

APPENDIX N

Jankowicz 2004, p. 277

THE FORMAL CONTENT OF KELLY'S PERSONAL CONSTRUCT THEORY

Appendix N summarises the basic assertions of the theory (Kelly, 1952/1991). The corollaries are presented in a different order than Kelly's, but in his own words. Jankowicz (2004) then provides a brief comment or gloss on each one.

The fundamental postulate and the corollaries.

Fundamental postulate	A person's processes are psychologically channelised by the way in which he anticipates events.	The world out there is real; the world in here is equally real. Psychologically, people operate by building internal representations of the phenomena they experience. They do so in order actively to predict what will happen next. This activity has the same epistemological status as the activity of the 'scientist' activity and explains nature.
Construction corollary	A person anticipates events by construing their replications.	People develop these internal representations by recognising regularities and recurring patterns in their experience, which they represent internally by means of contrasts called 'constructs'.
Dichotomy corollary	A person's construct system is composed of a finite number of dichotomous constructs.	Constructs are reference axes, not concepts; so, to understand someone's meaning, you need to know 'both ends', that is, the <i>implicit pole</i> , as well as the <i>expressed pole</i> , of the construct. Thus, 'good' as opposed to 'inadequate' expresses a different meaning to 'good' as opposed to

		'evil'.
Range corollary	A construct is convenient for the anticipation of a finite range of events only.	Unlike a concept, which applies to everything it encompasses, a construct is limited to a <i>focus of convenience</i> found useful by the person using it. It's not used for all things in all circumstances.
Modulation corollary	The variation in a person's construction system is limited by the permeability of the constructs within those ranges of convenience in which the variants lie.	Some constructs are more permeable (can accommodate many new events within their <i>range of convenience</i>); for example, 'good-bad'. Others are less permeable (apply to only a few); for example, 'fluorescent-incandescent'
Organisation corollary	Each person characteristically evolves for his convenience in anticipating events, a construction system embracing ordinal relationships between constructs.	Regarded as a data structure, the internal representations we call constructs are organized as a hierarchic system. Some constructs are more central and have the nature of personal values, subsuming other, more specific constructs.
Fragmentation corollary	A person may successively employ a variety of construction systems which are inferentially incompatible with each other.	While there is a tendency towards consistency between different parts of the system – especially between core constructs (personal values) and their subordinate constructs – this consistency isn't total; it may vary according to circumstances and events as the individual interprets them.
Experience corollary	A person's construction system varies as he successively construes the replications of events.	Constructs represent 'working hypotheses' about what will happen next. If they, or their implications, aren't effective in prediction, they are open to amendment in the light of those events, though people differ in the extent to which they are

		prepared to make, or even notice, a possible need for, such amendment.
Choice corollary	A person chooses for himself that alternative in a dichotomised construct through which he anticipates the greatest possibility for the elaboration of his system.	We often express preferences for one pole of each construct as opposed to another. If the whole system is to be effective in anticipating events, it makes sense for us to develop a preference which allows us to 'grow' the system in a way which increases the accuracy of our predictions and anticipations.
Individuality corollary	People differ from each other in their construction of events.	Different people develop their own meanings – their own constructs – for the same events, and this is what gives them their individuality and distinct personhood.
Commonality corollary	To the extent that one person employs a construction of experience which is similar to that employed by another; his processes are psychologically similar to those of the same person.	People are similar to the extent that they construe (see the meaning in) events similarly (and not because they encounter similar events, nor because they behave in the same way).
Sociality corollary	To the extent that one person construes the construction process of another; he may play a role in a social process involving the other person.	We enter into effective role relationships with other people (for example, boss-subordinate; parent-child; husband-wife) to the extent that we are aware of, and can understand, some of the other person's constructs (and not because the two sets of constructs are the same, nor because society has defined roles for us).