

APPENDIX A

LEAFLET

HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED BREAKTHROUGH IN LEARNING?

My name is Ian James.

Adult's learning is an area of education that is not fully understood. Academic writers and scientists are continually discovering new and unique ways of helping adults learn. I am neither an academic writer nor a scientist, but, I am a person who is vitally interested in this area of education. If I need to be labelled, then call me an educator.

Breakthrough in learning is something we all may experience from time to time. It is that instance when you are trying to come to grips with something that all of a sudden the "penny drops". Most times we are unaware of it happening, but, there are those exceptional times when the occurrence is so meaningful that what-ever eluded us eludes us no more.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to:

- *locate people who have experienced such things, and*
- *identify people who will talk about their experience.*

My experience

When I first learnt computer programming, I struggled for six months trying to grasp concepts and how to apply them. Without anything special happening (or that I was aware) all of a sudden it made sense and I was able to solve problems. Since that occurrence, which I am calling a breakthrough in learning, I have had little difficulty understanding computer programming.

Your experience could be in a far different area to mine. It may not have occurred while studying. It could be that your experience was during sports training or understanding something that eluded you for years. You could have experienced a breakthrough at work, at college or school or university, at home, at the beach, awakened during the night. They are all of interest.

If you think that your experience may be of this sort, and would be prepared to talk about it, please complete this form and return it to me at the Maryborough College of TAFE PO Box 65 Maryborough Q 4650. Be sure to mark the envelop confidential and include my name on the envelop. My phone number at the college is 200500 and at home 216748.

BREAKTHROUGH IN LEARNING

In responding, tick the box of your choice or write your comments.

1	WHEN WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE?		
	last year <input type="checkbox"/>	Jan-June <input type="checkbox"/>	July-Dec <input type="checkbox"/>
	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	this year <input type="checkbox"/>	Jan-June <input type="checkbox"/>

2 WHAT WERE YOU INVOLVED WITH AT THE TIME?
e.g., course of study or activity or project; please name it.

3 PLEASE DESCRIBE THE THING THAT YOU WERE LEARNING AT THE TIME.

4 WHERE WERE YOU? e.g., in a class room, at a sporting activity, at work.

Please leave your name and address so that I can get in touch to discuss the matter.

NAME: Mr Mrs Ms Miss _____ DATE: .../.../...

ADDRESS: _____

_____ P/C _____

PHONE No: Home _____ Work _____

THANK YOU

APPENDIX B

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Coral's Perception of Breakthrough

INTERVIEW: At College Nagel Street 16 Mar.'93

DURATION: 2 pm to 2.35 pm = 35 minutes

CORAL'S AGE: 40-45 years

BREAKTHROUGH OCCURRED: 1988.

THE ACTIVITY IN WHICH CORAL WAS INVOLVED: Academic study
(part-time external)

BREAKTHROUGH: Learning a skill for remembering information for
course examinations.

Coral I decided that I was going to do this Arts degree and when I got the first lot of information, because it had been twenty odd years since I had been at school, I looked at it and freaked. There was so much information that I had to retain.

I was having difficulty during the first six months and during the second six I realised that I had to work out a system for retaining information. There was just so much for me to remember.

The assignments were not a problem once I got into the flow of things. So what I set out to do was to try and find out some information on it. I read those page-a-minute memory books etc, and in one of the books I picked up a similar thing to the system I now use. In that it said that in order to retain a series of information, if you can pick up a key word in each little section and with the first letter of that key word make a word that will stick in your memory then you can recall that information quite easily. That is the way I've done it.

Ian Before you did that, what were you using to retain information?

Coral I was trying to recall the whole lot off-pat. I found that I could not retain...like if I had two subjects, if I had to recall all the information that was necessary for the exam I just could not retain that much information.

Ian How did it make you feel?

Coral Useless. Like giving up which I nearly did in the first twelve months. That was why it was essential for me to figure out some way of retaining that information in order to breed success to keep going.

Ian Did you fail in any exams?

Coral No, but, I only got passes in the first semester, but, my assignment work was quite good they were credits, but the exams were dropping me back. Overall the exams pulled me back to only passes. So that was why in second semester I had to work out a way of getting the information retained. Over the five year period of my study, things got better because I came out last year with two distinctions. It has gradually got better.

Ian Why pick that method?

Coral Because it suited me and because I've been able to work on that basis ever since.

Ian Explain suited me, what do you mean?

Coral I found that associating a word beginning with the first letter of the key words in that area I just found it so easy. So then, because I could recall that key word, I had the first letter of each one of those key words. From there, I found it easy to remember the whole section.

Ian Have you ever used a similar thing for remembering? (Prior to this occasion)

Coral If I have I can't recall it. I didn't try any other methods other than this one; only to try and recall the whole lot of the information.

Ian When did the breakthrough happen?

Coral I read the book right through and I recalled that piece of information later on. It must have been one specific area that it applied to really easily. I can't remember which, but, I found that...it must have been while I was reading something and I thought: 'Yeah, that would suit that', and there-after I used that system. But I can't remember what it was.

I was reading my study information when it all came together. I was reading the study information and I was trying to work out how I could remember all the information. I recalled having read about that system and I thought that it would apply really easily to this and so I did apply it to that. I found that it was really easy to recall that information. So then I used it there-after and I've been using it ever since.

It particularly applies to where you've got...like cause and effect things where you have ten or twelve different reasons or principles or guidelines or whatever you have to recall.

Ian When you read what do you see?

Coral I can picture the...unless they have to be in order then that is not the way I learn them. The way I learn them is to I pick out the first letter of the key words. I put them down and I make some sort of word or phrase out of them. I can in turn match it to that particular thing. So that there is a pictorial image of that thing up there and that is why it is so easy to remember that work and to take the key words from that.

When I receive my exam and scribble paper, I write down a word like that on my scribble paper and I fill in the key words and then I find it easy to fill in the words either side to complete my exam paper.

Ian Explain 'find it easy'?

Coral By having put the letters down of the key words I then write the key words and when I go to put that on the exam paper I don't have a problem transcribing that key word into that sentence or whatever I have to do.

Ian Why don't you?

Coral I've no idea. I've never thought about it. I've obviously read the sentences which go with the key word enough to be able to recall them, but, I place special emphasis on the key word.

Ian How do you relate that key word to that particular information?

Coral The whole sentence just relates to the key word. It is the key word in the sentence and the sentence relates to the word. [My answer] may be in precis form to what it was in the study guide, but, as long as I am getting that key information I'm happy. My objective is to get the key word and to make sure that I miss none of those key points. The whole structure of the sentence originally relates particularly to that key word.

Ian Can you recall a key word now?

Coral So you want me to recall something that I had done last year? There is something else too. I remember them specifically for exams and then if I'm not applying them in the work place I wipe it and then next semester I remember the next lot.

It is extremely important that we apply what we take in. I'm trying to think of something that I've used recently at work.

There is the term RACE which is Research Action ??? and Evaluation. I have trouble recalling it. It is in the social sciences in social research. I write the word RACE vertically and then on my scribble paper I put Research Action Coordination Evaluation. Then to put it onto the exam paper, if that was the question, I would proceed to explain research in full

Ian Where did that final step of information come from?

Coral From the back (pointing to the back of her head).

Ian No, it must have come from somewhere.

Coral I learnt that from my study materials and It has just happened now that you've put me on the spot and you are making me recall it because I had put it aside, but, prior to exams I would have made sure that I did have that information all stored because I realised that it was essential to have it for exams.

Ian Was the information strictly written that way or was it your interpretation of what was written?

Coral I would have had to learn it. In normal daily life I would not have come across that sort of thing. I don't even apply that sort of information now at work. It is not until you are in the higher levels of the department that you would need that sort of information.

I got the information simply through reading study guides and text books.

Ian Can we return now to the time when you were reading that book and you used the system and it worked.

Coral Well you see it didn't exactly happen like that. Because you see, I read the page-a-minute book through and then when I was reading this particular study guide I picked up something...it may have been that the key words had been underlined or something like that, I can't recall, but for some reason I looked at that and thought well that spells BRAT or something like that and so I wrote them down.

In that book it had said: 'If you can make a word out of those letters you'll be able to retain it much easier'. I didn't specifically pick that out when I was reading that page-a-minute book, but remembered that when I was reading my study guide.

Ian Are you always able to make a word out of key words of a sentence?

Coral Sometimes it doesn't make sense. If I am able to, unless it has to go in a specific order, I am generally able to. Sometimes it is like BA or BAADF or something, but, even if it is like that for some reason, because I've really concentrated on the key words, I can still recall them even if it is not a word that makes sense. If I can't get a pictorial image I can visualise the letters because I've concentrated on getting those letters into the brain. Like I said I can't even remember what that BA/DF is. I've got no idea, but, I can recall those letters. They were to do with something way back, but, I can see those letters as plain as day, but I've got no idea of what they represent.

When it first happened I wasn't sure that it would work. But I thought that I would give this a go and it was when I came to exam time that I was asked a question that I had thought: 'Boy, I'll never remember all that', but I applied the system on my scribble paper and it was so easy to write off and I thought: 'Wow, this is the way to do it'.

Ian So when was the breakthrough?

Coral At exam time.

Ian How did you feel?

Coral Elated because I put all that information down on the exam paper where-as before I would finish a three hour exam in one and knew that I didn't write enough. To be able to achieve and get that amount of information - to retain it long enough to get it down - was a real achievement.

Sometimes at work I would write up programs or what-ever...I've written up some submissions in the last couple of months and I'll be doing that and think: 'Ch, yes I remember that' where previously I would just put it to the back burner because I wasn't applying it.

Ian In an exam I presume that you are under pressure, Do you use this system only in a pressure situation?

Coral No because it is the same as the KISS principle. When we are in a communications thing at work if someone said: 'How do you do this communication?' at one instance I said KISS principle. They all looked at me as if I was daft because I had interpreted it as Keep It Simple Stupid to a bunch of carers of disabled people. When I went home I thought about it and tried to remember why I had said that? what was it? and I remembered later it is supposed to be Keep It Short and Simple. I thought that I must have said something wrong, but I couldn't think of what it was.

NOTE: (Coral works at Family Services and is particularly involved with people who have disabilities)

I use the system even in my every day learning.

Ian The breakthrough wasn't really during the exam was it?

Coral No the breakthrough was due to the fact that I had found the original system. It was recognition of something that I had read earlier. It is just the way to go. It just suited me and I have done it ever since. It is rather abstract because the words have no tangible meaning....

Tape end.

COMMENTS:

Coral , you have read the transcript and you are satisfied that it represents your perception of your breakthrough in learning.

Signed: Date: .../.../...

VERIFICATION

INTERVIEW: At work 18 June 1993

DURATION: 3 pm to 3.25 pm = 25 minutes

Question How do you learn best?

Coral I suppose I retain visual information more easily than other methods. I would acknowledge it quicker. Written information you would have to go over it a few times to be able to associate a visual image with it. I would then have to apply the information to something in every day life for me to retain it long term. If it is something on a television screen, or whatever, that association is already done for you so it is quicker for me to learn that way.

Question How do come things come together for you?

Coral Things come together quicker when I apply them to everyday situations. If they are really theoretical and more difficult to adapt than if something is more applicable to my work of family life. A theoretical subject like psychology ...if I can apply that to something within my family or work, then, that is easier to learn compared with something that I haven't come across.

Question Forming an acronym from the first letter of the key words, is that a concrete thing?

Coral I would say that it is abstract because I tend to use those where I have multiple amounts of information that I must recall during exams. It is dissimilar to everyday learning because if I have to learn something that I need to use every day, then, I learnt it and remember it because it becomes routine. If I have to learn a series of information that I have to recall in exam that is why I use an acronym. It doesn't necessarily have a concrete form because I can use those letters as how I recall that information. I did it about twenty times yesterday in an exam. It was very theoretical stuff.

Question Would agree with me if I said to you that once you learn something it becomes a part of you?

Coral I would say that it becomes a part of you to that extent when you can apply it to everyday life. When you are required to learn because a lecturer tell you that you must learn the theory of that, then, the next semester it's forgotten because I haven't applied to something real. If I apply it, it stays as a part of me. The information that is learnt for the short term is lost in ever decreasing amounts.

Stuff like the communications that I have been learning where I can apply to me work it stays with me. Other stuff, like history, I've done four semesters of history and I don't think that I can remember any of it. I can remember the very basic outline, but that would be it. I don't remember any detail because it is

unimportant for me. I had to cram so must for those exams and I just consider the information unimportant.

Question *Your breakthrough, was it the fact that you could form words from the acronym or the fact that you found the method?*

Coral *The fact that I found the system. Before I found that I couldn't retain that amount of information so it had to be because I found the system.*

Verification of Interpretation

Note: *The following verification was done as a separate activity from the above "VERIFICATION". This part will be used in the analysis where corrections need to be made. Exposing the learner to my conclusions could be suggestive and, therefore, influence the response.*

The purpose of this section is to check out my conclusions to see if they stand the test of the learner's criticism.

CONTEXT:

Non-formal - OK

Mental activity to acquire knowledge - OK

Mental activity to answer exam questions - OK

Short term memory - OK

EXPERIENCE:

Mental image - OK

Encoding - OK

Read earlier - OK

Something created - I didn't create it because the system was created by the person who wrote that book.

Change in the way she remembers - OK

Change from thinking useless - OK

Abstract thinking - One of the words that I used yesterday was (she said it ARADAE). I couldn't relate that to anything, but I could remember it. I tend to make a word out of it. Sometimes I can't. When that happens I just see the letters. Maybe I do subconsciously make a word out of the letters even though they don't make sense.

Thinking about the ones that I used yesterday, I think that I do make a word out of them. The word doesn't have to make sense or be realistic.

CONTRIBUTION:

Reading - That doesn't make sense. It seems that you are referring to me remembering the "Page-A Minute" book instead of the system.

Effort to overcome - This book was around the house and all I did was to pick it up and read. I spend time in searching for a solution. The book provided the solution right off. I didn't know what they were about before I read them. I did go looking for a way to overcome the problem.

Simplification of material - OK

Applying the coding system - OK

OBSERVATION:

OK

Gary's Perception of Breakthrough

INTERVIEW: At Gary's Home 20 Mar.'93
DURATION: 8.15 pm to 9 pm = 45 minutes

GARY'S AGE: 46 years

BREAKTHROUGH OCCURRED: 1993 February/March
THE KNOWLEDGE IN WHICH GARY WAS INVOLVED: Economic/Political Theory
BREAKTHROUGH: Rationalising ideas to form a personal theory.

Gary I suppose, that all I can say is, that probably for round about two and a half years I have been a politically active thinker about some of the things [concerning political policy] that have been in news papers, bulletins and keeping my ear to the ground. I am also an avid reader of this stuff. The things that you find confusing you try to fit into a logical structure so that you can see it as being reasonable. I could answer why certain things were the way they appear and how different political philosophies - how the policies come from philosophies - were being put into practice. I try to pick up trends that I could see in the wider community.

Now, I have done a lot of thinking about this sort of thing (economic rationalism) and a lot of arguing and debating with different people, but, it seems to me that what happened was...I do a lot of jogging by the way and I am a reasonably keen jogger when I get the opportunity, but, some of my best thinking and realising answers comes when I am actually running around an oval. I can fit the bits and pieces together better running around and thinking about it.

I think I got a good grip of it one afternoon when I found that the 'penny dropped'. To me, it was almost like putting a jigsaw puzzle together and all those things that interest you and the things that you try and seek out, you find the answers. Now you don't always find the answers, but it is probably building some sort of structure for you when you do get the pieces that link it together. I believe it [breakthrough] is when you get that step up to a greater understanding of what you have been looking and thinking about. Therefore, you've got some answers to all sorts of questions that may not have been totally related before, but, you can suddenly pick up the relationships.

Ian What were you mentally building?

Gary I was trying to build an understanding of the processes involved as well as coming up with a logically consistent argument about this economic theory. I was always on the look out for places where I could see it in operation and go from there and see what these sorts of things would result in if they were applied. You can quite often go down a certain distance and probably project a few years ahead and say that I have been fairly accurate in my predictions in

Australia for the period of the last ten years (without being big headed). That is because I am the sort of person that spends a lot of time walking around and thinking about these things.

Ian Relate for me one of those times you saw it working.

Gary I guess I've seen it working right across the board as different policies are brought in by governments at state and federal level. You see, the finger prints of this economic theory over each of these things as though they were being implemented.

[It is related] to how it applies to every day operation. How it comes back and effects 'Joe Blo' whether he is in an educational department or where ever he is i.e., the cut backs to government sector funding, the budgetary constraints that come though and you are given a certain amount of money and told to go away and plan well. Then you plan your operation and then the next thing you find is that you are doing things with 20% less funding. What are you going to throw away? You find that the theory is operating again. If you are going to make cuts then what you tend to do is to get rid of the cargo that you can jettison because that cargo is supposedly unnecessary fat in the system. So the theory operates on the basis that you keep rationalising and keep getting rid of the waste. What you are left with is supposedly a refined leaner meaner animal. The only thing about it is that it tends to create all sorts of social mayhem.

The problem with economic rationalism (I suppose I'm getting away from the topic here) is that it tends to always revise and reduce. It never takes the macro scale into consideration. So that when a company like our local firms cut the work force...the guy got company director of the year because he saved so many millions of dollars. The interesting thing about that case is that those people put out of work lob on the dole or whatever and simply go into another system to made it less efficient. So the efficiency in many cases is a short sighted thing meaning that someone else picks up the loss.

The secret now of business is to made somebody else ware the loss and you claim as much of the profit as you can. It's apparent if you look at the mass situation, economic rationalism has produced a million unemployed.

Ian What eluded you for you to think about this while running around the oval?

Gary I think that I have a disposition towards this kind of thing and I am just interested in it. It is not as if I turn around and say: 'I'm going to think about this now.' I don't have that ability to turn on and off. If something pre-occupies me, and this is where I think the breakthrough comes, it is that something which pre-occupies me and that it is not a chore. To start, it is what you want to do. So it is a totally relaxed state.

Quite often, though, a precursor to that is something that has really stirred me up because, my wife will tell you, I can be reading a news paper and I can see these political events evolving with the result that they annoy and upset me to the point where

I'll put on my joggers and my shorts and I will burn it off jogging. That is the sort of thing that gets me going.

What that has done has added another piece for me to chew over and I must digest it and I must rationalise it into my own system.

Ian Did that happen this time?

Gary Yes

Ian Was there a single occurrence of breakthrough? or Are you saying that a breakthrough happens often?

Gary I would say to get the big picture on some of these things...I guess it is not the same as if somebody is working out a problem like a maths problem and suddenly you've got it. This is an area which is continually expanding; and of course it's never ending because tomorrow is another day and it is not as if we are in a finite set.

So there are breakthroughs and there are breakthroughs and modifications and so on. There are sorts of little battles that you win and then there are major ones. [By major] I mean the ones where you put the thing together well. That's a good feeling and it is almost as if you say: 'Right, it's that bit of a buzz that stirs you on to want to know more about it'. I guess the reaction to me is that I talk to myself. I do, I talk to myself. You do. You want to say: 'Well this is how it fits etc'. I'll talk to anyone about it then.

Ian Can you recall a specific time or occurrence?

Gary I don't quite know what you are getting at, but, I can remember clearly that I was...I might do three or four laps and be chewing it over and one of those times happened fairly recently.

I'm more or less completely out of it and I'm thinking about the whole thing. It is almost like anger induced sometimes. It is an emotional thing.

I'm quite aware that I'm jogging and where I am and what I'm doing. I know that I am getting my exercise at the same time and that I'm burning off the things out of my system. I also play squash and those sorts of things. When I'm playing squash it is a different set up because I'm playing competitively and there is no way in the world any of these things penetrate. I just play squash. It is total concentration. When you're jogging you can think.

I jog at a reasonably good rate for someone of my age. So I put it in rather than a sort of easy jog. I suppose that if I were to check it out, when I get excited by an idea I'm probably actually running faster. Putting out of your mind such things as being fatigued or getting tired. Sometimes, when I'm thinking, I forget how many laps I've done.

When you say talking I hear it in my own mind. I talk as I would be talking to you now without the sound.

There is nothing visual. I think I am the sort of person who learns best by discussion and debate. People can talk and give me ideas to

check out something else or give a different slant. So there is a tendency for people to look at me as being argumentative. The style is often probing on somebody who is saying something and it sometimes gets taken as prying rather than probing and that you are not interested in the person and it is pretty impersonal.

Ian When something comes together for you while jogging; do you come home to try it out?

Gary I would not turn around and jot it down on paper. Although, sometimes when these things happen I feel I should jot it down and keep a record of it. I generally don't.

My wife has a social science background. She is sort of politically aware. She is more of a pragmatist than I am so what happens usually is that I bounce these ideas off her and we talk and discuss the point. So when you say: 'Do I test it?'. She probably is as good as anyone to test it on because if there is a flaw in your reasoning or whatever she can point out examples where maybe it doesn't work or whatever.

My motive, when I do this, is not to come up with the idea which will set us up. It is really just the idea of a breakthrough in getting the thing together. It is a discussion thing and I suppose that you could say that what happens is that it modifies your original viewpoint slightly. It allows you to move on to another. It might be two steps forward and one step back. You never get the total picture. I can't say that I've made the breakthrough and I know it thoroughly. What I guess it does, is to build in you something which is against the learning process. You end up with a gut feeling that...things that you come across a little later should fit into this thing and if they aren't fitting into your theory you believe that you have missed something.

Now I feel that if things are not coming in congruence or whatever with my theory then either the theory is wrong or there is something missing. When you get involved with it as I do you probably come to the view that there is just something here that doesn't gel. It is like listening to John Howard's industrial relations policy and you're going to have all these rights and then finally he gets pressured on television and you say: 'Well yes I now know what it is all about.'. Quite often your original gut feeling is right, or you think it is OK. The danger is that you can continue going along the wrong path modifying it and when you are talking about major breakthroughs maybe that is when you get completely up a dead gully and it becomes quite clear that that is not the correct answer. You then must move off somewhere else.

I like to pursue what I believe is the truth of something as much as anyone can pursue truth and it is the pursuit of that that I believe is the essence of education.

Ian Do you stop jogging when the answer comes?

Gary No. I set myself to do so many laps. The point about it is that you can feel so relaxed from the situation when you reckon that you've thought something through. So I generally finish the session. It

is the clock not so much the laps because in aerobic fitness you need to do at least twenty minutes jogging.

I'm usually quite keen to get home and talk about it.

The feeling is always a feeling of well being of having what I would believe is something worked out. This is sort of a good feeling of success.

Ian Do you pressure yourself or labour at it to come to this point?

Gary No, other things that I have done put pressure on me - like other studies. Generally, I have found that there is no such thing as pressure if it is something that you want to do. If you really want to do it there are not enough hours in a day.

The kind of pressure that I have faced in studies was when in fact I simply ran out of time to do assignments and basically my heart hasn't been in it and I feel that I am cheating myself by wasting time.

I find that once that you have all the notes and gathered all the info and that you have broken the back of the thing the rest is a bore and I don't want to do it any longer. I only find pressure if I am into something that I don't want to be doing.

Ian What are you doing when you're thinking. How would you describe your thinking process?

Gary I'm reasoning. I'm reasoning from a macro point of view to try and see it fit into a much broader picture. Then you look at the smaller parts later.

Ian From where does the information come - what provides the bits on which to reason?

Gary It is a total thing. I guess you shouldn't do that, but, occasionally you find yourself in a situation with other adults and you get involved in the talk, but you should be doing your work, but if the conversation gets around to politics I am quite prepared to sit and talk about it. I get the bits from the media, talking to people, as well as reading the papers. That is not a chore because I want to read it.

Ian When was the breakthrough, while jogging or when you talked it over with your wife?

Gary I would say the breakthroughs come while I'm jogging and thinking about it while relaxed. It gets checked later. Whether I go into another phase of thinking about the thing...it is inevitably at that time on the oval that I feel that I have got the grasp of it because that is the time when I feel good about it and suddenly: 'Yes, I see how that fits together now.'

When I'm coming back to talk with Debbie it is more-or-less a revelation of i.e., look this is what I've discovered; what do you reckon about it?

Because I have thought about it pretty well, she usually sees the point and we talk about it from there. She might introduce something else and that will set me off on another tangent.

Rarely would I in fact completely modify the argument on the discussion later.

No, the breakthrough is when I am actually on the oval.

Ian Does it happen anywhere else other than at jogging?

Gary Yes, I can be driving with the radio going and get a breakthrough. It is not just necessarily experienced on the oval, but, to me it is a time when I can be relaxed. I don't work well under pressure. I am a great believer that the real breakthroughs in humanity probably come from reflection and looking at things.

We have too much emphasis on speed and coming up with a solution. What we need now is more power in thinking and less speed. If you look at kids' exams everything is based on how quickly - almost like machines. I think that if a kid was allowed to go into a classroom for a two hour maths exam or whatever - which is two or three problems - and you say go and have morning tea, go for a jog, do what you like, but just come back with the answers. I know there would be all sorts of cheating etc, but, I believe that you would come up with more ingenious answers. I would want to see more power thinking.

I have a little girl who shows no great shape at school, but, she has a social IQ of two hundred. She sits back and she thinks. Some of her revelations are quite extraordinary from someone so young. She's not there giving the quick answers in class. Some times her questions appear quite weird and they get dismissed. I sometimes think that when kids are grappling with difficult problems they are dismissed by teachers out of hand when really it could be followed up.

I don't specifically set out to think about something. It is not an actively generated thing. It is an all being (embracing) thing.

Ian Do you get frustrated?

Gary Frustration is a part of it, particularly if you can see that there are political motive behind certain things and you need to be able to settle it in your own mind as to how they're getting to those points.

I would like to know it all. The frustrations come, too, when the penny does drop. It just seems that it was so simple. Why didn't you think of it before?

That is the same as when you are talking to someone and they have put something to you that you may not have agreed with and you actually had the answers, but, you weren't fast enough at the time to have given the answer. You feel cheated. It was your answer and you never presented it.

I think that that is almost a spur pushing to seek it out. I suppose, if you were to look at it, the secret as to what is pressure and what

is not pressure as if you had this spur and you want to find out and you want to check it. Well then, you are being pushed from within rather than having a sort of external pressure with someone setting a time table for you to put in an assignment etc.

Ian Do you always go jogging i.e., rain hale or shine?

Gary No, as I have said, I do not need to go jogging to do this kind of thinking. Jogging is probably the best time for me to do my thinking. It is probably because I have other commitments. It is, sort of, my time where I take time out to do it and it is away from interruption. It is not to be an unpleasant exercise.

Ian Is there anything that we haven't talked about that you would like to talk about?

Gary I don't know, I could be miss-leading you in something like this, but, it seems to me that you sort of piece things together and all of a sudden you've got the key piece to plug it together. You can sometimes pick things up quickly because you've picked up the key piece early. Sometimes you can just about put the whole thing together and they may be the ones with which you get the most frustrated and then finally you can do the last bit.

You actively seek that last bit because you are still looking. I think that is one of the problems when you are actually failing at something that you don't want to do, but you have to do it. A pre-requisite subject or something is such a thing and you are not really interested in it. I have always found that to be the hardest thing.

COMMENTS:

Gary , has read the transcript and is satisfied that it represents his perception of his breakthrough in learning.

Signed:

Date: .../.../...

VERIFICATION

INTERVIEW: At home 30 August 1993
DURATION: 9 pm to 9.30 pm = 30 minutes

From what I can gather you have to have some sort of background in the subject that you are looking at. You know, the brainwaves don't just come out of thin air. You would have had to pondered over the problem.

I experienced another breakthrough yesterday. I was doing the compound interest formula and you can do it by progressive simple interest and come up with the same answer as the compound interest method, but, when I did fractions of a period it turned out that I got a different answer even though I used the fraction to the simple interest formula. This had our maths department intrigued. They couldn't explain the phenomenon.

I sat on this, pondering the issue for about a day and a half. I was walking to the tuck shop...I had thought of a whole host of things before that. It had preoccupied my mind. It wasn't as though I was just suddenly going to think about it then, but, as it turned out the compound interest was always a few cents short of the other one. It dawned on me that one was a linear equation and the other was an exponential equation which gave you a curve and they only come to the same points at the same periods. However, in between the periods one would be a curve and one would be like a tangent across the curve. That is why it is always like that.

It just hit me as I was walking. I can remember where I was at the time. I was walking past an urn which I had put on to go down to the tuck shop to get myself a pie and have a cup of tea.

Question Do you have a rush of energy?

Gary Oh, yes.

Question Before the breakthrough?

Gary I can not honestly say that I am aware of that, but, I think that I was sharper than I am usually because I was also under a certain amount of pressure and stress at the time. I wasn't upset or worried where you can get yourself stressful and not think. I was at the stage where a little bit of pressure helps you do better. Over do it, and you get worse.

I had relaxed to go to the tuck shop, and if anything, I was in reasonably good spirit and it can be like that at other times. Once I saw the connection between the linear and exponential equation all the rest just fell into place. Your mind then sort of works very quickly to sort out the rest of it. It seems like once you get that little lift up onto the next plateau you zoom along to the next stage very quickly.

I can not really say what made the trigger. If anything there wasn't a trigger, it seems to demonstrate that there was not necessarily a trigger. It was progressively worrying me for about

three days that this thing didn't seem to have a rational solution from people who should have a rational solution for it (other teachers in the department). I was preoccupied with thinking it through.

I had thought about it the night after the problem because you don't like to leave something unresolved.

Verification of Interpretation

Note: The following verification was done as a separate activity from the above "VERIFICATION". This part will be used in the analysis where corrections need to be made. Exposing the learner to my conclusions could be suggestive and, therefore, influence the response.

The purpose of this section is to check out my conclusions to see if they stand the test of the learner's criticism.

PREAMBLE

OK

BREAKTHROUGH EXPERIENCE

OK

CONTEXT:

INFORMAL: OK

PRE-OCCUPIED: yes

COGNITIVE: OK

PERSONAL THEORY: That is right because I have to come to grips with it for me. It is a very selfish thing.

EXPERIENCE:

CHANGE IN UNDERSTANDING: OK, but, when you say change, I would not say that it is a radical change. It is a slight change in thinking. You suddenly see something that increases your awareness of the other forces that are involved. I didn't do a back flip on any of my ideas.

CHANGE IN COMPREHENDING POLITICAL EVENTS: OK

CHANGE IN STATE OF MIND: Yes, because you get a sort of buss. I don't know, I suppose the adrenalin flows and I do another number of laps that you would otherwise be fatigued and not do. Fatigue

doesn't seem a factor once you are in...not a trance...but, something like that.

It seems more like a higher (heightened) awareness state that you get into when you have actually made the breakthrough.

GOOD FEELING OF SUCCESS: Yes and I think that that is probably what it is - the success factor gives you that high.

CONTRIBUTION:

ACQUIRED TENDENCY: OK

STIMULATION: OK

ENJOYMENT OF DEBATE: It doesn't provide a relaxing diversion. You know what I said before that there is a certain amount of not stress, but, pressure involved. I have a concern about these things and most people would say that I am too concerned worrying about the year 2000. It is a worry because I see these things transpiring and I am unable to do anything about it. Other than intellectualise them I can not act and do something about it.

It is my pre-occupation. I spend so much of my time in that area. I think about it and see it in operation. I really don't know if it is something that excites me. It is something that definitely interests me. I can't say that I get a happy feeling necessarily out of it. I get a buzz out of it. That is probably purely the intellectual side of things - I can see what is going on, but, not necessarily like what is going on. I am against this whole thing. I believe that I can blow holes in the economic rationalist theory all over the place with logical argument, because I have developed my theories of how all this supposedly works and fits together.

It stirs me. When I'm highly emotionally involved it seems to push me to a higher peak of looking at it. If you were not concerned or bothered I don't think that I would get any of the revelations.

When I say stress, there really has to be that impetus to pressure that keeps me thinking about it and throwing it around otherwise I tend to throw it away and I don't think about it again and a breakthrough doesn't happen.

I find that breakthroughs come in the areas in which I am very interested.

EMOTIONAL REACTION: Yes, that is pretty right. I go out when I'm stirred up and that helps me. I can get rid of the anger as I go.

When I'm running, I am not thinking about running, but the political stuff.

EXPECTANCY: It is more of a get away than going there to solve the problem. I don't necessarily go to solve the problem. I'm really saying that it is a relief. A 'detox' style of thing. If I'm sort of sitting here and hear something on the news that I don't like it is

almost like the problem is right here with me. So if I go out side or into the garden I feel released from it. Also, there are no kids talking to me or radios interrupting or TV going or whatever, so it is a sort of get away.

HABITUAL: Also, I have the personal space where no one can interfere or break into my thoughts. When you are out jogging you are on your own. I can be in the garden and find the same parameters. There is a lot in that you are not having to say hello or getting interrupted.

By personal space I mean that it is one thing that nobody actually stops you and interrupts you. Like here, if the phone rings I've got to answer the phone, etc. If I'm jogging that is for me and it is my time. I haven't got the expectancy of the phone ringing, and you can concentrate totally uninterrupted. The other thing is that you decide when you will come out of the think mode. Here, the kids can make that decision for you prematurely.

TRANCE LIKE BEHAVIOUR: OK

MNEMONIC ACTIVITY: It is not as though I deliberately do that. I don't think in the sense that I am going to get rid of the pain of jogging by thinking. It is like 'I eat chocolate because I like it'. I like thinking along those lines (economic rationalism). The jogging allows me to be guilt free. It is just a vehicle.

INDUCTIVE REASONING: Yes.

ACQUIRED KNOWLEDGE: Yes.

RUSH OF ENERGY: I reckon that that is right.

When you say instant, I am on the verge of breakthrough, but it is not there - and then it is there. I can say that within one step I've suddenly seen a greater amount of the picture. Where as before I had been held up to that point. I had been pondering the problem for some time prior to that. The solution comes very quickly when it comes.

It is hard to pin point the moment that a rush of energy occurs because you are absorbed in what you are thinking. I honestly can't say because I am not monitoring my metabolism. Now that you have asked me I will say next time being aware I'll be able to tell you.

Since I am a verbal person I would like to explain it to somebody immediately I have the breakthrough.

INTERRELATED IDEAS: Yes. It is seeing the relationship of ideas with my theory.

OBSERVATIONS

I know what you are getting at there. I am a person who likes the audio style of things. When I was at school I wanted to debate with the teachers and they would think that I was precocious and a smart ass, but, what I wanted was verbal information while the teacher provided visual material and we would copy it down.

I talk to myself and it gets me embarrassed at times so that is why I get out into the back yard alone and talk it through.

I am a verbal person and like to learn that way.

Jack's Perception of Breakthrough

INTERVIEW: At Jack's place of work 20 April '93

DURATION: 7.45 pm to 8.15 pm = 30 minutes

JACK'S AGE: 20 years

BREAKTHROUGH OCCURRED: ??

THE KNOWLEDGE IN WHICH JACK WAS INVOLVED: Skill of welding

BREAKTHROUGH: Creating a constant flow of weld.

Jack's interview started by talking about his college experiences with maths and drawing. On pursuing the issue of learning from someone else, Jack related to a time when he was learning to weld. It was with welding that he experienced a breakthrough in learning.

Jack When I was learning how to weld, I was getting taught at home from my Dad. He is a welder (by trade). Dad has his particular habits and he was passing his habits on to me. I was beginning to weld fairly well and then when I got to college and they said this is the way that you do it my welding finished up looking terrible.

When I forgot the way Dad taught me and concentrate on the way the teacher taught it wiped the old habits.

I have a problem that when I'm set in my way, what ever anyone else says they're an idiot and I continue my way. Even if it is wrong, if it works for me fine, but, if I think that I can do it better using the teacher's method then I'll persevere even if it is bad to begin with. I'll keep trying.

Ian In what did you experience a breakthrough?

Jack The breakthrough was with doing runs and fillet build up.

All of the apprentices that were doing college at the same time were from Walkers and everybody knew everybody. With work mates, if you do a bad job you would get pretty badly rubbished by them. That sort of gets you to persevere on and get better than them.

Ian Did you improve your skills?

Jack Yes, I got honours all the way through college.

To start, my work was average and then it got better, it looked better and it was stronger.

Ian How?

Jack Through learning a better technique from the experience of the teacher. Maybe my father had taught me bad habits or that I had picked up bad habits by the way that he was teaching me.

There wasn't any great difference from the way the teacher did it and dad did it. It was only the way that you hold the hand piece and how quickly that you move the hand piece to get the build up of weld.

[I got the message] when it was pointed out to me about how much better it was. The teacher said: 'You do a run your way and I'll hold your hand and guide you in the way that I think it should be done, then you judge.' I compared them and found that his way was better using his technique.

It got me thinking saying: 'Oh! shit may be I should do it this way? This is maybe the best way?'. I felt a bit clever and a bit more confident. Confidence boosts you up. I began to think that, well I must be able to do this and I must be able to do this a lot better and I must be able to vertically up weld a lot better using this technique as well. You don't think 'what if' if the 'what if' comes up and you don't do it the new way.

My goal was to be the best. After all the rubbishing, I wanted to be the very best out of everybody. It made me determined. I was motivated. If someone got a better mark than me then I was determined to beat them next time.

Ian Where did you see your help coming from?

Jack From within myself I suppose, the competitiveness or maybe the influence of not wanting the rubbishing or both.

Maybe the teachers. Teachers were different. Some favour you more when you are close to the top. They seem to put more time towards you. The teachers gave me the time. They probably thought that: 'He is worthwhile so we'll put our time into him and if he is good enough then we'll help him.' You know if you're continually showing someone how to do it and they continually do it wrong it must be like bashing your head up against a wall. The teacher must get more satisfaction out of teaching a good student.

I had a number of teachers and I did well with all of them.

The work shop was good. I liked it there, it helped. There is probably another thing which effected me and that was the tall poppy syndrome that you tend to get doing things that are seen to be good, but, you become a bit isolated from your mates. There was a few of us that were sort of high and competed with each other. That created rivalry and competition. We would help each other to get along. If you have a competition with someone with whom you are fairly equally matched you both seem to improve. We both get better and better together.

Ian Go back to the time when your work was looking lousy. Why was it lousy?

Jack My technique was wrong because I was going too fast and I was holding the hand piece wrong.

Ian How was the light?

Jack Yeah, I suppose that was a problem too, because as you get better you pick up little tricks of the trade. With a welding visor everything is dark and you can't see until you actually strike the ark. When you get good enough you sort of look to strike your ark, close your eyes as you strike the ark then you shut the visor on the helmet all in the one action.

I wasn't doing that when I was doing a lousy job. I was doing that after I improved and picked up on the tricks.

Ian Well then, in what skill did you experience the breakthrough? Lifting the visor or what?

Jack The skill of doing the run and the skill of the way I was to hold the hand piece and then the tricks with the visor and the way that you can actually move your wrist and so forth. That comes with the skill. You start to think: 'Well that's good, but I can do better.' Then you tend to experiment with different things to improve it. Once you get over that initial hurdle and you're satisfied with that, but want to get over more hurdles you experiment further and get better and better.

When I got better I came across some small problems with different properties in metals. The smaller problems you seem to overcome quicker than the initial problem because you have that background experience.

Ian How did you experience the learning?

Jack Well it would have been a physical experience to begin with because you were physically doing it, but then it would have been a mental experience after you sort of acquired the skill because you wouldn't have to think about it.

When it becomes second nature you are not physically concentrating, it is in your mind and it just happens - like driving a car.

It came about through the mistakes at the start and learning from them. It was a physical learning experience at the start then I discovered that if I did it that way it worked and it is as if your mind says: 'Gee Jack, this is good - you get good results from that and we'll put it in the head and lock it away and then it will become second nature.'

Ian Where did you do your studies?

Jack Maryborough TAFE.

Ian What were your feelings when your work was looking poor?

Jack Worried about not being successful.

Ian Ego?

Jack Yes, I suppose it was. I think everybody tries to be the best. It's troubling to your ego if you are not good. Unless you're a 'dead head' and you don't care. Money doesn't matter, it was the thrill of being the best and to skate by saying: 'Well, I'm the best.'. People think that you

are knowledgeable. People think that you are wise because you are good at that particular thing.

I think respect is better description. The respect that you get out of it. People respect that you are skilful at your job and that you have a high knowledge of it.

I didn't ever get much respect from work. Walkers are fairly bad for the giving of praise, but I'm still trying to be better. I'm always trying to be better with or without praise. That is the way I look at it. I still get praise from my parents because they will always praise their kids. As long as they praise you nothing else really counts, no-one actually counts really.

Ian When you had your breakthrough, what tools were you using?

Jack A hand welder and that was about it. That's all you need when you are welding plate together. The mind was the other tool and a combination of both.

There is always that initial barrier no matter what it is that you are learning and then once you overcome that initial barrier (the highest barrier) the smaller barriers just fall away. Then once that you have fully learnt that, you take on and overcome other barriers at your own will and get better and better.

The improvement of the welding technique happened over a few lessons. In the first lesson, my work was pretty crappy. Then towards the end of that lesson after the teacher had said: 'Do it this way.' it began to improve. You try it and find that it is a little bit better the learning begins. At the beginning you think that he is only a 'dick head' and you're the smart arse, but you go away and think about it plus try with your way, he comes back as if to think that your trying so he 'hammers it home' and shows you physically, then, once he has done that and you think: 'Well that's good.', you start to do it (his way) and you get better and better and it keeps getting better.

Ian How did he convince you of his way?

Jack By showing me the two ways (his and mine). He said: 'You do it your way and I'll show how to do it my way.'. He virtually did it for me. Then you sort of remember that he held the rod this way and I was holding it that way. So if I hold it this way and do it that way and experiment with it you sort of acquire your own style. You base it around his style, but you pick up your own style by little tricks and stuff like that.

Ian How often did you have welding?

Jack We had welding twice a week in our apprenticeship course. We never had welding each day. It was always split. I don't know that that was so you could let it...I don't know if they thought that you were too slow and you couldn't cope.

You always have learning experience where you find problems.

COMMENTS:

Jack , has read the transcript and is satisfied that it represents his perception of his breakthrough in learning.

Signed: Date: .../.../...

VERIFICATION

INTERVIEW: At home 17 August 1993
DURATION: 9 am to 9.30 am = 30 minutes

Question Was your breakthrough to learn the technique of welding runs and fillets?

Jack It was learning to make a consistent run and smooth fillet build up of metal material.

Verification of Interpretation

Note: The following verification was done as a separate activity from the above "VERIFICATION". This part will be used in the analysis where corrections need to be made. Exposing the learner to my conclusions could be suggestive and, therefore, influence the response.

The purpose of this section is to check out my conclusions to see if they stand the test of the learner's criticism.

CONTEXT:

FAMILIAR COMPANY - OK

EXPERIENTIAL - OK

REFLECTION - OK

EXPERIENCE:

CHANGE IN UNDERSTANDING THE TEACHER - Yes, but, the words are not clear.

[What I am saying is that the teacher showed you something and you previously did not understand for whatever the reason. However, when the breakthrough came i.e., when the teacher showed you the method, it was then that you understood.]

Yes now I understand what you are saying. That is correct.

CHANGE IN INTELLECTUAL ABILITY - OK

CHANGE IN APPLICATION - OK

A NEW INTELLECTUAL SKILL - OK

CONTRIBUTION:

ENVIRONMENT - OK

EMOTION - OK Did the other people experience the same sort of thing i.e., to be the best? There were varying motivational factors.

MOTIVATION - OK Did that fact contribute? Yes

ATTENTION - OK

ATTEND - OK I agree that without that knowledge I could not have had the breakthrough.

CONFIDENCE - OK It did reduce the pressure particularly when you prove to yourself and others that you are getting better. They generally pick on the worst bloke for rubbishing. So getting better reduced further crap.

PRAISE - OK

ADAPTATION - OK

TEACHER COMPETENCE - I may have still had the breakthrough, but, certainly not as quick. You might have stumbled through it working at it in your own way, but, probably the technique would not be as good and take twice as long.

SENSES - OK

EVALUATION - OK

Do you want to add anything? No I agree with everything in there.

Melinda ' Perception of Breakthrough

INTERVIEW: At Melinda's home 4 March 1993
DURATION: 2.30 pm to 3.40 = 1 hour 10 minutes

MELINDA'S AGE: 30-35 years

BREAKTHROUGH OCCURRED: 1993 Feb.

THE ACTIVITY IN WHICH MELINDA WAS INVOLVED: Choreography and Scripting a proposed theatrical performance.

BREAKTHROUGH: While creating a programme for a forthcoming show Melinda experience a breakthrough in visualising the performance and presentation of the show.

Melinda A good choreographer listens to what the music is saying and a bad choreographer simply makes sure that the steps fit into the time with the music. There is a lot of learning involved there.

I am a perfectionist. I get very angry with myself if I don't do something right the first time. Contrary to the image of dances with pushy stage mums, I didn't have the pushy stage mum - I pushed me myself. I probably demanded a lot more of myself than I would normally have to do.

You start to develop real mental blocks in your learning. There would be certain steps that obviously you would see as different or, as a dancer, you are stronger on one leg than the other. While you have no trouble on one leg you tell yourself that you can not do it on the other leg to the point where you reach the stage of getting up from what you are doing. I get quite disgusted with myself.

I don't know, there is a breakthrough [or rather] a plateau stage where you get nowhere i.e., no matter how many times you do that step you can not do it; or no matter how many times you listen to that piece of music you can't envisage what goes with it. Then, suddenly there is this breakthrough period where suddenly you think to yourself: 'That's it! that is what it was meant to be.' It appeared as if by magic it suddenly falls into place.

It is the same with choreographing a show and putting a theatrical production together like I'm doing at the moment. I sat down to piece a programme together and I had notes all over the place, pages and things everywhere. I know how I wanted it to look, but, then of course you've got limitations of your environment, the talent that is at hand the technical facilities that are available and you've got to work within that framework. It seemed like: no matter which way I rearranged these things I could not do it. However, about a week ago it all just fell into place. Now I've got the programme all done and it is all finalised and it is simply a matter of making up the routines and teaching.

Ian What happened?

Melinda As I said, being a perfectionist my biggest block is frustration with myself. The environment plays a big part in it. I find that if I am tired my receptiveness in terms of what I can create or what I can take in is well and truly reduced. The environment for me plays a big part. As a person I have a low threshold for a great deal of physical discomfort which sounds strange being a professional dancer for years. They go through a lot more physical discomfort than most people. If there is physical discomfort in terms of; for example, the place which you are working in is too hot or conditions are cramped or you feel a bit off-colour or what ever, that is when I cease to function. If I can get the right environment I find things come to me very easily and I can keep taking in as much information as possible and soak it up like a sponge. I'm lucky in that I have a retentive memory; even photographic memory with some things - although that seems to be fading as I get older.

Sometimes breakthroughs come when I am totally relaxed. I've got to be totally relaxed to be at my most receptive. I get flashes of inspiration when I'm asleep. With dance routines I can dream something and I've woken up in the middle of the night and thought: 'That's it'.

Ian Did that occur with this breakthrough?

Melinda With this time...it seems like it did in as much as one day it was all wrong and the next day it was all right.

Ian There was a nights sleep between not knowing and knowing.

Melinda Yes, and that is why the relaxation thing plays a big part for me. I can handle heaps of pressure and always have been able to, and like I've said, meet the most awful deadlines. If I've had an eisteddfod coming up I've sometimes danced half the night to work out a routine or when involved with speech and drama in eisteddfods, I would get a piece which was three pages long learnt it that morning then go and perform it that afternoon. Pressure doesn't bother me. The pressure, to me, is not one of the discomfort factors. The discomfort factors are all external physical things i.e., too hot, too cramped, too noisy, that sort of thing.

I see myself as a strange contradiction. I'm one of those people who can do three jobs at once if necessary, in fact I usually do, doing one thing at a time never satisfies me. Where as, with most people, that would be enough to cause them so much discomfort that they couldn't function. I am the opposite that way, but, if it is really noisy or hot or any such external factors they are the things which throw me off. That is what threw my learning process.

Ian What were you doing the day before it happened?

Melinda It was a weekend, when I started to piece it all together and I was doing many things. It was a very busy weekend. I had lots of jobs to get finished. I'd made myself a list. I'm a great list maker. The programme was one of them. That was one job in particular that I had to get finished, because I had told the people in my class that:

- 'Next week, I will have this programme ready for you so you know exactly what you will be doing in the programme and when. I set myself a deadline, that does play a big factor with me. I am not a procrastinator because if I make up my mind to do something I'll do it there and then. But, I find I function best when I leave something until the last minute and then it has to be a spontaneous thing and I think: 'All right I've got to do this, I've got no choice, it's got to be ready by tomorrow etc and get on with it'. That is when I produce the best results - under pressure.
- Ian Other people have said that a breakthrough is a special thing and that it is an emotional experience...
- Melinda It is, because if you don't have the right frame of mind it doesn't happen. You just keep hitting this barrier.
- Ian Exploring the breakthrough. The next day, was there a similar environment to the one experienced the day before.
- Melinda Pretty much the same. I had sat down...I'd made about half a dozen attempts at this programme and changed it each time and thrown the old copy out and gone on with a new one. Then threw things about (mentally) and they weren't workable - so thrown them out etc.

Saturday was a stinking hot horrible day and I was tired and not in a very good frame of mind because of the weather. I sat down and looked at this thing and it seemed that no matter which way I turned I couldn't piece it together. It wasn't going to work, because this wouldn't allow that person to get changed in time and this person didn't do that type of item so what could I put there instead and all that sort of thing; or this person didn't have the capability to handle that routine so what could I give them to do to keep them happy while somebody else did the more difficult thing and the other person didn't feel left out. You had all of these personality factors that had to be taken into consideration which made it all the harder

I sat down and looked at it and I had reached the point where I was so frustrated (on the Saturday) and I thought: 'This is impossible'. Initially, when I had approached the project - I love taking on fresh challenges - there was this excitement; when you could say: 'Yeah, this is something new to work on and I can do this'. I sat down and wrote: 'Yeah, well I can put that in and I can ask them if they would like to do an item etc. That soon ?? because it was not coming together and I sat there on the Saturday and thought: 'This will never work, how will I ever make it work?'. I sat with my head in my hands literally and thought: 'It's hopeless'. Knowing that I was running out of time because I soon had to come up with a finished product, as I recall, I put it down in disgust with the thought: 'Forget it'. I walked away.

I found that that is always effective with me when I reach that block, that point, that plateau stage, I am better off walking away. I know that some people when they reach that stage they will tussle with it over and over until they get a breakthrough. That doesn't work for me. If I did that I would only get more frustrated and cranky and tired and no further advanced. I went and flopped down in a heap.

I didn't touch it for the rest of that day (Saturday). That was the afternoon. At that stage I had worked on it for three or four weeks.

Ian Did you try to do some of the things i.e., get up and dance?

Melinda Yes. I do that all the time. The cassette is always in the sound system and I'm around the lounge room dancing trying to work out steps playing the same piece of music over and over because even if I come up with a step that I think will look quite good if I'm not one hundred percent satisfied I'll try it another way.

I've gone down to the hall and taught them steps that I've worked out and said to them: 'Look that may be subject to change'. Then I've come home the next day and suddenly thought: 'That step fits in there better than that one' go back next week and told them to forget what I said last week; it's this. That is how much a perfectionist I am. I won't take second best where my performance is concerned. Yes, I get up and down and do all sorts of bits and pieces. I'll even go away and start on another job at the same time or read a book.

Ian How does that help?

Melinda It depends on what is important to me - this programme is extremely important because on the line is my reputation as a choreographer, producer and a teacher. It is an extremely important project to me. It was bugging me so much that I couldn't work the thing out. I've staged full musical variety reviews for players writing the whole thing from scratch. I sat here with this block and thought: 'If I could work out a show that was that big and had over a hundred people in it and of that length and involvement, why can't I put together a simple programme for a variety concert?' That is one thing that I do. I make comparisons with myself.

Ian Did you give yourself an answer?

Melinda Yes, but, I think the initial answer or response was that I was a stupid clot. After that I guess I wrote it off as simply being tired and having too much on. I also, at that particular time, think that I was starting to get a bit scared and a bit worried. My biggest failing is that I won't ask for help.

Part of the breakthrough was that I went over to mum's place because mum has always been there when I was doing any of these creative dance things. She was always there. While she can't do the practical side, creatively, she is a good ideas person and she knows what is necessary in stage production.

I went over there to record some music that was needed for the show because she has this incredible collection of records. I took a rough run down of the programme and showed her. She sort of looked at one or two things and said: 'If you do that there what will happen with this and that'. Actually, a couple of things that she said caused me to feel that my ability was being questioned. That probably helped a lot to get that input from another person. I know that a lot of these motivational people talk about personal

networking and how important it is to have your own network of close associates or friends or relatives that you can sit down and talk things over with and get their feed back.

That [session with mum] obviously did help. The breakthrough certainly didn't come then, but, her contribution made a difference.

I came home and I still didn't touch it. I was determined not to go back to it for the rest of the night. In fact, at that stage, I was quite disgruntled and thought that I was never going to get this thing done.

I began to think that I was taking on too much and finish up where I started from when I was sick last year?

Ian How did you feel?

Melinda Scared, because I didn't want to end up like that again.

Since leaving Sunshine Television - it was wonderful - receiving all these job offers from all over the place, but, it was like being inundated having to put people off. The things that I wanted to happen did happen in terms of jobs and projects. These were the things I really want to do e.g., this show and my new job at TAFE.

It put more pressure on me. The other pressure was from people hounding me to do things. For the sake of being polite you tend to pussy foot around and say that you'll think about it where as you felt like saying: 'Well back off and leave me alone I don't want to do this.' All this is happening at the same time.

There was also a whole new personal routine to get accustomed to.

Ian Did the project put pressure on you?

Melinda No it doesn't put pressure on you in that sense (the sense of it being a creative thing; which I love). The only pressure is in the deadlines and knowing that you are working in such a restricted sense.

It is all well and good my putting this down on paper and for me to say: 'That is what I want to see in this act and that is what I want to see in that act', but can I transfer it to those people who are not professional.

Ian All this was going through your mind while your head was in your hands?

Melinda Yes, and at that time I still didn't have all the pieces of music that I was going to use.

I admit it felt like a weight had been lifted after being at my mum's [because the music part of the programme came together].

Ian What made you get up, get in the car and go to your mother's place what were your thoughts?

Melinda The fact that I knew that I had a class coming up in three days and I had to start teaching them some routines and I could not do that unless I had the music to teach it with.

Ian So it was an external, but associated, thing?

Melinda I wasn't in the frame of mind to do it, I didn't really feel like doing it. I knew that I had to go.

Ian What did your mum do on arrival?

Melinda We sat and chattered for a while, had a cup of coffee and I basically showed her what I had worked out for the programme. She queried a couple of things. Then I asked about the records to which she responded by hauling things out.

I rifled through all the records while she played bits and pieces. She would play something on the piano and at times a tune would fit and I'd say: 'That's great, yes, I can really see that, that's good'.

Ian See what?

Melinda I don't know, some funny little thing that is back here in my head that when you hear that music you know that the sort of dance you want to do is going to fit to that music.

Ian That which is in your head, is that what you want to achieve? or is that your inner ability that simply knows these things?

Melinda It's a hard thing to explain from a dancers point of view, but, if you are a reasonable choreographer the music does talk to you the minute you hear it down to the point where you see the actual steps in your mind.

Ian When we began this discussion you referred to a good choreographer and a bad choreographer. You were saying that the ability to 'walk into' a piece of music and make it live. Was that your meaning? and is that what happened?

Melinda Yes. That happened over at my mum's place.

Ian What happened in the car when you going over to your mum's place? What were you thinking about?

Melinda On the way over I didn't know whether mum would be in the mood.

There was a drama. Her stereo played up. It has never had a thing wrong with it all the time she's had it. I began to feel like: 'Oh! no I've jinxed it'. This programme is bad luck, I won't do it. So we got over that and we then started listening to the bits and pieces and as I said she would go through it and I would say that that was no good m-- or that one was OK but that's the one - and that sort of thing. I am one of those people, as I said before, who won't settle for what is to me second best. If something does not grab me right at the start, forget it. Even if I settled for it I would never be content with it.

Ian Are you impulsive?

Melinda No, that is the funny part, I am not an impulsive person. I am a very practical person and, like I said, analytical and I think things out to the point where I drive my husband to the point of destruction. I think that one of the things that helped or one of the factors that influenced me (nothing against my husband) was that he tried to help with these things as much as he could, but, it was a total foreign world to him because he has never had anything to do with dancing. He can play the piano and know if someone is singing off key, but that is about it. He could not help me with this. I was trying to do this stuff earlier in the day and he would be there saying, 'What are you doing now?' to which I would reply: 'Same thing'. He would come back with: 'Can I help?' or he would come and lean on the back of the chair while I'm working. I would quip: 'Don't lean on the chair, it drives me nuts, and don't look over my shoulder and just go away and let me get on with it'. Where to go? Over to Mum's. She is a kindred spirit because she has done all these things for so many years. She would have loved to be on the stage herself or involved with professional theatre if she had a chance. So it is a kindred spirit and being with mum is conducive to achieving the things you want to achieve. You have someone else there and we both love the big musicals and the same types of music.

She can't carry out the practical side nor do the steps and things, but like me, she sees things in her mind. She is the one who has designed my costumes and things for all these years. She is very creative person and taught herself to sew.

Ian What is that feeling when you are over there?

Melinda Good, a lot more confident. In a way this is the kind of thing that we have not done for a few years now and it took me back to the days when I was doing eisteddfod work. We would sit for hours listening to pieces of music and trying to work out routines. In all the years that I did those things Mum was my greatest supporter and she was the one who sat through what would have been hours of boring rehearsals. She could not get up and show me steps because she is not a dancer, but, she could say: 'that there is something there that doesn't look quite right'. She would say: 'Why don't you try it his way or is there another step you can put in there instead'. She was the one who would keep the creative 'juices' flowing. So it was good in that way. It took me back to when we would do that sort of thing all the time.

Ian Did you have any expectations of what you were going to achieve by going over to your Mother's place?

Melinda No. I didn't actually because (A) I did not know if she would be in the mood to do it, and so I did not necessarily expect anything and (B) I thought that if mum was not in the mood I would go back another time. It was only to be a social call and that was it.

I was also intending to go to 4MB and try them. I fully expected to come home not having accomplished half of what I wanted to; where as I came home having accomplished all of what I wanted. From that point the pieces started to fit into place.

I came home in a much more relaxed frame of mind than when I went out. I still didn't touch it that day. I didn't want to go back to it. I had had enough.

Ian Was that late evening (Saturday)?

Melinda Early evening. When I returned, I sat down and watched TV.

The trouble is my husband says that I am hyper active, but, I'm one of those people who, if I'm just sitting doing nothing watching TV, feels that I am being azy and that I should be doing something more constructive.

That is why I'll do three things at once. I'll watch television, read a book, and cook a meal.

It was very frustrating for me to have had such a mental block with this programme, because once I start a job I like to get it over-and-done-with. I hate leaving anything unfinished. That is one of my biggest frustration's.

I am task oriented.

Ian Did you have the image of what you wanted to achieve or did the image develop?

Melinda I had the image.

Ian Was the image settled in your mind or did some of it change along the way?

Melinda Mostly, but, there were one or two options with particular pieces of music. That is when I turned and ask somebody ease.

Most times I am fairly confident with my own decisions. The only time is when I am in 'two minds' and I'll ask somebody ease.

Ian Resetting the scene; you are back from your mum's place and sitting watching TV, you had tea, you were generally relaxed and then went to bed. Did you think about the project during this time and leading up to when you went to bed?

Melinda I felt a lot happier at that stage, because at least I had music. Prior to that all I had were bits of notes.

I probably only thought about it in terms of knowing that I had to get the job done. I had to have something concrete by the weekend to show people.

Ian During the night what happened?

Melinda I have a very active subconscious. If something is bothering me I can virtually guarantee that I will dream about it. Vague dreams usually involve either visualising the way something should turn out or I want it to turn out. Sometimes it works the other way, I visualise something becoming a disaster and even down to dreaming conversations. I can have that conversation in five days and think: 'I've said this before'.

With something like the visual thing it crops up in my dreams.

In a disjointed way, when I wake up I can't necessarily link all the things together, but, I know that that particular problem has formed the basis of what ever it was that I dreamt about that night and I can remember different scenarios and routines and things.

Ian Did that happen that night?

Melinda Yes. With the dreams, they are not specific enough for me to tell you which step I did in a dance, but, the emotional scene, it being on stage and all the rest of it.

Ian When you woke up - What was your first thought?

Melinda I've got to get that dammed thing finished.

On the weekends, I tend to strive for as leisurely a morning as possible. Sundays are usually spent with a leisurely morning alone in the house. My husband goes to cricket.

Amazingly, I did start it in the morning. I would usually start such things in the afternoons on a Sunday. When I wake up I tend to itemise the day into all things that I have to do. That programme was bugging me all weekend. I knew that I had to get it finished so other jobs were put aside.

Ian When in the day did you commence work?

Melinda About an hour after waking.

Ian What were your actions upon returning to work?

Melinda I went straight to the table, sat down and put a piece of paper into the typewriter.

I had all my little pieces of paper spread all over the place including the floor.

I have a little Type Star 6 CANON portable typewriter. The ribbons are so expensive that I only use it when absolutely necessary or if I am travelling I will take it with me. I sat straight down and put a piece of paper into the typewriter.

Ian How did you feel?

Melinda Probably negatively, but, I started typing when suddenly it all began to fall into place. Before I knew it I had finished the first part of the programme on the one sheet and was changing paper.

Ian When you started to type, how did you feel?

Melinda Grumpy, because I was envisaging the problems anticipating them before they happened.

Ian When it started to fall into place. How did you feel?

Melinda I was confident about and knew that there wouldn't be a problem with the opening number because I had already choreographed that and taught it to the dancers. That definite part of the programme I typed, the title of the music, the routine, and who would be performing that item.

Ian Why did you type that first? Why didn't you go to the problem areas first?

Melinda Because I am very orderly. I love to do things in sequence. I hate doing things and leaving holes and having to leave things and go back. I'm determined that if I'm going to do something like that I do it straight through or not at all.

Ian When did the breakthrough come?

Melinda After I got past the opening number, because the next sequence was a particularly complicated one and didn't have all the music nor had I a clue of what I was going to do.

By the Sunday I had this piece of paper with all the things that I had scribbled out when I was at mums. So where as before I looked at this sequence of dance routines and thought: 'How am I going to do this and who am I going to get to do what?' I had all of these song titles that I could type in. The minute that I started to type, it all fell into place.

I could feel my mood lifting.

The great part about it was that even with out visualising the big picture of the whole show I could still do everything that I wanted to do, apart from one or two things that were not quite the way I would like then, but again accepting the limitations I could still do everything that I wanted to do within those limitations and keep everybody happy at the same time.

The other thing that made it difficult was that I am a person who tries not to leave any room for error and I try to cover every conceivable query that may arise. I knew that, even though it was important for me to get this programme finalised, I didn't want to take this to these people and say: 'That is the programme', because they would look at it and say: 'Well ok, but what does all that mean'. So as well as doing that I had to sort out exactly who was going to be in which items so I could make a dance list advising them of the number and dance routine each would have to learn and who was going to be in which one. I had to prepare a costume list so they could start costume hunting and know that that was for that item and that for that item etc. It was a triple work load that I had to get through that day.

I am a practical thinker and an open minded person.

In my work, I've had to make decisions. I've never been interested in management. I've never wanted to be a managerial person, but, I was forced into that position where I had to make decisions. Especially putting that show on air - say where the production assistant would come to me with a problem like that person who rang to say that they could not make it and could they make it

another day. Once upon a time I would try to be accommodating. When you are doing a half hour of live television five days a week you reach a stage where you have to be tough and make those hard decisions. I was placed in that position.

That work made me that way, all-be-it reluctantly.

Ian Going back to the typing. Do you like typing?

Melinda Yes I do actually. I like challenges and when I was learning to typing at school I tended to make things a competition for myself. I would do stupid things like trying to go faster and faster to beat myself. I was not competing with other students. My husband says that I am a very competitive person, but I am that way only with myself, to a degree with others, but, not to the extent where I go out to win like in a sport. It is myself that I like to beat. I do that all the time. If I'm alone at home I would try to type the lyrics of a song as fast as it is being played on the recorder.

Ian Can you do it?

Melinda Yes I can do it. My average typing speed is 98 words per minute. My fastest speed is 100.

My biggest problem, though, once I've proved to myself that I can do something - unless it is something that I am really rapped in and really want to keep on doing - I get sick of that thing and want to go on.....

(Tap expired, gave up called it quits.) Thanks.

COMMENTS:

There's really nothing extra to add - the basic facts are there - I only hope when this discussion continues I can express myself a little more concisely and lucidly.

Melinda , you have read the transcript and you are satisfied that it represents your perception of your breakthrough in learning.	
Signed:	Date: .../.../...

VERIFICATION

INTERVIEW: At TAFE 25 May 1993

DURATION: 2 pm to 2.45 pm = 45 minutes

Question Did the phenomenon come together because of the visual impressions?

Melinda To a certain extent. I suppose there were two different sets of impressions at play. One set is the very practical thing where you say: "This is what I want to do ideally, but, these dancers don't have the ability to do that so I have to modify it some how.". But, at the same time I like to set challenges for people and tell them to go ahead and give it a go. It might be horrendous at the start, but, you make them extend themselves and push themselves a little harder because you know that they can do it if they want to.

The second set or the initial set that influenced me most was what I wanted this show to consist of and then finding the appropriate music, which I did with Mum's help. Knowing that by using that music I could create that routine there and I could create this effect and that could fit in really well with this and A B & C would all fit in together and that was the sequence that I wanted.

Those impressions were first and foremost. I guess from the choreographer's point of view of: "Yes this will look good on stage." and the secondary set was "yes" but, can they do it. A judicator always says that you are better off doing a simple routine and doing it well than a complicated one and doing it badly. I'm honest enough to be able to say that it would look wonderful, but, they'll never do it. So you set about modifying the original ideas or else you would say to yourself: "It may be a little above their capabilities now, but, if they work on it over a period of weeks they will be able to do this.". The finale to the show is a good example of that it is a tough routine.

Question Am I justified in separating sixth sense and visual impression?

Melinda Yes. The sixth sense technically is the primary thing with me. That is what I go by i.e., what will look good on stage, what will come across well, what will have audience appeal. It is not until I have got the body of the show when I stopped and thought: "Who could do this?". That is where it got to the secondary impressions of visualising who could cope with a bit of reshuffling. Yes you are justified in separating the two.

Question Are you a concrete thinker or an abstract thinker?

Melinda I am a concrete thinker I say that because I tend to be a very practical person. I like to analyse things a great deal so I could think in abstract in a way too. If somebody tells me something, I won't necessarily accept it. I have to ask why. I need reasons for things and I like to go into things in depth.

It is not time wasted if I can show something for the time spent. Hence the typewriter. At least with something in my hand I can say: "well I have this draft, it might be rough, but, I've got something". At least you know that the end is in sight. Instead of the constant pacing and thinking you can see an end in sight. Having that in your hand means that I'm over that monumental hurdle and anything else is minor. I don't think that I am an abstract thinker. Because, you know some of these teasers that are set to see whether you are an abstract thinker, I don't click with things like that.

Question How did disorder influence you before the breakthrough?

Melinda Part of the frustration was sitting there with this typewriter because my typewriter only sits out on the dining room table. It won't fit anywhere else. It was there and bits of paper all around me which I found frustrating - as I said - and it had reached the stage where I had three or four retypes, not getting anywhere, not producing a finished product only a part of. That is when I reached the point when I had to say: "I've got to walk away from this because I'm getting nowhere and if I keep going I'll keep getting nowhere."

Disorder didn't contribute, but, my getting up and walking away did.

Question Were you content with being committed to so many things?

Melinda Yes, it comes with being an over committed person. It is a self inflicted state.

Verification of Interpretation

Note: The following verification was done as a separate activity from the above "VERIFICATION". This part will be used in the analysis where corrections need to be made. Exposing the learner to my conclusions could be suggestive and, therefore, influence the response.

The purpose of this section is to check out my conclusions to see if they stand the test of the learner's criticism.

CONTEXT:

Familiar surroundings - OK. It was a more relaxed setting which made the difference.

Task oriented - OK

Practical and analytical - OK. From the original ideas of what I wanted to happen I certainly had to make changes and cut backs and things and think: "well I can't do that because they can't learn that and they get hold of that piece of music".

Enjoyment: OK

Motivational swing - The greatest debate was whether it would have been easier to just give up on the whole idea and get out in those early stages when it was still possible to get out. I could have said to the students: "Look, we don't have enough time let's try next year." But, I am not the type of person who gives up on anything. I hate to let anything best me. I was just determined that it would come together and it would work. As a result we are on stage in a weeks time.

Compelling - It is a matter of personal pride more than anything. I am not a person who likes to give up on anything or let it best me which is a very strong motivating factor from my point of view to go ahead and finish a job and get it done.

EXPERIENCE:

Sixth sense - Unless someone is a dancer or a choreographer it is a hard thing to explain to anybody else. You just know that that belongs with that and that is how it should look. You get all these mental pictures. You just get that innate sense that that belongs.

I consider myself very lucky because I have had a lot of people compliment me and say: "You are a very good choreographer". Some dancers don't. Some dances are superb dancers but they couldn't choreograph in a pink fit. Yet others may not be good dancers and yet can create wonderful routines. Their are another group who have the combination of the two in that they can dance well and also create dance.

I like to think that I fall into the last category because it was suggested that I audition for the Australian ballet. This is not me saying that I am wonderful. I know the results that I can achieve. I was an honours student in dance exams and went through to the teaching level.

Visual impression - Yes very much so because I have worked with these people for long enough to know what they are capable of doing and it comes back to these mental pictures all the time where you know that you can not see the person doing it or this person can and that person can. You can see that in your mind.

Tactile - I am very much tactile. I can honestly say that I am a very tactile person. Take for instance with my husband we like to hold hands and cuddle.

Behaviour - (A bit too jargonistic) I got very frustrated knowing that I was running out of time and I had to have something concrete.

I'm a person that while I am thinking...I am an active person I don't like to sit and passively think - I am not a passive thinker - I like to be up and doing. I walk in circles while I think. I can't do that for ever, because I like to have something concrete to show at the end of it. So that is where it comes back to when I sat down and rattled away madly at the typewriter because I was producing some results. Even before that when I was in the total frustration stage

where I was getting no where I was pounding the typewriter. I would have something done and think: "No, that won't work and toss it in the bin.". But, at least there was something there to show for all the time spent.

CONTRIBUTING:

Coming away from the problem - OK

Habitual reaction - OK

Accessing information - The other thing that I find with myself is that I am a very orderly person in that...you know how other people are content to have reams of little notes and things all around them? well I can stand that to a point, but, then I must start making lists and putting things in order. I cut ten sheets of paper down to one or two.

I find that, to a degree, I get agitated if I don't have the sense of order about me. I operate better when I have a clean desk.

Fresh new start - OK

OBSERVATIONS

Part of what I was doing I already knew well. It wasn't something that I had to learn (being a problem solving experience rather than a total learning experience).

(Being analytical got in the way) That is a fair observation because I can think of instances where that does happen. My husband says to me sometimes that I get bogged down in too much detail instead of just going with my inner reaction.

The instance at Mum's probably relates most closely to what we were talking about before in regards to the sixth sense, the innate ability to relate music to dance. Where as the second comes back to the practical side of what the people can cope with and how the staging fits in etc.

Neil's Perception of Breakthrough

INTERVIEW: At Neil's Home 23 Mar.'93
DURATION: 12.45 pm to 1.20 pm = 35 minutes

NEIL'S AGE: 32 years

BREAKTHROUGH OCCURRED: 1991/92
THE KNOWLEDGE IN WHICH NEIL WAS INVOLVED: Personal
Development
BREAKTHROUGH: Speaking to people.

Neil The books are positive motivational things. They are not specifically written for Amway or anything. Some of them have exercises and some pure reading.

Some of the exercises are written i.e., work out goals in your life etc. We (Neil and wife) would do these together. The book 'Personality Plus' had an examination in it. It shows you your personality through the exercise of answering questions.

There are four types of personalities and it is written by one of the personalities that is not really seen as a big motivator. They are the quiet type. That was good for me because I have that type of personality. It was easy for me to read. It was funny as well as educational.

Apart from teaching me about the four types of personalities it taught me how to talk to people and how the personalities intermingle with each other and that you can have a cross section of personalities within one person and how they react with other personalities.

With the four types of personality, if you say something similar to each personality all of them will react differently.

The change in me was due to that book and a combination of everything. It showed me that my personality was 'melancholy' - not that it is a sad personality - it is just that I tend to pay attention to detail and things like that. The personality has mood swings and it showed me how and why I get those mood swings now and then and how to overcome them.

There is another book called 'Blowing the Dark Clouds Away' written by another person, but it was recommended reading for melancholy personalities. I haven't found that one yet - I'm still searching for it.

Ian What motivated you to read the first book?

Neil Because Toni (wife) had read it. I wanted to know what it was about. In Amway, you have someone who sponsors you and helps by teaching you how to do the business. This fellow was a very close friend of Toni's - they were school captains in Brisbane. He had the

book here one night and we were going through it and we did the questionnaire on personality at about 11.30 or 12 am that night.

That is another side to the story.

From there I suppose I got interested in reading the book because it seemed to have some good information in it.

My interest was mainly in finding out what my personality was and in them saying that you can work out someone else's personality. You can talk to them and listen and start to work out other people's personality, how to deal with them and how to say the right things without upsetting them.

Ian Why did you start this whole thing?

Neil Initially, I was drawn to it because of the business of selling Amway. You have to have a lot of confidence to be able to do that type of business. There is a lot of talking to people about things that you don't really know a lot about. You start off at a low level in the business and you work your way up. You ring people up and say to them: 'Do you want to look at a business?' and that sort of stuff. You are talking to people that you don't really know so you must polish up your speaking skills.

Ian Where does the work situation fit?

Neil It may have been more of a by-product rather than actually happening with that side of it.

It has made a difference for the last twelve months. It was at the beginning of last year that we started in the business - January 1992 if I remember correctly

Ian What was important about this in regards to the Dentist side of things?

Neil Realising that it had changed me in a way and I thought: 'Oh! I'm talking more to the patients'. I felt more at ease with my work as well as talking with people.

I was trying speaking skills. It worked and it just kind of fell into place. I could start talking to people and I found that they started talking to me. It made me feel good.

Ian What was the feeling?

Neil That I wasn't just doing a job. I could actually communicate with the people who I consider to be an important part of dentistry. It is also an extremely important part of the Amway business.

It helped me see that dentistry was what I wanted to do. I was starting to get a bit...am I doing the right thing - as other people think at certain time in their careers. Things were just kind of going along. I was doing the work more than trying to communicate with the patients. I was still communicating, but not as much as I do now. At one stage I was losing interest, but not in the short term more in the long term because I was thinking: 'Oh boy, I'm going to be here for

the next twenty years doing this.' I couldn't see myself in another twenty years doing the same stuff. I was starting to get sick of it.

Since the change I've expanded what I do with treatment plans. They have changed a bit. It has helped to broaden my field in dentistry that, in the past, I had not done a lot of and with more confidence.

Ian Are you saying that your confidence now is due to the things that you've got from the books?

Neil Yes, I would say so because I haven't really gone back and done any extra study. It's stuff (dentistry knowledge - latent skills) that is already in there that has materialised.

It didn't happen overnight. It took a month or so before I felt more confident in talking to people. I know, comparing to the way I was about twelve months ago, that I can speak to new patients a lot easier and I don't feel like I'm prying into their lives or something. If you start asking people a lot of questions they may start to think: 'What are you after?'. But if you can ask the right questions you can find out a lot of information and still be on a friendly, not prying basis.

Ian Would you run through the sequence of events with the Amway business?

Neil I was totally opposed to it to start with. Toni (wife) was the one who got involved. Going to a few Amway meetings and seeing and meeting other people who were in Amway and reading these books and listening to the tapes, I began to think: 'Mm, that's interesting.'. Then I got more involved.

Ian How did you get involved?

Neil By ringing up people and asking people into the business. Toni would show the business. I would set up the meetings and introduce Toni who would then do the talking. I know a lot of people around town, so I did the ringing.

My first phone call was terrible. A lot of people ring up and start to talk about something else, but, we decided to do it as it is and that's that. We were going to be professional about it. We were not going to try to talk people into it. If they didn't want to listen that's fine. We actually sat down with the people who sponsored us and wrote exactly what we were going to say so we could simply read it off.

We had success with the meetings because I was ringing the right type of people. We started to get a group of people involved. They ended up not doing anything with it - that's beside the point. Toni would tend to ring people and get few takers where I would ring five people and book three or four meetings.

To start with I had 'diarhoea' over it, I would get upset. It would take me about an hour to pick up the phone. When I think back on it, I would think: 'Why am I doing this to myself?'. When really I do enjoy dentistry.

I learnt the skill of being able to talk to people. Because if you talk to people for a while you can sort of work out their personality and

then know what not to say. You can have a feeling about them, but you are usually wrong.

I would write down all the names of the people that I was going to ring and what I was going to say to each person. At the time, I would write down something different for each person because I knew the people that I was ringing and I thought that I would say something different to each of them. I thought that it might have more impact or get their attention or something. I had an idea of their personalities. Most of the time I could talk to them fairly well. Most people don't want to do it anyway.

Ian Where did you learn the telephone technique?

Neil From an Amway book on how to get your business started. However, most of it was from audio tapes.

Ian When did you listen to the tapes?

Neil In the car - when ever we drove anywhere. Driving to work or to the bay to do something. The tapes were different to the books.

Ian When did you read the books?

Neil At night. I hate reading books...I hated reading books until I started to read these books. I had my fill of books at university.

I had narrowed my mind in that way because there is so much more to learn in life than just five years at uni. So they (Amway) suggested starting off by reading five or ten minutes each night. I then got hooked on it and began reading. I would look forward to reading the books. While at work I would be thinking: 'Oh, I'm going to read that book tonight and try and find out more about that...'.
I would read the books just before going to sleep.

Ian What about mornings?

Neil Weekends, but, very very rarely.

Ian How do you feel about reading books now?

Neil I haven't read as much as I did. I haven't in the last month or so, but I'll start getting back into it next week. I've another book 'Seven Habits of Successful People' which is good. I've read about two or three chapters of it so far.

Reading the books before I go to sleep seems to help stick it in my mind. I can think about things in the morning. They sort of come back to me in the morning. It is still there so I could have been dreaming about it.

Ian Applying it at work, you said that the response now from the patients is different.

Neil It could be because I've been there a bit longer now and I am becoming more acquainted with my patients. I had found that before, all they would say is good day as I walked into the room, but

now a lot of the patients will smile and say: 'How are you?'. They respond more.

One thing that dentists hate the most is when they get to work on a Monday morning and see the first patient and you're full of life after the weekend and you say: 'Good morning.' and they say: 'I hate dentists.'. I feel like crawling into a hole. It's a real let down. I don't seem to get that as much now - Oh, you get the odd patient.

Ian There must have been a time when you saw the benefits of the books, tapes, going to Brisbane etc.

Neil Yes, well there must have been a time, but I really can't put my figure on when it was. There has to be a time somewhere. It's probably a gradual awakening rather than immediate.

Even when I was applying what I had learnt, it wasn't in an instant. It took a little time to appear.

It changed my whole outlook on life.

Ian When you were listening to the tapes, What did you think about?

Neil I suppose we were thinking about the business and what we could spend the money on because, basically, the idea of getting into the business was to make money and how I could retire from dentistry and not have to work full time.

We think about houses a lot. Homes seem to be our big motivation - what we can do with the house and how we can renovate the house etc. So I think we were thinking about that as well. It is a two way thing. It is always Toni and I thinking about things together.

Ian Did you and Toni work on this together in the learning sense?

Neil Yes, we were always talking about things.

Ian Was there any 'gut' learning?

Neil No, there was only reading. You read a lot of it and it sinks in. You're reading every night for about twelve months at least. Not just one book - all the different books. Although, it takes me a long time to read a book. I read more so now than I have ever done before. I was just thinking today that I wouldn't mind getting a novel and reading it. Toni will read two or three books at a time and she can read them quite quickly.

Ian What are you doing now that you didn't do before?

Neil I am more motivated. If I say I'll do something I'll do it more so now than I would have before. I am more confident with my work. I am more likely to try things that I would not have attempted in the past. I tend to be able to work out problems with more ease. We now have staff meetings.

I am more of a reality type of person and want to do things rather than just knowing about them. I think - that's melancholy trait. I think about things too much - that is my personality.

I've found out that I have chosen the right profession doing what I am doing because I am that type of person that has to be continually doing things - active.

It is often hard for me to sit down and relax.

Ian Were there any pressures that you imposed on yourself?

Neil Yes we used to make sure that we listened to the tapes. Once you've got it in the recorder you listen, but if you didn't you would just listen to the radio. It wasn't as if we would say: 'Yeah! let's go for a drive so we can listen to the tapes.'. After a while when you go for a drive you look forward to listening to the tapes. Because the tapes were of people and what they had done, you would think that that would be good for you to do likewise and get to that level. Then when we get to that level we can make our tape and say that that is what we did.

COMMENTS:

The main thrust of the breakthrough: in personal development was not only the increase in confidence levels both at work and socially, but also an awakening of the fact that one should not lose sight of 'the future' and what you really want from life and not wrongly focus on 'the present' - the small things you want now. We have a print out statement on the bathroom wall: "Don't give up what you really want most in life for the little things you want now!!". My life is now geared to think a long way ahead and not to get over involved in, and stressed by, the day to day things/happenings that may get in the way of the long term 'life' goals.

Neil, has read the transcript and is satisfied that it represents his perception of his breakthrough in learning.

Signed:

Date: .../.../...

VERIFICATION

INTERVIEW: At home 8 June 1993

DURATION: 8 pm to 9 pm = 60 minutes

Question Did you have a fear of the future?

Neil Yes and I still have a fear of the future. There was a concern of doing the same thing for the rest of my life, but, not of being in the town.

Question What actually changed?

Neil My attitude to people dentistry and to life generally.

Question What did listening to the tapes do for you?

Neil The tapes concerned the business of Amway. The tapes were recordings of people who have been successful and how they became successful.

The books had more of an influence on the change than the tapes.

Question Did you see yourself when reading of the books?

Neil Oh yes, especially in the book "Personality Plus" where they were talking about melancholy. It was me-to-a-tee. There are many melancholies, they are the thinkers of the world.

Question Was there any other influence other than the book?

Neil No, I don't think so. Unless you are referring to a time in Armidale.

We stopped in Armidale on our way down to Sydney. That was the time when I noticed the change.

We stopped in a motel. Usually I push Toni (wife) into talking with the people and paying the bill, but this time I did it. I decided to go in with the point of talking with the fellow. These books tell you that if you start asking questions the people will open up to you. They'll even tell you what is in their bank balance, if you were that cheeky. I stated talking to him and he told me that his brother owned a pub in Rockhampton and was flooded out. etc. I got a whole lot of information in a matter of five minutes and began talking for quite a while. I had never met the fellow before. That was a big turning point. I walked out of there with his card intending to set him up in the business (Amway). The exercise of talk was to see if it would work - it did.

This happened after I had read the book. I think that that was before I tried it out at work on the people that I already know.

Question *What did you discuss when you talked things through with your wife?*

Neil We talked more of goals than personality. I remember talking to Toni about what the patients had said and Toni would reply that I must be talking more with the patients now than before because you're coming home with a lot more information.

We talked about personality to the extent of what we saw in each other checking out what the book was saying. Toni is a bit more Sanguine. She is a bit more outgoing than me.

Melancholy - They are the thinkers dealing with the detail.

Sanguine - They are outgoing life of the party people, telling jokes all the time.

Choleric - Do it my way, do it now, or you're a bloody idiot. (Bad tempered)

Phlegmatic - Is the other way, go with the flow. It will be all right, we'll just keep going. Having an unemotional disposition.

You get portions of each in one personality because I've a bit of Choleric and Phlegmatic mixed together which means that when I go to work I throw myself into work and I don't want to know anything else. Then when I come home from work I put it all aside. It is a real intricate part of being a melancholy with these others thrown in. That is in the book.

Verification of Interpretation

Note: *The following verification was done as a separate activity from the above "VERIFICATION". This part will be used in the analysis where corrections need to be made. Exposing the learner to my conclusions could be suggestive and, therefore, influence the response.*

The purpose of this section is to check out my conclusions to see if they stand the test of the learner's criticism.

CONTEXT:

Fear of future - Searched for a diversification more than a way out. So I could spend less time at the dentistry.

Dependent - OK

Personal - OK

Expression of his personality - The comfort zone is where you have to go to be successful according to Amway and to talk to people. Going outside my comfort zone was what I had to do to be successful in talking to people.

There was two different things. Being in the comfort zone to make the phone calls drumming up business. It was all secure because I

had it written out before I made the phone call. Talking was when I was out of my comfort zone and that was my breakthrough.

EXPERIENCE:

Change within his personality - Not so much a change, but taking control of my melancholy traits Suppressing them to develop the Sanguine in me. Sanguine is more of the extrovert - joke telling.

Talk - I find that I talk more to people. What I do now is to talk to the patients just before giving them an injection. It tends to calm them. The best line is: "How have you been?" they seem to respond with a warm "he cares". In that, talking has helped me cope with the business of dealing with patients. The patients have become noticeably more responsive to the treatment and their time in the chair.

Self imposed barrier - OK

Change of emphasis - OK

CONTRIBUTION:

Applying in a practical way - Mostly the books.

Information gathering - OK

Quite and Relaxed - I was more responsive.

Saturating himself of the information - Yes, it was gradual.

Override a pensive constitution - I needed the fire in my belly.

OBSERVATIONS:

OK

Norm's Perception of Breakthrough

INTERVIEW: At TAFE college 22 Feb. '93
DURATION: 4.15 pm TO 5.05 pm = 50 minutes

NORM'S AGE: 55-60 years

BREAKTHROUGH OCCURRED: 1992 Jan.-June
THE ACTIVITY IN WHICH NORM WAS INVOLVED: "Risk Management"
seminar.

BREAKTHROUGH: Understanding the requirements of insurance to
safeguard the College against litigation.

Norm On that first session, the guest speakers were Government insurance people from New South Wales. We really had no lead up as to the type or level of speaker who were to involve us in insurance matters. Most of us were not conversant with the procedure of insurance within our colleges as far as TAFE people were concerned and we just didn't understand insurance at the level to which the presenter spoke .

That particular session on the first day of this management course was really wasted on us because we sat trying to look interested hiding behind the fact that we did not understand it. It was not until after the session finished when we got to speaking with each other that it became apparent that we were all hiding and that we had not understood it.

Ian Did you speak with other participants other than TAFE representatives?

Norm Well those people from Colleges (like myself) did not speak to people outside TAFE on the first day. However, I did speak with one person from the Workers Compensation Branch because I knew him. People from the Department of Transport and the likes I had not meet at that stage. I spoke to those people from the colleges, the likes of John Pont, who I did know and John Hayward and Marion Gilbert who I had known from other colleges through the safety areas. When we spoke together, either on the premises or going back to our hotels, it was obvious that none of us had grasped what we were expected to know.

Ian Getting back to that first session. How was it delivered i.e., someone up front were there handouts or OHT's, Board, what.

Norm The fellow was up front. He was a "facts and figures" type person very high pressure salesman in his particular area of work. He would be one of the old equivalent of the old system SGIO in Queensland million dollar salesman where they got so much recognition for that million dollar sale that he seemed to be after. He was that style of person Very high pressure, high level and a person who obviously was seeking to impress.

Ian Did he have hand outs?

Norm No; there was nothing apart from talk, some overheads, and figures put to the whiteboard. There was nothing concrete other than a pre-reading. But that didn't follow with what he was saying. The pre-reading wasn't consistent with what he did. He didn't relate to our needs.

Ian Were you expecting something from that session?

Norm Yes. I was expecting that we would get an understanding of our insurance responsibilities within our work place. That had to come, otherwise it had no bearing on what we were there for.

The whole of the "Risk Management" says that "If you can not administer Risk management then you must insure against risk.". You must look at your own area of operation to ascertain whether or not you can remove that risk problem, but, if that can not be achieved then you must take out an insurance safeguard.

Ian That which you just described, was that the information that you were expecting and did not get or is that the information which is subsequent to your breakthrough?

Norm Yes. I can understand it now. I still don't understand what the fellow was on about in that first session (or the level at which he was talking). But, the breakthrough came on the sessions in the latter stages where it was put at our level plus related back to those difficult to understand sessions on the first days.

It started to make sense. I certainly started to understand what he was trying to get across

Ian Was there a particular point of time that you could say: "This is the moment that the breakthrough happened."?

Norm Yes. With the following speakers. Possibly on the second day when the question came up again (when we were dealing with it again). It came up where we were talking about evaluating risks and loss. The speakers who represented (Alexander Stenhouse) lead the discussion and brought it back into our areas of work and thinking.

Ian How did they do that?

Norm Possibly with leading type questions that were pre-established and answered by the guest speakers.

Ian So the questions came from the floor?

Norm Yes. The leaders (questions) came from the course organisers because they could see that it was a bit above us.

It was brought then to the insurers to actually answer the questions (verbally asked by participants) that were relevant to our needs.

Ian You're telling me that the insurers were present the whole time?

Norm Yes, and there were other speakers involved - guest speakers - who were providing information with authority on those subjects. Those

people who deal with evaluation and loss areas of insurance claims, you know, forecasting loss areas. It sort of started to come out at those times how one tied in with the other. But, Alexander Stenhouse were able to lead the questions in order that they tied it in with the previous day to meet our needs. So it started to mean something. That was possibly the beginning where I could see that there was a purpose served in the previous session. Up to that point it was very much in the air.

Ian Were there any activities? Other than questioning and the 'experts' providing informed answers.

Norm There were no activities to that point. The activities came later on.

Ian What do you mean by that point?

Norm The point where I began to understand it. Alexander Stenhouse was very conscious of the needs of the students.

Ian What were you doing? Were you listening, doing, answering, posing questions would you elaborate on that?

Norm No. We were mainly listening. There wasn't a great deal of opportunity to speak from the floor at that stage. Not only that, but, with the little knowledge that people had they would have been pretty brave to ask questions. There was a general lack of understanding on where the presenter was actually going.

Ian Let me ask a more personal question. How did you feel?

Norm Inadequate.

That ties it up in one word.

Ian What about after the breakthrough, how did you feel?

Norm Oh! no, after the breakthrough I started to feel that I could contribute. You say: "Well all right this can be applied and we have something to hold onto and to work on."

By the time we got to the third day, and this was only one aspect, the whole thing was building up toward a risk management mock-up activity. There was a mock trial on one of the final days. The trial was based on the area where people had allegedly committed an offence as far as the risk was concerned and they were put on trial.

We had actual legal people brought in especially to guide us through the proceedings.

Ian Did that happen before or after the breakthrough?

Norm After.

We were all fairly well clued up by the time the trial was introduced. The trial was for us and what was expected of us as employers in relation to "Risk Management".

Ian Did you contribute to the mock trial?

Norm Yes.

My role was the position of the barrister representing the defendant and behind me sat the two real life legal advisers who guided me in my role as barrister.

Ian How did you handle the role?

Norm With a fair amount of confidence. I knew that I had the support behind me. It was a sense of security.

Ian Could you have done it?

Norm No, because I don't know the legal aspects or procedures well enough.

Ian Based on what you learnt, however, did you have the information and skill to go into such a situation?

Norm No what I had was only a grounding. The information that we were taught was aimed at getting us to the court situation not to defend in court or more to the point to avoid getting into court. Legal people would (with the likes of me) take me to pieces, because I haven't got that sort of skill behind me to handle a courtroom situation.

Ian Was the breakthrough at a particular incident?

Norm No, it was over a number of things that came about. There were several types of things, it was a chain reaction right through the group. Once it started answers were understood and within a matter of a short space of time the whole of the group was breaking through.

Because of the type of information that was given, I believe it came about because of the opportunity to respond at a level that was understood and that group participation contributed to this happening. Relevant questions (relevant to our various applications) were asked and answered. Things started to come together fast.

Ian Was there any influence put upon you with regards the venue, location, atmosphere within the group, etc?

Norm There was nothing spectacular about the actual physical resources, the classroom was not a modern, up to date sort of room, adequate? "Yes, but nothing elaborate.". The sort of classroom that you would expect within the average TAFE college.

Ian Was that a help or a hindrance?

Norm It didn't worry me at all from that point of view. I think the atmosphere within the class played a far greater importance.

The organisers of the course set out with a very deliberate intent to break down the restrictions in the group, particularly at the start. They played a leadership role to create the atmosphere that was desirable.

Ian What was its effect on you?

Norm It relaxed me and the faster that you get to know people the faster people start to respond and interact together.

Ian Did it reflect in your breakthrough?

Norm To the extent that the people themselves were starting to talk more freely and therefore the questions and responses... the interaction started to move and that was not there initially on that first day.

Ian I'm trying to find out if something else influenced you during those early sessions where you said you were not understanding because the presenters were talking at a high level. I want to suggest some things and ask you to respond.

- Could it have been that you were stressed?
- Could it have been the case that you were expecting one thing and because they didn't deliver you missed their point?
- Was any pressure placed on you?

Norm There is always that air of expectancy that goes with the commencement of any seminar. I don't think that there was any influence. It wasn't a threatening sort of atmosphere.

I had some knowledge of the background. It was just unfortunate that the choice of speaker and the level of topic was unsuitable. It was agreed later on that that particular session should not have been on the first day.

Ian Earlier you mentioned something about a pre-reading, did you read it?

Norm We had to. It was expected.

Ian When did you read it?

Norm Over a period of time before hand, over several nights in fact. It wasn't something that was glossed over because I've been caught before.

RECORDING WAS STOPPED FOR A SHORT A BREAK

Ian How would you describe the type of learning that took place during your breakthrough?

Norm Discussion time was the area where I felt that I began to understand what was said. To a certain extent the breakthrough came as much from the non-verbal as the discussion. By sitting back listening to what was being said as much as taking part in it. There are two sides to that. One, there was a certain amount of comprehension involved, because in the initial stages I didn't comprehend what was being said. It wasn't until later on when the whole thing was reasoned out that this came into being.

Two, reasoning was put forward in the group discussion. This started to sum up the situation and to show that insurance had a definite purpose that it wasn't just a case of insurers taking premiums and that you would not be writing out claims as a result of it. There was a reasoning and an evaluation of the whole understanding.

Evaluation came into it, it had to. As you gained the knowledge you could start to evaluate and find the worth of it particularly for me as a college representative. You can not evaluate something that you don't understand.

Ian You are telling me, I think, that your breakthrough was with knowledge of insurance matters.

Norm Yes.

Ian Did you possess any prior knowledge of this subject?

Norm Only to a certain extent. If you know it all you shouldn't be there. It highlighted things that I already knew, but it also brought in other factors that I wasn't aware or conscious of.

Ian What do you mean by not conscious of?

Norm You sort of have a limited understanding of something and when it is spelt out then you reach a time when you say: "Yes well all right, I have known that part of it, these other items are things that I didn't know but I can add to what I've already got."

Ian Was that involved in your breakthrough?

Norm The more you understand a particular topic the better the chances are that you can grasp it and use it in an enlightened sense. You can not use something that you don't understand. To make a tool out of it you have to have sufficient understanding of it.

COMMENTS:

Giving further thought to non-verbal communication, Norm remembers being impressed by Stenhouse's expression conveying "yes you are on the right track" with an approval mannerism. As opposed to the first bloke who conveyed a message non-verbally of "touch me not". He spoke down to us not to us. Stenhouse persuaded us.

DECLARATION

Norm, you have read the transcription and you are satisfied that it represents your perception of your breakthrough in learning.

Signed:

Date: .../.../...

VERIFICATION

INTERVIEW: At College 23 April 1993

DURATION: 12.45 pm to 1.45 pm = 60 minutes

Question When the presenter didn't give you the sorts of information that you needed, what did it cause you to do?

Well basically, you don't turn off, but you lose a certain amount of interest because a person is not actually relating to your own needs. You take it in, but you don't really digest it.

Question What was the effect of that?

Well you become...I suppose it verges on despondency. You're not getting the material that you were seeking and as a result you are disappointed to say the least. I felt that we were let down initially. That was rectified on the second day. Stenhouse recognised the fact that there was something wrong. This came about through him moving around amongst the group at tea times. Stenhouse was running the course.

Question What were your motives while at the seminar i.e., task oriented or were you there for interest and knowledge or a social experience?

I looked at it as being part and parcel of the safety requirements of the college. What I wanted to do was to add to my experience of safety which was the risk and how to actually cope with that to lessen illness, accident, etc.

Question What was the feeling during that first day?

Three of us came away talking about it and at the motel that evening I discussed it and said: "What are we here for?". We didn't achieve a great deal - with material or satisfaction. That day was a waste of time and effort.

That discussion reinforced what I was feeling. I suppose we fed on each other in regards to the dissatisfaction.

However, that conversation didn't do a great deal. We were fortunate to a certain extent that, whilst I knew a number of the participants, there were also a number of participants who were foreign and it lessened the amount of communication and general getting to know people that would have otherwise happened with a different beginning.

Question Regarding your comments about being relaxed during the time when the organisers broke down the restrictions in the group, when did that happen - at what point of the seminar?

It didn't happen on the first day at all. It was on the second day that the organisers took the thing in their own hands to rectify the situation and bring the group to a point where they could participate. They realised that people were not getting any satisfaction and as a result they rectified it on the second day. By the third day things were back on track.

There was good material on the first day. The problem was the way in which it was presented that left us in the dark.

Question What did relaxing mean to you as a learner?

The organisers bonded the group and that was a necessary part. They started off with that on the first day with introductions to try and insure that people accepted them, but, that was shot down later in the day and they had to rebuild the bonding.

Arriving on the first day there was a certain amount of apprehension, I wouldn't say tension. It wasn't a friendly relaxed sort of atmosphere where you are going to get the full benefit of a learning experience.

Question What did you mean by the words: "it sort of started to come out at times when one tied in with the other"?

How one particular element fitted and locked in and its dependence on another to get the overall picture on how risk management was to function from the administration side to the engineering side of things and the safety program of prevention as much as anything. Then we went through the elements that were associated on the risk side of it and how to guard against risk. This is where the insurance came into it. To insure against risk.

Question At what stage did you take control of your learning?

I suppose it started during the second day. Certainly by the third day I was on top of it. Tuesday, after things had been explained...and I think in retrospect the insurance side was taken out of its rightful place as far as the agenda of the seminar program was concerned. It should have been later in the program where the more basic elements had been discussed then for it to build up to the insurance. To a certain extent it was putting the cart before the horse. To make it worse was the irrelevance of the material.

Question What did you do to take control of your learning?

Only that I became more receptive to what was going on and I became more willing to participate. I'm one of those persons, that, if I'm not getting the full benefit from something, I'll sit back and let it ride. However, if it is something that I am attuned to, I'll sit up and participate more readily - not forced to participate. A lot of the different representatives were named to present a response so that it became more of a group situation as time went on rather

than individuals. In my situation, I was able to say that I deal with it more freely once I accepted it. In the initial stage it was like just so much waffle.

Question Did you at any time sit back and let it go over your head?

On the first day I did because it wasn't relevant. The material presented had no positive application to a TAFE situation let alone to a college. It was too in depth. It was something that was put forward by insurers for insurers. Not from insurers to a client.

Question You made comments like: "it now means something" and "making sense of it", what were you alluding to?

I've had experience with safety and health, that presented no problems and I could accept what was said in those areas because they had application. It wasn't until the risk side of it became apparent and how the insurance against risk was necessary that it really started to serve a purpose and that is what I was getting at that particular time.

Question Did you evaluate the worth of the information at any time before the mock trial?

I do that as I go along. You get a sense of the aims and purpose from the organisers. You get this from the experience of attending seminars. You tend to ask yourself where are we being directed and at that point you ask: "What are we trying to achieve?". That mock trial was only to dramatise what had already been discussed and to put it into some sort of lasting performance. It was a dramatisation of performance that had all the characters to make the greatest impact on us, as participant, in the least amount of time. It was a very effective way of getting the message across and summing up at the same time.

We knew from the program that that was to be an activity. It was in our own interest to say: "Where are we going?" and "Where does this fit in?". As the different elements were put up you could see what was going to happen in real life action if you were placed in a situation of liability.

Question Was the breakthrough a lasting learning experience?

As a learning experience it was just another 'mile stone' that had to be negotiated (passed through). Every day life presents some difficulties. First of all you build up in your own mind why you are going to the seminar. Has it got the material that is going to be of benefit? And I suppose you carry a picture in your own mind of what it is that you expect and hope to get.

This seminar started off poorly, but it certainly as a complete seminar was very beneficial. It had its weaknesses at the beginning and possibly it provided that atmosphere that could have been avoided.

Question What was your breakthrough?

Only the insurance side which had been irrelevant up to that point then started to come together. It was during the afternoon of the second day when it was discussed that I felt deliberately brought back into the session (Stenhouse deliberately brought the hard to understand parts back as part of their agenda) and it was made more relevant to our needs. It wasn't just a case of TAFE's needs being met, it was the other government departments and the private providers who were also able to relate it to their specific needs. As an individual I was able to then think in terms of how it effected us. If I put it on that basis then it has more meaning.

Question How did you experience the breakthrough?

Only in that you are able to recognise where the different subject matter came in and supported each other. All those little disjointed bits that were associated with insurance were explained and you could see the relevance of just how they could be applied back into the local colleges.

Once that happened as an individual I was able to get definitely more confident in my ability to cope with it because if you are in a situation where you can't feel that you are coping you turn off. You must be able to relate to what is going on.

Question Was it emotional?

Not as such. I'm not the emotional type, not outwardly. I think it is a case of getting an inner feeling of understanding and able to cope and that is always a point in all of these things because you feel inadequate if you are not coping. You are conscience always too, of the fact that when you have to report on these sort of things when you go back to the college you want to feel adequate because you are expected to speak with a level of authority.

Verification of Interpretation

Note: The following verification was done as a separate activity from the above "VERIFICATION". This part will be used in the analysis where corrections need to be made. Exposing the learner to my conclusions could be suggestive and, therefore, influence the response.

The purpose of this section is to check out my conclusions to see if they stand the test of the learner's criticism.

PREAMBLE:

Insurance was only part of it. There was safety, health, compensation also. All of the insurance could have been put into about a day 's session of the five day seminar - if you were to put all the bits together.

Breakthrough was with the insurance part, but, I wouldn't have put it the way you've said it. It was the manner of presentation that was involved. It was kept in wording that was understood by insurers not for people in general or for people in our situation. That is the thing that caused me the hardship as far as understanding was concerned.

CONTEXT:

1 Traditionally Run Seminar - CK

2 Internal Conflict - OK

3 Interactive - OK that is a far statement.

4 Task Orientated - Not my own needs, it should be worded: "The needs that I was representing or my professional needs rather than my own needs."

EXPERIENCE:

1 Knowledge - OK

2 Change -OK

3 Relaxed - That was part of it, out, the simplifying and relativity of the material was also important. It is not just one thing that does it, it is a number of things .

CONTRIBUTION:

1 Meaningful material -OK

2 Talk - The discussion of the simplified material brought it into a level that we could actually relate to and part of that was the freedom of participation with the other people that came as a result. It was that awareness of what it all meant.

3 Respond at a Level that was Understood - OK

4 Empathy - The presenters sensed the need for change and responded accordingly. They certainly encouraged response and participation as a part of that.

(Norm's non-verbal reaction seemed to indicate that he would rather not be seen in an emotional context which empathy was touching.)

5 Respect - OK

6 Drawing conclusions - Sieving out what was applicable and was not applicable.

OBSERVATIONS:

(I asked Norm to make some comment about his accepting or making that inner subconscious decision to accept or not accept.) His reply was as follows.

Acceptance did occur. This applies to just about every ones' learning experience. Look at any class of students and if a student hasn't accepted what has been said you can see them turn off. They will find some other creative way of passing the time. There has got to be that acceptance and willingness to accept.

(I asked Norm if tension was an accurate term.)

There was tension on the first day. There wasn't any tension between the members of the group however, it was individual internal tension. The tension came from the thought: "Was I really adequate for the task?" and at that stage if it wasn't for the tea breaks I would have almost...I'm bottling it up...was it only me that was inadequate?. It was certainly plain that after speaking to others during the tea breaks they too were experiencing similar feelings of inadequacy.

(I asked Norm if there was anything that had not been said during our discussions and if so would he like the opportunity now to talk about it.) He replied: "no".

(I then asked Norm if he was satisfied with what he had given and that what I had concluded from his transcript truly presented his breakthrough learning experience) He replied: "I think so, I'm quite happy with it."

Tina's Perception of Breakthrough

INTERVIEW: At Tina's Home 6 April 1993

DURATION: 8 pm to 8.30 pm = 30 minutes

TINA'S AGE: 31 years

BREAKTHROUGH OCCURRED: 1981

THE SKILL IN WHICH TINA WAS INVOLVED: Singing

BREAKTHROUGH: Reaching the higher register.

Tina I suppose I didn't realise what I had learnt until twelve months after or even what she (teacher) was getting at. What most people think of when you go and have singing lessons is that you only learn breathing techniques and how to hold your breath for a long time. That was what I thought. However, what you get is a whole lot of different exercises.

The one thing now, looking back, that I couldn't do was to change from the lower register to the higher register. There are two different ways in which you can sing. You do all your low notes a certain way then you change the shape of your throat or the shape of your vocal cords to get to the higher register. No one ever actually explained to me that that is what I was not doing.

I could always tell if someone had lessons, but I didn't know why I could tell that they had lessons. It all comes down to being able to get from your lower to your higher register. During the lesson the teacher would try and describe how my throat should feel and how the air should not be pushed around my mouth and up through my nose. I would sit there and not understand a thing that she was describing. I had no idea of what she was getting at. I'd try to do it and when I couldn't I would think: 'that she is going to think that I'm an idiot'.

After a couple of months during one lesson I must have done it and the teacher said: 'Yes, that is what you do.'. Then I realised that what she had said was right. I had put it all together at the right time. That was when I realised that that is how to do it. From then on I was able to do it. Afterwards, whenever I heard anyone sing I could then say that that is the difference between someone who has learnt and someone who hasn't learnt singing.

Prior to that, whenever I tried to sing higher, I just tried to sing louder instead of using this technique.

Before I found the technique myself, I could tell when someone had not been trained and the difference between someone who had and someone who hadn't. I didn't know what the difference was until I had learnt it myself. I then said: 'Ah! ha! that is it.'.

Ian Did you imitate others to reach this skill of getting to the upper register?

Tina No. It just happened in the studio one day and that was it. You know, as a kid, I would stand with a hair brush and imagine it to be a microphone and sing all the time and try and sound like others, but I didn't really know what they did that made it sound different. It wasn't until I did it myself that I realised.

Ian Where were you when it happened?

Tina I was in a studio. A small twelve foot square room with the teacher - she was there basically all day and all night. It was in Queens Street Brisbane above a Night Club and you would go up the elevators and there was a whole row of studios, a big corridor, walk pass doors where people were singing and doing all sorts of things like that. I was just in one of the room.

My lessons were after work so they were between 6.30 and 7.30pm.

I think that I had done some exercises and we were going through the lesson where she was telling me what to do and I was thinking: 'Oh! what an idiot because I couldn't figure out what she was talking about.'. Then I happened to do it right and then I knew that I did it right and that was it.

Ian Accompaniment?

Tina Yes, a piano. It was playing at the time. It was just an exercise. I can't remember the exercise. I mean it was Bel canto technique [tone], but I don't remember the particular exercise. The teacher just accompanied me. It wasn't a song.

Ian What did you do?

Tina I just did it - surprise surprise. The teacher then reacted with: 'That's right! now, that is what we have been talking about.'. Then I knew.

Looking back, I have since been told by someone else that, you just form your throat and mouth as if you were about to vomit. That might be a crude way of putting it, but, that is exactly what you do.

Yes, the teacher stopped me and said that that sounds right and then it clicked. I had realised that I had done it right.

Ian If it wasn't reinforced by the teacher that you had done the thing right, would you have realised that that was the technique and that you had done it correctly?

Tina I don't know. It felt comfortable where as before I knew - I didn't know that I didn't know that I couldn't do something - that I couldn't do something that I could do. After the break it felt right. I suppose that if I had done it a few times I would have worked it out. She actually never said that that is what I was learning or that is what I had learnt. It is my interpretation of what it was. It took a couple of months for it to really sink in. Whenever I would hear people sing I would comment: 'That's why.'. It kept coming back to me that I could relate future experiences to that one particular thing.

I guess it was her initial response that caused me to realise that I had done it right. I think, without her saying anything, overtime I would have realised because it just felt right and sounded better. Every lesson is taped, so, I could hear that it sounded right.

Ian What kept you going back to the lessons?

Tina That was the biggest thing that I had learnt. There is so much to be learnt about singing. You could learn about singing till the day you die and still not know it all. It is just something that I knew that I could do and do well. If I have lessons I am contently using my voice. I am proud of my voice (kind of thing). I enjoyed it. I love it and I'm going to do more this year.

I did a lot of singing when I was at school, and, being one of these high achievers who has to get straight sevens and all that sort of stuff I cut out all my singing and everything to go through college and university. Now I've got children so I've cut out all my singing to look after the children. This year I'm going back to it. I just enjoy it. It is something that I like doing.

I can remember the first time that I sang in class. It was in kindergarten. I remember the teacher pointing me out in the class as being able to sing in tune and I think that is where it all started because I was naturally able to sing in tune. So if you can sing in tune you are always picked to sing something.

I joined choirs and got into music and had leading roles in musicals while at school. I could have joined the light opera company, but, stupid me said 'no' I've got to have a degree. So I didn't and wished I had in a lot of ways.

What probably contributed to the breakthrough was all the knowledge up to that point then it just all fell together. I think perhaps that it almost happened accidentally. If I hadn't had all those lessons before hand it may not have happened. Right now it felt like it happened afterwards when I received the reinforcement because I remember what she said. It was a lot of little things. It was almost...not an accidental thing, it was...well like some people would describe luck, but, luck is not really any such thing because a lot of circumstances contribute to that and it is perceived as luck. This to me was a similar thing. All the things that I had learnt to that point got me to that point and not stumbled on to it accidentally. After that there was a lot of reinforcement.

Ian Where you standing, sitting?

Tina Standing, always standing hands in front. Standing by the piano next to her.

Ian Describe the experience?

Tina It was a physical coming together of what she had told me and what I put into practice were the things that she described i.e., to move my throat and voice box and everything. I just happened to do it once the right way then I knew and that was it.

It is the vocal cords and your tongue and the way that you form your mouth. You kind of actually push your tongue right down low onto the bottom of your throat and open up and have an 'O' shaped mouth but with a bit of a smile. That is how you do it.

Before the break I didn't make a change i.e., I didn't lower my tongue to the bottom of my mouth/throat whatever part it is. It is right back in your throat. Because of that, it must be that particular thing that you do that allows you to sing higher. I kept everything the same and sang louder and louder and louder. I got fairly high, but it sounded quite loud instead of controlling it more. Part of this was controlling the volume and all that sort of thing. Before I had to sing loud to sing high. Now I can sing higher and not sing loud.

There was no particular tune, it was just one of the exercises. There is a book of exercises which are written in Italian. It is in Italian because their vowel sounds are better, but, I think the exercise that I was doing at the time was not even one of those. I think it was a scale or something.

It was something that I had sung previously, same piano, same room. It was something that I would have sung wrongly previously. Subconsciously, I think, all the things that I had been told up to then - now knowing how it feels - I was able to do them.

I had lessons for about eighteen months and this was probably a couple of months into my lessons. We used to get together on a Sunday afternoon for a recital with all the students, but it wasn't until the next year that I went into the eisteddfod. I wasn't practicing for anything in particular at the time of the breakthrough.

Ian How did you feel?

Tina Very good, because I am a high achiever and when I can't grasp something straight away I think that I am an idiot. It wasn't just the thrill of doing it I thought: 'Finally, I'm not stupid I can now really relate to what she is saying.'

It seemed like...let me explain: I can't understand it when you look into a painting and it is like a mess. I can not comprehend what other people see in it. This seemed like the same thing. She was telling me all these things and I just couldn't get what she meant until I did it then I realised what she meant.

Everything I did, felt like the thing that she had described and I knew it sounded right and of course she reinforced it by saying: 'great', and then I knew. I felt a bit of a sense of achievement. That is the one thing out of my eighteen months of lessons that I remember the most, was learning how to do that.

Ian What is the feeling of 'stupid'?

Tina I feel that if I can't grasp something, I feel that I should be able to. I'd watch what she was saying and I'd try and understand what she meant, but I just couldn't get it and then felt good after I had eventually got it.

I suppose it was frustration, but not much. She was an excellent teacher and she never made me feel frustrated. I didn't really know what I was trying to learn until after I had learnt it. She never really said what it was, but I knew that there was something that I couldn't really grasp. It was such a sense of achievement when I did it. I knew then that I could do it like other people.

I wasn't pressured. If it had been something for an exam I would have been because I'm that type of person that had to get one hundred percent. This was something that I did for pleasure. I was there to learn. I didn't get angry or frustrated by it.

She was a good teacher, but, if I go to an eisteddfod I'll listen and think that one person was great and they wouldn't win (type of thing), so I don't know that I am qualified to judge how good she (teacher) was but she was always patient and never made you feel that you hadn't understood. You would just keep going and then you would play back your tapes after the lesson and think: 'Oh, that was really awful.'. She would never say anything. She would always say: 'Keep going.' However, half the lesson was spent talking. She was a bit exocentric.

Ian Was there any thing learnt after the breakthrough that was dependent on what you had learnt during the breakthrough?

Tina Being able to sing high without singing loud and being able to sing higher. If I hadn't learnt that, I could not have sung as high as I can now. To me being able to do that is almost the crux of singing more than being able to hold your breath. Without being able to do that you can not sing high musically. It sort of makes a noise but it is not a musical sound which is pleasant to the ear. I know that my upper register has a pleasant sound to it. I was always considered an alto and always thought of myself as an alto because I thought I couldn't sing high. I didn't know how to change my register so I would sing alto louder. After this breakthrough I realised that I was actually a soprano and she (the teacher) said to me all along that I was a soprano. It was funny because a girlfriend and I went to the same teacher and we had sung together for years and she always did the high parts while I did the low parts, but, after this she did the low parts and I did the high parts.

I find it frustrating now because I am in a corals society down the bay and because I've got a fairly good range - when practiced - and I can hold a good tune in the lower register I get to do the alto parts. When you don't actually sing the melody you start to sing the harmony and things - now down there because I can do it and probably because I am more capable than others in the society I get the alto part. But I like the soprano parts better.

Ian What has it meant to you personally?

Tina I find it a challenge to sing as high as I can. I want to get back into singing now because my range has dropped off because of lack of practice. I have a nice voice and it sounds nice. I can sing beautiful clear notes up high and just enjoy the thrill of doing that. It gives me goose bumps.

Up until then I had never sung an 'F' above middle 'C' in public because being a perfect onist, if I can't sing it perfectly I don't sing it (type of thing). I was singing the 'E' above that and I just couldn't believe it. It made me feel so good - so proud of myself.

I love to sing songs like 'Vilia' that go really high. Just the challenge of it. I just like doing it.

The challenge before the breakthrough was trying to find what she was talking about. I'd never even thought about being a soprano up until then because I thought that I was an alto and that I can't sing high. I didn't know that I could do it. It changed a lot of things.

Ian Is there anything more that you want to talk about that we haven't talked about?

Tina The other thing that I wanted to do was to relate it to something else. It is sort of like learning to ride a horse. To me it was the same sort of learning that rising to the trot is. You know when you've done it. It's like the accelerator and clutch on the car you know when you've done it right.

Ian Did you already have the skill laying dormant?

Tina Obviously I was capable of doing it, but I had to be guided to know what it was. I didn't really know. You know normally you have an objective and you strive toward that objective and you know where you are heading, but I really didn't know that that was what I was going to learn. It wasn't until after it that I knew that that is what I needed to learn.

Ian Were you being conditioned?

Tina I don't know. She constantly described how our mouth should be formed and what we should do and how our throat should feel and how our tongue should be. I just kept doing it until I did it. Then it all made sense. I was being guided more than anything to the point where I learnt it and then I was right.

COMMENTS:

Ian - John Durrand told me that his trainee singers watch his hands on the keyboard.

Toni - I remember doing that! I watched her (Tina's teacher) hand on the piano keys waiting for her to go up a note.

Tina , has read the transcript and is satisfied that it represents her perception of her breakthrough in learning.

Signed:

Date: .../.../...

VERIFICATION

INTERVIEW: At home 8 June 1993

DURATION: 7.30 pm to 7 pm = 30 minutes

Question What were you exercising?

Tina Just the vocal cords. Strengthening them by a series of exercises. There are a series of exercises called the Vaccai, they were Canti method which are specifically designed so that your voice jumps increments of notes where the tune goes up or down a note each time. Then you have notes sung at two or three or four intervals. Then there are Octaves and other exercises like Trills and Runs and things like that getting your voice strengthened and to use the different notes and gaps between notes so that when you sing you can handle it.

Question Did you have the technique at the time of doing the exercises?

Tina No.

Question Could you perform the exercises without the technique?

Tina Yes, but it didn't sound as good. If all the notes were in my lower register, I could have done it and it would have sounded OK, but, as soon as I got up a bit I just sang louder and it sounded terrible.

Question Did you cut out at that point?

Tina I kept trying, but it sounded dreadful. I would give up a lot sooner than I do now with the technique. It wouldn't come out so I would shout. I knew it wasn't right.

Verification of Interpretation

Note: The following verification was done as a separate activity from the above "VERIFICATION". This part will be used in the analysis where corrections need to be made. Exposing the learner to my conclusions could be suggestive and, therefore, influence the response.

The purpose of this section is to check out my conclusions to see if they stand the test of the learner's criticism.

CONTEXT:

Singing Lessons - OK

Enigma - OK

Self-actualisation - OK

Accompaniment - OK

Enjoyment - OK

EXPERIENCE:

Change singing higher notes - OK

Discovery - OK

Change in singing range - OK

CONTRIBUTING:

Experience of learner - Not years - months

Exercises - OK

Motivation - I probably didn't know that that is what it was, but I knew that it was different. I could tell the difference from listening to singers who had lessons and those who didn't, but I didn't know what the difference was. The challenge was the motivation.

Patient disposition - Well it didn't put me off. I didn't feel threatened by it. I probably would have kept going. However, I would have got frustrated before the teacher. She wasn't that sort of person.

Because I didn't know what I was learning, I didn't know what I was aiming for. So how would you know when you got there if you don't know where you were going. I would have kept going anyway. Certainly doing it made me want to keep doing it once I knew that I could do this thing. I could hear myself improving. That was its own reinforcement to keep going.

High Achiever - OK

OBSERVATION:

The learning was the sum of all the things before it and that is what it (technique) led to. The fact that I did it was the reinforcement that I could do it again. I don't think that I could have learnt it if I hadn't had that experience before hand. I would have gone on as before knowing that I was doing it differently, but not knowing why. With twenty years of singing and singing and singing prior to this I didn't get it. I was always an Alto and I always sang low and didn't even think that I could be a Soprano. I thought that was it, that is what I did and that is the way I sing. It wasn't until the lessons, that it made me aware that I could sing Soprano. No, I hadn't done it in all that time. I think that if I had done it unknowingly without the lessons, I would have known sooner what she was talking about.

The lessons were not focused on getting to the technique. They were generally centred on singing to strengthen my lungs and my voice to increase breathing. Others may go into the lessons having learnt the technique and the lessons do other things for them. For me it was the biggest thing.

When I did it, I knew that I had it because the note sounded clear and pure instead of loud. I felt different and the sound came out better and I knew that I had lowered my tongue to the base of my mouth.

Warren's Perception of Breakthrough

INTERVIEW: At Mr ' home 23 Feb. '93

DURATION: 8.12 am to 8.35 am = 22 minutes

WARREN'S AGE: 35-40 years

BREAKTHROUGH OCCURRED: 1992 Jan.-June.

THE ACTIVITY IN WHICH WARREN WAS INVOLVED: Adult Literacy

BREAKTHROUGH: Learning the basic skill of reading, spelling and writing, but his breakthrough was with writing.

Warren I suppose that it started back in 1990 when I decided that I was going to do something about my literacy problem. It has always been a bit hard to get on with work. It was a barrier. It has been my main barrier all along. Every time I started a job with an employer and I could progress to a more responsible position (to the point of becoming a salesman, dealer, someone who writes out quotes, etc) it was just impossible for me. I've always been held back to step past where my skills would allow.

In 1990 I decided to learn literacy. My wife was behind me all the way. She would say things like: "Go for it.". She started to teach me. Lots of people would try to help, but, my wife had a different approach. She would teach similar to a class.

She was encouraging. If you wrote down a word and you had one letter wrong she would say: "Yeah, but you've got five of them right.". That was really encouraging.

I found that that is the way that they teach at the college. Instead of being negative by saying: "No you idiot you spelt it wrong again.", it made me think that: "Oh! Yeah well that's true I've only got to learn that one letter as opposed to learning the whole word.". That was really positive.

I started to find that the smaller words like the "the", and the "to", all those silly things fitted in to place. They started, all of a sudden, to sink in where in the past they didn't. "The" was always "de". It was due possibly to my Dutch origin and my pronunciation of words had a lot to do with it. Yeah, I'd say that that had heaps to do with it. Also, in third class I had nuns as teachers and when I came out here I couldn't speak English and they had this way of teaching that if you had more than three words spelt incorrectly they would cane you. One cane for every word spelt wrong. I couldn't even pronounce the words let alone say or spell them. Well, every Friday I lined up for seventeen cuts of the cane. I think I just took a hate to it. Truth be known, that is what happened and every time someone would ask me to spell something I would shudder and crawl into a corner.

I think that I had problems with writing in Holland as well. There was something there that didn't gel.

For years it went on and finally I ended up admitting it to people as opposed to hiding it all the time. I would overcome my problem by

having it written out before hand i.e., a cheque written out in the wallet or something that would show me how to write out numbers.

My biggest breakthrough was the fact that I no longer denied that I was illiterate. This caused the pressure to come off. People didn't expect me to write things any more. If I do a quote, I'd have to say to them: "Give me a timber list." (of course me and my cryptic timber lists, drawings, etc meant that I had to order and do every thing because there was nobody who could understand it).

Ian Why didn't you seek help earlier.

Warren Shame I guess. Embarrassed about the fact that I couldn't make it with other people and over the years they treated me like I was less intelligent. I never considered myself as an unintelligent person. I'm an artist, travelled around quite a bit, and have done a lot of things. I've done just about every trade you can think of. Reading and writing was just one of those barriers. Something that I couldn't get together.

Ian Did anything happen which caused you to admit to your difficulties?

Warren Yes, tired of being stopped. That was the biggest one, apart from getting Ross River fever. I had already admitted to my difficulties before that. I did it off my own bat.

In the middle of 1991 I went into Social Security and said: "I can't read or write and is there anything that you could advise me to do?". They sent me to Skill Share and that is where I met Sylvia. She said that I was really wasting my time at Skills Share i.e., one hour here and one hour there and suggested that I approach the college to get you a tutor - which I did. I was still very busy at the time and went away often for my work so I didn't really get the hours in that I really wanted to.

In 1992 I signed up right from the word go at the beginning of the year. I joined the literacy classes. "New Start Literacy" came up and I jumped for that because it gave me the chance to do it full time. It was then that I came down with Ross River fever. That caused me to decide to do full time study. I could no longer work physically because I would run out of steam and had to rest.

I now write. I write stories and reports. I'm in there and doing it.

Ian Referring to your breakthrough, was it with writing or reading that you experienced the breakthrough?

Warren It was writing.

Ian Where did the breakthrough occur?

Warren I would say that it occurred at college.

Ian Did anything happen prior to that time to prepare you?

Warren No not really. I give credit to the teachers.

Ian What happened?

Warren It started quite a way back in the beginning of the year when they got me to actually write stories.

I still had problems spelling. I'm not a brilliant speller by no means, but now I've got enough know-how to look the words up in a dictionary where before I had no idea. It was guess work all the way. I can get by now by being able to use the dictionary. That is a big step, to at least get the first few letters right to enable me to use the dictionary.

Ian Before the breakthrough, how were you feeling?

Warren Nervous and a little bit strange about being there, wondering if I would ever get it.

Ian Did you have a particular expectation of the class?

Warren Yes, I suppose I was expecting miracles. It came slow. It didn't just happen overnight. It is a bit weird, I'm contradicting myself here, but, it suddenly was made easy to put the things into practice that they showed you. They would put out things in front of you and say: "How many words can you get out of this and how many words can you get out of that.". Once I started to get the hang of the different sounds it became easy.

It didn't really stick until they started to get me to create my own writing opposed to copying down things. They would say: "Here is a topic, start writing about it." That is when it really came together because all of a sudden I could play with my own mind. I started writing and it felt good just to see things actually going on paper. At first it was always trying to use the smallest possible words, but that quickly changed and I began to use bigger words and the freedom started to come. There was a lot of push from the people who were teaching me.

For me it was exciting. All of a sudden somebody lifted something from me. It was a whole new way of expressing myself.

Ian What kept you going during the difficult parts?

Warren I was pretty determined. I don't like starting something and not finish it. That has always been my attitude. I've got a few trades behind me that I've started and finished, but art is my main field.

Ian You now enjoy reading.'

Warren Very much so.

Ian Is that related in any way to the breakthrough?

Warren I would say so; yes. I've always searched for knowledge, but at best I would only extract the barest knowledge to help me at the time - no more no less than what I needed - then toss the book away and work the rest out for myself.

Ian Has reading been your personal goal or getting knowledge?

Warren Getting the knowledge not for reading or writing. I had already blocked reading and writing out of my mind with the thought that I'd never be able to do this anyway. I've always loved books. I've always had heaps of books around me. Art books mainly. You know, you look at the painting and you read the size and the name and that's it. Now I read the life stories of them. It makes a big difference opposed to asking other people and them giving their version of the story, I can actually read it for myself.

Ian Is there an actual point in time when you could say your breakthrough occurred?

Warren Yes, when I ran into Sylvia. Prior to Sylvia I was just dabbling without much interest, but, Sylvia had a hell-of-a-lot-of-want-to-teach or draw that something out of me that made me more interested.

Ian How did she treat you?

Warren Always like I was really clever, much brighter than I thought I was. Sylvia was always positive. She always fed me with positive thoughts which is incredibly encouraging.

Ian How did Sylvia cause you to read with enjoyment?

Warren Like I said, I could already read, but, she broke it up from reading word for word to reading full sentences i.e., opposed from trying to work out little words and things like that. She got me through by saying: "Read the whole sentence." and then if you have a problem with a word come back to it. By reading the whole sentence I found that the word worked itself out. That definitely worked.

Ian Did the room have anything to do with it, the atmosphere etc?

Warren No I don't think so because I like reading anywhere.

I began at Skill Share then at the college with a tutor. You know one-on-one. We were located at the old city campus in one of the ordinary class rooms. That wasn't sort of enough because, like I said, I was doing a lot of work in between tutoring sessions and going away for work. So I wasn't getting the time that I needed.

The tutor was very positive. We played games like scrabble and things like that which made it more fun. We didn't play scrabble the way you would normally play scrabble. We would set up a word and then see how many words that you could get out of it. We weren't competing for scores. We did other things like reading and writing and comprehension type exercises which were good because it made me read quicker and repeat what the story was about.

In thirty eight years I didn't have a hope of writing. You know before the "the" was "de" and "to" was always "to" no matter which "to" it was.

Now I have this knowledge. I know that ultimately it was me that did it, but, it was through the tutors' and teachers' support and backing that made it happen. I've recommended to a lot of other people with the same problem that they too should own up and that they can find help through the college literacy program.

Ian Would you like to add any more?

Warren They found the way to get through to me by using the creative side of me. I would say that that is the way they broke me into it.

Ian Did time of day have an influence?

Warren When I first wake up I usually do my reading. It's quite. I also really enjoy writing early in the morning.

Ian Let me go back to the breakthrough. Did anything happen on the morning when you remember a breakthrough?

Warren You're rattling my brain now. I don't know. Maybe..., like I said, that is when I started reading.

Ian Was there a point in time when you said: "Hay! I can do this."?

Warren I would say I probably did. I think it was when I mastered those silly words like the "ous" endings and those sorts of things. When they, all of a sudden, started to click into place. When you hear those sort of funny sounds. I'm not sure, but yeah, I got to a point where I thought that I was booming along and thought that I was doing really well and could say: "Yeah! I'm going to do it." then I just got to this real stand still where nothing seemed to gel. I just kept making the same mistakes over and over. Those funny words with the weird endings and the silent letters. When I could start working those out, it happened. When I could hear those and the difference in the sounds and say: "Yeah! that's it." that would have been the big one.

COMMENTS:

Warren , you have read the transcript and you are satisfied that it represents your perception of your breakthrough in learning.

Signed:

Date: .../.../...

VERIFICATION

INTERVIEW: At Warren's home 13 April 1993

DURATION: 2.30 pm to 3.15 pm = 45 minutes

Question Was Warren able to progress at his own pace?

Warren Yes, it was at my own pace. In the full class that I went through, we had a certain amount of work to get through, of course, but basically the whole thing was at my own speed.

Question Did Warren read audibly?

Warren I read out loud most of the time. There was some reading where I read to myself. That was when we did the comprehension exercises. I would read it and then write what I had comprehended about what I had read.

We wrote it mostly, but there were a few occasions when we told them.

Question Is the sequence right. Did Warren comprehend reading before or after the breakthrough?

Warren I'm not sure. I've always been able to comprehend what little I could read and anything that I heard. I suppose I would say that I've had good comprehension all along, but it was being able to read for a sustained period i.e., longer than a couple of paragraphs.

I don't have the problem any more. I love reading novels now.

I found usage of better words since I've been able to read properly. That is something that really came with it. The more I read the better flow of words. A bigger vocabulary, but more importantly I now have a better use of words. I used to use big words, but they weren't right.

No just to be able to read more was the biggest thing.

Question What was behind Warren's goal for knowledge and why did he want to learn to read and write?

Warren Well, furthering my education and the fact that I kept running into barriers. I'd get to a point where I could go no further. The written world takes its place and if you're not there you can't be a part of it. I like to know things.

I was getting knowledge in my own way all my life, but there are too many barriers with doing it that way. There is just so much in books that you miss out on.

Now I work with reading and writing. I'm writing reports which is something that I would never have take on before. Like you said you can pick up knowledge from all over the place and use all sorts of methods to do so, and I have, but reading opens up a new frontier.

Question Did you realise what reading could do for you before you began your quest for reading and writing skills?

Warren No, I knew that it was a barrier, but whether I really knew that it was a barrier as far as learning was concerned, I don't think that I did at the time. I accepted that there wasn't any other way of doing it. I never saw it as being a means of learning. I still don't think that it is a means of learning (as in skill to learn), but it helps a lot. You can find a lot more in books than you can get people to talk about.

To a point, I could see that with the skills of reading and writing I could get knowledge.

Question What was the feeling at the time of the breakthrough?

Warren It was a relief to know that it could be done and that it wasn't out of my reach. I thought that I would never be able to write. I knew that I could read within limitations, but I never thought that I would write.

I came to the realisation that I could write before I admitted to others that I had a literacy problem. It sort of happened when my wife would encourage me and work with me - much the same as they do at the college

It was elation when it actually happened. More of a feeling of achievement or freedom maybe.

Verification of Interpretation

Note: The following verification was done as a separate activity from the above "VERIFICATION". This part will be used in the analysis where corrections need to be made. Exposing the learner to my conclusions could be suggestive and, therefore, influence the response.

The purpose of this section is to check out my conclusions to see if they stand the test of the learner's criticism.

CONTEXT:

Proactive - Nobody told me to go and do it. I chose to do it myself.

Teaching similarity - (This was not written at the time of the interview)

Goal orientation - That is correct.

Functional Mental Handicap - That is right.

Non-formal - That is what I thought you meant, but I wasn't going to say anything until you explained it. That was exactly the way it was in the early stages. I was never forced to do anything. It went to a classroom situation later with one-on-one tutoring when you felt that you needed it.

There was never any force. If you had trouble and you started lagging behind nobody got concerned. They'd try to pick you up of course. I didn't have that problem at that stage because I was getting it together.

Support - That happened. I found that I could cope. No problems there.

EXPERIENCE:

Latent Skill - Writing in the sense of writing - yeah. Spelling of course was learnt. Writing just came. I just enjoy it.

I would see myself writing mental songs in my head and things like that. I loved telling stories to kids that I had made up.

We didn't do much writing in the class...not until I started to write. Once I started to write for myself they would give me assignments. They would give us a title and we were expected to go away and write about it.

Creative Behaviour - Right

CONTRIBUTION:

Self confidence - [Self confidence] definitely. That is true.

Recognising words - Yes. I still have trouble spelling.

Phonetics - If I didn't sound them out in my head I would sound them out loud.

Tutor influence - That is exactly how they kept me motivated. The positive feeling that they gave me all the way through was what kept my confidence up. That constant feeling of someone who didn't think that I was an idiot may me try hard.

Determination - It's not my nature to give up, but, mind you if they made it hard on me I probably would have. If they had treated me the way that they treated me at school I would have given up.

OBSERVATIONS

The three events are the main events. I agree.

[With out the prerequisites of self will and confidence and left with the forerunners]; Warren replied: "When, I don't know. I'm happy with what you have written".