

The *Pagdadala* Model in Counseling and Therapy¹

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Burden bearing (*pagdadala*), because it is an experience of the common Filipino, is used as a model (*Pagdadala*) for viewing the life experiences of the Filipino and used, as well, as a way to help the Filipino in difficult times. The Filipino is then revealed as committed to his or her tasks, responsibilities and relationships, taking these to their destinations, crawling on hands and knees if needed. The Filipino is seen to gain meaning not only from fulfilling accountabilities but also from a sense of belonging to a community of co-burden bearers that in return gives meaning to acts of burden bearing. The model also reveals ways of helping a burden bearer in difficulty which allow a helper to move sensitively with the burden bearer. Some issues are clarified; issues of self, of being with the other, of bearing up, of letting out breath when tired, and of seeing things in different ways. Finally, the counselor is then seen as someone who has taken up the burden of helping co-burden bearers.

For many years now, I have been training paraprofessional counselors in different parts of the Philippines. Most of these paraprofessional counselors are members of nongovernment organizations (NGOs). They are in their work because they are naturally skilled in counseling and can easily approach, and are easily approached by, their respective clientele. They do not have any formal training in psychology, most of them lack a college education, and they are not comfortable when English is used as the language of training. They do not use the English language when with their clients, most of whom are poor and lack a formal education. As a consequence, North American and European frameworks of counseling and therapy and their concepts, terms and methods, are at best difficult to convey, and at worst, difficult for the trainees to accept and use.

A model has emerged in the course of my work that paraprofessional counselors find "natural, simple, and easy to understand." The model is based on the experience of *pagdadala* (carrying a burden). Burden

bearing is experienced daily by most Filipinos, namely, those who are poor. During our training sessions, I am able to ask the participants to derive the model with me, using their own experiences with burden bearing. Although they may not understand Pagdadala as a model, they understand the language of the model which I call the *Pagdadala* model in this paper. Elsewhere I have called it the *Pagdadala* story. (See Decenteceo, 1997.)

The metaphor or model of burden bearing makes sense only when viewed through the actual experience of burden bearing. My understanding of the experience of burden bearing has two sources. One is the contacts I had with numerous victims of human rights violations, most of whom were poor. They invited me into their homes and shared their lives with me.

The other is my own experience as a young boy in my Visayan hometown, working in our yard, in our backyard poultry and in my uncle's general store. At that time, I planted bananas, dug ditches, built chicken coops, repaired nipa roofs, constructed feeding and drinking troughs for the chickens and put up fences of bamboo or barbed wire. It was often my job to clean the chicken waste from under the coops and cart them to a compost pile on the other side of the yard. I lifted sacks of chicken feed, corn and rice. I delivered eggs on my bicycle to houses, some of which were four kilometers away, steering with one hand while carrying a basket of eggs in the other. It was also part of my job to bury dead pets and chickens, of whom up to forty could die in a single day when sickness swept through our poultry. I also recall carrying a twenty-foot bamboo pole on my shoulder for more than 200 meters. At my size then, it was a struggle to keep either end from dragging on the ground.

We weren't very poor. Both my parents were teachers. But it was my parents' idea of how a young boy should be trained for adulthood.

My experience as a sometime burden bearer was critical in seeing the possibilities of using the experience of burden bearing as a model; time with my clients who were victims of human rights violations helped to flesh out the model.

I try to avoid calling it the Burden Bearing model because “burden bearing” sounds so depressing, according to English-speaking Filipinos. Non-English-speaking Filipinos, on the other hand, are immediately able to relate the model to their own experiences of burden bearing, a fact of daily life for many of them. Then too, ordinary Filipinos tend to carry their burdens lightheartedly, for the most part.

I have found the model to be an apt way for counselor and client to talk about life experiences. It has led to local terms that refer to counseling processes and has given me a different way of looking at some issues in therapy.

The *Pagdadala* Model

A full account of an act of *Pagdadala* describes the following aspects:

The burden

The burden bearer

The manner by which the burden bearer carries the burden

The destination of the burden bearer

The path of the burden bearer

The experiences of the burden bearer on the way to the destination

In Tagalog and Cebuano, respectively, the above components are as follows:

Ang dinadala

Ang nagdadala

Ang pagdadala

Ang patutunguhan

Ang pagdadaan

Ang pinagdadaan

Ang gidala

Ang gadala

Ang pagdala

Ang padulngan

Ang agianan

Ang giagian

Equivalent terms can be found in other Philippine languages. These vernacular terms are very useful because Filipinos tend to revert to their native tongue, shifting away from English or Filipino, when they speak of emotional and intimate matters. While the national language may be useful in helping the therapist and client communicate with each other, the client may best be able to express his or her deepest, strongest and most intimate feelings in the vernacular.

The act of *pagdadala* is used in counseling or therapy only in a metaphorical sense. (I use metaphor and model somewhat interchangeably, perhaps using the latter in a more formal sense.) I will now elaborate further on the metaphorical use of each aspect of Pagdadala.

Ang dinadala/Ang gidala. These refer to roles, relationships and responsibilities. A parent is spoken of as *nagdadala ng pamilya* (carrying the family). A partner might be admired as the responsible member in a relationship as in *siya ang nagdadala ng kanilang relasyon* (she carries, i.e., takes care, of their relationship). A leader may be seen to have an important responsibility as in *mabigat ang kanyang dinadala*. Lately, I have come to realize that past experiences can also be referred to as *dinadala*, as in *Dinadala pa rin niya ang nangyari* (She is still affected by what happened).

Ang nagdadala/Ang gadala. What we carry or are responsible for depends on who we are. First-born children are assigned different responsibilities from youngest children. Men and women, husbands and wives have different burdens. Teenagers are not held accountable for the same things as adults.

Some of us are willing burden bearers; others are not. Orphaned children and teenage parents find themselves having to assume responsibilities too soon. Some women resist traditional burdens. Some men would rather not bear traditional burdens. Some leaders actively seek office; others hold office reluctantly.

Ang pagdadala/Ang pagdala. We differ in the ways we carry our burdens. Generally, we are known to carry burdens lightheartedly (*magaan magdala*). Some, however, unnecessarily put pressure on themselves (*mabigat magdala*). Recently, they have been called Type A personalities (Meyer and Rosenman, 1974). Others are simply grumpy or complain too much (which might be all right if they did not affect anyone else). But someone who is *mabigat magdala* also gives others a hard time.

Some manage their responsibilities well (*maayos magdala*). Others are very inefficient. Some organizations make their employees' jobs difficult because of the vagueness of their organizational structure and task assignments. Members of a family may be confused as to the roles each individual member plays. Lines of communication may be blocked or unclear.

Ang patutunguhan/Ang padulngan. Actual burdens are carried to specific destinations. In the *Pagdadala* model, destinations are states or conditions. Parents want good health and a good education for their children. Students hope for knowledge, skills and a degree that certifies to these. Couples want a relationship in which they can rely on each other and into which children can grow happily. Community leaders want peace and security, good health, comfort and wellbeing for their communities.

Ang pagdadaan/Ang agianan. The path is the plan or strategy for bringing a relationship, role or responsibility to its desired state or condition. (It will be noted that in Tagalog the root word of *paraan*, meaning procedure, is *daan*. Similarly, the root of the same word in Visayan, *pamaagi*, is *agi*. Both root words mean path.) Husbands or wives may try to find a job in their home communities. Others may go overseas to provide for their families. An eldest daughter may decide to stay single until all her younger siblings have finished college. A couple may jointly decide that one of them must stay home to look after their children even if it means a smaller family income.

Ang pinagdadaan/Ang giagian. This refers to the day-to-day events that affect our burden bearing. We may encounter unexpected difficulties. A project may run out of funds. Individuals we counted on may back out or be absent through illness or death. Accidents may occur. These events can make burden bearing difficult. (This aspect was not mentioned in my 1997 article.)

The community of the burden bearer plays a very important role. The different aspects of *Pagdadala* are defined and given meaning by the community of the burden bearer. The solitary explorer is idealized in other cultures. In contrast, the solitary burden bearer is not meaningful in a Philippine context. Different communities may assign different burdens to different burden bearers. Meaningful paths and destinations may also differ, depending on the community. Different communities may also give different values to different ways of burden bearing.

The members of a community help prepare its burden bearers (*paghahanda* in Tagalog; *pagamdám* in Cebuano). They also determine the preparedness and suitability of its members to take up burdens. When its burden bearers have difficulty, the community reaches out to help

them. Conversely, during times of difficult burden bearing, the burden bearer turns to other members of his or her community.

Working with the *Pagdadala* model

The *Pagdadala* model provides a framework, i.e., a language, for discussing the lives of Filipinos. In my experience, Filipinos already use it to talk about themselves. But my intention is to use the model to work as a clinician-researcher-trainer among Filipinos, especially those who do not speak English. In this section, I will talk about some discoveries from my use of the model. Please note that these findings come from observations in my work, not from a philosophical or linguistic analysis of the model. One could say that the use of the model has sensitized me to make these discoveries. The sections below are a quick survey.

Reasons for counseling/therapy. There are different terms for the problems people bring to therapy: illness, life problem, inappropriate behavior, loss of meaning, dysfunction, communication breakdown, to name a few. Through the *Pagdadala* model, I was able to hear my clients saying that they were *nabibigatan* or *nabug-atan*. A burden bearer who is overwhelmed by burden bearing is said to collapse, *bagsak* in Tagalog and *hugno* in Cebuano.

In English, these Tagalog and Cebuano terms mean that burdens were heavy so that individuals were having difficulty with their burden bearing. At the end of a session or treatment program, they would use the term *gumaan* or *hing gaan*, meaning they felt light or loosened up.

Thus, listening to them from the *Pagdadala* model, I realized that my clients were not speaking of problems and the solutions to them. Instead, they were referring to heavy burdens and difficulties in burden bearing. Sometimes they collapsed from their burdens. They were looking for ways to lighten their burdens and ways to ease their burden bearing.

Ways of helping. As I became more sensitive to what my clients were saying, the *Pagdadala* model clarified some new terms for me. (These terms were new to me although my clients had been using them in my presence for a long time.) They sometimes said that they were *naguguluhan* or *nalibog*, that is to say, they were confused. Through

the *Pagdadala* model, I could understand what their confusion was about. They were confused about what their burdens were, why they were taking them up, who they were that they had such burdens, what the destinations of their burdens were, and why they had to take their burdens there.

Then I realized that I was to help them clarify these issues. That is why they referred to *paglilinaw* or *pagklaro*, the process of clarification regarding aspects of the burden, the burden bearer, the destination, the path and sometimes, the events that happen to the burden bearer along the way.

My clients were saying that they needed *pagsasaayos* or *pagpahimutang*, *needing to arrange things*, to put them in their proper places. *Pagsasaayos* means the arrangement of things. This is a reference to the aspect of *pagdadala*, the way a burden is carried. A burden that is well arranged is easier to carry. There are also ways of carrying a burden to make it heavy or light. I have already mentioned the terms *magaan magdala* and *mabigat magdala*.

Another term the *Pagdadala* model sensitized me to and clarified was *pagaalalay* or *pagsuporta*, meaning to give support. On the way to the destination, events may stagger the burden bearer. At these times, he or she needs support. If a Filipino is asked to physically demonstrate *pagaalalay*, he or she will do it while the other is moving. That is, the helper moves with the burden bearer. If the burden bearer needs to lean on something or someone, the term is *sandal*, with the thing or person leaned on regarded as a *masasandalan*. At these times, both what is leaned on and the burden bearer are standing still.

At other times during the journey, the burden bearer may need to stop, put the burden down and rest. This is obvious when the burden is a real one such as a pushcart or a sack of rice. Metaphorically, resting or *pagpahinga* means that one does not think of the role, relationship or responsibility, at least for a little while.

At other times, the burden bearer may forcefully let out a breath. In English, this may be accompanied by a sound represented as "whew." Metaphorically, the act of letting out breath is transformed into the act of telling one's story. For this they need a *mahihingahan* or, in Cebuano, a *mapahungawan*, someone to whom they can breathe out (*hinga* or *hungaw*) their story. The result is a feeling of lightness (*gumagaan/*

mogaan) or ease (*lumuluwag/moluag*). While telling one's story of burden bearing is called *paghihinga*, in the process, the burden bearer is *maibsan*, the root word of which is *ibis*, meaning to put down a burden. Burdens are temporarily set down in the telling of one's story.

The Counselor

In this section I will use the *Pagdadala* model to try to make sense of local terms that refer to the counselor. I will not include terms such as *terapist* or *kawnselor* since these are enlightening only to someone who already knows what a therapist or counselor is. For such a person, translation is unnecessary.

Gabay, meaning a guide, refers to someone who instructs or accompanies a burden bearer along the path that he or she is taking toward a destination.

Tagapayo or an adviser is someone who gives advice about different aspects of burden bearing, particularly how to carry or manage burdens (*pagdadala*).

Sinasanggunian, similar to *tagapayo*, is consulted (*sinasangguni*) regarding different aspects of burden bearing.

Tagatanglaw, or someone who sheds light, also someone who enlightens or helps by clarifying why certain burdens are taken up, by whom, to where they are brought, and which paths the burden bearer may take. A *tagatanglaw* can also help to clarify why the burden bearer is going through certain difficulties (*ang pinagdadaanan*).

The relative importance of a *tagapayo* or a *tagatanglaw* will depend on one's theoretical orientation, whether a counselor is "insight," "action," or "systems" oriented. Both are equally important in the *Pagdadala* model. Each addresses different aspects of *Pagdadala*.

Mahihingahan is not presently recognized as a formal term in counseling in the Philippines. (The Cebuano term is *mapahungawan*.) Mentioned often in the vernacular, it is the metaphorical equivalent of the person to whom, or in whose presence, one lets out breath. (The accompanying process is called "*naiibsan*," meaning one's burden is put down.) The English equivalent of a *mahihingahan* is "a listening ear." Within a western framework, however, a "listening ear" is not as important as a *mahihingahan* is within the *Pagdadala* framework. An

“empathic ear” is probably more important in the western view (but see my comments below on empathy in the Philippine setting.)

It is very important to note that given the current status of professional mental health services in the Philippines, these functions need not be performed by formally trained counselors or therapists. It is more likely that other members of the burden bearer’s family or community adequately fulfill these roles, rendering professional services superfluous.

Debriefing vs. *Pagpapahinga*

Since the late ‘80s, the debriefing of survivors of natural and man-made disasters has been an important contribution of counselors and psychologists. This task was highlighted during the Pinatubo eruption, the earthquake that struck central and northern Luzon, and the flash-floods that hit eastern Visayas. It has certainly given counselors, psychologists and psychiatrists a specific role to take during relief operations. But how do survivors react when they hear the term debriefing? Is there a Filipino term?

I have often encountered the term *makahinga* as in *Kailangan kong makahinga*. Here, the individual means that he or she needs to talk to someone. In the Pagdadala model, this is the equivalent of the act of forcefully exhaling air. Metaphorically, it is giving an account of one’s experience. I have also heard people say *Kailangan kong maibsan*. Literally, this means “I need to put my burden down.” It can also be taken to mean: “I need relief from burden bearing.” Usually, *makahinga* and *maibsan* are used at the same time. In the act of telling one’s story, one is able to put one’s burden down.

As mentioned earlier, events or experiences may also be referred to as burdens. Traumatic experiences are particularly difficult to carry. Going to a *mahihingahan* and telling one’s story of the event allows the individual to set that burden down (*maiibsan*).

The process involved is interesting. I believe that *maiibsan*, while it refers to putting a burden down, does not mean setting it aside. After relating one’s story and setting the burden down, the burden bearer can alter the way the experience is carried. He or she is able to take a different look at the act of carrying that particular burden. The process is referred

to as *maiigpawan*. Local definitions of *pag-igpaw* can be taken to mean to transcend. It can also mean to reframe a particular burden bearing experience. In terms of the *Pagdadala* model, reframing means to reinterpret the burden, the self as burden bearer and the destination of the burden.

If talking to someone (*paghinga*) to put one's burden down (*maibsan*) is a basic process for easing the act of burden bearing, it is not surprising that Filipinos go to counseling sessions only once. If the goal of counseling is to gain insight or to solve problems, then one session is insufficient. Counselors or therapists may feel several sessions are necessary since they need to know the client and the client's problem well. But to tell one's story, or to put one's burden down for a while, one session should be enough. Counselors and therapists will feel less uneasy about single-sessions if they realize that in being a *mahihingahan*, they are playing an important role.

Note that the term debriefing, like reflection, free association and interpretation focus on techniques. It also focuses on the mental health worker since it is he or she who carries out the technique. *Makahinga* and *maibsan*, on the other hand, focus on the needs of the client. A *mahihingahan*, like a *masasandalan*, is simply one who responds to a need. In contrast, terms like debriefing enable mental health workers to project their expertise. On the other hand, terms like *mahihingahan* make the mental health worker assess his or her adequacy for meeting the client's needs.

I mention this because of a tendency in the west, particularly in North America, to talk about techniques of therapy. It seems to me that the search for Philippine terms also carries this tendency to focus on the techniques and skills of the counselor or therapist. The calling cards of counselors and therapists support this view. At the very least, the indigenization of counseling must begin with the client's problems and needs. When we do so, we emphasize the fact that ours is a service—not a business—profession. It will also serve to remind us that there are already a lot of caring and loving Filipinos who, without professional training, are helping their neighbors and friends.

We should also bear in mind the improvisatory nature of Filipinos—their *pakiramdaman* and *oido* (playing by ear) talents—before we harden

what they do into specific techniques. This also applies to such “methods” as *pakapakapa* (get the feel of or sense for something), *pagtatanong-tanong* (ask freewheeling questions) and *pakikipagkuwentuhan* (trade stories). I believe these are better seen as intentions, rather than as methods or procedures, as when a counselor asks a client, “*Puwede ba akong makipagkuwentuhan sa iyo?*”

Burnout vs. *Pagkakademoralays*

In the early '80s, NGO workers were introduced to the term “burnout.” Through my talks with them, I knew they were familiar with the symptoms of burnout. But at that time, I did not know any Tagalog term for the symptoms as a whole. In local studies on burnout, researchers used terms such as *nauubos*, *nauupod*, *napapagod*, *napipiga*, and so on. These terms try to approximate the sense of “running out of gas or energy” that burnout connotes. None seemed to capture the sense conveyed by the NGO workers as they talked about their difficulties.

One term was possible though I never heard it used as a local equivalent of burnout. If burnout refers to a rapid loss of enthusiasm (or energy), why weren't NGO workers using the term *ningas kugon*? This term is about the flame of the *kugon* grass which burns strongly but dies out quickly.

The term is not used because *ningas kugon* refers to enthusiasm or commitment that was doubtful to begin with. Thus, the rapid flare-out is to be expected. NGO work however is based on genuine commitment. It will be recalled that the term burnout was originally used with reference to cause-oriented workers (Freudenberger, 1974). Thus, *ningas kugon* is not appropriate.

Burnout also means giving up entirely on the work that was begun with a lot of enthusiasm. Analogously, in the language of burden bearing, the burden bearer may collapse. (The Tagalog term is *bagsak*; the Visayan term is *hugno*.) But it should be noted that neither term connotes giving up the burden. In fact, the burden bearer may continue to crawl with the burden (*gapang* in Tagalog; *kamang* in Visayan).

After a while, I was able to discern the term *nadedemorlays* used by NGO workers. It does not mean running out of energy.

Nadedemorays, as the NGO workers use it, means a questioning or doubting of the cause that an individual is committed to. It is not the individual's commitment that is questioned; it is the worthiness of the cause. (In the case of burnout, the commitment of the individual is under question.) In the language of *Pagdadala*, the burden and the destination, and whether the burden bearer should continue, are being questioned. Uncertainty about these aspects of burden bearing makes burden bearing heavy or difficult. The burden bearer may consider giving up the burden. However, if the questions are clarified, the burden bearer will continue bearing the burden.

Empathy vs. *Paghaum*

All the North American and European therapeutic approaches give importance to the role of empathy in the therapeutic process. The term means getting into the world of the client in some way as exemplified in the phrase "walk around in someone else's shoes." The search for a local equivalent has apparently been fruitless because mental health workers tend to use a Filipinized version of empathy by pronouncing it in Philippine accents or by using the term "emfaty."

In my work, I became aware of a term that Visayan workers used when they talked about their relationship to their clients. The term was "*paghaum*" which means to "conform with the movements" of the client or to "move with" the client. Subsequently, the Tagalog term "*alalay*" became salient as an equivalent of the Visayan "*haum*." Someone who conforms with my movements simply moves together with me. He or she has to sense my movements, often without talking to me. His or her primary role is to steady me as I move with my burden. The other person does not take over my burden. Other terms are *sabay* (to go with) and *sakay* (to ride with).

It seems that this experience of "*paghaum*" or "*pagaalalay*" which is the way to help a burden bearer in actual life, is the local equivalent of the term "empathy." Anyone who has tried to explain empathy in the vernacular knows how difficult it is to do so. The difficulty may not be philosophical. It may be cultural. What we mean by being with someone may simply mean moving with that person; it may not mean entering that person's world. There are numerous experiences in the life of the masses of Filipinos where moving with someone else is very important:

planting rice seedlings, pounding or threshing rice, rowing a *bangka*, transporting a house, pulling in a fishnet, transporting a long object such as a bamboo pole, and so on. Perhaps we draw on these experiences to understand what it means to be with someone else.

The concept of Self

Filipino writers often take issue with the preoccupation in conventional psychology with the concept of the self. Two alternative approaches have been offered. One approach is to say that the important issue for Filipinos is not the search for the self but the struggle for daily survival; not "Who am I?" but "What will my family eat?" The other response to the issue of the self is to say that Filipinos are as concerned, if not more so, with their relationships with their fellows, as centered on the term *kapwa*.

The use of the term *kapwa* is perhaps more of a middle class reframing of the issue since Filipinos in this class are not struggling to survive (while admittedly not having an easy time). Enriquez (1989, p. 34) says:

For the middle class Filipino from the Philippine province of Bulacan, the *ibang-tao* ("outsider") is *kapwa* in the same manner that the *hindi ibang-tao* ("one of us") is also *kapwa* ("the unity of the one-of-us and the other").

In saying that the primary concern of the majority of Filipinos is daily survival, psychology tends to be cast aside in favor of political and/or economic perspectives. Certainly, conventional psychology cannot provide food for Filipino tables (more precisely, the floors on which many Filipinos have their meals).

The Pagdadala model, however, suggests that the question of survival is a question of how parents and other family members will carry the burden of their families. It is also a question of how community leaders and other members of the community will carry their communities.

Regardless of the reader's preference, the Pagdadala model is able to accommodate both alternatives. First, it de-emphasizes the self and emphasizes the community. Second, it recognizes that daily survival is critical to most Filipinos. In the model, the self (more accurately, *ang nagdadala*) is one of the aspects of *Pagdadala*. But there are other

aspects. Filipinos also say that one's self (*ang sarili*), while a legitimate burden, is only a light one (*magaan dalhin ang sarili*). The family, in contrast, is a very important burden (*mabigat na dalahin*). The model recognizes the important role of the community in defining different aspects of *Pagdadala*. The act of *Pagdadala* is meaningful only in the context provided by one's community.

Multiple Paradigms

More and more, therapists recognize that no single perspective fully and adequately addresses the entire range of human problems. They are more willing to acknowledge the possibilities offered by perspectives other than their own. They are also willing to acknowledge the limitations of their own perspective. But they also see the risks of working from a patched-up perspective drawn unsystematically from various perspectives. This is sometimes called eclecticism.

Cottone (1992) suggests that the solution is a paradigm that subsumes all the other paradigms. Here, I am proposing the *Pagdadala* model as a way of utilizing the different therapeutic paradigms. This is accomplished by fitting a paradigm or theory into one or more of the aspects of *Pagdadala*. This depends on the aspect of burden bearing that needs to be worked on. This, in turn, depends on the joint assessment of the client, his/her significant others and the therapist.

When *pagdadala* is made difficult because the burden, destination, the path and the person of the burden bearer are not clear, clarification may be needed. The "insight" therapies may be used. For example, the psychoanalytic, psychodynamic, existential or humanistic schools can be used to address the client's questions of "who am I?", "why am I carrying this particular burden?" and "where am I taking this burden?"

When the arrangement or management of a burden is needed, the systems therapies and the "action" therapies may be used. The responsibility of carrying a family may be addressed by systems therapies. Relationships or how the individual relates to others may be addressed by the behavior therapies.

Sometimes, members of the individual's family and community may be more appropriate helpers. In this instance, the therapist needs to refer to them or to serve as a bridge to them. The family or community members

may be better at explaining aspects of burden bearing that are determined by the community or its particular historical development. The recognition that the individual is to be understood from within his or her community and cultural group is part of multicultural therapy as advocated by Ivey and his colleagues (Ivey, Ivey, and Simek-Morgan, 1997).

Another reason for a multi-paradigmatic perspective based on the *Pagdadala* model is the fact that the relatively few (per capita) practitioners of counseling and therapy in the Philippines represent a variety of therapeutic perspectives from North America or Europe. Some of these are actively searching for indigenous therapeutic approaches. Their work will be easier if they do not have to totally reject their previous training.

If the *Pagdadala* model can be seen to work, it should be a fascinating instance of the use of a very old experience, burden bearing, to enlighten a contemporary issue.

The *Pagdadala* model is different from the models on which the European and North American therapeutic perspectives are based. It allows me to look at therapeutic work among Filipinos in ways that are not available from these other perspectives. Since the *Pagdadala* model is based on an experience of most Filipinos—to be sure, of most people in Third World countries—it promises to yield ideas that are more relevant to their lives. (But it really is not up to me to say. It depends on how useful other clinician/researchers find the model.)

The use of the model to search for concepts, methods, and frameworks that are indigenous depends to a very large extent on the clinician-researcher's familiarity with the experience of burden bearing. A model is useful if it helps us to see beyond the phenomenon that we are trying to understand. Our familiarity with the model provides us with insights on the phenomenon before us that would otherwise not be immediately available if we were to rely only on what is directly given to us. Someone who is not familiar with burden bearing (whether therapist, client, or researcher) will probably have difficulty using the *Pagdadala* model. (That is why I work with paraprofessional counselors. Their experience with actual burden bearing is a major part of our joint endeavor to find indigenous concepts and methods of counseling.)

This creates a dilemma since most clinician-researchers, being from the middle or upper class, have little experience with actual burden bearing. We are left with an important question. If clinician-researchers of today are to use the *Pagdadalá* model, they must acquaint themselves with actual burden bearing. How will they do it? Are they willing to do it?

Notes

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