

CHAPTER FIVE

Recurring Challenges and Problems

The first part of this chapter consists of notes on nine recurring issues and problems; the second has twenty troubleshooting charts.

NOTES ON OUTSTANDING AND RECURRING ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

This section contains notes on the following recurring issues and problems.

1. Regretting not being involved earlier
2. Questions about the experience consultants need to have and requests to visit consultors *in situ*
3. Dangers of straying beyond competencies
4. Unacceptable differences in beliefs and values
5. Taking sides
6. Encountering the surreal
7. The danger of drift from consultancy to counselling
8. Some abuses of consultancies
9. Consultancies that appear redundant

1. Regretting Not Being Involved Earlier

Some experiences of disclosure are sweet and bitter. Amongst these are those which reveal how we can achieve something we have long wanted to achieve and how we could in the the past have been more effective. Excitement and joy intertwine inextricably with regret at lost opportunities: the greater the value of the insight and the more painful, devastating, savage and possibly harmful is the regret. Times without number I have heard and voiced the plaintive cries in consultancy sessions as a consultor and a consultant: “How much more effective and useful I would have been had I known that at the beginning rather than at the middle/end of my ministry”. “Oh, all this mess could have been avoided if only we had had a consultation a short time ago and all the energy required to sort it out and get back to square one, as it were, could have been used so much more profitably!”¹ Taking the downside of such discoveries seriously is essential because they are potentially harmful to consultors and consultants. Dwelling upon what could have been, squanders emotional energy needed for the present and the future. It can breed all kinds of spurious and destructive psycho-spiritual conditions: remorse, discontent, shame, self-reproach, self-castigation, being judgemental. These undesirable states are not conducive to creative thought and action. A combination of personal and

mental and spiritual devices help me to counter it. Brief notes on the devices follow in bullet form.

- Connote the past and future positively.
- Whatever we might now think and feel about our past in the light of new insights, it is that which has brought us to the present window of opportunity. That is the way we came. Nothing we do now can change that route. Thank God that we have been brought to this point and that there is territory still to be traversed in the light of the lessons learnt from the past.
- Our orientation must be to the present and the future: attention must be on where do we go from here and not where did I come from or how did we get here.
- Focussing on the here, now and the immediate future against the background of our evaluation of previous experience helps us to:
 - reinforce our learning;
 - redeem the past (cf pp 129-131);
 - find new vocational life;
 - engage in a new phase of creative reflective engagement;
 - connote the past positively rather than negatively.
- Regret over past actions is both a sign of our fallibility (and our need to accept it) and of our desire for infallibility (which is not an option). Rarely will we get things absolutely and totally right no matter how carefully and prayerfully we consider and consult about them because we are neither omniscient nor omniscient and we are prone to sin (cf pp 129-131). Several things follow from these aspects of our condition. Progress is made by refusing to aim for anything less than perfection even though we know that it will not be achieved: idealism needs to be tailored by realism. Developmental initiatives must always be followed by any necessary corrective action.
- Every human project achieves perfection only through God's salvatory work (cf pp 129-131). Our contributions are consummated not in and of themselves but in the work of Jesus Christ: "all things are held together (cohere) in him";² they reach their perfection through his activity in human and divine affairs. At a particularly exciting but insecure and uncertain stage of my ministry the truth of this text, and the passage in which it is set, illuminated my whole being and released me from deep anxiety about the future. By faith and insight I had stepped out of the traditional forms of directive ministry highly favoured and protected by the Church into the non-directive approach to ministry widely unacceptable to the establishment. Where would this risky venture take me and those with whom I worked? How would it fit with the scheme of things? The insights from the Epistle to the Colossians enabled me to see clearly that redeeming and integrating all the pieces of work for human and spiritual well-being was Christ's work and not mine. Once my whole being possessed and was possessed by this article of living faith I was released to give myself without reserve to the work I believed God had given me to do. Of course, I had to trace out, examine and make as many connections as I possibly could with things in the wider setting, but without confusing my contextual and holistic tasks with those of Jesus Christ.

Each of these points has emerged from a lifetime of struggling with my propensity to dwell on aspects of the past which I now regret and to go on blaming myself and others destructively and at times masochistically. During these struggles they have been honed as I have used them to help myself and others to see the issues more clearly and to approach them more profoundly in a better state of mind and heart.

2. Questions About the Experience Consultants Need to Have and Requests to Visit Consultors *In Situ*

Two widely held assumptions about the giving and receiving of help and support run counter to the form of consultancy described in this book. One of them is that those most likely to be able to understand, support and help you are those who have had similar experiences to yours, had the same kind of job and worked with same kind of people in similar kinds of socio-spiritual settings and have faced the same kind of problems. This assumption runs counter to what was said in the introduction to work-views about people being able to understand each other's inner and outer realities. The other assumption is that direct acquaintance with the consultor's situation is *always* an advantage if not a necessity. Those subscribing to these assumptions can find it difficult to believe that consultants who do not have similar backgrounds and have not visited them *in situ* can possibly help them through studying their work-views with them (cf pp 51-71). They can find it difficult to see how the interactive procedures can get at their realities. Not surprisingly they tend to seek consultants with whom they can identify experientially and expect them to visit their situations.

Relevant Experience

Discussing the assumption about relevant experience with would-be consultors provides opportunities to examine the essentials of consultancy processes. Amongst other things, this involves considering what is the relevant experience that consultants need to have. As we have seen, it is the experience which gives them the knowledge and skills to help consultors *anywhere and at any time* to analyse and design programmes of work with people *whether or not they have direct personal experience of the particular forms of work and the situations in which the consultors are engaged*. Consultants gain such abilities from working and consulting with a wide spectrum of people who differ from them significantly. Their essential expertise is to bring what they know about working with people in general to bear upon the particularities of consultors and the idiosyncratic features of consultors' situations through reflective engagement in detachment.

Undoubtedly, there can be considerable advantages in consultants having knowledge and experience of the kind of work in which the consultors are involved. It helps to build up initial trust and confidence in consultors because it meets the commonly held criteria for the giving and receiving of help mentioned above. It engenders vocational rapport between consultors and consultants. Consultors can feel they are more likely to get help from those who have worked in the field. Consultants are more likely to identify critical areas and know about common problems and issues. But, this kind of familiarity can inhibit penetrating analysis.

Consultors and consultants, for instance, can lock each other in single or second rather than in second or third loop learning. Analytical processes stop when consultants collude with statements such as, "You know what it's like".

Pursuing these themes with consultors can help them to understand and try out consultancy processes with consultants from similar and dissimilar background to theirs. For most people, however, understanding of and belief in the consultancy processes described in this book come through their own experience of it or that of trusted colleagues.

On Visiting Consultors' Situations

Generally speaking essential consultancy data is in the work-views which are deeply embedded in the minds and hearts of consultors. Visits by consultants do not generally add much of value. Nonetheless, some consultors are keen that consultants visit them *in situ* or see them at work. Very few consultors have, in fact, requested I make such a visit. But for those who have, it has been an important matter. Invariably, my first response to such a request is to explore with the consultors what they feel can be gained by such a visit and why they feel it to be necessary. Sometimes this leads to new insights and understandings of consultors and their circumstances. It involves going over critical elements of the approach to consulting about consultors' situations through their work-views, and this of itself can be useful. Such a discussion can lead consultors to decide against a visit or to put their request for one into abeyance until they have had a consultancy session or to insist that they do want one.

Should the consultor and the consultant agree on a visit, then the discussion provides a background against which they can explore what kind of a visit could be arranged and to scan the possible positive and negative outcomes. *Helpful visits* are those which:

- (a) give consultors more confidence in the ability of the consultants to help them; (such a relational change is facilitative—it allows the consultant's competence to come into play);
- (b) enable consultants to see significant features of the consultor's physical and affective working environment which they had not got from other discussions;
- (c) provide opportunities for consultants to see consultors engaging with those with whom they work and thus to compare and contrast what consultors say about the way in which they relate to people with the way in which they appear to do so;
- (d) lead to what emerged from (b) and (c) being checked out and explored in subsequent consultations;
- (e) cause people in the situations to trust the consultants.

In interpreting the experience it is necessary to take into account that, to a greater or lesser extent, the consultant's presence alters the situation: s/he is not experiencing things as they are when she is not present; her/his observations are those of a visitor; the value of such visits depends upon consultants experiencing or discerning something reliably approximate to "normal".

An incident illustrates some of the issues. Over a period of two or three years, as a part of a wider programme, I acted as a consultant to an Anglican Bishop's Staff Meeting. This was a group of about twelve or fourteen people who held senior posts in the diocese. I led a two-day residential retreat on "shared ministry". Then they invited me to examine the way in which they conducted their Staff Meetings suggesting that I sit in on two or three meetings like a "fly on the wall" and then share with them anything which I felt could improve their meetings. I said that I would be glad to consult with them about their meetings but the way in which they suggested we do this was not the way in which I normally operate. My preferred method was structured discussions with them about their purposes for and the way in which they conducted meetings and any unresolved problems they might have. They agreed to have such meetings but said that they still felt more would be achieved if I sat in on some of their meetings. The structured discussions were pedestrianly productive. The bishop and the members of the meeting became quite insistent that I sit in on meetings. This I did. One of the important things that struck me was that, whilst their avowed purpose was to facilitate an holistic approach to the work and development of the diocese, the meeting always started with pastoral and vocational matters related to individual priests and churches and ended with overall diocesan matters. I noted that this meant that: individual cases were considered in relation to their own context and not that of the diocese; more energy and quality time was available for individuals than for the diocese; working on a fixed agenda structure meant that meetings were not tailor made to enable them to deal with the particular subject matter contextually in relation to their purposes for the whole diocese. They saw the significance of the points and immediately laid plans to revise the way in which the meetings were structured. Pairs of members, rather than secretaries, became responsible for designing agendas.

Once the case was put it was self-evident. In all probability a similar conclusion could have been reached by studying with the members the structure of the meetings in relation to their purposes. But it is unlikely that they would have responded so enthusiastically. I am convinced that they responded so readily because I had satisfied and proved their criterion by sitting in on some of the meetings. A discussion would have been much more economical (a consultancy session of one and a half to two hours) than sitting in on two or three four- or five-hour staff meetings.

Unhelpful Visits. Generally speaking, visits are decidedly unhelpful when they:

- fail to achieve the desired objectives described above;
- break trust between any of the parties;
- engender or reinforce in consultors or consultants any idea that what is encountered and seen *in situ* buildings, people, meetings, events—is any more or less real than what is encountered and seen in consultancy sessions—descriptions, charts, diagrams and models which conceptualise analyses of, and insights into situations, events and designs. These perspectives on realities are complementary. Insights into the inner dynamics and meanings of human relations and interactions, situations and events are not restricted to consultations. Practitioners can have them in intensive moments of interaction as well as in moments of reflection and in consultations. But wherever they occur their

generation depends upon inspired, insightful, reflective and analytical processes operating to good effect upon the relevant observations and data rather than upon physical proximity to the work situation. These processes can be induced equally well by the direct observation of events by "participant observers" (consultors) or by the examination of reliable data provided to non-observers (consultants). Some of us only see the inner pictures through consultations, most of us use consultations to sharpen our insights and models. Occasionally when I have visited a situation long after a consultancy has ended ex-consultors quip about the models and diagrams, "Now you can see what it is really like!". I cannot help feeling that beyond or within the humour they have missed something about the realities of both perspectives.

- **lead consultants (and/or consultors) to assume that they have seen consultors and their situations as they normally are.** See above. The presence of consultants modifies and possibly distorts the way in which consultors behave and the situations in which they operate.
- **lead consultors and/or consultants to give precedence or undue value to the consultant's perspective and deflect them from the central importance of the consultor's work-view.** Visitors can see things of vital importance missed by those who are regular participants. First impressions can be revealing. Nonetheless, it is important to take seriously the status and limitations of the experience and the information it provides. Observations, for instance, are those of an outsider at a particular period which may or may not be representative. Such observations can be useful when they are used to check out, develop or refine consultors' perspectives. They are not helpful if they are assumed to be more reliable and insightful than the consultor's observations.

Display 5:1 sets out some of the things which help, and those which hinder consultants making effective visits to consultors *in situ*. It is based on a discussion in a group of clergy and laity representing three denominations who had had good and bad experiences of consultants visiting them *in situ*. Questions which could help you to plan and evaluate a visit are given in Display 5:2.

3. Dangers of Straying Beyond Competences

The misuse of the non-directive consultancy model can take consultants and consultors beyond their competences. This propensity derives from the universality of this form of consultancy: it can be effectively applied to any situation in which there is, or should be, purposeful interaction between people. Consequently, as we have seen, "consultants" can be "facilitators" of analysis and design in situations of which they have no personal experience and are not conversant with apposite bodies of technical and academic knowledge. (See the discussion about consulting and facilitating). If consultors and consultants do not have these abilities and ignore the fact, the danger of working beyond their competences is ever present. Consultants are more likely to stay within their competences if consultors and consultants:

It would help if:

- consultants have a good reputation which goes before them
- consultants gather information carefully but lightly rather than ponderously
- consultants and consultors interact creatively
- consultants demonstrate an understanding of the situation
- there is real openness between consultants and consultors and honest statements of what has been discussed and done beforehand
- the meeting is a special not a routine one
- the consultant fits into the normally accepted procedures and etiquette

It would hinder if:

- the arrangements and preparations are chaotic
- there are references to private conversations between consultants and consultors which give the impression that something is being arranged behind the scenes
- consultants come with fixed ideas and exert pressure to get them accepted
- consultants give the impression that they know all about a situation
- consultants ask "What can I do for you?" instead of indicating what they could do
- consultants try to sweep people along with their schemes and give the impression of listening only when what is said goes along with their ideas
- consultants misunderstand and misrepresent the group and the nature of the relationship between members and insist on their explanations
- dissonance of language

Display 5:1 Things Which Help and Hinder Consultants Visiting Consultors *in Situ*

Outcomes

1. What do you want to achieve through the visit?
2. What particularly do you wish to check out/observe?
3. What do you wish to avoid?

The Kind of Visit Needed

4. What kind of visit is most likely to be effective?
5. Whom do you need to meet? In what setting and circumstances?
6. What do you wish to experience?
7. What pattern of interaction do you need to observe?

Minimising Negative Effects of Your Presence

8. In what kind of a visit is your presence least likely to distort the situation?
9. How will you introduce yourself and explain your visit?
10. How can you prepare people in the situation for your visit?

Recording and Evaluating your Impressions

11. In what ways, if any, do you think your presence affected what happened? How will you compensate for distortions?
12. What struck you? Why? What meaning/significance do you attach to it?
13. Has your view of the consultor and his/her situation changed and, if so, in what ways?
14. What are the questions/issues you now need to consider with the consultor?

Display 5:2 Questions Which Could Help Consultants to Prepare for and to Evaluate Visits

- check whether between them they have the required abilities;
- discuss how the expertise that they each bring can be used most effectively so that the consultor's expertise interacts creatively with the consultant's, *e.g.*: the consultor might select and bring into play aspects which have to be considered *and* consultants might suggest suitable analytical and reflective processes and introduce relevant material about working with people in and through Christian institutions;
- build in safeguards against going beyond their competencies.

Observing such codes of good practice effectively counters the propensity for consultors and consultants to be drawn beyond their competencies by the seductive powers of the universal properties of the the non-directive approach and the momentum of consultancy processes. Consultants (and consultors) are on dangerous ground when they do not know that they do not have relevant information or that it is not in play. If, however, the consultancy subject matter has to do with ways and means of working with people individually and collectively or human relations problems, then the consultant is likely to have the necessary skills and knowledge.

Some circumstances in which consultants are in danger of being taken beyond their personal and professional competence have already been discussed:

- essential data inaccessible to consultant (pp 67-69);
- discerning lack of consultancy potential (pp 116-120).

4. Unacceptable Differences in Beliefs and Values

Rarely, if ever, will consultants and consultors have identical systems of religious beliefs and human values. Many kinds of differences between them do not present any significant difficulties to their consulting. Discussions about them and the associated action could be informative, enriching and creative. That is all par for the course in consultancy. However, given that consultors' beliefs and values are the reference point for action outcomes, problems do arise for consultants when they find that the beliefs and values to which consultors are firmly committed are unacceptable to them because they take them beyond the boundaries of the inclusivity with which they can live and lead to action which is unacceptable to them. For instance, it is entirely against my beliefs and convictions to take any action which disenfranchises others of their legitimate human and spiritual rights and freedoms. Therefore, I could not with a good conscience offer any help at all to anyone hell-bent on overpowering others and taking away their freedom. Any opportunity to try to convince them that what they were about was wrong and to help them to accept policies of empowerment would be eagerly taken. But I would withhold consultancy help until I was sure that transformative changes had occurred in their beliefs and intentions. In the marginal cases between the acceptable and unacceptable it is desirable that consultants themselves consider:

- those things upon which they and the would-be consultor agree and those on which they differ and whether there is a basis for a consultancy;³
- the difficulties they are likely to experience as a direct consequence of the differences; (Differences should not be confused, nor equated with difficulties. Differences can be necessary for complementarity between practitioners, for instance. Differences may not be the cause of the difficulties: racism causes problems between black and white people not the differences in the colour of their skin. Get at the causes of the difficulties which are associated with differences in beliefs and values.)
- when/how/why the differences are likely to cause problems;
- what they think they could do in relation to these differences

- before they cause difficulties
- when they are causing difficulties
- when the difficulties have subsided;
- what would have to change in them and the would-be consultor for them to be able to offer consultancy services with confidence of success;
- whether they can see ways of working through the implications of their analysis with the would-be consultor;
- whether they can articulate and examine the conclusion(s) which are emerging.

If consultors find the consultant's beliefs and values lie outside those which are acceptable to them they could use this way of exploring differences and their implications from their perspective.

5. On Taking Sides

To side with or against others is a normal human activity. Like everyone else consultants and consultors have a natural tendency to do this. Generally it is part of an instinctive and involuntary response; a form of learned behaviour. It can happen in relation to any human attribute or action. Dealing with this is an important feature of consultancy work. Consultants need to understand and deal creatively with tendencies that they might have to side with or against consultors or any faction in his/her situation. Doing these things effectively influences their ability to help consultors to understand and deal creatively with their own propensities to take sides in the consultancy and in their working world.

In relation to all this consultants could find themselves in various positions and taking up different stances. Here, we explore a selection of these and their consultancy implications. Some are complementary and may come into play at different stages of consultations.

- (a) *Consultants could be in the happy consultancy position of being genuinely neutral.* Clearly this is a blessed state in which to find themselves.
- (b) *Consultants could attempt to be neutral.* This has been widely advocated. If they are not neutral they will have to feign neutrality. That means falsifying their position, living a lie, with all the negative consequences that that can have for interpersonal trust and consultancy processes.
- (c) *Consultants could reserve or withhold their position when it differs from that of the consultors without inferring or feigning neutrality.* This enables consultants and consultors to concentrate on the consultor's position. It also gives consultants time to consider whether their positions are congruent or incongruent with those of the consultors and the kind of interplay between them which is likely to be most constructive (cf pp 60-65 on the interplay of perceptions).

At times this approach, (c), can be adopted without explanation. Consultors and consultants can concentrate on the consultor's perspective without overt reference to where the consultants stand. At other times consultors can feel uncomfortable when consultants withhold their position: they can wonder just where they stand; they can become uneasy about exposing their thinking whilst consultants are not sharing theirs; they can become preoccupied in second-guessing what consultants

are thinking or weighing up whether to ask them instead of concentrating on their own thinking. Some of these possibilities can be dealt with by consultants in various ways: by affirming consultors; by showing that they are broadly in sympathy with the consultor's position without going into detail; by indicating their position in passing so that it is known but does not become the focus of discussion; by going over the reasons for withholding their position and thus disabusing consultors of any fears they might have. But if consultors cannot go on without knowing the consultant's position in some detail and discussing it then they must be given the opportunities they want.

Sometimes when I have been pursuing this kind of approach, consultors have asked me what I think or where I stand before I felt that it would be helpful to turn to my position. Then I have said something like, "I am happy to tell you where I stand and what I feel if it is going to help you. But what is important at the end of the day is not what I think but what you think. My feeling is that we should stay with your thoughts and feelings until we get things clearer. What do you feel and think?" This kind of response can open up important discussions about taking sides and ways of proceeding in and through the consultancy.

(d) *Consultants could take the consultor's side openly when they feel at one with her/him.* Professional approval is given to the consultor's praxis and theology through such a stance. Moral support is also given to them as practitioners. Such profound benefits can be of enormous help to consultors especially when they feel they are very much on their own in situations where the people with whom they are working are in conflict and faction. They can feel justified and reinforced in whatever they are doing, thinking, and feeling. But this powerful admixture of alliance and support is not an unqualified good:

- It can create a relationship between consultors and consultants which is uncomfortably near to a coalition against those on other sides and which inhibits the formation of alliances between consultors and consultants for the common good (cf pp 118-120).
- It concentrates the interaction between consultors and consultants entirely on the consultor's work-view which reduces or prevents the creative interaction of their perspectives and the possibilities of seeing things from different angles through other people's eyes).
- The independence of consultants can be compromised or lost and this can reduce their ability to perform their analytical and catalytical functions.
- It can engender polarisation and faction and insidiously infer that all the truth is on one side by promoting a one-sided approach to many-sided situations, issues and problems.
- It can make it more difficult to handle feelings and ideas as objectively as is desirable or required (cf pp 40-41).
- If consultants take sides with consultors, consultors in turn, are likely to do so with consultants and with other people in indiscriminating ways.
- It could hinder a holistic approach to taking all sides into account.

(e) *Consultants who find themselves taking up a position significantly different from that of the consultor can offer it for consideration.* This is quite different from

consultants arguing against the consultor's position and in favour of their own. It involves consultants submitting essentials of their position for the same kind of critical scrutiny that has been given to the consultor's or anyone else's during the course of the consultation. The objective is to see what, if anything, the consultant's position has to offer to the consultor and, of course, vice versa. Any intention or suggestion of imposing ideas upon consultors must be avoided if there is to be any chance of consultors and consultants modifying their positions in the light of the other's and of them feeling that they have done so freely. Non-directivity is essential to this process which, as we have seen, precludes attack but not confrontation, challenge and being forthright.

Focussing on the *consultant's stance* helps to handle the issues creatively. A profile of the stance advocated in this book is implicit in the notes of the approach just considered and explicit in the seven elements of practice theory expounded in Chapter Two. This stance derives from commitments of consultants:⁴

- to accept the realities of similarities and differences between them and consultors and to seek to understand them and their significance;
- to work with consultors for their good and that of the situation and systems of which they are a part;
- to help consultors to remain their own person and to have good interdependent working relationships with people taking different and opposing sides in order that they are best placed to engage creatively with all parties and factions to promote the common good and to get others to do the same;
- to withhold or deploy or share their own positions (the sides to which they are naturally attracted) to achieve the objectives stated but not to deceive consultors by, for example, feigning neutrality or pretending to hold positions which they do not favour;
- to be true to themselves and their convictions and to use their perspective to promote effective consultancy processes;
- to engage in as wide a range of non-directive inclusive consultancy activity as their own beliefs, values and positions permit;
- to engage in open dialogue with those to whom they cannot in good conscience offer consultancy help.⁵

Being able to explain one's stance can help consultants (and consultors) to clarify just what they are trying to do, the role they need to take and the part they wish to play. Doing this helps them to get into the most effective working relationship with consultors (and consultants).

As problems of taking sides are a common feature of church and community work, tackling them in the ways discussed provides opportunities for experiential learning about alternative ways of approaching them as well as about facilitating consultancy.

6. Encountering the Surreal

A sense of unreality is one of the problems that can arise when the consultancy operates through the consultor's work-view for subjective and objective change.

Examples have already been considered. Consultants face aspects of the problem when what consultors communicate to them about themselves and their situations does not ring true (cf pp 67-69 and 116-118). Consultors experience aspects of the problem when consultants fail to understand, misrepresent or misunderstand how consultors experience their personal and situational realities (cf pp 230-231). Clearly, getting an agreed picture of the realities to be considered is essential to effective consultancy or to deciding that consultancy is not appropriate to the consultor's need. Possible causes for consultants and/or consultors feeling a sense of unreality are:

Miscommunications or misunderstandings between consultors and consultants. Often these can be corrected simply by checking things out.

Realities are difficult to grasp and/or understand and/or describe. Consultors and/or consultants deal with complex realities related to themselves and/or their work. Consequently they are often considering things which they do not properly comprehend or find confusing. Other possible sources of confusion may be: their opinions and understandings are in flux; the essential nature of things is eluding them; they are experiencing phenomena they find difficult to describe to their own satisfaction. Acknowledging and accepting that they are searching for descriptions and understandings which will enable them to work at the realities helps in several ways: it gives consultors and consultants the freedom to be tentative, to suggest and to examine; it reduces the danger of treating hunches which need to be explored and tested as though they were established concepts to be defended; it enables consultors and consultants to make common cause in helping each other to find words, diagrams and models which represent their realities and illuminate meaning.

Consultants are inducing confusion by using/projecting on to consultors and their situations things from similar contexts which are not applicable even though it may appear that they are. Consultors need to get consultants to work to them and to their situation. Consultants need to check inputs for applicability.

Critical aspects of the consultor's situation are outside the consultant's experience/understanding/imaginative powers or beyond his/her empathic range (cf pp 40 and 59-60). Accompanying consultors as they think things out can be a way of dealing with this group of problems (see the second approach to thinking together pp 72-73). Consultants offer moral support, encouragement and reinforcement as they accompany and gain new insights which help them to understand and empathise and if necessary to challenge (cf pp 98-101 on learning together).

Consultors and/or consultants are deceiving themselves and/or each other (cf pp 67-69).

Conceptually and emotionally the consultant may be more in touch with the consultor's realities than s/he is. Strange as it may seem this does happen! At times the spectator can see more of the game than the player. Consultors must not be too hasty in dismissing the views of consultants when they do not tally with their own. They need to examine them carefully. Even if they are not right they may well be catalysts to new insights. Consultants need to offer their ideas as hunches and to do so tentatively and humbly for critical examination.

Consultor's work-views may have no connection with realities outside themselves: they may be psychological or spiritual constructs which do not seem to correlate with the given socio-religious context. Consultants need to assist consultors to find more appropriate help.

These notes can be used as a check list to aid analysis and to help determine what action either party should take.

7. The Danger of Drift From Consultancy to Counselling

Consultancy and counselling are in the same family of services (cf p 368). Work and personal issues can be complexly interrelated. Providing pastoral care and first-aid counselling can be a proper function of consultancy. Consequently it is all too easy to drift from an appropriate and effective consultancy or a consultancy-cum-counselling/pastoral relationship to an inappropriate and ineffective counselling relationship. Such a movement from consultancy to counselling could occur, for instance, through exploring complex personal and work relationships between a consultor and his/her spouse/partner. The focus of attention could change imperceptibly from :

- (a) practitioners and their approach to their work
to
- (b) what their spouses and partners feel about the consultor's work and approach to it and the impact of it upon them
to
- (c) the effects upon practitioners and their work of the attitudes of their spouses and partners
to
- (d) marital and partnership problems between the spouses and partners.

Changing the focus from (a) to (b) and (c) is within the consultancy remit as long as consultants and consultors continue to deal with factors related to work and vocation which they need to tackle. The consultor's capacity to do his/her work can be increased or reduced or compromised through the factors indicated in (b) and (c). Consultants may well be able to help consultors to think through the causes related to (b) and (c) providing that all that is required is consultancy help or non-directive first-aid counselling. If the focus changes to (d) then the relationship between the consultor and his/her spouse or partner is the substantive issue and not the consultor and her/his work. The exchanges now relate to a different part of the system in which consultors exist. The marriage or partnership sub-system is central and the work is a significant sub-system. Whereas in (a), (b) and (c) the consultor's work sub-system is central and the partnership is a significant sub-system.⁶ Moving to (d) represents a change from consultancy to counselling. A different body of knowledge and skills other than those associated with consultancy may well be required which the consultant may or may not have—and even if s/he has the skills it should not be assumed that it is necessarily right for the same person to act as both consultant and counsellor. Therefore, it is unwise to drift from (a) to (d). If a consultancy

approaches a (d) position, consultants and consultors need to take stock of the situation before proceeding. Having summarised and clarified the position in which they find themselves, considering the following questions could help them to decide what action to take.

- Is it necessary to move from (a), (b) and (c) to (d) and from consulting to counselling in order to achieve the consultancy objectives?
- If it is, is the consultant capable of acting as a counsellor?
- If s/he is, is it desirable that s/he should?
- If s/he does what will be the likely effects upon, and the implications for the consultancy relationship?
- If the consultant is not capable, how should the marital or partnership problems be tackled and what are the implications for the consultancy process and contract?

Because of the similarities between consultancy and counselling there are several slip roads from one to the other. Consultancy and counselling, for instance, are both caring activities. They work systemically from different but closely connected parts of practitioners' systems in which it is all too easy to move from one focal point to another.⁷ Aspects of the outcome of consultancy and counselling are similar. Through concentrating on issues related to work and vocation, consultancy contributes to consultors and their situations in relation to the healing, sustaining, guiding, reconciling, nurturing and developing functions associated with pastoral care⁸ and more recently with pastoral counselling.⁹ Elementary distinctions between counselling and consultancy are made in Chapter Eight (p 368). There are similarities of approach and method between consultancy and counselling when they are based on non-directive approaches and methods. As these are universal tools in human affairs which can achieve so much, consultants can be seduced into thinking because they are equipped with them they are omniscient. This is to be avoided. An awareness of boundaries between allied disciplines and the praxis limits to be observed must not be eclipsed by focussing upon what is common currency between them. Given the intricate connections and subtle differences, it is not surprising that consulting and counselling are sometimes confused and that dysfunctional drift between them occurs.

8. Some Abuses of Consultancies

The aim of this section is to highlight possible abuses of consultancies to which reference has already been made and their harmful effects upon people. Any kind of malpractice and misuse does, of course, have bad effects. To cover all possible forms is simply not possible as it would, for instance, involve examining the downside of all that has been said about good practice. Here our concern is with attitudes, approaches and actions which cause abuse rather than the well intentioned but incompetent or ineffectual or clumsy or unskilful use of consultancy methods.

Some Ways in Which Consultants can Abuse the Consultancy System

- *Consultants can abuse the system by trying to make consultors into something other than what they are or should be.* This can happen when consultants are trying to make consultants think, work, feel in ways which are alien to them. For a discussion of some of the issues see pp 42-45 and 121-122 and Charts I:7 and II:7.
- *Consultants can abuse the system by allowing or encouraging consultors to be unduly or chronically dependent upon them and consultancy sessions.* There could be many reasons for this happening. One may well be that consultants cannot counter or resist the consultor's desire for the security of a dependent relationship. (There is, of course, a proper form of dependence inherent in consultancy when that is a healthy dimension of the consultor's overall interdependent working relationship with the consultant.) The consultant may be encouraging the consultor to be dependent in order to satisfy his/her need to be really wanted and needed, if not indispensable. When there is any danger of this form of abuse consultants need to examine their motivation. They may need counselling help to do so. And consultors may need to do the same.

Whatever the motivation of consultants and consultors and the interpersonal dynamics, the effects of undue dependency are undesirable. Consultors are less able to be their own person. Their freedom to act independently of the consultant is compromised and eroded. They are in a subservient relationship with the consultant rather than a consultative one. Their interdependent relationships with those with whom they work are adversely affected by their dependent relationship with the consultant. Consultants have compromised themselves and their consultancy role. They have forfeited the opportunity to help the consultor to be more constructively dependent, independent and interdependent.

- *Consultants can abuse the system by thinking for consultors when they can and should be doing so for themselves.* This makes sessions into a "thinking for you service" instead of a means of consultancy. Of course, consultants do think for as well as with consultors (cf pp 72-73) but this is quite different from allowing consultors to misuse the thinking services they provide. Amongst the undesirable effects are: consultors can become dependent and lazy; consultants can become indulgent, superior and patronising and prone to controlling and taking over. Relationships, roles and interpersonal behaviour are a travesty of those associated with non-directive consultancy. Consultants have forfeited the opportunity to help consultors to be more constructively dependent, independent and interdependent.
- *Consultants can abuse the system by taking over.* Consultants can take over through consultors being dependent. For a survey of the problems of consultants taking over see Charts I:7 and II:7. They may seek to do so through envy, jealousy or desire for power.
- *Consultants can abuse the system by trying to exercise remote control of consultors and their work situations.* See Chart I:1.

- *Consultants can abuse the system by using consultancies for ends other than those for which they have contracted with the consultor.* See pp 118-120 and Chart I:1.

Some Ways in which Consultors can Abuse the Consultancy System

Generally speaking consultors abuse the system in the obverse way that consultants do. Thus, having noted ways in which consultants can abuse, what follows can be much briefer.

- *Consultors can abuse the system by allowing consultants to try to make them into something other than what they are or should be.*
- *Consultors can abuse the system by being unduly or chronically dependent upon consultants and consultancy sessions.*
- *Consultors can abuse the system by allowing or getting consultants to do things for them which they can and should do for themselves.*
- *Consultors can abuse the system by allowing consultants to take over or to exercise remote control over them and their situations or to use consultancies for ends other than those for which they have contracted (cf Charts I:7 and II:7).*
- *Consultors can abuse the system by using consultants and what emerges from the sessions to get their own way in the working situation and/or to absolve themselves from responsibility for things that go wrong.* They can, for instance, use sessions covertly to get the consultant to agree with their ideas and schemes so that they can use his/her authority to pressurise those in opposition to them to accept. Or they can shunt responsibility for anything that goes wrong unfairly on to consultants. Or again, they can misrepresent to their own advantage what consultants have said (cf p 37). As these things can be, and generally are, done in the absence of the consultant, s/he cannot defend herself/himself nor put the record straight.

Some Ways in Which Outside Parties can Abuse the Consultancy System

One of the ways in which outside parties can abuse consultancies is through establishing or trying to establish "denied coalitions" with consultants (cf pp 118-120). Also they can use consultants as scapegoats without the knowledge of the consultant.

9. Consultations That Appear Redundant

When consultors come to implement ideas drawn up with great care in consultancy sessions, they can find that they do not fit because things have changed or a critical factor was overlooked. This is not an uncommon experience. When this happens, consultors simply must be able and willing to re-think things on their own and/or with their colleagues in relation to the situation as they now experience it. Stubbornly holding to the original ideas and trying to force a fit is foolish and misplaced loyalty. As noted earlier, freedom to work to the new realities is utterly essential (cf pp 121-122). Participants in any consultations must aim for this; consultors must ensure that they are free agents.

Some consultants find that repeated experiences of having to abandon or revise their preparation leads them to question the value of analysing things in depth and working out plans in detail in advance. Surprisingly, a committed reflective practitioner found herself doing just that towards the end of a course on consultancy to which she had made valuable contributions. Others find that their commitment to careful forethought is challenged by those who argue that, as the experience of each human situation and problem is different, it is impossible to get to the bottom of anything with any certainty in human affairs and, therefore, why try? They see little value at all in laying plans for action because the experience of events can be so different from prior thought about them—so much so that, some times, advanced planning appears redundant if not an impediment to the action required. Everything therefore, they argue, depends upon, and must be left to the occasion and people simply have to rely upon their ability to do and say the right thing at the time. These arguments can have a strong emotional pull in church circles even amongst people who use stringent analytical processes in their work. High kudos goes to inspired action and the leading of the Spirit in many sections of the Church.

Outright denial of all this is not helpful because there is some truth in it but insufficient to make even the beginnings of a conclusive case against thinking in advance. Both spontaneous responses and planned interventions have been creative in some cases and destructive in others: both are required in work with people. And there is considerable evidence to show that the ability for creative intuitive spontaneous action in complex dynamic situations can be developed by habitually preparing, training and planning for events even though situations can/do change significantly in the period between one engagement with them and another. One situation (S2) grows out of another (S1). Therefore, even though it is not possible to foresee in advance all the nuances and contingencies of existential realities, reflective practitioners who understand S1s, have decided advantages. It helps them: to appreciate and understand S2s; to discern the changes that have occurred between S1s and S2s and what has caused them; to assess and decide how to adjust to the new situation, S2. So understanding situations at points S1, S2, S3 etc. assists consultants to work with them and the processes of change which make them dynamic entities.

Study is necessarily carried out on situations as they were at the moment when last they were observed and on projections of how they might be when next encountered. Therefore to be realistic, studies of situations must treat them as dynamic not static entities. An important part of the dynamic of change is the thought processes active within the participants and those who influence them. Consultants who have thought their way to a different position introduce new dimensions to any situation. These changes are visible when thinking is shared so the situation will never be the same again and people acknowledge that when they say things like: "You have changed your thinking", "S/he has moved her/his position". So, whatever contextual or material or logistical changes may have occurred in a situation which has been the subject matter of profound analysis, there has been a sea change in the thinking of at least one participant, the consultant, and through him/her the thinking in the situation. At any point, aspects of the thinking may have to be revised. But that is an integral part of the living dynamic of any

learning practitioner, community or organisation. So any prior sequence of thought has the potential to influence change through becoming a shared part of an ongoing thinking dynamic even when it has to be altered to meet new factors. On the other hand, if the thinking has been halted and fixed in, say, a plan or proposition, consultants are trying to mesh a static entity with a dynamic one: both must be in motion to mesh. Creative collective action depends upon the thought patterns of the participants synchronising.

All the same, those who decide to give time to thought, analysis and planning and to working to the actualities of the changing crucibles of human existence will have to live with the feeling that some thought was redundant, or now appears to have been so. But very often such thought comes into its own later in different circumstances and in unpredictable ways.

TROUBLESHOOTING CHARTS

Notes on Their Status and Use

- These charts are aids to, not substitutes for, analytical thought by consultants and consultants about the particularities of the difficulties they are facing: they are not offered as "quick fixes".
- These charts differ from those in, say, car manuals. Generally speaking it is much more difficult in human affairs to make definitive connections between symptoms, causes appropriate treatment and solutions. Situations vary from each other significantly and subtly no matter how similar they might appear. The casual application of standard solutions is a dangerous lottery. This means that the charts need to be treated as diagnostic tools, aids to analysing a problem and deciding on the action to take: they *do not* provide ready made diagnoses and prescriptions for action. Their function is to help you to identify symptoms, to survey *possible* causes and to think of *possible* courses of action. They are to be used as an indicative check list of possibilities rather than a prescriptive list of probabilities. They will serve you best when they help you to bring into focus as many ideas as possible and then, having scanned them, to select those to be used in your own analysis.
- The charts are displays. They put on show clusters of symptoms, possible causes and courses of remedial action. So they assist people to recall and to scan potentially useful information and ideas. They can facilitate lateral thinking. They place before people material which could facilitate:
 - diagnostic reading of events and situations
 - the identification, understanding and interpretation of symptoms and their implications
 - action decision making.
- The charts would be self-defeating if they made you feel that you were being *told* what your symptoms are, what *causes* them and what *action* you should take. In some places the use of the first person can appear to be doing just that, in other places it has quite the opposite effect. The same is true of impersonal styles of address. So, to make it more likely that the charts read as open possibilities to be

tested for fit, the most appropriate forms of address have been used even though this is stylistically inconsistent.

- The charts are meant to prompt thought, to bring things to mind. The proliferation of question marks placed before the points are there as a reminder of this. They represent questions such as: "Is this how *you* feel?" "Could this be a cause of *your* difficulty?" "Would this help *you* to deal with the problem?"
- The charts are *not* meant to suggest simplistic connections between symptoms, causes and remedial action. A difficulty can have several symptoms and causes which are linked systemically not linearly¹⁰ (cf pp 331-334). The columns of the charts contain alternatives; some are mutually exclusive, others are not. Consultors and consultants may well see direct connections between items in the columns in relation to their particular problem. But the charts are not constructed to show invariable linear or systemic connections between symptom, diagnosis and prescribed action. Like supermarket shelves, they are arrays of items, ideas and possibilities, to be selected and collected to be fed into the analytical processes.
- The charts are indicative rather than comprehensive. Hopefully they will trigger off other ideas and possibly get consultors and consultants themselves brainstorming.
- One way of using the charts is to mark or highlight points in all three columns (or photocopies of them) which seem to ring a bell or to be possibilities or have some relevance or challenge you. Extract, combine and edit them to be more of a fit. Reflect on what they and the pattern of connections might be saying.
- One set of charts troubleshoots from the *consultor's perspective*, the other from *consultant's*. Therefore they facilitate speculative diagnostic reading of a problem from the complementary perspectives of the consultor and the consultant. (The importance of this is brought out in the discussion on the interplay of perceptions on pp 60-65.) Clearly some of the same points are made in both sets of charts and there is overlap. But there are nuances which reward careful reading of both perspectives on the same problem. Lists of the titles presented at the end of this section demonstrate this complementarity.
- Switching from the consultor's to the consultant's perspective proved to be difficult. But it was also surprisingly rewarding. I found new points emerging relevant to both perspectives. Several times charting from the consultor's perspective led me to radically revise the chart I had already done from the consultant's perspective and vice versa. Eventually I realised that, whatever value the completed charts might or might not have, *making charts of this kind is, of itself, a valuable diagnostic tool*. I found it was achieving some results in relation to tackling problems that did not emerge as readily through the use of other methods. For instance, it made me distinguish between symptoms (experiential and behavioural indicators of the problem) and causes (explanations of the roots of the problem). Therefore, constructing your own charts could help you to examine your difficulties.

THE CHARTS

To give you an overview of the charts and to enable you to find the help you might require, lists of them are given below.

I Troubleshooting Charts from a Consultant's Perspective

1. Consultants are surreptitiously using consultors and consultancies to achieve ends other than those for which they contracted
2. Consultants are failing to get consultors to consider seriously ideas and information that could be important to them and their work
3. Consultants feel that the consultancy is not going anywhere
4. Power failure: consultancy energy loss
5. Consultants are not keeping up with consultors
6. Consultors are not keeping up with consultants
7. Consultants taking over
8. Consultors taking over
9. Consultors being defensive
10. Consultants being defensive

II Troubleshooting Charts from a Consultor's Perspective

1. Consultor's appear to be losing their freedom to explore and/or to decide upon their preferred options
2. Consultors are failing to get consultants to take seriously ideas and information they consider to be critically important
3. Consultors feel that the consultancy is not going anywhere
4. Power failure: consultancy energy loss
5. Consultants are not keeping up with consultors
6. Consultors are not keeping up with consultants
7. Consultants taking over
8. Consultors taking over
9. Consultors being defensive
10. Consultants being defensive

I: TROUBLESHOOTING CHARTS FROM A CONSULTANT'S PERSPECTIVE

Symptoms which could be experienced by consultants: warning signals of difficulties, feelings of unease, hunches that things are not as they appear or should be in the consultancy working relationship. **References** to parts of this book which *could* be relevant.

Possible causes of the symptoms and **references** to parts of this book which *could* be relevant and helpful.

Possible courses of action open to consultants—diversionary, or protective, pre-emptive, remedial—and **references** to parts of this book which *could* be relevant and helpful.

210

1. Consultants are surreptitiously using Consultors and Consultancies to achieve ends other than those for which they contracted

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? Consultants feel uncomfortable, ill at ease, apprehensive, wary, have a bad conscience.</p> <p>? The consultancy dynamic is discordant: the processes are not what they are meant to be and cannot be understood within those terms.</p> <p>? In relation to the overt consultancy data the consultant's performance is irrational or inconsistent or reactionary or aggressive.</p> <p>? The consultant feels s/he must satisfy two parties, one overtly and the other covertly, but to satisfy the one is to disappoint the other.</p>	<p>? In the consultant's mind the outcome of the consultancy is pre-determined.</p> <p>? The consultant is trying to run with the hare and the hounds.</p> <p>? The consultant is unable to work with integrity to or through the consultor's agenda because s/he rules out some things which the consultor considers critical.</p> <p>? The consultant's performance is being perversely influenced by factors extraneous to the consultancy e.g. by his/her commitment to his/her own agenda or that of others.</p>	<p>? On your own or with an independent consultant, supervisor, friend:</p> <p>? look at the situation and your diagnosis as honestly as you can.</p> <p>? decide, articulate, write down what are the root causes of the difficulties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — in yourself — in your relationships with the consultor and others <p>? establish what has to happen to put things right and whether it is possible and whether you want to do it.</p>
<p>? The consultant feels that s/he is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? being compromised through her/his duplicity ? a false consultant and friend to consultors ? deceiving and cheating consultors ? acting as an undercover agent ? a double dealer. 	<p>? It is simply not possible to meet the expectations of the consultor and others tangential to the consultancy.</p> <p>? The consultant is trapped in a "perverse triangle". S/he has entered into a "denied coalition" against the consultor rather than an "open alliance" (cf pp 118-120). Inter-alia this means that the consultant is working secretly to what others want him/her to achieve by trying to influence consultors in that direction regardless of their feelings and predilections.</p> <p>? The impossibility of the working relationship and situation has de-skilled the consultant, undermined his/her self-confidence and self-respect and left him/her unable to cope with or handle the situation.</p> <p>? By taking sides the consultant has lost the independence of thought s/he needs.</p>	<p>? Consider whether or not you can orientate yourself to be an effective consultant to the consultor in relation to all the issues involved and determine the implications of your conclusions.</p> <p>? Examine possibility of getting covert issues into play in the consultancy in ways in which they can be handled constructively by all parties.</p> <p>? Withdraw from consultancy with apology and a full explanation or an indication of reasons (conflict of interests).</p> <p>? Dismantle perverse triangles and undo denied coalitions.</p> <p>? Explain to consultor what happened if it is possible to do so without aggravation of significant relationships and discuss whether to annul or renegotiate consultancy contract.</p>

211

2. Consultants are failing to get Consultors to consider seriously ideas and information that could be important to them and their work

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? Consultor listens politely to what consultant has to say and, without comment, passes on to something else.</p> <p>? Consultants feel/think/know intuitively that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? consultor is not taking what they say seriously ? what they are saying does not command the attention of the consultor ? consultors do not see the relevance of what they say and are ignoring them ? they are not communicating, getting through. <p>? Consultors say consultant's suggestion will not work in their situation or that they have tried it and it failed or that they themselves could not do it. But consultants are unconvinced: they feel that their suggestions have relevance and potential. Consultors have failed to convince them otherwise.</p> <p>? Consultants feel frustrated/angry/put down/ignored/being treated rudely or disrespectfully.</p>	<p>? Consultant's ideas are not relevant or practicable. They only think they are. They are holding on to them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? because they want to be heard out and to know that they are being heard out ? stubbornly because any rejection of them hurts their pride and they feel they lose status ? in desperation because they do not know what else to suggest ? to prove they are right. <p>? Consultant fails to transfer learning (cf p 76).</p> <p>? Consultors are simply not hearing what is being said nor seeing the significance, they are blind to it (cf Johari Window p 300, cf p 264).</p> <p>? Consultors do not acknowledge what consultants says because they are preoccupied with their own thinking.</p> <p>? Consultors see/glimmer the relevance of the suggestion but block it off because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? they cannot cope with the work ? they feel incapable/inadequate ? significant others (external reference points) would react negatively to them and to consultors even considering them (cf "group think" concept pp 323-324) ? they cannot handle the self-feedback induced within them by the very thought of the ideas. 	<p>? Examine your inner feelings/response to the failure to get the consultor to consider your ideas noting those which help/hinder the consultancy process. As necessary use a range of reflective methods (cf pp 86-87).</p> <p>? Reconsider your motivation and the merit and value of the ideas and suggestions you have made in the light of the consultor's reactions.</p> <p>? Decide whether or not you should revisit the ideas with the consultor with a view to learning from them and what happened rather than thinking of implementing them. Would it help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? to establish with the consultor the criteria to be met by any proposed action plan ? to ask the consultor to explain in detail what s/he has done along the same lines in order to see just how and why the ideas did not work ? to establish criteria ? to explore the consultor's feelings and reactions and why they occurred. <p>? Raise the problem with consultors and work through it sympathetically and non-judgementally but analytically and critically. It might help if you present the difficulty in terms of, "I was unable to get you to think about this." (cf pp 96-98).</p> <p>? Explore areas of dissonance you have identified.</p>

- ? Consultors do not feel able/confident enough to challenge the consultant's ideas so they ignore them.
- ? Consultants have pressed and consultors resisted to the point where they are both locked in their obduracy and their desire to win. They are arguing not exploring.
- ? Consultors are defensive because they feel consultants are presenting their ideas in judgemental ways (cf pp 45-46).
- ? There are communication blockages caused by dysfunctional:
 - ? interplay of perceptions (pp 60-65)
 - ? differences in preferred learning or operating styles (cf 98-101)
 - ? use of approaches and technical aids (cf 73-91 and 96)
 - ? differences in the respective rates of thinking and modes, methods and tempo of interaction (cf pp 93-94)
 - ? mood clashes
 - ? misuse of thinking modes (cf pp 86-87)
 - ? use of thinking together approaches (cf pp 72-73)
 - ? clashes of work views (cf pp 51-71).
- ? Consultors are not able to move from single to double loop learning (cf pp 77-78).
- ? When introducing ideas you need to:
 - ? do so tentatively
 - ? ask if they fit
 - ? say you wish consultors to defer judgement on them until they have been fully explored
 - ? ask whose backing/approval is required to make them work and examine how that might be sought.

3. Consultants feel that the consultancy is not going anywhere

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? Consultants give no verbal or non-verbal indicators that anything of value to them is emerging from the consultation.</p> <p>? Nothing seems to spark consultants off: their response to a wide range of suggestions is polite indifference or nonchalance; nothing seems to gel, click, galvanise them; they seem imperturbable, impervious to the consultant's inputs.</p> <p>? Consultants seem withdrawn:</p> <p> ? their participation is reluctantly reactive rather than proactive</p> <p> ? the consultation is experienced as something done to them rather than with them</p> <p> ? they act as recipients of, rather than partners in the processes.</p> <p>? Sequences of thought do not mature because consultants hinder and halt them by:</p> <p> ? switching to some other problem without explanation in what appears to be a random irrational manner</p> <p> ? re-presenting the problem as originally presented in a manner which ignores/disregards/treats with indifference points made that the consultant considers to have some relevance—it is as though nothing had been said</p> <p> ? consultants grass-hopping from one thing to another.</p>	<p>? The ideas that have emerged will not work.</p> <p>? The problem cannot be resolved.</p> <p>? Inappropriate thinking mood/mode being used (cf pp 86-87).</p> <p>? Emotional atmosphere not conducive to tackling given subject matter.</p> <p>? Consultant and/or the consultant:</p> <p> ? is suffering from reactive or referred (from some other situation) or clinical depression</p> <p> ? is overstressed</p> <p> ? is unable to concentrate</p> <p> ? has lost interest/hope</p> <p> ? has not the energy required for the task</p> <p> ? feels beaten</p> <p> ? cannot handle feedback</p> <p> ? is/are out of his/her/their depth.</p> <p>? The exchanges are skirmishing around the outer edges of the realities or problems: they have yet to get to the heart of the matter:</p> <p> ? clues, information and ideas have yet to be discovered which will galvanise consultants and trigger off constructive analytical processes.</p> <p> ? the consultancy is at the stage of scanning and random brain storming exploration of issues and possibilities and not of constructive, systematic analysis.</p>	<p>? Face up to anything that seems outside of the power of the consultant and/or consultant to change for the better: state it, write it down.</p> <p>? Try to find ways of working at what is happening to and within the consultant as a result of the presenting problems and the consultancy processes as well as working at the problems themselves.</p> <p> ? Ask consultant if it would help to discuss feelings generated by the problems and the consultancy processes.</p> <p> ? Ask consultant if s/he feels consultancy is at all useful and if so how and why. (Note: Considering the consultant's feelings is important especially if his/her performance depends upon doing so.)</p> <p> ? Tentatively raise your concerns.</p> <p> ? Review or evaluate consultancy.</p> <p> ? Summarise with the consultant the course the consultancy has taken and discuss with him/her the picture emerging and the implications (cf pp 92 and 165)</p> <p> ? Consider/discuss whether suffering from reactive, referred or clinical depression and the implications (cf pp 68, 202-203 and 368).</p> <p> ? Decide which thinking mood/mode most likely to help (cf pp 86-87).</p> <p> ? Try to create an approach and atmosphere more conducive to consultancy subject matter (cf pp 83-87).</p>

? Lines of enquiry peter out in a desultory manner.

? Consultants appear to be accommodating themselves to problems which they have come to the conclusion cannot be solved and to situations that cannot be redeemed.

? Consultant is not using the consultancy to find ways of overcoming difficulties but going through the motions to:

 ? demonstrate that s/he is the victim/custodian not the cause of an intransigent unredeemable situation

 ? gain moral and spiritual sympathy and support.

? The consultant needs more time than the consultant to work through the issues and feelings because of his/her personal and emotional involvement, or vocational investment or intelligence or rate at which able to think (cf Charts I : 6 and II 6) and/or because of the risks involved for her/ him.

? The consultant is preoccupied with the inner personal work which will enable him/her to come to terms with the situation and to engage creatively with the analytical processes.

? The consultant is being diverted from the identification with the consultant and the issues which are likely to yield results through his/her being overly concerned with getting positive responses.

? Consultants are withholding positive responses because they feel acknowledgement of indebtedness leads to being beholden.

4. Power failure: consultancy energy loss

This presentation is almost identical to the one from the consultant's perspective Chart II:4.

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
? Consultant or/and consultor: ? not having sufficient energy for the consultancy tasks ? drained, weary, tired rather than alert ? unable to get their mind and feelings round the task; losing touch with the process as it slips away from them ? satisfyingly tired after doing good work ? experiencing the weariness of being beaten ? unsure of self and others and judgements ? overwhelmed, paralysed by the enormity of the task ? struggling for concentration ? working at things mechanically rather than creatively ? unable to face anymore ? frustrated by their weakness ? disappointed, annoyed or angry with themselves because they have not the energy required ? finding attention and energy diverted from tasks to self and tiredness. ? Quality of engagement between consultants and consultors and with the subject matter critically reduced: it is dull rather than creative; self-confidence is depleted. ? Want to give up/have a rest.	? Consultants and consultors: ? have spent themselves for the time being, profitably or unprofitably, used up all energy currently available ? are experiencing inner dissonance which is absorbing energy dysfunctionally. ? Consultants/consultors are stressed or under-stretched because: ? the challenge of the work is too great or too little ? they are overtaxed/exhausted/worn-out/burnt out/bored ? overwhelmed by the thought of all that is involved ? unmotivated. ? They have completed a cycle of work and not got the energy to start right away on the next round of work. ? The consultor's loss of energy could be related to the thinking tasks or to the post-consultancy action required to follow them through. ? Is the consultor the driving force behind the work under consideration or the consultor plus his/her organization. If the former, is the consultor overly responsible for finding the energy? ? Is the workforce under-powered or the work under-staffed? ? Is the consultor and/or consultant losing interest in the work or the consultancy? ? Is the loss of energy due to the approach and methods being adopted and the moods and modes of participation and reflective engagement (cf pp 86-87)?	? Accept the situation as gracefully as possible without being judgemental of self or others. ? Consultants and/or consultors need time/space to reorientate and regroup. ? Connote positively what has been achieved. ? If consultor and consultant lose energy: ? soldier on in the hope that energy will return ? have a short break, call it a day ? share feelings and possible reasons for power loss/energy failure and look at implications. ? If consultor loses energy: ? consultant asks if consultor wishes to continue or not ? consultant "carries" him/her until a natural break or s/he recovers energy. ? If the consultant, loses energy: ? confess it ? continue hoping energy will return ? summon up as much energy and will power as possible ? concentrate on task rather than feelings of tiredness ? live off consultor's energy. ? Consider value of doing energy audit (cf pp 109-111). ? Take a break or engage in some other activity which will hopefully revitalise consultant and/or consultor.

5. Consultants are not keeping up with Consultors

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
? The consultant feels: ? s/he has not got a grasp on the situation and the essential information ? left behind by the discussion, ill at ease, out of it, insecure, not able to do his/her job, letting consultor, self and consultancy cause down ? on verge of panicking at thought that this is one assignment s/he cannot pull off ? deskilled, embarrassed, inclined to let things drift or to give up. ? The consultant assumes/fantasizes/discerns evidence that the consultor: ? is becoming impatient and dissatisfied ? is confused and embarrassed ? is frustrated, irritated, let down ? is concerned/worried/desperate/disappointed that consultant is not going to be able to help ? is feeling that time, energy and money are being wasted ? may well have to withdraw ? has written off the consultancy/consultant and is politely going through the motions.	? The consultant: ? is not able to work at consultor's pace and the consultor is not able/willing to work at consultant's ? has not done his/her home work ? simply cannot absorb information at the rate at which it is being delivered ? cannot think through the material at the pace being set by the consultor ? lacks confidence to ask for clarification and to check things out ? is intimidated (cf pp 93-94). ? The consultor: ? not able/willing to work at the consultant's pace; on balance the rewards of adjusting to his/her pace are insufficient ? is engrossed in his/her own thoughts and not properly attuned to a consultancy dialogue (cf pp 92-94, 207 on "interactive meshing") ? is not presenting his situation/problem/case in a manner which enables the consultant to play his/her part (cf pp 25, 91 and 106-107 about economic input) ? is trying to impress consultant ? is trying to appear on top of things when s/he is not ? is trying to think through things more quickly than is realistically possible. ? The consultor is excitedly engrossed in describing and exploring ideas and insights which have come to them in a moment of important disclosure. ? There are dysfunctional differences between the consultor's and the consultant's rates of thinking and expressing, exchanging and exploring ideas which are preventing creative dialogue.	? When difficulties occur during sessions consultant can: ? soldier on in the hope that things will become clear ? seek clarification as soon as s/he feels losing grasp of the situation ? reflect back what s/he is "hearing" and "seeing" and what s/he is not clear about ? raise with consultor concerns and problem of keeping up ? examine/evaluate what is actually happening in the consultancy session from both their perspectives and determine the implications of whatever comes to light. ? Explore with consultor advantages and disadvantages of their different rates of thinking (cf pp 93-94). ? In preparing for sessions in the future consultants: ? consider the kind of briefing that could help them to be more effective and sessions to be more productive and act on their conclusions ? discuss with consultors whether prior written briefing is necessary or whether there is any background material they need to read so that they can get on top of as much information as is necessary before sessions (see p 93 and cf pp 25 and 106-107).

6. Consultors are not keeping up with Consultants

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? The consultant finds s/he is grappling with the issues on her/his own: the consultor is either leaving him/her to it or holding back the thinking process by making what the consultant considers to be irrelevant /inane/embarrassing contributions which s/he tends to ignore/ patronisingly acknowledge /feign to adopt them for future use without intending to do so simply to take them out of circulation.</p> <p>? The consultant feels/knows s/he has left the consultor behind but simply does not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? know how to enable him/her to catch up ? have the energy/patience to go back over everything again ? feel it is possible to get the consultor critically engaged. <p>? The consultant has evidence/observes/feels/thinks/ assumes/fantasizes that the consultor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? does not understand what the consultant is getting at ? does not recognise the consultant's picture/ analysis of the situation ? is not on the same wavelength ? feels left behind, out of the discussion increasingly less able to contribute and pursue what s/he considers important ? feels alienated ? cannot see how analyses and designs fit the situation and/or how s/he can implement action plans 	<p>? The consultor has got it right.</p> <p>? The consultant is unaware s/he could be wrong.</p> <p>? The consultant is looking for the way forward s/he would take, not the consultor's way forward: attention is on the consultant's solution, not on the consultor's nor the consultor's and the consultant's.</p> <p>? The consultant, consciously or unconsciously, is trying to impress the consultor.</p> <p>? The consultant's thinking is sound whereas her/ his approach to the consultor is not.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? The consultant's thinking is ahead of the things that the consultor has not/cannot/will not see and/or comprehend. ? The consultant is not expressing his/her thinking coherently—possibly because s/he is not clear or because s/he is pursuing a disclosure in the flood of inspirational energy. ? The consultor does not understand the consultant's thinking because s/he does not know/ cannot discern the processes and stages of thought which have led him/her to think as s/he does. ? The speed of interchange is simply too great for the consultor to get his/her mind round the consultant's thinking and to digest and assess its value. ? The consultor is not willing/ able/ prepared to do the reflective thinking that is required or that the consultant thinks is necessary. ? The consultor has allowed the consultant to believe that s/he is following the discussion and thinks that what the consultant says is sound/understandable/relevant/practicable. 	<p>? Leave your own train of thought and turn to the consultor's.</p> <p>? Ask consultor if s/he needs time to think privately.</p> <p>? Give the consultor space to think by simply stopping talking.</p> <p>? Soldier on in the hope that all may eventually become clear.</p> <p>? Ask the consultor's permission to complete the train of thought and then to go over it with him/her (see p 93 and cf pp 72-73).</p> <p>? Ask the consultor if s/he is following—if not explain your thinking and thinking processes until the consultor understands.</p> <p>? If it is not possible to enable the consultor to catch up, discuss the implications.</p> <p>? Explore with the consultor any differences in their experience, knowledge and thinking patterns and yours and their implications (cf pp 91-96 and 98-101).</p> <p>? Learn as much as you can from the experience of working with people generally in other situations and help the consultor to do so.</p> <p>? Check out your ideas with the consultor for fit (see pp 49-50 and cf pp 42-45 and 121-122).</p>

218

- ? feels consultant is making things worse instead of better
- ? is more and more confused
- ? thinks that the consultant really understands the situation and what to do whereas s/he does not
- ? feels deskilled/inferior/unsure of self/losing confidence
- ? feels irritated/confused/resentful/defensive/ angry/annoyed with self and consultant.

? The consultant is assuming an understanding of/acquaintance with the body of knowledge necessary to understand his/her contribution which the consultor does not have.

? The consultant is not paying sufficient attention to the consultor and to the interaction between them because s/he is engrossed in her/his own thoughts/confused/struggling to understand etc.

? The consultant's thinking is not sound:

- ? s/he is not thinking realistically/straight/ contextually

- ? the consultant has got things wrong/out of focus, made wrong connections by thinking of things that have worked elsewhere rather than concentrating on the consultor and his/her situation.

? The consultor's contributions are:

- ? not useable
- ? useable but not seen to be so
- ? not understood by the consultant.

? There are potentially dysfunctional differences between their thinking processes to which neither consultor nor consultant have paid sufficient attention: they may, for instance, vary greatly in their abilities to think about feelings and ideas (cf pp 72. 96-98).

? The consultant is thinking on his own (cf p 72).

? Thinking together (cf p 73) is prevented by the consultant thinking at a pace with which the consultor cannot cope.

? They may not be using the right thinking mode (cf pp 86-87, 91).

? The consultant wrongly assumes that, providing the right answer is obtained, it does not matter how it is found nor whether the consultor understands how it is found: the consultor needs to understand the answer not the process.

219

7. Consultants taking over

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? The consultant is behaving as though the consultor's work is his/hers.</p> <p>? S/he is confusing the consultancy partnership work with the consultor's work.</p> <p>? S/he talks about "our work" and "our plans" when s/he should be referring to the consultor's work and plans</p> <p>? S/he assumes responsibilities that properly belong to the consultor including decision making.</p> <p>? S/he lays claim to it inspirationally, intellectually, emotionally, spiritually (cf pp 40-41, 198-200).</p> <p>? S/he takes charge rather than enables, directs rather than accompanies.</p> <p>? Consultants:</p> <p>? are colluding with the take over</p> <p>? are pleased to have someone so closely identified with and committed to them and their work</p> <p>? are responding negatively to the "take over": it makes them feel uncomfortable, unsure, insecure, resentful, angry</p> <p>? do not know what to do about the relationship and how to put it right.</p>	<p>? The consultant could be motivated to take over:</p> <p>? through allowing her/his profound and healthy empathic consultancy association with the consultor and her/his work to slip over into unhealthy possessiveness</p> <p>? by making inappropriate responses to her/his frustrated desire to be in the consultor's position; inwardly the consultant, is taking on the consultor's role</p> <p>? through confusing his/her consultancy role with that of a colleague, partner, superior, manager</p> <p>? because s/he thinks s/he should be directive</p> <p>? because s/he wants to be in charge</p> <p>? because s/he believes s/he must do so to safeguard the consultor</p> <p>? through her/his failure to get the consultor to consider ideas and information that could be important to their work (cf Chart I:2).</p> <p>? The consultant is surreptitiously using consultors and consultants to achieve ends other than those for which they have contracted (cf pp 118-120 and Chart I:1).</p>	<p>? Carefully review your role, feelings, behaviour in the light of your basic responsibilities to the consultor and yourself and take whatever action you see to be necessary (cf pp 35-36, 36-46, 49-50 and 143-146).</p> <p>? Explore with consultors how they are feeling about the consultancy in relation to their:</p> <p>? respective purposes for the consultancy and the contract they have made</p> <p>? roles (cf pp 35-36)</p> <p>? interpersonal behaviour (cf pp 36-46)</p> <p>? working relationships (cf pp 46-51)</p> <p>? thinking together (cf pp 71-101)</p> <p>? understanding of codes of good consultancy practice (cf pp 143-145).</p> <p>? As appropriate consider the action suggestions for Charts I:1, 2 and 6.</p>

- ? The consultor could be contributing to the "take over" by:
- ? colluding with it
 - ? desiring and encouraging the consultant to become a colleague and encouraging him/her to take over
 - ? looking for someone to direct them and their work
 - ? being too passive and, for instance, failing to get consultants to consider ideas and information they consider to be critically important (cf Chart II:2)
 - ? not keeping up with the consultant (cf Chart I:6 and II:6)
 - ? feeling obligated to the consultant
 - ? being intimidated by the consultant.

8. Consultors taking over

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? Consultors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? tend to monopolize the consultancy time, "they don't stop talking" ? answer their own questions ? contribute rather than receive: talk rather than listen ? are more open to approval than to challenge ? ignore/dismiss/parry the consultant's input ? dominate the consultancy ? appear unaware of what they are doing and the effects. <p>? Consultancy sessions are more of a monologue than a dialogue.</p> <p>? Consultants respond positively to the consultant's energetic engagement with their work but not to the consultant's exclusive preoccupation with their own thinking.</p> <p>? Consultants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? respond negatively to the way in which the consultors monopolize and dominate ? are concerned and frustrated that they are not turning the monologue into the kind of dialogue which enables them to make their contribution ? feel their role and function has been compromised and are concerned to make their proper contribution ? are colluding with the consultors. 	<p>? Consultors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? are so excited/absorbed/engrossed/captivated/riveted by their work and their thoughts and feelings or so nervous about it that they just cannot stop talking ? are inveterate, garrulous extroverts ? are full of themselves ? are confusing owning their work with being possessive about it ? are out to impress the consultant, not to seek his/her consultancy help ? want the consultant's uncritical/unconditional approval and support ? have no intention of making changes to their approach and work ? do not believe/think that the consultant has anything to offer ? does not understand what consultancy is really about and has to offer ? are engaged in a form of defensive behaviour, i.e.: keeping the consultant at a distance (cf Charts I:9 and II:9) and in preventing her/him from taking over (cf Charts I:7 and II:7). <p>? The consultant has a stronger personality than the consultant.</p> <p>? Consultants and consultors have got fixed in a parody of the mode in which consultants accompany consultors as they, the consultors, think things out (cf pp 72-73, 86-87 and 91).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Carefully review your role, feelings, behaviour in the light of their basic responsibilities to the consultant and themselves and then take whatever action you see to be necessary. (cf pp 35-46, 49-50, 143-145). ? Make a strong courteous bid for time to raise critical consultancy issues. ? Share and explore with consultors how you are feeling about the consultancy in relation to your: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? respective purposes for the consultancy and the contract they have made ? roles (cf pp 35-36) ? interpersonal behaviour (cf pp 36-46) ? working relationships (cf pp 46-51) ? thinking together (cf pp 71-101) ? use of consultancy time ? understanding of codes of good consultancy practice (cf pp 143-145). ? Consider the suggestions given in Charts I: 1-5, 9 and 10; II: 1-5, 9 and 10. ? Use the experience to help consultors to examine the way in which they operate beyond the consultancy as well as within it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? feel their role and function has been compromised and are concerned to make their proper contribution ? are colluding with the consultors. ? inclined to give up/have given up. 	<p>Consultants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? are happy with things as they are ? are allowing themselves to be intimidated/overwhelmed by consultors ? do not want to offend the consultant ? are not able/willing to assert themselves as consultants ? are not keeping up with consultors (cf Chart I:5) ? do not have the skills/courage/determination/will to "take on" the consultant ? have given up to trying to make their contribution ? did not make a realistic contract with the consultors ? do not know what to do about the relationship and how to improve it. 	

9. Consultants being defensive

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? In relation to some aspects of their thought/feelings/beliefs/work situations, consultants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? go on the defensive ? act as though they are under attack ? close the subject down ? indicate the topic is a "no-go area" ? are evasive, uncommunicative ? avoid answering questions, trade in elusive answers ? change the subject ? appear to be withholding things ? do not volunteer information. <p>? Non-verbal communication through body language and avoidance of eye contact, both of which speak of defensiveness.</p> <p>? The verbal interaction does not flow in dialogue: consultant's questions/contributions are parried by consultants.</p> <p>? Consultants hinder attempts to get agreed descriptions of the consultancy subject matter. They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? are elusive ? make non-committed/indifferent responses to the consultant's attempts at clarification; there is always something not right but they do not help to correct it ? avoid acknowledging/owning/agreeing to a series of descriptions revised in attempts to meet ambiguous objections to previous ones 	<p>? The consultant is an unwilling party to the consultancy. (Defensiveness is much more likely to occur in people who have not become consultants of their own volition. When, for instance, they are in a compulsory work assessment scheme or a reluctant member of a group consultancy arrangement.</p> <p>? Consultants are feeling under attack whether or not they are.</p> <p>? Consultants <i>are</i> attacking, consciously or unconsciously, the consultant or his/her approach/beliefs/ideas/methods/actions.</p> <p>? Consultants feel vulnerable because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? they do not want to show themselves up ? there are issues they feel unable to explore with the consultant for fear of not being able to cope/making things worse/revealing things they do not want to ? they fear that disclosing things may adversely affect their relationships with colleagues/the consultant/significant others (cf pp 41-42) ? consultants are raising things they feel unable to consider ? they feel consultants will disapprove of their actions/attitudes etc. <p>? The consultant's elusiveness reflects the way in which fundamental critical aspects of the situation elude the consultant and cause her/him to feel unsure/uncertain/ insecure/confused/ defensive.</p> <p>? Consultants do not give some information because they do not wish to complicate things or because they think it will lead to another round of analysis with which they cannot cope or because they think they can take it into account themselves.</p> <p>? Issues on which the consultancy is touching are difficult to access because they are buried/rooted deep in the consultant and his/her consciousness.</p> <p>? Consultants are not free to explore issues freely and openly because of their commitment to a belief system/ a programme of action/ a body of people/ reference groups or people.</p>	<p>? Consider with consultants before a problem occurs how best to deal with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? situations in which consultants are/feel unable for one reason or another to share relevant information ? any defensive behaviour that might overtake them. <p>? When consultants become defensive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? take the pressure off them/"back off"/give them space/do not carry on with or persist with or pursue or proceed with lines of enquiry ? invite, hunt for, maintain eye contact ? give the consultant time and opportunity to return to the subject of his/her own free will ? if that fails and it is necessary to return, approach it later tentatively and humbly so that the consultant is able to decline or pursue the matter without loss of face. <p>? List the possible causes of the consultant's defensiveness in the order most favourable to the consultant and examine them in that order.</p> <p>? Examine your thoughts/attitudes/attributes/feelings/behaviour/verbal non-verbal communications for anything that might possibly cause the consultant to feel that s/he or her/his ideas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? not accepted/acceptable ? rejected ? under judgement ? being attacked.

<p>? reject suggestions by making veiled references to their personal knowledge of things and decline to disclose their information. ("If you knew the situation like I do, you would know that that would not work".)</p>	<p>? There is explosive and dangerous information which must not be disclosed but which must be taken into account by the consultant.</p> <p>? Confidences are preventing consultants from providing all the information needed: they are struggling with the difficult dynamics caused by the interaction between openness and confidentiality.</p> <p>? Consultants are finding it difficult to talk about others "behind their backs" (cf pp 41-42).</p> <p>? The consultant lacks the interactive and verbal skills required to present/discuss/explore one or more of the above causes and their implications with the consultant constructively.</p> <p>? The consultant is pressing on when the consultant needs time to digest what has emerged and to think through the implications.</p> <p>? Consultants are understandably attempting to defend themselves appropriately or inappropriately against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? consultants surreptitiously using consultants to achieve ends other than those for which they contracted (cf Charts I:1; II:1) ? consultants taking over (cf Chart I:7). <p>? The consultant's defensiveness is a cause or consequence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? the consultant's failure to get him/her to consider ideas and information which could be important to them and their work (cf Chart I:2) ? the consultant's failure to get consultants to consider information they consider important (cf Chart II:2) ? feeling a consultancy is not getting anywhere (cf Charts I:3 and II:3) ? power failure or consultancy energy loss (cf Charts I:4 and II:4) ? consultants taking over (cf Charts I:7 and II:7). <p>? The consultant's defensiveness is a way of the consultant taking over (cf Charts I:8 and II:8).</p>	<p>? Decide what you can and will do to eradicate/overcome/compensate for these potential causes of defensiveness which are part of what you bring to consultancies.</p> <p>? Determine what you are learning which would inform your future practice and help consultants to do the same.</p>
--	---	--

10. Consultants being defensive

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? In relation to the consultor and to other interested parties consultants find themselves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? being defensive ? acting as though they are under attack ? being evasive ? avoiding answering questions ? withholding information ? communicating defensively through their body language and through avoiding eye contact. <p>? The verbal interaction between consultors and consultant does not flow in dialogue: it is stilted/convoluted/uses defensive mechanisms.</p>	<p>? The consultor is attacking the consultant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? because s/he feels s/he is losing her/his freedom (cf Charts II:1 and I:1) ? because s/he is unable to get the consultant to take her/his contributions seriously (cf Chart II:2 and I:1) ? because s/he feels the consultancy isn't going anywhere (cf Charts II:3 and I:3) ? because the consultant is not keeping up with her/him (cf Charts II:5 and I:5) ? because s/he cannot keep up with the consultant (cf Charts II:6 and I:6) ? because the consultant is taking over (cf Charts II:7 and I:7) ? because s/he wants to take over (cf Charts II:8 and I:8) ? as a form of defence (cf Charts II:9 and I:9) ? because of significant differences in their approach, methods, beliefs <i>etc.</i> (cf pp 92-94, 98-101 and 197-198). <p>? The consultant is struggling with the difficult consultancy dynamics and the moral confusion related to openness and confidentiality because s/he has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? entered into a coalition (cf pp 118-120) and Chart I:1 and II:1) ? relevant information which s/he cannot reveal and which s/he does not know how to deal with in the consultancy 	<p>? Consider with the consultors before a problem occurs how best to deal with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? situations in which you/they feel unable for one reason or another to share relevant information ? any defensive behaviour that might overtake either of you ? no-go areas ? <i>etc.</i> <p>? Should consultants become defensive they can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? say they cannot pursue that subject at the present time ? indicate they need space/time ? ask the consultor not to press them on that point/in that way ? share how they are feeling with the consultor ? try to maintain eye contact with the consultor. <p>? As appropriate consider the suggestions on Charts I:1-9 and II:1-9.</p> <p>? Examine any propensity you, the consultant, might have towards defensiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Under what circumstances does it occur? ? How does it manifest itself in your thoughts/attitudes/feelings/behaviour/verbal and non-verbal communications? ? Why do you think it occurs?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? explosive and dangerous information which must not be disclosed to the consultant but which must be taken into account. <p>? The consultant is not delivering and knows s/he is not doing so (cf Chart I:3 and II:3).</p> <p>? The consultant is anxious about the possibility of the consultancy adversely affecting her/his relationships with people outside the consultancy <i>e.g.</i>: those who have commissioned the consultancy, funded it and those who are expecting to receive help through it.</p> <p>? The consultant lacks the verbal and interactive skills and/or courage required to present/discuss/explore one or more of the above causes and their implications constructively with consultors and others involved.</p>	<p>? What helps you to overcome it?</p> <p>? What could consultors do to help you to overcome it?</p> <p>? Decide what you can and will do to reduce the incidence of defensiveness when you are acting as a consultant.</p>

II: TROUBLESHOOTING CHARTS FROM A CONSULTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Symptoms which could be experienced by consultants: warning signals of difficulties, feelings of unease, hunches that things are not as they appear or should be in the consultancy working relationship.
References to parts of this book which could be relevant.

Possible causes of the symptoms and references to parts of this book which could be relevant and helpful.

Possible courses of action open to consultants—diversionary, or protective, pre-emptive, remedial—**and references** to parts of this book which could be relevant and helpful.

1. Consultants appear to be losing their freedom to explore and/or decide upon their preferred options

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? Consultants feeling/thinking/believing/convinced that they are being subtly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? deflected from the course of thought or action they wish to take ? directed ? persuaded against their better judgement/intuition ? manoeuvred ? manipulated ? "used" ? losing control ? taken over. <p>? Consultants feeling/thinking/believing/convinced that the consultants have a hidden agenda.</p> <p>? Consultant's input not receiving consultant's full attention and therefore consultant not being helped to develop his/her own thinking.</p> <p>? Consultant seems preoccupied with other ideas.</p> <p>? Consultant feels s/he not her/his own person (cf pp 42-45).</p>	<p>? The consultant simply doesn't understand the consultant and his/her situation.</p> <p>? The consultant is hell-bent on a dangerous course of action and dismissive of any attempt to get him/her to reconsider what he/she plans to do.</p> <p>? The consultant realising/believing the dangers, considers what the consultant proposes to do ill advised and is worried and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? is trying to quietly manoeuvre consultants into what s/he considers to be a better/safer approach without making their position known ? does not know how to get consultants to think about alternatives. <p>? The consultant is a directive practitioner not a non-directive one or s/he is committed to the non-directive approach but malpractising (see references to the non-directive approach).</p> <p>? The consultant believes s/he knows what should be done and is not open to any other suggestions.</p> <p>? The consultant is trying to serve someone else's agenda as well as or instead of or through the consultant's. S/he may, for instance, be trapped in and acting out of a "perverse triangle" through entering into by design or default, a "denied coalition" against the consultant which prevents her/him from working with the consultant in an "open alliance" (see pp 118-120).</p> <p>? The consultant may be confusing her/his role with that of a tutor, supervisor, manager (see pp 35-36).</p>	<p>? Seek help.</p> <p><i>If you, the consultant, feel you can/want to continue the consultancy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Discuss your feelings and/or thoughts and/or hunches with the consultant to see whether a mutually acceptable contract and modus operandi can be negotiated. (Generally speaking it is easier to open such discussions with an expression of feelings—or problems—rather than with statements about what you think is causing them or judgements about the consultant's behaviour). ? Continue the consultancy, safeguarding yourself against being deflected by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? questioning and exploring with the consultant any suggestions which you feel would take you in a direction you do not wish to go ? expressing your feeling of being deflected etc. as and when they occur and exploring them with the consultant ? asking the consultant to say what made him/her make a particular suggestion. <p><i>If you, the consultant, feel you cannot/do not want to continue:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? free wheel through what remains of the contract ? withdraw without explanation ? withdraw after discussing with the consultant your reasons for doing so.

2. Consultants are failing to get Consultants to take seriously ideas and information they consider to be critically important

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? Consultants listen politely to what consultants have to say and without comment pass on to something else.</p> <p>? Consultants feel/think/know that:</p> <p> ? consultants are not taking what they say seriously even though they are complementary about it</p> <p> ? what they are saying does not command the attention of the consultant</p> <p> ? consultants do not see the relevance of what they are saying</p> <p> ? they are not communicating, getting through.</p> <p>? Consultants say consultants' suggestion will not work in their situation or that they have tried it and it failed or that they could not do it. But consultants are unconvinced: they feel that their suggestions have relevance and potential, consultants have failed to convince them otherwise.</p> <p>? Consultants feel frustrated/angry/put down/ignored or that they are being treated rudely or disrespectfully.</p>	<p>? Consultant considers consultant's ideas are not relevant or practicable but does not know how to say so without adversely affecting the working relationship.</p> <p>? Consultant is simply not hearing what is being said nor seeing its significance because s/he is blind to it (cf Johari Window p 300, cf p 264).</p> <p>? Consultants are not hearing/acknowledging what consultants are saying because they are preoccupied with their own thinking.</p> <p>? Consultants are holding on to their ideas because:</p> <p> ? they want to be heard out and to know that they are heard out</p> <p> ? rejection of them hurts their pride</p> <p> ? those with whom they work are deeply committed to them and will not be easily persuaded to drop them</p> <p> ? they want to prove they are right.</p> <p>? Consultants see/glimmer the relevance of the suggestion but block them off because:</p> <p> ? they are wary of them instinctively but cannot say why</p> <p> ? they cannot face all that is involved in examining them thoroughly.</p> <p>? Consultants have pressed and consultants resisted to the point where they are both locked in their obduracy and desire to win: they are arguing not exploring.</p>	<p>? Examine your inner feelings/responses to the failure to get the consultant to consider your ideas noting those which help/hinder the consultancy process. As necessary use a range of reflective methods (cf pp 86-87).</p> <p>? Reconsider the merit and value of the ideas and suggestions themselves in the light of the consultant's reaction.</p> <p>? Decide whether or not you should revisit the ideas with the consultant with a view to learning from them together about what happened rather than thinking of implementing them, if you decide to do so, would it help:</p> <p> ? to establish beforehand with the consultant the criteria to be met by any proposed action?</p> <p> ? to ask and help the consultant to articulate his/her reservations and to examine with him/her precisely how and why the ideas are likely to fail?</p> <p> ? to explore the consultant's feelings and reactions and why they occurred?</p> <p>? Raise the problem with consultant and work through it sympathetically but analytically. It might help if consultants or consultants present the difficulty in terms of, "I was unable to get you to consider this." rather than, "You were unable to think about this" (cf pp 96-98).</p> <p>? Explore areas of dissonance you have identified.</p>

- ? There are communication blockages caused by dysfunctional:
- ? interplay of perceptions (pp 60-65)
 - ? differences in preferred learning/operating styles (cf pp 98-101)
 - ? use of approaches and technical aids (cf pp 73-91 and 96)
 - ? differences in the respective rates of thinking and modes, methods and tempo of interaction (cf pp 93-94)
 - ? mood clashes
 - ? misuse of thinking moods and modes (cf pp 86-87)
 - ? inappropriate use of thinking together approaches (cf pp 72-73)
 - ? clashes of work views (cf pp 51-71).
- ? Consultants, and possibly consultants, are unable to move from single to double loop learning (cf pp 77-78).

3. Consultants feel that the consultancy is not going anywhere

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? The consultant does not convince the consultor that s/he understands the consultor/the situation/the issues or that s/he has a grasp upon the consultancy subject matter or processes.</p> <p>? Consultants give no verbal or non-verbal indications to consultors that anything of value to them is emerging from the consultation.</p> <p>? Nothing seems to spark consultants off: their response to a wide range of suggestions is polite indifference or nonchalance; nothing seems to gel, click, galvanise them; they seem imperturbable, impervious to the consultor's input.</p> <p>? Consultants seem withdrawn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? their participation is reactive rather than proactive ? the consultation appears to be something done to them rather than with them ? they act as passive rather than active partners in the processes. <p>? Sequences of thought do not mature because consultants hinder and halt them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? switching to some other problem without explanation in what appears to be a random irrational manner ? re-presenting the problem as originally presented in a manner which ignores/disregards/treats with indifference points made that the consultor considers to have some relevance—it is as though nothing had been said 	<p>? Consultant does not understand the situation/cannot get his/her mind around it/ does not retain sufficient detailed information long enough to be a creative partner in the consultative process.</p> <p>? The ideas that have emerged will not work.</p> <p>? Inappropriate thinking mood/mode being used (cf pp 86-87).</p> <p>? The problem cannot be resolved.</p> <p>? The emotional atmosphere is not conducive to tackling the given subject matter (cf pp 83-86).</p> <p>? Consultant and/or the consultor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? is suffering from reactive or referred (from some other situation) or clinical depression ? is overstressed ? is unable to concentrate ? has lost interest/hope ? has not the energy required for the task ? feels beaten ? cannot handle feedback ? is out of his/her depth ? is preoccupied with other things. <p>? The exchanges are skirmishing around the outer edges of the realities or problems, they have yet to get to the heart of the matter.</p>	<p>? Face up to anything that seems outside of the power of the consultor and/or consultant to change for the better : state it, write it down.</p> <p>? Try to find ways of working at what is happening to and within the consultant's and the consultancy processes as well as at the problems themselves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Ask consultant if it would help to discuss any feelings generated by the problem and the consultancy processes. ? Ask consultant if s/he feels consultancy is at all useful and if so how and why. (<i>Note</i> Considering the consultant's feelings is important if his/her performance depends upon doing so.) ? Consultor tentatively raises his/her concerns. ? Review or evaluate consultancy. ? Consultor summarises with the consultant the course the consultancy has taken and discusses with him/her the picture emerging and the implications (cf pp 91-92, 165). <p>? Consider/discuss whether consultant is suffering from reactive, referred or clinical depression and the implications of this (cf pp 68, 202-203 and 368).</p> <p>? Consider which thinking mood or mode is most likely to be helpful (cf pp 86-87, 91).</p> <p>? Try to create an affective state more conducive to considering the subject matter (cf pp 83-86 and cf pp 86-87).</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? grass hopping from one thing to another ? allowing lines of enquiry to peter out in a desultory manner. <p>? Consultants appear to have come to the conclusion that the problems cannot be solved and the situations cannot be redeemed and so they are encouraging consultors to accommodate themselves to them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Clues, information and ideas have yet to be discovered which will galvanise consultors and trigger off constructive analytical processes. ? The consultation is at the stage of scanning and brainstorming and not systematic analysis. <p>? The consultant does not understand the consultor's needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? to demonstrate s/he is the victim/custodian not the cause of an intransigent unredeemable situation ? for moral and spiritual sympathy and support. <p>? The consultant is not taking account of the fact that the consultor needs more time than s/he does to work through the issues and feelings because of her/his personal and emotional involvement, vocational investment and because of the risks involved for her/him.</p> <p>? The consultant is preoccupied with the inner work which will enable him/her to engage creatively with the analytical tasks.</p> <p>? The consultant is being diverted from the identification with the consultor and the issues which is likely to yield results through her/his being overly concerned with getting positive responses.</p> <p>? The consultant's desire, need and possibly request for positive responses is inhibiting the consultor and the consulting processes and adversely affecting their relationship.</p>
--	--

4. Power failure: consultancy energy loss

This presentation, almost identical to the one from the consultant's perspective, is included to help consultants to read it from their perspective which is, of course, different.

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
? Consultor or/and consultant: ? not having sufficient energy for the consultancy tasks ? drained, weary, tired rather than alert ? unable to get their minds and feelings around things; the task is slipping away from them ? satisfyingly tired after doing good work ? experiencing the weariness of being beaten ? unsure of self and others and their judgements ? overwhelmed, paralysed by the enormity of the task ? struggling for concentration ? working at things mechanically rather than creatively ? unable to face anymore ? frustrated by their weakness ? disappointed, annoyed or angry with themselves because they have not the energy required ? finding attention and energy diverted from tasks to self and tiredness. ? Quality of engagement between consultors and consultants and with the subject matter significantly reduced: it is dull rather than creative; self-confidence is depleted.	? Consultors and/or consultants: ? have spent themselves for the time being, profitably or unprofitably they have used up all the energy currently available ? are experiencing inner dissonance which is absorbing energy dysfunctionally. ? Consultors/consultants are stressed or under-stretched because: ? the challenge of the work is too great or too little ? they are overtaxed/exhausted/worn out/burnt out or bored ? overwhelmed by the thought of all that is involved ? unmotivated. ? They have completed a cycle of work and not got the energy to start right away on the next round of work. ? The consultor's/consultant's loss of energy could be related to the thinking tasks or to the post-consultancy action required to follow them through. ? Is the consultor the driving force behind the work under consideration or the consultor plus his/her organization. If the former; is the consultor being overly responsible for finding the energy? ? Is the workforce under-powered or the work under-staffed? ? Is the consultor and/or consultant losing interest in the work or the consultancy? ? Is the loss of energy due to the approach and methods being adopted and the moods and modes of participation and reflective engagement (cf pp 86-87, 91)?	? Accept the situation as gracefully as possible without being judgemental of self or others. ? Consultors and/or consultant need time/space to reorientate and regroup. ? Connote positively what has been achieved. ? If consultor and consultant lose energy: ? soldier on in the hope that energy will return ? have a short break, call it a day ? share feelings and possible reasons for power loss/energy failure and look at implications. ? If consultant loses energy: ? consultor asks if consultant wishes to continue or not ? consultor "carries" consultant until a natural break or s/he recovers energy ? live off the energy of the consultor. ? If consultor loses energy: ? confess it ? continue hoping energy will return ? summon up as much energy and will power as possible ? concentrate on task rather than feelings of tiredness ? live off energy of consultant. ? Consider the value of doing an energy audit (cf pp 109-111). ? Take a break or engage in some other activity which will hopefully revitalise consultor and/or consultant.

5. Consultants are not keeping up with consultors

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
? The consultor feels/assumes/fantasizes/discerns evidence that the consultant: ? has not got a grasp on the situation and the essential information ? has been left behind by the discussion/is (or feels) ill at ease/out of it/insecure/not able to do his/her job/letting consultor/self and consultancy cause down ? is getting desperate/ beginning to panic ? is deskilled, embarrassed ? has given up. ? The consultor: ? is becoming impatient and dissatisfied ? is confused and embarrassed ? is frustrated, irritated, let down ? is concerned/worried/desperate that consultant is not going to help ? is feeling that time, energy and money are being wasted ? has written off the consultancy and is politely going through the motions ? is considering withdrawing.	? The consultor: ? is not able/willing to work at consultant's pace ? is engrossed in his/her own thoughts and not attuned to a dialogue (cf pp 91-96 and 207 on "interactive meshing") ? is not presenting his/her situation/problem/case in a manner which enables the consultant to play his/her part (cf pp 25 and 106-107 on inputs) ? has not briefed consultant in advance ? is trying to impress consultant ? is trying to appear on top of things when s/he is not ? is trying to think through things more quickly than is realistically possible. ? The consultant: ? is not able to work at consultor's pace and consultor not able/willing to work at consultant's ? has not done his/her homework ? cannot absorb information at the delivery rate ? lacks confidence to seek clarification ? is intimidated (cf p 93). ? There are dysfunctional differences between the consultor's and the consultant's rates of thinking, expressing themselves, exchanging and exploring ideas which, if they cannot be overcome, prevent creative dialogue. ? The consultor is excitedly engrossed in describing and exploring ideas.	? When difficulties occur during sessions you could: ? soldier on in the hope of consultant getting on top of things ? ask consultant if s/he has followed the points made/got a picture of the event/situation and if so ask him/her to describe things as s/he sees them ? raise difficulties with consultant ? ask consultant how s/he can help you to get a working picture of the situation. ? In preparing for sessions in the future you could: ? consider the briefing most likely to help consultants and consultations to be more effective ? ask consultant what kind of briefing would be helpful ? prepare written pre-consultancy briefing or/and verbal and possibly written briefing to be presented personally in the consultancy (cf pp 87-88 and Appendix 1).

6. Consultors are not keeping up with consultants

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultors
<p>? The consultant is racing ahead apparently regardless of whether the consultor is following/engaging/understanding/agreeing or not (cf pp 72 and 93).</p> <p>? The consultor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? does not understand what the consultant is saying/getting at ? does not recognise the consultant's picture/analysis of his/her situation ? feels the consultant is not on the same wavelength ? feels left behind, out of the discussion, unable to contribute and pursue what s/he considers important ? feels alienated ? cannot see how s/he can implement plans ? feels consultant is making things worse instead of better ? feels/fantasizes that the consultant understands the situation and what to do better than s/he does ? feeling deskilled/inferior/unsure of self/losing confidence/irritated/confused/resentful/defensive/angry and annoyed with self and consultant. 	<p>? The consultant is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? unaware s/he could be wrong ? looking for the way forward s/he would take, not the consultor's; attention is on the consultant's solution, not the consultor's ? assuming the consultor is following ? not paying sufficient attention to the consultor and to their interaction ? engrossed in her/his own thoughts/confused/struggling to understand/out to impress the consultor ? assuming a necessary acquaintance with a body of knowledge which the consultor does not have. <p>? The consultant's thinking is sound but not the approach to the consultor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? It is ahead of the consultor's. ? Her/his thinking is not expressed coherently. ? S/he is concentrating on getting answers. ? The consultor does not understand the consultant's thinking because s/he cannot discern the stages of thought which have led to it. ? The speed of interchange is too great for the consultor (cf pp 93-94). 	<p>? You, the consultor, can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? give up ? soldier on in the hope that all may eventually become clear ? ask the consultant to catch you up ? tell the consultant what is happening and discuss implications with him/her ? tell the consultant when his/her thinking does not seem to fit your situation ? ask the consultant to explain: his/her thinking; the processes by which s/he arrived at his/her conclusions ? ask the consultant for private thinking time in order to make your contribution to the consultancy ? discuss with the consultant how you can cope constructively with any differences in your knowledge and thinking patterns ? glean from the consultancy anything which may help you to work with people ? ask the consultant to explain why particular contributions were not pursued, dropped, remain unused.

<p>? The consultant does not take the consultor's contributions seriously. S/he:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? acknowledges them politely/patronizingly ? ignores them ? feigns to adopt them ? takes them out of circulation. 	<p>? The consultor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? is not able/prepared to do the required reflective thinking ? has led the consultant to believe that s/he is following and agreeing with him/her (cf pp 72, 93, 143-144). <p>? The consultor's contributions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? are not useable ? were useable but not seen to be so ? are not understood by the consultant. <p>? Thinking together (cf p 73) is prevented by the consultant thinking on his own (cf p 72) at a pace with which the consultor cannot cope and/or by not using the right thinking mode (cf pp 86-87).</p> <p>? The consultant's thinking is not sound.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? S/he is not thinking realistically/straight/contextually. ? S/he has got things wrong/made wrong connections by thinking of things that have worked elsewhere rather than concentrating on the consultor's situation. <p>? The consultor has got it right.</p> <p>? They have not paid sufficient attention to the differences in their abilities to think about feelings and ideas (cf pp 83-87, 96-98).</p>
---	---

7. Consultants taking over

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? The consultant is behaving as though the consultor's work is his /hers. S/he:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? confuses the consultancy partnership work with the consultor's work ? talks about "our work" when referring to the consultor's work ? assumes responsibilities that properly belong to the consultor ? lays claim to the consultor's work inspirationally, intellectually emotionally, spiritually (cf pp 40-41, 198-200) ? takes charge rather than enables, directs rather than offers services. <p>? The consultor's autonomy has been compromised, s/he is less free to be her/his own person (cf pp 42-45). S/he:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? is negative about the "take over" ? feels uncomfortable, unsure, insecure, resentful, angry ? does not know what to do about the relationship and how to put it right. <p>? The consultor favours the take over and is pleased to have someone so closely identified with and committed to them and their work.</p>	<p>? The consultor could be contributing to the "take over" by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? colluding with it ? desiring and encouraging the consultant to be in charge ? looking for someone to take responsibility for them and their work ? being too passive and, for instance, failing to get consultants to consider ideas and information s/he knows to be critically important (cf Chart II:2) ? not keeping up with the consultant (cf Chart II:6 and I:6) ? feeling obligated to the consultant ? being intimidated by the consultant. <p>? The consultant could be led to take over:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? by allowing empathic consultancy association with the consultor and her/his work to slip over into unhealthy possessiveness ? by making inappropriate responses to her/his frustrated desire to be in the consultor's position ? by assuming the consultor's role ? through confusing his/her role with that of a colleague, partner, superior, manager ? by being inappropriately directive ? by surreptitiously using consultants and consultations to achieve ends other than those for which they have contracted. (cf pp 118-120, Chart I:1 and II:1). 	<p>? Carefully review your role, feelings and behaviour in the light of your basic responsibilities to yourself, your constituencies and the consultant and take whatever action you see to be necessary (cf pp 35-46, 49-50 and 143-145).</p> <p>? Explore with consultants what you see to be happening in the consultancy and how you are feeling about it in relation to your:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? respective purposes for the consultancy and contract ? roles (cf pp 35-36) ? interpersonal behaviour (cf pp 36-46) ? working relationships (cf pp 46-51) ? thinking together (cf pp 71-101) ? use of consultancy time ? understanding of codes of good consultancy practice (cf pp 143-145). <p>? As appropriate consider the action suggestions in Charts II: 1, 2 and 6 and I: 1, 2 and 6.</p>

8. Consultors taking over

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? Consultors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? are energetically/single minded/obsessively engaged in their work ? tend to monopolize the consultancy time: they contribute rather than receive; talk rather than listen; answer their own questions; sessions are more of a monologue than a dialogue ? are more open to approval than to challenge ? ignore/dismiss/parry the input of consultants ? dominate the consultancy ? are disappointed that consultants contribute so little and wonder why they do not take a more active part—they seem to have nothing to add, agree with what is said or to be out of their depth ? do not welcome ideas from others about ways to improve the situation ? are not entirely happy with being in the "driving seat". <p>? Consultors feel/sense/intuit/fantasize that the consultants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? are impressed by their "performance" ? are going along with/colluding/happy with the pattern of interaction ? are irritated by them taking so much consultancy time. 	<p>? Consultants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? are happy with things as they are ? have nothing to contribute ? are out of their depth ? are allowing themselves to be intimidated/overwhelmed by consultants ? are not able to assert themselves—do not have the skills/courage/determination/will to take on consultor ? are not able to keep up with the consultor (cf Chart I:5) ? have given up to trying to make their contribution ? did not make a realistic contract with the consultor. <p>? The consultor has a stronger personality than the consultant.</p> <p>? Consultors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? are so excitedly absorbed in their work and their thoughts and feelings about it that they cannot stop talking about it ? are confusing owning their work with being possessive about it ? are out to impress the consultant rather than to get his/her help ? want/need the consultant's uncritical/unconditional approval and support ? have no intention of making changes to their approach and work ? do not believe/think that the consultant has anything to offer ? do not understand what consultancy is really about and has to offer ? are engaged in a form of defensive behaviour to prevent exposure or to keep consultant at a distance (cf Charts I:9 and II:9) or to prevent consultant from taking over (cf Charts I:7 and II:7) or to keep control. 	<p>? Carefully review your role, feelings, behaviour in the light of what you really need and want to get out of the consultancy and take whatever action is necessary (cf pp 35-46, 49-50 and 143-145).</p> <p>? Ask consultants if they have anything they wish to raise with you and, if they have, give them uninterrupted time to do so and consider what they say openly and seriously with them .</p> <p>? Explore with consultants how they are feeling about the consultancy in relation to their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? respective purposes for the consultancy and the contract they have made ? roles (cf pp 35-36) ? interpersonal behaviour (cf pp 36-46) ? working relationships (cf pp 46-51) ? thinking together (cf pp 71-101) ? use of consultancy time ? understanding of codes of good consultancy practice (cf pp 143-145). <p>? As appropriate consider the suggestions given in Charts II: 1-5 and 9-10; I: 1-5 and 9-10).</p> <p>? Use the experience and the discussions with the consultant to examine implications of what emerges for the way in which they operate beyond the consultancy as well as within it.</p>

9. Consultants being defensive

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? In relation to some aspect of their thought/feelings/beliefs/work consultants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? go on the defensive ? communicate defensiveness verbally and non-verbally ? act as though they are under attack ? attack as a means of defence ? close the subject down ? indicate that a topic is "a no-go area" ? are evasive, non-communicative ? avoid eye contact ? avoid answering questions ? trade in elusive answers ? change the subject ? withhold things ? are not sharing/unable to share vital information privy to them. <p>? The verbal interaction is not flowing in dialogue, e.g.: consultant's questions/ contributions are parried by consultants.</p> <p>? Consultants hinder consultant's attempts to get agreed descriptions of the consultancy subject matter by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? being elusive and vague ? making non-committal/indifferent responses to attempts at clarification—there is always something not right but they do not help to correct it 	<p>? Consultants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? find it difficult to talk about others "behind their backs" (cf pp 41-42) ? cannot explore issues freely and openly because of their commitment to a belief system/a programme of action/people/reference groups ? are prevented by confidences from providing all the information needed ? have information which must not be disclosed but which they must take into account; the needs for openness and confidentiality are in opposition ? experience difficulty in accessing their defensiveness because it is rooted deep in their own consciousness. ? The consultant's elusiveness reflects the way in which fundamental /critical aspects of the situation elude the consultant and cause her/him to feel unsure/uncertain/insecure/confused/defensive. ? The consultant is an unwilling party to the consultancy. (Defensiveness is much more likely to occur in people who have not become consultants of their own volition. When, for instance, they are in a compulsory work assessment scheme or a reluctant member of a group consultancy arrangement.) ? Consultants feel vulnerable because they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? do not want to show themselves up ? feel unable to explore some things with the consultant for fear of not being able to cope/making things worse ? fear that disclosing things may adversely affect their relationship with colleagues/the consultant/significant others 	<p>? Consider with the consultant before a problem occurs how best to deal with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? situations in which you are/feel unable for one reason or another to share relevant information ? any defensive behaviour that might overtake either of you ? no-go areas. <p>? Should you, the consultant, become defensive :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? say you cannot pursue that subject at the present time ? indicate you need space/time ? ask the consultant not to press you on that point in that way ? share your feelings with the consultant ? try to maintain eye contact with the consultant. <p>? Examine any propensity you might have towards defensiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? When does it happen? ? In what circumstances does it occur? ? How does it manifest itself in your thoughts/attitudes/feelings/behaviour/verbal and non-verbal communications? ? Why do you think it occurs? ? What helps you to overcome it? ? What could consultants do to help you overcome it? <p>? Decide what you can and will do to reduce the incidence of your defensiveness.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? declining to correct/acknowledge/own/agree to descriptions revised to meet ambiguous objections to previous ones ? rejecting suggestions by making veiled references to their personal knowledge of things. ("If you knew the situation like I do, you would know that that would not work".) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? feel consultants will disapprove of their action/attitudes etc. ? feel under attack even if they are not. ? Consultants are, consciously or unconsciously, attacking consultants or their approaches/ideas/methods/actions (cf Charts II:10 and I:10). ? Consultants are understandably attempting to defend themselves in appropriate/ inappropriate ways against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? consultants surreptitiously using consultants to achieve ends other than those for which they contracted (cf Charts I:1 and II:1) ? consultants taking over (cf Chart I:7). ? The consultant lacks the verbal and inter-active skills required to present/discuss/explore the above causes with the consultant constructively. ? The consultant's defensiveness is a cause or consequence of : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? the consultant's failure to get him/her to consider ideas and information which could be important to him/her and to his/her work. (cf Chart I:2) ? her/his failure to get consultants to consider important information (cf Chart II:2) ? feeling a consultancy is not getting anywhere (cf Charts I:3 and II:3) ? power failure, consultancy energy loss (cf Charts I:4 and II:4) ? consultant's taking over (cf Charts I:7, and II:7) ? difference in approach, method, beliefs (cf Chart II:11 and I:11). ? The consultant's defensiveness is a way of the consultant taking over. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? As appropriate see the suggestions on Charts I:1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 10 and II:1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 10. ? Determine what you are learning which should inform your future practice.

10. Consultants being defensive

Symptoms	Possible Causes	Possible action for consultants
<p>? Consultants find consultants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? being defensive ? acting as though they are under attack ? being evasive ? avoiding answering questions ? withholding information ? communicating defensively through their body language and through avoiding eye contact. <p>? the verbal interaction between consultants and consultants does not flow in dialogue: it is stilted/convoluted through the use of defensive mechanisms.</p>	<p>? The consultant is struggling with the difficult consultancy dynamics and the moral confusion related to openness and confidentiality because s/he has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? entered into a coalition (cf Chart I:1 and II:1) ? information that must be taken into account but which s/he cannot disclose to the consultant and does not know how to deal with. <p>? The consultant is not delivering and knows s/he is not (cf Chart I:3 and II:3).</p> <p>? The consultant is anxious about the possibility of the consultancy adversely affecting her/his relationships with people outside the consultancy e.g. those who have commissioned the consultancy or funded it and those who are expecting to receive help through it.</p> <p>? The consultant is attacking the consultant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? because s/he feels s/he is losing her freedom (cf Charts II:1 and I:1) ? because s/he is unable to get her/his contributions taken seriously (cf Chart II:2 and I:1) ? because s/he feels the consultancy is not going anywhere (cf Charts II:3 and I:3) ? because the consultant is not keeping up with her/him (cf Charts II:5 and I:5) ? because s/he cannot keep up with consultant (cf Charts II:6 and I:6) ? because the consultant is taking over (cf Charts II:7 and I:7) 	<p>? Consider with the consultant before a problem occurs how best to deal with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? situations in which you are/feel unable for one reason or another to share relevant information ? any defensive behaviour that might overtake either of you ? no-go areas ? etc. <p>? Examine your thoughts/attitudes/feelings/behaviour/verbal and non-verbal communications that might possibly cause the consultant to feel that s/he or her/his ideas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? not accepted/acceptable ? being rejected ? under judgement ? being attacked. <p>? Decide what you can and will do to eradicate/overcome/compensate for these potential causes of defensiveness which are part of what you bring to consultancies.</p> <p>? When consultants become defensive take the pressure off them/ "back off"/give them space/ do not carry on with or persist with or pursue or proceed with lines of enquiry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Invite, hunt for, maintain eye contact. ? Give the consultant time and opportunity to return to the subject of his/her own free will.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? because s/he wants to take over (cf Charts II:8 and I:8) ? as a form of defence (cf Charts II:9; I:9) ? because of significant differences in their approach, methods, beliefs etc. (cf pp 92-94, 98-101 and 197-198). <p>? The consultant lacks the verbal and interactive skills and/or courage required to present/discuss/explore constructively one or more of the above causes and their implications with the consultant and others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Return to the topic later tentatively and humbly so that the consultant is able to decline or pursue the matter without loss of face. <p>? List the possible causes of the consultant's defensiveness in the order most favourable to the consultant and work on them in that order.</p> <p>? As appropriate consider the suggestions on Charts II: 1-9 and Charts I: 1-9.</p> <p>? Determine what you are learning which should inform your future practice.</p>

NOTES AND REFERENCES: Chapter Five

1. I have written briefly about this in *Analysis and Design* pp 247f. Also in that book I refer to the way in which many problems arise from faulty initial designs and plans cf pp 159 and 173, reference 2.
2. Colossians 1:17 R.E.B.
3. A way of setting out differences is given in *Analysis and Design* p 236f.
4. cf *Analysis and Design* pp 231ff.
5. cf *op cit* pp 236ff
6. This can be readily seen from a diagram in *Analysis and Design* p 218.
7. See Campbell, Alastair V (Ed) (1987) *A Dictionary of Pastoral Care* (SPCK) p 188f, an entry by Campbell on "Pastoral Care, Nature of".
8. *ibid* p 198f an entry by Howard Clinebell on "Pastoral Counselling".
9. *ibid* p 189f
10. cf *Analysis and Design* p 188f.