The Future Needs a Past

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Career counseling has become an umbrella term covering a myriad of career services and interventions. However, these interventions are not interchangeable. They have distinguishing characteristics that indicate when to use each intervention with whom. This chapter examines a set of three paradigms that may be used to classify and describe the interventions to help counselors make effective and efficient choices in which service to provide to which clients. The word *paradigm* denotes distinct concepts and thought patterns. Kuhn (1996) described a paradigm as a conceptual model, which at any particular time, defines a scientific discipline and structures a prevailing view of best practices. In his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* Kuhn (1996) described a scientific paradigm as: "universally recognized scientific achievements that, for a time, provide model problems and solutions for a community of researchers" (p.10). A paradigms privilege certain epistemological assumptions and preferences to form a specific way of understanding the world. Accordingly, different paradigms may produce distinct conceptualizations and explanations for an identical object of study.

Part of forming a profession involved forging a common language and selecting activities to craft a discourse and practices that practitioners have found acceptable and useful. Through repetition, this set of vocational guidance discussions and activities came to substantiate the field of practice known as vocational guidance. These routine sayings and doings confirmed meaning on the profession by giving it an identity, boundaries, and norms. Many of those rituals and routines continue to this day to be reproduced in university training programs that induct new members into the profession and socialize novices about the standard

discourse and practices. However, change in the modern world during the 20th century brought changes in the nature of work, and made it progressively more complex to make vocational choices and adapt to work. With each major jump in complexity of work, led to the demand for different kinds of research on vocational behavior professional help to augment vocational guidance.

In the field which was once simply vocational guidance, two additional paradigms have emerged during the last century to address the new sets of problems experienced by the members of society living in increasingly complicated times. Before considering the two more recent paradigms, I will consider the foundational paradigm of vocational guidance.

Vocational Guidance

The first scientific paradigm for career intervention, replacing the social work practice of "friendly visits," became known as guidance. A **guide** is a person who leads newcomers through an unknown or unmapped landscape. In the case of job or vocational guiding, the newcomers had moved to the city from farms and foreign lands. Vocational guidance was devised by Frank Parsons (1908) as a scientific approach, one that used "true reasoning" to match people to occupational positions. It quickly evolved into what Kuhn described as "normal science," and in some respects remains so today. In normal science, the practitioner and researcher apply a standard model to solve a familiar problem, which in this case involves matching people to positions. Over time, guidance personnel who practice this normal science accumulated substantial evidence about the familiar problem and refined methods with which to address it.

 Typically, counselors guide –that is direct or advise--the lost by recognizing who they resemble and then directing them to explore occupations in which they will meet similar people. In the case of vocational direction, the guide relies, not on recognizing physical landmarks, but

on recognizing the types of people occupied in different jobs. In short, the paradigm for vocational guidance concentrates on the construct of resemblance. Counselors looked at an individual and identify their standing on some traits that differentiate among occupational groups. Originally the problem-solving solution used to recognize individuals and match them to occupational groups was astrology and phrenology. As science progressed, counselors conducted the scientific study of individuals using tests and inventories. The initial approach to studying individuals was elegantly articulated in 1911 by Edward Thorndike in his book called *Individuality*. It came to be known as differential psychology or the study of individual differences and associated with the Minnesota point-of-view. According to Thorndike (1911, p. 2), psychologists study common humanity to establish facts and laws in which to ground practice; the study of individual differences enables practitioners to apply these principals economically in the case of each individual whom we seek to assist.

The application of differential psychology was boasted by techniques learned during World War 1, an especially good example being the Vocational Interest Blank constructed by E. K. Strong Jr. to match individuals to occupational groups. Today, the Strong Interest Inventory remains a key tool in this paradigm. In normal science, practitioners eventually derive a synthesis of the known evidence and techniques. In the field of vocational guidance the grand synthesizer was John Holland who systematized knowledge about interests, values, and abilities into a six sydromes that he called protoypes. His elegant system for vocationa guidance matches both individuals and occupations to six the prototypes. Then the individual's vocational personality types and possible occupations is indicated by a vector of resemblance to RIASEC types.

To understand the philosophy of science supporting the vocational guidance paradigm, I locate it in Stephen Pepper's (1942/1970) philosophical model of world hypotheses. Pepper's system offers a concrete means of identifying and articulating our personal epistemological positions as they underlie our theoretical, methodological, and therapeutic orientations with respect to vocational guidance. Pepper's system of epistemic positions or conceptual systems used root metaphors to foster conceptual clarity, comprehension, and insight regarding a mode of philosophical thought. Vocational guidance exemplifies the paradigm that Pepper named "formism." With its root metaphor of similarity or type, formism attempts to answer the question "What is it like?" by classifying objects in the world. It stresses categorization of things. Its theory of truth is correspondence

In due course, a theorist will likely analyze this part-by-part data on the phenomenon to derive a synthesis. In our case, Holland's derivative synthesis of the categorical research on traits into a system of types. Its value lies in its simplicity.

Career Education

Developments and refinements in the normal science of vocational guidance enjoyed a long period of stable cumulative growth in methods and materials as THE paradigm, as is typical in the history of science. In the 1950's this stability began to be unsettled by social changes in the organization of society World War II. US society saw the growth of the middle class, the development of suburban living, and the rise of hierarchical corporations. The new middle class worked in corporations and lived in the suburbs. Corporations structured their organizations as bureaucies. The bureaucrats of society pursued the goals of efficiency and rationality through specialization of functions, standardization of procedures, formal division of responsibility, hierarchical arrangement of authority, and impersonal social relationships. An individual who

works in a bureaucratic hierarchy is rewarded by a regular salary and prospects of advancement during a lifetime career. Thus career as a path through a corporation emerged as both a creation of and value of bureuacracry as people climb the ladder of success.

However, the normal science of vocational guidance was not effective in planning careers, because it mainly focused on matching people to positions, not a series of positions or a career path. The new social arrangement of work into careers called for a revision of the guidance paradigm or a new paradigm. The ensuing "revolutionary science" or "paradigm shift", to use Kuhn's (1996) terms, differed from those in the physical sciences. In the physical sciences, a paradigm shift means one can no longer reasonably hold to the old paradigm. For example, it would be difficult for a contemporary physicist to still posit that ether carries light. However, in the social sciences There may be a profound change in a fundamental model or perception of events yet individuals may still adhere to the older model. This is what occurred in the 1960s, some stayed complete with the vocational guidance peardigm, others moved to a new one, and still others tried ot combine the two. These reproducing practices do constrain actors and position them.

When new demands occur, they disrupt practice and position and require opening up to new possibilities. Practitioners did not ignore all the achievements of vocational guidance. Rather, they preserved the model yet highlighted the boundaries of its useful application – guiding, advising, selecting and classifying—and added a second paradigm. which I call career development education, or for short career education.

Career Education or Career Development

Super and his colleagues introduced a new paradigm, the developmental psychology of careers to augment Holland's differential psychology of occupations. Super called for a shift

from focus on occupations and differences between the people in them to a focus on individuals and they develop their worklives over time. Major view is that career is alifelong process, as opposed to occupational choice which is a point in time event. Super viewed of individuals as agents who manage their own lives; whereas Holland viewed them as actors. So career education concentrated on how individuals cope with a series of social expectations or vocational development tasks about how to develop a career in an organization. Researchers identified the attitudes, beliefs and competencies (the ABCs of career development) that agents may use to manage developmental tasks and shape their careers. For example, they highlight looking ahead, in contrast to looking around for a job. This future orientation became the prime ingredient in their model of career maturity, inventing the word planfulness for it. Career educators in schools and career coaches in industry mapped out the meta-story of a career with five stages of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement. Each stage has substage demarcated by specific tasks. For example, exploration one was to crystallize a preference, specific a choice, and implement it. For establishment one was to stabilize in a position, consolidate it, and then advance. So over time, each stage loses its equilibrium and need a transition. Super tries to make it easier to cope by making them predictable and some continuity. However, each change need new self-organization at a higher level of integraitons. In addition to teaching individuals about the game plan, they coached then in learning skills to master the task, for example decision making, information seeking behavior, assertiveness. perspective and the associated career education intervention of increasing planfulness. This means orienting people to future developmental tasks and helping them increase their coping readiness and resources. Today, we no longer preach planfulness for a stable 30-year career but instead promote

adaptability for possibilities, or as Bob Lent likes to say preparedness. Adaptabiilyt rther than matuiry.

Pepper calls the second paradigm, Organismic rejects idea that the parts (traits) explain the whole, rather the whole explains the parts. Psychological theories which tend to stress the organization, unity, and integration of human beings expressed through each individual's inherent growth or developmental tendency through progressive integration.

because it attempts to answer the question "How does it develop?" The root metaphor is organic development in the sense of progressive steps or stages. Its theory of truth is coherence. In this paradigm the self as agent is the source of his or her own development. It must ready itself for the next stage. In the language of Dan McAdams it focuses on the individual as agent in their lives. Development rises from within, and as Super often said "careers unfold" as individuals "discover who they are," "manifest a self," and "get ready" for what comes next.

So, in my early experience, I relied on the paradigm of formism in the guise of a vocational guidance that asks who the client or actor resembles. In mid-career, I concentrated more on the paradigm of organicism in the guide of a career education that asks about the process of developing the agency to shape one's career. Super called it career counseling, but it has never been about counseling. It is career development education--career education for short-- and for practitioners working with adults it may be called career coaching or even mentoring. From my perspective, the work of Super career maturity and maybe Betz and Hackett on self-efficacy both concentrate on increasing agency. The concept of personal agency does not reinvent constructs such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-concept, and so on. Rather, it helps to organize such concepts into the multi-layered model of the self that is premised on volitional goal-directed, self-regulated actions. An agentic self involves the evolution of competencies, beliefs, and attitudes—the very stuff measured by career development inventories and career decision-making inventories and

developed by career education and career coaching. people can still use earlier ideas to discuss the history of science.

Career counseling

So my first paradigm for career services is vocational guidance with the actor while the second paradigm is career education with the agent. My third paradigm is career counseling with the author. As I moved into this paradigm, Wittgentstein's ideas about *language games* became relevant. Language is not a passive thing to be picked up, it is something that is a part of us - we shape the use of language as language shapes us.We live in language. Super and Crites led the charge in renaming vocational guidance to career development and counseling. In small part because they were tired of being called the VD guys- vocational development. The *Vocational Guidance Quarterly* was renamed the *Career Development Quarterly*, and Weinrach and Holland (1987) wrote an editorial lamenting this change.

Calling it career development was fine, because it was career development education, which fit the psychological zeitgeist of psychosocial education. However, things became sloppy and career development education or career education became career counseling. This loose language and slippage in meaning has had a detrimental effect in recruiting students to our discipline. We continued to do vocational guidance, yet now called it career counseling. Students who want to do counseling, prefer not to do vocational guidance disguised as career counseling. Counseling faculty want to teach counseling not vocational guidance. Many universities now have adjuncts teach vocational guidance, although labeling it as career counseling courses, because tenured faculty find it old fashioned and too routine. We have many articles and symposia discussing why people are not attracted to the career field but never have really addressed the slippage caused by referring to vocational guidance as career counseling. This

insight actually occurred for me at the inaugural conference of the Society for Vocational

Psychology (Savickas & Lent, 1994) when Arnie Spokane asserted that we have theories of

career choice and development not theories of career counseling. He was right and his bold

assertion turned my career in a new direction. The second SVP conference (Savickas & Walsh,

1996) focused on counseling and presented two new theories of career counseling: Krumboltz's

(1996) learning theory of career counseling and Chartrand's (1996) sociocognitive, interactional

theory for career counseling. In 2001, Linda Subich and Simonson reviewed the scant literature

on career counseling theories and updated it last year at APA. Asking the question of "Where is

the counseling in career counseling?" marked a turning point that led me to a third paradigm that

I am now enjoying. It is still in need of a name or brand. I have called it career construction

counseling or life designing because the term "career counseling" has been taken. But what it is a

turn from logical positivism of objective vocational guidance and subjective career education to

social constructionism of life projects. Career is now viewed as a project -- not the properties of

an object or the self-consciousness of subject-- but a space between the individual and society.

Career, from this perspective, is a story that people tell about their work life and the social spaces

they occupy. They author a story about themselves as actors and as agents in their lives. The

intervention of counseling seeks to concentrate reflection on identity themes and then extend

them into the future, not just recognize resemblance or promote readiness. It is using reflexivity

and themes to design a live. It is about uniqueness and attends to emotion, not just resemblance

and reasoning.

Eventually twenty or more years after first seeing that client, ideas began to come

together in what I now call career construction as theory of vocational behavior and life

designing as theory of career counseling. As I reflected on my career in preparation of this talk, I

realized that I actually unwittingly yet unwaveringly followed the path charted by Don and Jack. Don wanted to someday integrate his segmental theories of career. I think I may have done that using social constructionism as an epistemology to tie them together (cf. Brown and Lent, in press). Jack wanted to develop something he called career therapy. I think he might like life design counseling (Savickas, 2011). So, as I look back I think I have extended and elaborated the work of my masters. What I have also tried to do is merge their contributions by explicating a theory of career counseling rooted in a theory of vocational behavior and career development. I realized that Spokane was right. Vocational psychology—while providing much for vocational guidance-- offered little to career counseling.

During all these years, my career counseling sessions slowly moved away from test interpretation and vocational guidance. I focused increasingly on interview questions that encouraged clients to narrate their autobiographies. I became interested in Adler's work and saw how Holland had wisely used life-style logic in composing his six types. I would ask clients about their role models, and magazines, and how they made important decisions, what their parents wanted for their lives. Over time, I discovered the complex work of David Tiedeman. It took me a long time to realize that Tiedeman was not a self-concept theorist like Don Super but a self-construction theorist. I remember studying Kelly in graduate school and writing a monograph called career construction. But I lacked the confident and competence to publish it. As I followed the work of the Niemeyer brothers, I became fascinated by social constructionism and psychological constructivism. They could be used in career counseling. Dan McAdams work on stories alerted me about how to work with narratives.

But naming this third paradigm has been challenging. To me it is career counseling, but I have called it life designing and career construction. The paradigm is contextualism; the

contextual world view defines reality as an ongoing and dynamic event. The individual is seen as constantly changing-especially through interaction, and action is conceptualized as behavior infused with meaning. The contextualist makes distinctions, he or she does not make classifications. Formism such as Holland's RIASEC general types removes the context, whereas contextualism insists on the particulars of context. (Super, & Harkness, 2003). Pepper (1942/1970), the world hypothesis that is both dispersive and synthetic is *contextualism*. Contextualism attempts to answer the question "How does it happen?"" root metaphor is an act in context. And its truth criterion is a pragmatic "successful working." "These acts or events are all intrinsically complex, composed of interconnected activities with continuously changing patterns" (pp. 232-233).

So the third paradigm is about uniqueness, not resemblance. It is about individuality not individual differences. In the same year that Thorndike published *Individuality*, Stern (1911) published a book entitled *Methodological Foundations of Differential Psychology*. Throndike equated individuality with individual differences. His view prevailed during the rest of the 20th century. However, Stern differentiated between individuality and individual differences, calling for two distinct methods for study of persons (Lamiel). One is to study attributes the other is to study individuals. In the study of individual differences, the object of study is attributes. Individuals are the means, attributes are the ends. However, Stern advised that knowledge of attributes is not knowledge of individuals. In the study of individuals, the object of study is individuals and the attributes are the means.

Studies of individual differences artificially dismember the individual subjects and objectify them as scores on variables—a very useful process for vocational guidance. However, while these investigations begin with individual persons serving as research subjects, the investigators make no attempt to reassemble the extracted variables back together into whole

persons. They forfeit attention to the individual participants as unique composites of social and psychological characteristics in favor of an almost exclusive regard for the variables. For Stern, the differences between individuals is the object study, the results are knowledge of no one. Dollard (1949) aptly noted that in quantitative research "the individual is lost in the crowd" (p. 5). This statement could be paraphrased as "the individual's career is lost in the crowd of vocational behavior variables." If vocational psychologists want to advance the study of careers then they need to study persons not differences between people. Individual difference variables are differences not persons (Lamiell & Laux, 2010). As Murray (1938) insisted in founding the science of personology, living beings should be studied as living wholes. The meaning of career is lost in the study of fragmentary parts rather than living wholes.

Life Design: A Paradigm for Career Intervention

Life-design represents a new paradigm for career intervention (Savickas, 2012). Within a paradigm of practice (Kuhn, 1996), specific instantiations do not follow a rigid pattern; rather each realization of the general conceptual model shows a flexible and creative application of the abstract template. The abstract template for the paradigm for vocational guidance is to (a) enhance self-knowledge, (b) increase occupational information, and (c) match self to occupation. The paradigm for career education is to (a) assess development status, (b) orient the individual to imminent developmental tasks, and (c) develop the attitudes and competencies needed to master those tasks.

The paradigm for life design structures interventions to (a) construct career through small stories, (b) deconstruct these stories and reconstruct them into an identity narrative or life portrait, and (c)) co-construct intentions that lead to the next action episode in the real world. Let us consider each element in turn, starting with construction of a career story.

Construction

When individuals are dislocated from their current stories, they begin narrative processing of their biographies (Heinz, 2002). Some individuals seek counseling to assist them in this identity work. With these clients, life-design interventions begin by having them describe both (a) the incident that dislocates them from the current episode in their story and (b) their goals for a new scenario that they want to co-construct with a counselor. I am amazed at how most of time, the client opening includes the exact ending we will get to. They will keep going in the direction they are already headed. However, people know implicitly more this about their life direction than they can tell explicitly. So life designing seeks to enhance narratability, that increase clients' ability to tell their stories. Thus, the process of counseling helps client hear what they already know. Yet, there is a little more to it than that. What they already know must become clarified if it is to enhance their ability to decide and act. This is where Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology offers grand advice to the counselor: problems are solved not by giving information, but rearranging what we already know. So when clients fall out of story, how do we help them articulate what they already know and find what they did not lose? Simply stated, we follow Wittgenstein's advice and rearrange or reconfigure the past story to meet present needs.

To do so, counselors ask clients to narrate micro-narratives, or tell small stories about how they have made their self, shaped their identities, and constructed their careers. These fundamental stories are the base materials that we will rearrange to discuss the heart of the matter and what is at stake in the choices to be made. Life designing assumes that nothing can be created from nothing. So counselors inquire about the cultural plots and metaphors a client used to articulate and illuminate her or his most profound concerns and fundamental truths.

Individuals retrieve and repeat possibilities of action from communal history as sources of the self. To mold themselves and hold themselves, individuals select base materials from the range of meanings made accessible by their culture. But which plots, metaphors, meanings, and action possibilities did they select as sources for self-construction?

To address this question, I theorized practice. Over the last 40 years, I have tried dozens of stimulus questions. Often struggling, as I did with that very first client, to figure out how to be useful and avoid feeling like I wasted their time. At this point in time, I ask clients five simple questions to elicit stories about sources of the self. The questions inquire about their preferences for role models, magazines or television shows, books or movies, proverbs, and early recollections. The questions represent the scaffolding for self-assembly and re-assembly. They prompt concrete examples of abstract claims about life and provide a reference background or meaning making with which to remake meaning to navigate transitions and troubles. The role models reveal self conceptions, the magazines show manifest interests, the favorite story exemplifies a life script, the proverb offers advice to self, and early recollections highlight the preoccupation that will become occupation. Telling their stories focuses client's self-awareness and hearing their stories invites reflection on what matters most.

Deconstruction

Client stories often reveal dominating expectations or insidious ideas that suppress more life-enhancing alternatives. Counselors must deconstruct or take apart these self-limiting ideas, confining roles, and cultural barriers. In particular, counselors should be sensitive to axioms of meaning and ideological biases regarding gender, race, and social status. When stories require deconstruction, counselors may discuss with clients what a story assumes, overlooks, omits, forgets, or inadequately addresses. Having listened closely to how a client constructs her or his career story, and maybe deconstructing some of its ideas and incidents, it comes time to

reconstruct the small stories into a large story or autobiography. **The career problems we face cannot be solved using the same story with which we created the problems.**

Reconstruction

Remember in this reconstruction, or narrative bricolage, the client is the architect whom the counselor serves as carpenter. As Wittgenstein stated, problems are solved not by giving information, but rearranging what we already know. Occupational transitions, developmental tasks, and work traumas require clients to revise their understanding—and understanding is the goal of the third paradigm, not explanation which is the goal of the first paradigm. Narrative processing of identity constructions gathers the threads from the micro-stories and weaves them together into one tapestry to craft a unified sense of individuality. Integration of small stories about the self in social situations constructs a large story or macro-narrative, that is, an identity narrative. Career counseling consists of helping clients to gradually rearrange the identity-narrative by selectively and creatively reinterpreting the past to suit future aspirations. They reassemble or re-member pre-existing elements in new combinations that are more useful. The emerging macro-narrative imposes order by highlighting strands of continuity and patterns of meaning that lead to renewed purpose in a changed world. Thematic continuities provide for both fidelity and flexibility in pointing a way forward that maintains continuity yet alters the course at the same time.

Counseling helps clients to amplify the theme in order to better direct, regulate, and sustain their actions as they cope with their current concerns, challenges, and choices.

Co-Construction

Having reconstructed an identity narrative from the client's micro-narratives, the counselor then presents to the client a draft of her or his life portrait, A first goal in narrating the life portrait to clients is to have them consider the macro-narrative reconstructed by the

counselor. The portrait should not be a surprise, like an interpretation, just the next step in the story of the life.

Reflecting on the life portrait typically leads to the client editing the identity narrative. This revision involves amendments that correct mistakes, adjustments that come to terms with old conflicts and settle accounts, and alterations that enhance self-esteem and support a more optimistic view of life.

However, revising the macro-narrative involves more than just giving accurate voice to the client's life story. Clients need to modify the portrait to make it more livable and then extend it into the future. *It should become a portrayal of personhood that relates clearly to the concerns and questions that the client brought to counseling. That* is why they came to counseling. Client and counselor join together to candidly craft a move in meaning with which to confront choices. The co-construction of a revised life portrait seeks to incorporate the current dislocation in a way that clarifies priorities, mobilizes central tendencies, and increases the possibility of transformation and development. This occurs as clients access different meanings and knowledge that open new possibilities and restart stalled initiatives. With new language, fresh perspectives, and expanded vistas clients may reorganize their meaning system and clarify what is at stake in the next episode of their career story. This self-clarity enables clients to make their intentions more apparent to themselves and their counselors. With this new found clarity, clients may envision the next scenes, form intentions, and begin to act. Action –that is behavior infused with meaning--prompts further self-making, identity shaping, and career constructing. A revised identity narrative, with stabilized new meanings, enables individuals to meet the uncertainties of transition with comforts recalled from the past. As clients go further and deeper

into the world, their actions answer the questions brought to counseling. Action prompts further

self-making, identity shaping, and career constructing.

Conclusion

The contextual paradigm of life design does not replace but rather takes its place

alongside the formist paradigm of vocational guidance and the organismic paradigm of career

education. Its place is positioned by five sets of distinctions that differentiate among vocational

guidance, career education, and life design: actor, agent, and author (McAdams & Olson (2010);

object, subject, and project (Savickas, 2011b); resemblance, readiness, and reflexivity (Savickas,

2011a); scores, stages, and stories (Savickas, 2011a); and traits, tasks, and themes (Savickas

(2001). Vocational guidance, from the *objective* perspective of individual differences, views

clients as *actors* who may be characterized by *scores* on *traits* and who may be helped to match

themselves to occupations that employ people who they *resemble*. Career education, from the

subjective perspective of individual development, views clients as *agents* who may be

characterized by their degree of *readiness* to engage developmental *tasks* appropriate to their life

stages and who may be helped to implement new attitudes, beliefs, and competencies that further

their careers. Life design, from the *project* perspective of social constructionism, views clients

as *authors* who may be characterized by autobiographical *stories* and who may be helped to

reflect on life *themes* with which to construct their careers. Depending upon a client's needs and

social context, practitioners may apply career interventions that reflect different paradigms:

vocational guidance to identify occupational fit, career education to foster vocational

development, or life design to construct a career. Each paradigm for career intervention--

whether it be modernity's guidance, late modernity's psychosocial education, or post-

modernity's design—is valuable and effective for its intended purpose.

What I see as a next challenge is to play the language game and refine our words as a precursor to refining our field. We might distinguish the career services we provide into the three categories of guidance and advising, educating and coaching, and counseling and designing. This would impose deeper meaning on our own vocational behavior and advance the career of career intervention. This may not be the path you prefer yet we must do something innovative if we are to continue to be useful to the clients we serve in the post-corporate world of the 21st century.