CHAPTER 6
RESEARCH PROCESS

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the final part of the research process is covered, namely a discussion of the final intervention study and research process, including the selection of the sample for the study, an overview of the development and compilation of the intervention programme, the content of the programme and the application there-of. A list of the Gestalt play therapy techniques used in this programme is given, which is important for reporting the findings of this study in the following chapter. This chapter provides some theory again on the goal of the research, the method of research, the research group, and assessment instruments.

The finalised intervention is thus covered in this chapter, the application of the intervention to a sample and the collection and analysing of data. This is the second grouping of steps of an intervention research study as stated by De Vos (2002:409-418), namely "Evaluation and advanced development". A visual presentation of these groupings can be found in Chapter 1, Figure 1.6 Research procedure.

Mouton (2001:124) states that this and the following chapters "document the results of your fieldwork and may be organised into one or more chapters, depending on the nature of the study, the research objectives, the complexity of the research design and the amount of data collected". The current study's results were summarised in two chapters with referrals to the addendums containing the final intervention programme as part of the outcomes of the research. The final chapter covers critique on the research study and recommendations for future development of the current study or new research in this field. The areas, which need more research, are also indicated. The following is a diagrammatic presentation of this chapter, acting as a one-glance overview:
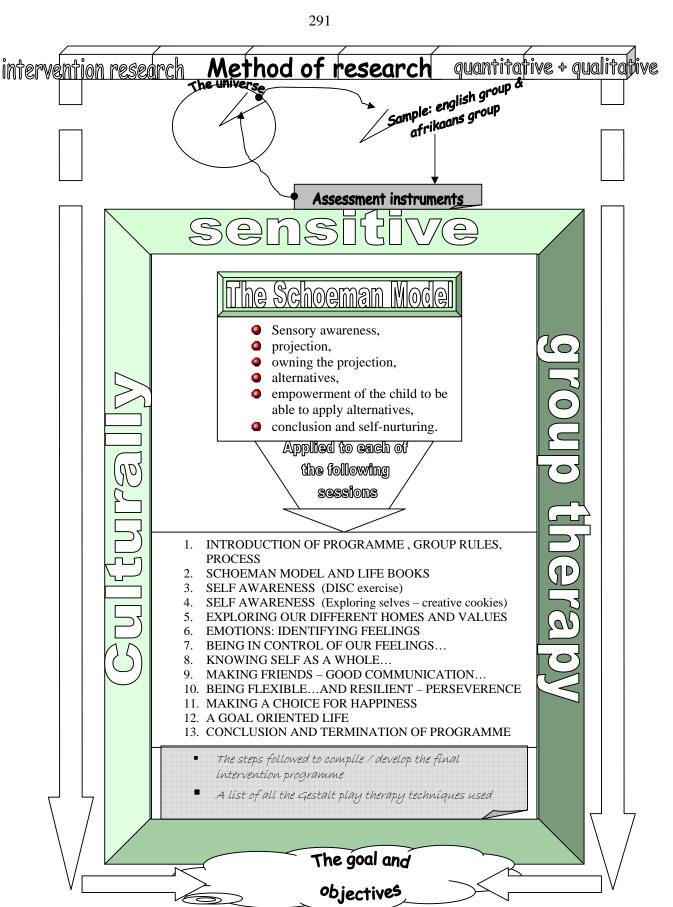
intervention research | **Method of research** | **quantitative + qualitative**

The universe

Sample: english group & afrikaans group

Assessment instruments

sensitive

culturally

group therapy

The Schoeman Model

- Sensory awareness,
- projection,
- owning the projection,
- alternatives,
- empowerment of the child to be able to apply alternatives,
- conclusion and self-nurturing.

Applied to each of the following sessions

1. INTRODUCTION OF PROGRAMME , GROUP RULES, PROCESS
2. SCHOEMAN MODEL AND LIFE BOOKS
3. SELF AWARENESS (DISC exercise)
4. SELF AWARENESS (Exploring selves – creative cookies)
5. EXPLORING OUR DIFFERENT HOMES AND VALUES
6. EMOTIONS: IDENTIFYING FEELINGS
7. BEING IN CONTROL OF OUR FEELINGS…
8. KNOWING SELF AS A WHOLE…
9. MAKING FRIENDS – GOOD COMMUNICATION…
10. BEING FLEXIBLE…AND RESILIENT – PERSEVERENCE
11. MAKING A CHOICE FOR HAPPINESS
12. A GOAL ORIENTED LIFE
13. CONCLUSION AND TERMINATION OF PROGRAMME

- The steps followed to compile / develop the final intervention programme
- A list of all the Gestalt play therapy techniques used

The goal and objectives

Figure 6.1: Chapter overview

2. METHOD OF RESEARCH

Mouton (2001:56) explains the method of research and the research design by comparing it with building a house. He compares the research methodology with the methods and tools used to build the house during the construction period. The following is a representation of the "A metaphor for research design" diagram used by Mouton (2001:56). It gives a very clear indication of how the research methodology fits in the research as a whole.
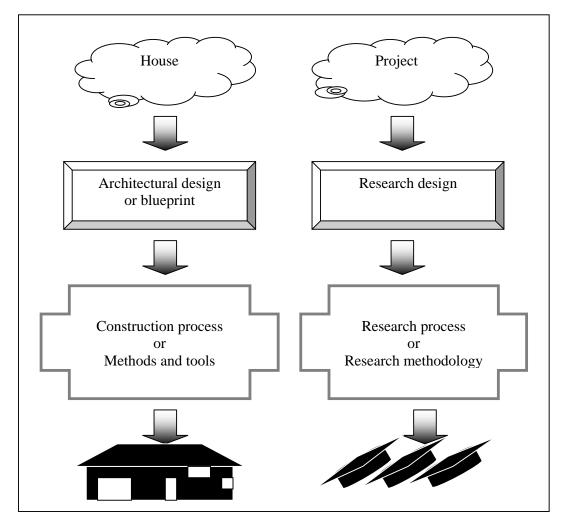

Figure 6.2: A metaphor for research design

According to Mouton (2001:56) and Mouton (1996:26, 36) the research methodology focuses on the research process and the kind of tools and procedures to be used. Its point of departure is the specific tasks at hand, thus the data collection or sampling

etcetera. It focuses on the individual steps in the research process and the most objective or unbiased procedures to be employed.

The following discussion thus covered the individual steps of the research process where the researcher developed and applied a research programme to evaluate the effectiveness of Gestalt therapy techniques to enhance emotional intelligence of middle-school-age children in a cultural sensitive way. These steps were followed using intervention research as a method.

Intervention research includes both quantitative as well as qualitative methods (De Vos, 2002:368). Social Research (2005:1) mentions the debate over whether quantitative and qualitative methods can be used in combination in one research study. "…some researchers argue that combining the two approaches is beneficial and helps build a more complete picture of the social world, while other researchers believe that the epistemologies that underpin each of the approaches are divergent that they cannot be reconciled within a research project" (Social Research, 2005:1). The researcher used these methods in combination in this one research project and will therefore go along with the researchers who believe that this combination is beneficial and gives a more complete picture of the social world studied.

3.   THE SAMPLE / RESEARCH GROUP

Mouton (1996:135) refers to a sample as a selection of some of the elements of a population with the intention to find something out about the population as a whole. It is important that the sample should be representative of the population (Mouton, 1996:136). Mouton (1996:135) also states that an operational definition of the population provides the basis for sampling. A population is already defined in Chapter 1, 10.4.1 Universe and population. As a refresher of the memory, Mouton (1996:135) defined a population as the sum total of all the cases that meet this study's unit of analysis. According to the unit of analysis of the current study, the population is all the possible Gestalt play therapeutic techniques that could be applied to a research group. According to the definition of a sample, it is related to the unit of analysis, because it is a representative part of the bigger population, which meets the

requirements of the unit of analysis. In this study, the unit of analysis is mainly Gestalt therapy techniques. As a sample is a representative part of a population, it can consist of people or things, it can be organizations, institutions, collectives, social activities, cultural objects or interventions (like in the current study) (compare Mouton, 1996:134; Strydom & Venter, 2002:198).

The unit of analysis therefore indicates Gestalt play therapy techniques to be the sample. Another part of the unit of analysis focuses on the research group, thus the people on whom these techniques were tried. They (techniques and research groups) form a unit, because neither of them could be used in isolation of the other to complete the research process. The specific selection of Gestalt Play therapy techniques only has meaning here if it is applied to this specific research group (middle school-age children from different cultures). Both the Gestalt play therapy techniques as the first part of the sample as well as the research group as the other part of the sample is discussed in the following two sections.

3.1   The sample of Gestalt play therapy techniques

The sample of Gestalt play therapeutic techniques was selected according to the needs of the different themes of emotional intelligence presented in the current intervention programme. The sample size was determined by confidence intervals (compare Chapter 1, 10.4.2.3 Size of a sample; Hopkins, 2000:8). The researcher used the most appropriate techniques "to give acceptable precision for the effect you are studying" (Hopkins, 2000:8). The sample of techniques is closely related of the emotional intelligence themes selected to apply in the intervention programme. These themes are based on an exploration of common attributes of both Gestalt therapy and emotional intelligence. This selection process is discussed in chapter 2, 3.5 Improving emotional intelligence.

The following is a list of the themes, which were included in the intervention programme. These themes were compiled in different sessions focusing on one or more of the themes. Some themes were included in all sessions on a continuous base. The researcher indicated the names of the sessions in brackets after each theme and typed the themes in bold for clarity. Those themes, which were included throughout

the whole programme, have "continuous" in brackets next to it. Those themes, which were combined in one session is followed by the relevant, same session names in brackets.

- **Increased awareness**

  (Continuous, Session 1: INTRODUCTION OF PROGRAMME AND GROUP RULES, Session 2: SCHOEMAN MODEL AND IDENTIFYING OF PROCESS, Session 3, SELF AWARENESS (SELF BOOK / JOURNAL), Session 4: SELF AWARENESS (CREATIVE COOKIES), Session 5: EXPLORING OUR DIFFERENT HOMES AND VALUES)

- **Being aware of feelings, identifying feelings, expressing feelings using the right vocabulary**

  (Session 6: EMOTIONS: IDENTIFYING FEELINGS, Session 7: BEING IN CONTROL OF OUR FEELINGS…)

- **Understanding themselves as a whole – knowing the balance between thoughts and feelings, organismic self-regulation**

  (Session 8: KNOWING SELF AS A WHOLE…)

- **Responsibility for their own lives**

  (Continuous, Session 7: BEING IN CONTROL OF OUR FEELINGS…)

- **Heeling through relationships with others, empathy, good communication and dialogue**

  (Session 9: MAKING FRIENDS – GOOD COMMUNICATION…)

- **Being flexible in understanding different opinions and finding alternative ways to do things and self-organising principles**

  (Session 10: BEING FLEXIBLE…AND RESILIENT – PERSEVERENCE)

- **Having a purpose in life, being goal oriented, leading to self-actualisation**

  (Session 11: A GOAL FOR MY LIFE)

- **Having enough courage to be what they want, being vibrant enough and having enough energy and endurance not to give up when they fail**

  (Session 10: BEING FLEXIBLE…AND RESILIENT – PERSEVERENCE)

- **Being motivated, enthusiastic and positive** (Continuous)

- **Making a choice for happiness**

  (Session 12: MAKING A CHOICE FOR HAPPINESS)

Many sessions were spent on awareness because it is stated as "…the key term in Gestalt Therapy" by Jarosewitsch (1995:1) and also as the goal of therapy by Yontef (1993:13) and is listed as such in Chapter 2, 3.5 Improving emotional intelligence.

The researcher used the themes listed above as part of the selection criteria for appropriate Gestalt therapy techniques. These themes are common in both emotional intelligence literature as well as Gestalt therapy (Chapter 2, 3.5 Improving emotional intelligence). The selection criteria for the intervention techniques thus included the following:

- The possibility of the technique to improve emotional intelligence
- Techniques based on Gestalt therapy theory, which relates to emotional intelligence in literature
- The applicability of the techniques to the developmental phase of the children (middle school age) in the research groups
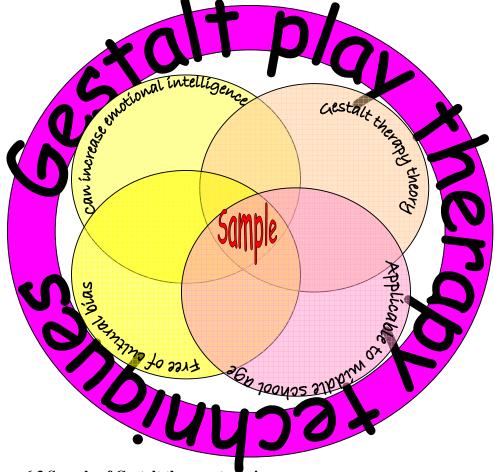- Techniques, which are as far as possible, free of cultural bias

Figure: 6.3 Sample of Gestalt therapy techniques

3.2   The research group as part of the sample used in the intervention programme

A research group is, according to the researcher, a group of people who are participating in a research project as subjects of research. The current research group were used as subjects of research because the effect of the Gestalt play therapy techniques on their emotional intelligence growth was assessed. The current group is defined in Chapter 1, 10.4.1 Universe and population & 10.4.2.1 Definition of a sample. The definitions in these two parts from Chapter 1 are combined in the following description of a research group as part of the sample used in this intervention programme. The population of the research group consists of primary school children in Namibia whose emotional intelligence can possibly be assessed and improved. This population should be culturally diverse (Chapter 1, 10.4.1 Universe and population). The subset of the population used was a group of not more than five to six children selected from clients who visited the mental health practice of the researcher (Chapter 1, 10.4.2.1 Definition of a sample). This selection was done using the most appropriate subjects "to give acceptable precision for the effect you are studying" (compare Hopkins, 2000:8; 3.1 The sample of Gestalt play therapy techniques).

This description includes a group of children in primary school from different cultural groups in Namibia, who needs improvement of their emotional intelligence levels. The groups consisted of four to six children who use either English or Afrikaans as main communication medium in educational institutions. Language, as criteria, was added after the pilot study, where a bilingual group inhibited the possibility of growth in the group therapy setting (Chapter 5, 5.1.1.2 Language of group members as selection criteria). According to this definition the researcher used the following selection criteria to select the group members for the research group:

- Primary school children
- Children in need of increased emotional intelligence according to an assessment with the Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System
- Children from different cultural groups in Namibia (groups not representative of all the cultures in Namibia, because these were children who needed

improvement of emotional intelligence who came to the practice for assessment and help)

- Group size between five and six (Schoeman, 2004:90)
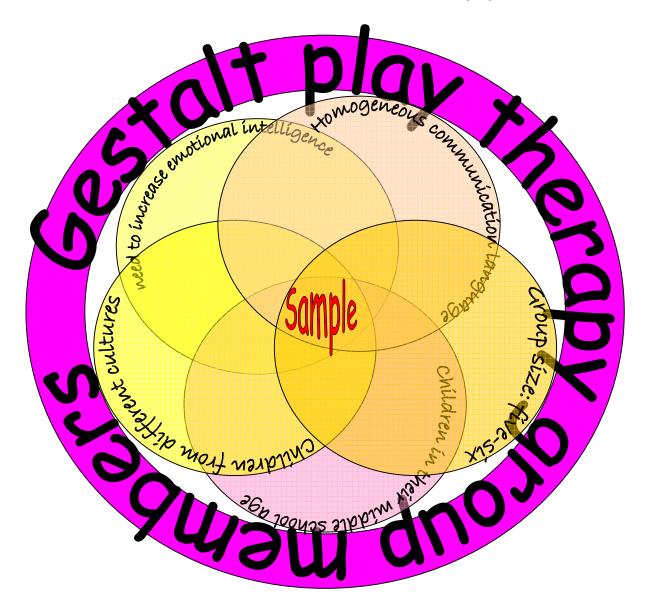- The children should be able to use the same communication language

Figure 6.4: Sample of research group

Members were selected using the criteria listed above and by following the selection procedure as discussed in Chapter 4, 5.2.3.1 Procedure for selection of participants. This selection procedure requires two levels of selection, namely:

- to determine whether this group will fulfil in the current needs of the child – thus "Will this group be good for the child?" and
- to determine whether the child's profile fits the goal of this group – thus "Will the child be good for the group".

The selection procedure for the current study included the following steps, which are divided in the two levels of selection stated above:

LEVEL 2 (Will the child be good for the group?)

- Assessment of the child using the Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System
- Using the information from the assessment above to determine whether the planning processes of this child's profile is low enough to indicate a need for emotional intelligence training (refer to Chapter 2, 3.4 Assessment of emotional intelligence, for more information about the assessment of emotional intelligence, using the Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System)
- Comparing the child to the selection criteria as stated in the diagram above to determine whether this child fits the profile of the research group
- The child is then preliminary placed in either an Afrikaans group or an English group depending on the communication language of preference for the child.

LEVEL 1 (Will the group be good for the child?)

- Individual interview with the parent and child to discuss the child's profile and the goal of the Gestalt play therapy group therapy programme to enhance emotional intelligence
- Giving time for the parent to think about inclusion in this programme and to discuss it with the child and other important others in the child's environment
- Telephonic confirmation with the caretakers of the child to determine whether he will take part in the programme

FINAL CONFIRMATION

- If the confirmation is positive the researcher gave practical information about the dates and times of contact, a short overview of the content and goal of the programme, as well as an overview of the procedure concerning feedback.

The final sample thus consisted of Gestalt play therapy techniques and the research group.
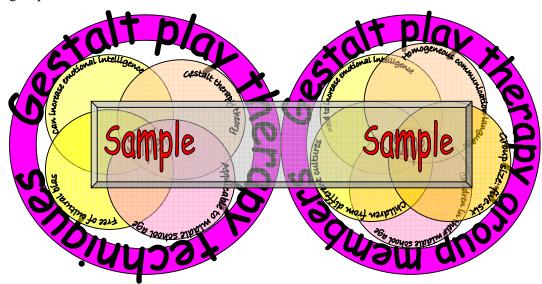

Figure 6.5: The final sample for the intervention programme

4.   GOAL OF RESEARCH

"The research objective or purpose gives a broad indication of what researchers wish to achieve in their research" (Mouton, 1996:101) Welman and Kruger (1999:19) regard the purpose of research as threefold, namely:

- To describe (define) how things are
- To explain why things are the way they are
- To predict phenomena

Welman and Kruger (1999:19) conclude the following from the above stated threefold: "So, we can say that the purpose of conducting research into theories and other research problems is to define, explain and, consequently, predict and even modify or control, human behaviour, its organizations, products and/or events".

The goal of research of this study is explained in the following paragraphs by focusing on this threefold explanation and the description of the purpose of research by Welman and Kruger (1999:19) above. The researcher is using the term "purpose"

here as a synonym for "goal". This relation was already stated in Chapter 1, 4.1 Aim, in the following way: "According to Fouché (2002:107) the terms purpose, goal and aim are often used as synonyms for one another".

The aim (or purpose or goal) on which the researcher focused in the current study is stated as follows in Chapter 1, 4.1 Aim:

AIM

The aim of this research is to identify Gestalt play therapy techniques to enhance the emotional intelligence of primary school children within their cultural context.

Figure 6.6 Copy of aim of research

4.1 The goal of this research in a threefold way

Stating the goal of this research in the threefold way of Welman and Kruger (1999:19) it can be explained as follows:

4.1.1 Describe how things are (define)

Define the type of Gestalt play therapy techniques to use in an intervention programme to enhance the emotional intelligence of primary school children in a culturally sensitive way.

4.1.2 Describe why things are the way they are

Describe why these techniques are effective. This can be done by determining whether the intervention programme was successful. The effectiveness of the techniques can be predicted from literature, but described by analysing the outcomes of the intervention programme.

4.1.3 Predict phenomena

Certain predictions can be made from the outcomes of the intervention programme. These can relate to future adaptations to the current programme or possibilities for

further research on related topics found in the outcomes or findings of the intervention programme.

This research study is partly a qualitative study. Delport and Fouché (2002:357) state that the researcher in a qualitative study is the "instrument" of the research study. The researcher's own perspective therefore also shapes events and interpretations and cannot be ignored. The researcher's vision for this research study is therefore part of the goal of the study. The following states this vision:

4.2   The researcher's vision

I want to publish an effective programme based on Gestalt play therapy techniques to enhance the emotional intelligence of primary school children from a variety of cultures.
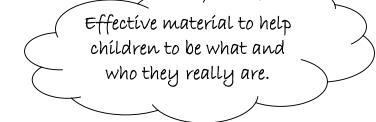
Effective material to help children to be what and who they really are.

Figure 6.7: The researcher's vision

5.   THE RESEARCH PROCEDURE OF THE INTERVENTION PROGRAMME

5.1   Background information for the intervention programme

The researcher used the unit of analysis of the current study to identify the different themes needed for more knowledge and insight. The unit of analysis was derived from the main aim of this research study. The researcher therefore worked with "the end in mind" (Covey, 1998:73-104). The researcher identified the following themes to study from literature: characteristics of the primary school child, emotions, emotional

intelligence, culture, and Gestalt play therapy techniques. The literature study is covered in chapters two, three and four of this research report.

The following are the conclusions on the listed themes, which was used to develop the intervention programme:

5.1.1 Characteristics of the primary school child

This is a physically more mature, stronger and independent child than toddlers. On emotional level, he builds on his self-image and forms his view of himself through success in tasks, messages from important others, interpersonal relationships with peers on individual and group base and relationships with authority figures who's opinions are seen as the truth.

He bases moral decisions on what is expected of him by society, not to get punished, and to gain other people's approval. Whatever is seen as moral will be influenced by the child's home- and community culture.

On cognitive level he usually bases his logical reasoning on concrete objects. He will thus not use abstract reasoning to increase his awareness and other emotional intelligence skills, but reasoning based on concrete objects. (This is very important for the choice of Gestalt play therapy techniques.) The primary school child grows on emotional intelligence level by doing, experimenting and playing – this requires an active way of learning. (Chapter 2, 1. THE PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILD)

5.1.2 Emotions

Emotions are the carriers of information, which connect and influence all the different systems and levels of being and is equally connected and influenced by all the other systems (Chapter 2, 2.1.2 A definition of emotions).

5.1.3 Emotional intelligence

In the current study emotional intelligence is defined as a process of growth. In this study the children were led towards better emotional intelligence as a tool to create wholeness and to grow more effectively. The children were made aware of unfinished business so that they can restore their balance and grow through awareness. The children were thus led to heal themselves through a process of

awareness and reaching their true potential. (Chapter 2, 3.3 Emotional intelligence in primary school)

Emotional intelligence was assessed with the Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System (Naglieri and Das, 1997a). Salovey and Sluyter (in Maree, 2004:77) discussed the strengthening of the frontal lobes as of critical importance to enhance emotional intelligence as well as cognition. Assessing the functioning of the frontal lobes thus gave an indication of the children's level of emotional intelligence. (Chapter 2, 3.4 Assessment of emotional intelligence)

The following is a list of the emotional intelligence skills, which were included in the intervention programme because of their close relation to Gestalt therapy principles:

- Awareness
- Being aware of feelings, identifying feelings, expressing feelings using the right vocabulary
- Understanding the self as a whole
- Responsibility for their own lives
- Heeling through relationships (interpersonal skills)
- Being flexible
- Being goal oriented
- Having enough courage to be what they want
- Being motivated, enthusiastic and positive
- Making a choice for happiness

(Chapter 2, 3.5 Improving emotional intelligence)

5.1.4   Culture

The following is an applicable definition of culture for the current research study:

Culture comprises of biological and social attributes that help people to make sense of and give meaning to life (Chapter 3, 1.2.5 A conclusion on the definition of culture).

According to the researcher this definition relates to emotional intelligence and Gestalt therapy's goals. The researcher is of the opinion that "to give meaning to life" relates to the following emotional intelligence attributes: self-knowledge and a good self-image, making a choice for happiness, living a goal oriented life, good interpersonal relationships, motivation, resourcefulness (compare Goleman, 1996; Le Roux and De Klerk, 2003; Vermeulen, 1999). The researcher is also of the opinion

that "to give meaning to life" relates to Gestalt principles such as: awareness of the self and the environment, the paradoxical theory of change in relation to awareness because it leads to becoming what you really are if you are aware of unfinished business or imbalances. Other related Gestalt principles include responsibility for your own life and self-organising principles, which lead to self-actualisation. (Compare Harris, 1998; Jarosewisch, 1995; Yontef, 1993; Zinker, 1977.)

The definition of culture includes both biological and social attributes, which in the researcher's opinion relates to the holistic view of the human being held in this research study (compare Chapter 2, 2.2 The operation of emotions; Chapter 3, 2.1 Culture within the Gestalt framework – the field theory; Chapter 4, 1.16 Holism).

The researcher concluded with an understanding of culture as the field of the children and the therapist in the current research. The following quote from Chapter 3 (2.1 Culture within the Gestalt framework – the field theory) of this research report is a good explanation of culture as the field of participants in this intervention programme:

"Perls, Hefferline and Goodman (in Ground level: the field, 1997:1) referred to the human being as being mobile in a great interacting field … The client live within a cultural framework, which is both cognitive / biological as well as a social phenomenon (Chapter 3, 1.2.5 A conclusion on the definition of culture). According to Gestalt therapy (Perls, Hefferline and Goodman in Ground level: the field, 1997:1) the process of the human being's existence is the field. As culture includes all this, the researcher sees culture as the field".

5.1.5   Gestalt play therapy techniques

The main function of play therapy techniques seems to be designed to heighten awareness of present functioning (Ivens, [sa]:4). The researcher designed an intervention programme based on Gestalt play therapy techniques. Different types of existing techniques were studied and listed in this research report in Chapter 4, 3.2 Play therapy techniques. Although these types of techniques were not all applied in the intervention programme, it still seemed necessary to give an overview of the main types of techniques and their function in play therapy. The researcher therefore had a variety of types of techniques to use in the intervention programme. Although some of

the most famous techniques, like psychodrama, fantasy, empty chair, tasks and dream work are listed, the therapist is still encouraged to be creative and develop techniques that will suit his clients' needs (Ivens, [sa]:4). The researcher therefore used the techniques as stepping-stones to create new variations of these to fit the needs of the current intervention and the group members.

The techniques used were applied while keeping the fields of the children in mind. The researcher aimed to increase the sensitivity, comprehension and acceptance of other's cultures in this intervention programme. The researcher as therapist also had to take her own field or culture into account and had to be aware of her own ways of thinking, feeling and acting according to her cultural values. The researcher therefore had to be cautious not to teach cultural values or have expectations of the children in the groups based on her own cultural background.

The researcher found in literature (Chapter 4, 3.1.1 Experiments) the importance of using experiments in Gestalt therapy. The experiential nature of this type of therapy was thus a focus point in each session of the intervention programme.

The techniques were applied in a group therapy setting. The value of the latter is important, because emotional intelligence has a big factor of interpersonal relationships and growth through relationships and interpersonal contact seems very important in Gestalt therapy. (Chapter 4, 1.4 The therapeutic relationship)

5.2   Selection of the group members

The group members were selected using the following criteria as discussed above in, 4.2 The research group as part of the sample used in the intervention programme. The criteria is listed again for the sake of clarity:

- Primary school children
- Children in need of increased emotional intelligence according to an assessment with the Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System (see reminder of Cognitive Assessment System below)

- Children from different cultural groups in Namibia (groups not representative of all the cultures in Namibia, because these were children who needed improvement of emotional intelligence who came to the practice for assessment and help)
- Group size between five and six (Schoeman, 2004:90)
- The children should be able to use the same communication language

THE COGNITIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

(Naglieri & Das, 1997a)

Reminder

This test assesses four processes, which underlie learning. The executive processes, which directly deal with the processing of information include the successive processes (logical, systematic thinking, detail oriented, factual, auditory information) and simultaneous processes (holistic focus, insight and understanding, intuitive, visual information). The other two processes are the attention processes, which include the child's ability to focus effectively on what is necessary. The last one is the planning processes, which has been used as main indicator in this research study. These processes involve planning, problem-solving and decision-making and is very much related to a child's self-confidence, self-control, motivation and handling of feedback. All these are very closely related to emotional intelligence and Gestalt theory as already discussed in chapter 2.

Figure 6.8: Reminder of Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System

The process of selection was also discussed in 4.2 The research group as part of the sample used in the intervention programme and was applied in selecting the following group members. In the following paragraphs each group member will be discussed according to the criteria above and the process as stated earlier. As discussed earlier, the researcher formed two research groups with homogeneous communication language preferences, namely and Afrikaans group and an English group. The group members are discussed below in these two groups. Group members were named using their initials for the sake of confidentiality.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

This group consisted of more reserved and introverted children. They were very creative, more peaceful, quiet and slower in completing activities. They liked to discuss matters although they were action-oriented according to the needs of their developmental phase. Introverts tend to be less talkative, can concentrate on one thing for a prolonged period of time and prefer to finish one thing before starting with the next (compare Briggs Myers, 1998:9; Jopie van Rooyen & Partners SA, 2005:46).

MEMBER 1: D

Gender: Male

Cultural group: Baster

Results of Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System:

D had very good simultaneous processes indicating good insight and comprehension, but poor successive processes indicating difficulties with reading and writing. His attention and planning processes were also not very good. His mother reported him with a poor self-image and lack of motivation because of his difficulties with languages and number sequences.

Needs:

On educational level he needs stimulation of the successive processes and a further diagnoses of possible dyslexia and help with this. On emotional level, he needs to work on his self-image, motivation and general coping skills.

Inclusion in programme:

D was included in the Afrikaans group, because this is his home language. Although his educational difficulties seem worse than his emotional difficulties, the latter are weakening and have a more negative influence on his learning difficulties.

MEMBER 2: STE

Gender: Female

Cultural group: Western - Afrikaans

Results of Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System:

STE's successive and attention processes were much stronger than her planning and simultaneous processes. This means that she tends to be very detailed, systematic and perfectionistic in her work. Her insight and general understanding of what she learns as well as her emotional intelligence related processes are weaker. This leads to very high test and performance anxiety.

Needs:

STE needs help with insight and understanding of her work on educational level. She thus needs to strengthen her simultaneous processes for increased insight in work as well as her self. On emotional level she needs to work on her self-awareness, understanding of her feelings and having control over her feelings. The latter together with a better self-image might help her to handle test and performance situations better.

Inclusion in programme:

STE was included in the Afrikaans group as this is her home language as well as her educational language. After the discussion with STE's caretakers it seemed as if her emotional related problems were the cause of poor performance in school as well as emotional related processes like feeling unhappy and depressed most of the time. It also influenced her motivation, because she presented psychosomatic symptoms to avoid school. Her high expectations of herself, inability to tolerate things, which go wrong and thus perfectionism is leading to difficulties with emotional intelligence.

MEMBER 3: STA

Gender: Male

Cultural group: Owambo

Results of Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System:

STA had average simultaneous and successive processes with his simultaneous processes a little stronger than the successive. This indicates good insight and comprehension, but slightly weaker detail orientation, sequential thinking and systematic and objective reasoning. The latter can cause difficulties with reading and writing. His attention and planning processes were much lower than the former, with his planning processes being very weak. His mother reported a lack of motivation to study and he seemed emotionally behind his peers. He also seems to have attention deficit problems.

Needs:

On educational level he needs stimulation of the successive processes and a further diagnoses of possible attention deficit disorder and help with this. On emotional level, he needs to work on his self-awareness, motivation and responsibility for his own life. Such low planning processes might indicate a need for help on all levels of emotional intelligence.

Inclusion in programme:

STA was included in the Afrikaans group, because this is his home language together with Owambo, which is also spoken at home. His emotional intelligence related processes are very weak and needs urgent attention. If he does not develop on emotional level he might find it extremely difficult to use his executive processes to its full potential.

MEMBER 4: E

Gender: Female

Cultural group: Owambo

Results of Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System:

E's simultaneous processes, thus her ability to understand and have insight in processes in her personal life as well as academically, is lower than her successive processes (logical, factual thinking). Her attention processes is on nearly the same level. Her planning processes are even lower than these.
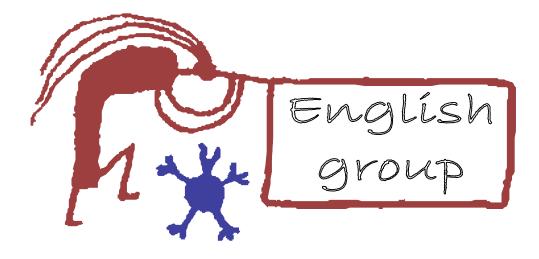
Needs:

E needs help with insight and understanding of her work on educational level. She thus needs to strengthen her simultaneous processes for increased insight in work as well as her self. Her planning processes are extremely low in relation to the other processes. She thus needs a lot of work on emotional level. She needs to work on her self-awareness, understanding of her feelings and having control over her feelings. Improvement of the latter might help her to increase her simultaneous processes too, as the latter includes insight and understanding, also of the self and life situations.

Inclusion in programme:

E was included in the Afrikaans group as she speaks Owambo and Afrikaans at home. Although her educational language is mostly English, she also speaks Afrikaans at school with friends and some teachers. E needed this programme to at least start off working on her emotional intelligence and thus gain insight in herself and her environment.

MEMBER 5 AND MEMBER 6:

These two group members will not be discussed, because although they were initially included in the programme, their caretakers could not make the meetings practically. They therefore requested inclusion in a similar programme during 2006.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

This group was very active and nearly all of the children were extroverts. Extroverts tend to be more talkative, seek action and variety and cannot concentrate for a prolonged period of time on one task (compare Briggs Myers, 1998:9; Jopie van Rooyen & Partners SA, 2005:45). They experienced common emotional control difficulties relating to anger management and self-confidence related problems relating to learning difficulties.

MEMBER 1: J

Gender: Female

Cultural group: Herero

Results of Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System:

J's simultaneous processes, thus her ability to understand and have insight in processes in her personal life as well as academically, is lower than her successive processes (logical, factual thinking). Her planning processes are lower than all other processes, although nearly on the same level than her simultaneous processes. Her attention processes are on average level and is the strongest of all scores.

Needs:

J needs help with insight and understanding of her work on educational level. She thus needs to strengthen her simultaneous processes for increased insight in work as well as her self. Her planning processes and the above-mentioned insight related simultaneous processes are very low in relation to the other two processes. She thus needs a lot of work on insight in relation to her self, her emotions and control over this. She needs to work on her self-awareness, understanding of her feelings and having control over her feelings. Improvement of the latter might help her to increase her simultaneous processes too, as the latter includes insight and understanding, also of the self and life situations.

Inclusion in programme:

J was included in the English group as she speaks Herero and English at home. Her educational language is only English and this is also the language in which she communicates with friends and other important others. J needed this programme to cope with her difficulties and frustrations concerning schoolwork and to increase her tolerance for difficult situations.

MEMBER 2: K

Gender: Female

Cultural group: Western-German

Results of Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System:

K's simultaneous processes and successive processes, which are the executive information processing functions are both on average level, with her simultaneous (understanding / insight) processes a little higher. Both her planning and attention processes are on low-average levels, with her planning processes the lowest. It seems as if K suffers from attention deficit disorder with hyperactivity after confirmation with follow-up screenings.

Needs:

K needs help with identification and insight in her emotions and control over this. She needs to work on her self-awareness, understanding of her feelings and having control over her feelings. She also needs help with interpersonal relationships and her self-image.

Inclusion in programme:

K was included in the English group as she speaks German and English at home. Her educational language is only English and this is also the language in which she communicates with friends and other important others. K needed this programme to cope with the emotional consequences of her problems with attention deficit with hyperactivity. After discussions with her caretakers and teachers, it also seemed as if she might experience some emotional stress at home due to the absence of structure and consistent discipline, as well as the marital stress between her parents. She also has a sibling who has Down's syndrome.

MEMBER 3: V

Gender: Female

Cultural group: Herero

Results of Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System:

V's successive processes and planning processes were significantly lower than her simultaneous and attention processes, which were on exactly the same level. This might be an indication of learning problems specifically concerned with reading, spelling and mathematics. V's self-confidence might have been negatively influenced by her difficulties with reading and spelling in school and all the negative feedback she receives in connection with her academic abilities.

Needs:

V needs help with her self-confidence and courage and motivation to handle difficult situations. She needs to accept herself with her learning difficulties and needs to develop ways to deal with negative feedback. She might also need some insight in her emotions and their value.

Inclusion in programme:

V was included in the English group as she speaks Herero and English at home. Her educational language is only English and this is also the language in which she communicates with friends and other important others. V needed this programme to cope with the emotional consequences of her learning problems. These include self-awareness, insight, courage and resilience to cope with difficulties and most of all and increased self-image and –confidence.

V's caretakers also found the practical arrangements of the group meetings very difficult. Although they were very serious about helping her, she could not attend all the sessions, including the post-test session. The researcher included her in the results of the programme and sent a report on her progress based on observations and recommendations concerning her needs to her caretakers.

MEMBER 4: P

Gender: Male

Cultural group: Herero

Results of Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System:

P had average successive processes and slightly lower attention processes. His simultaneous processes and his planning processes are extremely weak, especially his simultaneous processes. This indicates significant difficulties with insight and comprehension of both personal and emotional related happenings as well as schoolwork. His low planning processes lead to problems with self-confidence, self-control and the ability to find solutions for personal problems.

Needs:

On educational level he needs stimulation of the simultaneous processes for increased insight of schoolwork and his personal life. On emotional level, he needs to work on his self-awareness, motivation and responsibility for his own life. Such low planning processes might indicate a need for help on all levels of emotional intelligence.

Inclusion in programme:

P was included in the English group, because this is his home language together with Herero, which is also spoken at home. His emotional intelligence related processes are very weak and needs urgent attention and his processes relating to insight in himself are even weaker. Increased emotional intelligence might also stimulate the simultaneous processes.

MEMBER 5: R

Gender: Male

Cultural group: Western – German / English

Results of Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System:

R's scores on this assessment were in general high. His planning scores were lower in comparison to his other processes, especially his executive processes, which were high. His simultaneous processes (insight and understanding) were a little lower than his successive (logical reasoning) processes. His attention score was also a little lower than his high executive processes scores.

Needs:

R's needs are related to emotional intelligence and attention. His caretakers communicated the need for personal control and organisation. R seemed a little scatter brained and "immature" for his age to them. R thus needs insight in his emotions and skills for emotional control, motivation and goal orientation.

Inclusion in programme:

R was included in the English group, because this is his educational language. At home he communicates in both German and English. His emotional intelligence related processes and general coping skills concerning self-control / discipline and a goal-oriented life seemed the most important reasons for inclusion in the programme.

MEMBER 6:

KA was included in the programme, but only attended the first three sessions. His caretakers discontinued the sessions because of practical arrangements with transport and supervision of KA after sessions until his transport arrives. He was also a little young in comparison with the other members of the group. The researcher therefore agreed with his caretakers to rather include him in a more appropriate group during 2006, and also settle for better practical arrangements for his transport and care.

Following the selection of the members of the two research groups as well as the group for the pilot study (selection process not discussed in detail), the researcher still worked on the compilation of the intervention programme. The parts following the discussion on the selection of the group members include the process during which the intervention programme was compiled and finalised and also an overview of the final programme and its application.

5.3 Compilation of the intervention programme

The intervention programme was compiled after the biggest part of the literature study was finalised. The information from the literature study was essential for the content of the intervention programme.

The final intervention programme was compiled and developed following the steps listed below:

- Identification of emotional intelligence themes to include in programme
  (These themes had to be related to both emotional intelligence and Gestalt theory)
- Identification of the sequence of the themes in the programme
- Researching applicable ideas for play therapy techniques to apply in a culturally sensitive way
- Starting the pilot study to test the draft intervention programme
- Adapting and further development of the programme as the pilot study progressed
- Make adaptations to exercises presented in the pilot programme
- As the adaptation of techniques and further development of the intervention programme were completed, the research groups were initiated – before the final sessions of the pilot group were done. The final intervention programme was thus initiated before the pilot programme was completely finished. The latter was possible as the pilot programme could still be adapted in time before the research groups would use that specific session.

5.4   The application of the intervention programme

5.4.1   Introduction

As stated above, the intervention programme was compiled using a variety of Gestalt play therapy techniques, which were creatively adapted to the needs of the programme and group members.

The researcher will discuss the sessions of the final intervention programme, as adapted after the pilot study, in the following paragraphs. A summary of the goal and techniques of each session will be given as well as a copy of one of the sessions as it is presented in the intervention programme included as an addendum to this research report. Some visual representations of the exercises will be provided in the form of photographs to enhance insight in the intervention programme. The researcher is referred to as the therapist in this section, to make these paragraphs more applicable to the reader who might like to use this intervention programme. The researcher was a therapist especially during the final intervention study, because it was also necessary to work on her own therapeutic skills, self-awareness and awareness of cultural values.

The programme starts with a discussion of aspects of therapy to keep in mind when applying this programme. The programme's sessions follow after this. The programme can be presented in a minimum of 12 to 13 sessions and a maximum of 15 sessions, depending on the needs of the group members and practical considerations. Feedback reports are sent out after the programme to inform caretakers of the goal and content of the programme and the outcomes of the post-test or observations of the child under their care. Personal feedback sessions can also be arranged if needed.

The following is a summarised overview of each one of the 12 basic sessions of the final intervention programme. Some of these are exactly the same as the ones in the pilot study and some were adapted, added or taken away from the pilot programme.

5.4.2   Sessions

In the final intervention programme each session is divided in the following parts:

● The goal

● A list of techniques used in the session

● Material needed

● Content based on the Schoeman model, namely strengthening of the interpersonal relationships, sensory awareness, projections, owning of projections, alternatives and self nurturing (Schoeman, 2004b:118)

● Appendices with material needed for the session, information letters, forms and questionnaires and any other extra material needed to complete the session.

The Schoeman-model in the content part of the sessions is not always identified, but is included. Certain parts of the model are clearly identified, like the sensory exercise and the self-nurturing exercise.

The following paragraphs is a short overview of each one of the sessions of the final intervention programme:

5.4.2.1 Session 1:Introduction of programme and group rules

The focus of this session is to start with the first step of the Schoeman-model – building relationships. The group members and therapist are introduced and get to know each other a little better. The value, goal and content of the programme is explained to the group members. The group members explored their processes with an exercise where each member chose an animal with which he/she can relate and explained the relation. The therapist explained to the group that certain rules might be important to ensure effective sessions. The therapist added some rules and the rest were added by group members. They could make a poster with drawings of the preferred rules for their group to keep the exercise active.

The following techniques were applied in this session:

● Creative techniques

● Imaginary techniques

● Biblio-play techniques

● Dialogue

5.4.2.2 Session 2: Schoeman model and identifying of processes (DISC exercise)

The group members were introduced to the typical process of the sessions, which is based on the Schoeman model. The therapist explained the Schoeman model by applying it. The session thus started with an explanation of the Schoeman model and specifically the sensory exercise, then the group member engaged in a sensory exercise. During this session the group members completed the DISC exercise named "All About Bots! All About You!" (Rohm, 1998). The procedure for this exercise is explained in the intervention programme, Session 2, which is attached to this research report as an addendum. The group members shared their experiences of the Bots exercise to increase self-awareness. If needed and if time allows, the group could work a little more on the group rules poster/s. Self-nurturing was done with an imaginary exercise.

The following techniques were applied in this session:

- Sensory exercises
- Biblio-play technique – using stories of Robots in DISC exercise
- Dialogue – self-awareness
- Creativity and biblio-play – last drawings on group rules
- Imaginary exercise - Choosing a present from a shop – self-nurturing

5.4.2.3 Session 3: Self-awareness: Creating a life book

The therapist should work hard on strengthening the relationship between the therapist and group members and on enhancing an atmosphere of acceptance. The children can feel free to relate to each other in a safe emotional climate where they can be who they really are and can feel free to learn to know each other and themselves.

If the DISC exercise was not completed during the previous week's session, it could be completed during this one. The main exercise for the current session was the introduction of life books. Each group member received an empty A5 book and a set of ten sticker headings. The headings or topics are related to knowledge of themselves including the following: What I look like, My favourite foods, My home, Things that make me sad, Things about my friends, Things I dream about, I hate…, Things I like to do, My family, My favourite vacation, Things about my school, My favourite TV programmes, I love…, I

am… . They need to complete at least one topic per week. They had a double A5 page per topic. They could use photographs, magazine pictures, drawings, writing, paint, scrap booking techniques etcetera. to complete their life books. During the session the group members had the opportunity to decorate the outside of their life books with anything that fit their being, or that is descriptive of them, or which they really like. They can use any medium, which is available during the session. Each group member got a chance to present their book's cover and explain what they did and why – thus explaining the meaning of the decorations. If they were not finished yet, they could complete this at home for the following session. The life books were checked, shared and discussed in the beginning of each one of the following sessions.

The following techniques were applied in this session:

- Sensory exercises
- Biblio technique
- Dialogue
- Progressive relaxation

Figure 6.9 Presentations of children creating life books during session 3

5.4.2.4 Session 4: Self-awareness: Creative cookies

The therapist was still focusing on the relationship. By the forth session the group members and therapist were already used to and familiar with each other. Giving hugs as the children arrived and hearing how they feel seemed a very natural and much needed act. The children enjoyed this.

The sessions from now on started with an attempt to share the life books, but without too much pressure on those who did not finish their task for the week. Exploring themselves using the life book was also their responsibility.

The sensory exercise was based on exploring true feelings, because self-awareness was the main goal here. Another goal of this self-awareness session was to share one self with others and to hear other's perceptions of you. This was done in a fun way.

As already explained in the pilot study, the therapist made use of a creative exercise to give feedback to the group members about the outcome of the DISC exercise. The researcher explained each one's behaviour / personality style to them and had a short discussion on whether they agree with this or not. After this, a variety of cookie shapes were presented with icing sugar in different colours and other cake decorations. All group members had to represent their behaviour styles by decorating one cookie. After this each one had a chance to present the cookie and explain what it means. Here after they had to make another representation of themselves, which they could take home and share with someone they trust. The self-nurturing exercise of this session also included making the most enjoyable cookies possible for themselves.

The following techniques were applied in this session:

- Sensory exercises – tasting cookies of different tastes and smells
- Creative technique – building cookies
- Dialogue – sharing the cookie built by each one as well as how others think he/she should have build the cookie
- Imaginary exercise – making the most desirable cookie to eat and eat it

Figure 6.10 Presentations of children's creative cookies during session 4

5.4.2.5 Session 5: Exploring our different homes and values

The therapist still focused on the relationships within the group. This session was focused on awareness of your own field and that of others and also on accepting others in their otherness because of their cultural fields. The therapist used creative work and fun activities for the presentation of the cultures. Children made drawings with white board markers on little A4 white boards to represent their homes. The people in their homes where represented with little paper dolls. After his or her representations were finished, each member got a chance to present it to the group and have a group discussion on it. The group members had to include the following in their presentations of their family culture:

the people living in the house, family rules, family time and any other typical cultural activities.

The therapist made the children aware of the value of each child's culture and the value of having different cultures.

The following techniques were applied in this session:

- Sensory exercises – awareness of skin sensations, movement
- Creative techniques – drawing homes on white boards
- Biblio play techniques (media) – cutting out figures, applied to exercise
- Dialogue – sharing the sensory exercise's experience and feelings
- sharing their life books up to now
- discussing and sharing the value of cultures of self and others
- sharing compliments in self-nurturing
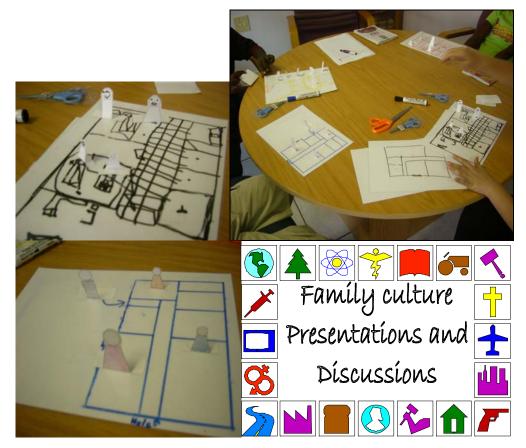- Experiments – if needed children need to handle a specific situation or discuss it

Figure 6.11 Family culture presentations

5.4.2.6 Session 6: Emotions: Identifying feelings

During this session the group members learned to identify their feelings by learning the concepts related to the feelings. They also explored different situations, which caused these feelings in their own lives and the value or 'job' of feelings in general. This was also applied to their own lives to increase their understanding of feelings / emotions. They identified feeling faces, coloured the faces with colours, which fit their experience of that feeling. Recognising facial expressions associated with feelings seemed an effective technique in a culturally sensitive programme, because typical facial expressions associated with feelings seems universally similar (Le Doux, 1998:109). This way the children also learned to identify the feelings of other people, which might increase their interpersonal skills. They identified situations that cause certain feelings, using a collage like drawing or white boards and white board markers. The therapist used explanations, imaginary exercises and discussions to show the value of feelings. The latter seemed a very abstract concept in all groups. The group also discussed how they could use their feelings as part of the value thereof.

The following techniques were applied in this session:

- Sensory exercises – looking at pictures and connecting feelings, conscious breathing to enhance the release of endorphins
- Cognitive exercises – categorising feelings
- Creative techniques – colouring, drawing, collage
- Dialogue – sharing the sensory exercise's experience and feelings
- sharing their life books up to now, discussing the value of feelings
- completing the exercise on how we can use our feelings
- completing the incomplete sentences through discussion
- Experiments – if needed children can act out feelings or situations concerning the incomplete sentences - they can also practice how to express themselves using 'I feel' messages
- Imaginary exercise

Figure 6.12 Identifying feelings and experiments with feelings

5.4.2.7 Session 7: Being in control of our feelings

Here the group members could start to apply their knowledge about feelings to their lives. Taking responsibility for their own lives was a very important theme to cover from now on. The therapist explained the ABC-theory of Ellis (Corey, 1996:371-390) with an imaginary exercise, explanations and discussions of experiences and feelings. The group members needed to understand that feeling and behaviour consequences are not really caused by an activating event, but by the way we think about it, thus our beliefs. They could change their feeling and behaviour consequences by changing their beliefs. Although this was experienced in the imaginary exercise, the concept is still very abstract and was difficult for the group members to understand. The group members then learned a method of how to control certain feelings like test anxiety and anger. The therapist used a visual exercise of a robot. The method to control feelings and its effect was to STOP AND RELAX as the red light, THINK as the yellow light and DO what you decided as the green light. The group discussed and practiced how they could apply this in situations applicable to their own lives. Some groups used test anxiety and other used situations where they loose their tempers and get angry. This application is very experiential. The therapist went in confluence with the group members and act on their needs. Experiments with their needs were important. They needed to experience the application of this technique.

The following techniques were applied in this session:

- Conscious breathing to enhance the release of endorphins. Sensory exercises – looking at objects through a 'looking tunnel', identifying what they saw by touching the objects under a cloth.

- Biblio / imaginative technique – story to explain ABC theory

- Creative technique – making drawings of the feeling faces and thoughts on laminated cardboard with white board markers.

- Biblio technique, experiment – robot

- Creative technique, biblio technique – continuing to make a life book

- Dialogue – sharing the sensory exercise's experience and feelings

- sharing their life books up to now

- discussing the value of thoughts determining our feelings

- Experiments – if needed with the robot technique. If someone has a feeling, which he wants to change, practice the robot technique with him.

- Imaginary exercise – dream of a time when they really had a good laugh with friends, try to remember the feeling when they laughed, take it with them through the day.

5.4.2.8 Session 8: Knowing self as a whole

In this session the therapist focused a lot on holism both as part of Gestalt therapy as well as emotional intelligence. During this session the children used games to understand how all the different parts of their selves are influencing each other. Discussions on how they experienced this in their lives were used to own the projection. The findings of Pert (1999:190) that the presence of more positive neuropeptides in the body can inhibit the possibility of viruses to attack cells were used. The therapist presented a game where the group members were divided in black and yellow teams and had to put pins on a cardboard cell within a certain time. The team with the most pins won. This was used to explain Pert's (1999:190) findings. Another exercise included a visual representation with black and yellow pins as viruses and neuropeptides and clay as cells. The children used magazine pictures of people to indicate what the state of their cells would be by using black pins for viruses and yellow pins for positive neuropeptides. The group discussed the application of this in their own lives.

The following techniques were applied in this session:

- Conscious breathing to enhance the release of endorphins. Sensory exercises – feeling, smelling, tasting, seeing – thus many senses connected to thoughts and feelings.

- (Experiment with feeling and thinking – writing words under no pressure, writing words under pressure) OPTIONAL IF TIME ALLOWS OR IF SOME MEMBERS EXPERIENCE TEST ANXIETY.

- Biblio play: Board game, Story of cells with clay, poster with healthy alternatives

- Creative play: Making own cell to represent a situation / condition / experience

- Imaginary exercise – dream of a possible alternative to apply and experience it – doing something to make the self as a whole healthy.

Figure 6.13 Presentations of body cells with good and bad ligands / messengers

5.4.2.9 Session 9: Making friends – good communication

Communication and interpersonal skills were learned with a story, board game and card game. The story was focused on one child's way of handling a bully in his class, which is one way to handle a difficult interpersonal situation. The group members discussed the message of the story afterwards. The games were adapted after the pilot study to a more active orientation, with less explanations and more action. The children in all groups enjoyed this session very much. The games can therefore still be used to be aware of and develop interpersonal skills. Although this is the case, the session might still need some more work to increase the speed of the board game. The board and card games are explained in more detail in the addendum with the intervention programme – session 9.

The following techniques were applied in this session:

- Sensory exercises – feeling, smelling, tasting, seeing an orange – thus many senses connected to thoughts and feelings.
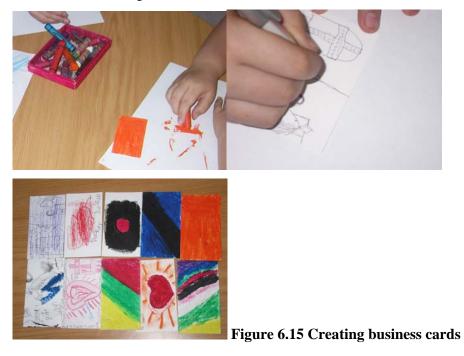
- Biblio play: Story, Board games

- Dialogue

Figure 6.14 The friendship puzzle game

5.4.2.10   Session 10: Being flexible…and resilient – Perseverence

This session was mainly based on discussions on projections of things that can go wrong in the children's lives. The therapist did a brainstorm exercise with the children on a white board and engaged in discussions on things that did not go right during that specific day at school and home. The therapist also used an imaginary exercise to help the group members to think about the worst thing that could ever happen to them. They were encouraged to be aware of such an experience on different levels of the self, feelings, thoughts and physical experiences – again being aware of the self as a whole. They represented this in a creative way. The group members and therapist used discussions of ways to handle this and made a visual presentation of perseverance as a reminder of the message of this session. The continuous theme of taking responsibility for their own lives were emphasised again.

The following techniques were applied in this session:

- Sensory exercises – feeling, smelling, tasting, seeing – thus many senses connected to thoughts and feelings.
- Biblio play – brainstorm on white board
- Creative exercises – creating business cards
- Dialogue

Figure 6.15 Creating business cards

5.4.2.11   Session 11: Making a choice for happiness

The choice for happiness was included as part of taking responsibility for your own life. The group members used discussions and biblio play to find how they can make themselves happy. They made a big collage poster of things to use to make themselves happy. The ABC theory of Ellis (Corey, 1996:371-390) was revisited in the discussion on what can make us happy. Also the session of the self as a whole was revisited to discuss in which ways we can cause our own happiness. The therapist used an imaginary exercise to help the group members to apply a choice for happiness. The collage was discussed as they were busy creating it. They also made a business card to remind them to choose to be happy. Giving the group members a homework exercise encouraged owning of this projection and alternative. They could try one of the following: smiling at themselves in the mirror when they got up in the morning or if they don't feel that happy, greet someone in a friendly way when they get at school and notice how they feel afterwards.

The following techniques were applied in this session:
- Sensory exercises
- Biblio play – making a collage poster
- Imaginative exercise
- Dialogue – discussions and conclusions
- Creative play – making business cards to remind them to choose to be happy

Figure 6.16 Collage and business cards of making a choice for happiness

5.4.2.12   Session 12: A goal for my life – identifying a passion

Responsibility was still a continuous theme. The children could now start to use their previously gained knowledge about themselves to create a goal for their own lives. The theme was introduced by an exercise where group members compared their experience of the following: first going anywhere in the room then thinking about a favourite colour and going to a place where they could see that colour. A goal for one's life was discussed in the group as well as their awareness of what and who they really are. They each made a flag as a symbol for their goal for their lives. Discussions on the meaning of their flags were used as owning of the projection. This exercise was kept as it is from the pilot programme. The group members could relate to this, but finding a goal for their SELVES seemed a novel experience to them. The therapist found that very few group members were aware of a passion that drives them.

The following techniques were applied in this session:

● Sensory exercises – tasting and sharing experiences
● Dramatic play / experimenting / active play – acting out the search of a goal
● Dialogue – discussions and conclusions
● Creative play – making goal flags
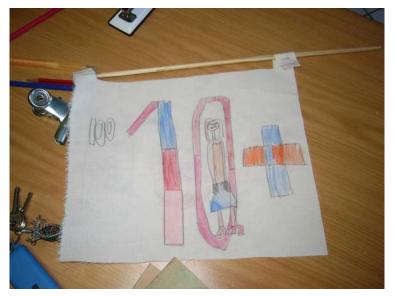

Figure 6.17 A goal flag

5.4.2.13   *Session 13: Post-test and conclusion of programme (can be combined*
               with session 12 if necessary)

This session was used both for the post-test as well as a conclusion of the programme. This session was an extended session of two hours instead of only 90 minutes. The therapist attempted to make this a fun session. She started the session of with the post-test to finish the less fun part before the group could enjoy the remainder of the session. The planning processes of the Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System (Naglieri & Das, 1997a) were applied as a post-test. The applicability of this part of the Cognitive Assessment System was assessed during the pilot study. The planning processes could be assessed successfully in a group situation. The therapist assured the group-members that this is not a way to assess their intelligence or skills. It is simply one of many ways to determine whether they have grown over the past weeks. Enjoyment of the testing situation was discussed as well as techniques to handle test anxiety when necessary. The therapist sat around the table with the group members. They used little dividers to ensure that they don't look on each other's work. The researcher could still have a view on all of the members' tasks. After the test, the groups had short discussions on the way that they handled the testing situation. Here after, the rest of the session was spent in just the way the group members wished. The group members brought things to eat to have a little party. They could do whatever they preferred. Some groups repeated the 'creatie cookie' exercise, others played games or they preferred to sit around the table, eating and talking.

Near the end of the session, the therapist called everybody together and handed out a special message, which was prepared before the time for each member with a special chocolate for each one. The therapist wanted to give the final message of how important each one of the members were to the group and the therapist and wanted each one to get an inspirational message to build their self-images.

Following this session the therapist scored the post-tests and compiled a feedback report for the caretakers. The report contained an overview of the programme and its goals, the need/s of the specific child and the growth that was observed. A discussion of the child's personality profile according to the

DISC exercise was included as well as recommendations for further growth. The therapist added a little memorabilia in the form of a key ring with a photo of the group members.

The final research programme consists of an introduction to the programme with the theoretical background as found in the literature study. No references to the research study were made, because therapists who did not read the full research report can also use the programme. Following the visual images of the final session, is an example of the layout of one of the sessions in the report:

Figure 6.18 From top to bottom and left to right: Having cookies for the closing party, Combining session 12 with last session, A fun group photo during the final session

5.4.3   Example of a session

SESSION 1
INTRODUCTION OF PROGRAMME AND GROUP RULES

GOAL

- An initial introduction of all the group members
- To introduce participants to the type of programme and an overview of the content of an emotional intelligence programme
- Orientation towards what group work / therapy is: Introduction to the structure of group sessions – the Schoeman model
- Clarification of group rules
- To get the group members enthusiastic about the programme

TECHNIQUES

- Creative techniques
- Imaginary techniques
- Biblio play techniques
- Dialogue

MATERIAL NEEDED

- Play animals
- Crayons, A3 paper or A3/A2 piece of card board

1. **Introduction of all group members**

● Technique: Dialogue, imaginary exercise

Therapist introduce herself

Other group members should each one choose an animal whom they think is a little like him/her. They should then share in the group why they are a little like that animal. They should then also say their names.

2. **To introduce participants to the type of programme and an overview of the content of an emotional intelligence programme**

● Technique: Dialogue / biblio play

The therapist asks the children what they think they are going to do and through dialogic interaction give a quick overview of the programme.
A time graphic card can be used to show how the different themes will follow.

3. **Orientation towards what group work / therapy is: Introduction to the structure of group sessions – the Schoeman model**

● Technique: Dialogue

The therapist explain to the children that they will always first do a short sensory exercise, followed by their theme related activity, which they will discuss and apply to their lives, they will always end off the sessions with self-nurturing.

4. **Clarification of group rules**

● Technique: Dialogue, creativity. Biblio play

The therapist set certain basic group rules. While doing this she make a drawing of each on an A3 / A2 paper / card board. Children can add and discuss some more rules, which they would like to add. This part of the session will continue during the next session when they can add more rules.

5.   Inspirational part / self nurturing

● Technique: Dialogue and creativity

The inspiration towards enthusiasm about the programme should be done through the session. Children should share a favourite thing they wish they could do during the rest of the day. After this they can share how they will feel if they could do this. They should all imagine themselves that they can do this and try to feel the way they would then when they leave.

6.   Conclusion

Hand out information letters to parents as well as summary of session.

APPENDIX 1 OF SESSION 1

INFORMATION LETTER TO PARENTS

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Dear Parent

Herewith I want to thank you for including your child in the programme presented by me this term. I will try my best to make this an enjoyable learning experience.

This programme has as its goal the strengthening of your child's emotional intelligence. Based on the CAS test done previously, your child's planning processes was a little weaker than what it should be for effective support of other thinking processes. Planning processes are closely linked to emotional intelligence as it incorporates the skills necessary for good emotional intelligence.

The following are the basic themes, which will be covered in the programme:

- Awareness of self and emotions – self-knowledge
- Being responsible and in control of emotions and thoughts
- Expressing feelings using the right vocabulary
- A good relationship with other people
- Understanding self as 'n whole – feelings, thoughts, body
- Being flexible – also accepting different opinions
- Having a goal / purpose in life
- Being motivated, enthusiastic and positive
- Courage and energy to be what he/she wants – not to give up when failing
- We choose happiness

The programme will be presented over 12 weeks to be able to cover the necessary themes. Follow-up programmes might be available if necessary. No sessions will be held during school holidays.

The first two sessions will be spent on an introduction to the programme and group members as well as determining the child's personality / behaviour and learning style.

Please complete the slip at the bottom of this letter and return this with your child to the next session.

Sessions will be one and a half hour long. It will start exactly at …….to be able to fit the programme goals and also to fit in with the rest of the afternoon programmes of the children. Please bring your child on time and pick him/her up at ……. again. We can unfortunately not promise safe care for your child before or after the sessions as the practice also accommodate other therapists and clients.

I sincerely hope that we will have an enjoyable and effective programme. You will receive an information slip each week, with the theme for the week and the date of the next session.

Yours sincerely.

Marelise Calitz
Psychometrist and Educational Consultant

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Herewith I, _____ , parent of

_____ Give my permission that this child may be included on a videotaped session/s for research / study purposes.
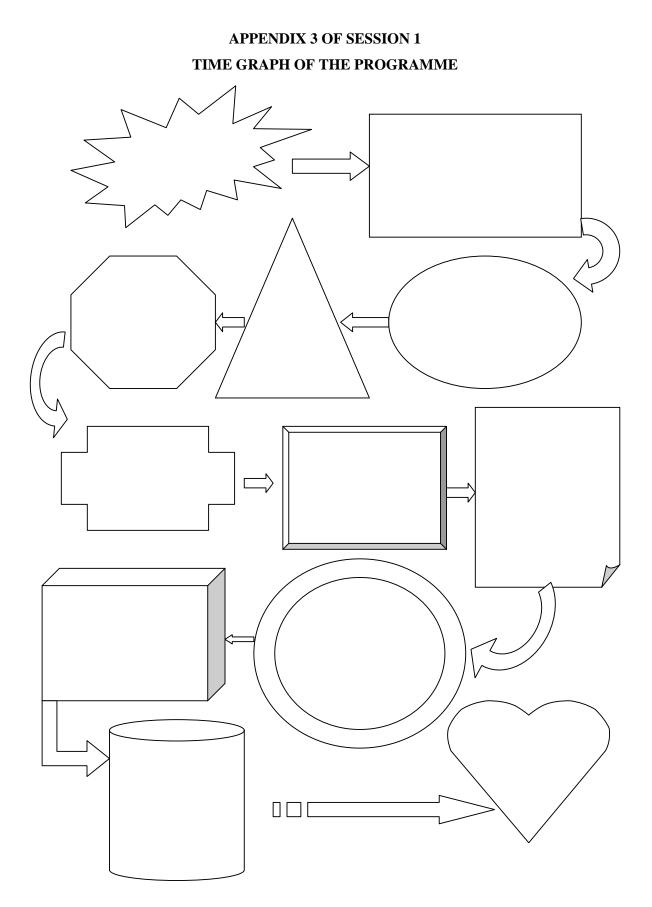
Signed:

_____   _____

Parent   Date

APPENDIX 2 OF SESSION 1

PROCESS NOTES FOR USE THROUGH PROGRAMME

Process:_____

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Notes: _____

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APPENDIX 3 OF SESSION 1
TIME GRAPH OF THE PROGRAMME

APPENDIX 4 OF SESSION 1

SESSION OVERVIEW AND REMINDER TO PARENTS

OVERVIEW OF SESSION 1

* **INTRODUCTION OF ALL GROUP MEMBERS AND THE PROGRAMME**
* **GROUP RULES**

NEXT SESSION: DAY:…………………..DATE:……………………

5.4.4   Gestalt play therapy techniques used

While developing the intervention programme, the researcher did not focus on including all the different types of play therapy techniques. The researcher rather focused on using a variety of techniques, which were most suitable to enhance each emotional intelligence theme.

The techniques used in the final intervention programme and sessions in general were adapted and developed further, as the pilot study progressed. The process of selecting appropriate techniques developed through the following phases:

- Studying and listing a variety of possible techniques found in literature
- Applying a selection of these techniques, which the researcher could use to enhance emotional intelligence of primary school children in a cultural sensitive way
- Assessing whether these are effective in the pilot programme
- Assessment of effectiveness of techniques in the final intervention programme

The researcher applied types of techniques in different ways in the sessions. The type of technique could therefore be a heading of applications thereof. Under each technique heading the researcher placed a variety of applications in the programme. The researcher listed the types of techniques and a cryptic summary of the applications as it appeared in the final research programme below. The techniques discussed include:

- Imaginary techniques
- Creative techniques
- Projection techniques
- Dialogue
- Sensory exercises
- Biblio play techniques
- Experiments
- Cognitive exercises
- Conscious breathing
- Games
- Dramatic play / experimenting / active play

5.4.4.1 Imaginary techniques

- Imagine to be at a favourite place as part of sensory and self-nurturing activities
- Choose a picture and imagine to be in the picture, using awareness of all senses
- Dream of a possible alternative to apply and experience it – doing something to make the self as a whole healthy

5.4.4.2 Creative techniques

- Creating group rule posters
- Drawing homes on white boards
- Colouring, drawing, collages
- Clay: representing body cells with clay
- Creating business cards: I will never give up
- Creating business cards to remind you to choose happiness
- Creating a flag as a symbol for you goal for your self
- Colouring toilet rolls according to a feeling experienced in relation to an object on which the person focused through the roll – the rolls were used as looking tunnels
- Drawing experiences of sounds of nature on a CD, part of sensory exercise

5.4.4.3 Projection techniques

Projection techniques were used as an opportunity for the child to project himself or his feelings onto something else to deal with this in a non-threatening way. The researcher as therapist used creative techniques as projection techniques at times.

- Pretending to be an animal for awareness of process
- Creative cookie technique – representing the self in the form of a cookie

5.4.4.4 Dialogue

- Discussing programme, group rules and processes according to choice of animals
- Self-awareness, sharing DISC preferences
- Sharing the sensory exercise's experience and feelings
- Sharing their life books up to that specific session
- Discussing and sharing the value of cultures of self and others
- Sharing compliments in self-nurturing
- Discussing the value of feelings
- Completing the exercise on how we can use our feelings
- Completing the incomplete sentences through discussion – they can also practice how to express themselves using 'I feel' messages
- Discussions and conclusions

5.4.4.5 *Sensory exercises*

- smell pots
- awareness of skin sensations, movement, brain gym
- looking at pictures and connecting feelings, conscious breathing to enhance the release of endorphins
- feeling, smelling, tasting, seeing – thus many senses connected to thoughts and feelings
- feeling, smelling, tasting, seeing an orange – thus many senses connected to thoughts and feelings
- tasting chocolate and sharing experiences
- looking tunnels – looking at environment through toilet rolls, connecting a feeling to the object on which the person focuses
- feeling, smelling and tasting objects with contrasting surfaces, smells and tastes
- listening to sounds of nature on a CD, identifying, describing and associating it with a feeling

5.4.4.6 Biblio play

Any exercise where children will make use of some or a variety of audio and / or visual material is understood as biblio play *(Chapter 4, 3.2.6 Biblio play).*

- Using stories of Robots in DISC exercise
- A story/s for discussion of interpersonal skills
- Cutting out figures, applying to exercise
- Board game, Story of cells with clay, poster with healthy alternatives
- Brainstorm situations / things that can go wrong during a day and in general on white board
- Making a collage of things you can use to make you happy

5.4.4.7 Experiments

- If needed children need to handle or practice a specific situation or discuss it
- Experiment with feeling and thinking – writing words under no pressure, writing words under pressure, experience and discuss the difference

5.4.4.8 Cognitive exercises

- Categorising feelings
- Listing positive consequences and beliefs using the ABC-theory

5.4.4.9 Conscious breathing

- To enhance the release of endorphins (Pert, 1997:187)
- To be aware of usually unconscious processes can increase awareness of self (Pert, 1997:186, 293)
- Increase awareness of self and healing contact (Pert, 1997:293-294)

5.4.4.10 Games

- Board game with cells and pins representing viruses and endorphins
- Board game to discuss interpersonal relationships / the characteristics of good and bad friendships
- Card game to increase awareness of interpersonal skills

5.4.4.11   Dramatic play / planned experimenting / active play

- Acting out the search of a goal

5.4.4.12   The therapeutic relationship with the children

- Present in each session
- The researcher as therapist attempted to create a warm and accepting emotional climate where children could be free to be themselves and try out new behaviour during experiments. This environment is healing.
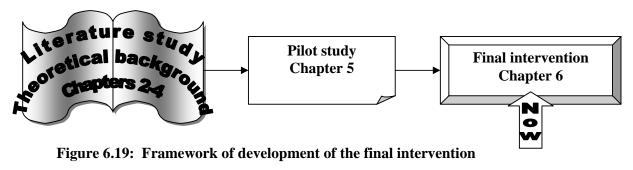
5.4.4.13   Biding one's time

- The researcher as therapist attempted to suppress her urgency to cover all the exercises and themes planned for one session.
- The researcher focused on the children's current needs and foreground issues while busy with a session's theme. Their foreground needs were given priority over finishing all the exercises for that session.

The last two techniques as well as the use of experiments proofed most useful according to the process notes taken after each session by the researcher as therapist. If these were neglected, the therapist noted a salient negative effect on the group members' comprehension of the presented theme.

6.   CONCLUSION

This chapter covered the intervention programme and its application. The Gestalt therapy techniques used here is the outcome of this study. The outcome still needs to be proven as effective or not. This will be covered in the next chapter, which covers the research findings. Here the outcomes of the post-test are stated and evaluated. The researcher used this information to come to certain conclusions about the effectiveness of the techniques used in this intervention programme.

Figure 6.19:   Framework of development of the final intervention

(Final intervention)