person to whom the experiences happen and who possesses some element, no matter how minute, of freedom to become aware that these forces are acting upon him (1958, p. 41).

The term used by Heidegger, Binswanger, Kuhn, and other European existentialists to describe the nature of man's being is "Dasein." The word is composed of "da" meaning "there" and "sein" which means "being." Thus "being there" implies that man is present, and has the capacity to be conscious of, and take responsibility for, his existence (May, 1958).

## Man as Process

In the existentialist view, the noun being is a word for man who is felt to be in a process of becoming. Being

as a verb form implies that man is in the process of being something (May, 1958). When being is used as a noun according to May (1958), it should be understood to imply potentia, the source or potentiality for what a person becomes. Man is therefore seen as dynamic, continually in the process of becoming.

Man and time. The existential temporal orientation is towards the future. Man is viewed in the context of what he is moving toward or becoming.

The significant tense for human beings is thus the future--that is to say, the critical question is what I am pointing toward, becoming, what I will be in the immediate future (May, 1958, p. 41).

#### The Phenomenological Attitude in Existential Counseling

The existential effort to see man as he really is, to take the phenomena as given, is phenomenology (May, 1960). The word "phenomenology" has been used with a variety of philosophical and psychiatric meanings which have not always been clearly distinguished (May, 1958). The phenomenology which was the initial stage of, and later integrated into, the existential psychotherapeutic movement, is a psychiatric phenomenology in the sense of Husserl's concept; this being basically,

a methodological principle, intended to provide a firm basis for the foundation of a new psychology and of a universal philosophy . . . the phenomenologist uses an absolutely unbiased approach; he observes phenomena as they manifest themselves and only as they manifest themselves . . . he excludes from his mind not only any judgment of value about the phenomena but also

any affirmation whatever concerning their cause and background; he even strives to exclude the distinction of subject and object (May, 1958, p. 96).

Rather than trying to logically or scientifically prove anything, phenomenology tries to communicate directly the reality of our experience. As Van Kaam (1966b) states: "phenomenology attempts to make explicit what is spontaneously and implicitly experienced" (p. 177).

The basis of existential psychotherapy is the attempt to "see the patient as he really is, a human being rather than merely a projection of our own theories about him" (May, 1967b, p. 2). The phenomenological aspect of such counseling is the endeavour to experience the phenomena of the relationship as it appears in its full reality (May, 1960).

May (1958) asks if we can be sure we are seeing the patient in his own reality or if we are merely seeing a projection of our own theories about him. In the existential, phenomenological view our presuppositions always limit what we see of a problem or therapeutic situation. For perception to be as clear as possible, the counselor must make a disciplined effort to analyze, clarify and clear his mind of presuppositions (May, 1960, p. 21).

Though wary of the dangers of theoretical preoccupation both May (1967a) and Van Kaam (1966a) express their openness to other psychological theories. Van Kaam's awareness of both the positive and negative aspects of theory are expressed

in the following quote:

theoretical simplification or reduction of the complexity of human existence by the therapist is potentially harmful. This does not mean that psychological theories are useless. On the contrary, each scientifically acceptable hypothesis enriches the therapist with a new possibility for understanding certain realms of experience in his clients (1966b, p. 171).

### Man's Involvement with the World

The existential world includes everything past and present which affects the individual (May, 1958). As May says, "the world is the structure of meaningful relationships in which a person exists and in the design of which he participates" (p. 59). The existential view of man as being-in-the-world implies an involvement with the world which makes man inconceivable without his world. Man can not be studied as if in a test tube, isolated from the world. Rather, he must be considered as he exists in relation to the world around him. May's (1958) view of man is that he is a unified whole with his world:

the person and his world are a unitary, structural whole; the hyphenation of the phrase being-in-the-world expresses precisely that. The two poles, self and world, are always dialectically related. Self implies world and world self; there is neither without the other, and each is understandable only in terms of the other (p. 59).

### The Unity of Man

Van Kaam (1966a) considers the specifically "human" character of psychotherapy to be of critical importance. He uses the term "human" to refer to "man as a concrete unity, manifesting himself in concrete human behavior"

(pp. 295-296). Van Kaam rejects the split which he says "separates man into an 'internal (thinking) substance' and an 'external (objective) substance'" (1966a, p. 296).

#### Alienation of Man

Van Kaam (1966a) characterizes the unifying nature of the existential view as anti-dualistic. This characteristic of existential therapy means he is able to see both the "symptoms and the subjective 'you' and to interrelate them as a whole of the client's being" (1966b, p. 45). May echoes this view for existentialism in general which he states

is the endeavor to understand man by cutting below the cleavage between subject and object which has bedeviled Western thought and science since shortly after the Renaissance (1958, p. 11).

The existentialist attitude sees our culture's "separation of man as subject from the objective world" as contributing to men's feelings of alienation and despair (May, 1958, p. 57). According to May, man's alienation from his natural and human world is resultant from, and expressed by, his desire to be separated from and gain power over nature.

#### The Ideal State of Man

In existentially based counseling, man's ideal state is freedom. This is reflected in the condition of man which therapy seeks to attain. As Van Kaam says; therapy "is basically an event of liberation" (1966b, p. 62), it should lead to the client feeling free.

Though there may be some variety in the ways that the goals of existentially based therapy are expressed, they

seem to primarily reflect the aim of establishing the necessary grounds for freedom or of actually attaining it. May is speaking of a necessary condition for freedom when he states that the aim of therapy is "that the patient experience his existence as real" (1958, p. 85). To experience his existence as real, man must have a sharp and clear rather than blurred awareness of it. May acknowledges the importance of such experience to being free when he asks, "is not man's capacity to be conscious of himself as the experiencing individual actually also the psychological basis of human freedom?" (1967a, p. 174).

In the view of Van Kaam, "therapeutic care for the patient amounts to wanting his freedom" (1966b, p. 57). The ideal state of man in the existentialist view is thus free. Therapy is then a process which works towards the achievement of this state. Indeed, the progress of therapy may "be measured in terms of the progress of 'consciousness of freedom'" (May, 1967a, p. 174).

As previously discussed in the consideration of the existential view of man, man and his world are seen as integrally related. This view has a number of implications for existential attitudes towards man and his freedom. These attitudes are discussed by May (1967a) in a consideration of some principles concerning the psychological bases of freedom.

### Freedom of the Centered Self

May (1967a) considers freedom to be a "quality of action of the centered self" (p. 176). The idea of "centered self" does not mean self-centered in the sense of selfishness, it means rather, the totality of the individual acting from his center. The free act then involves the individual's

neuromuscular apparatus, his past genetic experience, his dreams, and the infinite host of other more or less deterministic aspects of his experience as a living organism [which] are related in their various ways to this centered act and can only be understood in this relationship (p. 177).

The centered self is the self acting as the totality of the individual. Freedom is an act of consciousness and consciousness "is the experience of the self acting from its center" (p. 177). In this unified view of the individual, May rejects "chopping" the individual up "into 'stimuli' and 'response' or into 'id, ego [and] superego'" (p. 177). He sees such fragmentation as destroying the centeredness of the individual and leading to confusion about his freedom.

As the existentialist view is one of man in a unity with his world, freedom is an integral part of man and pervades his existence.

Man's freedom has roots that are in his very nature as man. It cannot be totally eradicated by circumstances . . . when [man] has reached the top level of freedom . . . his freedom stretches so widely into all corners of his life that he is able to turn each obstacle or adversity into a positive personal value. In freedom, he becomes able to experience his very illnesses in such a way that they help him to grow (Van Kaam, 1966a, p. 52).

### Freedom and Limitations

The existential attitude towards man's intimate relationship with his environment implies that man's freedom must be relevant to and limited by not only his self but his world. The self may be limited emotionally through the individual feeling blocked, driven, in conflict, or in despair; the total picture thus given of the self being lack of freedom (May, 1967a, p. 174). Physical freedom may be limited by body abilities; health, age, etc.

What a man can do, the extent of his freedom, is limited by his world as well as by his self. These worldly limitations may take the form of social responsibilities. May's second principle is that "freedom always involves social responsibility" (p. 176). As he says, social freedom is limited because it

is not license nor ever simply "doing as one pleases." Indeed such living by whim or the state of one's digestion is in a sense the exact opposite to the acting of the centered Self we have been talking about. Freedom is limited by the fact that the self always exists in a world (a society, culture) and has a dialectical relation to that world (pp. 177-178).

Though limits may physically restrict an individual he may still develop his freedom of self. It is the aim and meaning of the counselor's existence to make his client free in a psychological rather than a physical sense. This freedom enables the individual to give meaning to all his limitations (Van Kaam, 1966b). May also expresses this existential attitude toward freedom and limitations with his statement

that "the capacity consciously to confront limits, normal or barbaric as they may be, is already an act of freedom" (1967a, p. 178). By confronting such limits, May means to be conscious of and face up to them.

#### Attitudes Toward Attainment of an Ideal State

In existentially based counseling both the counselor and the client play active roles in the client's progress towards becoming free. In this section attitudes towards the attainment of freedom will be considered, first those relevant to the counselor and second those relevant to the client.

#### The Role of the Counselor

The counselor and limitations. One way in which the counselor participates in the client's free self-actualization is by making sure that his development is grounded in reality. Such counseling "excludes everything that could inhibit or destroy the free actualization of the self in the light of the life vocation and the authentic life situation" (Van Kaam, 1966b, p. 30). The counselor refuses to encourage any act which might limit the free growth of his client. \*

The counselor and freedom. Counseling is the making free of a person who has not had the chance to grow and develop (Van Kaam, 1966b). The counselor facilitates this freedom by helping the individual to see himself in a free and meaningful way. He presents the client to himself (Van Kaam, 1966b). The client sees this new view of himself

through the therapist

awakening his unique personality, by evoking and re-creating him as a free and alive source of meaning and by allowing him to experience himself, in the counseling situation, as an independent unveiling of sense and meaning in his world (Van Kaam, 1966b, p. 64).

The result of good counseling, according to Van Kaam (1966b), "is that my counselee will be able without me to grow daily in freedom" (p. 67). The existentialist attitude is that the individual should find and live his own freedom. The therapist's role is to help him in this search but to do so in a way which encourages autonomy.

The individual is encouraged to find and define his own limits according to his own unique life situation. As Van Kaam (1966b) says, "the potential freedom of every man can grow" however it "is limited in its actual growth at a given moment by the finite historical situation of the person concerned" (p. 67). The good counselor recognizes these limits and wants the counselee himself to choose the right way within them (Van Kaam, 1966b).

#### The Individual and His Freedom

The individual man's attainment of freedom may be affected by the following three factors: anxiety which influences how he feels, concepts which influence how he sees himself, and deterministic factors which influence his external world. The following is a consideration of existential attitudes towards these factors.

Freedom with anxiety. May's final principle regarding

freedom is that "freedom requires the capacity to accept, bear, and live constructively with anxiety" (1967a, p. 178). May draws the distinction between neurotic and normal anxiety. He feels man should be free of neurotic anxiety which blocks awareness and leads to destructive action. However, the existentialist view is that normal anxiety is a constructive and expected part of life. Indeed, "to be free means to face and bear anxiety; to run away from anxiety means automatically to surrender one's freedom" (p. 179).

Normal anxiety is viewed as something which "all of us experience at every step in our psychological growth as well as in this upset contemporary world" (p. 178). Dealing with this anxiety is a constructive growing experience which May sees as fostering rather than restricting freedom. He feels that the popular "emphasis on freedom from anxiety has actually tended to undermine freedom" as it has "played into the tendencies of the individual to surrender his originality, take on 'protective coloring', and conform in the hope of gaining peace of mind" (p. 178).

Freedom from concepts. In the existentialist view individual freedom may be restricted through the person's narrow conception of himself or concern with how others see him. Van Kaam (1966b) draws attention to the damage that may be done if an individual is overly influenced by popularized psychological concepts and so sees himself only in their light. For him,

one of the long-range aims of contemporary therapy is to liberate people from the tyranny of popular concepts, which, like a thick fog, render real personal experience impossible (p. 172).

Van Kaam also sees our society as being unhealthily preoccupied with how we appear to other people. A person who cares more how he is conceived by others than who he is himself ceases to be a real person. Such a person loses his own freedom as he sells himself out to his public image (Van Kaam, 1966b).

Freedom with determinism. As freedom for the individual is compatible with limitations in his world, freedom is also compatible with determinism in the existential view. In this view, "self implies world, and world, self" (May, 1967a, p. 174). However, contrary to the usual assumption, an increased awareness of self brings an increase rather than a decrease in awareness of the world. So, as the individual's freedom increases due to self awareness, his awareness of deterministic factors increases due to his increased awareness of the world (May, 1967a).

In other words, as the individual becomes more conscious of the deterministic factors which influence him, he becomes more free. May draws the following implications from this point:

Freedom is thus not the opposite to determinism. Freedom is the individual's capacity to know that he is the determined one, to pause between stimulus and response and thus to throw his weight, however slight it may be, on the side of one particular response among several possible ones (May, 1967a, p. 175).

## CHAPTER III

### THE ATTITUDES OF ZEN

In this chapter the attitudes of Zen are examined in respect to their view of man, his ideal state, and his attainment of that state. The Zen view of man is considered, as it was in the last chapter, in the light of an ontology pertaining to what is viewed and a phenomenology pertaining to how it is viewed. Following this is a discussion of man and his unity with the world.

The second section of this chapter deals with the Zen view of man's ideal state, the nature of his freedom and its limitations. Finally, consideration is given to Zen attitudes toward attainment of man's ideal state. In this section the individual's responsibility for his freedom and blocks which may hinder its attainment are examined.

#### The Zen View of Man

##### Ontology and Zen

Zen is concerned with ontology--it "seeks first of all to reach the roots of our being"(Suzuki, 1962, p. 373). In Zen it is up to each individual to find his own truth. The Zen man is more concerned with what is true for him in the way he sees himself and the world, than he is concerned with what might be absolutely true for all men. Rather than

propagating specific beliefs regarding man's being, Zen seeks to "help each person arrive at the existential discovery of his own true Self" (Suzuki, 1962, p. xviii).

In the study of man's being or self, the words in Zen writings which mean self are "kokoro" (Japanese) and "hsin" (Chinese) (Suzuki, 1962, p. 373). The variety of ways in which the word hsin is used leads to some difficulty in its exact translation. Basically, however, it is the ultimate constituent in the being of a person (Suzuki, 1949). Watts (1957) defines hsin as "the totality of our psychic functioning, and, more specifically, the center of that functioning" (p. 25).

#### Man as Process

Zen sees man as a being in process in the sense that he is dynamic rather than static. Man is in a process of continual change with the world of which he is a part. In Zen there is no self which moves through a succession of experience, neither is there a fixed self which life flows past (Watts, 1958). The self is not separate from, but part of, the continually changing process of life. While the individual subsists, though in a process of change, the Zen emphasis is on his relationship to the world, not his identity as a separate entity.

Man and time. The time orientation of Zen is to the present. For Zen there is no time line stretching back to the past and forward to the future (Suzuki, 1953). "One can

live only in the present moment" (Holmes & Horioka, 1973, p. 83). Zen views man and events in the immediacy of the present, not in a temporal context of past and future.

Though events may be acknowledged as transitory they are seen as "timeless moments which [arise] when one is no longer trying to resist the flow of events" (Watts, 1957, p. 123).

An example of this attitude is found in Ma-tsu, quoted by Watts (1957):

with our former thoughts, later thoughts, and intervening thoughts (or, experiences): the thoughts follow one another without being linked together. Each one is absolutely tranquil (p. 123).

Watts (1957) speaks of Zen as a "liberation from time" (p. 199). For in Zen, emphasis is on the present, the past and future are abstractions with no concrete reality. As Watts writes:

There is only this now. It does not come from anywhere; it is not going anywhere. It is not permanent, but it is not impermanent. Though moving, it is always still. When we try to catch it, it seems to run away, and yet it is always here and there is no escape from it. And when we turn around to find the self which knows this moment, we find that it has vanished like the past (1957, p. 201).

### Zen and Phenomenology

Zen is phenomenological in its emphasis on direct experience. Zen perceives and feels, it does not abstract (Suzuki, 1949). A simple example of this attitude is given by Suzuki (1949); "Zen just feels fire warm and ice cold, because when it freezes we shiver and welcome fire" (p. 41).

The fire is felt, the intellectual conception of heat is not dealt with. The Zen master points directly, cutting short all theorizing and speculation (Watts, 1957).

Zen's stress on the subjective nature of individual experience is characteristic of the phenomenological attitude. The following quote is illustrative of Zen's negation of theory and emphasis on self experience:

The truth of one's being must be grasped in and through one's being; it is a living truth and cannot be known abstractly or contemplated from the outside. No one can perceive it for another, no one can relate it to another--each must come to it by himself and through himself. Reality is inimitable, and the truth of one's own being cannot be patterned on that of another. Living truth must be forged, it cannot be followed. The Zen disciple who tries to win approval by quoting the master's own words only earns a blow from the master's staff (Suzuki, 1962, p. xviii).

One of the difficulties in Zen is to "shift one's attention from the abstract to the concrete, from the symbolic self to one's true self" (Watts, 1957, p. 126). When dealing with abstract objective truths the knower does not necessarily affect the truth of what is known. In the concreteness of Zen, however, the knower and the known, the self and his reality, cannot be separated (Suzuki, 1962). The relationship between the self and its reality is an integral part of that reality.

Zen attempts to maintain the wholeness of man and his world, it resists anything which would lead to disunity. Zen therefore is not against intellectualism any more than it is against feeling. Zen is non-partisan, it

will not take sides with any of the parts of man's being, but is concerned only to arrive at his wholeness. Zen opposes the intellect and the feelings alike not as expressions of man's wholeness, but only as would-be usurpers of that wholeness (Suzuki, 1962, p. xix).

Though phenomenologically subjective in attitude, Zen "has no objection whatever to the scientific approach to reality" (Suzuki, 1960, p. 30). Zen merely wishes to remind science that there is another approach which is more direct, inward, and personal (Suzuki, 1960).

#### The Unity of Man and His World

In Zen man is seen as being united with the world (Suzuki, 1962). "The self and the rest of the universe are not separate entities but one functioning whole" (Holmes & Horioka, 1973, p. 16).

Man's life and his relationship with the world are unreal to the extent that man feels alienated from his world. Zen seeks to cure this estrangement through providing man with enlightenment into the true wholeness of his being (Suzuki, 1962). In the wholeness of man and his world,

the universe becomes [man's] very own; he lives in it even as it lives in him. Life is no longer a collection of fragments externally and accidentally related, but a living whole in which the parts retain their identity as parts and yet at the same time are fully united with the whole. And the unity of all things is reflected in the wholeness of his inner life (Suzuki, 1962, p. xv).

The unity of man and his world is reflected in Zen's love of nature. Suzuki (1962) speaks of getting so close to nature that we can see and live with its very heart. As the

Zen tenet put forward by Holmes and Horioka (1973) states: "Man arises from nature and gets along most effectively by collaborating with nature, rather than trying to master it" (p. 46).

### The Ideal State of Man

The ideal state of man in the view of Zen is freedom. "If there is anything Zen strongly emphasizes it is the attainment of freedom" (Suzuki, 1949, p. 41).

For man to be free in the view of Zen he must "transcend all possible conditions, limitations, and antitheses" that hinder his free activity (Suzuki, 1949, p. 68). The major antithesis which man must overcome is seeing the world in the context of subject-object duality. When the sense of subjective isolation vanishes, the world is no longer felt to be "some sort of obstacle standing against one" and a "sensation of freedom in action" arises (Watts, 1957, p. 132).

### Freedom of the Self

In Zen the self is liberated through finding its original nature. In this freedom the unsophisticated self of one's original being is found (Suzuki, 1949). "Zen tells us; 'Find your Self and you will be free and safe'" (Suzuki, 1962, p. 376). As Suzuki writes further:

When one knows what the self really is, one is free, what insecurity is there to feel? The main thing is to take hold of the Self, which is as Zen people would say, seeing into one's own nature or kokoro (hsin) (1962, p. 377).

### Freedom and Affirmation

For Zen, life is affirmation itself. "To be free, life must be an absolute affirmation" (Suzuki, 1949, p. 68).

Such affirmation must not be a reaction against, or conditioned by, negation. If this was the case life would lose its wholeness and creative originality (Suzuki, 1949).

In Zen absolute affirmation is whatever flows out from one's innermost being. It is a unique spontaneous creation of the moment which would be spoiled by either repetition or explanation. As Suzuki (1949) says:

Life is fact and no explanation is necessary or pertinent. To explain is to apologize, and why should we apologize for living? To live--is that not enough? Let us then live, let us affirm! Herein lies Zen in all its purity (p. 71).

### Freedom and Limitations

Freedom in Zen is not freedom "in the crude sense of 'kicking over the traces' and behaving in wild caprice" (Watts, 1957, p. 133). The liberation of Zen is for those who have mastered the disciplines of social convention (Watts, 1957).

Suzuki (1949) warns that Zen should never be confused with a libertinism which follows "one's natural bent without questioning its origin and value" (p. 86). The difference between such freedom and the freedom of Zen is that the Zen man limits himself as a result of personal consciousness and moral intuition (Suzuki, 1949).

The freedom of the individual, while not subject to

external control, is limited by the individual who is master of himself (Suzuki, 1949). In Zen the individual attempts to master himself through rigorous self-discipline. Suzuki (1949) offers the following dialogue as an illustration of such limitation:

A distinguished teacher was once asked, "Do you ever make any effort to get disciplined in the truth?"

"Yes, I do."

"How do you exercise yourself?"

"When I am hungry I eat; when tired I sleep."

"This is what everybody does; can they be said to be exercising themselves in the same way as you do?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Because when they eat they do not eat, but are thinking of various other things, thereby allowing themselves to be disturbed; when they sleep they do not sleep, but dream of a thousand and one things. This is why they are not like myself" (p. 86).

### Attitudes Towards Attainment of the Ideal State

#### Freedom and the Individual

The attainment of liberation, the ideal state of Zen, is primarily up to the individual. Zen is mostly a matter of personal experience. The individual finds his freedom in his own experience, it is not shown to him through the teachings of others (Suzuki, 1949). The Zen master or roshi may point the way to liberation but it is the student who finds it.

Watts(1958) uses the following old Zen poem to illustrate this fundamental position of Zen tradition:

If you do not get it from yourself,  
where will you go for it?

(p. 80)

Strictly speaking, Zen does not teach, it merely guides the student in his search. As Suzuki (1949) says, in Zen there is "nothing to explain, nothing to teach, that will add to your knowledge," no knowledge is really yours unless it grows out of yourself (p. 92).

Freedom and satori. The ultimate attainment of freedom in Zen is through satori. Satori may be defined as acquiring a new viewpoint which intuitively rather than intellectually and logically sees a new world "hitherto unperceived in the confusion of a dualistic mind" (Suzuki, 1949, p. 88).

The experience of satori is such that no amount of intellectual explanation can clearly communicate it (Suzuki, 1949). As attaining liberation in Zen, particularly through satori, is so subjectively experiential, it cannot be adequately conceptualized and taught as such.

Suzuki (1949) indicates the extent of teaching in Zen with his statement that,

all we can do in Zen in the way of instruction is to indicate, or to suggest, or to show the way so that one's attention may be directed towards the goal. As to attaining the goal and taking hold of the thing itself, this must be done by one's own hands, for nobody can do it for one (p. 92).

Freedom and anxiety. The Zen man who has attained a state of freedom is calm, he is not anxious (Suzuki, 1949). Suzuki (1960) acknowledges the distinction between normal

existential anxiety and neurotic anxiety, he goes on to point out that:

All forms of anxiety come from the fact that there is somewhere in our consciousness the feeling of incomplete knowledge of the situation and this lack of knowledge leads to the sense of insecurity and then to anxiety with all its degrees of intensity (p. 66).

Anxiety is a result of separateness from one's self and the world (Suzuki, 1962). The enlightened Zen man has a wholeness in his self and world which allows him freedom without anxiety.

Anxiety in the form of tension may play a part in a Zen student's working towards freedom through satori. Particularly in the Rinzai sect of Zen, students are given problems to solve called "koans" (Suzuki, 1960). The student grapples with the koan until he reaches "the limit of his mental tension" (Suzuki, 1962, p. 293). At this point the difficulty is transcended, insight is gained and the problem dissolves (Suzuki, 1960).

Freedom from concepts. "Zen defies all concept-making" (Suzuki, 1949, p. 42). Rather than conceptualizing, Zen feels or perceives directly. Zen deals with living facts of life, it is the experience of these facts, not the intellectualizing about them which is seen as important (Suzuki, 1962). To be caught up in ideas and words about Zen was called by the old masters "to stink of Zen" (Watts, 1957, p. 127).

The following quote from Suzuki (1963) is illustrative

of Zen's emphasis on direct perception:

The epistemology of Zen is . . . not to resort to the mediumship of concepts. If you want to understand Zen, understand it right away without deliberation, without turning your head this way or that. For while you are doing this, the object you have been seeking for is no longer there. This doctrine of immediate grasping is characteristic of Zen (p. 490).

According to Zen, concepts are the tools of logic which restricts man's freedom. Zen is against logic as it feels we are too much the slaves of words and concepts (Suzuki, 1949). To Zen we are so intimidated by logic that "we shrink and shiver whenever its name is mentioned" (Suzuki, 1949, p. 66).

Zen wishes us to acquire an entirely new point of view which allows us to escape the tyranny of logic. We would then see that rather than living logically we live psychologically, biologically, and spiritually.

"As long as we think logic final we are chained, we have no freedom of spirit" (Suzuki, 1949, p. 60). Zen does not strive to be illogical for its own sake, it merely attempts to show that logic is not the final answer. Suzuki (1949) gives the following example of the restrictive nature of logical dualism:

The intellectual groove of "yes" and "no" is quite accommodating when things run their regular course; but as soon as the ultimate question of life comes up, the intellect fails to answer it satisfactorily. When we say "yes," we assert, and by asserting we limit ourselves. When we say "no," we deny, and to deny is exclusion. Exclusion and limitation, which after all are

the same thing, murder the soul; for is it not the life of the soul that lives in perfect freedom and in perfect unity? There is no freedom or unity in exclusion or in limitation (p. 67).

Freedom and determinism. In Zen there is no question of whether man is free and fighting life or controlled and submitting to it (Suzuki, 1962). This problem of whether man is free or determined arises from a view which separates man from his world. Such a question is not part of Zen as in Zen man is in unity with life (Suzuki, 1962).

In Zen man is felt to be free. As Suzuki (1960) says:

From the Zen point of view, what uniquely psychologically, distinguishes the experience of the self is that it is saturated with the feeling of autonomy, freedom, [and] self determination (p. 30).

## CHAPTER IV

### ATTITUDES OF ZEN AND EXISTENTIALLY BASED COUNSELING COMPARED

In this chapter a comparison is made between the attitudes of Zen and existentially based counseling. The first section is a consideration of attitudes regarding view of man, his ideal state, and conditions for attaining that state.

Table II is a simplified outline of the attitudes examined in the previous two chapters and a brief comparison of these attitudes. A more detailed examination of how these attitudes of Zen and existentially based counseling compare follows.

The second section of this chapter examines the cultural and philosophical history of both Zen and the existentialist view. First in this section is a consideration of how existential attitudes developed from the tradition and culture of the West. The final part of this section is devoted to examining how the attitudes of Zen arose from the Eastern traditions of Buddhism and Taoism.

#### A Comparison Between the Existential and Zen Views of Man

In comparing attitudes in relation to view of man first consideration is given to ontology. Following is an examin-

TABLE II  
Attitudes of Zen and Existentially Based Counseling

	Attitudes of Zen	Attitudes of Existential Counseling	Comparison
View of Man	primarily concerned with man's being	primarily concerned with man's being	both concerned with man knowing his self
	man seen as a changing process	man seen as a changing process	Ex. emphasis on man as becoming; Zen emphasis on man as he is
	oriented to present	oriented to future	Ex. man in time context, Zen man not
	concerned with man's subjective reality	concerned with man's subjective reality	Ex. tries to know others' experience; Zen only tries to know own
	man in unity with the world	man involved with the world	Zen sees man in a closer relationship with world than does Ex. view
	man seen as a unity	man seen as a unity	Ex. may separate man's unity through analysis; Zen does not
Ideal State of Man	ideal state freedom	ideal state freedom	Ex. freedom to give meaning Zen freedom to be spontaneous
	freedom socially responsible	freedom socially responsible	Ex. limited by self and world Zen limited only by self

Table II contd.

	Attitudes of Zen	Attitudes of Existential Counseling	Comparison
Conditions for Attaining Ideal State	freedom of individual primarily his responsibility	freedom of individual may be facilitated by another person	attainment of freedom more the individual's responsibility in Zen
	freedom through new viewpoint	freedom through new viewpoint	Zen much more radical change of view
	anxiety may be part of gaining freedom	anxiety natural part of freedom	Ex. sees anxiety as normal, in Zen anxiety in attaining, not final freedom
	concepts block freedom	some concepts may block freedom	Zen more radical rejection of concepts and their use in logic
	freedom through feeling part of, not determined by world	freedom through awareness of causality from external world	Ex. sees duality of man and world, Zen does not

ation of those attitudes relevant to man as process, time and phenomenology. Finally, in this section the Zen and existential attitudes towards man's world and its unity are examined.

### Ontology

Both Zen and existentially based counseling are concerned with ontology, the nature of man's being or self. The existential attitude sees man's being as his very core, his center. Likewise, the self in Zen, hsin, stands for man's center or heart. Indeed, the original ideograph of the word hsin pictures a heart and it first symbolized this organ (Watts, 1957).

### Man as Process

Zen and existentially based counseling both see man and his life as a continually changing process. An analogy with photography may illustrate how these views differ. The existentialist attitude sees man as in a movie. The emphasis is on what he is changing into, what he is becoming.

Zen, while acknowledging that man is not static, that life is a flowing process, only looks at one frame at a time. In Zen the present instant is all that is important, like the flash of a photographer's bulb, it is that instant where life is; the past and future are not considered.

In existentially based counseling man is seen as growing, as continually in a process of becoming something else. Zen, however, is "most emphatically not to be regarded as a

system of self-improvement, or a way of becoming" (Watts, 1957, p. 125). Though Zen sees man as changing, its concern is with the present moment. Existentially based counseling is concerned with what man is in the process of becoming while relating to him in the present.

### Man and Time

The existential attitude towards the individual as becoming, emphasizes what man is moving toward and developing into. As stated by May (1958), the significant tense in the existential view is the future.

While the existential attitude towards man as becoming places emphasis on his development towards the future, this development is focused on in the immediate present of the counseling relationship. As May (1960) says, the world of the therapeutic relationship is "at the moment being represented by the consulting room of the therapist" (p. 72). The existential counselor is concerned with his developing growing client in the immediacy of their counseling relationship.

The attitude of Zen does not place man in a temporal context. In Zen emphasis is on the immediacy of the moment, the significant tense for Zen is the present (Watts, 1958).

### Phenomenology

Both Zen and existentially based counseling embody some of the attitudes of psychiatric phenomenology as described by May (1958) and considered in Chapter Two. One such

*Client = Subjective*

attitude which both approaches hold in common is that they view man's experience as subjectively his.

Neither Zen nor existential therapy approach man or a therapeutic relationship with moral judgement. The phenomenological attitude in both approaches is one of viewing the individual's experience as it is manifest. \* There is no attempt to explain causes of behavior or fit observations into a preconceived theory (May, 1958; Suzuki, 1949).

Though both Zen and existentially based counseling see the individual's experience as uniquely his, they differ in how accessible they see this experience as being to an observer. May (1967b) states that the "basis of existential psychotherapy [is] the quest to see the patient as he really is" (p. 2). The individual's self is then open, at least to some extent, to being known to another person.

Zen, on the other hand, makes no attempt to know another person's reality. In Zen the individual's being is seen as inaccessible to others, it cannot be known or contemplated by another person (Suzuki, 1962).

### Man and His World

Both Zen and existential counseling stress man's relationship with the world which is around him. This relationship, however, is perhaps closer in Zen than it is in the existentialist view.

In the view of Zen, man is one with the world in a united whole. The individual in Zen finds his self not

through building it up as a separate identity, but through surrendering his life totally. The body and mind are then not separate from the world but part of nature (Suzuki, 1949).

In the existentialist view, man and his world are a unified whole in that they are mutually dependent and inter-relating; they are, however, still seen as separate entities. As with Zen, the existentialist view <sup>Bohr</sup> sees man ideally as in harmony with, rather than having power over, nature (May, 1958; Suzuki, 1962).

An important difference in how Zen and the existentialists see the individual's relationship with the world centers on the amount of emphasis given the individual as a separate identity. In Zen the enlightened individual has no separate identity, he is in union with the world. In existential therapy the individual is seen as a separate entity who finds meaning in his relationship with the world though he is not merged into a union with it.

### The Unity of Man

Zen sees the individual as a unified whole (Suzuki, 1949). In existential therapy man is also viewed as a concrete unity (Van Kaam, 1966a). The two approaches differ, however, in their attitudes toward man as a being whose nature may be known.

In existential counseling the individual may be seen in light of various concepts in order that he may be better

understood. May (1960) writes of these concepts as "the distinctive qualities and characteristics that constitute the human being as human" (p. 72).

In Zen there is no attempt at understanding man, hence there is no description, and no possibility of man being broken up according to the different characteristics which he manifests (Suzuki, 1949). While both Zen and existentially based counseling view man as essentially a unity, the latter view is less unified through its attempt at intellectual understanding.

#### A Comparison of Attitudes Concerning Man's Ideal State

Zen and existentially based therapy both consider man's ideal state to be one of freedom. Suzuki (1949) writes about the freedom of man's original spontaneity and of the Zen emphasis on "attainment of freedom" (p. 41). Van Kaam (1966b) also writes of man's freedom having "roots that are in his very nature as man" (p. 52) and of reaching the fullness of his freedom through existential therapy.

Though both approaches view man's ideal state as being one of liberation, they differ when it comes to the nature of this freedom. The existentialist view sees man's freedom as a psychological freedom which allows him to give meaning to his life. Van Kaam (1966a) speaks of freedom not in a physical sense but in the sense of man having the freedom to give "meaning to all his limitations" (p. 52).

In Zen, freedom ultimately is finding one's "original nature" or self. As Suzuki (1962, p. 376) says: "find your self and you will be free and safe." In this state man is free from dualistic patterns of conventional thought and so capable of fresh and spontaneous action (Suzuki, 1949).

#### Freedom and Limitations

Both Zen and the existentialist view see man as limited by social responsibility. May (1967a) and Suzuki (1949) are careful to point out that the freedom they speak of is subjective and in no way implies license to follow one's own desires.

The two approaches differ in how they see external limitations. When in a free state the Zen man may limit himself through discipline but he will feel no external limitations impinging upon himself (Suzuki, 1949). The existential view, on the other hand, acknowledges limitations from the external world and sees the individual finding freedom in the way in which he encounters these limitations (May, 1967a).

#### Attitudes Regarding the Attainment of Man's Ideal State

Both Zen and existentially based counseling see man attaining freedom through a change in his view of himself and his world. The two approaches differ, though, in how they see this change in view coming about.

In existential counseling, the attainment of freedom

may be facilitated by another person. In Zen, however, the liberation of the individual is more his own responsibility.

The attainment of freedom in Zen, particularly the ultimate liberation of satori, involves a radical change in world view. As noted previously, this freeing of the individual, as with the rest of Zen, is a matter of personal experience (Suzuki, 1949). Though the Zen master may point the way, he does not teach or show freedom. In Zen the individual finds his freedom through his self, not his relationship to another.

Existentially based therapy is, as the name implies, a helping relationship. Freedom for the individual is found through his seeing a new view of himself and his situation. The counselor actively helps the individual or client towards this end (Van Kaam, 1966b). This finding freedom through seeing a new point of view differs from Zen in that the change in view is far less radical and it is facilitated by another person.

#### Blocks to Attainment of Freedom

Zen and existentially based counseling differ in their attitude towards factors which may be seen as hindering attainment of freedom. Three such factors which will now be considered are anxiety, intellectual concepts and determinism.

Freedom and anxiety. In the existential view, anxiety is a necessary part of freedom. Such anxiety is seen as normal, aiding man's growth and development (May, 1967a).

Long term  
Ideal  
Zen  
states.

Usually  
short term  
bursts.

52

The process of attaining liberation in Zen may involve some anxiety in the form of tension; it has, however, no place in Zen's liberated state. The free Zen man is at one with himself and his world, he feels no separateness and so no anxiety (Suzuki, 1962).

Freedom and conceptualization. The attitudes of Zen and the existential view differ in regard to the extent that the logical use of concepts is seen to block freedom. Existentially based therapy, while using concepts as part of a logical system of knowing patients, is aware of their inherent danger. May (1958) points out the danger of concepts, particularly those which are over used or popularized, getting in the way of real knowledge or experience.

Zen, in its emphasis on personal experience, is the very antithesis of logic and intellectualism. Zen strongly rejects concepts and logic; it sees them as restricting man's thought and blocking his freedom (Suzuki, 1949). The existentialist view is aware of the danger of concepts, Zen rejects them outright.

The difference in concept usage between Zen and existential therapy is primarily on the level of the Zen master and therapist. Neither the master's student nor the therapist's client would be as likely to use concepts so the difference between them in this regard is minimized.

Freedom and determinism. The Zen man feels free and at one with life. Zen sees man as an integral part of the world

as a whole, not free of or controlled by it. The question of whether man is free or determined thus does not arise.

The existential attitude sees man as both determined and free. In this view man has freedom in his capacity to know that he is determined. (May, 1967a).

### The Cultural and Philosophic Background of Zen and the Existentialist View

In this section a comparison between attitudes of Zen and existentially based counseling is related to their cultural and philosophical history. First is a brief consideration of Western civilization from which arose the existential view. Following this is an examination of the Eastern tradition from which came Zen.

#### The Western Tradition

The existentialist approach arose in response to a crisis in Western culture (May, 1958). This crisis is one in which man is seen as alienated from himself and his world. The following is a consideration of the dichotomization which eventually gave rise to the existential revolt.

In the history of Western thought, man's tendency to be objective began as early as the Greeks who developed a basic system of categorization through external observation of nature (Van Kaam, 1966a). Even at this time man was seen as being split up into various categories. Representative of the Greek dichotomy in man is that element of the soul called "thymós." The thymós came between the intellectual

*Karma  
cause + effect?*

and sensual elements in man, it represented the conflict between his reason and desire (Tillich, 1952, p. 3).

With the Renaissance, came a new belief in the power of the individual and concern with physical nature (May, 1967a). In this period, man gained a new confidence in his ability to understand and control his environment.

For exploration to continue it was methodologically necessary for man to break down what he was investigating into more manageable categories. As a result, the Renaissance saw

the gradual split of the Western cognitive mode of existence into philosophical-theoretical, empirical-theoretical, observational, experimental, and applied modes of knowledge (Van Kaam, 1966a, p. 85).

In this way man began an increasing effort to understand and control the physical world.

By the nineteenth century man had made, at least materially, much progress. Industrialization had taken giant strides towards the understanding and control of nature. However, instead of man relying on reason as he had in the seventeenth century, his new emphasis was on technique.

With less emphasis on individual reason, confidence in natural harmony, which had been taken for granted, was lost. This led in the latter half of the nineteenth century to cultural disunity and compartmentalizing.

Man himself was not whole but seen as composed of various faculties: reason, will, and emotion. As the factories

of the time were supposed to work mechanically, so too was man.

His reason was supposed to tell him what to do, then voluntaristic will was supposed to give him the means to do it, and emotions--well, emotions could best be channeled into compulsive business drive and rigidly structuralized Victorian mores; and the emotions which would really have upset the formal segmentation, such as sex and hostility, were to be staunchly repressed or let out only in orgies of patriotism or on well-contained weekend "binges" (May, 1958, p. 21).

### The Existential Revolt

In the nineteenth century, the separation of man and his world reached a critical point. The individual was dichotomized according to his faculties, his reason and his will. He was not one with his world but split between subjective and objective views. Further cultural breakdown resulted from the loss of security once offered by the traditions of Christianity and humanism which had fallen victim to the technical onslaught of the industrial revolution.

It was against this cultural crisis that the originators of existentialism revolted. The revolt was not a movement brought about by one central figure, it was, rather, a spontaneous reaction to the crisis of the time.

That the existential approach arose as an indignant and spontaneous answer to crisis in modern culture is shown not only in the fact that it emerged in art and literature but also in the fact that different philosophers in diverse parts of Europe often developed these ideas without conscious relation to each other (May, 1958, p. 17).

Though relatively unknown in his time, one of the most revolutionary originators of existential thought was Søren Kierkegaard. He fought to overcome the split between man's reason and emotion by turning attention to the individual's very existence which underlies both.

Kierkegaard argued against the extremes of the positivist and rationalist views. He brought unity to man and his world with the idea of relational truth. That is, man the subject, and the object he observes, find truth not as separate entities, but in the unity of their relationship. As Van Kaam (1966a) states:

the existential view of scientific theory unites the positivist and rationalist views in a flexible synthesis. According to this concept, theory is a subjective-objective creation of the scientist. Theory is subjective insofar as it is a creation of the scientific thinker. It is objective insofar as it represents in principle structural properties and relationships among the behavioral phenomena. Theory is thus a subjective frame of reference created by the scientific thinker to represent structural properties and relationships which he observes in the appearances of behavior (p. 102).

### The Eastern Tradition

Zen originated in a combination of the Eastern traditions of Chinese Taoism and Indian Mahayana Buddhism (Watts, 1957). As previously mentioned, Zen is founded on attitudes which emphasize the unity and interrelatedness of man and his world. The following is a brief account of how this wholeness of the Buddhist and Taoist traditions contributed to the development of Zen.

Taoism. When Buddhism came to China, Chinese culture was already well established, being at least two thousand years old. In the Chinese society of that time there were two "philosophical" traditions playing complementary parts; Confucianism and Taoism (Watts, 1957).

Confucianism served as a guide to everyday life. It was concerned with maintaining proper order and establishing guidelines for social conduct. Confucianism presided "over the socially necessary task of forcing the original spontaneity of life into the rigid rules of convention" (Watts, 1957, p. 10).

The function of Taoism was to counterbalance the restrictive nature of Confucianism. The Tao may be defined as "the indefinable, concrete, 'process' of the world, the Way of life" (Watts, 1957, p. 15).

Taoism is concerned with unconventional knowledge; "with the understanding of life directly, instead of in the abstract, linear terms of representational thinking" (Watts, 1957, p. 10). Taoism sought to encourage man's free and spontaneous participation in the world. Man was seen as one with the world, with the Tao; his relationship was one of interdependence, not control.

Traditionally the originator of Taoism is Lao-tzu. According to legend, as he was leaving society to go alone into the wilderness, he was persuaded by a gatekeeper to write down his final thoughts. The resulting book, the

Tao Te Ching, is felt to contain the essence of Taoism. The following two quotes from the Tao Te Ching illustrate the wholeness of the Taoist view of man and his world.

The Tao is forever undefined. . . .  
 Once the whole is divided, the parts need names.  
 There are already enough names.  
 One must know when to stop.  
 Knowing when to stop averts trouble.  
 Tao in the world is like a river flowing home  
 to the sea (Chapter 32).

The great Tao flows everywhere, both to the left  
 and to the right.  
 The ten thousand things depend upon it; it holds  
 nothing back.  
 It fulfills its purpose silently and makes no  
 claim.

It nourishes the ten thousand things,  
 And yet is not their lord (Chapter 34).

Buddhism. The evolution of Buddhism which led to the development of the Mahayana doctrines is historically vague. However, as Watts (1957) points out, knowledge of this history is not crucial to an understanding of Zen as the Mahayana doctrines were fully developed by the time they came into contact with the Chinese tradition.

Mahayana Buddhism stresses the unity of all things and the liberation of man. As Watts (1957) states, the aim of these teachings was "to bring about the experience of liberation, not to construct a philosophical system" (p. 57).

The culmination of Indian Mahayana Buddhism is found in the doctrine of Dharmadhatu (Watts, 1957). This doctrine is based on the uniqueness and interdependence of all things: it states:

that the proper harmony of the universe is realized when each "thing-event" is allowed to be freely and spontaneously itself, without interference. Stated more subjectively, it is saying, "Let everything be free to be just as it is. Do not separate yourself from the world and try to order it around" (Watts, 1957, p. 71).

According to legend, the Indian monk Bodhidharma brought Buddhism to China in the sixth century A.D. The school that developed around Bodhidharma was very much influenced by the Taoism of China. The Mahayana Buddhism of India combined with the Chinese Taoism to form a basis for the development of what the Japanese would call Zen.

Within its first century in China, Zen acquired a Chinese practicality and directness; it was soon firmly established in Chinese culture. For approximately the next seven hundred years, Zen played a major part in Chinese life; it flourished in remote monasteries, the Imperial Court and the educational system (Strunkard, 1951).

Zen was brought to Japan in the twelfth century, where it influenced the culture even more than it had in China (Holmes & Horioka, 1973). Of the five definite Zen schools in China, two were transplanted to Japan, the Rinzai and the Soto. The Rinzai school emphasizes the attainment of satori through the koan system while the Soto school places most stress on meditation. Both of these Zen schools have remained prominent in Japan up to the present day.

The traditions of Buddhism, Taoism, and Zen unify rather than compartmentalize. "The East is synthetic in its method

of reasoning; it does not care so much for the elaboration of particulars as for a comprehensive grasp of the whole" (Suzuki, 1949, p. 35). There is no dichotomy in the Eastern view, man is one with himself and at home in the universe.

## CHAPTER V

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ZEN AND EXISTENTIALLY BASED COUNSELING

The relationship between Zen and existentially based counseling may be considered in the context of past cultural history and present psychological implications. Historically there is a great difference between the two belief systems. Zen is a culmination of thousands of years of tradition while the existential approach revolts against tradition and is little more than one hundred years old.

The historical contexts of Zen and existentialism, though markedly different, give rise to similarity in the basic attitudes held by the two systems. In revolting against diversification in Western culture the existential approach sought a unity of man and his world which had always been part of the Zen tradition. This wholeness of man and desire for his liberation is basic to the similarity between the attitudes held by Zen and existentially based counseling.

The relationship between the attitudes of Zen and existentially based counseling has been considered in regard to their view of man, his ideal state, and the means by which that state may be obtained. Both Zen and existentially

based counseling are primarily concerned with man. They have in common that they see man as changing, they are concerned with his wholeness and his relationship with the world around him.

While the ways in which Zen and the existential view regard freedom may differ, both approaches desire man's liberation. Also in respect to attaining freedom, though there may be many specific differences between the existential and Zen attitudes, both approaches see man attaining liberation through changing his view of the world.

Psychologically, Zen attitudes encompass the individual and his world. Zen is broad in scope, it is a way of life. The attitudes of existentially based counseling are more narrow in scope. They do not encompass a total life situation but rather focus on specific therapeutic relationships.

#### Implications for Counseling

Carl Jung (1949), one of the "fathers" of modern psychological thought, states that the only movement in our culture which definitely should have some understanding of Zen experience is psychotherapy. In light of the comparison made between attitudes of Zen and existentially based counseling, what are the implications of such an understanding for psychotherapy?

Do the attitudes of Zen have any relevance to the counselor and his relationship with his client? The correspondence found between the attitudes of Zen and the attitudes

of existentially based counseling suggests that yes, some of the attitudes of Zen are relevant to counseling.

The counselor may try to understand his client through developing an empathic relationship with him. In such a relationship the counselor will attempt to experience what his client is feeling. Zen also strongly emphasizes direct experience. In both the Zen and the counseling experience spoken of there is an attempt to transcend the perception of subject-object duality which separates the individual from what he is attending to.

In the counseling relationship, emphasis may be placed on the client's feelings and emotions rather than on his intellectual conception of what his problem is. As a preoccupation with intellectual concepts may be a block in the counseling relationship, so concepts also are seen to block experience in Zen. These attitudes of Zen, emphasizing direct experience, may have something to offer the counselor who is interested in focusing on the immediate experience of his client.

The counselor who is focusing attention on his client in the immediate therapeutic relationship may find Zen relevant in a temporal context. Such a counseling relationship involves concentrating on the client as he is in the present moment. This orientation to time is most relevant to Zen, as Zen is primarily concerned with what is happening NOW.

Some of the attitudes of Zen which have developed out

of Taoism seem to be particularly pertinent to a therapeutic consideration of man in present Western society. The Tao or "flow of life" underlies the Zen view of life as a continual process of change, and view of man as integrally involved with this changing world. These attitudes seem most relevant to today's world: authors such as Toffler (1970) are pointing out the rapidity of present change and advances in the fields of science and communications are "shrinking" the world in a way which forces man to be more involved in the world around him.

The view of man as in a continual process of change may \*  
be of practical value to therapy. Such an attitude might bring a flexibility to the therapist which would allow him to be more open and understanding of his client's need and changing life situation.

The Zen view of man as integrally involved with the world might also be valuable to a counselor. In light of such an attitude the counselor might be more inclined to consider the problem of a client in the context of his total life situation. \* In this way he might develop an increased awareness of how he, the counselor, as well as those outside of the therapeutic relationship, are all having an effect on his client.

The counselor who wishes to approach his client in an open non-judgemental way may be helped by an awareness of Zen. Basic to Zen is the idea that the Tao or flow of life

is evolving naturally and as it should. The Zen attitude of non-competitive, non-judgemental acceptance of life is based on this Taoist view. Such acceptance may help to foster in the counselor a calmness and peaceful stability. The client of such a counselor may be more open and responsive to therapy as a result of feeling free from judgement and confident in the stability and presence of the therapist.

May (1958) warns of the danger of psychotherapy becoming a new representation of the fragmentation of man; of psychotherapy becoming "part of the neurosis of our day rather than part of the cure" (p. 35). It was the existential movement which strove for a unified view of man and it is by offering a similar unifying view that Zen may have a positive influence on Western psychotherapy. ker  
withen?  
+

Taoism balanced the constraints of Confucianism and existentialism sought to balance the fragmentation of nineteenth century man. In the same way a counselor's awareness of Zen attitudes might serve to balance the dichotomizing tendencies of Western science as manifest in psychological thought.

#### Dangers in the Study of Zen

Perhaps the most obvious danger in comparing Zen and existential attitudes is that of expanding their similarities into identities. As previously indicated, to view the attitudes of the two systems as the same is a dangerous oversimplification.

A second danger in considering the attitudes of Zen arises from the possibility of confusing the attitudes themselves with Zen. Such attitudes are attempts at intellectually conceptualizing the Zen view, they are not Zen.

A final danger when studying Zen is that of coming to erroneous conclusions concerning Zen attitudes as a result of seeing them exclusively in a Western frame of reference which is strictly logical and dualist in nature. Zen is based on Eastern tradition and manner of thought, a manner of thought which is less structured and bound by fewer conventions than is the thought of Western man.

#### Suggestions for Further Research

This study of existentially based counseling and Zen has considered the two approaches as unifying agents. Beyond the scope of this thesis, but open to further research, is the problem of the nature and extent that man and his world ~~+~~ suffer disunity in our culture as a result of traditional modes of thought.

Research also may be needed in regard to how Western psychotherapy might benefit from the Eastern traditions. ~~+~~ As indicated in the Review of the Literature, benefits to be gained from the East have had much brief mention but few in-depth studies. Areas open to further study include philosophies such as Taoism and practical disciplines such as ~~+~~ meditation. Of particular interest might be a consideration of how the therapeutic nature of Buddhism in general might

be relevant to the West.

Further research relating Zen to Western culture might examine attitudes of Zen such as those relating to time or non-judging. Of importance to learning from the East might also be a consideration of, if and to what extent, Zen might be integrated into modern Western culture. Of particular interest might be the relationship between Zen and Christianity; R. H. Blyth (1960) in his Zen and English Literature makes considerable comparisons in this regard.

#### Conclusion

There are basic similarities between Zen and existentially based counseling. Both are concerned with individual man and his attainment of freedom. Also both Zen and existentially based counseling emphasize the wholeness of man and his interdependent relationship with the world.

Though possessing basic similarities existentially based counseling and Zen are not identical. As shown in the previous chapter, when first examined specific attitudes held by each approach may appear to be held in common. However, when such attitudes are considered in the overall context of their belief systems, they are found to be though similar, not the same.

The correspondence between existentially based counseling and Zen attitudes has implications for the theory and practice of counseling. The unification of man and his world found in Zen may serve to balance objectivity and

compartmentalization found in traditional Western psycho-  
logical theory. The counselor may also find Zen attitudes  
such as those held in regard to experience and acceptance  
to be beneficial to his counseling practice.

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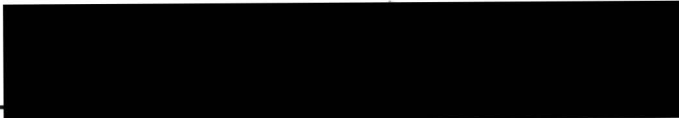
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A COMPARISON OF ATTITUDES IN ZEN AND EXISTENTIALLY  
BASED COUNSELING

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Author

  
Signature

DAVID NORMAN EYLES

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Name

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Date