

# Chapter 3

## Method

This chapter contains the description of the research design and the research method. The research design is of a qualitative nature, and the method of facilitation is based on the intrapsychic and systems approaches. The problems surrounding scientific knowledge and truth generation, and the assumptions surrounding our past understanding of body and mind as separate entities, need to be placed into the context of an interdisciplinary framework.

The qualitative approach to data gathering consists of qualitative interviewing, narrative inquiry, and action inquiry.

The psycho-biographical framework which surrounds the process of inquiry consists of writing ethnographically, with particular emphasis on the attitude of the ethnographer. Throughout the data gathering process the emotions involved in getting hurt and in forgiving are explored.

The analysis of the data will be explained by means of discourse analysis, and theory generation will be clarified by the grounded theory approach.

The strengths and weaknesses of this qualitative investigation will conclude this discussion.

The method for facilitating forgiveness will be discussed in chapter 4.

The method of data collection entails the sampling procedure, preparation for the data collection, and data collection. The method of data collection will now be described in more detail.

## **Sampling procedure**

Six individuals who were physically, psychologically, and/or emotionally hurt in the past were located by means of personal contact or by personal recommendation from friends, colleagues, and helpful individuals. A short interview was conducted with the aim of identifying individuals who had been profoundly hurt, who were plagued by negative emotions such as resentment, anger, and hatred, and who had tried to forgive their perpetrators, but had not been able to do so in the past. The time span between having been hurt and the present time, which represents the length of time with which the individuals were intimately tied to their negative emotions, ranged from between two to thirty years. Each individual was selected on the grounds of his /her willingness to want to forgive.

This preselected number of individuals who requested assistance in achieving the difficult task of forgiving were chosen for demonstrating the process of facilitation with the aim of forgiving themselves and/or the people and systems who hurt them. The results can therefore not be generalised to the population of individuals who do not want to forgive their perpetrators.

## **Preparation for data collection**

The process of data collection needs to be thoroughly planned before the research

participant is requested to meet me for the first interview. Particular care is taken in choosing a comfortable venue in a natural environment according to the research participant's choice. Attention is paid to the fact that the venue is conducive to narrating sensitive and confidential material. Interruptions by telephone are excluded by setting aside two to three hours or more of uninterrupted mutual attention to the story of hurt and possible interventions. Time for peace without interruption is negotiated before the actual interview with each individual. During the phase of preparing for data collection, particular attention is paid to my role as researcher and facilitator. A free day or two needs to be available after the data collection, to write down the narrative as well as the possible interventions that would be performed if the necessity arose during the narration phase. Since my full attention is focussed on the research participant's story and person, no room remains for making notes, and for the manipulation of technical equipment such as audio or video tape recorders. This unusual method of encoding complex information therefore demands no interference from other sources until the story and the interventions have been written down.

Participation in this research project was voluntary. Each participant was verbally assured of confidentiality and anonymity. They were also told beforehand that approximately two to five hours of their time would be required for narrating their story, checking my written version of their story through their eyes, being the recipient of interventions to facilitate forgiveness, and to report back for a check-up with regard to the success of the interventions. Feedback from each participant was also requested with regard to the changes that would occur, and whether forgiveness had been achieved. They were required to invest their time, in return for free therapeutic assistance, while I invested my time and skills, in return for positive evidence of the efficacy of a brief intervention method in assisting individuals with forgiving. This research design is of a win-win nature, and therefore ethically sound. It is also valid since my written accounts of the participants' narratives are verified by the narrators themselves, which precludes interpretations and false information. The subjectivity of the narratives and the interventions cannot be deemed a drawback since personal relief is always of a subjective nature, and therapeutic interventions by means of NLP can only achieve results in the life of an individual when that

particular individual's subjective reality is taken into account. In facilitating forgiving by means of NLP, the facilitator's aims are guided by the participant's aims for his/her life. The participant therefore needs to verbally state in positive terms that he/she wants to achieve forgiving the perpetrator. The facilitator's will, ideas, or wishes are entirely irrelevant with regard to the process of learning to forgive, which implies the following:

- The participant is the expert who knows what his/her own outcome should be.
- The participant is the expert in making decisions that direct his/her life.
- The participant decides what he/she wants to achieve within the constraints and restrictions of his/her life.
- The participant's subconscious and conscious emotions, thoughts, spiritual orientation, social world, environment, and behaviour are taken into account.

Data analysis is conducted simultaneously with the data collection and intervention. This means that I am fully engaged with all my senses, in a multitude of tasks, while I am interacting with the research participant on the level of empathic listener, data collector, analyst, and NLP practitioner / facilitator.

The process of data collection will now be explained more fully.

## **Data Collection**

The qualitative interviewing method has the potential to convey the deep meaning of the subjects' experiences. According to McCracken (1988) it is one of the most powerful methods of qualitative investigation. The nature of the data being elicited is influenced by the way the interviewer asks open ended questions regarding the problem, and the way he/she interacts with the interviewee. The evaluation of the responses occurs idiosyncratically according to contextual constraints and underlying belief systems of the interviewer and the interviewee. The process of data collection and the interview method

therefore go hand in hand.

Defining the qualitative interview as it is applied in the present research can be done best by highlighting some of the important features of this method.

- The qualitative interview regarding this research is mainly directed at the life-world of the research participant. The life-world is an event in the research participant's life in which hurt occurred which was not forgiven. Listening to an account of the event in which hurt was experienced enables me to experience the event and the accompanying emotions as the research participant experienced them then and re-experiences them as the event is recounted.
- The unstructured interview format used in the present study is essential for maximum information gathering during the interviewing process. I therefore adhered to the role of active listener. One participant had written down her whole story comprising approximately 145 pages, of which a shortened version is included in this thesis. With regard to this participant, I read the whole story before our first interview.
- Open ended questions are asked in the beginning of the interviewing process with the aim of motivating the participant to narrate the circumstances that lead to the hurtful act and the subsequent hurt feelings.
- Unlike the structured interview and questionnaire, the qualitative interview is extremely powerful with sensitive material. It allows the researcher to explore the complexities of personal experiences and interpersonal events and sequences, by ingenious questioning.
- The attitude of the researcher towards the research participant is of utmost importance in this research process. Genuineness and respect for the individual is the foundation of a successful, in depth, qualitative interview.

The narrative inquiry as a form of interviewing was chosen, because it is highly effective for exploring subjective experiences of a sensitive nature. Data gathered by the narrative inquiry consists of complex constructions of emotions, beliefs and subjective interpretations. Emotions, beliefs and interpretations are unique subjective features of a particular event in the life of an individual, and the same event may elicit different emotions and interpretations in different individuals. The difference in emotional responses and interpretations of the same event by different individuals can be attributed to different underlying beliefs, as well as assumptions about the event (Swanepoel, 2001; Wiesenthal, 1997; Cameron-Bandler and Lebeau, 1986). By living through an event and telling the story of that event, the participant is re-experiencing that event, and I, the listener am living through that event through the story. The construction of experiential stories must therefore be understood in terms of a reflexive relationship between the telling of the event by the participant, the experiencing of the event by the listener, and the retelling of the event by me, the listener / researcher.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) stress the strategic link between the formulation and the generation of grounded formal theory and substantive theory. Substantive theories of emotion were used in this research as a stimulus in generating ideas on the possible integration of theory and lived experience. Grounded theory is adaptable for studying an array of diverse phenomena, since it is a general methodological way for conceptualising and thinking about data (Casey, 1998; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Discovering something new implores the investigator to use a different way of viewing the same phenomenon. This research aims to do both, to examine forgiveness from established theoretical perspectives, and also from a new perspective. The new perspective must be understood as an attempt to throw light onto areas of the object of investigation (forgiveness) that were until recently shrouded in darkness. This happens during the interviewing process, and during the entire duration of the interview. I therefore need to be alert and on the lookout for new additions to the body of accepted theoretical knowledge with regard to forgiveness. If a grounded theory is to be usefully applied in daily situations, it must correspond closely to the substantive data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

The narrative inquiry can best be described by highlighting its most important features:

- The narrative inquiry is mainly directed at the life-world of the individual. The life-world regarding the present research, is an event in the participant's life in which hurt occurred that was not forgiven. Listening to an account of the event in which hurt was experienced enables me as the listener /researcher /facilitator to experience the event and the accompanying emotions as the participant experienced them then, and re-experiences them as the event is recounted.
- Using the narrative inquiry format is essential for comprehensive information gathering during the interviewing process. It is essential for me as researcher to adhere to the use of open ended questions. An accepting stance, and a trusting relationship between myself and the client is a prerequisite for optimal information gathering.
- Throughout the interviewing process the aim of assisting the participant to understand the circumstances that lead to the hurtful act and the subsequent hurt feelings is used as a stricture throughout the process of exploration.
- Unlike the structured interview and questionnaire, the narrative inquiry is extremely powerful with sensitive material. It allows the researcher to explore the complexities of personal experiences and interpersonal events and sequences. Subjective hurts are of a highly sensitive nature, and private thoughts of revenge, un-forgiveness and hatred are more likely kept concealed when there is no positive rapport between the interviewer and the participant.

The practice of action inquiry is research and action tied together. That means that I, the interviewer, am gaining knowledge while I am in action as a researcher, an empathic listener, and a facilitator at the same time. The combined roles of researcher, listener, and facilitator compel me to respect, value and revere the individual who tells the story. Action inquiry must therefore be understood as a discipline that is relevant to participatory inquiry.

Action inquiry can be described as a way of investigating the aspects of human experience that are essential in understanding the generation of knowledge regarding four domains of human experience (Torbert, 1991). The four domains of human experience are the following:

- ***Knowledge about the system's own purposes***  
This refers to knowing what demands attention at any point in time, as well as an intuitive knowing of what goals are worthy to pursue.
- ***Knowledge about the system's strategy***  
This refers to the cognitive knowledge of the underlying theories for its choices.
- ***Knowledge about possible behavioural choices***  
This refers to an awareness of oneself and one's interpersonal skills.
- ***Knowledge of the outside world***  
This refers to the empirical knowledge of the system's behavioural consequences.

The corresponding four territories of experience to the abovementioned domains are the following: purpose, strategy, behaviour, and the outside world.

Action inquiry can thus be described as scientific inquiry that is concerned with inquiring about issues of everyday life. For Torbert (1991) and Wiesenthal (1998) that means that I as a researcher am self-reflexively aware in the midst of action. According to the theories of ego development of Loevinger (1976) and Kegan (1979) it appears that becoming aware of alternative perceptions is the result of maturation since this awareness only seems to unfold during the later stages of human development. These perceptions, our own as well as others', are contingent upon underlying assumptions. Since assumptions can be tested they also contain the possibility for transformation according to Dilts, Epstein, and Dilts (1991), and Bandler and Grinder (1975). However, the possibility for



transforming these assumptions only reaches consciousness during the later stages of human development when a person becomes aware of the interplay of thought, action, and the environment in the eternal now (Torbert, 1991).

The four dimensions of conversation that correspond to Torbert's (1972) four territories of human experience (purpose, strategy, behaviour, and the outside world) are the following:

- **Framing**  
The purpose of speaking is expressed, which means that the underlying assumptions of the conversation are named.
- **Advocacy**  
The process of action is clearly expressed.
- **Illustration**  
The process of action is grounded in a story.
- **Inquiry**  
The listener is free to respond by asking questions or by commenting on the story.

A person who practices action inquiry therefore needs to develop a span of attention across the four territories of consciousness as well as acquire behavioural flexibility (Torbert, 1991). Both of these attributes can be attained by means of constantly observing and reflecting upon one's own actions.

My attitude as researcher and interviewer towards the participant, is of utmost importance in this research process. Genuineness and respect for the participant is the foundation of a successful, in depth, qualitative interview.

An unstructured interviewing schedule is desirable according to the results of my previous

explorative study on forgiveness (Von Krosigk, 2000), since individual stories may differ in length of description, detail, sensitivity of content, and time necessary before the task of behaviour change can be initiated. The number of interviews per person for this study involved one interview with a particular individual, but the duration of the interviews varied from one individual to another, depending on the number of issues that needed to be resolved (Von Krosigk, 2000). It is therefore important to remain sensitive towards the idiosyncrasies of each participant, and to retain flexibility of thought and behaviour.

In the present research study, the psycho-biographical framework refers to the internal and external environment of an individual in the context of living. It is used to delineate both the goal and process of forgiveness that are consistent with the values considered to be an integral part of one's self (Levinson, 1978; Scheibe, 1995). According to Swanepoel (2001), Wiesenthal (1998), and Krebs (1975), an individual who is emotionally aroused at the sight of a similar other being fraught with pain, is willing to help the other, even at a cost to themselves. The reason being that the pain of the similar other becomes intrinsically tied to the affective state of the self, by perceiving the well-being of the self and the other as mutually interdependent. This can also be understood as an existential response to internal values according to Enright and Fitzgibbons (2000) and Dilts (1983), and to a commitment to oneself and the other according to Dilts, Epstein, and Dilts (1991). Letting go of hostile behaviour can only occur after one has become aware of such behaviour, and when another goal has become more attractive than expending one's psychic energy on bitterness and resentment (Enright and Fitzgibbons, 2000; Dilts, Epstein, and Dilts, 1991).

The scientific description of races and cultures of mankind is called ethnography (Oxford, 1996), and narrating stories, in this case stories of hurt, from peoples' lives is the essence of writing ethnographically (Swanepoel, 2001; Wiesenthal, 1998; Ellis, 1997). Stories create a reality of the human condition in which a certain segment of life is documented and its actors are shown as tragic, heroic, damaged, or sensitive. Telling the story to an outsider who is able to listen impartially with compassion is like an act of having one's feelings validated (Von Krosigk, 2000). Those of us who hear or read these stories of hurt

feel a type of solidarity with the victims of hurt. That in turn validates our feelings that life is not fair, and that there are many other people who have had similar and often worse experiences than the ones we had to endure. By reading these stories we must allow ourselves to become part of the story. By becoming part of the story we feel its nuances, understand its ambiguities, and resonate with the moral dilemmas it may pose (Ellis, 1995). Such stories provide us with valuable insights into internal processes of coping with exceptionally difficult situations (Von Krosigk, 2000). They compel us to think and feel as the actor in the story thought and felt at the time (Von Krosigk, 2000). When we have felt and thought what the actor in the story experienced, our own life has been affected, and we have found a certain truth or insight through that experience (Von Krosigk, 2000).

When we read stories we should pose the question about the meaning of the story and in what way that meaning has relevance to our own life ( Moore, 2001; Von Krosigk, 2000). We should also consider in what way describing reality is different from dealing with it (Von Krosigk, 2000).

By experiencing the effect a particular story has on our own life, and by seeking a certain truth for our own life through that effect we try to think *with* a story from the framework of our own lives. By thinking *with* a story, we are engaging in the academic practice of narrative inquiry according to Von Krosigk (2000), and Wiesenenthal (1998) which requires us to link the theories that we know to the story (Von Krosigk, 2000). When we think *about* a story rather than *with* it the result is a reduction of the story to its content (Wiesenenthal, 1998). By thinking *about* a story the only activity that is possible is a content analysis in which meaning, relevance to our own lives and truth are lost (Wiesenenthal, 1998). The approach to narrative inquiry as an academic practice, changes the process of thinking *about* to one of thinking *with* (Ellis, 1997; Ellis and Flaherty, 1992).

When we think *about* a story, rather than *with* it, we reduce the story to its content, and proceed to analyse its content. **When we think *with* a story rather than about it, we link theory to story.** My reason for choosing ethnographic writing for this research is to link theory to story, including the stories that are embedded in the intervention sections in

chapters 5 to 10, which enables me to engage in the process of narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry through ethnographic writing is essential when we aim to understand individuals within their contexts.

There are a growing number of ethnographies that set out to broaden our basis for understanding others. In these ethnographic novels, the setting of the scene is described, local peoples' own stories are narrated, the unfolding of the narrative takes place over a longer or shorter time-frame, and the author is an integral part of the action. As Bakhtin (1981) observed, the novel has invaded the scientific monograph and transformed it, by using a multilayered consciousness and maximal contact with the present. These features are also used in narrative ethnographies, whose future lies in the realm of possible social inquiry.

Rose (1990,p.57) predicts that “the future of ethnography will be a polyphonic, heteroglossic, multigenre construction that will include:

- the author's voice and own emotional reactions
- critical, theoretical, humanist mini-essays that take up and advance the particular literature or subliterate of the human sciences and particular disciplines (perhaps an ethnography will develop one or two ideas that provide coherence to the entire book)
- the conversations, voices, attitudes, visual genres, gestures, reactions, and concerns of daily life of the people with whom the author participates, observes and lives, will take form as a narrative and discourse in the text
- poetics will also join the prose
- pictures, photos, and drawings will take up a new, more interior relation to the text, not to illustrate it, but to document in their own way what words do in another way

- the junctures between analytic, fictive, poetic, narrative, and critical genres will be marked clearly in the text but will cohabit the same volume.”

The implications of the multigenre ethnography will be a transformation in reading, and in the conduct of inquiry (Rose, 1990). This inquiry will require of me as a researcher to acquire a narrative quality, which means that I will endeavour to place myself into unfolding situations, by living through ongoing events, rather than looking for presentations of selves, class relations, and abstract analytical category phenomena.

Together with Jackson (1989) I elaborate this point by referring to the necessary participation in another's life by inhabiting their world in the sense of putting myself physically in the place of others. It is therefore deemed essential that I break the habit of using a linear communicational model for understanding others.

Leading lives of narrative inquiry will generate new multigenre textual constructions. These textual constructions will consist of events documented by a voice which can be the voice of myself as the writer, or the voices of the clients who tell me their stories.

When we write about other cultures that in itself is a political act which denies transcendence, but by generating multigenre texts we are creating an aesthetic democratic space in which cultural voices can reach across to one another to converse with each other (Rose, 1990).

The anthropologist who narrates the stories of others, attempts to recombine identities through imaginative literary construction. The voices that are brought to life in the poetic already exist in that other place, and the people living there have also existed and may still exist. They do however have increasingly more access to the same literature and to the same publications as myself as a researcher who voices over their voices, or is writing over their narrative (Prattis, 1985).

Ethnography, constructed, is not explorative, but rather the establishment of new relationships across cultural and class boundaries (Marcus and Fischer, 1986). However, by crossing over cultural and class boundaries again and again, the ethnographer inhabits a zone of contact which cannot be defined but must be explored (Von Krosigk, 2000). Exploring the crossing of cultural and class boundaries may transcend critique and instead celebrate the differences or the fusion that results from the differences that have been historically worked out to make something new (Moore and Mathews, 2001; Shoemaker, 2001). The approach in this research calls for such a broadening of the boundaries of research and writing practices while focussing on intrapsychic processes of hurt, anger, sadness and forgiving (Von Krosigk, 2000). The goal of research into the nature of forgiveness should first of all be a way to heal deep emotional wounds, to restore positive mental health, and achieve forgiving, only then to produce knowledge about the underlying theoretical aspects of the forgiveness process (Von Krosigk, 2000).

As social beings, we live storied lives (Rosenwald & Ochsberg, 1992). In this sense, stories constitute the way we are (Wiesenthal, 1998). Storytelling is both a method of knowing, and a way of telling about our lives (Richardson, 1990; Wiesenthal, 1998; Von Krosigk, 2000). Most of us learn the norms of conformity when we are socialised, and the stories that were written in the past were dealt with in an abstract and factual way which intellectualised the lived lives of real experience. One important challenge for the future of ethnography is the transformation from description to communication (Bochner and Waugh, 1995). Investigators need to become part of the world they investigate and break away from the epistemology of depiction that prescribes to a preexisting and stable social world (Bochner and Ellis, 1996). The literary and empirical narratives in this investigation represent an attempt to respond constructively to the challenges of ethnography, which calls for a merging of social science and humanities, to grapple with the meanings of lived experience, to focus attention on values and beliefs, and to link the stories of lived experience with theory (Wiesenthal 1998).

Talking to individuals is the basis of qualitative interviewing in the research process. Individuals talking to the researcher who is writing down notes on what is being heard, is

the basis of ethnography (Ellis and Flaherty, 1992). Ethnography represents both content and process, and “such work requires an intensive personal involvement, an abandonment of traditional scientific control, an improvisational style to meet situations not of the researcher’s making, and an ability to learn from a long series of mistakes” (Agar, 1986, p.12). Writing ethnographically requires the researcher to become part of the story (Ellis, 1995). That means that the researcher feels the story’s nuances and understands its ambiguities. Ethnography also means that the researcher learns from people by taking the attitude of a student or a child in relationship to the narrator (Spradley, 1979). As social beings, we live lives that are comprised of stories (Wiesenthal, 1998; Rosenwald and Ochberg, 1992), and in this sense stories make up the way we live and the way we are.

Storytelling is both a method of knowing, and a way of telling about our lives (Richardson, 1990). Most of us learn the norms of conformity when we are socialised, and the stories that were told in the past were means to instill moral and pro-social values and behaviour into the listeners. In today’s time the absence of stories in the lives of people has left a gap in the field of emotional knowing that has evolved into an attitude of intellectualisation regarding the stories of others. The lack of emotional knowing has resulted into an inability to feel the lived lives of real experience when it is clothed in the form of a story (Zukav and Francis, 2001). Researchers need to become part of the world they investigate by feeling the feelings of the narrator and to break away from the epistemology of depiction (Zukav and Francis, 2001; Bochner and Ellis, 1996).

Ethnography on a practical level can be defined as social research designs that are comprised of the following features:

- the explorative nature of particular social phenomena
- the use of uncoded data at the point of data collection
- detailed investigations of just a few cases
- data analysis that involves the interpretation of meaning and function of human behaviours

Ethnography can thus be conceptualised as the investigation of subjective reports that are a valuable source of personal experience, premonitions, and underlying beliefs (Von Krosigk, 2000). In depth analyses of human experiences are possible, new discoveries can be made and new areas can be explored (Von Krosigk, 2000). By analysing subjective reports those aspects of human life that are essential in understanding human motivation and behaviour can be explored. In this research, subjective reports form the basis for grounded theory formulation, and they provide real-life examples of a variety of behaviours based on similar or differing underlying beliefs, and similar or differing interpretational and contextual constraints.

## Depictions

The problem with the mind - body discrepancy is such that those who prescribe to the notion that the mind and the body are two distinct entities, assume that the body is governed by mechanical processes, while the mind is governed by non-mechanical processes (Gilbert Ryle, 1949). The differences between the physical and the mental were thus represented as differences inside the common framework of the categories that explain the body and the mind, such as processes, causes, effects, states, and attributes. There is the practice of neuro-linguistic programming which demonstrates in what way the mind operates in terms of causes and effects thereby influencing the body, which is conceived to be different from the causes and effects that can be observed in the body which has been conceptualised as part of a duality. The mind creates a certain state, which can be described as happy, content, and angry, but which was perceived to be different from the state that is created by the body, which can be described as healthy, relaxed, and tense (Dilts, 1983; Bandler and Grinder, 1975). The assumption that minds are separate centres of causal processes divorced from the body's causal processes resulted in the dualistic hypothesis of para-mechanical processes of mind and mechanical processes of body (Descartes, 1988). The result of this thinking created a theoretical difficulty in explaining how minds can influence and be influenced by bodies (Ryle, 1949). The belief



that the mind and the body are two polar opposites resulted from the belief that these terms are of the same logical type. In reality however, the mind does not exist without the body, and there is no living body without a mind. Logically, the mind and the body are therefore two aspects of one whole organism which we call a human being (Dawkins, 1987). In reality, the body and the mind are also experienced as one. It is obvious from the logical reasoning that mind and body are one, and from the physical reality, which is based on observation, that mind and body are one, that the idea of a mind - body gap needs to be discarded. Truth claims that have absolute value are often dysfunctional in the real world of daily interactions in natural and social environments according to Von Krosigk (2000), and it is often more useful to pursue effective strategies for achieving the relief of human conditions by gaining the wisdom to choose interventions that have the ability to improve natural and social conditions.

The appropriateness and usefulness of rigid disciplinary boundaries that separate the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and arts have been questioned by Rorty, 1979 and 1982). Denzin (1992), Foucault (1970), Lyotard (1984), Rorty (1979), and Rosenau (1992) are some of the postmodernist and poststructuralist writers who have challenged our notions about scientific knowledge and truth; Ellis (1991) and May (1991) about the dismissal of intuition, emotion and myth, Agger (1989) and Gergen (1982) about the uncritical commitment to the rhetoric of rigour and objectivity, and Foucault (1980) and Sampson (1993) about the core values and ideological commitments of the social sciences.

Scholars are beginning to consider what the social sciences may become if they were closer in their commitment to listening to stories rather than formulating theories as was demonstrated by Collins and Sayer (2001), and Wiesenthal (1998), and if they would admit to be value-centered rather than pretending to be value-free (Coles, 1989; Richardson, 1990; Rorty, 1982), to grant the legitimacy of narrative modes of scholarship that show what it means to live in a world mediated by the contingencies of using language and fashioning an identity (Dilts, Epstein, and Dilts, 1991) making it possible for us to consider people who have been forgotten, ignored, neglected, and misunderstood (Rorty, 1982;

Putnam, 1990). To see and to accept the social sciences as a continuation of literature would be the outcome of such actions.

Social scientists who are committed to this endeavour understand their goal as enlarging and deepening a sense of community, acceptance, and love (Rorty, 1991; Von Krosigk, 2000). They echo Rorty's (1982, p.202), sentiments that "what we hope for from social scientists is that they will act as interpreters for those with whom we are not sure how to talk. This is the same thing we hope for from our poets and dramatists and novelists".

Traditionally, interpersonal communication as a field of study has ignored the notion that its subject matter can include moral, ideological, and narrative knowledge. It seems that communicationists deemed it more important to be true to science than to be true to the phenomena of joint action (Shotter, 1987). As a result, the research vocabulary of interpersonal communication has become a jargon that emphasises 'facts', 'impacts', 'causal conditions', 'regularities', 'behavioural observations', 'prediction', and 'control'. Of this jargon, the meaning of 'control' has become the accepted problematic in the realm of interpersonal communication (Bochner, 1984)

It is my goal with this investigation to bring the study of local narratives that display how people are hurt and how they overcome their hurts into a more centralised and legitimated position in this field. This goal could be achieved by making the narrating of stories a field of research that merges scientific inquiry with human inquiry, and places sense-making on a par with therapy.

To achieve understanding and appreciation for 'stories', and 'narratives' with the focus on emotional, personal and subjective experience, researchers must confront their assumptions and conventions (their need for theory), and relinquish the importance of concepts and categories. A focus on meaning also requires that researchers relinquish certain norms of communication that equate objectivity with detaching and distancing oneself from those who tell their stories, to relinquish rationality with standardised criteria for making judgements, and to relinquish an overemphasis on universals as opposed to

particulars. Stability, routines, graphs and the a-historical must be relinquished for the possibilities of change, improvisation, stories and contingencies. The preference for 'facts' must be replaced with an interest in 'meanings' and 'values', to make sense of our communicative encounters, and to understand what is happening (Ellis and Bochner, 1992).

Statements of fact cannot be made independently of the observer / narrator and his/her subjective operation as a living system, since the notion of nature is constitutively bound to what the observer / narrator does by speaking about and explaining his/her experiences (Maturana and Varela, 1980).

Historical and linguistic processes are both mediums in which science can grow (Clifford and Marcus, 1986). Scientific activity on the other hand is dead without the contexts of history and language (Dawkins 1989). Reframing the issues about which research on interpersonal communication is concerned, means to move away from the idea of a reality, and to move towards the idea that all attempts to speak for, write about, or represent other people's lives are partial, mediated and installed by conditioning. Such research activities create value and inscribe meanings (Moore, 2001) . No matter how scientific we think we are, our descriptions of interpersonal life end up as stories that construct, or assign meaning and value to the patterns of relating that we have observed (Von Krosigk, 2000). In addition to assigning meaning and value to our patterns of relating, Robinson (1998), and Enright and Fitzgibbons (2000) deem it essential that forgiveness be recognised as interdisciplinary. By taking together the ancient literary texts, modern philosophical inquiry, and psychological science, the suggestion arises that forgiveness has a certain meaning that needs to be preserved (Enright and Fitzgibbons, 2000).

## **Depicting Emotions**

Phenomenological psychologists argue that we cannot fully understand emotions unless we experience them ourselves and can imaginatively enter into the emotional experiences

of others: “*If you were emotion-blind, perhaps like a being from another planet, you would no more be able to understand happiness or sadness as emotions than a colour-blind person could understand what it is like for something to be red or blue*” (Oatley, 1992, p. 414).

Howard and Callero, (1991) maintain that it is very difficult to control our emotional experiences, because a) the chosen external event to which we expose ourselves may not produce the desired cognitions, b) the thoughts we engage in may fail to produce the desired emotion, c) we may have no control over our thoughts, d) the foundation of the emotion (physiological arousal) may persist even when the thoughts that aroused it are no longer present, e) we may fail to deceive ourselves, and f) the source of our emotions (our cognitions) may be unconscious. Our cognitions, according to Howard and Callero (1991), are therefore outside our control.

Cameron-Bandler and Lebeau (1986), both Master practitioners of NLP, maintain that emotions have a structure, and that the individual structures of emotions are made up of the sets of perceptual components that result in the characteristics of each emotion. From this perspective, the structure of an emotion is dependent upon what goes on inside a person in relation to the external circumstances. That means that two people under the same circumstances may experience different emotions, and two people under different circumstances can experience the same emotion. What goes on inside the two people will therefore determine which emotion will be experienced (Dilts, Epstein, and Dilts, 1991). The components from which emotions are built can be compared to the individual instruments which comprise an orchestra. In order to recognise the individual instruments while the orchestra is playing, one needs to have heard each instrument play on its own. Similarly, one needs to consciously acknowledge each component of an emotional state, before one can appreciate the contribution it makes towards the overall emotional state (Cameron-Bandler and Lebeau, 1986).

According to Cameron-Bandler and Lebeau (1986) emotions consist of eight components, which will now be described:

- **Time frame**

This refers to the past, the present and the future, and a referral to the present, past or future is almost always necessary for many emotions to exist at all. Without imagining the possibility of a negative future outcome, it would be impossible to experience the feeling of anxiety.

- **Modality**

This refers to the belief about the possibility, necessity, or desirability of something. When a person believes s/he cannot do something, the modality of impossibility contributes to the emotion of inadequacy or helplessness.

- **Involvement**

This refers to being actively or passively involved in doing something about the thoughts one has about attaining a goal. I **will be** an actress when I have passed my final examination at the end of the year. The active involvement 'I will' together with the future time frame 'at the end of the year' contribute to the emotion of active involvement.

- **Intensity**

This refers to increasing the vividness of an emotion by adding colour, brightness and detail to the internal images one has. Emotions that are structurally similar but which vary in their relative intensity are 'concerned' (low intensity) - 'upset' (medium intensity) - 'anxious' - (high intensity) - 'hysterical' (very high intensity). Similarly, the intensity of an emotion can be decreased by reducing the colour, brightness and detail of one's internal images.

- **Comparison**

This refers to taking note of differences and similarities between one's own accomplishments and those of other people. Comparing oneself to others can create feelings of inadequacy, envy and contempt.

- **Tempo**

This refers to the underlying pace of an emotional experience. Feeling excited, panicky, restless, impatient, angry and anxious are dependent upon a fast pace, while feeling bored, lonely, patient, discouraged, accepting and satisfied rely on a slow pace.

- **Criteria**

This refers to the judgements one makes as to what is desirable or undesirable in a certain situation. When a woman is told she is pregnant, she will feel happy if she wanted a baby for a long time but could not fall pregnant. However, if she finds it difficult to feed the five children she has, she may feel despondent when she learns she is pregnant again.

- **Chunk size**

This refers to the size of the task that one gives attention to in a given situation. Thinking of studying medicine for six years may elicit a feeling of being overwhelmed (large chunk). Thinking of achieving more than 70% in the upcoming test may elicit the feeling of being motivated (small chunk).

According to Cameron-Bandler and Lebeau, (1986), a knowledge of the structure of emotions can make all emotional states available. It can help an individual to change his/her emotions when they are inappropriate for a particular situation, and it can assist an individual to experience the appropriate emotion in a particular situation (Dilts, Epstein, and Dilts, 1991).

Negative emotions are the fundamental building blocks in the psychological make-up of individuals who cannot forgive others. It is therefore essential for me as facilitator for forgiving to have a good understanding of emotional states and their effects on thoughts and behaviours.

## Discourse Analysis

The collected data is analysed in a particular way in order to organise the material in such a way as to isolate the most relevant information for the extraction of the largest amount of meaning from the data. This is done by means of discourse analysis, which will now be described in more detail.

The practice of discourse analysis can be seen as a way to dissolve the boundaries between empirical studies measuring behaviour and the dynamics of meaning. It describes the words, phrases and linguistic devices which categorise and reproduce the social world, and it provides techniques that appear to be systematic.

Discourse analysis can be seen as an attempt to understand how social reality is constructed by the use of words, and it is an activity by which a better understanding of social life and social interaction is gained (Potter and Wetherell, 1987). By applying discourse analysis, the reading and interpretation of texts is emphasised. Although there is no set of rules or formal procedure according to which discourse analysis should be conducted, a 20-step guide to applying discourse analysis has been formulated by Parker (1992). These twenty steps focus on different levels of discourse analysis and each step raises questions about the theoretical framework the analyst is using. The 20 steps for conducting discourse analysis are as follows:

- The objects of study must be treated as texts which are described by words. There is nothing outside of the text. That means that only the description of the world in the text by words can be used for the purpose of analysis.
- Discourses are available to different audiences from the same text.
- The analyst should ask what objects are referred to, and describe them.

- The analyst should talk about the talk as if it were an object. (Talking about the talk as if it were an object is a discourse.)
- The types of person talked about in the discourse must be identified.
- What the persons (objects) can say in the discourse must be speculated about.
- A picture of the world that this discourse presents must be mapped out.
- The way in which the text using this discourse would deal with objections to the terminology must be worked out.
- Contrasting ways of speaking (discourses), discourses must be set against each other, and the different objects they constitute must be looked at.
- Overlapping points must be identified.
- The discourse as it occurs must be elaborated by referring to other texts. As the discourse addresses different audiences it must be elaborated.
- The term used to describe the discourse must be reflected upon.
- How and where the discourses emerged must be looked at.
- How the discourses have changed, and told a story must be described.
- Institutions which are reinforced when this or that discourse is used must be identified.
- Institutions that are attacked or subverted when this or that discourse is used must be identified.



- Categories of people that gain and lose from the employment of the discourse must be looked at.
- Who would want to promote the discourse, and who would want to dissolve the discourse needs to be identified.
- How a discourse connects with other discourses which sanction oppression must be shown.
- How the discourses allow dominant groups to tell their narratives about the past in order to justify the present, and prevent those who use subjugated discourses from making history, must be shown.

From these 20 points, a definition of discourse analysis can be constructed: Discourse analysis can be defined as the process of detailed examination of the elements of a system of statements that constructs an object. This definition seems to be based on the understanding that discourse analysis constitutes a method, that should always be used in a fixed sequence. That however, is not the case. The sequence can be employed in any variable order (Parker, 1992).

Psychological accounts and literary texts have in the past been seen as mutually exclusive categories of written material. Contemporary philosophy argues that instead of believing that our accounts, including scientific accounts, are mirrors of nature, we should understand all knowledge as discursive, provisional and relative (Rorty, 1979; Lyotard, 1986). Cultural studies argue that there is no such thing as society, there are only little stories told about it (Lyotard, 1984). Abandoning the search for truth and recognising the essentially fictional nature of human existence, have implications for how we view the past and present. Potter, Stringer and Whetherell (1984, p.23) have made this point clearly by stating that “the picture we gain from a text is not determined so much by the underlying experience of the author, but rather by the arrangement and structure of the words in the text and their place

in general cultural systems of meaning. “Leavitt in Moore and Mathews (2001) throws light on the phenomenon of self and society in the Bumbita tribe which leads to individual dissatisfaction as a result of comparisons with the western culture and customs. Cultural systems of meaning were also a moot point at the root of unforgiveness in the explorative study on forgiveness by Von Krosigk (2000).

Discourse analysis in its recurrently used words, phrases and linguistic devices which categorise and reproduce the social world, provides a technique which could also build onto content analysis to produce more levels of meaning. These techniques consist of a systematic way of clarifying, the meanings behind the words, phrases and linguistic devices that categorise and produce a particular social world for a particular individual. At this point there is an overt overlap in the techniques of discourse analysis and the techniques of NLP. Both contribute to making one expert communicators by means of tuning into the subjective world of others.

Discourse analysis also plays the language game of science, but it breaks the rules in three ways:

- Discourse analysis is deliberately reflexive about its own truth claims, and draws attention to the discursive construction of its own theoretical position and its data.
- Discourse analysis corrodes the truth claims of other supposedly scientific discoveries. Examples of this are concerned with the rhetorical devices that scientists use to support their own findings and to discredit the theories of their opponents. The resulting relativism can facilitate an increased attention to what the knowledge does or achieves.
- The reflexive and relativist dynamic of discourse analysis often breaks the rules by raising broader issues. It could also dissolve the boundaries by shifting the topic from measured behaviour to the dynamics of meaning (Parker, 1992).

According to Berman (1982) modern built environments give rise to a contradictory shared experience, which is a unity of disunity. This unity of disunity is experienced not only in modern built environments, but also in modern texts. These modern narratives describe times of crisis which can only be understood by drawing upon the understanding of culture, history and politics. Texts that are comprised of historical and political events, such as the writings by Marx and Engels, can be understood without employing discourse analysis. By being informed politically, culturally and historically it thus seems to be possible to make sense of certain texts without having to attend to the implicit meanings in discourse (Billig, 1988).

There are thus occasions when discourse analysis is neither useful nor necessary to evaluate or understand texts:

- The processes that have so far been discovered by psychologists are true in the sense that they become real as they are spoken of and reproduced in the medium of language. Discourse analysis from that perspective provides a framework in which the reality within a discourse becomes true.
- The contradictory accounts that people give of the same event and the unresolvable conflicts between different explanations can all be accommodated by discourse analysis.
- The researcher, the narrator and the reader are all provoked to interrogate their own presuppositions. That means that their attention is drawn to their own way of describing their collections of narratives or their own discourses.

The structure of discourses and the relationship between discourses can be directly perceived. This suggests that the perception of the person engaging in reading discourses is the same as the perception of the person who engages in reading texts. Depending on what is being read, the perception of what is being read can transport the reader into the realms of the unknown, non-experienced, and foreign, or into the known, experienced, and

familiar realms of experience. When the reader is in the realm of the foreign, he may feel separate and alienated from things and their meanings. The way the reader perceives the world cannot be understood as a sequence nor as an accumulation of stimuli. Perception has no end, it is ongoing, which means that the reader cannot divide perceiving from remembering nor the present from the past. This ties in with Still's (1979) view that an ecological account of the world should not fall back on cognitive notions of memory.

A discourse can be described as a unit of text that ranges over more than one sentence and is used by linguists for the analysis of linguistic phenomena (Collins, 1995). There are however a variety of definitions of the term 'discourse' and it may be useful to present them together for a better and more comprehensive understanding. Parker (1992, p.5) defines a discourse as "a system of statements which constructs an object". Foucault (1972, p.49) defines discourses as "practices that systematically form the object of which they speak", and according to Potter and Wetherell (1987) the object is constructed by linguistic means, and this linguistic compilation is used to analyse social reality. Discourse can thus be described as the practice of systematically arranging statements that can be used for constructing an object which can be analysed.

Analysing discourses by executing a sequence of stages that one intuitively adheres to has been established by Potter and Wetherell (1987). Some of these stages in the process of analysing discourses are presented with the aim of sensitising the reader to the complexities of discourse analysis.

- **Coding**

The first stage according to Potter and Wetherell (1987) is a suspension of beliefs regarding language use. That means that the way in which language is used in making inferences and in interacting with others must be learnt. To learn about the way in which (how) language is used mainly involves the process of becoming sensitive to it. Learning about the way in which language is used by becoming sensitive to it is termed 'coding'.

- **Reading mindfully**

When analysing discourses one should always keep this question in mind: What functions are being fulfilled by this text, and how is this text fulfilling them? The second stage therefore involves reading mindfully.

- **Identifying versions of counteraction**

When examining discourses mindfully it is essential to focus on the aspect of counteraction, meaning that the text may describe a sequence of events in such a way that it influences the reader to have a certain experience through this particular version. Counteraction is thus a way of being sensitive to possible alternative versions of the event which are less persuasive than the one presented.

- **Sensitivity to discursive features**

In analysing function, it is important to become acquainted with the use of discursive features that are frequently employed to perform specific rhetorical functions. For example, when extreme case formulations, such as 'always', 'never', 'nobody', 'everyone' are used, they expound an extreme position which increase the persuasiveness of the position.

- **Variability**

Analysing discourses by different people about the same object would result in a variety of discourses depending on whether the object was evaluated positively or negatively, and the purpose for which discourses are written can influence the variability of discourses written by the same individual (Potter and Wetherell, 1987).

Discourse analysis and NLP were shown to overlap with regard to creating and understanding meaning within particular discourses. Both are used with regard to analysing linguistic phenomena, and both are powerful methods for conveying the deep meanings of individual subjective experiences. However, NLP is not only an analytical tool, but simultaneously also a technique for effecting change with regard to thoughts, feelings,

and behaviours. An in-depth discussion on the principles of NLP will follow in chapter 4.

Grounded theory is a way of thinking about and conceptualising data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The construction of a theory that is based on or grounded in the emerging data is called a grounded theory. The grounded theory approach is a process in which the collection and analysis of the data occur simultaneously (Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This process of theory construction involves being open to the emerging data without imposing an external framework on the data. Being open to the emerging data of forgiveness implies that I, as the researcher, should remain open to a range of questions that could lead to the discovery of important features concerning forgiveness. Such features, in conjunction with the emerging theory of forgiveness need to be sensitively compared to the existing theory. I, as the researcher thus need to be sensitive to the meaning of and the relationship between concepts.

The groundwork for the development of a theory of forgiveness is done by the grounded theory approach. The aim of the grounded theory approach is to allow categories to emerge from the data. The grounded theory approach regarding forgiveness is therefore rooted in the reality of forgiving, and automatically excludes artificially imposed categories that need to be subjected to testing and inclusion or exclusion at a later stage. The emerging theory of forgiveness which results from a grounded theory approach can therefore be understood as a number of theoretical constructs constituting the essence of forgiveness at a particular stage of completion.

The underlying operation of generating grounded theory entails the concomitant actions of collecting, coding and analysing the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). All three proceedings should be performed together in such a way that the activity allows a continuous intermeshing and smudging of the data to occur. The process of generating theory and understanding theory as process should not be separated, according to Glaser and Strauss, (1967), since focussing on each operation separately would hinder generation of theory.

Generation of theory and its ability to predict, explain, and be relevant must remain connected to the process by which it is inductively developed from real life data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). A theory that has been inductively developed from real life events is necessarily considered to be more enduring, since it is intimately linked with the data of real life action which makes it difficult to refute or to replace.

Qualitative research is often the end product of research within a substantive area, since it is often the best way to obtain the type of information that is required for such an investigation. Generating grounded theory can be understood as a way of creating a theory which is fitted for a particular function. Glaser and Strauss (1967) assert that grounded theory is derived from data, which means that the researcher/facilitator cannot find examples that fit dreamed-up, speculative assumptions. The researcher/facilitator is indeed tied to factual data which determines the components for the construction of theory. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967) qualitative research is the difficult path on which the empirical situation needs to be endured. The need for highly rigorous future research should however not be thwarted, in spite of the fact that plausible discoveries from carefully analysed qualitative data can be used as satisfactory evidence to explain certain phenomena.

An emphasis on being “scientific” is not always feasible, since structural changes in the systems that are being explored are often substantial (Ladavas, Cimatti, Del Pesce, and Tuozzi, 1993). These structural changes tend to hinder a rigorous demonstration of the explored material (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). However, by attempting to develop theory that can be applied, this investigation hopes to contribute to the body of psychological theories and practices.

## Strengths and Weaknesses

The strengths of qualitative investigation centre around flexibility of techniques, insight into sensitive issues, and the discovery of underlying belief systems. The weaknesses centre

around content and context variability. The strengths of this qualitative investigation will now be described.

Qualitative studies tend to employ purposive sampling techniques rather than random selection techniques (Kuzel, 1986). The reason for this is to gain as much information as possible to illuminate the study aim. In this qualitative investigation with regard to facilitating forgiving, purposive samples of individuals were selected. Those who wanted to forgive, but could not achieve their aim on their own over a long or very long time were chosen to take part. The number of subjects that are needed to illuminate the study aim up to a point of redundancy is a major concern for the researcher, and the strategies for qualitative sampling are therefore based on the qualitative inquiry or the research aim. In this study six individuals are deemed to be more than sufficient, since the process of NLP facilitation is not bound to a particular person or content. Facilitating forgiving is a process that will be repeated for six different individuals in six different contextual situations. It will be noticed that the process of facilitation remains constant, while the intervention strategies change in conjunction with the context and the participants. If sufficient evidence regarding the research aim has been identified in the already collected sample, the need for further evidence is unnecessary. Kuzel (1986) found that a sample of 5 to 8 subjects is usually sufficient for exhausting the evidence necessary for analysis. That however depends on the individual research sample and the topic of investigation. The sample size is therefore a flexible number of subjects that differs for each topic of investigation. For this topic of investigation viz. forgiving, the sample size of 3 proved to be sufficient evidence for fulfilling the research aim.

The terms reliability and validity regarding quantitative research are replaced by the terms credibility, dependability and confirmability with regard to qualitative research. To verify credibility, dependability and confirmability, Kuzel (1986) uses triangulation and reflexivity to replace or supplement the methods of quantitative research.

- **Triangulation**

Where the quantitative approach will start with an abstract proposition, the



qualitative approach will test its hypotheses against a wide array of divergent methods of inquiry. Ultimately, a satisfactory theory will correspond meaningfully with all the methods of inquiry (Brody, 1980). The following methods of inquiry were used in this research: unstructured interviewing, action inquiry, narrative inquiry, the grounded theory approach, ethnography, and the exploration of emotions, thoughts, and behaviour (NLP).

- **Reflexivity**

What everyone would have expected at first glance based on unexamined preconceptions would be in need of reexamination. Going back to a reexamination of basic definitions is the core of reflexivity (Brody, 1980). Reflexivity is an ongoing activity with regard to this investigation.

During a qualitative interview the interviewing technique is also highly flexible, which means that the researcher cannot be understood as the one who has the knowledge. In this research, the narrator is the one who tells the story of hurt, and the researcher is the one who listens to the story from the narrator's perspective. In this sense, the narrator is the one who has the knowledge, while the researcher is the one who learns from the narrator by trying to understand the world through the eyes or body of another viz. the narrator.

Positive rapport between the researcher and the narrator and the sensitivity of the researcher towards the narrator's painful experience may free the narrator to disclose sensitive information. This has happened with regard to every participant. The participants have disclosed sensitive or traumatic information for the first time, and I have assisted them in dealing with their hurts. By uncovering underlying belief systems through ingenious questioning methods, the researcher / facilitator may be able to effectively help the narrator on the spur of the moment by means of appropriate NLP interventions. I did effectively help the participants consistently throughout the process of data gathering.

The theme of the interview differs from one individual to the next due to individual

experiences in different contexts. When the content and context variability is high, findings cannot be generalised with regard to subjective interpretations of a situation. However, interventions by means of NLP are content free, and they can be generalised, especially when the facilitator strives to achieve a particular kind of subjective relief, which was the case in this research.

The NLP approach to forgiving is a context specific goal which can be regarded as positively helpful to the research participants. This point validates the use of a qualitative approach to gathering and analysing the data with regard to forgiveness. It also invalidates the negative objections to a qualitative investigation technique (non generalisability due to content and context variability), because specific aims for specific outcomes are essential for assisting individuals in overcoming their negative emotional states by means of NLP. The qualitative research approach therefore seems to be extremely well suited to demonstrating the facilitation for forgiving by means of NLP.

