

## ■ ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE NATURE OF HUMANITY

### John E. Jones

Human relationships are based on assumptions about people, what they are like and what their nature is. These assumptions can be either implicit in the way we relate to other people, or they may be explicit. A given person may or may not be able to specify what he or she believes to be the nature of humanity. That person who has a coherent point of view about the nature of humanity is said to have a philosophy. But each of us has in our relations with other people a more or less consistent set of assumptions that we make about other people and about ourselves, and our philosophies may be inferred by observing us relating to other people.

Different assumptions about what other people are like lead to different ways of relating. For example, the person who has the point of view about people that underlies the statement, “People are no good,” is likely to behave toward people in a suspicious, nontrusting way. On the other hand, the person who assumes that to be loved is a human need relates to people in a fundamentally different manner. In their assumptions about the nature of humanity, some people emphasize the animalistic side of humanness, and this leads to a different set of behaviors toward other people, particularly those of the opposite sex. Persons who hold the assumption that the herd instinct is a part of human nature tend to behave differently than do people who do not have an instinctual basis for their philosophy.

The term “nature” connotes birth, and philosophies about the nature of humanity have at their roots the assumptions that we make about what people are like without regard for the influence of the environment on them. What is a person like when he or she is born? Is he or she, in fact, a person? It is important that people be able to assess their assumptions about other people for two reasons. First, to diagnose how they are relating to friends, to coworkers, and to other group members. Second, so that they may plan more effectively the interventions they might make in the human systems of which they are a part. The way they intervene in human relationships implies a set of assumptions about what people are like.

Gordon Allport specifies three psychological models about the nature of humanity. The first of Allport’s models is that people are *reactive beings*. This model specifies that people essentially react to stimuli in their physical environments. They are not proactive in the sense that they will things to happen. They are essentially reactive, and their behavior is determined by their environment. The second model is that people are

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*reactive beings in depth*. This model specifies that people have unconscious lives, that their behavior is a function of things of which they are not aware. They are reactive to their environment and they are also reactive to drives, instincts, will, and other aspects of their personalities, which are submerged. The third model is people as *beings-in-the-process-of-becoming*. This model specifies that people essentially have within themselves the capability of becoming good and sufficient, given an environment that nurtures their growth.

These three models subsume most of the schools of psychology that are prevalent today. Allport says that the reactive model takes in naturalism, positivism, behaviorism, operationism, and physicalism. The second subsumes psychoanalysis, psychodynamics, and depth psychology. The third model contains such trends as holism, orthopsychology, personalistics, and existential psychology.

Each of these three models has different implications for the way we relate to one another. The first, the *reactive* model, implies that we will relate to other people in terms of influence, power, rewards, reinforcement, manipulation, and conditioning. We will relate to one another in ways that cause others to react. That is, we become a part of others' environments and stimulate them verbally and nonverbally, and we reward their behavior both positively and negatively in order to shape their behavior to our ends. The second model, *reactive beings in depth*, implies that we would relate to people in terms of "why." We would try to discover motives, to develop insight. We would in our relations with other people discuss the reasons behind our behaviors, feelings, thoughts, attitudes, and values. The third model, *beings-in-the-process-of-becoming*, implies that we would relate to other people in terms of nurturance and development. We would try to foster climates that would produce growth in one another.

It is important to bear in mind that these models represent different assumptions about the nature of humanity that are not in the scientific sense verifiable. Nonetheless, they are at the base of all human relations. There is no way to establish the truth about people's nature, but it is worthwhile to make one's own assumptions explicit. E.G. Williamson once said that he didn't like the word truth. He said, "Truth is a shady spot where we sit down to eat our lunch before moving on."

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## ■ THE MASLOW NEED HIERARCHY

**Sandra L. Pfeiffer**

Abraham Maslow theorized that experienced needs are the primary influences on an individual's behavior. When a particular need emerges, it determines the individual's behavior in terms of motivations, priorities, and action taken. Thus motivated behavior is the result of the tension—either pleasant or unpleasant—experienced when a need presents itself. The goal of the behavior is the reduction of this tension or discomfort, and the behavior itself will be appropriate for facilitating the satisfaction of the need. Only unsatisfied needs are prime sources of motivation.

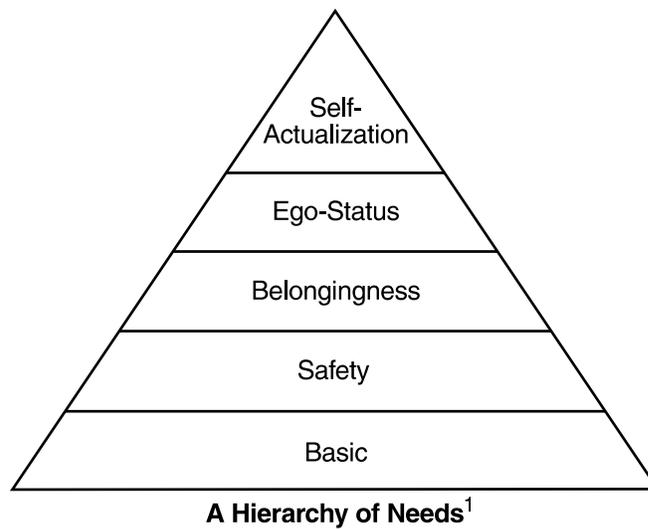
Understanding behaviors and their goals involves gaining insight into presently unsatisfied needs. Maslow developed a method for gaining insight by providing categories of needs in a hierarchical structure. He placed all human needs, from primitive or immature (in terms of the behaviors they foster) to civilized or mature needs, into five need systems. He believed that there is a natural process whereby individuals fulfilled needs in ascending order from most immature to most mature. This progression through the need hierarchy is seen as the climbing of a ladder where the individual must have experienced secure footing on the first rung in order to experience the need to step up to the next higher rung. The awareness of the need to climb further up the ladder is a function of having fulfilled the need of managing the preceding rung, and only satisfactory fulfillment of this need will allow the individual to deal with the new need or rung. Inability to fulfill a lower-order need or difficulty in fulfilling a lower-order need may result in an individual's locking in on immature behavior patterns or may produce a tendency to return to immature behaviors under stress any time an individual feels a lower-order need not fulfilled to his or her satisfaction. The individual may also revert to behaviors that fulfilled lower-order needs when the satisfaction of higher needs are temporarily blocked. That is not to say that any need is ever completely satisfied; rather, Maslow indicates that there must be at least partial fulfillment before an individual can become aware of the tensions manifested by a higher-order need and have the freedom to pursue its fulfillment.

The Maslow Need Hierarchy is presented in the following illustration. The Basic level represents needs that reflect physiological and survival goals. At this level are such factors as shelter, clothing, food, sex, and other necessities. In modern societies, where these basic needs almost automatically are met, there is not likely to be any need tension concerning the fulfillment of Basic needs. However individuals adapt this basic level

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upward to include such needs as avoidance of physical discomfort, pleasant working environment, or more money for providing creature comforts.



The second level of the hierarchy consists of Safety needs. When the individual has at least partially fulfilled the Basic needs, he or she will experience the tensions relating to needs of security, orderliness, protective rules, and general risk avoidance. These needs are often satisfied by an adequate salary, insurance policies, a good burglar alarm system for his or her business, a doorman for the apartment building, etc.

When Safety needs have been met, the individual will become less preoccupied with self and will endeavor to form interpersonal relationships. The relative success of this need for Belongingness will result in feeling accepted and appreciated by others. Thus the third level needs concern family ties, friendship, and group membership.

When an individual feels secure in relationships with others, he or she will probably seek to gain special status within the group. This need tension will be associated with ambition and a desire to excel. These Ego-Status needs will motivate the individual to seek out opportunities to display competence in an effort to gain social and professional rewards.

Because Ego-Status fulfillment is greatly dependent on the ability of others to respond appropriately to the individual's efforts to perform in a superior way, they are the most difficult to fulfill satisfactorily. However, if the individual has gained satisfaction on level four, he or she may be able to move up to level five—Self-Actualization. At this level, the individual is concerned with personal growth and may fulfill this need with challenges to become more creative, demands for greater achievement, and, in general, efforts to measure up to his or her own criteria of personal

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<sup>1</sup>“Hierarchy of Needs” from MOTIVATION AND PERSONALITY, 3rd Ed., by Abraham H. Maslow, Revised by Robert Frager, James Fadiman, Cynthia McReynolds, and Ruth Cox. Copyright, 1954, © 1987 by Harper & Row, Publisher, Inc. Copyright © 1970 by Abraham H. Maslow. Reprinted by Permission of HarperCollins Publisher Inc.

success. Self-actualizing behaviors must include risk-taking, seeking autonomy, and developing freedom to act.

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## ■ DEPENDENCY AND INTIMACY

**John E. Jones**

Effectiveness in human relations results from the interplay among a very large number of factors, but it is useful to think about interpersonal behavior as stemming from two primary sources: how we are treated by others, and our own “personalities.” One assumption underlying organization development is that how we behave in a work setting is determined more by our reactions to the environment than by our intrinsic personality traits (Sherwood, 1972). In general, however,  $B = (P, E)$ , or, behavior is a function of the interaction between our personalities and the environment.

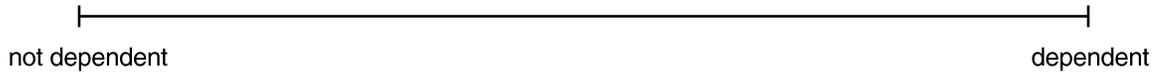
There is an endless array of character traits that have been described, measured, and cataloged. The list is so large that it appears that our selves are so complex that it is a wonder that we can connect with one another at all. Two dimensions that subsume a great part of our relating behaviors, however, can be studied. Dependency and intimacy are two relatively stable characteristics of people that strongly influence their reactions to the situations in which they find themselves with other people. Dependency refers to our relations to other people with regard to authority, control, structure, rules, and power. Intimacy refers to our characteristic ways of behaving in relation to other people with regard to closeness, personalness, confidentiality, and emotional distance. Together these two dimensions can explain a large part of the variability of people’s reactions to the environments in which they live and work. Our characteristic ways of relating to other people, then, result not only from who they are and the situations within which we are relating, but also to our needs to control or to be controlled and our needs to be close or to be distant from people. These two dimensions will be discussed in relation to each other and in relation to effectiveness in human relations.

We characteristically think of personal traits as being linear; that is, we have more or less of a given characteristic. Often in thinking about personal traits such as intelligence, rigidity, need for achievement, etc., we tend to think that one end of the linear continuum is better than the other in terms of mental health. The two traits, dependency and intimacy, however, are not seen as linear dimensions.

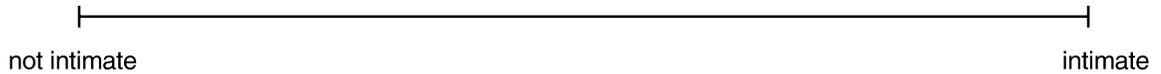
Rather, they are probably most usefully conceptualized as curvilinear dimensions. If we think of dependency in the usual linear sense we tend to think of one end of the continuum being not dependent and the other end being dependent. Graphically, this can be displayed as follows:

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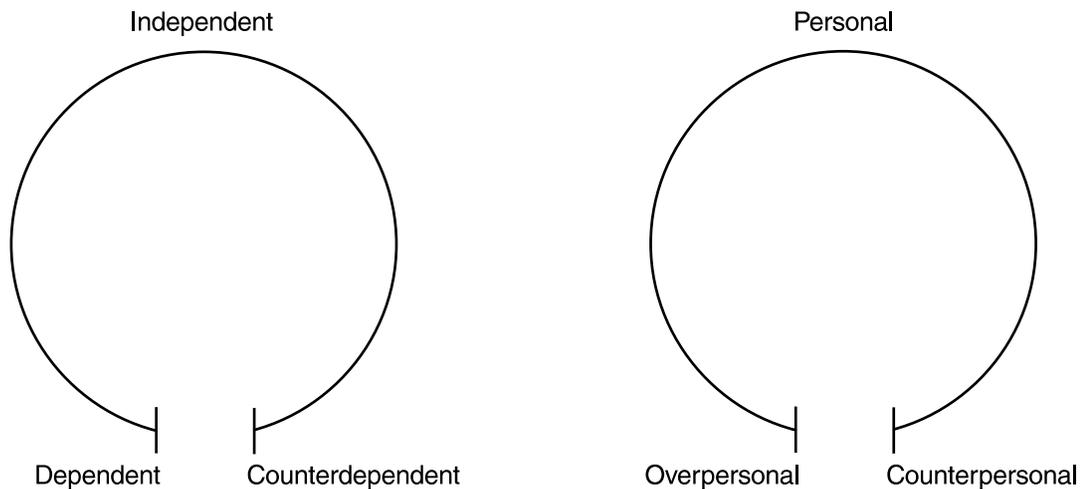
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Similarly we might think of intimacy as a matter of degree, as follows:



Thinking in this way would lead us to the conclusion that that person would be healthiest who would have a relatively low amount of dependency and a high amount of intimacy. It is more useful, however, to think about these as having different poles. The two ends of the dependency continuum can be described as dependent and counterdependent, and the middle can be described as independent. The two ends of the intimacy dimension can be overpersonal and counterpersonal, and the center of that dimension can be described as personal. Then these two continua can be displayed graphically as follows:



What makes these traits nonlinear is that it is not a matter of being more or less dependent; it is a matter of working out one's conflicts with authority figures. The two ends of the continuum are psychologically close together; that is, the person who is conflicted with regard to authority will often display some ambivalent behaviors with respect to those people who are presumably in charge. They may be overly dependent in one situation and counterdependent in another. A person who is conflicted with regard to personalness or intimacy will similarly engage in behavior that flips between being counterpersonal (you can't get close to me) and overpersonal (I want to consume you). So, instead of thinking of the optimum values of dependency and intimacy as lying on one end of the scale, it is useful to consider that the best condition is one in which conflicts with other people with respect to dependency and intimacy have been

satisfactorily worked out. The middle of each scale, then, would be seen as the desirable condition.

There are predictable behaviors that are engaged in by people who are conflicted or unconflicted on each of these two dimensions. The person who has not made a satisfactory resolution of authority relations is likely to engage in the following dependent behavior. He or she actively seeks structure, "leadership" from others, rules, agenda, parameters, instruction, etc. This person may also engage in a number of resistive behaviors toward those people who are presumably in control. That is, he or she may seek to be dependent on other people and at the same time experience resentment in the situation. Counterdependent behaviors include engaging in a leadership conflict with the establishment, blocking decision making, attacking the leader, ventilating negative feelings about the situation, etc. The person who is unconflicted with regard to dependency is a person who is equally comfortable in a highly structured situation or in an ambiguous situation in which control, authority, rules and agenda, etc., are not clear. This person can either lead or be led. He or she can help to mediate between the so-called leader and the people who are having problems with authority. In a group situation, the people unconflicted with regard to dependency are likely not to be perceived as very viable in the beginning of the group's development, but their efforts at supporting members in getting through the stage of structuring their interaction can be helpful.

The person who has an internal conflict with regard to intimacy can be expected to engage in a number of behaviors. He or she may play "keep-away," by not permitting people to get him or her involved in closeness. This person may not express very many feelings verbally. He or she may resist engaging in activities that involve touching or involve sharing of private information. At the same time, this person may engage in behaviors that offer promise of getting people to like him or her. He or she may get chairs or ash trays for people or smile a great deal at people. However, this person will continue to keep his or her distance. The person who is unconflicted in regard to intimacy can, by definition, be close or distant from others. He or she is not compulsive in the need to be close to everyone, but does not keep people arbitrarily at a distance to meet his or her needs for self-protection. This person emerges in group situations as one who can bridge the gap between those people who are unsettled about knowing themselves and being known by others and those people who want to explore themselves and each other in profound ways.

It is important to consider that being independent and being personal are not necessarily the best conditions for ensuring effectiveness in human relations. One has to have the capability of being independent and of being close and personal; but one needs to go beyond that, to transcend that to a higher goal of developing the capability of being interdependent and interpersonal. Interdependency is based on the observations that no one person can be self-subsistent, that we all need other people, and that the basic social need that exists in our society is that of finding ways of developing interpersonal relationships in which we meet each other's needs without being exploitative. A popular

saying puts it very well, “None of us is as smart as all of us.” When we can become dependent on each other in an interdependent way, functionally rather than dysfunctionally, we can achieve outcomes together that are synergistic; that is, we can produce more together than we can working in parallel. When we think of intimacy in this way, the goal becomes not to reduce conflict with regard to knowing and being known, but to develop the ability to build satisfactory interpersonal relationships. To become personal—to resolve one’s internal conflict with intimacy—is seen as necessary but not sufficient. The end is to develop the capability of relating with other people at an appropriate level of intimacy.

It is important to be able to develop effective relationships that are unconflicted with regard to power and love, or authority and intimacy. What is needed is to transcend being independent and personal to become capable of interdependent and interpersonal behavior (Pfeiffer, 1972). The chart below represents this ideal movement graphically:

Level	Dependency	Intimacy
III	Interdependent	Interpersonal
transcendence .....		
II	Independent	Personal
I	Dependent-Counterdependent	Overpersonal-Counterpersonal

Level III interactions are characterized by a willingness to lead and to be led, to be close or distant, and to be noncompulsive about who is in charge and/or whether one is being loved.

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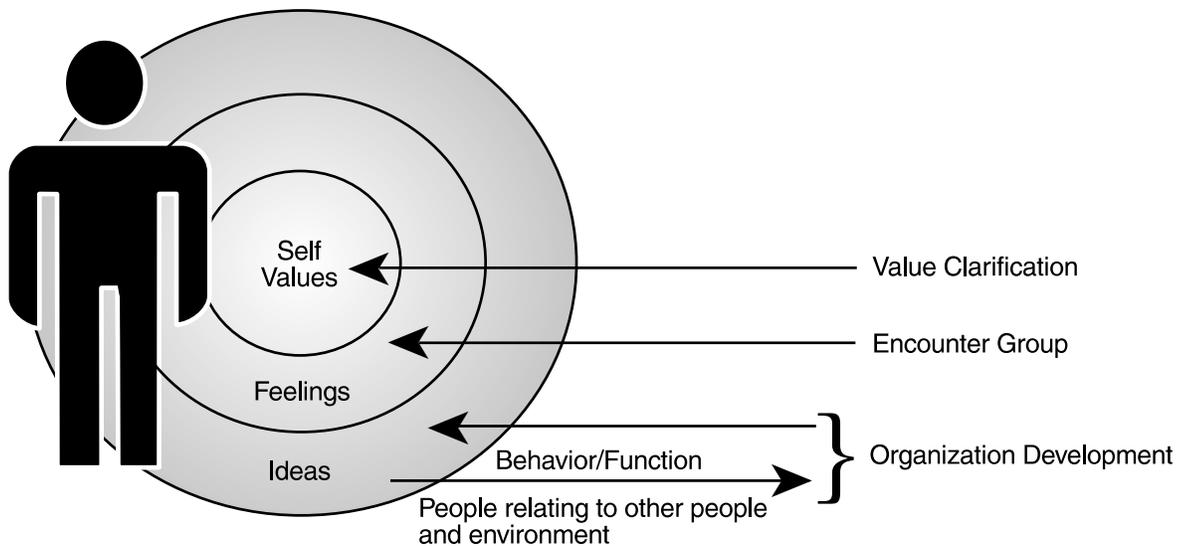
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# ■ SOME IMPLICATIONS OF VALUE CLARIFICATION FOR ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

**Maury Smith**

The goal of this article is to indicate how the methodology of value clarification (abbreviated: VC) can be used in an organization development (OD) intervention. To do this, the article will have two sections: the first will give a very brief summary of the more important concepts of a VC theory; the second section will give a few examples and indications of how VC methodology may be used in OD.

Before discussing VC theory, it would be well to delineate where it fits in relationship to organization development and human relations training group approaches.



The diagram above depicts in a simplified way how value clarification relates to OD and human relations training groups. Organization development theory attempts to deal with people, their interpersonal and task relationships, their organizations and the systems created; yet for the most part the emphasis in OD is on the behavior of people. Various strategies are employed in OD to facilitate behavior that is beneficial and effective for the organization; to improve people's ideas and insights into themselves as leaders, participants, and team members and their insights into the dynamics of

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organizations; to use experiential learning in an effort to deal with feelings and better task accomplishment. However, most strategies do not center on people's values.

In most human relations training (T) groups, in fact, most human relationships, the emphasis is on the feelings of a person. Or, to put it another way, task accomplishment is laid aside and the total emphasis is on the maintenance and/or the improvement of relationships. Most OD practitioners see "T-groups" as one tool in building better communication and relationships between people. Most human potential practitioners see these groups as an end in themselves. Value clarification methodology uses the group-dynamic or experiential-learning approach but with the emphasis on the values of the individual. It has been found that a value clarification approach cuts very quickly to the heart of people and can become as intensive as an encounter group. As opposed to focusing exclusively on maintenance to build relationships, the VC facilitator uses the task of clarifying one's values as the means of building a trusting, creative atmosphere and group spirit.

## **SUMMARY OF VALUE CLARIFICATION THEORY**

### ***Introduction***

In this section the theory of VC will be the focus. It is on the major concepts of real value, primary values, value indicators, and priority ranking that the activities and instruments of VC are created. As with OD and training group interventions, the participants in a VC group do not necessarily need to know the theory behind the intervention. VC uses an inductive group process or, if you prefer, an experiential learning approach. The participants learn the theory of VC as they are actually working out their values in the group through the activities and instruments. The participants are encouraged to share with their group as much of their values as they feel comfortable in doing. No one is forced to share any more than he or she wants to.

Generally speaking, in a VC workshop the first session will have the participants involved in some very simple value-clarifying techniques with a brief functional description of what the criteria of a value are. As the workshop progresses, the participants will be involved in exploring their values in depth and what their value indicators are. In most workshops the tendency is to break the large group up into small groups of four to eight people. There are some activities that work well with larger groups of twelve to fifteen and even some that can be used with a group of fifty.

As with most group dynamic techniques, the instruments used in VC are simple but very stimulating. Participants become involved and intrigued as they discover more consciously what their values are. The group interaction becomes a veritable "buzz session" as the participants share with one another what they are discovering about themselves. The session can become so intense that some participants become disturbed over what they have discovered about themselves and will need individual consultation. On occasion, referral or follow-up with an individual is recommended.

The goal of value clarification is simply to help people to discover through inductive group process what their values are by structuring activities that confront their thinking. VC is a methodology and not a philosophy of life. As a methodology, VC does not establish a person's values nor does it study intrinsic values as a philosopher or as a moralist would. It is not the purpose of VC to tell people what their values should be; rather VC helps them to discover the values by which they are actually living.

## ***Major Concepts***

### *Value*

The value clarification definition of value is a totally operational description. On the basis of this definition, many activities can be devised to help people discover what their values are and to free them to choose freely from alternatives, after considering the probable effects of the alternatives. They repeatedly act on their choices and are willing to acknowledge these choices as their values publicly. This process gives them pleasure because it accomplishes their development as people. In order for something to be a value it must fulfill the following criteria:

- It must be *chosen freely*.
- It must be *chosen from alternatives*.
- *The effects of the various alternatives must be considered*.
- It must be *acted on by the person*.
- It must be *acted on repeatedly*.
- It must *help the person achieve his or her potential*.
- It must be *publicly affirmed by the person*.

A full value must have all seven criteria. If even one of the criteria is missing, it is not a full value but only a partial value or a value that is being formed by the person. Partial values include desires, thoughts not acted on, opinions, interests, aspirations, beliefs, attitudes, etc.

The preceding can be summarized into three general areas: choosing, acting, and prizing. To be a full value something must be consciously considered and deliberately chosen. We have many so-called "values" that have been introjected from parents and schooling that are not full values of our own (even though we act on them) simply because we never consciously chose them. Secondly, we frequently think that we have a high value in some area when in actuality it is nothing more than a strong opinion and so it is not a full value. A full value must be acted on repeatedly. Thirdly, we must prize a value. There are many things that we do in our society that do not help us to grow in the talents that we want to develop or things that we are forced to do but do not enjoy doing nor care to share with others. A full value is something we enjoy because we see how it

is helping us to develop as a person, and we wish to share and affirm it publicly to others.

A value facilitator does not necessarily have to give the preceding definition to a group. The activities and instruments used in value clarification gradually teach a person what his or her values are; just as with other group dynamic approaches, the group does not have to know the theory behind groups in order to develop cohesiveness. In value clarification people discover what their true values are as the various instruments confront them by examining what their values are.

### *Primary Values*

One of the major concepts in VC theory is that of *primary values*. VC is a methodology, and the facilitator's responsibility is to create the opportunity for people to discover their own values, not to impose his or her values on them. The goal is to make people aware of what their value indicators demonstrate as their full or partial values according to the criteria. One of the criteria is that the value facilitates the growth of the person and helps develop his or her potential. Modern developmental psychology seems to indicate that there are two primary values that most would accept: the value of one's own self-worth and the value of the self-worth of others. Different philosophical or religious stances may emphasize a particular aspect within these two broad primary values, but they do agree on them. There may well be other primary values, but this concept should not be carried so far as to impose values.

### *Value Indicators*

Another important concept of VC is that of *value indicators*. A value indicator is simply something that is not a full value. In other words, it does not meet all seven criteria outlined. However, value indicators are important because they show people what values they are in the process of forming. They may have goals but not be working toward them and so they would not be full values. They may have attitudes that they absorbed from parents but that they did not choose. They may say they have interest in something but never take the time to act on the interest. Feelings, beliefs, and aspirations are usually value indicators because they do not fulfill all seven criteria of a full value.

The ways we use our time and money are very strong value indicators. A person may say that he or she has as a high value the importance of reading. However, you might ask how much time does he or she take to read each week or when he or she last read a good book and be surprised to discover that the last time was five years ago. A simple process in determining a value is to ask a person or a company to describe how they spend their money. Generally speaking, the more money they spend on something, the greater the value it is to them.

Many different kinds of VC activity sheets may be designed to help people distinguish their true values from those they believe to be values. For example, consider the following sheet to determine how the use of time indicates a person's values:

**Table 1. Value Clarification Sheet—Time**

On the list of activities, first add other activities on which you may spend time during a typical week. Then rank the activities according to which you think are most important to you. The most important should be 1, etc. Finally, figure out how much total time you spend on each activity.

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Time Spent</i>
Work: Planning Performing Breaks Recuperation from work Thinking about work during off hours _____ _____		
Family: Time with partner Time with children Time with total family Time with friends by yourself Time with friends with your partner Time with friends with your family _____ _____		

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Time Spent</i>
Recreation: Reading Sports Television Conversation Parties Time by yourself _____ _____		
Religious Political Community _____ _____		

After the participants have finished the activity, ask them to compare their “rank” columns with their “time spent” columns. The usual results of a VC sheet like this is that people find there is a discrepancy between what they believe their values are and what the value indicator points out as their values. For example, a person may say that work is very important and find that he or she only spends as much time as required on it and spends more time on recreation. Or, a person may say that family is the highest value and find that he or she spends more time on volunteer work. It is this kind of confrontation of the discrepancy that stimulates the person to begin to reflect on values and to begin to freely choose his or her values from alternatives after consideration of the effects. At this point the person may consciously act on values and celebrate them as being helpful in personal growth.

### *Priority Ranking*

Priority ranking is another important concept in VC theory. This is the process whereby the individual takes inventory of full and partial values, examines them and puts them in the order of their importance. Many of the instruments in VC are geared to help a person rank values and become aware of what his or her priorities truly are. Because many people have not reflected on the values they live by, most of the rankings will be dealing with priorities, which are partial values. In VC, people are confronted with their

hierarchy of priorities. In the process of identifying and ordering their priorities, individuals come to know themselves better and how they relate to the world in which they live. It is this process of reflection and ranking that helps the person grow in self-awareness as a person with a choice about his or her destiny.

The emphasis in the ranking of one's priorities is not whether the person is right or wrong or has good or bad values. Rather, the process is designed to help the person become aware of what these values and priorities are. Once aware, he or she is free to choose values and priorities. Being aware of what one's full values are gives the person the freedom to choose the values that foster growth and to choose the priorities that achieve the desired ends.

One of the discoveries of VC is that two people may have the same priorities and yet rank them differently. The difference in ranking is the source of conflict between the two people. The use of the VC approach to priority ranking can be used as a way of resolving conflicts. Once individuals see how their different rankings cause conflicts they can negotiate out their differences and resolve the conflict in such a way that both people will win.

For example, two vice presidents may have as the same priorities: (1) getting the task done, and (2) maintaining good morale among the workers. Both would agree that these two factors are the most important for building a successful business and yet find themselves in continuous conflict because they rank these two values differently.

Vice President I  
task  
morale

Vice President II  
morale  
task

Vice President I will continuously be pushing task over morale in discussions and planning with Vice President II, who will be pushing morale over task. In other words, these two are attempting to impose their priority rankings on one another. When they discover this as the root of their disagreements, they will be in a position to negotiate their different rankings. This may seem like an oversimplification: that the example is too pure and would never fit reality. However, its validity will be discussed more in the second section of the paper.

There are several other important value clarification concepts that cannot be explored in an article of this length such as: values and leisure, values and environment, values and guilt, people's limitations, original value formers, values and creativity. The references at the end of the article treat in depth the theory and methodology of VC.

## ***SOME USES OF VALUE CLARIFICATION METHODOLOGY IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT***

### ***Introduction***

There are several implications of VC methodology that would be helpful tools for an OD intervention:

1. In negotiating expectations and what an organization hopes to achieve;
2. In setting goals and priorities that help an organization understand itself;
3. In screening job applicants to see if their values are the same as those of the organization; and
4. In team-building efforts through discovering the positive value of what seems to be a limitation (this will be explained further).

### ***Negotiating Expectations***

Frequently, in the initial stages of an evaluation of an organization, an OD consultant must uncover the expectations or hidden agendas of the individuals in the organization. Whether it is an organization with problems, one that has been functioning well, or one that is being formed, it is best for the expectations of the individuals to be out in the open and negotiable. It is part of the evaluation of the organization to come to grips with such basic questions as: Who are you? What are you doing? Where do you want to go? How are you going to get there?

Recently I was called in by four priests who were exploring the possibilities of working together in a collaborative team model. The first thing I did with them was to facilitate the working out of their expectations for themselves, for one another, and for the parish. The process was begun by having them take pencil in hand and individually listing what they wanted to achieve in the parish. After they had finished their lists, they were asked to rank the activities according to what they as individuals wanted to do first, second, etc. As a third step, the lists were written in order on newsprint and put up next to one another for evaluation. For the most part all four had the same kind of items and all four had ranked them differently. The common items on their lists were: parish organizations and meetings, building a spirit of community, improving the liturgy, service to the people, teaching religion in grade school and high school, preaching, counseling, visiting the hospital, social action involvement in the community, parish administration, work with the youth of the parish, and programs for the aged.

The differences in ranking graphically demonstrated to them that they had a lot of negotiating to do. On the basis of their lists, they discussed the kind of service they wished to provide for their parish-to-be and came to a consensus on a policy that all they would be doing would be motivated by the value of building a spirit of Christian community in their parish. They clearly saw that they were different in their interests, but that they represented different interests that could work together and dovetail with

one another. One of the priests was much more interested in social action as a higher priority than the other three. They decided that they were willing to support his priority and also to learn from him in this area. As the ranked list was discussed, many issues were clarified in the same manner.

In the process of negotiating their differences, they came to realize that they would have to continue this kind of communication to develop their collaborative model. They, therefore, decided to have frequent staff meetings at a specific time.

As a second phase of the above, the priests were asked to list what they considered their training and talents in relationship to the first listings of what they were going to do in their parish. As a second step they were asked to rank their talents. The first four items looked like this:

<b>Joe</b>	<b>Frank</b>	<b>Jack</b>	<b>Tom</b>
counseling	liturgy	teaching	social action
preaching	counseling	preaching	teaching
teaching	teaching	hospital	counseling
hospital	administration	youth work	preaching

These listings were placed on the board where all could see what they could contribute to the team. They quickly saw the diversity of talent as an asset if they cooperated with one another. It was pointed out that their diversity of talents and interests would be a source of conflict between them when they began to negotiate their budget or when they evaluated the use of their time and efforts. In relationship to the first listing they saw how they could each be responsible for an area in collaboration with the rest of the team. They noted a lack of interest in the necessary administration. The facilitator pointed out the need for a better understanding of administration and leadership training. This discussion led to a clearer understanding of the kind of collaborative model out of which they would operate.

### *Establishing Goals and Priorities*

Organizations tend to have no explicit agreement on the underlying priorities on which they operate or very vague notions about what their priorities and goals are. The OD consultant wants the organization to know clearly and explicitly what they are about so they can plan effective programs. Many of the activities and techniques of VC methodology are very effective in setting clear goals. For instance, as an indication of what can be done within VC methodology, suppose that you have been working with a middle-management group as outlined previously. The group has discovered that one of their priorities is security. The next necessary phase is to check whether they all mean the same thing by security or whether there are other, underlying values under the umbrella called “security.” It is at this point that the VC facilitator must know how to discover the underlying value beneath a priority. This can be compared to the “third ear” in counseling or listening for feelings instead of content in the Rogerian sense. In the

VC approach, the facilitator develops an ability to discover the underlying value inherent in the kind of language the participants use.

To discover what the group means by “security,” the facilitator asks them to describe or define what each means by the term. It is important to push the participants to be specific and not remain vague. For example, person A may be speaking in terms of keeping the ship afloat, feeling that they have a good thing going and that the boat should not be rocked. The VC facilitator working with this person notes that the person is 55, is a top executive, and is making good money. Expansion and newer programs present a threat that might jeopardize a good job. Person A’s underlying value called “security” is to maintain the status quo to ensure the existing job.

Person B describes “security” as having enough money to pay all the bills and talks in terms of making enough money to put some away. The VC facilitator discovers that this person is spending \$4,500 on insurance out of a \$30,000 salary. Therefore, a job at this level is necessary in order to pay insurance and provide for retirement. Person B’s underlying value called “security” is to prepare for future retirement.

Person C describes “security” in terms of knowing that others appreciate one’s work, believing that it is important for “security” that the management compliment and encourage the employees. The VC facilitator listens to this person’s language about fellowship and good morale through being appreciated. Person C’s underlying value called “security” is being accepted and liked. This person feels secure when appreciated and complimented.

Person D describes “security” in terms of a place where people get along together and talks about the importance of a peaceful atmosphere at work. People work best where things run smoothly. Person D’s underlying value called “security” is keeping peace and avoiding conflict.

The process could continue until what each person in the group means by the priority security has been explained. What has been made explicit is that they thought they had the same value, but in reality they were being motivated by different values. This points to insufficient depth of communication and exposes their source of conflict.

The next step would be for them to see how their different underlying priorities interfere with their communication and negotiations as well as their ability to work effectively together. The OD consultant will want to be aware that this particular activity can quickly reveal more than the participants want revealed and can open the system up faster than the system may be able to cope with the data. The OD facilitator will have to make some definite decisions about how to use the data that flows from this activity.

### *Screening Job Candidates*

If a company clearly knows what its values and goals are, job applicants may be screened according to their values through the use of some of the VC instruments and approaches. This is being offered as a suggestion that would be an adjunct to other procedures and instruments used in screening. People with the same values will tend to find it easier to work together.

## Team-Building

In a department or a group-to-group team-building effort, the VC approach helps build maintenance through the trust and cohesiveness built in VC group dynamics and the sharing of themselves as they discover and discuss their values. There is especially one concept and activity that helps a group discover its talents to convert its limitations to the positive values that may exist in the apparent limitation.

As a team-building activity, ask the members to list the talents that help them work effectively and their limitations. For example, a person may write:

<b>Talents</b>	<b>Limitations</b>
I know my job.	I'm late to meetings.
I like my work.	I can't be rushed.
I enjoy people.	I get angry when disturbed at work.
I am good at organizing.	

The next step is for each individual (with the help of the small group) to determine the positive value underlying the limitations. In the previous example, the group could find out that the person gets involved in work enough to lose track of time and be late for meetings. In this instance, involvement in work is the positive value underlying the limitation of being late. Or, the apparent limitation of not being able to be rushed may have as an underlying positive value the person's concern about the quality of work done, resulting in careful checking. Underlying the anger may be a deep interest in work and a desire to pursue it uninterruptedly.

Two things are achieved by using this activity as a team-building effort. First, the participants get to know one another better. They find out explicitly about the talents each has to offer to the team, talents they may not have recognized in the person. They have already begun, through the activity, to learn together how to help one another work better by helping one another convert their limitations to positive values. Second, the individual is made more aware of how to put limitations to good use, to accepting his or her talents and limitations, thus opening to growth as a person and as a team member.

## CONCLUSION

The goal of this article has been to give an indication of how value clarification methodology can be an adjunct tool in an organization development facilitator's repertoire. Many facilitators have shied away from considerations of values for fear of becoming moralistic or philosophical. The VC approach is a methodology that helps the participant discover his or her actual values and freely choose the value that will foster growth in the direction he or she wants. An OD facilitator will already, in most cases, have an understanding of the inductive group process that is used by VC. He or she will need to become acquainted with the VC theory and methods. With the VC approach and

the facilitator's own background in OD, he or she will soon be adapting and devising new activities and instruments.

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## ■ FIGURE/GROUND

### Judith James Pfeiffer

A common imperative in personal growth groups is to “stay in the ‘here-and-now.’” Initially, this imperative was imposed to benefit group progress, but it often produces a stultifying effect. Energy is lost as the group attempts to understand the concept, filter out “there-and-then” data, and operate exclusively in the “here-and-now.”

The Gestalt concept of figure/ground parallels the “here-and-now” time orientation in a personal and lively manner. Put simply, “figure” represents the person’s current awareness; and “ground,” short for background, is the scenery for that awareness. What is “figural” for an individual at any given moment is that person’s here-and-now.

The person “forms” a figure, acts on the figure, destroys the figure, and repeats the cycle. A new figure cannot be clearly formed until the first is acted on.

Imagine, for example, that Tom is going to a personal growth group. He is driving through heavy traffic thinking about what will happen in the group. His thoughts concerning the group are foremost, or “figure.” A dog runs in front of his car; he slams on the brakes. Now his group thoughts are “ground” and the dog incident is figure. But when he arrives at the retreat center, his “figure” is his expectant feeling about the group. Just as he enters the door, he smells the aroma of fried chicken. His figure now becomes his hunger, and his expectant feeling, ground. After dinner, his feeling of fullness is figure. He goes to the group room and seeks out the most comfortable seat. His figure—fullness—recedes into the background. The cycle continues.

It is important to note that action is necessary to “complete” figure. “Action,” broadly interpreted, provides the energy to move figure to ground. Even the “action” of silently acknowledging figure can at times move it to ground. Of course, if the issue is potent, considerable energy or action may be required to move it to the background.

For example, when Marie arrived at the retreat center for the personal growth group, she was most concerned about her mother’s impending surgery, and her concern was “figure.” She did not even taste the fried chicken. After dinner she went to her room and silently acknowledged her feeling of concern. When the group began, her concern had become background. She now had made “space” for the group to emerge as figure.

The rhythmic flow of the figure/ground cycle occasionally becomes interrupted. Although there are several methods a person can use to interrupt the cycle, the most common is to “fuzz” the figure. Then, in order to reactivate the cycle, the figure must be clarified.

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Mike is a member of the personal growth group. His figure is anger. He denies understanding his anger. To unblock and reenergize this figure, the facilitator may ask him:

1. What are you doing?
2. How are you doing that?
3. What do you want?
4. What do you need?
5. What are you imagining (pretending)?
6. What do you feel angry about?
7. Toward whom in this room do you feel most angry?

Once Mike has clarified his “figure,” he may decide not to deal with his anger at this time. He may simply acknowledge it. Or he may arrange to have a confrontation with the object of his anger. Once he has made a decision to act on figure, his figure—anger—becomes ground.

Anne is another member of the group. She cannot identify her “figure.” When the facilitator asks her what she is feeling, she shakes her head and says, “Nothing.” To clarify figure, it is essential to deal with the “here-and-now.” How does Anne experience “nothing”? Where is “nothing” located in her body? Can she describe “nothing”? “Staying with the obvious” helps produce a clear figure.

Even when a person’s figure is clearly nongroup material—an issue that is not part of the common experience of the group—he or she can be helped to act on this figure through such a method as silent acknowledgement or writing notes to himself or herself.

The individual’s ability to move nongroup figure into ground will depend on its intensity. Turning figure into ground to allow a new figure to emerge can be seen as a valid indication of personal power.

Although the figure/ground concept is but a small portion of Gestalt theory, its use can personalize and energize the “here-and-now” group concept. False issues and side issues are reduced as each member deals with his or her figure. Growth potential is increased.

## ■ A GESTALT PRIMER

### J. William Pfeiffer and Judith A. Pfeiffer

Fritz Perls, the founder of Gestalt therapy, was influenced by Freud, Rank, Reich, Adler, Jung, and others. As a result, Gestalt therapy is, in many ways, an extension of psychoanalytic theory. Subsequent impact on Gestalt theory has come from psychodrama, general semantics, client-centered counseling, and group dynamics.

The use of Gestalt methods is characterized by individual adaptation of Perls's basic work coupled with a variety of other theoretical approaches. Characteristically, the Gestalt-oriented process includes change through activity, centrality of present experience, importance of fantasy and creative experimentation, and significance of language. Practitioners personally involve themselves and attempt to integrate humanistic values into their work.

### CONTACT

The contact cycle is the key concept of Gestalt psychology. Many people, because of cultural training, are not particularly aware of internal events; therefore much of the emphasis in Gestalt is on increasing both physiological and psychological awareness. Once awareness is achieved, excitement develops; that is, energy emerges within the person. Excitement is followed by action, which produces contact (Figure 1).

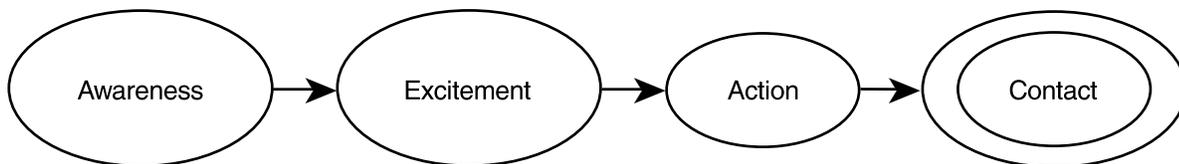


Figure 1. Contact Cycle

For example, as I am walking on the street early in the morning, I pass a bakery, and my *awareness* is of the smell of fresh-baked bread. *Excitement* is created by fantasies of things that I enjoy: cream puffs, doughnuts, and sweet rolls. *Action* is going into the store to purchase those things that meet my fantasies. Lastly, I make *contact* with the bakery goods.

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Contact, although frequently a person-to-person phenomenon, is not necessarily limited to that dimension. Contact can be made with food, with music, with nature, or with other intangible things. Personal or environmental contact is revered, desirable, and important. It is the final step in the contact cycle.

However, while contact is seen as being ideal or desirable, too much contact would dull the senses, diminishing awareness, the essential first step in the cycle. To maintain the cycle, each person develops a rhythm of contact and withdrawal. In the bakery example, then, I find it enjoyable to make genuine contact with my food fantasies, but there is also an obvious need to withdraw so that the food can be digested and utilized by the body. People set up a food rhythm by eating meals two or three times a day. They also establish a rhythm of contact with and withdrawal from other people, determining how often and how intensely they want to make contact or, sometimes, when they do not want to make contact at all. Many people, for example, do not want personal contact in the morning before they have had two cups of coffee.

## RESISTANCES

In addition to a dulled awareness, which is a clear impediment in the contact cycle, resistances—another Gestalt core concept—also prevent contact. Resistances are phenomena that occur between excitement and action in the contact cycle (Figure 2).

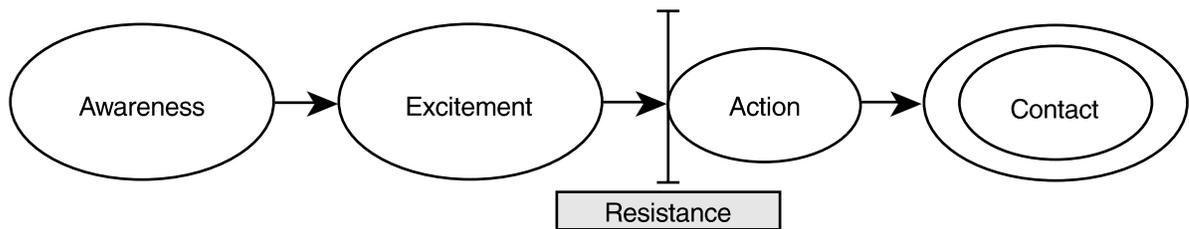


Figure 2. Effects of Resistance

For example, in the bakery illustration, I have become aware of the bakery goods and have been excited by my fantasies of their taste, but as I start to proceed to action, that is, go into the store to buy, I encounter resistance that says, “Hey, you weigh too much—stop—you’re on a diet—stay away.” What has happened is that the resistance has broken the contact cycle. Awareness and excitement occurred, but resistance stopped the action before contact took place.

Although it is easy to see resistances as “bad,” in fact they can serve a useful function in stopping us from contacting things we do not desire to contact. There are six key resistances.

## ***Introjection***

We introject by swallowing intact values imposed on us by our family, church, political system, and culture. We hold undissolved values inside ourselves. At some point we may find that we stop short of action because of an introjected value or belief, for example, the belief that slim is beautiful. Although I may or may not accept this value, it is a Western value that I introject. Hence, in the bakery example, introjection acts, at least partially, as a resistance to break the cycle short of contact with the bakery goods.

## ***Retroflection***

If, for example, when a conflict occurs with a friend or a working partner, I say to myself, “My fault, I’ve done it again. Every time I get into this sort of situation I do the same thing,” I am owning—making myself responsible for—everything that goes wrong in my life. This is called retroflection. When it is carried to an extreme, I become apologetic for someone else’s tiredness, ineptitude, boredom, or whatever. This particular resistance prevents contact by making me inevitably “responsible” for things over which I have no control.

## ***Attribution***

In many ways attribution is the 180-degree opposite of retroflection. Whereas in retroflection I own and assume responsibility for everything that happens, even those things over which I have no control, in attribution I assume that all control and responsibility reside outside myself. As long as I give away power, I deny myself the opportunity to make any change.

A pertinent example is the phrase “You make me so angry.” Within the Gestalt psychological context, it is impossible for anyone to make me angry. In fact, I choose whether or not to be angry. I alone am responsible for the meaning I attach to the behavior of others, and my anger flows from that meaning. But in the attributive statement “You make me angry,” I give away my power of choice and thereby lose both control and responsibility: “Angry” is therefore something that you “do” to me.

## ***Confluence***

A fourth resistance occurs when two people parallel each other without making contact, as in the confluence of rivers. This is a classic “yes-man” stance.

Sue: “Tonight I’d like to go out to dinner somewhere.”

Howard: “Hey, that’s great, I really enjoy eating out.”

Sue: “You know, I’ve been thinking about it, and what I’d really like is Chinese food. I haven’t had Chinese food in a long time.”

Howard: “Great, I really love Chinese food.”

Sue: “Well, on second thought, there’s a new German restaurant in town. I think German food is marvelous. That seems better to me.”

Howard: “That’s not a bad idea. I’ve heard about that restaurant; let’s go there.”

Sue: (exasperated) “You know, on second thought, I’m really tired of eating out—let’s just open a can of soup and have a cheese sandwich.”

Howard: “Fantastic. I really prefer not to go out.”

In confluence the person who tries excessively to “fit” another person denies that person the right of contact. Like Howard, such a person bends and flows with whatever the other person initiates, preventing contact between the two. At no point are conflicting ideas confronted.

### **Projection**

When I use projection I am saying that what is true for me is true for the other person. For example, I feel tired and I say to someone else, “You look tired.” It may or may not be true, but I note it because of my own tiredness. In the same way, I can assume that other people are bored or angry or frustrated because I am bored or angry or frustrated. Interestingly it has been suggested that all empathy is, in fact, based on projection.

### **Deflection**

A sixth resistance is deflection. It is very much like a tennis match in which each person serves repeatedly but does not return the serve of his opponent. Cocktail-party conversation is a prime example.

John: “We used to have a janitor at our school named Salvador. He was really a neat guy.”

Lois: “You know, one of these days I’d really like to take a trip to San Salvador. There are lots of interesting things I’d like to see in Central America.”

John: “Last summer I took a trip to Europe. One of the things I like best there is the food.”

Lois: “Speaking of food, I really like to cook. I’m a pretty good cook and I really enjoy entertaining people.”

John: “People sometimes irritate the hell out of me. I never know what they want and it’s difficult for me to respond when I don’t know what they want.”

## **POLARITIES**

Another major concept in Gestalt psychology is polarity—the idea that there are opposite, counterbalancing poles of action. These opposites also attract each other. The experiential knowledge of each pole increases the available range of behavior. The aim is to achieve a rhythmic movement from one pole to another as in a pendulum's swing.

For example, people who are very involved in intellectual happenings (head or cognitive understanding), may be equally uninvolved in or unknowledgeable about happenings of their body (emotional understanding). This case of polarity would be between the head (that is, the cognitive) and the physical (that is, the emotional) body. By working on each pole, a person can integrate both.

## **FIGURE/GROUND**

The concept of figure/ground is also important. When something is *figure*—that is, clearly and sharply focused for an individual—it is, in Gestalt logic, worthy of being dealt with; it does not need to be justified. Linked with the concept of figure is the idea of *ground*, or background. Any concept can become figural and then move into the background.

For example, I come home tired after a hard day. What is figural for me is fatigue, and I want to sit down and prop my feet up. After I have done that for a brief time, my fatigue moves from figure to background—ground—and my thirst emerges as figure. I fix myself a drink, have a couple of sips, sit back, and my thirst moves from figure to ground. Then the quietness in the room emerges as figure and I decide to turn on some music. I listen for a while; the music is figural, and then it fades into the background. The next thing that emerges for me is the awareness that I am hungry: It has been several hours since I have eaten.

As the example shows, figures emerge, are dealt with, and then move into the background. They must, however, be dealt with before they can become ground. In a group setting, for example, if someone does not deal with what is figural, as frequently happens, that figure stays within the group and does not recede into the background. A typical example of this can be found in a group-on-group setting. The people in the outer group may be very figural for the inner group. Not until someone in the inner group acknowledges anxiety about the outer group does that figure pass into ground. Often figures can be released simply by acknowledging them.

Assume that I am a member of a personal growth group. My figure is anger, but I deny understanding it. In order to deal with my anger, I must unblock and clarify the figure. I can ask myself some questions to help in doing this: What am I doing? How am I doing it? What do I want? What do I need? What am I pretending? What do I feel angry about? With whom am I most angry?

Once I have clarified my figure, I can decide what to do with my anger at that time. Perhaps acknowledgment may be sufficient to release the figure. As soon as I make a

decision to act on the figure, my anger becomes ground. In clarifying the figure, it is essential, then, to deal with the here and now.

## **EXPERIMENT**

Of all the things that are unique to the Gestalt approach, nothing is perhaps more central than the concept of experiment. An experiment differs from an experiential learning activity in that the latter offers some expectation about the outcome of the activity. In contrast, the best experiments are those that are totally free of expectations.

The experiment is created by using the contact cycle as a framework. A person or group is asked to do something and to see where that action or involvement will lead. The experiment is very much like the laboratory technique of mixing chemicals to see what will happen.

### ***Classic Experiments***

A number of experiments have become classic techniques; that is, they have consistently produced meaningful results. They can lack the vitality of new experiments, but they also carry with them some proven qualities. Classic experiments combined with adaptations of classics and blended with newly created experiences often produce the best results.

Frequently, however, group leaders impose or introduce experiments at inopportune times. In addition, when they introduce too many of them, the group can become dependent on the rhythm of going from experiment to experiment. The number of experiments should be carefully considered. The frequency should be consistent with the flow of the group, and the facilitator should not be obliged to produce one experiment after another.

### ***Dialogue***

In dialogue, one person talks to another or one part of a person talks to another part of the same person. For example, this experiment can separate the body and the mind, the emotional and the cognitive parts of a person. I speak from the cognitive perspective, considering the values of cognition and my concerns about my emotional aspect; then I follow that by talking from the emotional point of view, emphasizing the values of emotionality and the negative aspects of intellectual pursuits.

Frequently called the open-chair technique, in which the person moves from one chair to another to represent two opposing aspects of self, this technique can be handled in a less distracting way. Simply using one hand to serve one point of view and the other hand for the other point of view or changing voices for each viewpoint is, we think, less disruptive than actually moving from chair to chair.

## **Reversal and Exaggeration**

Once a polarity is identified (as in the previous example, head-cognitive and body-emotional), one way to clarify the issue is through reversal. If I am primarily at the cognitive pole, I can be encouraged to reverse my perspective on the world and to speak from the vantage point of the emotional pole.

Or, alternately, I can use the concept of exaggeration. If I am operating primarily from the cognitive perspective, I exaggerate it, deny the polar (emotional) opposite, and deal with everything in a mechanical, computerized fashion.

## **Rehearsal**

Frequently people are blocked from contact by a fear of ogres. They think, “If I were to do this, something terrible would surely happen.” One of the ways I can move ahead is to rehearse what I am about to say and what I am going to do. I can rehearse it silently or aloud to the group, looking away from the group. Asking me to identify *specifically* the worst thing (the ogre) that could happen if I were to behave in a certain way frequently helps me find out that the worst thing is not very disastrous at all. At the opposite pole, I could be asked to tell the best thing that could happen. Often I discover that the worst thing would not be terribly severe and that the best thing would offer high rewards. That knowledge may key a change in behavior for me.

## **“If I Were King”**

This experiment gives me the maximum sense of power. By elaborating the things that I would do “if I were king,” I can become aware of both the genuine restraints on me and the restraints I impose on myself in my relationships. Awareness gives me the potential to work the issues. In a teachers’ workshop the phrase might be “If I were the school superintendent, I would . . . .” Or, in a business setting, the statement could be “If I were the president of the company, I would . . . .”

## **Making the Rounds**

A fairly simplistic but powerful intervention is for a person to go around a group, making brief statements to, or interacting with, each group member. For example, if I am demeaning myself, I may be asked to stand in front of each person in the group, one after the other, and complete the statement “You should appreciate me because . . . .” Or I might make a bragging statement in front of each person, tailoring each statement to the person I am addressing.

## **Mimicry**

Frequently even very good interventions get in the way of the person trying to work an issue. Mimicry as a nonverbal intervention can focus on what is happening in a way that is not disruptive. For example, if, while I am talking about a particular incident or

emotional experience I have had, my hand is grasping my throat in a choking manner, it would detract from what is happening for the facilitator to describe my behavior to me verbally: I would be likely to move my hand away instantly. But if the facilitator simply touches his or her own throat in mimicry, I can recognize the action and examine it in terms of my own behavior.

### ***Sentence Completion***

One of the richer ways of checking out a hunch about a group member is for a facilitator or other group member to ask the individual to complete a sentence. For example, when people appear to be masking anger, they might be asked to complete the sentence “People who get angry are . . . .” As they complete that sentence several times they can get in touch with some of the forces restraining them from dealing with their anger.

### ***Try-On Sentence***

In a variation of the previous technique, the facilitator or other group member might say, “What I’d like you to do is try on this sentence—say it and see how it fits.” This technique is especially useful when the facilitator has a clear hunch about the person. For example, if there is an indication of attraction between two group members, and one (or both) of the individuals is denying it, a try-on sentence might be “I’m feeling very attracted toward Lee and nervous about saying so.” As the person “tries on” the sentence and repeats it perhaps two or three times, he or she can determine its accuracy—whether it fits, fits only partially, or does not fit at all.

### ***Unfinished Business***

Some issues from earlier in a session or from previous sessions almost inevitably remain unresolved or unfinished. This technique intends to pick up these loose ends in order to work them further. In completing issues, we have found it most helpful to say to the group, “Frequently when I leave groups or other people, I find myself walking down the hall saying things to myself that I wish I’d said to the group. What I’d like you to do is imagine that you’re walking away from this group. Is there anything you would regret not having said?” With that cue, things are frequently brought up and moved toward resolution.

However, all business does not need to be finished; in fact, many items can only be worked so far at one time; they need time to “simmer.” Work can be done later when they are ready. We believe that groups are frequently misdirected in an attempt to work every issue through to a conclusion. There may, in fact, not be a conclusion available at that time.

### ***Resentment/Appreciation***

Two polar feelings very frequently distorted within a person are resentment and appreciation. If I feel some hostility or negative emotion about another person, he or she

can be asked to complete the sentence “What I resent about you is . . . .” Then the person is asked to take that statement and substitute the word “appreciate” for the word “resent.” For example, the person may say, “What I resent about you is your aggressiveness.” By changing “resent” to “appreciate,” the person is saying, “What I appreciate about you is your aggressiveness.” With this method frequently comes the insight that resentments and appreciations are often closely linked.

### ***Failure-Free Experiments***

In summary, the whole concept of experiment is exciting and creative. Two basic approaches can make experiments almost failure free. First, group facilitators typically think that, as the facilitators or authority figures, they must do everything correctly, they must be “right on” with every intervention. Instead, we encourage a facilitator to see the experiment as more like baseball, in which a batter who gets one hit out of three is very successful. The important thing is to try the experiment, give it full energy, and, if it does not go anywhere, be free to give it up. People should be encouraged to realize that a particular set of ingredients may make nothing happen, in which case it is important to go on to something else.

Within the experiment, the facilitator respects resistances. A reluctance to be involved or to deal with an issue is probably the most important thing to be confronted (inasmuch as it is figural). The facilitator should focus on the resistance itself and not question why it is there.

A facilitator’s timing can never be “wrong” in an experiment. If a person raises an issue that would be ideally suited to experiment and an experiment does not emerge at that point, the issue simply does not get resolved at that time. It is recycled within the individual until that person, the group, or the facilitator discovers some way to deal with it.

## ***PHYSIOLOGICAL AWARENESS***

Awareness, discussed as the initiation of the contact cycle, can logically be divided into two components: physiological awareness and psychological awareness. Physiological awareness, or being in touch with what is happening within the body, is a clue to some psychological issues.

### ***Body Awareness***

A technique that has been used frequently and one that we believe has a great deal of validity is the experiment in body awareness. There are a number of ways to conduct this experiment and all sorts of logical variations. We favor the following version. One person in the group (ideally, a staff member, to demonstrate some modeling behaviors) is asked to volunteer to work on his or her awareness. The facilitator, who is going to direct the individual in the awareness experiment, gives some brief directions. The volunteer lies on the floor with eyes closed. The facilitator works for a sense of flow,

telling the volunteer to report awareness on three succeeding levels: first, the environment (What do you hear, see, smell, taste, and touch? What are you aware of in the room?); second, his or her own contact with the floor (How do you describe the way your body meets the floor?); and, third and mainly, the events within his or her own body (What is happening inside your body?).

When the person is through exploring the third (body) level, the facilitator takes the volunteer gradually back to being in the group. The facilitator elicits the volunteer's awareness of contact with the floor (second level), and then awareness of the environment (first level).

A major consideration in the body awareness experiment or inventory is that the voice of the person leading the experiment should be well modulated and not interfere with the individual. Also, the facilitator should make statements rather than ask questions. If a person is asked, "Can you say more about what's happening in your shoulder?" that person has to divert to move his or her head and say, "Yes, I can say more about that." Instead, the person who is leading the experiment can accomplish this by saying, "Say more about what is happening in your shoulder." Such a statement still leaves the person free not to respond if he or she is not interested in that idea. Finally, the interventions made by the facilitator directing the body awareness experiment should be short and precise, not more than ten words at a time. Otherwise, the interventions may detract from the individual's self-awareness.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL AWARENESS**

The other component of awareness—psychological—can be subdivided into two categories: fantasy and dreams.

### ***Fantasy***

Not a fabrication, fantasy is simply getting in touch with what is going on in an individual's mind. As a shortwave radio can pick up stations around the world at different frequencies on different bands, so also are there many frequencies and bands within each individual—dozens, perhaps hundreds of fantasy strains going through the person at any given time. During a fantasy the person calibrates his or her mind like the dial on the radio, tuning in and hearing what is happening. Because the subject of fantasy is rich and very little is understood about it, many facilitators consequently shy away from using fantasy techniques because they do not understand the process.

It is our contention that fantasy has a low potential to damage an individual in any way, because the person is the one responsible for creating the fantasy. It is self-regulating, in that people are unlikely to generate fantasies on levels that they are unwilling to confront.

## Dreams

The other means to psychological awareness is through dreams. The Gestalt approach to dreams is unique and distinct from the Freudian, psychoanalytical approach, in which interpretation is the key. In the Gestalt framework, there is no interpretation. The major premise is that all components of the dream are in the individual who has the dream. If your dream is about driving fast down a mountain road, you can work through the dream so that at one point you might be moving as though you were the automobile and at another point wavering as though you were the road and at another point frozen as if you were the cliff. All these perspectives can be reached through the one individual.

A productive variation to individual dream work is group dream work. In the car example, one person might be asked to play the mountain road and several people might be asked to play the car. While the dreamer talks out the dream, the people move down the road. By following the core elements of the contact cycle (Figure 3), the dreamer gains new perspectives. The excitement and action are in the blank spots, that is, the parts of the dream not remembered: how he or she got from there to there. Fleshing in those blank spots provides the richness of the dream.

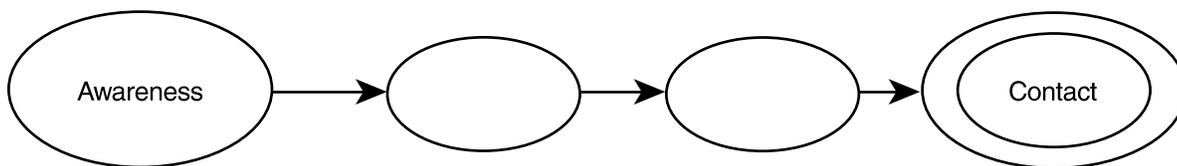


Figure 3. Core Elements of the Contact Cycle

## GESTALT ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT<sup>1</sup>

A number of exciting dimensions are related to the application of Gestalt technology to organizations. Perhaps the most distinctive and pervasive concept in Gestalt OD is the lack of concern with the system. It is an anti-systemic approach. According to Gestaltists, the only real ingredient to be dealt with in systems is the individual. The way to change the system is to change individuals. Energy is not put into how individuals work together, how they relate, or what the organizational climate is. Instead, the focus is on how to deal with each individual.

In Gestalt OD the consultant is the model—particularly, a nonrole model—for the organization. The consultant tells “where he or she is” and what is happening, encouraging individuals in the organization to do the same.

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<sup>1</sup> The major work in Gestalt OD has been done by Stanley Herman at TRW. “Notes on Freedom” and “The Shadow of Organization Development” are key examples of an emerging Gestalt OD theory (see references).

## LITERATURE

Gestalt literature is difficult for the novice to understand. There is no single book that we could clearly recommend for someone newly interested in Gestalt. No smooth, clean, unencumbered introduction to Gestalt exists that a person could read once to get a sense of the content. A personal sorting-out process from all the literature available is necessary so that a person can see what makes sense in his or her particular learning parameters.

We include an annotated bibliography to give some of our reactions to existing books and articles. It is important to note that Gestalt literature can be read and reread. The more understanding a person has about Gestalt, the more he or she can find in the literature—particularly a book like *In and Out the Garbage Pail*, a biographic account of Fritz Perls. We think that this experience can be replicated in other books in the bibliography.

## REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY OF GESTALT LITERATURE

### I. Major Sources

Downing, J., & Marmorstein, R. (1973). *Dreams and nightmares: A book of Gestalt therapy sessions*. New York: Harper & Row.

A series of fourteen taped and edited dream therapy sessions. Provides a dramatic view of Gestalt dream work in action. Downing makes excellent asides that give insight into his rationale for making interventions.

Fagan, J., & Shepherd, I.L. (Eds.). (1971). *Gestalt therapy now: Theory, techniques, applications*. New York: Harper & Row.

A second generation of Gestalt therapists reports on exciting new developments in theory, techniques, and applications—plus several important selections by Fritz Perls.

Fagan, J., & Shepherd, I.L. (Eds.). (1973). *Life techniques in Gestalt therapy*. New York: Harper & Row.

This book originally appeared as Part Two of *Gestalt therapy now: Theory, techniques, applications*. Three essays from the original version are omitted. Intended primarily for the therapist-in-training who wishes to understand more about the theoretical components of Gestalt.

Because the book is composed of articles that appear elsewhere in Gestalt literature, it offers almost nothing new. It is simply a convenient and inexpensive container for the material. The singular exception to this is Shepherd's brief piece, "Limitations and Cautions in Gestalt Approach." She raises more questions than she answers, but the net effect is to balance some realistic concerns against the unqualified acceptance of Gestalt approaches.

Perls, F.S. (1969). *Ego, hunger and aggression: The beginning of Gestalt therapy*. New York: Random House.

This book is a link between orthodox psychoanalysis and Gestalt therapy. Its focus is the in-depth examination of psychological and psychopathological reactions of the human organism within its environment. It is difficult reading; its primary utility is as a guide to exploring Perls's transitional ideas that have had such heavy impact on the Gestalt movement.

Perls, F.S. (1969). *Gestalt therapy verbatim* (J.O. Stevens, Ed.). New York: Bantam.

This book provides a basic, concise, and clear foundation of some Gestalt theory. The book is divided into two parts: “Talk” and “Dreamwork Seminar.” Perls involves himself in a question/answer session in “Talk.” He discusses simply the concepts of here-and-now, responsibility, and many others. In “Dreamwork Seminar,” Perls works with actual dreams. Fantastic! His masterful work is both poetic and instructive.

The book reads well and is surprisingly full of easily grasped ideas, although it was almost entirely edited from audiotapes. Good editor!

Perls, F.S. (1969). *In and out the garbage pail*. Moab, UT: Real People Press.

Fritz shares himself fully in this book—his seriousness, his intellect, his humor, his insanity. As well as discussing major Gestalt concepts, Perls goes with new figures as they emerge and gives himself permission to write flowingly. If the reader is willing to encounter Perls himself, the book is a delight. The reader who wants a clear, crisp outline of Gestalt methods may be frustrated. The average reader can expect to be both delighted and frustrated.

Perls, F.S., Hefferline, R., & Goodman, P. (1951). *Gestalt therapy: Excitement and growth in the human personality*. New York: Dell.

This major Gestalt work invites the reader both to learn and to experience Gestalt. Interspersed throughout the book are various activities for the reader.

The book is long and full of thought-provoking material. Its length, complexity, and compelling nature make it both difficult to read and difficult not to read. The reader should allow several weeks to assimilate this work.

Polster, E., & Polster, M. (1974). *Gestalt therapy integrated: Contours of theory and practice*. New York: Random House.

As the title implies, this book attempts to mesh theory with rather specific practices used in Gestalt work. The book is rich in both of these dimensions. The authors write as if they are giving informal lectures to a group of students, and their style is informal, personal, and very informative.

An excellent resource book, a must for people learning Gestalt approaches to individuals and groups.

Pursglove, P.D. (Ed.). (1971). *Recognitions in Gestalt therapy*. New York: Harper & Row.

This small book presents ten varied articles. Each offers some understanding of what Gestalt “is,” either in a traditional or experiential writing style. The differences between the articles support a basic Gestalt ingredient—creativity. Laura Perls offers two actual case studies while Paul Goodman discusses “Human Nature and the Anthropology of Neurosis.” This collection is a stimulating, enjoyable experience.

Schiffman, M. (1971). *Gestalt self therapy and further techniques for personal growth*. Menlo Park, CA: Self Therapy Press.

This book covers an array of topics ranging from techniques for using Gestalt self-therapy to a consideration of life developmental stages as reflected in Erik Erikson’s work. Its orientation is such that one does not have to have a background in psychology to understand the terminology. It is a fairly good beginner’s primer with a number of specific Gestalt approaches; especially useful in working with one’s own dreams.

Stevens, B. (1970). *Don’t push the river*. Moab, UT: Real People Press.

This is a rare book to be savored time and time again in either short or long sittings. It represents a person’s life lived within a “Gestalt life style.” At times it conjures up feelings of lightness and

warmth, and at other times feelings of sadness and loneliness. Its orientation is a stream-of-consciousness approach to living in the here and now in a responsible way.

Interesting and challenging to read and really stay with. A lot of things make more sense in this book when it is read the second and third time.

## **II. Ancillary Sources**

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## ■ HUMAN NEEDS AND BEHAVIOR

**Anthony J. Reilly**

As an individual, each human being is complex and unique. The uniqueness of individuals falls under the special area of psychology called individual differences, which has been thoroughly studied in the last fifty years.

Individuals, however, are perhaps more alike than they are different. The psychology of common needs and motives is a psychology of similarities. Individuals differ in their behavior, but basically they spend much of their time striving to satisfy needs common to all human beings.

The question of why people act as they do is inevitably raised in any study of people in relation to their environment. At work, at home, at the club, the stimuli of personal interactions elicit responses from people. And from their resulting behavior their human needs can be inferred.

### **BEHAVIOR CAUSED BY NEEDS**

All human behavior has a cause or causes, some conscious, others unconscious. Our behavior is not random, even if it sometimes appears that way. Some internal or external stimulus or combination of stimuli elicits behaviors that vary widely in their complexity.

For example, physical stimuli in a person's body generate feelings of hunger. Hunger represents a state of tension, and on experiencing such tension, a person seeks food to alleviate it. That person needs food.

A more complex need is the need not to eat—to diet. It is easy to see many possible and varied needs imbedded in the behavior of dieting. Physical well-being, a person's image of his or her body, a desire for acceptance by peers—these are only a few of the possible needs—tension states—that elicit the behavior of restricting food intake.

### ***Subjective Perceptions of Stimuli***

If we are to understand how needs and behavior are related, we must also consider an additional factor: the subjective perceptions of stimuli that trigger behavior. A person's background, personality, past learning—all these come into play in determining how the person responds to a specific situation.

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## **PURPOSEFUL BEHAVIOR**

Behavior is prompted by stimuli, but it also is purposeful and directed toward a goal. People involved in the helping professions, for example, aim at assisting other people to discover goals, ranging from the simple to the complex. Once goals are clear, individuals are free to choose or not to choose behavior that carries them toward these goals. However, before goals are clarified, a person must first recognize what needs he or she wants to satisfy.

## **CLASSIFICATION OF NEEDS**

### ***Primary or Innate***

To understand human needs adequately it is useful to classify them. Thus we have *primary*, or *innate*, needs, such as food, shelter, water, rest, air, temperature control, and so on. These needs are inborn; that is, they are not conditioned by experience. Physiological in nature, such needs must be gratified in order to ensure the survival of the individual.

### ***Secondary or Acquired***

The second level of needs consists of those that are *secondary*, or *acquired*. These are generally learned as a person experiences living. They operate in two different but complementary spheres: *intrapersonal* and *interpersonal*.

Like all needs, intrapersonal needs can be inferred from behavior. All of us seek to satisfy certain needs in order to feel good about ourselves. These needs include, for example, self-respect, esteem, a feeling of being significant in the world, a sense of independence and freedom.

Interpersonal needs are concerned with a person's relations to other people. Often called "social needs," these have been discussed by many investigators. These needs represent dependence and interdependence among people. Because people behave differently in the presence of other people than they do when they are alone, these needs are reflected in behavior that is equally different. Interpersonal needs are even more complex than intrapersonal needs, because they depend on the interaction of people for their satisfaction.

## **SCHUTZ'S FUNDAMENTAL INTERPERSONAL NEEDS**

Schutz (1967, 1972) postulates three fundamental interpersonal needs that account for the behavior that occurs when people interact. According to him, all human interaction can be divided into three categories: *inclusion*, *control*, or *affection*. He substantiates this theory by citing numerous studies of parent-child relations, basic personality types, and group behavior.

*Inclusion* is defined behaviorally as “the need to establish and maintain a satisfactory relation with people with respect to interaction and association” (Schutz, 1967, p. 18). This need connotes ideas like “associate,” “interest,” “belong,” “attend to,” “join.” Terms that connote the lack of, or negative, inclusion are “isolated,” “lonely,” “withdrawn,” and “ignored.” The need to be included manifests itself as a desire to be attended to by other people, to attract attention and interest from others.

*Control* is the second interpersonal need Schutz postulates. Its behavioral manifestation is the “need to establish and maintain a satisfactory relation with people with respect to control and power” (Schutz, 1967, p. 19). Terms such as “power,” “authority,” “dominance,” and “ruler” identify this need. People who have high control needs generally demand these things from others and expect to control their own future. Low control, on the other hand, is reflected in terms such as “resistive,” “follower,” “submissive,” and “henpecked.”

*Affection* is the third interpersonal need investigated by Schutz. It focuses on “establishing and maintaining satisfactory relations with others with respect to love and affection” (Schutz, 1967, p. 20). “Emotionally close,” “personal,” “love,” and “friendship” are related to this need; “hate,” “dislike,” and “cool” connote its lack.

Schutz reasons that we can gain insight into all people by knowing the needs of one person, and he has good support for this line of thinking. Just as a human being is complex and unique, so he or she is also simple and similar to other human beings.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF HUMAN NEEDS**

Knowing more about needs can help us understand human behavior and growth.

### ***Integration***

Perhaps the most important implication we can draw has to do with integrating the two levels of needs: the primary, or physiological, and the secondary, or acquired, intrapersonal and interpersonal needs.

In human relations training, whether the focus is on skill-building, management development, or organization development, the emphasis is on the *whole person*. Historically, scientists—including behavioral scientists—have tended to divide a person into autonomous parts—brain, body, emotions, soul. When classifying needs, we need to guard against doing the same thing.

The three kinds of needs should not be seen as separate and autonomous. We do not approach people in dissected parts. What a person manifests through his or her body generally says something about his or her mental attitudes as well. An emotionally “uptight” person may often appear physically tight and rigid. One who is psychologically vulnerable is likely to present a body that reflects that reality. Thus it makes sense to approach needs in a holistic manner, looking at the blend and interdependence among physical, intrapersonal, and interpersonal needs.

The holistic approach is illustrated by an example: In a combat situation a soldier chooses to become hysterically blind. A number of needs present themselves simultaneously. At the primary level, the soldier needs to survive; self-preservation is a prime motive in this situation. On an intrapersonal basis, the soldier needs to maintain self-esteem: It is not acceptable to be afraid, to be a coward. In the interpersonal sphere, the soldier does not want to be rejected by the peer group because of cowardice.

The soldier's goals, then, are in conflict: wanting to preserve his or her own life, to feel good about himself or herself, and to have the respect of peers. The "selected" behavior of becoming blind is directed at all these goals. Graphically, the example may be shown as follows (Figure 1):

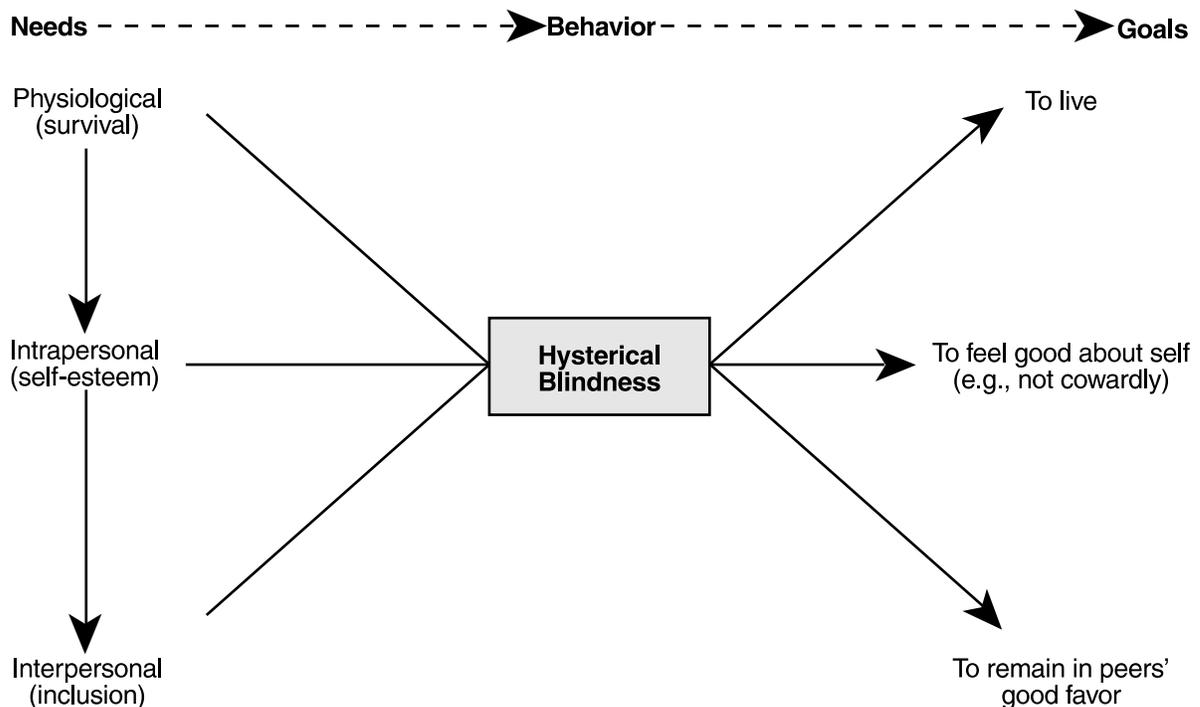


Figure 1. Needs, Behavior, and Goals

### Clarification

The second major implication springing from the consideration of human needs has to do with the clarification of those needs and goals. For psychological growth to occur, needs and goals must be first understood and then met through behavior that is responsible and responsive to the individual himself or herself and to his or her significant others. Thus, one individual's chosen behavior may differ widely from that of another, but each is striving to meet certain common human needs. We need to know what these needs are and to understand their relationship to behavior before we can attempt to modify our behavior to reach our goals. The physical, intrapersonal, and

interpersonal demands of an individual are all important in determining the human behavior that results from these interdependent, personal human needs.

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## ■ OPEN SYSTEMS

**David J. Marion**

Many people are beginning to think about and live their lives in new ways. Old traditions and habits seem inadequate to new possibilities, fresh needs, greater pressures, enlarged perspectives. Behind many of the newer ways of thinking about people and groups and organizations lie the concepts of general-system theory and models of open systems in particular.

### ***Nature of Open-Systems Theory***

Most basically, open-systems thinking considers process, or change, as the primary fact of existence. For example, the movement of my hand is a short, quick wave of action set against the longer, slower flow of my body. Both of these processes occur against the backgrounds of increasingly longer, slower, greater waves of city, country, continent, planet, and universe—measured in social, historical, geological, galactic, and cosmic spans of time. From this perspective, action (or change) in time is as real and as much an actuality as something extended in space.

Such a view breaks down many of the walls within which people have felt themselves enclosed. Material things no longer are the only “objective reality.” Needs, feelings, relationships, and ways are as objective a part of existence as are automobiles and real estate and buildings and mountains. In systems thinking, the substance of a thing is not its material nature but its thrust, its direction—its coming to be, realization, and ceasing to be.

### ***Causality***

If we consider the substance of a thing not some kind of stuff but some way of change, we come to think about cause less as a single event or force and more as a whole, extended situation. Again, this way of thinking allows for and does justice to a wider realm of human motivations, desires, and ways.

The causes of human behavior are not a one-way street. Cause does not move solely out from inside of me, impelling me to act. Nor do causes come solely from outside of me, compelling me to act. The causes of human action can come from both directions at one and the same time. For example, perception is determined both by my tuning my own energies at the proper frequency to receive, and by the qualities of that which I

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perceive. Or, to take a second example, communication is a mutual function of your world and of my world or it is not communication.

In this limited but most profound sense, human behavior is free, or open. Fully human activity does not “belong to” prior events. Rather it develops out of the full, mutually causal participation of individuals in other ongoing systems of events.

## **GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE OPEN-SYSTEM MODEL**

Seen in sharp contrast to machine-theory notions of people and organizations, the open-system model of growth is particularly useful.

Machines and mechanical systems in general are formed from fixed parts according to an a priori plan. Their order is determined prior to their existence and, to the extent that they are well built, this order provides steady performance. This standardized predictability is of the greatest value in mechanical systems.

Open systems, however, develop through individually unique histories. Their order evolves in the course of their existence and, to the extent that they are adaptive, past histories are carried forward in new efficiencies. Particular and unique events and ways are the hallmarks of open systems.

A person’s intelligence, sensitivity, and ability are not original or separable pieces of the individual. They develop in the course of the individual’s life and exist only as a part of that person. A group’s decision-making process, style of communication, and other ways and norms do not exist before but only in the course of the group’s life. An organization’s structure and tasks and methods evolve out of the history of the organization’s transactions with its changing members and environment.

### **Order**

The conception of order as something given and fixed is bound up with a conservative approach. Society and individuals are thought of as closed, unchanging things—like a machine and its parts. Order seen as development and change, though, is linked to a progressive approach. Society and individuals are thought of as open, developing things—like a game and its plays, or an artistic movement and its works or performances. Mechanical systems are necessarily conservative or fixed in their functioning because the whole is the structure of its parts. Open systems can progress and develop because the whole can structure or modify its parts.

### **Three Essential Factors**

An individual system—whether a person, a group, or an organization—will develop humanly to the extent that it is an open system. The development of open systems appears to depend on the presence of three essential factors: (1) rationality, (2) steady-state maintenance, and (3) feedback.

*Rationality* is present to the extent that the system’s action is purposive and coping. It is absent when behavior is disorganized or defensive. Purposive, coping action

requires the integration of system components into an integrated whole and, further, the adaptation of the system to the demands and opportunities of its environment.

Failure to bring the parts together, or to adjust to the environment, is always reflected in behavior that is repetitive, fixated, or one-sided—in a word, irrational.

Realistic perception and effective action depend on the system's using all its powers of feeling, thinking, imagining, willing, and doing.

*Maintenance of a steady state* concerns the ability of a system to accumulate and use "resources." The resources used by an open system are material, energy, and information differentials, or bound tensions. As an open system develops it becomes highly differentiated. The different parts or phases of the system come to vary or differ from each other. These differences are creative tensions, which represent sources of action and powers of change. For example, when the needs and abilities and interests of an individual, the leadership and interactional modes of a group, or the operating and communication patterns of an organization are each varied and integrated, effective powers of action are likely to be present.

*Feedback* reflects the ability of the system to generate and utilize evaluative information. Without such information the system is blind to itself and the consequences of its action. Such information is essential. Rationality and steady-state maintenance are not automatic, fixed things; rather they are dynamic sets of ever-changing relationships. Monitoring and modifying these interactions requires information—feedback.

Such feedback will best be produced if in the action of the system there is a progressive cycling through phases of problem identification and problem-solving. A self-guiding and self-maintaining system depends on such a process. For example, the social system that is preeminent in its ability to utilize self-guiding information is science; scientific development is well understood as the progressive, reciprocal use of problem identification and problem-solving, theory and experience, hypothesis and experiment, concept and data.

## **CONCLUSION**

Much of modern society fails to comprehend this larger process of development, or the system model that lies behind it. Organizations and individuals—threatened by the rate and intensity and radical nature of change—have placed excessive emphasis on problem solving, information, and control. Often out of irrational needs for power and certainty, they neglect the other side of the coin, namely, problem identification, involvement, and consensus. In this way tensions become more destructive than creative, and the ability of individuals, groups, and organizations to function in an integrated and adaptive manner decreases.

As existence becomes ever more varied and changing, individuals, groups, and organizations will have to learn to function and develop as open systems.

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## ■ ALTERNATIVES TO THEORIZING

### Stanley M. Herman

Almost all of us who have been raised in the Western cultural tradition have learned to depend on rationality, logic, and systematic thinking in our dealings with people and situations. Thus in our culture we have developed magnificent processes for handling great complexity in orderly ways. However, in our often exclusive devotion to the logical and rational we have cut off much of our access to intuition, inspiration, and other noncognitive resources in our lives. Even when we deal with emotions, many of us treat them as “data” to be factored into a rational diagnosis or solution of the “problem.”

### ***New Ways of Perceiving***

There is much to be gained for the manager and the organization consultant in learning an expanded range of ways of perceiving: letting go of cognitive, intellectual processes from time to time to experience what is happening both within and outside oneself. Parts of our bodies other than our thinking minds—and other ways of perceiving—can and do produce marvelous clues to what life is about, as Eastern religion and philosophy (e.g., Zen and Tao) can show.

Although not normally seen as being relevant to the affairs of organizations, these “new” paths of perception have great applicability and potential for increasing the energy and the capacity for thought and action of managers and others who work in organization environments.

### ***Overemphasis on “Systems” Approaches***

At present, organization and management theorists emphasize systems approaches to organization dynamics. Systems thinking has become *the* fashionable way of analyzing and treating management problems. For some, the systems way of looking at things has become synonymous with making big abstractions—converting people or process troubles into important-sounding but distant generalities.

The United States Army, for example, is an extremely complex system. A consultant may well estimate that changing the philosophy, policies, and procedures of this entire system would require years of intervention. However, if he or she focuses on *what* really needs to be done and *who* needs to do it (not to change the whole Army but only the unit with which he or she is consulting), the problem becomes decidedly more manageable.

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## **THE TENDENCY TO “THEORIZE”**

Most of us tend to be theorists, either consciously or unconsciously. People typically have theories about almost everything that goes on from one moment to another in their lives. The theories may be structured and formal or merely loose collections of assumptions. They may focus on significant issues such as U.S. foreign policy or on a minor concern such as whether women ought to precede men when leaving an elevator.

There are, of course, some advantages to having a theory. It can help make the world more predictable and help us feel in control of situations. There may be substantial costs to the theorizing process, however. The very act of mobilizing our theories in order to understand and control what is *going to* happen detaches us from the event itself and our involvement in it. In the act of theorizing we place ourselves partly outside the event as an observer. Thus only part of our awareness and energy is available to deal with what is happening.

### ***Theories as Distorting Screens***

Our theories can “filter” our thinking and distort our perceptions, functioning as screens between events and our experience of them. The distortions can occur at different points with different consequences.

First, one may theorize before an event, that is, in preparation for it. In this case, the person most often attempts to confirm his or her theory in the ensuing transactions. Frequently, any aspect of that event that does not fit the preestablished theoretical framework is discounted, distorted, or perhaps not even perceived at all. On the other hand, information that does not fit the theoretical model but is compelling enough to demand notice may threaten the theorizer with the destruction of his or her model and leave the person in confusion, grasping desperately for another model to replace the first.

For example, a highly talented pair of consultants specializing in one of the systems approaches to organization development worked with a group of aerospace engineering managers for several days to focus on the needs of the organization. The work was largely frustrating and unproductive to both the consultants and their client, and the reasons were not difficult to see. The consultants had a *theory* about working with management groups (“managers are unsophisticated about systems”), and the managers had a *theory* about working with organization consultants (“consultants should know best”). The consulting effort failed because neither party could reexamine its assumptions.

When “theory lock-in” occurs in the midst of an event, instead, a slightly different, though related, pattern is revealed. Many people seem compelled to try to “pigeonhole” incoming information into one or another of several possible hypotheses until finally one pigeonhole is declared the winner. Then, once more, subsequent information may be selected to conform with that theory.

## ***Useful Approaches to Theorizing***

Appropriate uses of theory and the process of theorizing can, of course, be useful. In Buddhist literature there is an expression that says a wise person will use a raft to cross a river, but once on the other shore the raft is left behind. Theories can be treated like the raft: They can be learned and then let go. Sufficient trust in one's internal processes is necessary; when a theory is relevant to the situation, it (or appropriate parts of it) will reoccur to one's mind.

Theorizing can also be useful at the conclusion of an event. Looking back over a series of occurrences and generating some tentative hypotheses about the behavior and organizational interactions of individuals involved in the event may be helpful—if the theorizing does not become restrictive and force subsequent life experiences to be seen in its framework.

## ***EMPHASIS ON A “NOW” RESPONSE***

We would do well to learn to live with more ambiguity and with the excitement that comes from being involved as real, live people with other real, live people.

Instead of ignoring his or her own feelings about and responses to a client, a consultant can learn to respond on a more human, immediate basis. For example, in one recent training workshop, it was not until the consultant honestly stated his own sense of frustration that the client could acknowledge a similar feeling, and progress could be made on the problem.

If we allow ourselves, we can discover that the Eastern principle of “now-ness” can apply to our development as effectively functioning people and to our interactions with other people. If a consultant can, for a moment, give up trying to control and predict where a particular engagement between counselor and counselee ought to go, he or she might find, more often than not, that a new and surprising clarification will emerge.

## ***SUMMARY***

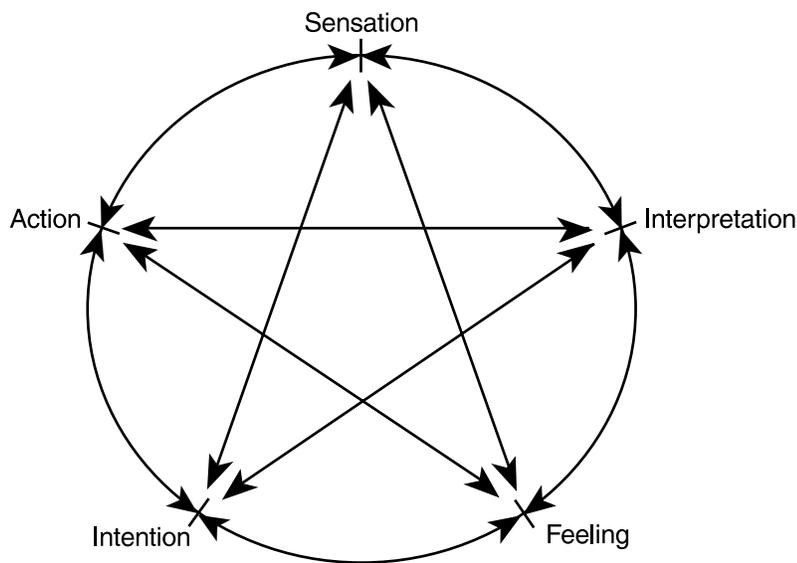
There are possibilities for all of us to expand our range of ways of perceiving and of dealing with people and problems. To do so, we need to learn to suspend, temporarily, our logical-rational controls. We need to learn to float with what is happening, to involve ourselves fully, to forget who we are “supposed to be,” what our appropriate roles are, what our relationships “ought” to be, what kind of behavior is supposed to be “helpful” and “constructive” and what kind is supposed to be “improper” and “selfish.” If we do this, we have the opportunity to discover—to be shocked or surprised, disappointed or delighted. Theories can very often be barriers to an understanding of people's real selves and can inhibit their potential for excitement, creativity, and energy.

## ■ THE AWARENESS WHEEL

**Sherod Miller, Elam W. Nunnally, and Daniel B. Wackman**

Self-awareness enables a person more effectively to process information he or she already has, i.e., information about thoughts, feelings, and so forth.

The Awareness Wheel is the major conceptual framework we use for teaching self-awareness. Five types of information are distinguished: these types of information involve somewhat different, though interrelated, cognitive processes (Figure 1).



**Figure 1. The Awareness Wheel**

1. *Sensing* involves receiving data through the senses, e.g., I see, I hear, I touch, I smell, I taste. When a person reports sense data, or sense information, he or she will make purely *descriptive* statements:

“I see a striped ball.”

“I see your muscles tightening.”

“I hear your voice becoming louder.”

2. *Interpreting* involves assigning meaning to the sense data. Meanings are impressions, conclusions, assumptions, etc. Present sense data are filtered through a framework based on past experiences and interpretations (i.e., stored information). When a person reports interpretive information, he or she makes inferential statements:

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“That striped ball is a soccer ball.”

“I think you are scared.”

“I don’t think you understand what I mean.”

3. *Feeling* involves an emotional or affective response to the sense data received and the meaning assigned, e.g., I feel. Usually, feeling involves an actual sensation in some part of the body. A report of feeling information may be either a descriptive or an inferential statement:

“I’m happy.”

“I feel scared.”

“I think you’re upset about something.”

4. *Intending* involves what a person wants from a situation. Intention statements indicate the things a person wants to happen or wants to do, or they indicate inferences about another’s wants.

“I want to play ball.”

“I want to win this argument.”

“I think you want me to leave.”

5. *Acting* involves actual behavioral response, doing something based on sense data received, meaning assigned, feelings, and intentions. This is the “output” of information processing. One person’s output, in turn, becomes “input” for another, i.e., what the other sees, hears, etc. Action includes both verbal behavior and nonverbal behavior.

I act by kicking a soccer ball.

I attack your ideas by saying, “Your thinking is inconsistent.”

I ask you, “Are you upset?”

We initially focus on helping participants distinguish among these different types of information and the different cognitive processes involved. But we also clearly point out the interrelationships among the processes. We stress that experience does not necessarily occur in the sequence of sensing, interpreting, feeling, intending, and, finally, acting. Rather, for example, sensing is affected by feeling: i.e., the emotional condition of a person has a major impact on his or her ability to receive information. As another example, a person’s interpretation of the sense data he or she receives is strongly influenced by his or her intentions in a situation; thus, the person may focus too strongly on some of the sense data and ignore other data.

## **INCOMPLETE AND INCONGRUENT SELF-AWARENESS**

The Awareness Wheel is intended to help participants become conscious of distinctions among different types of information and cognitive process and of interrelationships among the different types. When the five different types of information are not interrelated, certain behaviors may occur, resulting in inadequate expressions of self-

awareness and ineffective communication. Communication becomes incomplete and/or incongruent.

There are many types of incomplete self-awareness, but they all share one characteristic: at least one type of information is missing from a person's awareness. Several common types of incomplete awareness are described in the following section:

1. *Interpret-Act*. This configuration represents a very common behavior pattern, i.e., "assume and do." People who assume and do but have no consciousness of feelings or intentions typically communicate feelings indirectly or without emotion.

2. *Interpret-Feel-Act*. This configuration represents behavior that does not take into account data received from the other person or situation. Because important available information is not recognized, the person's behavior appears to have little relationship to "reality." The person's reactions seem to be based only on internal cues and are not responsive to the other person's communication or the social context. In short, the person seems to be in his or her "own world."

3. *Confusion of Interpretations with Feelings*. This configuration represents confusion between thoughts and emotions; often, behavior exhibits what might be called "language pollution." For example, a person might say, "I feel that we should decide" or say, while shouting, "I'm not angry, I just think my point is an important one." Sometimes this kind of statement is simply a result of sloppy language, but often it represents a real confusion between thoughts and emotions. This confusion may be manifested in overemotionality or underemotionality or, more generally, in indirect emotional responses.

4. *Sense-Feel-Act*. Behavior based on this configuration indicates little thinking. Actions are basically emotional reactions, that is, an "acting out" of feelings rather than an "acting on" feelings.

5. *Interpret-Feel*. This configuration involves no action. In essence, the person becomes a patient. Usually the individual's responses are purely reactions to others and, therefore, are controlled by them. The person collects impressions and feelings but seldom translates them into appropriate action. In short, the person is not an active agent, making his or her own choices.

In each of these five configurations, *intention* is not involved. In each case, behavior occurs without the person recognizing his or her intention in the situation. A sixth configuration does include intention, but other cognitive processes are missing.

6. *Intend-Act*. This configuration represents behavior that is essentially devoid of both interpretation of the other's message and of awareness of one's own emotional reaction to that message. The actions usually express an intention relative to another person, typically an intention to manipulate the other person or control his or her behavior in some way. Behavior based on this configuration often appears to be cold and calculated.

Besides incomplete awareness, a person can experience *incongruent* awareness. Incongruent awareness happens when two or more parts of the Awareness Wheel are in conflict. For example, a person does not feel good about what he or she wants (conflict between feelings and intentions). The person may ignore the feelings, carry out an action and get what he or she wants, but the feelings are likely to remain—and along with them, the incongruence. If incongruence is chronic it affects a person's life style.

A person can use incongruence as a “growing point”—finding the incongruent part of his or her Awareness Wheel and doing something to regain congruent awareness. This may require changing values, expectations, meanings, or intentions or even altering some behavior.

## **SKILLS IN DISCLOSING SELF-AWARENESS**

Making a clear statement about a part of the Awareness Wheel involves a communication skill. Because there are five parts in the Awareness Wheel, five skills are involved in expressing complete awareness:

- making sense statements
- making interpretive statements
- making feeling statements
- making intention statements
- making action statements

A sixth crucial skill is used when a person discloses complete self-awareness—speaking for self. Speaking for self involves expressing one's own sensations, thoughts, feelings, and intentions. The language used in speaking for self is “I,” “my,” “mine”; e.g., “I see . . .,” “I think . . .,” “My opinion is . . .,” etc. This skill is crucial because it clearly indicates the authority on a person's experience—the person himself or herself. When a person speaks for self, he or she increases autonomy, but, at the same time, takes full responsibility for what he or she says. Thus the person avoids the two dangers at either extreme of a continuum, *underresponsibility* and *overresponsibility*.

At one extreme, the underresponsible person does not accept ownership of his or her thoughts and feelings. He or she does not even speak for self. This person believes his or her point of view is not important and cannot be useful to self or to others. As a result, he or she depreciates self and avoids acknowledging his or her own thoughts, desires, and feelings. This person often behaves indirectly to achieve his or her goals, such as attempting to make others feel guilty because they are overlooking him or her, hoping to receive attention without asking for it directly.

At the other extreme, the overresponsible person tries to speak for another person (e.g., “You are sad”) or for everyone (e.g., “One partner should be dominant in marriage”). Speaking for others often takes the form of normative appeals; for example, you *should* feel a certain way, or you *ought* to do something. Little or no respect is

shown for the other's rights and autonomy. Typically, speaking for the other is an attempt to persuade and manipulate that person into thinking, feeling, or doing something that he or she would not do if left to his or her own choosing.

Speaking for self on the other hand, increases both one's own and the other's personal autonomy and personal responsibility. First, speaking for self clearly indicates that the responsibility for one's own interpretations, feelings, intentions, and actions is self and not the other person. And by avoiding speaking for the other, speaking for self leaves room for the other person to report his or her own perceptions, thoughts, feelings, intentions, and actions—and take responsibility for them.

## ■ POWER

### Dennis C. King and John C. Glidewell

Power is a key ingredient of almost all human relationships, whether person-to-person or system-to-system. In recent years, students of individual and organizational psychology have placed increased emphasis on understanding it and its role. As a result, a variety of definitions have evolved. Suggested here is one comprehensive way of defining power and several perspectives for viewing its magnitude, sources, and character. A clearer understanding of power can be attained by applying this framework to a given relationship; more effective operating strategies can result.

#### ***Negative Connotations***

To many, the word “power” has a negative connotation, undoubtedly because it is so frequently allied with negative acts. For example, “power” readily comes to mind when one discusses the hold an evil dictator has over people, but it is only rarely considered when one speaks of the relationship of a parent and child. Yet, in both cases, very real and considerable power exists; its value is determined in light of the situation in which it is present. Sayings such as “power corrupts” are generalizations, subject to the inaccuracies of such broad statements.

#### ***DEFINITION OF POWER***

There have been several approaches to describing power and many resulting definitions. Its origin and ingredients will be considered here.

#### ***Origin***

It is hypothesized that “power” arises from two primary elements—*need* (for a service, for knowledge, for direction, for material) and *means* (a raw material, money, authority, knowledge). The match of a need and a means transforms these two into equal and opposite forces known as *dependence* and *influence*. This is the most easily recognized form of power, which will be labeled “active power.”

Because these forces are equal and opposite, it is possible to determine the degree of the resulting power by measuring either influence or dependence. Emerson (1962) equates power with dependence and states that “power resides in dependency” (p. 32). Measuring dependence alone, however, only establishes the strength of activated power.

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It does not comprehensively assess the effect of peripheral forces of stability and strength.

### **Ingredients**

Other important ingredients of power can be grouped together and termed a power-stability factor. These ingredients, as the name suggests, bear on the stability of the power relationship and its strength and are many and varied. Included in this factor are unfulfilled needs, unutilized means, alternate resources, “do-without” time, and reciprocity.

*Unfulfilled needs* and *unutilized means* represent important, but often overlooked, potential forces that affect the stability of a power relationship. The drives to fill unspoken needs or to utilize excess means are real. These drives may weaken existing bonds or may strengthen them. For example, if an individual’s need for a home improvement loan leads to dealings with a new bank, the relationship between the individual and the bank that holds the person’s mortgage, savings, and checking account may be affected. Correspondingly, a tight end in professional football who develops the ability and likes to punt may have his role changed or ask to be traded as a result. Drives such as these vary in strength over time and may not always be present to any significant degree.

*Alternate resources* are under constant, if not conscious, review by the actors in a power relationship. Are there alternate ways of filling a need? If so, what are the comparative costs—in money, in convenience, in psychological effects? (Thibaut & Kelly, 1959, refer to a comparison-level alternative in treating competing resources.) When considering costs, any penalty for disengagement—such as contractual bonds—must be recognized. Alternate resources are available in most voluntary relationships; e.g., a business that has its yearly income tax made out by accounting firm X may switch to firm Y, perform the task itself with existing personnel, or hire additional personnel.

The “do-without” time is most dramatically illustrated in the case of a labor strike, which pits the “do-without” capabilities of the workers against those of the company. The result almost always alters the power relationship between the two systems. This factor is a real consideration in determining power even when it is not tested; the perceived “do-without” time has an impact on power dynamics.

The existence of *reciprocity* between two systems also has a stabilizing effect on their relationship. In other words, when each party is influential, as well as dependent, toward the other, the bond between them is stronger. For example, a store may be more willing to provide credit to customers who are likely to increase the amount they purchase because of the credit plan. Both are influential and both are dependent. Although reciprocity tends to strengthen a bond between two systems, it is also true that the withdrawal of either a need or a resource by one system often represents a move so major that termination of the relationship results.

The total power that exists between two systems is usually complex, with various influences, dependencies, and stabilizing factors in effect on either side. Some combination of active power and a stability factor is the result.

## **MAGNITUDE OF POWER**

Although it is extremely difficult to assign a numerical value to the magnitude of a power relationship, it is possible to assess its relative value and its sources of stability and/or instability. Simply defining the influences and dependencies that exist—labeling them as strong, moderate, or weak—and identifying the factors that may or do affect stability can add depth to a power relationship analysis.

## **SOURCES OF POWER**

If power is born as a result of a union of needs and means, then the primary sources of the needs and means in question must be identified. Needs and means appear in a multitude of forms. Several of the more common are listed in the following section:

<b>Source</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Knowledge	Technical or professional expertise
Resources	Raw materials, money, manpower
Social pressure	Cliques, clubs, gangs, committees
Authority	Policies, elected officials, organizational position
Law	Laws of public domain, civil rights, felony offenses
Norms, values, traditions	Religious beliefs, honesty, social pressures, dress codes, habits
Personal style	Charisma, strong dependence
Coercion	Strikes, riots, mobs

Organizationally speaking, all or any of these sources may be pertinent, depending on the segment of the environment concerned. In a manufacturing operation, for example, the plant may rely on the home office for product development (knowledge) and on a paper company for shipping containers that, in turn, supply the product to customers (resources); react to the demands of an ecology group (social pressure); set the amount of production and the number of employees (authority); be influenced by the Food & Drug Administration (law); give out bonuses and have a summer company picnic (norms, values, traditions); be run by an iron-fisted plant manager (personal style); and be subject to union-instigated work stoppages (coercion).

Taking the time to identify the sources of power can be of enormous benefit in understanding, using, altering, or coping with relationships.

## CHARACTER OF POWER

The nature of a power relationship is determined by the characteristics of the systems involved. These characteristics often affect both the visibility and stability of power associations. Although many factors could be considered, system energy, permeability (the energy flow across the boundary), adaptability (the ability to change with outside pressures), differentiation, (the degree of complexity), and integration (the additive or complementary quality) are used here. A tool for analyzing and describing each characteristic (based on an approach of Oshry, 1971) can be constructed by placing descriptive words and phrases in a matrix showing high or low and positive or negative orientations. (See Figure 1.)

<b>System Energy</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
High	Alive, vibrant, creative, alert	Violent, explosive, irrational, impetuous
Low	Peaceful, simple, elementary	Listless, apathetic, dull
<b>Permeability</b>		
High	Collaborating, consensual, tending toward teamwork	Inefficient, dependent, without initiative, indiscriminate
Low	Independent, with initiative	Competitive, duplicated, guarded, uncommunicative, filtered
<b>Adaptability</b>		
High	Efficient, preplanned, proactive	Commanding, controlling, obedient, unquestioning
Low	Free, natural, spontaneous	Inefficient (regarding environment), rigid, unbending
<b>Differentiation</b>		
High	Rich, stimulating, adaptive	Diffuse, nonsupportive, competitive
Low	Cohesive, unified	Simplistic, nonadaptive
<b>Integration</b>		
High	Collaborative, supportive	Conforming, dull
Low	Spirited, independent	Competitive, unproductive, combating

**Figure 1. Characteristics of Power Systems**

It is important to note that the same individual or system will not necessarily be classified in the same quadrant for different characteristics. In fact, there will be frequent deviation in one or more categories.

By analyzing each of these characteristics for both parties of a relationship, several clues can be offered about what sort of approach might help in developing an effective

relationship between them. A situation, for example, in which one system is violent and explosive and the other is listless and apathetic will undoubtedly call for a different strategy than if both are creative and vibrant.

Power relationships are complex—their magnitude, their source, and their character need to be considered—but they are well worth defining as an aid in effective dealings between systems.

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## ■ LOEVINGER'S EGO STAGES AS THE BASIS OF AN INTERVENTION MODEL

**Victor Pinedo, Jr.**

For decades, a basic deficiency of personal and organization development programs has been the absence of a comprehensive model of human development that is capable of encompassing the various facets of growth while at the same time permitting meaningful measurement. For the practitioner, Loevinger's model of ego development offers a major conceptual advance, an empirically derived model of maturity that is rich in detail and nuance and comprehensive enough to act as a conceptual framework for complex, personalized organizational intervention. Impacted and expanded by the Life-Cycle theory of Hersey and Blanchard (1972), McClelland's social motives (1961), and Harrison's model of cultures (1975), Loevinger's model of ego stages (1976) is a convenient basis for organizational and community intervention. In working with these theories and their interrelationships, a new model evolves that can be used to integrate three major factors: individual maturity level (from Loevinger), management style (from Hersey and Blanchard), and organizational ideology (from Harrison).<sup>1</sup>

### **LOEVINGER'S STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT**

Loevinger originally developed her levels as a way to measure an individual's stage of ego development. In a sense, each of her six major stages and substages represents a point in time and space at which an individual has stopped in the developmental process. A stage represents the way a person looks at and copes with the world. Differences in people at various stages would represent differences in the following human functions: cognitive differences—how people reason and make sense of a situation (cognitive style); process differences—how people express emotions and relate to one another (character development and interrelations); system differences—how people function, cope with the world, and maintain an integrated sense of self (preoccupational needs). Figure 1 shows how each of Loevinger's six levels of ego development (impulsive, self-protective, conformist, conscientious, autonomous, and integrated) is revealed in four

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<sup>1</sup> These theories were integrated by the author and his collaborators over the period 1970 to 1976 in a program conducted by Fundashon Humanas in Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles. The political upheavals of 1969 led to an invitation to David McClelland of Harvard to develop a training program in his methods for a group of islanders. One of the coordinators of this program was Harry Lasker, a former student of McClelland's, who, working with the author, a local management consultant and psychologist, gathered data that demonstrated an extremely strong relationship between the various patterns of motivation and levels of adult maturity or ego levels.

different dimensions (impulse control/character development, interpersonal style, cognitive style, and conscious preoccupation) in an individual at that level.

Each stage or ego level is characterized by distinct emotional preoccupations, cognitive styles, and manners of behaving toward others. At different stages, people cope with the world and make sense out of it in different ways. They also have different attitudes toward their work and distinct expectations and levels of commitment.

### **1. Impulsive Stage**

At the first of the six stages the individual does not recognize rules and considers an action bad only if he or she is punished. Interpersonal relations tend to be exploitative and dependent. Other people are treated as sources of supply by the impulsive person. At level one, the central work attitude is “I’ll do it only if I get rewarded,” the main motivator at this level being pay. Commitment is only to oneself, to the satisfaction of one’s own needs. The responsibility that can be given to a person at this level is very low.

### **2. Self-Protective Stage**

At stage two, the opportunistic or self-protective stage, rules are recognized for the first time but are obeyed simply in order to achieve an immediate advantage. At this level, a person will manipulate rules to his or her own personal advantage. Interpersonal relations are manipulative and exploitative, and dependence on others is decreased but not eliminated. The individual can be both passively dependent and aggressively independent. However, such an aggressive independence is often betrayed by an inner sense of shame and doubt.

A person at level two has a conscious preoccupation with questions of control, advantage, and domination. He or she normally thinks in terms of trying to get the better of another person. This deception-oriented thinking betrays a high level of distrust. Because the individual at level two is out to exploit other people, the concurrent belief is that all people are out to exploit him or her also. Because life is seen in competitive terms, there is no capacity at this level for the idea of cooperation. The person at this level is a lonely person because he or she cannot rely fully on others or trust them.

The key work attitude at this level is “I’ll do only what I’m told to do” or “I’ll do whatever I can get away with.” Job security and working conditions are important. The individual can take some limited kinds of responsibility for small tasks but must be supervised with continuous orders and directions.

### **3. Conformist Stage**

At level three, rules are partially internalized for the first time, but they are still obeyed simply because they are rules, with little emotional attachment to or belief in them. When the person breaks the rules, he or she does have a real capacity to feel shame. The conformist is deeply concerned about what other people think.

<b>Ego Level</b>	<b>Impulse Control/ Character Development</b>	<b>Interpersonal Style</b>	<b>Cognitive Style</b>	<b>Conscious Preoccupation</b>
I. <i>Impulsive</i>	Does not recognize rules Sees action as bad only if punished Impulsive Afraid of retaliation Has temper tantrums	Dependent and exploitative; dependence unconscious Treats people as sources of supply	Thinks in a dichotomous way Has simple, global ideas Conceptually confused Thinks concretely Egocentric	Sex and aggression Bodily functions
II. <i>Self-Protective</i>	Recognizes rules but obeys for immediate advantage Has expedient morality: action bad if person is caught Blames others; does not see self as responsible for failure or trouble	Manipulative and exploitative Wary and distrusting of others' intentions Opportunistic Zero-sum; I win, you lose Shameless; shows little remorse	As above	Self-protection Gaining control and advantage, dominating Getting the better of others, deceiving them Fear of being dominated, controlled, or deceived by others
III. <i>Conformist</i>	Partially internalizes rules; obeys without question Feels shame for consequences Concerned with "shoulds" Morally condemns others' views Denies sexual and aggressive feelings	Wants to belong to group, to gain social acceptance Feels mutual trust within in-group, prejudice against out-groups Has pleasing social personality: superficial, niceness, helpfulness Understands relationships in terms of action rather than feeling and motives	Thinks stereotypically Uses clichés Sees in terms of superlatives Has sentimental mentality Has little introspection; references to inner feelings banal and stereotyped	Appearances Social acceptance and adjustment to group norms Status symbols, material possessions, reputation, and prestige

**Figure 1. Loevinger's Stages of Ego Development Across Four Dimensions\***

\* After Loevinger (1976).

<b>Ego Level</b>	<b>Impulse Control/ Character Development</b>	<b>Interpersonal Style</b>	<b>Cognitive Style</b>	<b>Conscious Preoccupation</b>
<i>IV. Conscientious</i>	Standards self-evaluated; morality internalized Self-critical tendency to be hypercritical Feels guilt for consequences	Has sense of responsibility, obligation Has mutual, intensive relationships Concerned with communication, expression of differentiated feelings	Conceptually complex Has sense of consequences, priorities Aware of contingencies, perceives alternatives Sees self in context of community, society	Achievement of long goals, as measured by inner standards Attaining ideals Motivation, reasons for behavior Self: feelings, traits
<i>V. Autonomous</i>	Add: **Behavior an expression of moral principle Tolerates multiplicity of viewpoints Concerned with conflicting duties, roles, principles	Add: **Wants autonomy in relations Sees relations as involving inevitable mutual interdependence Tolerates others' solutions of conflict Respects others' autonomy Open	Has greater conceptual complexity Tolerates ambiguity Has capacity to see paradox, contradictions Has broad scope of thought (time frame, social context) Perceives human interdependence Has greater objectivity	Individuality and self- fulfillment Conflicting inner needs Nonhostile, "existential" humor
<i>VI. Integrated</i>	Add: **Reconciles inner conflicts and conflicting external demands Renounces the unattainable Concerned with justice Spontaneous, creative	Add: **Cherishes individuality	Add: **Has sense of self as part of flow of human condition	Add: **Integrated sense of unique identity "Precious life's work" as inevitable simultaneous expression of self, principle, and one's humanity

**Figure 1 (continued). Loevinger's Stages of Ego Development Across Four Dimensions\***

\* After Loevinger (1976).

\*\* "Add" means add to the description applying to the previous level.

For the first time, the idea of reciprocity and trust emerges. But trust is extended only to the individual's in-group. For people who are outside this special group, the conformist can feel much prejudice and tends to think in very stereotypical terms. Therefore, he or she may condemn other people's views on a moral basis.

The conformist's interpersonal relations are rather superficial. He or she judges people by their actions rather than their feelings and motives. Someone who is superficially friendly may automatically be seen as a good person. A similar kind of superficiality exists in the conformist's preoccupation with material things—status, reputation, appearances, and adjustment. He or she has little introspection and self-consciousness.

Work attitudes at level three change. At the lower stages of this level, the key work attitude is "I'll do only what others do." At a higher step, the attitude becomes "I'll do only what is expected of me." The motivators at this level extend to the issues of peer relations, friendliness of supervision, competence of supervision, and company policy and administration. Generally this individual can be delegated conventional kinds of tasks that take a relatively long time to complete. The source of initiative for the level-three worker is still external, governed by company rules and what other employees do. He or she is very other directed and cares about what other people are doing and thinking. He or she shows the beginnings of commitment to the company and may become committed to the department or to a group of coworkers or to a department supervisor.

The work attitude of a person between levels three and four is "I'll do only what is best for my career advancement": the "yes man," the career ladder climber. This individual is motivated most strongly by recognition for the work he or she has done, possibilities of advancement, and opportunities to take responsibility.

#### **4. Conscientious Stage**

At this stage, a new pattern of thought begins to emerge. For the first time, rules and morality are fully internalized. At this level a person can feel guilt, rather than the shame of the conformist. Although the person at this stage may still condemn other people's values, inner morals begin to take precedence over group-sanctioned rules. The individual begins to think for himself or herself and to be moved primarily by what he or she considers important—inner principles. Conscious preoccupations are with obligations, ideals, and achievement as measured by inner standards. The individual has increasing awareness of his or her own feelings and needs and begins to judge and appreciate others in terms of their internal feelings and traits, rather than their actions. He or she develops the capacity for self-criticism, which can become neurotic in its severity. This mentality is often associated with an intense desire to prevent others from making mistakes.

At level four the work attitude becomes "I'll do what is best for the company" or "I'll do what the job demands." Here, finally, is the conscious preoccupation with the quality of work being done. The key motivators for this kind of worker are opportunities

to take responsibility and opportunities that permit achievement. This worker can assume great amounts of responsibility over long periods of time. He or she takes initiative on the basis of internal standards of excellence.

### **5. Autonomous Stage**

At this level, the great psychological problems are coping with inner conflicts and conflicting duties. Moral issues are no longer seen as a set of absolutes, but as an attempt to resolve contradictions. There is a much-increased capacity to live with ambiguity and a greater tolerance of other people and their solutions to life's conflicts. The autonomous person can accept others for what they are, fully conscious of their faults. Interpersonal relations are marked by a high level of awareness of feelings and emotions in self and in others. He or she recognizes that there must inevitably be interdependence between human beings.

There is an increased recognition at this level of the need to learn from one's mistakes and to grow. The most characteristic preoccupation now is with questions of individuality, self-actualization, and self-fulfillment. The autonomous level can be a tormented one, with many unresolved inner conflicts. The person at this level tends to draw back from the rush of life and to focus on the contradictions in his or her own feelings and in life's needs.

### **6. Integrated Stage**

At this stage occurs a reconciliation of the conflicting demands of life, a renunciation of the unattainable, and a tendency to cherish and appreciate differences among people. An integrated sense of identity expresses itself through the traits that Maslow (1962) calls characteristic of self-actualizing personalities: a superior perception of reality and an increased acceptance of oneself, of others, and of the way life is. In addition there is increased spontaneity, freshness of appreciation, and richness of emotional reaction. There is greater capacity to be problem centered, to give oneself completely to an idea outside oneself, as well as an increased capacity to give to other people in an open and complete way without feeling impoverished.

In addition, there is a desire for detachment and an increased desire for privacy and autonomy. But the person at the integrated level is not cut off from other people. He or she can experience an all-pervasive love for mankind and tends to have a democratic character structure and a genuine openness toward other people and a trust in them. The integrated personality is often highly creative.

A key aspect in the integrated personality is a higher frequency of peak experiences. Maslow (1962) has described the kinds of cognitions that are associated with peak experiences: a sense of wholeness, perfection, and completion; a greater awareness of justice; an intense sense of aliveness and richness of sensation; an appreciation of and focus on beauty and goodness; a spontaneous awareness of one's uniqueness and individuality; an awareness of honesty and a feeling of being close to truth; and an intense sensation of self-sufficiency.

## **MCCLELLAND'S SOCIAL MOTIVES**

The work of McClelland (see especially *The Achieving Society*, 1961) powerfully expresses the relationship between individual psychological patterns and social change. After years of psychological research, McClelland was able to discern three fundamental human motives: the power motive, the achievement motive, and the affiliation motive. According to an individual's motive pattern, he or she will be likely to display different kinds of behavior and have different concerns. For example, the power motive was found to be related to opportunistic defensive behavior. People motivated by a need for power are primarily interested in controlling others while seeking their own ends. The achievement motive characterizes people interested in the accomplishment of tasks, professional excellence, and rational problem solving. Their behavior tends to be efficient and productive. McClelland found that the achievement motive is strongly related to socioeconomic development. More specifically, it relates to feelings of satisfaction, higher productivity, and the desire and ability of people to organize individually and collectively for task fulfillment. McClelland developed an educational methodology that would stimulate and enhance the achievement motive in people. The affiliation motive leads to more interpersonal behavior. This motive expresses itself in a concern for intimacy, quality of relationship, and social harmony.

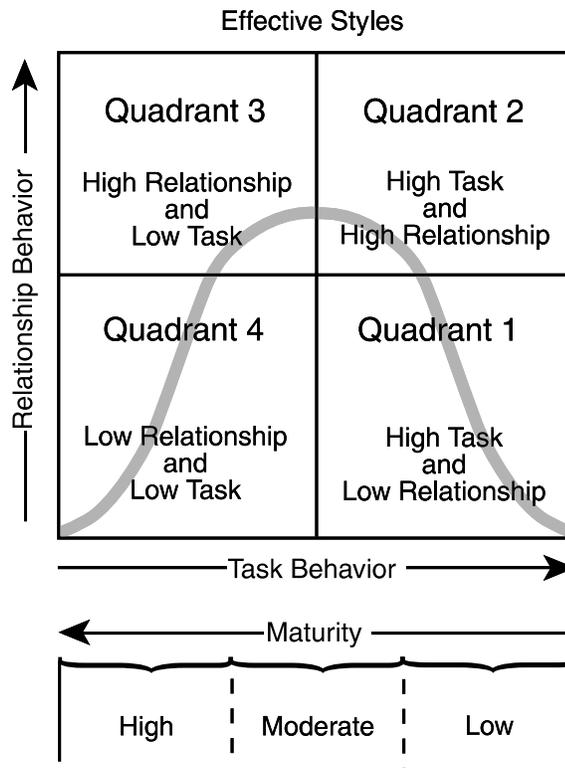
The author's research with McClelland's motives found that they are, in fact, crude predictors of ego levels. People with high power needs tend to be at low ego levels. People at low ego levels will not respond to achievement motivation training because it demands more mature emotional and intellectual capacities than they have yet developed. Achievement motivation, on the other hand, is characteristic of a higher level of maturity.

## **THE CONCEPT OF MATURITY**

According to Hersey and Blanchard's Life-Cycle theory (1972), as the level of maturity of one's followers continues to increase, appropriate leader behavior requires a change in management style. (See Figure 2.) Maturity is defined in the Life-Cycle theory by

achievement motivation, the willingness and ability to take responsibility, and task relevant education and experience of an individual or a group. . . . As a person matures over time he moves from a passive state to a state of increasing activity, from dependency on others to relative independence . . . . our concern is for psychological age, not chronological age. Beginning with structured task behavior, which is appropriate for working with immature people, Life-Cycle Theory suggests that leader behavior should move through (1) high task-low relationships behavior to (2) high task-high relationships and (3) high relationships-low task behavior to (4) low task-low relationships behavior, if one's followers progress from immaturity to maturity. (pp. 134-135)

Hersey and Blanchard's definition of the integrative force of maturity, however, is simplistic and incomplete. They relate maturity to achievement motivation, but it is clear



**Figure 2. Hersey and Blanchard's Life-Cycle Leadership Theory<sup>1</sup>**

that this phenomenon is very complex, one that cannot be changed by simple behavior modification, as suggested by Hersey and Blanchard.

An individual has certain developmental needs and certain dilemmas that must be fulfilled in order for a strong sense of self to develop. The more the individual feels that he or she can satisfy personal needs, the more growth energy that person is going to have to move to a higher set of needs and a more complex set of dilemmas.

### ***Ego Stages as Unfulfilled Needs and Dilemmas***

Relating Loevinger's ego stages to several developmental theories results in a much deeper way of looking at the concept of "maturity" and gives a much clearer picture of what type of behavior one can expect at each stage of development. (See Figure 3.) If Loevinger's ego stages are understood as unfulfilled needs and dilemmas, it is clear that a complex form of intervention is necessary, if change is the desired end. Figure 3 reveals the way an individual's various needs and dilemmas relate to each of Loevinger's ego stages. The first column indicates the predominant need, the second column the unfinished dilemma, the third column the psychological modalities that the individual must master in order to continue, the fourth column the motivation that will be predominant if stagnation occurs at a certain stage, and the fifth column the characteristics that the personality acquires by solving the dilemmas at each stage.

<sup>1</sup> From Henry & Blanchard (1976).

At the earliest stage of development, an individual is learning to satisfy physical needs. This process gives the person self-trust and motivation to tackle the next step in the developmental process. At the second stage the person is concerned with security. The dilemmas here are autonomy/shame/doubt, initiative/guilt, and industry/inferiority. Successfully completing this stage will lend the individual self-control and willpower, direction and purpose, method and competence. That person is ready to move on to the next set of dilemmas belonging to the sphere of acceptance; if these are successfully resolved, the individual moves on to those of ego and finally to those related to the need for realization. The successful satisfaction of each need seems to generate more energy and more motivation toward dealing with the next more complex set of dilemmas. With each set, the individual's impulse control, interpersonal style, cognitive style, and conscious preoccupation change nature and quality.

An interesting relationship, for example, can be seen between McClelland's three social motives (power, achievement, and affiliation) and Loevinger's ego levels. Subjects who tested at Loevinger's ego levels 1, 2, and 2/3 are high in power motive and low in achievement motive and affiliation motive. At stages 3, 3/4, and 4, there is an increase of achievement motive in both quantity and quality, a decline in power motive, and a slight increase in affiliation. At ego levels 5 and 6, achievement declines and power further declines. There is an increase in affiliation and an increase in socialized power.

### ***Forming a Character Armor***

If the individual, however, is not successful in development, if he or she is unable to fulfill a need or to solve a dilemma, stagnation or the formation of a character armor occurs. This happens especially at the lower stages, which represent points in time and space where the individual has felt impotent in fulfilling needs and in solving the dilemmas faced at that stage. The individual's motivational energies are used to protect himself or herself from feeling impotent. Power behavior, for example, becomes the defense system at these early stages of development. Behavior becomes predictive and directed toward satisfying the unsatisfied needs. The individual's whole world has stagnated into unproductive, amotivated behavior. An individual at stage two, for example, will create a self-protective world. The person feels insecure but will not own the insecurity and projects the needs onto the world, often in polarized fashion. At stage three (conformist), all behavior seems to be directed toward being accepted.

It is possible to see how the ego-development levels provide a very important tool for managing change and for changing motivational patterns. Change from one stage of maturity to another becomes a very complex matter. It involves deconstructing the character armor and facilitating the working-through of unfulfilled needs, psychological modalities, and dilemmas. Only if the individual senses his or her *own* power again can that individual let go of the armor.

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5
Ego Stage	Predominant Needs	Unfinished Dilemmas	Psychological Modalities	Predominant Motivations (McClelland)	Acquired Characteristics
<i>1. Impulsive</i>	Physical	Trust/mistrust	Receiving; giving in compensation	Power	Drive, hope
<i>2. Self-Protective</i>	Security	Autonomy/shame/doubt	Holding onto; letting go	Power	Self-control, willpower
<i>2/3. Self-Protective/Conformist</i>		Initiative/guilt Industry/inferiority	Doing (searching); doing as if (playing) Making things (completing)	Power Deficiency affiliation	Direction, purpose Method, competence
<i>3. Conformist</i>	Acceptance	Identify/confusion	Making things together Being oneself (or not being)	Deficiency affiliation Power achievement	Devotion, fidelity
<i>3/4. Conformist/Conscientious</i>		Intimacy/isolation	Sharing oneself	Achievement	Affiliation, love
<i>4. Conscientious</i>	Ego	Generativity/stagnation	Losing oneself and finding oneself in another Creating; caring for	Growth affiliation; achievement Growth affiliation	Production, care
<i>5. Autonomous</i>	Realization	Integrity/despair	Being through; having been	Achievement; growth affiliation	Renunciation, wisdom
<i>6. Integrated</i>			Confronting; not me	Socialized power	

**Figure 3. Loevinger's Ego States As Related to Needs and Dilemmas**

A climate that facilitates the working through-process is necessary. A therapeutic program can facilitate the destructuring of the armor and unleash motivational growth, creating situations that will allow the person to feel potent again.

## **HARRISON'S ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL**

Loevinger's stages are character formations at certain points of development in the individual; the individual must be touched at the core of being and must be given a map of alternatives before there can be motivation to grow. But the cultures in which people's organizational lives are structured have lives of their own and need also to be considered. Harrison's (1975) definition of four distinct competing organizational ideologies—power oriented, role oriented, task oriented, and person oriented—is useful here.

### *Power Orientation*

An organization that is power oriented attempts to dominate its environment and vanquish all opposition. It is unwilling to be subject to any external law or power. . . . those who are powerful strive to maintain absolute control over subordinates . . . .

### *Role Orientation*

An organization that is role oriented aspires to be as rational and orderly as possible. In contrast to the willful autocracy of the power-oriented organization, there is a preoccupation with legality, legitimacy, and responsibility . . . . Predictability . . . stability and respectability are often valued as much as competence. The correct response tends to be more highly valued than the effective one. Procedures for change tend to be cumbersome; therefore the system is slow to adapt to change . . . .

### *Task Orientation*

In the organization that is task oriented, achievement of a superordinate goal is the highest value . . . . Nothing is permitted to get in the way of accomplishing the task . . . . Emphasis is placed on rapid, flexible organization response to changed conditions . . . .

### *Person Orientation*

The person-oriented organization exists primarily to serve the needs of its members . . . . Individuals are expected to influence each other through example, helpfulness, and caring. Consensus methods of decision making are preferred.  
(pp. 201-203)

## **INTEGRATED MODEL**

Combining individual maturity levels as described by Loevinger, Hersey and Blanchard's model of management styles, and Harrison's organizational ideologies leads to the integrated model described here (Figure 4). These factors interrelate in a very interesting fashion. If individuals are at a low stage of maturity, for example, they will often form a culture at the power stage. In a company this culture would attract

authoritarian managers, and the three factors would complement and perpetuate themselves. Even if the manager is taught new styles of management, the same old organizational culture will be there, and the same old character defenses will be called forth.

An understanding of Loevinger's maturity stages and the dynamics by which characters are formed will enable the facilitator to further develop these energies. Initially, a special program led by a trained leader is necessary. But by understanding individuals' unfulfilled psychological needs, psychological modalities, and dilemmas that have not been worked through, the manager can become a manager of growth. Situations can be created that will allow a successful working-through of the different management styles suggested by Hersey and Blanchard and that will further allow the manager to change management styles as the organization and its people change.

A successful intervention, especially if the largest part of the group is at the lower ego levels, should include at least these three aspects of change. Loevinger's contribution becomes especially important as a point of integration for these three aspects and as a map for intervention. Her stages provide the information needed to create the necessary climate that can stimulate individual growth and also lead to organizational effectiveness. The consultant can use this information to structure an intervention that is full and encompassing, consequently stimulating more growth.

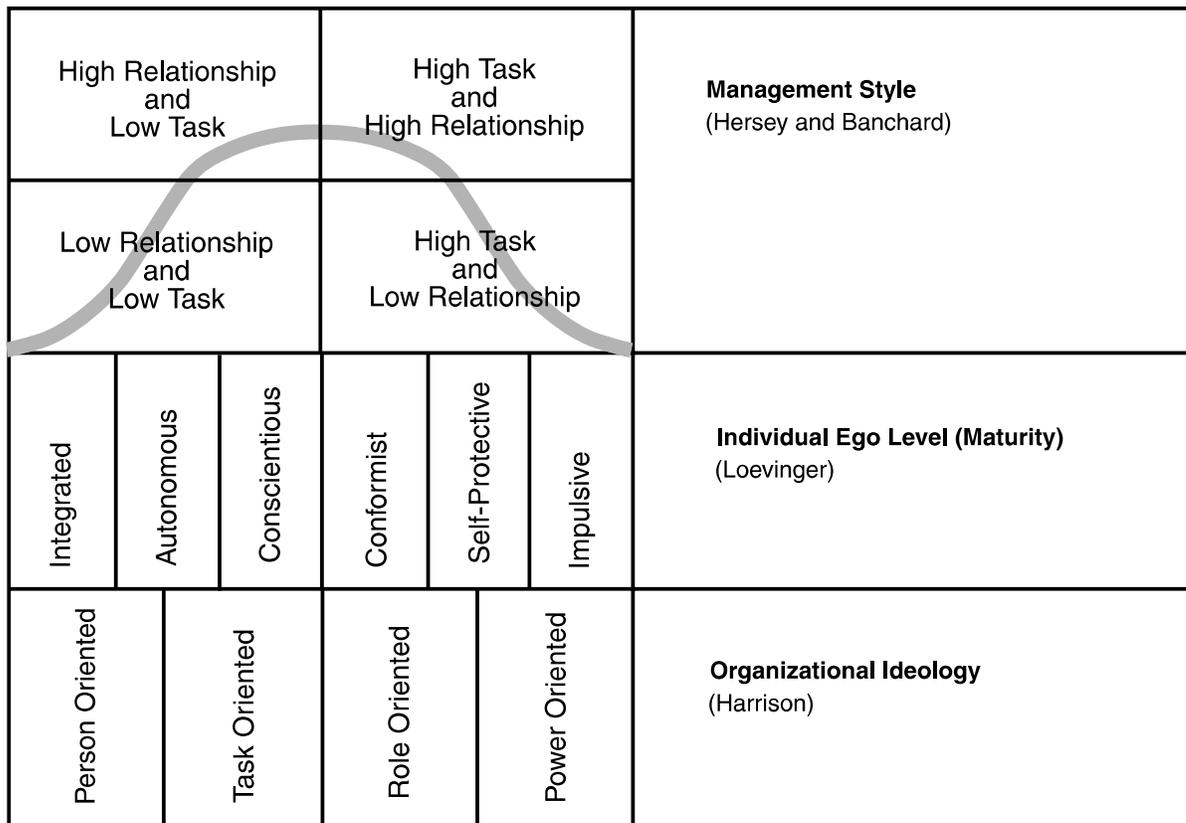


Figure 4. Integrated Model

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## ■ THE ORGANIZATIONAL GESTALT

### Peter Scholtes

A person's experience of another individual is formed by a system of impressions, including tone of voice, choice of words, eye contact, breathing, posture, gestures, body constrictions, use of space, physical touch, pace and tempo of transactions, shifts in focus, awareness of feelings, and manner of expressing them. The individual's total presence is that individual's Gestalt.

An organization also transmits its own system of impressions—behaviors that constitute its own total presence—its Gestalt. These behaviors are always significant. They are never accidental, although they may not be deliberate. Managers may find it revealing to look at the everyday phenomena that make up the organization's Gestalt. They should look at these elements naively, as would a child or a visitor from another planet, simply observing without judging and without the distortions of sophistication or the filtering of familiarity.

### THE ELEMENTS OF AN ORGANIZATION'S PRESENCE

Certain behaviors and dynamics of an organization express the organization's uniqueness, distinguishing it from another organization providing the same products or services. These are the major elements of an organization's Gestalt:

- *Use of and Reaction to Authority*  
How do those in authority see themselves and how do subordinates respond to those in authority? Is the boss respected, feared, rebelled against, revered, or ignored? Is the boss a parent, partner, friend, or playmate? What makes a boss a boss? What gives a boss credibility in that role?
- *Initiative, Delegation, and the Response to Delegation*  
What is the level of tolerance for the taking of initiative or the delegating of responsibility? When, where, to whom, and by whom is responsibility taken or given?
- *Locus of Power*  
Power is where it is perceived to be. Whoever is seen as powerful and influential is powerful and influential. And powerful individuals lose their power when they are perceived as powerless. Who in an organization seems to have power and

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influence? Who bestows that power and influence? Are there nonpowerful people in positions that would ordinarily be held by someone with power (or vice versa)?

■ *Locus and Levels of Energy*

Where or when is there a high level of excitement, enthusiasm, or fun? Where or when do these levels drop? Where or when is there tiredness, listlessness, lethargy, or inertia?

■ *Quality of Human Contact*

People will have numerous transactions in an organization; there may also be some ordinary forms of exchange that are conspicuously unexpressed. An organization whose members easily make contact with each other or outsiders has a dramatically different presence from an organization in which relationships are stiff, awkward, or uncomfortable. Points of contact to observe:

- **Ordinary Civilities:** Do people engage in the ordinary hello's, thank you's, goodbye's, etc.?
  - **Titles of Address:** How do people address one another—first names or nicknames, formal titles, or “Hey, you!”? What are the patterns of formality or informality?
  - **Informal Conversation:** What do people talk about when they do not talk about work? Is there any “inside” topic that one must engage in to be considered a real member?
  - **Physical Arrangements:** Where are people located when at work? In proximity to whom? What is their physical space—near to or far from others? Is there a connection between physical location and other elements, such as the locus of power or energy? Does the physical arrangement allow for informal conversation or visual contact?
  - **Visual Contact:** Who looks at whom? Who avoids looking at whom? Is it an organization of lookers or avoiders?
  - **Pace and Tempo of Contact:** How fast or slow is the pace of contact between people? Is contact terse, abrupt, driven, or leisurely and flowing? Is there time to savor experiences or is there a state of continuous crisis? Is the pace a walk, a canter, a gallop, or a stampede? What or who changes the normal pace?
  - **Directness and Candor:** When or where is there secretiveness and surprise as opposed to open disclosure of information and sharing of opinion?
  - **Touch:** Is physical touching an acceptable form of contact between members of the organization?
- *Conflict/Disagreement*  
Is conflict engaged or avoided? Is anger O.K.? Are people aware of negative

feelings? What happens to the dissident member? What form of sanction, if any, is placed on a dissenting minority?

■ *Strokes and Support*

Does the organization seem to encourage the expression of positive support, compliments, optimism, or affection (as opposed to complaining, backbiting, or abandoning people in need)? Is there a pattern to the timing or location of the strokes or support, complaining or abandonment?

■ *Feedback and Evaluation*

Do individuals and the organization seek and exchange reactions and evaluations regarding the quality of work? Is feedback valued, listened to, and acted on? Or is evaluation avoided or ignored, criticism responded to with defensiveness, and blame cast for problems and mistakes?

■ *Individuality Versus Uniformity*

In any organization there are indications of the extent to which members exercise conformity or choose uniqueness: the food they eat, what they do on a break, the appearance of their work space, the clothes they wear. Is uniformity among members required by the nature of the work, arbitrarily imposed by authorities, or selected by people without apparent coercion? Is there room in the organization for the nonconformist or the eccentric? How is the nonconformist treated?

■ *The Physical Environment*

Does the physical appearance of the workplace—the colors and textures, the appointments and amenities, the use of space—suggest movement or stillness, stimulation or inertia? Is it tight and rigid or loose and flexible? What does the appearance of the place suggest about the people there and the work they do?

■ *Turnover, Presence, and Promptness*

What are the patterns of staff turnover and of absence or lateness at work stations, meetings, training programs, or informal gatherings of the staff?

■ *Focus on Time*

How does the organization deal with its past, present, and future? Which dominates? Which is ignored?

## **EXPERIENCING AND EXPLORING THE ORGANIZATIONAL GESTALT**

There are many ways a manager may seek to become aware of an organization's Gestalt. He or she can explore the organization with a stranger's eyes, taking a naive tour of the office or plant, or ask outsiders to do this. Taking a fantasy tour and experiencing the organization through the mind's eye can also help a manager to make contact with an organization's uniqueness.

What is important is to become aware of the total presence, the uniqueness—the Gestalt—and to realize that this Gestalt is not an accident. The total presence of an organization is purposeful; its characteristics can be seen as the desired results of a carefully conceived plan. Therefore, the manager and everyone else in the organization are getting exactly the kind of organization they want, tailor-made to fit their needs, wants, values, and styles.

An organization may be characterized by some behavior that is deplored by its members: “We’ve got to do something about the poor morale and high turnover in our clerical pool.” A manager with a Gestalt approach might respond, “Assuming this situation exists because we want it to exist, let’s explore two questions: How are we arranging to create and maintain low morale and high turnover in the clerical pool, and what has been the benefit for us in doing this?”

An organization will change only when it is aware of what it is, accepts what it is, recognizes how it benefits from what it is, and takes responsibility for what it is. The basis of change is a paradox: organizations change not by seeking to become what they are not, but by seeking to become, with greater clarity and responsibility, what they really are.

## **TWO EXAMPLES OF GESTALT INTERVENTIONS**

The following examples of Gestalt organization development (OD) interventions describe real situations that have been disguised, abbreviated, and combined into composite cases.

### **No Strokes**

Terry, a manager of a department with two hundred employees, has approximately twenty subordinates reporting directly to him. In an OD session, one of Terry’s more forthright subordinates, Chris, confronted the manager in the following manner:

Chris: You almost never pay compliments. You almost never say something positive about my work. I can’t get excited about my work when you’re so stingy with strokes.

Terry: Two weeks ago I complimented the Birmingham project.

Chris: Yeh, you said, “This is going smoothly.” You didn’t say, “Chris, you did a hell of a job.” You didn’t compliment a person—me. You complimented an event.

Terry: Chris, you’re right. I want to pay compliments. I just don’t think about it. I guess I figure that you know when you’ve done a good job.

Gestaltist: Let’s suppose that you two are getting exactly what you want.

Terry: What do you mean?

Gestaltist: Suppose, Terry, that you are doing exactly what you want to do, that there is some payoff for you in not giving strokes. What might that payoff be?

Terry: (After much soul searching) I guess I'm surprised that my compliments are so important to people.

Gestaltist: Try saying, "I am a person whose compliments aren't important!"

Terry: (Repeats the sentence) Yeh, I don't see myself as being important.

Gestaltist: Say, "I don't believe I'm important."

Terry repeats the phrase and then describes feelings about being in this present position after having shot up through the ranks at a relatively fast rate.

Gestaltist: What's the payoff for you in complimenting a successful event instead of the person who brought it off?

Terry: (After more soul searching) I guess I'm awkward with the relationship that's established when you compliment the person. Complimenting the event maintains a kind of distance.

Gestaltist: Try saying, "I'm a person who wants distance, who's awkward with relationships."

Terry repeats this and mulls it over for a while. "Yeh, that's where I am. I'm going to look at that for a while to see if that's where I want to stay."

The Gestaltist then turns to Chris.

Gestaltist: Chris, presume for a minute that you don't get strokes because you don't want strokes. Now imagine what the payoff is for you in this no-stroke reality that you have created for yourself.

Chris: I don't know. Maybe I don't want to acknowledge that Terry knows the difference between a good job and a bad job.

Gestaltist: Try dropping the maybe. And make your statement directly to Terry.

Chris: Terry, I don't want to acknowledge that you know the difference between a good job and a bad job.

Gestaltist: Because if I acknowledge that you know the difference between a good job and a bad job . . .

Chris: . . . then I open myself up to criticism.

Gestaltist: Chris, say, "I'm a person who doesn't want to be criticized."

Chris repeats the statement and adds, "My fantasy is that when I'm criticized I will start going downhill. I'll give up. I'll do worse and worse."

Gestaltist: Chris, earlier you said to Terry, “I can’t get excited about my work when you’re so stingy with strokes,” and now you’re saying, “When I’m criticized I’ll give up.” These are the realities you create for yourself. Try saying this: “I’m a person who controls my energy according to the compliments and criticisms of Terry.”

Chris repeats the statement and agrees that this is an accurate description. The Gestaltist also asks Chris to think about whether or not this is how the situation should remain.

### ***The Absent Supervisor***

The staff of a small agency was meeting to participate in a training program conducted by a Gestalt-oriented OD consultant. The director of the agency was present, as were six employees. The supervisor of the six employees, Lee, was absent. When one of the employees had asked Lee about coming to the session, Lee had mentioned a previous commitment that made it impossible to be there.

For several minutes at the beginning of the training session, the participants—the director and the employees—complained about Lee’s absence, criticizing, accusing indifference toward the other staff members, and claiming that Lee’s absence diminished the value of this one-day training program.

The Gestaltist proposed this question: “Presume that the situation that you have is exactly the situation you want. Presume that Lee isn’t here because you don’t want Lee to be here. Let’s talk for a while about how you benefit from Lee’s absence.

Subsequent discussion revealed that there was indeed relief on the part of several people when they discovered that Lee was missing. Those who had frequent contact with Lee agreed that they had never really conveyed how important they felt this program was. In fact, Lee was informed of the meeting well after everyone else knew that it had been scheduled. Further discussion revealed that Lee was frequently used as a scapegoat, the built-in excuse for failure.

The Gestaltist then led the group members in a discussion of other realities that they might have created for themselves, including Lee’s indifference toward them and the diminishment of the value of the training program. The staff members were able to put in perspective the extent to which they were in collusion with Lee on these “shortcomings.” They were able to see how they abdicated their responsibility for organizational problems by attributing them to Lee and how they let Lee do the obstructing that they in truth wanted to happen, although they were unwilling to speak up themselves. Then they criticized Lee for blocking those things that they secretly were resisting.

## ***CONCLUSION***

Taking responsibility is the recurring theme of the Gestalt approach to organization development. Managers learn to take responsibility for themselves—their opinions,

preferences, feelings, needs, and styles—and for the status quo of their organization, including some of the things they complain about most. Subordinates also learn to take responsibility for themselves and for the status quo of the organization. The organization strives to become continuously aware of its presence and uniqueness—its reality—that members (individually and collectively) have created for themselves.

# ■ A PRACTICAL MODEL OF MOTIVATION AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

## Roger Harrison

Over some years of practice as a consultant and educator, I have evolved a model of motivation and individual development that I believe to be more comprehensive than others available in the literature for managers and practitioners. It has been extremely useful in educational design and practice, in the understanding of different managerial styles and strategies of influence, and in the diagnosis of problems of organizational motivation and performance. The model draws heavily on the work of others, notably McClelland (1953), Maslow (1970), Kelman (1963), and Harvey, Hunt, and Schroder (1961), and attempts to integrate major contributions of these and other writers into a form that lends itself readily to use by managers, educators, and consultants.

The model addresses itself to questions like the following:

- What are the basic human needs that people bring to their work and their interactions with others?
- Why does a particular managerial style, educational approach, or strategy of influence work well with some people and poorly with others?
- What does one need to know about a person in order to manage, educate, or influence him or her successfully?
- How do people differ in their expression of basic human needs, and how does this expression change and develop over time?
- What motivational factors determine whether a person will be productive and comfortable in different educational and organizational structures and climates?

## THE MODEL

Three central concepts form the basis of the model: (1) three basic *categories* or areas of human needs, (2) three broad *levels* or stages of human development; and (3) the idea that individuals always exist in tension between the opposites of *unification* (being as a part) and *separation* (being as oneself).

The three basic *categories* of human need are defined as *politico-economic*, *social*, and *competence*. These are similar to McClelland's power, affiliation, and achievement

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needs, but are defined more broadly. It is assumed that these needs are present and active in each individual from birth and that they go through a process of elaboration and growth as the individual develops, each need expressed in more complex, abstract, and symbolic ways at each higher level of development.

The three broad *levels* of human development are referred to as *sustenance*, *self-definition*, and *generativity*, each level representing the focus of the individual's energy on a basic human problem. At the sustenance level the problem is how the individual can survive in the world; at the self-definition level the problem is who the individual is as a unique human being and how he or she defines himself or herself in relation to others; at the generativity level the problem is how the individual actualizes his or her powers, talents, and potentials in the service of the highest values and ideals.

At each level of development, individuals exist in tension between being as a part (*unification*) and being as oneself (*separation*). When I operate as a part, I tend to see myself and my problems as pieces of a larger whole, I merge and identify myself with the whole, I serve it, and it sustains me. At the same time, my freedom is constrained by the nature of the whole and by the operation of the other parts. When I operate as myself, I see myself as separate and different from my world, I look to my own nourishment, define my own identity, and foster my own growth. I am free to become and to do whatever my own nature and qualities empower me to be and do. Thus, within each level of development two opposite orientations exist. Unification attempts to solve the basic problem of that level through merging, integrating, and cooperating with others; separation seeks fulfillment through asserting an individual, differentiated, and often competitive stance toward the world.

Table 1 summarizes the content of the model, showing how the interactions of *need*, *level*, and *orientation* result in characteristic *behavioral styles*.

## ***Need Categories***

### *Politico-Economic Needs*

Those needs that contribute to maintenance of life, enhancement of health and bodily comfort, and freedom from restraint, fear, pain, and bodily harm are called politico-economic needs because their satisfaction in society is channeled and regulated through political and economic processes and institutions. Politics, dealing as it does with the use and restraint of force and violence, deeply affects our needs for physical freedom and the avoidance of fear, pain, and harm. Economic activities produce and distribute the means of maintaining life and enhancing comfort and health.

Politico-economic needs deal with power in its narrow sense: the ability to exercise control through legitimate authority, force, or economic sanctions. Typical themes or concerns in this need category include personal strength and weakness; the power and authority of position; wealth and poverty; civil, criminal, and political justice; business and political ethics; making war and keeping order. People who are heavily invested in this category of needs know and use such currencies of political and economic power as

money, goods, and services; violence and the means of force; the rights, privileges, and prerogatives of position; the signs and symbols of power and authority; legal incentives and sanctions; the moral force of concepts like justice, fairness, honesty, honor, and integrity. The positions taken on these issues vary, of course, with the level of development.

### *Social Needs*

This cluster of needs includes friendship, acceptance, belonging, attention, love, and intimacy, and also the need for the avoidance of loneliness, rejection, and isolation. Themes or concerns in this need category include intimacy and distance; personal attractiveness and popularity; norms and standards of sexual and social conduct; and values regarding friendship, loving kindness, openness, and consideration for one another's feelings. These needs are channeled through social institutions such as courtship, marriage and the family, and social and fraternal groups and organizations.

The social needs deal with affiliation—the attractions and repulsions people feel for one another—and with the modes of expressing these in private and public lives. People who are heavily invested in this need category both use and are sensitive to the currencies of affiliation, such as physical contact, social gradations, manners, social skills, and norms and customs.

### *Competence Needs*

The competence needs deal with knowing and doing. This category includes needs for achievement, productivity, creativity, understanding, the development of one's skills and abilities, and also the avoidance of confusion, failure, meaninglessness, and ignorance. The satisfaction of these needs is facilitated and channeled through institutions of research and learning; the arts, crafts, and sciences; business and industry; and agriculture.

Typical themes and concerns in the competence category include conflicts and disagreements over facts, opinions, theories, and plans; judgments and standards regarding the quality and quantity of work and artistic merit; educational and experience requirements for entry into professional practice; controversies over approaches to research, learning, and teaching. People who are active in this need category seek and use competence currencies such as recognition and respect, praise and criticism, reputation; and concepts and values like creativity, truth, beauty, wisdom, artistic and professional integrity, scientific rigor, progress, growth and improvement.

Each of these broad clusters of needs arises at or near birth and is active throughout life. One is no more basic or primary than another: each contributes fundamentally to the maintenance of life and health in the individual and society.

The three categories of needs are not equally active in all people, however, and within each person there may be differential elaboration and development among the three. Apart from innate differences, opportunities in a given cluster of needs for many and varied successful transactions with the environment seem to stimulate individuals to

develop toward higher levels of the need and toward a richness and complexity of behavior patterns, concepts, fantasies, and desires. The individual can be seen as a tree or a plant that sends out many shoots and roots in the directions of sunlight and nourishment but that may be stunted in those areas where the environment is unfavorable for growth. Thus an individual might develop great depth, independence, and complexity in the expression of competence needs and at the same time be inhibited, dependent, and frustrated in the social area. It is important for the manager, educator, or consultant to be continually aware of the possibility of an individual's differential development in different need categories, as it can be the source of much apparent discontinuity, inconsistency, and contradiction in individuals' strengths, sensitivities, values, and thought patterns.

### ***Stages of Development***

When our most basic needs are satisfied they cease to motivate behavior. More complex derivative needs then emerge, and when these needs have been met, they in turn form the basis for further elaboration. This developmental process goes on as long as a person is growing psychologically—often a lifelong process.

Development follows the patterns outlined below.

#### *Away from:*

- seeking tangible, concrete incentives and satisfiers
- needs experienced as deficiencies that must be filled up or replenished from outside the person
- control of behavior by others through application of rewards, punishments, and external values and standards
- similarity between members of a given culture in the ways needs are experienced and expressed
- emotional response to incentives and satisfiers, rewards, and punishments as ends in themselves to be sought or avoided

#### *Toward:*

- seeking abstract, intangible, and symbolic incentives and satisfiers
- needs experienced as pressures arising within the person to utilize talents and resources in creating and contributing
- control of behavior by the self through the operation of the self-concept and internal values and standards, and resistance to external control by means of incentives and standards
- differentiation and individuation in the ways needs are experienced and expressed
- rational, instrumental response to incentives and satisfiers, rewards, and punishments as means to higher ends or as problems to be solved in the pursuit of higher goals

Throughout the process of development, at each level (sustenance, self-definition, and generativity) the individual moves back and forth between the opposite poles of separation (*being as oneself*) and unification (*being as a part*). The interaction between the level of development and the polarities of orientation defines six developmental modes: *unsocialized* (sustenance/separation); *dependency* (sustenance/unification); *competition* (self-definition/separation); *mutuality* (self-definition/unification); *independence* (generativity/separation); and *compassion* (generativity/unification). (See Table 1.)

### *Sustenance Level*

At the sustenance level, the separation orientation (unsocialized mode) results in the law of the jungle. The individual takes what he or she can get whenever and however possible. This orientation is the opposite of the unification orientation at this level (dependency mode), in which the individual enters into stable relationships in which he or she receives gratification from stronger people and institutions in return for conforming to a prescribed part or role.

### *Self-Definition Level*

As a person moves into the level of self-definition, the same tension between opposite orientations can be observed. In the self-assertion of the competition mode, the individual defines himself for herself by rebellion to and opposition against control by authority figures and conformity to their requirements. At this level a person asserts his or her determination to be an individual, but that self-definition is grounded in and shaped by what authorities and society expect of individuals. To oppose someone or something is to be influenced by the other, and the nature of rebellion is in large part determined by what is rebelled against.

In the unification orientation at this level, the individual may attempt self-definition through mutuality, a network of voluntary associations chosen to provide models and support for the developing sense of one's identity. Here the individual moves into relationships with others who act the way the individual would like to act, or who treat the individual as if he or she actually were what he or she wishes to become. When the individual's desired identity is confirmed by its congruence with others' behavior toward the individual, the individual experiences this as rewarding. When the feedback is disconfirming it is painful, and the individual may move away or try to change his or her behavior. In mutuality, the individual again chooses to be as a part.

### *Generativity Level*

As one's identity becomes more solidly established, further development once more presents the individual with the same dimension: separation versus unification. At the level of generativity, in the separation orientation (independence mode), a person is gratified through the exercise of personal talents and powers in the pursuit of goals that

**Table. 1 Interaction of Needs, Levels, and Orientations**

		POLITICO-ECONOMIC NEEDS	SOCIAL NEEDS	COMPETENCE NEEDS
<b>Sustenance Level</b>	Separation Orientation (Unsocialized Mode)	<i>Behavioral Style:</i> obtaining immediate gratification of physical needs, needs for safety and freedom from restraint, and needs for strength and health, with whatever means possible and from whatever source available	<i>Behavioral Style:</i> obtaining immediate gratification of needs for stroking, holding, affection, attention, and inclusion, with whatever means by which and from whatever source these satisfactions may be available	<i>Behavioral Style:</i> finding order, meaning, cause-and-effect relationships in the world; reducing uncertainty and increasing the success of instrumental behavior through trial and error, insight, and direct experimentation
	Unification Orientation (Dependency Mode)	<i>Style:</i> securing the reliable satisfaction of physical, safety, and power needs through meeting the demands and requirements of more powerful people, groups, and institutions	<i>Style:</i> securing the affection and acceptance of others through compliance with others' social mores, customs, and standards	<i>Style:</i> acquiring understanding, skill, and knowledge through the teaching, direction, and guidance of more able and experienced people and institutions
<b>Self-Definition Level</b>	Separation Orientation (Competition Mode)	<i>Style:</i> defining one's own power and strength and affirming one's own political and economic values, goals, and ideals, by attacking and weakening the power and authority of others	<i>Style:</i> affirming one's own attractiveness, acceptability, and loveworthiness in one's own eyes and asserting one's own norms of social conduct by opposing or flaunting the social standards of others	<i>Style:</i> affirming one's own skill, knowledge, and creativity and one's own standards of excellence and achievement by resisting or violating performance standards and criteria of merit set by others
	Unification Orientation (Mutuality Mode)	<i>Style:</i> defining one's own power and strength and one's political and economic values and ideologies through strength-enhancing association with others who have similar goals, values, interests, and ideals	<i>Style:</i> defining one's attractiveness, acceptability, and loveworthiness and one's standards of social behavior by mutually supportive association with others	<i>Style:</i> defining one's competence, knowledge, and creativity and one's standards of excellence and achievement through mutually confirming associations with others
<b>Generativity Level</b>	Separation Orientation (Independence Mode)	<i>Style:</i> enjoying the exercise of strength, power, and wealth for their own sake in accordance with one's own values and ideals and without undue regard either for gain or loss or for the opinions and evaluations of authorities or peers	<i>Style:</i> enjoying the unfolding process of intimate and social relationships and the exchange of love and affection, without undue concern for the gain or loss of love or for the opinions of society or one's peers about one's social conduct	<i>Style:</i> enjoying the exercise of one's skills, talents, and creativity and one's own standards of excellence, without undue regard for the criticism of authorities or peers as to the quality of one's work
	Unification Orientation (Compassion Mode)	<i>Style:</i> devoting one's power and strength without pride or consideration of personal gain to the accomplishment of higher ideals of political, social, and economic justice and the welfare of humanity	<i>Style:</i> finding joy in giving love unreservedly, without consideration of reciprocity or of the merit of the recipients	<i>Style:</i> finding fulfillment in devoting one's skill, knowledge, and creativity to the achievement of the highest human purposes without thought of honor or recognition

are chosen according to internalized values and standards. The individual becomes truly autonomous, having developed a high degree of resistance to concrete rewards and punishments, to the norms and sanctions of society, and to the attempts of authorities and peers to define who and what that individual is as an individual. Gratification comes not from external sources, but flows directly from the experiences of power, love, and creativity that are generated in the exercise of one's unique capacities as a human being. At this level the individual needs little from others, except to be unhindered in the pursuit of projects and goals. This is the highest form of being as oneself.

Once again, however, the unhindered exercise of one's own ego may in time give way to a reunification with others at this highest level. This can occur, for example, through an experience of oneness with all mankind (or even all creation) and the rededication of the individual's capacities to goals and purposes higher than his or her own ego. In the unification orientation at this level (compassion mode), one experiences again a connection and relatedness with others, but the urge now is to give and contribute rather than to receive, and the giving is not in order to maintain a particular image of oneself, but simply for the enjoyment of surrendering to higher purposes than those of one's own ego.

Theoretically, when one has moved from the level of sustenance to that of self-definition or from there to generativity, all of life's events and problems will be dealt with in the idiom of the higher level. In fact, this pattern of progression is a gross idealization of reality. What really happens is that at times individuals may operate at the highest level and then undergo some reverses: what had been thought of as the independence mode was actually propped up by an identity-supporting set of life circumstances. We slide or are pushed backward into the competition mode or the dependency mode, while struggling to maintain a positive self-image. We feel drawn toward the higher reaches of human existence, but we are weighed down and pulled backward by unresolved conflicts, unmet needs, and fears and anxieties about the world and ourselves.

Rather than considering a person's level of development as though it were a secure platform that has finally been achieved, it is more accurate to describe a central tendency in each need category. This is the level of development at which an individual seems to have the most energy invested during a given period in his or her life. It is this level to which the individual returns most frequently, even though he or she may transcend it under favorable circumstances and retreat to a lower level under stress.

It is probably also true that each person demonstrates a tendency through all levels of development to gravitate toward being as a part or being as oneself in his or her relationships with the environment. When a person is troubled or stressed, he or she tends to move either toward separation and opposition or toward unification and cooperation.

## **Overview of Developmental Model**

Within each need category, the individual tends to develop from a sustenance level, focused on gratification through concrete and tangible incentives, through a level of self-definition, in which the emphasis is on ego development and identity confirmation, to a generativity level, at which the focus of the need shifts from the development of the self to the expression of the individual's unique capacities and highest values. At each level, the individual also moves back and forth between the opposite poles of separation and unification.

During the process of development, the goals that the individual seeks become more abstract and intangible at each level. The sources of gratification shift from outside to inside the person. The person becomes more differentiated and individual, less susceptible to external rewards and punishments, and less easily shaped by the feedback, opinions, and attitudes of others.

In applying the developmental model, it is important to remember that development may proceed at different rates for different individuals in each of the three need categories and that during a given period of life, an individual's behavior will probably not remain consistently within one developmental mode or level.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT AND INTERPERSONAL INFLUENCE**

Any model of motivation has consequences for management and for influence processes such as selling, persuading, negotiating, counseling, and problem solving. Influence processes are effective only insofar as they relate to the satisfaction of needs of the individual toward whom the attempt at influence is directed. The model shows how the same behavior will be perceived and responded to very differently by people operating in different modes or at different levels in the model. An example is the private thoughts that employees operating in different developmental modes might have to the same message delivered by a supervisor during a performance appraisal:

- Supervisor:* "Dale, I am not recommending a merit raise for you this time because your performance has fallen off markedly during the last couple of months."
- Unsocialized response:* "I need that money; maybe I can steal some tools and sell them at the flea market."
- Dependent response:* "This is really unfair. I work as hard as the others. But for now I'd better work a little harder if I don't want to lose my job."
- Competitive response:* "Who you think you are, throwing your weight around like that! I'm really overqualified for this job, and I think I'd better look around for a place where they will appreciate my talents."

- Mutual response:* “I’d like to be seen as a good worker, but everyone else in the office takes it easy, and I don’t want them to see me as an eager beaver.”
- Independent response:* “Evidently Lee’s noticed my long lunch hours and feels a need to assert authority. I enjoy the work and I doubt if my work output has fallen off much, if at all, but I really enjoy playing squash during lunch. Maybe we can work out some sort of arrangement about it.
- Compassionate response:* “Lee’s been under a lot of pressure lately. Maybe later I can find a way without creating defensiveness to suggest how we could improve the whole department’s productivity.”

This example illustrates the value of knowing where the other person is in the developmental model when choosing a managerial style or influence strategy. Not only does the same attempt at influence produce different results at different levels, but the possible range of responses is much greater at higher levels than at lower ones. At higher developmental levels, the individual reacts less directly to the immediate withholding of a reward and more to the wider context of the situation in which the supervisor and subordinate find themselves and his or her longer range objectives. In the move from lower to higher levels of development, the individual’s response is less predictable, and (1) more information about the person is needed in order to influence him or her successfully, (2) the manipulation of rewards and punishments is less likely to produce an effect, either intended or unintended, and (3) the time span that must be encompassed by an effective strategy increases.

### ***Effective Influence Styles***

By looking at the response patterns typical of each developmental mode, effective managerial styles or influence strategies can be determined.

#### *Unsocialized Mode (Sustenance/Separation)*

The naked use of one’s strength, attractiveness, and knowledge is effective at this level. One can influence through giving and withholding incentives (money, fear, pain, affection, attention, success or failure on concrete tasks, etc.). The individual responds to the immediate consequences of his or her behavior and is relatively unresponsive to rules, regulations, moral persuasion and the like, as these latter imply understanding and accepting a set of reciprocal expectations. Therefore, follow-up and supervision are required in order to assure compliance.

### *Dependency Mode (Sustenance/Unification)*

The individual responds to concrete rewards and punishments and to direction, evaluation, and advice from those whose position in a social structure legitimizes their exercise of authority and influence. Illegitimate manipulation of incentives tends to provoke resistance and subversion. In this mode, it is not enough to be strong, attractive, or competent; one must also know the rules and play the game.

### *Competition Mode (Self-Definition/Separation)*

The individual seeks to develop a sense of self-respect and self-love and a positive image of his or her own strength, attractiveness, and competence. People operating in this mode can be influenced by feedback that enhances or diminishes the desired self-image. They respond positively to opportunities to demonstrate competence, strength, and self-direction. They avoid being manipulated and evaluated. It is important in managing such individuals to give descriptive rather than evaluative or prescriptive feedback. Descriptive feedback points out a problem or area of difficulty without either evaluating the other individuals or prescribing a solution. Thus the individual's energies may be focused on a problem without diminishing his or her self-respect.

People operating in the competition mode are also responsive to active listening: empathetic understanding of a person's ideas, values, hopes, fears, and problems without evaluation. Drawing another person out and showing him or her interest, respect, and attention enhances the individual's sense of himself or herself as someone worth listening to. People in the competition mode respond well to opportunities for involvement and participation in activities in which they can learn and grow and demonstrate their finer qualities to themselves and others.

### *Mutuality Mode (Self-Definition/Unification)*

In this mode the individual seeks identity-confirming relationships by, for example, modeling his or her behavior on that of others who personify ideals of strength, attractiveness, or competence. Influence through identification may take place without any active effort of the person who (perhaps unwittingly) serves as the model. Or the modeling may be a conscious attempt at influence, as in the exaggeratedly tough behavior of the military drill instructor.

The individual in this mode also seeks associations that confirm a valued identity: those in which one feels like the person he or she wishes to become. This may occur through the status, social desirability, and prestige that is attached to membership in certain groups or organizations; it may also take place through interpersonal relationships in which one is treated as a peer by others who possess valued qualities or share one's ideals, values, and aspirations. Often, it is by this latter route that the individual in the competition mode begins to move toward the mutuality mode.

Charismatic influence styles that communicate a vision of exciting future possibilities are effective in increasing the sense of potency and self-worth that is

strongly sought in this mode. At the heart of the mode of mutuality is the sense of shared identity through participation with admired others that occurs when exciting and emotionally charged ideas and images are presented in a way that affirms shared values, goals, and ideals.

#### *Independence Mode (Generativity/Separation)*

In both this mode and that of compassion, the individual no longer looks for validation of identity. Individuals operating in these models know who they are, and they derive enjoyment directly from the expression and development of their unique capacities. Neither reward nor recognition is essential to this enjoyment. The only real coercive hold that others may have over these individuals is control over opportunities for the exercise of their talents and powers, but even this may not be sufficient to influence such individuals, inasmuch as many of them would prefer to withhold their capacities rather than use them in the service of values they do not share. Others may help or hinder the individual in this mode by providing or withholding the instrumental means for achieving his or her goals (information, ideas, material resources), but the ends remain unaffected.

#### *Compassion Mode (Generativity/Unification)*

People operating in this mode not only know who they are, they know what they are in the world to do. Their activities are not animated solely by the drive to actualize their own capacities, but by identification with purposes greater than themselves—dedication and devotion to a greater good. Their exercise of their powers involves giving to others as well as gratification with the process itself. They respond not only to opportunities to actualize their skills and abilities, but also to the perceived needs of others and of mankind.

#### ***Instrumental Versus Non-rational Influence***

As a person moves through the developmental levels he or she responds to more and more of the influence attempts of others as being instrumental to valued ends, rather than as ends in themselves. For example, reputation, which at the level of self-definition would be valued in itself, becomes at the level of generativity a matter of indifference, except as it opens the door to further possibilities for exercising talents and creativity or being of service. It is seen with rationality and detachment: its loss may be a problem but not the personal catastrophe it might be at the level of self-definition.

Whether we are aware of it or not, most of our influence attempts carry messages at both the rational and nonrational levels. We are usually fairly clear about what we are communicating at the rational, instrumental level, but we often overlook or misjudge the messages that are being received and responded to at the nonrational level by the other person. At this level, the medium often conveys the message, as when one's use of a receptive, respectful style (active listening) conveys implicitly to the other that he or she

is considered a person whose ideas are worth hearing. Again, when a salesperson cites twenty reasons why his or her product is superior, the overt message may be rational and accurate, but to a person in the dependency mode, the covert message may create this response: "This person is a real expert; I'd better pay attention to her." A listener in the competition mode might respond, "This person is an egotist who thinks he knows my business better than I do. I'll cut him down to size."

It is worth noting that it is a good strategy to err in the direction of assuming that the person one is dealing with is operating on a higher level than he or she actually is. Although people are usually unresponsive to influence attempts pitched at too high a level, they may become highly antagonistic and defensive when they are treated as though they are operating at a level they have left behind. For example, when a supervisor gives overly detailed and specific directions to a new employee (thus assuming that the employee is in the dependency mode), the latter may be offended that his or her professional knowledge and skills have been slighted (competition mode). Reversing this approach, the supervisor might suggest to the employee that help will be provided on request; the dependent employee would likely ask for it, and the competitive one would try to manage the task alone.

## **ORGANIZATIONS AND MOTIVATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Organizations in our society are designed for the most part to accommodate members who operate in the dependency mode. With the exception of prisons, mental hospitals, some parts of the military, and the like, organizational arrangements assume that the participants possess a set of internal moral standards and respect for rules and regulations. It is further assumed not only that members are responsive to immediate rewards and punishments, but that they can be managed by approval, disapproval, and direction by people exercising legitimate authority. They are expected to be able to forego immediate gratification in the hope of future rewards.

Moderate to severe stresses and strains between the needs of individuals and the requirements of the organization are often apparent in our culture today. Some of these can be laid to difficulties within the dependency mode, such as those that occur when the organization radically alters performance standards and expectations or when expected rewards for loyalty and long service are not forthcoming (older employees forced out or retired early, etc.). Other stresses derive from the fact that many people operate much of the time in the competition and mutuality modes, which are not well provided for in the formal structure of most organizations. Those in the former mode tend to be seen as rebellious and difficult to manage, while those in the latter tend to develop attachments and loyalties that may be organizationally dysfunctional (e.g., the solidarity of informal groupings).

## ***New Organizational Forms***

Much of the recent work on management style, organizational climate, and the motivation of employees and managers has been directed at providing satisfactions within the organization for the ego-oriented needs of people operating at the level of self-definition. Theory Y and participative management are cases in point. These developments, however, have taken place within a structure and context that is basically oriented to dependency, and the fit between the new experiments and the logic of the organization's structure has been awkward and uneasy at best. For example, it is common when efforts are made to increase the responsibility and autonomy of a work group for the members to point out that the normal systems of authority and compensation cut across and undermine these efforts. In modern and progressive organizations people are frequently offered a choice between responding to the dependency system, which is implicit in the bureaucratic structure of the organization, or ignoring the operation of that system in favor of the ego satisfactions and increased feelings of self-respect and personal strength offered by a new organizational arrangement. Whichever they choose, they will experience some conflict and inconsistency in their environment. If the organization has a history of heavy-handed use of authority, it will be much harder for people to behave according to an ego-oriented set of beliefs and assumptions. Whatever fears and insecurities they have internally that pull them into the dependency mode will be continually activated by the use of power in the organization. The risks in behaving otherwise will seem enormous and the gains dubious.

As we develop a more individualistic, ego-oriented culture, increasing numbers of people find that the organizations in which they work do not offer the rewards they seek in the development of their personal identities. They may limit their personal commitment of energy within the organization to that required to hold a job and make a living and devote their greatest energies to leisure pursuits, which offer more ego satisfactions.

Organizations that offer more identity satisfactions than traditional models often make use of small, semi-autonomous groups as the basic work unit and offer their members in the mutuality mode a great deal of satisfaction. Predictably, it has been found that dependent people do not do well in such organizations, nor are they happy in them.

These new forms of organizations, however, have proven difficult to proliferate. They appear to work extraordinarily well when they are carefully designed and implemented from the ground up but are hard to install in existing systems, partly because both the technology and the existing patterns of relationship are so strongly supportive of more dependent orientations. Also, and this does not augur well for the spread of these innovative designs, the middle and lower levels of management appear to experience a severe constriction in their own ego satisfactions when these new patterns are introduced. At these levels, identity is strongly supported by the differentiation of one's power and responsibilities from those of the workers. When the

differences are eroded by the introduction of more egalitarian systems, those affected resist, and they are often in a position to do so effectively.

Few organizations are oriented to providing their members with satisfactions at the level of generativity. People operating at this level have an unsettling tendency to be relatively impervious to organizational sanctions, and they can also dispense with the ego satisfactions that may be offered. However, they are not particularly rebellious, either, and do not make trouble for the sake of asserting their own strength. They make use of the organization for their own (usually benign) purposes; they generally perform well; and they usually manage to work out a set of mutually satisfactory work arrangements with superiors and coworkers. In fact, their level of development may not be recognizable in organizational life until they are asked to go along with some plan or policy that is unacceptable to their own strongly held values, at which point they may become very difficult and extremely resistant to influence of any kind.

For managers and practitioners who are concerned with organizational change and improvement, the developmental model of motivation is a useful tool for diagnosis and planning. Unmet needs shared by many organization members (for example, self-definition needs in the more routine and bureaucratic functions within many modern organizations) can be potent forces in support of change efforts. These needs represent hidden sources of human energy for productivity, creativity, and improvement.

Conversely, strongly held needs that are met by aspects of the current organizational system can be sources of massive resistance to change. Forms and processes central in meeting the individual needs of organizational members carry tremendous psychological energy. When everything is working properly, that energy flows smoothly through the organization, deceiving the ambitious planner into thinking that change may be easily accomplished. Disruption of these high energy systems, however, quickly produces dramatic effects, usually in the direction of organizational dysfunction. One example among many can be found in the problems repeatedly experienced in the introduction of computers for planning, scheduling, and record-keeping functions. Such changes often require that significant groups give up identity-supporting planning, decision-making, and communicating functions and accept increased control and regulation through the new computerized systems. This change tends to move the individuals concerned toward the lower dependency mode, and their resistance and distress is directly predictable. Applying the model in planning such organizational changes can identify the problems in advance, and ego-enhancing approaches (e.g., participation in planning the change) can be developed to mitigate the demotivating effects. This approach has been taken with considerable success in many planned change efforts, but it has yet to become in any sense a recognized business practice.

## **EDUCATION AND MOTIVATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

One's level of motivational development not only represents a way of expressing basic human needs, but also a way of perceiving and coping with the world. Thus it structures the learning processes of the individual in fundamental ways. It is worthwhile to pay particular attention to the conditions that favor movement from one level or mode to the next.

*Unsocialized mode.* The individual learns through direct application of rewards and punishments and from immediate feedback of results. Orderly, regular, and predictable systems of reward and punishment or success and failure establish the conditions for development into the dependency mode. The individual must learn that if he or she acts in certain ways the environment will respond reliably and dependably.

*Dependency mode.* The individual responds to direction and correction from teachers and others in an authority role and tends to accept uncritically what is taught. Learning is facilitated by clear structure and by explicit communication of what is expected of the learner. Good at following instructions, the individual falters when required to use initiative to modify what has been learned and adapt it to new situations.

Success in meeting the requirements of authority figures forms the groundwork for experiments with self-assertion and autonomy. If these are treated gently (e.g., not punished by coercion or abandonment), the individual moves on into the competition mode.

*Competition mode.* The individual responds to opportunities for independent learning and for demonstrating skill and learning in challenging situations. People in this mode respond well to recognition of their achievements and skills. They work hard to establish and project a positive self-image. They resist evaluation and direction, but have not yet learned to evaluate and direct themselves effectively. Success in the mode of competition forms the groundwork for movement into the mode of mutuality. The necessary development of greater trust is facilitated by situations that are low in threat.

*Mutuality mode.* The individual responds to opportunities to identify with prestigious and admired others and to model his or her behavior on theirs. People in this mode respond well to charismatic teachers, and they participate effectively in cooperation and teamwork with others. They learn readily through example. Success in forming stable, self-confirming associations with peers forms the basis for more autonomous development. Movement toward independence is facilitated by group norms that support or at least permit deviation and individuality on the part of members.

*Independence and compassion modes.* The individual operates autonomously in goal setting, self-direction, and self-evaluation. Information and advice from others are neither overaccepted nor rejected, but are responded to instrumentally. Learning is valued and enjoyed for its own sake, rather than for the rewards and recognition that it brings from others.

When the individual has experienced for some time the enjoyment and satisfactions of unfettered self-development, the desire to help those less fortunate and to devote oneself to goals and ends higher than one's own ego may arise spontaneously, leading to

the compassion mode. In this mode, the learning processes may not differ significantly, but the goals and purposes of the individual's learning and selfdevelopment may undergo a change.

Growth of the learning capacities does not follow a straight line, of course, and the individual may move back and forth from one level to another under the stimuli of circumstances. It is important to keep in mind that although those operating at the highest levels may use the forms of learning that have been described as characteristic of lower levels, they do so by choice, for instrumental purposes.

For the educator who is concerned with maximizing human potential, the object of educational design is to help all parties to the learning process operate at the highest possible level of development of which they are capable. This normally means going beyond traditional educational structures and procedures, as these are constructed in such a way as to maximize the ego satisfactions of the teacher, while keeping the learner in a dependency mode. In this, educational structures are consistent with traditional organizational structures, and thus education socializes learners into their future roles in bureaucratic organizations.

The most perplexing design problem is that educational experiences that fit one level of development are pitched too high or low for another. The orientation toward *being as oneself* or *being as a part* is a critical design dimension as well; what is close and interdependent enough for one individual is far too confining and "groupy" for another. I have come to feel that the appropriate alternative to the traditional model is not its opposite (which would probably be to treat everyone as though they were in the independence mode), but rather a system of "flexible structures," so designed as to permit within one overall framework the greatest possible variation in learning styles, educator/student relationships, and group versus individual learning settings. The aim of such designs is to provide each learner with a secure base to which he or she can relate in his or her customary learning mode. In addition, learning settings are provided to offer a challenge to each individual for his or her personal growth and development. Thus, for the dependent person there are lectures, books, and directed activities, and also the challenge at some point to set personal goals and strike out on an individual educational path.

The more advanced aspects of this approach to educational design can be called "self-directed learning." Its theory and practice have been described elsewhere (Harrison, 1973, 1978). The significant point is the importance of meeting learners in the developmental mode in which they are comfortable and then challenging them to stretch themselves to function in modes they have not yet mastered. This combination of challenge and support seems to produce considerable growth without the trauma and stress associated with approaches in which challenges are presented without an opportunity for the learner to take refuge in the familiar.

## CONCLUSION

The material presented in this paper has been developed as a conceptual tool useful for the working manager, educator, or organizational consultant in diagnosing and understanding what needs people are seeking to meet in their working and learning settings and how these needs change and develop with time and experience. This model can be useful in designing structures within which organizational and educational purposes can be effectively achieved while individual needs are met as well. The author's experience suggests that if the ideas presented here are used as a way of organizing and examining experience and suggesting possible solutions to practical problems, the tool will be found to be a bit rough but fairly sturdy. If, however, it is used as a substitute for thinking a problem through, it may, like most theories and models in the behavioral sciences, lead one badly astray.

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## ■ AN ADLERIAN PRIMER

### Daniel G. Eckstein

Whatever their theoretical orientations, group facilitators probably know and use concepts pioneered by Alfred Adler and the school of psychology he founded, Individual Psychology. Adler believed in a humanistic and holistic psychology and in the social determinants of behavior. This was a break with Freudian theory and a step toward the development of social psychology.

Adler is considered to be a pioneer in the group counseling movement (Gazda, 1975). He was the first psychiatrist known to use collective counseling in a formal and systematic manner. As early as 1922, Adler was counseling children in front of an audience of adults who actively participated. In these clinics, participant parents gave one another support and Adler found that discussing a child's difficulties in front of a group objectified the problems and helped the child to recognize them as social rather than private affairs.

Exponents of Adler, led by Rudolph Dreikurs, have developed his understanding of human behavior into a theoretical approach to counseling. This approach is summarized here.

### THEORY

Adlerian theory, as suggested by Dinkmeyer, Pew, and Dinkmeyer (1979), is characterized by the following major premises.

#### ***All Behavior Has Social Meaning***

Adler disagreed with Freud's assumption that human behavior is motivated by sexual instinct. Adler's assumption was that human behavior is motivated by social urges and that humans are inherently social beings. He substituted an interpersonal social-relationship mode for the intrapersonal id-ego-superego personality structure of Freud.

Adler developed a belief in high social interest as "the ironclad logic of social living." Social interest creates an attitude toward life, characterized by an individual's willingness to cooperate with others for the common good and "specific awareness of the universal interrelatedness of all human beings."

Adler theorized certain "tasks" of living encountered by everyone in the process of individual development: love, friendship, and work. Two more life tasks—self-concept

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and the spiritual or existential search for meaning—were added by Mosak in conjunction with Dreikurs (1977).

A crucial Adlerian concern was how individuals found their places within their first social group, the family, and in later social groups, i.e., schools, friendships, vocations, and love relationships, throughout life. Adler felt that an individual with high self-esteem and high social interest will move toward the group in an encouraging manner. Conversely, a person suffering from self-doubts or inadequacies, or who has few concerns for the rights and needs of others, will move away from the community in a discouragingly dependent or mutually independent manner.

### ***The Human Personality Has Unity and Definite Patterns***

The Adlerian seeks a unified understanding of the “total person” through synthesis of the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions of human personality. For example, Adler (1938, p. 205) notes that to deny the total context of a personality is like “picking single notes out of a melody to examine them for their significance, their meaning. A better understanding of this coherence is shown by Gestalt psychology which uses their metaphor as frequently as we do, The only difference is that we are not satisfied with the ‘Gestalt’ or as we prefer to say with the ‘whole,’ when we refer to the notes of the melody. We are satisfied only when we have recognized in the melody the originator and [his] attitudes as well, for example, Bach and Bach’s style of life.”

Style of life is the key term in Adler’s personality theory. He used it to describe self, personality, a personal problem-solving method, an attitude toward life, a line of movement, a pattern, a technique, the system by which an individual functions. A life style is formed early in childhood and it is unique; no two people develop the same style. Dreikurs (1953, p. 44) noted that life style is “comparable to a characteristic theme in a piece of music. It brings the rhythm of recurrence into our lives.”

### ***Behavior Is a Function of Our Subjective Perceptions***

Adlerians take a position similar to that of other phenomenological disciplines in their concept of perception: An individual defines a personal reality through subjective experience, perceiving and learning what is accommodated by his or her life style. Adler called this a “private logic.”

### ***All Behavior Is Purposeful***

Adler maintained that all behavior is purposeful and goal directed, although the individual may not always be consciously aware of having such motives. He observed that the children of deaf parents would “throw” a temper tantrum utilizing all the typical facial and bodily gestures but without making a sound. It was obvious that screaming was of no consequence to deaf parents. Adler concluded that a person does not “lose” his or her temper, but rather “throws” it away for such purposes as putting others into his or her service, punishing others, demanding attention, displaying frustrations and

inadequacies, etc. By seeking to discover the payoff or purpose of behavior, group leaders can more readily understand dysfunctional behavior displayed by group members.

Related to the Adlerians' belief that people engage in behavior that is most effective in meeting their purposes is a concern with use, as in "What does one do with ability?," rather than with possession, as in "What skills does one have?"

### ***The Striving for Significance Explains Motivation***

Adler is probably best known for the concepts of "inferiority complex" and "strivings for success." His premise was simply that as a result of its initial helplessness, an infant feels inferior and strives to overcome a feeling of incompleteness by developing to a higher level. Feeling inferior and compensating for that feeling becomes the dynamic principle of motivation, moving an individual from one level of development to another. The striving continues throughout life as what Adler called "the great upward drive" toward perfection. Overcompensation for feelings of inferiority was another Adlerian concept.

Adler coined the term "masculine protest" to indicate the cultural problems involved where men dominated or were deemed superior to women. Dreikurs (1946) further explains conceptualization within children by noting, "The phantom of masculine superiority intimidates boys by imposing on them an obligation which they can never expect to fulfill and invites girls to rebel against their secondary role." He also spoke of the fallacy of glamour and chivalry, noting they were merely indications of superior and inferior interrelationships. Adlerian writings on "cooperation between the sexes" can be found in Ansbacher and Ansbacher (1978).

An inferiority complex results when special difficulties of incapability, constant discouragement from others, or faulty self-evaluations relative to one's own feelings of worth are put in the path of normal development.

Adlerians ask, "How is the person seeking to be known?" Dreikurs (1953) envisioned a "vertical versus the horizontal plane." Persons operating on the vertical plane continually measure themselves as either "better than" or "worse than" others on every dimension, resulting in interpersonal relationships that are either "one up" or "one down." A much more useful interpersonal orientation is illustrated by the "horizontal" plane whereby each person is recognized by his or her different and unique attributes.

## ***GOALS OF ADLERIAN COUNSELING***

Adlerian counseling is characterized by the following four developmental phases.

### ***The Relationship***

An Adlerian counselor initially seeks to establish an equal relationship, a collaborative effort between two or more active partners who are working toward mutually agreeable

goals. This kind of relationship can be developed and maintained only by the mutual trust and respect of the counselor and the client or the group members.

Carkhuff (1980) said that such a relationship is built during the facilitation phase of counseling, which is characterized by the following behaviors:

- *Unconditional Positive Regard.* There are no conditions placed on the relationship such as: “You would be O.K., if you would only . . . .”
- *Genuineness.* The counselor and client are two equals—real people—not a “healthy” therapist and a “sick” patient.
- *Empathy.* The counselor accurately perceives the feelings, thoughts, and attitudes of the client, including the client’s “feeling tone” toward the environment.
- *Self-Disclosure.* Relevant personal information is freely volunteered.
- *Concreteness.* The counselor and client talk about specific concerns rather than vague abstractions.

People who are experiencing interpersonal conflicts may have difficulty in forming close relationships. This makes the counseling process an important first step for the client toward social living. It also makes the counseling relationship an ongoing task because the counselor must continue to earn the confidence of the client.

The reality of the relationship between the client and the counselor can threaten the client’s self-esteem or methods of relating to people. Shulman (1973) noted that the client’s fear of disapproval—of being exposed and found defective—may interfere with the counseling relationship. He listed the following defenses used by clients to “defeat” the counselor or to “save” their self-esteem:

1. Externalization: *The fault lies outside me, including:*
  - Cynicism: Life is at fault.
  - Inadequacy: I am just an innocent victim.
  - Rebellion: I cannot afford to submit to life.
  - Projection: It is all their fault.
2. Blind Spots: *If I don’t look at it, it will go away.*
3. Excessive Self-Control: *I will not let anything upset me.*
4. Arbitrary Rightness: *My mind is made up; don’t confuse me with facts.*
5. Elusiveness and Confusion: *Don’t pin me down.*
6. Contribution and Self-Disparagement: *I am always wrong.*
7. Suffering as Manipulation: *I suffer to control others.*

All such defenses have potential to destroy the counselor-client relationship.

## ***Psychological Investigation***

After establishing trust and agreeing on their future goals and methods, the counselor and client move next into psychological investigation (Eckstein, Baruth, & Mahrer, 1978). This phase of Adlerian counseling is a discussion of the client's subjective and objective situations:

- The *subjective situation* includes both the client's feelings and concerns—complaints, problems, and symptoms.
- The *objective situation* carries the investigation to how the client is functioning in such basic areas as work, relationships, and moral-ethical beliefs. The relationships discussed may be with friends, with the opposite sex, or with a deity.

Having established the subjective and objective situation, the counselor links both sets of information by asking the client what Dreikurs (1953) called The Question: "What would be different if you had all these problems or concerns solved?" The client's answer to such a question helps explain the purpose or payoff for complaints and emotional stresses. It also indicates in what area the person is experiencing difficulty and where or on whom the problem is centered.

At this point the counselor is ready to conduct a "life-style investigation" and to administer other psychometric tests, such as interest, achievement, aptitude, and personality inventories that are deemed helpful. The person's family atmosphere provides clues as to how his or her place in the initial social group was achieved. Early recollections represent subjective personal conclusions, "filtered" by the child from external, environmental circumstances. Such recollections coincide with the individual's current outlook. The family atmosphere of the client and his or her early recollections are analyzed for crucial attitudes concerning "Life is . . .," "Others are . . .," "I am . . ."

## ***Interpretation***

When the counselor and the client are in the interpretation phase of counseling, they share their basic attitudes about life, self, and others. The consistent emphasis in their dialogue is on goals and purposes, rather than on causes or why people act the way they do.

During interpretation, the counselor is concerned with increasing the client's awareness of his or her:

1. Life style;
2. Current psychological movement and its direction;
3. Goals, purposes, and intentions; and
4. Private logic and how it works.

Their discussion of the client's private logic includes its implications for the client's present and future activities. They also confront the discrepancies between the words

that are expressed and the actions that are taken and between the ideal goals that are stated and the real goals that are sought. The client begins to experience insight into his or her true intentions—what is really desired—by examining the specific means he or she employs and the ends, or goals, they produce. This examination of the client’s life style allows the counselor to specifically refer to self-defeating ideas that are dysfunctional in the person’s life.

According to Dinkmeyer, Pew, and Dinkmeyer (1979), an Adlerian systematic summary would include identification of the following:

1. The individual’s problems and feelings of deficiency;
2. Directions taken by the individual to overcome the perceived deficiency;
3. The relationship between such direction and cooperative social interest;
4. Specific areas of difficulty the individual experiences with life tasks;
5. How the individual is avoiding the resolution of problems;
6. How the individual manages to feel superior while avoiding confrontation of problems; and
7. Contributing influences from the individual’s past history.

Such an interpretive summary should also use support and encouragement to identify the individual’s strengths and assets. Adler disapproved of the “red-pencil mentality” of a therapist who constantly analyzes a client’s deficits and liabilities. “We build on strengths, not on weaknesses,” was the reminder that Adler continually gave to his counselor trainees.

### ***Reorientation***

In the final phase of Adlerian counseling, reorientation, the counselor and client work together to consider alternative beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes—a change in the client’s life style. Specific reference is made to the “subjective” concerns stated by the client during the life-style investigation. A particular Adlerian technique involves what Nikelly (1971) described as “stroke and spit tactics.” “Stroking” is synonymous with encouragement, caring, and other “powerful invitations” directed from the counselor to the client. An example of an encouragement workshop is included later in the article.

While providing encouragement to the client, reorientation also consists of what Adler called “spitting in the soup.” A bowl of soup will not be enticing to a soup lover if someone contaminates it with spittle. Similarly, the counselor uses the life-style summary of the individual’s goals and private logic to reveal faulty beliefs and self-defeating behavior. Once these are acknowledged in the counseling dialogue, the client is consciously aware of them. Although the individual may continue to engage in the self-defeating behaviors, they probably will not be as pleasurable as before—they have been contaminated.

## **FAULTY COGNITIONS**

Utilizing the “basic mistakes” of Adler, the “irrational beliefs” of Ellis (1973), and the “cognitive deficiencies” of Beck (1970), Kern et al. (1978) compiled the following list of faulty cognitions:

1. *Casual inference*. Making an unjustifiable jump in logic by drawing a conclusion from evidence that is either insufficient or actually contrary to the conclusion reached.
2. *Blowup*. Tending to exaggerate or magnify the meaning of an event out of proportion to the actual situation; generating a general rule from a single incident. (“I made a mess of my relationship with Chris. I guess you could consider me a real social bust.”)
3. *All-or-Nothing Thinking*. Thinking in extremes; allowing only two possibilities—good or bad, right or wrong, always or never. (“People never have a good time with me.”)
4. *Responsibility Projection*. Failing to assume responsibility for one’s emotional state (“This course is causing me to have a nervous breakdown!”) or for one’s personal worth. (“If my parents had only made me study in high school, I’d have been able to qualify for college.”)
5. *Perfectionistic Thinking*. Making idealistic demands on oneself. (“I made a D on that test; I’m so stupid!”)
6. *Value-Tainted Thinking*. Couching a statement in such terms as “good,” “bad,” “worthless,” “should,” “ought,” or “must.” (“I must get into medical school or I won’t be able to look my father in the eye.”)
7. *Self-Depreciation*. Focusing on punitive self-statements rather than task orientation. (“I hate myself for not being able to break this habit.”)

### *Correcting Faulty Thinking*

Once clients discover the illogical aspect of their thinking, they generally are motivated to make changes in their personal private logic that will render it more functional. According to Kern et al. (1978, pp. 21-22), correcting self-defeating, private logic includes the following steps:

1. Asking the client to describe only the facts of the actual situation that gave rise to an expression of the faulty thinking (“I made a 78 on my freshman composition exam”) and to omit the self-defeating statement (“. . . and I know I’m just going to flunk out of college”). In this way, the reality of the situation is separated from the individual’s personal conclusion.
2. Asking the client to generate alternative explanations for the situation that triggered the illogical conclusion. The student making the 78 on the composition exam could have concluded, “I made a high C when I’m used to making A’s, and

this discrepancy is disappointing. I guess I'll just have to study much harder if I am to meet my expectations.”

The client is told to avoid being the direct object or the subject of a passive verb. In the case of responsibility projection, the personal statement is to be reconstructed in such a way that the client becomes the subject of an active verb. For example, the statement “My roommate makes me so mad when she doesn't hang up her clothes” could become: “When my roommate doesn't hang up her clothes, I become very angry because I'm telling myself that she should meet my expectations and something's wrong with me when I can't get her to do better. Clearly, my roommate is not doing it to me—I'm doing it to myself!”

3. Asking the client to design a positive course of action based on the more reasonable of his or her alternative explanations. This technique is used to assist clients to recognize the poor fit between many of their fictions and reality and to practice a more responsible kind of self-talk.

## **ADLERIAN COUNSELING SKILLS**

Counseling skills used by Adlerians include active listening, goal alignment (“Is this the person you want to be?”), reflection of feelings and empathic understanding, confrontation, interpretation and encouragement, and the following steps:

### ***Paradoxical Intention***

There is a technique that was called “prescribing the symptom” by Adler, “antisuggestion” by Dreikurs, and “paradoxical intention” by Frankl (1971). It is a technique in which clients are encouraged to emphasize their symptoms or develop them even more. For example, a person who is afraid of losing consciousness may be asked to try “passing out.” Bringing humor into the situation, the counselor adds, “Come on now, pass out all over the place.” When people discover that they cannot intentionally do what they had feared would happen to them, they are often able to laugh at the situation. The counselor then may attempt to assure such people that “inasmuch as it is impossible to pass out here on purpose, why should you pass out any other place?” Frankl said such an intervention “takes the wind out of the sails” of the fear.

### ***Acting “As If”***

When a client says, “If only I could . . .,” the counselor suggests that the client pretend or “act as if” it were possible to be that way. Mosak and Dreikurs (1973, p. 60) suggested that “We show him that all acting is not phony pretense, that he is being asked to try on a role as one might try on a suit. It doesn't change the person wearing the suit, but sometimes with a handsome suit of clothes, he may feel differently and perhaps behave differently, in which case he becomes a different person.”

## ***Catching Oneself***

As individuals become aware of their purposeful goals, they are encouraged to “catch themselves” engaging in any behavior they want to change. Initially, it may be after the fact when they think, “There I go again.” Eventually, however, they are able to anticipate, and thereby alter, the undesirable behavior.

## ***Creating Movement***

Introducing the element of surprise by doing the unexpected can help encourage clients to consider a change in behavior or attitude, although judicious use of the technique by the counselor is advised. In the following example, the counselor momentarily assumes the client’s faulty logic:

Kim:               Whenever I join groups, it is always the same—I reach out in a trusting manner, and then someone always hurts me by being insensitive. I’m leaving this group.

Counselor:       Yes, all groups are that way. I suggest a safer, nonthreatening place for you.

Such an intervention would obviously be inappropriate if stated in a sarcastic manner. However, if the counselor briefly mirrors or agrees with such faulty either/or overgeneralizations as well as the “I can’t handle being hurt” feelings, then perhaps the client can recognize the mistaken belief more easily.

## ***Goal Setting and Commitment***

Whatever the theoretical approach, an essential task of counseling relates to behavior and attitude change. Each counseling session should conclude with specific homework assignments concerned with observable behaviors. McKay (1976) suggested that a “change card” be written on an index card with the following instructions on one side:

This week I will . . . (be specific, remember, “think small”). I can sabotage my commitment by . . . (your own special means). I will evaluate my commitment on . . . (time and day).

The reverse side of the card is used by the client to chart daily progress. The client is advised by the counselor to focus this evaluation on what is accomplished and not to dwell on mistakes. If things did not go as well as you would like, analyze possible reasons: Did I expect too much of myself? Did I sabotage my commitment? How? Make a new commitment based on your discovery. (p. 16)

## ***SPECIFIC APPLICATIONS FOR GROUP LEADERS***

In an excellent chapter on group counseling and psychotherapy, Dinkmeyer, Pew, and Dinkmeyer (1979) extended Adlerian theory of behavior to the therapeutic group:

1. All behavior has social meaning, therefore, all transactions among group members have a social direction and a social intention.
2. All behavior can best be understood in holistic terms; therefore, group members should be encouraged to become aware of one another's life styles.
3. With their recognition that all behavior is purposeful, group members discover that while words may be deceiving, a person's behavior reveals direction and intention. A group member may express a desire to change, but the other members soon learn to pay attention and respond more to what that person actually does.
4. The group can serve as a microcosm, aiding members in discovering how they find a place in this group and all other groups.
5. Positive psychological development is based on each individual's capacity to belong to the group, to make a commitment, to engage in the give-and-take of life, and to extend his or her social interest.
6. Because each group member is responding on the basis of a personal phenomenological field, the members should be encouraged to understand how their subjective perceptions influence their feelings and behavior.

### ***Group-Leader Competencies***

Specific competencies needed by group leaders include the "core conditions of helping," of Carkhuff (warmth, genuineness, positive regard, etc.) and the following skills listed by Dinkmeyer, Pew, and Dinkmeyer (1979):

- Structuring the group and communicating its purpose
- Utilizing interaction exercises and programs effectively
- Universalizing
- Dealing with the here-and-now interaction
- Linking
- Confronting
- Blocking
- Encouraging and focusing on assets and positive feedback
- Facilitating participation by confronting nonverbal clues
- Facilitating "I" messages
- Paraphrasing and clarifying to stimulate reality testing
- Offering feedback
- Formulating tentative hypotheses

- Setting tasks and getting commitment
- Capping and summarizing

## **ADLERIAN GROUP APPROACHES AND RESOURCES**

Adlerians stress that all behavior has social implications. It is, therefore, only logical that groups characterize the essence of their psychology. Several representative group approaches are identified and briefly described here, along with Adlerian workshop designs that reflect important contributions to the profession.

### ***Parent Education and Family Therapy***

Books offering the Adlerian approach are in heavy demand for parent education and family therapy (e.g., Dreikurs & Soltz, 1964). A noteworthy characteristic of such parent meetings is that by using an accompanying study guide, lay (nonpsychologist) parents can rotate as discussion-group leaders. Churches and parent-teacher associations have shown much enthusiasm in sponsoring such groups. Other widely used books include: Dinkmeyer and McKay (1973), Corsini and Painter (1975), and a structured group experience by Dinkmeyer and McKay (1976).

One of the first steps in parent education is learning to understand the four goals of a child's misbehavior that Dreikurs (1957) defined as: undue attention, power, revenge, and display of inadequacy. When undue attention is the goal, the child is saying "I only count when you pay attention to me." Parents usually feel frustrated or annoyed by such an "ever-present child." When corrected or scolded the child may stop temporarily, but then resumes the behavior later for the same purpose—to get the parent involved. Specific methods of change include suggesting to the parents that they ignore the misbehavior, do the unexpected, or give attention at pleasant times.

When mistakenly seeking the goal of power, a child is saying "I am significant only when I am dominating others." Parents generally react to this with anger, revealing their feelings to the child with raised voice, clenched jaw, or sharp language ("I'll make you do it! You won't get away with that!"). In such a power struggle, parental reprimands merely intensify the child's actions. It may be suggested to parents that they should try to extricate themselves; to act, not talk; to be friendly and establish equality; to redirect the child's efforts into more constructive channels.

Revenge is one of the most discouraging mistaken goals of children. Basically the child's life stance is "I can't be liked and I don't have power, but my significance comes from my abusing others as much as I have been abused." Parents who feel hurt or angry may react with "How could you do this to me?" When disciplined by the parent, such a child may try to get even or display behaviors that put him or her in even more disfavor. Suggested corrective measures include winning the child by avoiding retaliations, realizing that such discouragement takes time and effort to overcome, and maintaining order with minimal restraint.

Children who say, “I can’t do it right so I won’t try to do anything at all,” are displaying inadequacy. Their parents may report a feeling of despair, saying, “I’ve tried everything, so I give up.” Specific suggestions for improving such a condition are given in the principles of encouragement, described later in the sample workshop design.

Helping parents to become aware of a child’s mistaken goals and to learn how they can transform such misbehavior is an important first step in family counseling when it is coupled with additional family constellation information. Dinkmeyer and McKay (1976) suggest transforming a child’s mistaken approaches into the following goals of positive behavior: “I belong by contributing. I can decide and be responsible for my behavior. I am interested in cooperating. I can decide to withdraw from conflict.”

### ***Teacher Consultation***

Attitudes toward discipline are changing, as reflected in the language used by teachers. Baruth and Eckstein (1976) stated that the traditional language of power (control, direct, punish, threaten, setting limits, policing, enforcing, laying down the law, being tough, reprimanding, scolding, ordering, or demanding) is being replaced by a new problem-solving vocabulary (conflict resolution, influencing, confronting, collaboration, cooperation, joint decision making, working out contracts with students, obtaining mutual agreements, winning students over, or agreeing to disagree). Baruth and Eckstein offered information on developing techniques for rectifying misbehavior, improving the classroom atmosphere, and utilizing classroom meetings to solve problems.

The approach suggested by Dinkmeyer and Carlson (1973) utilizes group process (“C” group consultations) and focuses on the following techniques:

- *Consultation* that is provided and received by all the group members.
- *Collaboration* on the concerns of the group members, who work together as equals.
- *Cooperation* among members, so that encouragement can be offered and received.
- *Clarification* of the concepts under discussion, as well as of the members’ belief systems and feelings.
- *Confrontation* of the purposes, attitudes, beliefs; and feelings that interfere with the successful modification of the parent-child relationship. If change is to occur, confrontation of old, useless beliefs must take place. A norm of confrontation—not to prove who is right but to share discrepancies and observations—is established by the group leader at the beginning of the group.
- *Confidentiality* that assures the members that what they say in confidence will be shared only by the group.
- *Commitment* to the tasks confronting each member that goes beyond reading the assignment and discussing it at the next meeting of the group.

- *Change*, as the purpose of involvement in the group, is assessed by each member in specific terms that evaluate both the goals and the rate of change.

Dinkmeyer (1970) is also used by many elementary school systems. His kit contains a variety of experiential activities, including: role playing, puppetry, group discussion, and problem situations, plus music and art activities, and suggested reading lists.

### ***Marriage Counseling***

Investigating, interpreting, and summarizing the life styles of a husband and wife can increase their interpersonal understanding. Dreikurs (1946) suggested four principles of conflict resolution that are useful in marriage counseling: (1) showing mutual respect, (2) pinpointing the issue, (3) reaching a new agreement, and (4) participating in decision making. Additional marital counseling strategies and resources are available in Dinkmeyer, Pew, and Dinkmeyer (1979).

## **REPRESENTATIVE ADLERIAN GROUP DESIGNS**

### ***Early Recollections***

Two Adlerian contributions that are significant for group facilitators are (1) the influence of birth order and family constellation on personality and (2) the relation of early recollections (ER) to interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts. Eckstein (1980) notes the following uses for ER in group settings:

1. The sharing of early recollections can be included as an option in a group program of relatively nonthreatening introductory activities. Subgroups of two or three persons can become better acquainted by sharing spontaneous ER caricatures of themselves, a “life-line,” descriptive adjectives, superlatives, or other demographic information.
2. Early recollections can provide useful data regarding values, conflicts, and behavioral goals for growth for participants to use in subsequent group sessions.
3. Because of their simplicity and the brief amount of time needed for analyzing them, early recollections can also be used for mass investigation of a total group. For instance, when coupled with data from such instruments as the inclusion-control-affection paradigm of FIRO-B (Schutz, 1966), facilitators may vary intervention styles and workshop design according to the particular individual and/or group climate. For example, rigid structured activities could receive resistance from group participants who have a low desire for control, as measured by the FIRO-B. Early recollections can provide an additional “climate-sensing” source of data for facilitators.

4. Early recollections can serve as indicators of therapeutic growth and the positive consequences of group counseling. A crucial Adlerian theoretical notion regarding ERs is that during the course of therapy either an entirely new set of memories will be recalled by the client, or an objective recollection will be accompanied by different subjective personal reaction (Dreikurs, 1967; Eckstein, 1976; Nikelly, 1971). Thus, pre/post ERs (recorded before and after counseling) can supplement other psychometric and impressionistic data in validating the personal growth of participants.

Eckstein (1980) integrates ERs and guided imagery as a means of integrating intrapersonal exploration. A group leader instructs participants to close their eyes, relax, and imagine the following:

Go back in your life to a particularly pleasant or positive moment. How does it feel? What is happening? Who else is there? Now let that image fade away and go back in your life to an unpleasant or negative experience. How does it feel? What is happening? What makes the memory different from the first one? If you could change this event, what would you do? Now give yourself the ability to make the change. How does it feel? How are you different? Now let that image fade away and with your eyes closed, reflect on the memory of this experience for you. Now come back to this room. Open your eyes and silently write down your impressions. (pp. 80-90)

Participants are then invited to each select a partner and share any parts of their fantasy they choose to disclose. Total group discussion, processing, and application conclude the exercise and often lead to individual sharing and intensive counseling/therapy. Possible therapeutic consequences of this activity for participants include the following: implications for the present and future, identification of unfinished business with oneself or with significant others, recognition of irrational self-defeating attitudes, plus growth and healing.

### ***Encouragement Lab***

O'Connel (1975) described the procedure used in a typical one-day encouragement lab as follows:

1. *Mixing*. The group participants are instructed to mill about nonverbally, select partners, and arrange themselves in two groups.
2. *Thinking about methods by which you can encourage others*. The facilitator has the group members relax and imagine acts of encouragement and possible dangers of encouraging.
3. *Stopping, looking and listening to one another*. The members form pairs. A interviews B on how B wants to be encouraged and what fears B has concerning such encouragement. B later interviews A on the same theme. Then the A's move to the center of the room and the B's observe. The A's talk about their partners' views of encouragement. Later, the B's give feedback on whether the A's were correct. The process is reversed, with the B's moving to the center.

4. *Clarify content, guess at feelings.* The B's interview the A's to rate them on self-esteem and social interest. Each B has already rated himself or herself independently. The facilitator calls time periodically to have the B's paraphrase the A's content and guess at their feelings. The members describe difficulties they had in following the task. They share their ratings, discuss the evidence used and the reasons for differences between the raters. Then the process is reversed with A interviewing B.
5. *Lecturette on how to lower self-esteem and social interest.* The facilitator describes behavioral signs and their purposes and presents a lecturette on the three Cs of interdependence:

All persons are *constricted* in that no one creates an optimal self-esteem and social interest. We are all *creative* in maintaining our life styles by making old inferences in new situations. We all *cooperate* in reinforcing behaviors and attitudes, even though we would like to think of ourselves as independent when successful or at the mercy of fate when we fail.

6. *Natural high.* Each participant projects the self-esteem and social interest he or she will have one year from now and rates them. A interviews B, and later B interviews A to find out what evidence the partner used to constrict the self at a future time. Interview questions include: How does the partner select and arrange the constricting environment? How can the partner move to prevent constriction?
7. *Practice in reinforcement.* The facilitator role plays types of constricted individuals, creatively searching for reinforcement of the constriction. The members of one group try to encourage one another while another group watches and later gives feedback. All groups have a chance for action.
8. *Sense of humor.* The facilitator in each group writes a list of highly stressful situations, and the group selects one. Through psychodramatic techniques, the facilitator illustrates feelings and behaviors that make a situation stressful for an individual. Other members model humorous responses to the situation that make the scene relatively nonstressful.

Frank Walton (1975) describes an adolescent minilife group workshop that is based on an unpublished model developed by Bob Powers.

## **SUMMARY**

Adlerian psychology is given much practical usage by group facilitators who represent varied humanistic theoretical orientations. O'Connell (1976) refers to such contemporary theorists as Viktor Frankl, Colin Wilson, Ernest Becker, Ira Progoff, Rollo May, and Werner Erhard, as characterized by a "yes, but" attitude toward Adlerian principles. Although all these "friends" acknowledge the use of many of Adler's ideas in their own systems, they add qualifying statements to their similarities.

Current Adlerian psychology is experiencing a rapid growth by attracting related practitioners who are interested in the useful contributions of Adlerian theory and practice. The North American Society of Adlerian Psychology (NASAP) coordinates activities in the United States and Canada.

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# ■ HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT: WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO BECOME INVOLVED

**John E. Jones**

Within the broad field of human relations, such diverse terms as sensitivity training, leadership development, laboratory methods, experiential education, organization development, sociotechnical systems, and quality of work life are defined, redefined, and finally settled into the professional argot. When a new concept is introduced the question is where, or how, it fits within the already defined framework. To many, the term human resource development (HRD) is synonymous with training. The purpose of this paper is to attempt a more concise definition of human resource development, to explore the major components of this emerging field of professional activity, and to point out some ways in which trainers can become involved in this field.

There is a need for clarity in professional terminology because we have to communicate with our clients and potential clients in order to establish proper expectations for our work if we are to develop appropriate contracts. The lack of clarity about what constitutes HRD has resulted in what we believe to be an underemployment of group facilitators within organizational systems. It is our view that trainers, consultants, and group facilitators need to be aware of and relate effectively to the various activities that we believe constitute HRD in order to develop a more well-rounded perspective of the part that training and development play in the array of programs that focus on the people aspect of an organization.

## ***Defining HRD***

Although it may be presumptuous to attempt to define an emerging activity, we believe that HRD is describable as a set of activities. The following definition, while not the result of a consensus of practicing professionals, represents our view of how HRD can be thought of productively by practitioners:

Human resource development is an approach to the systematic expansion of people's work-related abilities, focused on the attainment of both organizational and personal goals.

A number of elements of this definition bear some comment. First, human resource development focuses on people. The human aspect of the organization or system is the one to which group facilitators can most productively be oriented. We are, in a sense, the champions of human values, human dignity, human concerns, and the human

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implications of organizational change. People are seen as having skills, having potential, and having the ability to grow, change, and develop; HRD focuses on increasing the talents and abilities of the people in the system. Of course, people learn and grow within organizations without formal programs and opportunities. HRD, however, is systematic in that it comprises a number of activities that are individually designed to focus on the pool of people who constitute the human organization. The term resource implies that the individuals or groups of people within the organization are considered to be resources rather than problems. The term development is ambiguous in the literature of training and development as well as in the literature of organizational behavior. In this context it implies an emphasis on the discovery and nurturing of human resources.

The programs and practices of HRD focus not only systematically on the development of people but also on the system as a unit. So HRD can also be thought of as systemic. The emphasis is on the possibilities for the enhancement of the total human system. Expansion implies growth, and all HRD activities are focused toward learning and behavior change—toward increased effectiveness. Theoretically there are many untapped human abilities that can be made available to the organization and to individuals within the organization. The focus here is on goal attainment. The “bottom line” is the accomplishment of the objectives of both the organization and the individuals in it. HRD activities, when they are coordinated with each other, offer the promise of making the relationship between the individual and the organization more effective by focusing on the development of people and of people’s systems.

### ***HRD Components***

Five major areas of activity can be utilized by organizations to improve human systems and to develop people within those systems. These five professional activities are training, organization development, education, system change, and human-systems programs. The traditional view of HRD would include only training and organization development, but it is our view that numerous other activities designed to ameliorate human systems, support the smooth functioning of human systems, and develop members of the system are legitimate ones to be engaged in by HRD personnel.

Figure 1 is a categorization of the major activities that constitute HRD. What these efforts have in common is that each has a human aspect, a people dimension. It is clear from this listing that there are myriad programs that affect individuals and groups within an organization. Some of these activities could be classified in more than one category, but this listing represents our judgment of the primary focus of each component.

*Training.* Within the training function are numerous programs that are typically carried out by HRD personnel. In each of the enumerated activities the main emphasis is on the development of individual people with regard to skills, knowledge, and attitudes. This area is the core of many HRD practitioners’ work; it presents opportunities to reach and influence almost all the influential people within the organization. Conducting effective training is one of the best ways for the HRD person to establish credibility with managers. In addition, training provides a foundation of knowledge and skills on which

other HRD programs can be built. For example, for management by objectives (MBO) to succeed there must be adequate training of individuals as well as system planning.

*Organization Development.* In this area of activity the emphasis is not on individual people but on people systems. Common to all these program components is attention to process, i.e., consulting with groups of people on the processes through which work gets done in a social context. The role played by the HRD practitioner is that of a helper to the human system in learning about its own functioning in order to increase the effectiveness of that system.

*Education.* In educational programs the emphasis is on providing assistance to the individual as a person, not as a worker. The rationale is that fully functioning people are more productive. The career-development center is an offshoot of the traditional assessment center; it differs from the latter in that the focus is on development rather than selection.

*System Change.* Large-scale redevelopment of organizations has innumerable effects on people. New plant start-ups and internal reorganizations both are new designs for human systems as well as for operational systems. Numerous efforts are made inside organizations to minimize the effects on people of large, pervasive change. When organizations are decentralizing or centralizing, merging with other organizations, or expanding in dramatic ways, the HRD practitioner can be enormously helpful to planners in working through the process of planning as well as consulting on the human aspects of such system change.

*Human-Systems Programs.* Other programs and activities in organizations attempt to help the human system function more effectively. These include the wide array of HRD components that regulate and maintain the people system. HRD personnel need to be thoroughly conversant with these activities and find ways to become involved in them.

These categories of HRD components are neither discrete nor mutually exclusive. Their overlap provides opportunities for HRD practitioners to cross boundaries and provide services to managers in assuring that the organization's social and technical systems are compatible and mutually beneficial.

### ***Entry Strategies***

People involved in training inside organizations often seem unaware of the system effects of what they are doing. When the training department and the organization development group are separate, the trainer may inadvertently work against the integrity of the organization as a system unless the training is carried out with proper regard for goals and priorities. Conversely, organization development personnel often tend to see all organizational problems as people problems, communication problems, conflict problems, or examples of the need for redistribution of power. Both sides can benefit from an overview that puts their work into a matrix of activities that are designed to

<b>Training</b>	<b>Organization Development</b>	<b>Human-Systems Programs</b>
Executive development	Organization assessment	Performance appraisal
Management development	Team building	Manpower planning
Supervisory development	Resolving interunit conflict	Succession planning
Sales training	Third-party consultation	Assessment centers
Technical skills training	Process consultation	Compensation (wage/salary administration)
Personal-growth programs	Job design/enrichment	Job analysis
Stress-management programs	Work simplification	Job classification
Time-management programs	Quality-of-work-life programs	Recruitment/exit interviewing
Pre-retirement planning	Sociotechnical-systems interventions	Personnel-policies planning (including benefits and rewards)
<b>Education</b>	<b>System Change</b>	Labor/employee relations
Career-development centers	Transition planning	Scanlon Plan
New-employee orientation	Centralization/ decentralization	Affirmative action/equal employment opportunity programs
Physical fitness programs	Mergers	MBO programs
Employee-assistance programs	Organization design (e.g., sociotechnical-systems interventions)	
Life/career planning		
Tuition-assistance programs		

**Figure 1. Human Resource Development Components**

benefit both people and the organization. Getting involved in the broad spectrum of HRD activities can provide that perspective.

Because we believe that people involved in “traditional” training and development might beneficially become active in other HRD activities, we want to spell out what we believe to be a set of strategies by which the HRD practitioner might maximize his or her impact. Many of the programs enumerated are technical specialties for many consultants.

The HRD practitioner can adopt the major strategy of becoming a clearinghouse, the person who familiarizes outside experts with the training and development activities going on inside the organization, works with the experts, and becomes the recipient of referrals from the technical specialists when they encounter training and development implications in their specialty work. This means that the HRD practitioner must, in effect, set up a referral resource system for managers within the organization and do research on the credible experts in the community who might be brought in to work on the development of particular systems.

The HRD practitioner can become involved in activities that are not thought of as training or organization development in three ways. First, most of these activities can benefit from process consultation; the HRD person should be equipped to provide that service. Second, many group facilitators can function easily as experts on applications of behavioral science to organizational planning and problem solving. Third, HRD

practitioners can enter these activities as advocates of humanistic values. People in HRD have, we believe, a responsibility to help the organization manage what often is a lack of attention to the people aspects of organizational decisions. There always is creative tension between the development of the human system as a system and the development of individuals as private, autonomous people. Also, there often is a very high emphasis inside organizations on task considerations, sometimes at the expense of human considerations. The main challenge that we believe HRD practitioners need to confront the organization with is to correct the blind spot that so many managers have about the impact of change on the individual worker.

An additional strategy available to HRD practitioners is to expand their knowledge and skills into the areas of HRD that they are not now conversant with or credible in. This requires retraining and study, but it adds to the repertoire of services that the HRD practitioner can offer to the organization.

As a part of the training function of the organization, the HRD practitioner can develop management courses on the knowledge and skills needed to engage in the various HRD functions that may be present or planned for in the organization. Courses in how to conduct a performance review or assessment center, coaching, counseling, etc., can allow managers full participation in human resource development and can also help them to see HRD as an organizational priority.

Another entry strategy for HRD practitioners is to invite themselves into the planning processes for the start up of new aspects of the organization. If a new plant is to be planned, the HRD practitioner can offer to join the planning team as a process consultant—a technical expert on the development of human resources.

### ***Careers in HRD***

It is clear that training and organization development are here to stay as recognizable, supported activities within a wide array of organizations. Because more and more management publications and popular magazines have referred to human resource development in the past few years, it is clear that HRD is becoming visible within a variety of organizations and that top management is becoming more sensitive to the need for HRD as part of corporate planning and problem solving. This opens the way for new steps in the career ladders of group facilitators within organizations. A number of organizations have now created vice-presidential slots for human resource development, opening a new avenue of growth and development for professional people within this area. This field is continuing to emerge rapidly, and it is incumbent on practitioners not only to pay attention to the kinds of services they are able to provide to organizations, but also to be acutely aware of the HRD functions that can be brought into the organization through outside consultants; these efforts can help the organization make HRD a continuing priority in its overall system development.

## ■ LEARNING CYCLES: MODELS OF BEHAVIORAL CHANGE

**Albert B. Palmer**

Learners move through a number of stages as they acquire new information or skills. A model that describes these stages is of interest to theorists, facilitators, and teachers because it can be used to assess where a given learner or group of learners is focused and to guide further learning. This paper summarizes several models that describe the learning process, presents a synthesis or general model, and concludes with some observations generated by the study.

Not all of the models to be presented were initially viewed as examples of a learning cycle. Newell, Shaw, and Simon (1960), Miller, Galanter, and Pribram (1960), and Pounds (1969) all were concerned with the development of problem-solving models. On the other hand, Kolb, Rubin, and McIntyre (1971), Jones and Pfeiffer (1975), and Argyris (1976) specifically describe their concepts as indicators of learning cycles. In spite of the different labels, each theorist uses a series of concepts to describe how an individual develops and ultimately manifests a change in behavior.

It should be noted that all these processes are associated with *changes* in behavior. *Learning* has occurred when individuals adjust or modify their behavior; this differs from *understanding*, wherein awareness may occur but behavior remains the same. Although understanding is a part of learning, the learning process is completed only when the individual actually produces new behavior either in an unfamiliar situation or in a situation that was previously experienced as unsatisfying.

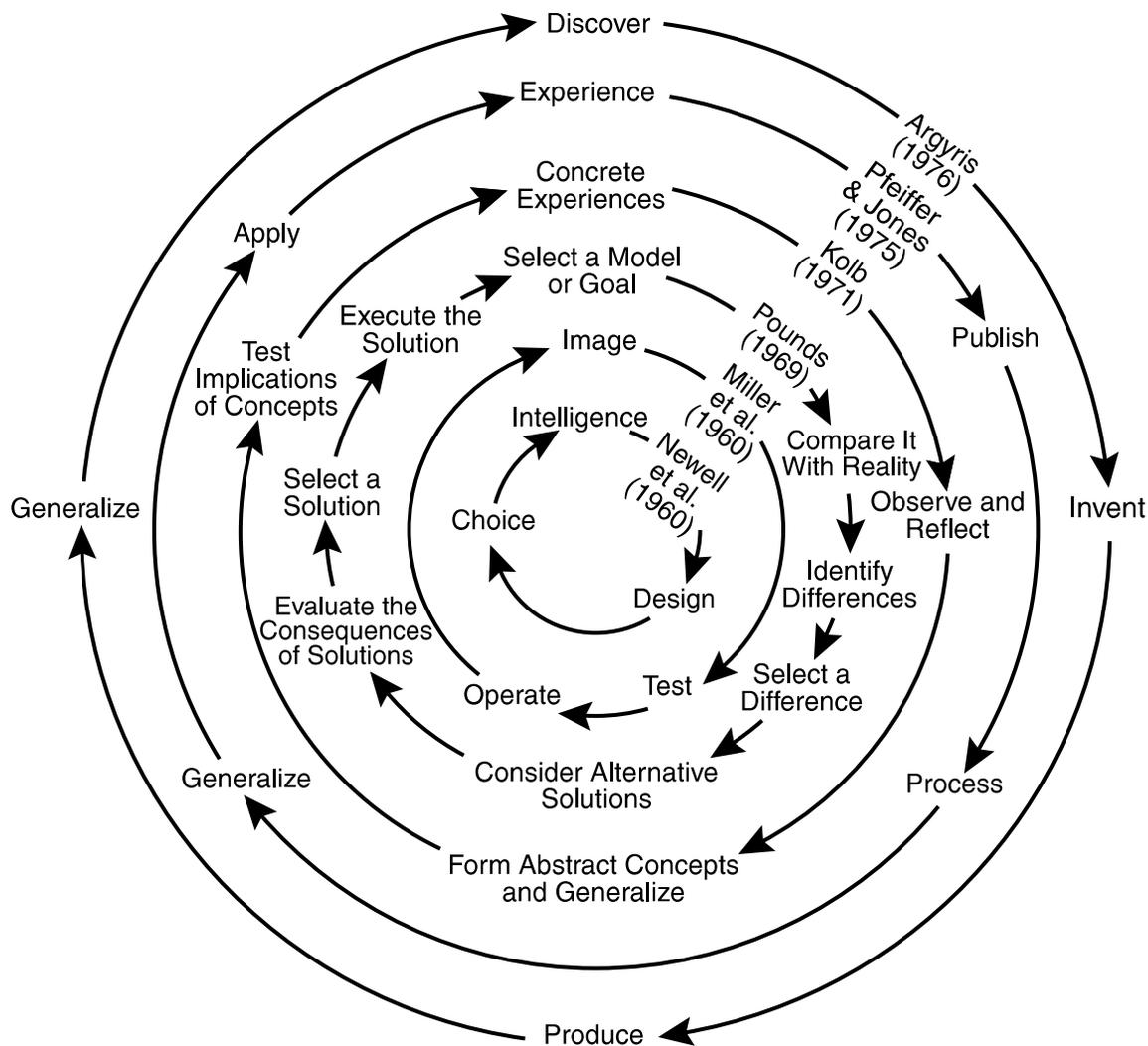
### **SIX THEORIES**

Figure 1 includes each of the theories summarized in this paper. They are arranged in order of publication and their components appear in the order specified in each theory and in approximate relationship to each other. The models are discussed in this paper in chronological order.

Newell, Shaw, and Simon (1960) studied complex analytical processes and formulated an early, three-step model of decision making. Step one, *intelligence*, wherein alternative actions are developed and defined, is followed by *design*, the process of evaluating the alternatives. The third step, *choice*, involves selecting an action from those available.

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**Figure 1. Learning Cycle Models for Behavioral Change**

Parallel concepts more related to cognitive psychology were developed by Miller, Galanter, and Pribram (1960). *Image*, referring to the internal nature of the process, involves the generation of alternatives. *Test*, like design, is the evaluation of the consequences of various alternatives prior to actual action. *Operate* is the term for carrying out the choice.

Pounds (1969) divided the decision-making process into two separate but interrelated procedures: *problem finding* and *problem solving*. He analyzed each procedure and described how individuals move through each in a series of steps. One begins, according to Pounds, by *selecting a model*—some standard for performance. It defines what ought to be. The model is then *compared to reality* and *differences are identified*. These two processes provide the data—the range of problems to be tackled. Problem finding ends when a specific *difference is selected* for action.

Problem solving begins with the *consideration of alternative solutions* followed by *evaluation of the consequences of those solutions*, i.e., outcomes are predicted for each possibility. The final steps are *selection of a solution* and its *execution*.

Computer science had a strong influence on Newell et al., Miller et al., and Pounds. Their writing is heavy with such terms as operator and input and output variables, and the relationships between the terms are portrayed in flow charts. Little attention is paid to expediting the change process or to the facilitator as an agent of change.

Kolb, Rubin, and McIntyre (1971) changed this emphasis from enumerating the skills necessary for successful management to one of investigating how the manager learns, i.e., how one adapts to changes in the environment and the job. Kolb et al. developed the *experiential learning model* to describe this adaptive learning process. The real world, with its demands, dilemmas, and disappointments, serves as the basis for *concrete experience*, a frequent stimulant to learning. Internal or cognitive processes are the mechanisms for reducing experiences to more manageable form, so we observe, and then *reflect* on experiences. Once internalized, the observations and reflections lead to the *formulation of abstract concepts and generalizations*. Such personal theory building leads to application, which Kolb et al. defined as *testing the implications of concepts in new situations*.

In the previous model, the learner must have some expertise in each of the steps for learning to be effective. This is made more difficult by the fact that some of the skills seem to be mutually exclusive. For example, individuals who are highly skilled in observing and reflecting on the world around them may be reluctant to intervene and take action. Kolb et al. described the process as two-dimensional, with the concrete experiencing of events and abstract conceptualization at the poles of one dimension and active experimentation and reflective observation at the poles of the other.

Jones and Pfeiffer (1975) present experiential learning as a five-step cyclical process in which each step is dependent on the completion of the previous step. Behavior associated with involvement in the world, *experiencing*, is the most common (and most effective) impetus for learning. The second step, *publication*, is the process of making public or sharing observations, feelings, or other reactions generated by the experience. This learning process is a group, rather than a solitary, activity. The involvement of more than one person obviously leads to a range of reactions. *Processing* is a systematic examination of patterns and dynamics that emerged during the sharing stage. This essential step gives some meanings to the experienced event. The next stage, *generalizing*, relates those meanings to life. Implications and principles—the “so what?” of the learning—are stated. Finally, these principles are *applied* to actual situations, and the learner states how he or she will apply the new learning or behavior. The experiential process is not complete until the new learning is tested behaviorally. The cyclical nature of the process becomes apparent now, because testing the new behavior is itself in fact a new experience.

The most succinct explanation of this process can be found in Pfeiffer and Jones, 1980, and ways to facilitate the process are presented by Gaw (1979).

Argyris (1976) utilizes the concept of learning cycles to explain the changes noted in individuals who have examined their organizational behavior. When people are given the opportunity to compare their actual behavior and its consequences with their intentions, more often than not they *discover* inconsistencies or incongruities between intentions and actual outcomes. This discovery is the basis for the *invention* of new behavior to reduce or eliminate the inconsistencies and accomplish what was intended. Argyris separates the invention (design) of new behavior from its *production*—actually carrying out the behavior. Finally, the discoveries and new behaviors are *generalized* from the situation that spawned them (usually the laboratory or consulting experience) to other situations. Although discovery is a convenient starting place, Argyris notes that in reality learning can begin at any point in the sequence.

Each of the learning cycles described here is an abstraction, a model applied to observed behavior. Kolb suggests that we have predispositions or preferences for learning styles and that those preferences shape our learning effectiveness. Argyris, on the other hand, says that skill in all phases of the cycle is required for effective learning. He suggests that most people do not know how to learn effectively and therefore must be taught (in a workshop or other setting) how to learn.

The answer for Argyris is to use the learning cycle in teaching the learning-cycle model. Thus, participants need to discover, invent, produce, and generalize about the discovery phase of the learning cycle. They also need to discover, invent, produce, and generalize about invention, production, and generalization. We often take for granted the ability of participants to profit from their experiences, especially if those experiences occurred under our leadership. Learning to learn may be as fundamental to the success of an intervention as anything else that is done.

Learning-cycle models have evolved in a way that mirrors changes in the technology of organization development. Each new learning cycle has been more elaborate than the one preceding, with greater and greater emphasis on the participant as a complex entity. The cycles have moved from mechanistic and computer-influenced technologies to those that stress change as a process influenced as much by the affect, or emotions, of the learner as by rational thought. We now understand that change requires much more than data or manipulation of situational variables in a learner.

## **A GENERAL MODEL**

Although the theorists discussed in this article have not approached the problem in the same manner, it seems clear that they would agree that learners move through a series of steps as they acquire new skills. Those steps may or may not be followed in sequence, but the success of the learning experience probably is related directly to whether or not each step occurs. Although the labels applied to the steps may differ, the theorists seem to be trying to describe an experience observed by all; thus, those experiences common to all learners provide the basis for a general model of the learning cycle.

The Argyris model seems to come closest to qualifying as a universal model—one that accounts for most of the behavior we see. Nevertheless, concepts from the other models are consistent with and can enhance the learning cycle described by Argyris. It is all part of the process that Argyris calls “decomposition,” the breaking down of the learning process into smaller, more manageable units.

The general model that follows focuses on the common actions of learners and the similarities and connections between descriptions of those actions. Issues in the application of the concept of learning cycles are also noted.

### ***Phase One: Discovering***

The word *discover* means “to perceive or see” and “to gain knowledge or understanding”; both of these occur in the early stages of the learning process. Each process is a source of data.

Most participants in human relations workshops are there to learn about dynamics that pertain to one or more of the following:

1. The behavior of another person or persons.
2. The intentions of another person or persons. (Participants often are not aware of the difference between intentions and behavior, and treat them synonymously. The discovery that one’s behavior is in response to an intention attributed to another person, not what that person actually does, can be a powerful motivation for learning.)
3. His or her own behavior.
4. His or her own intentions. (Many workshop participants are aware of this dilemma, but still have difficulty in differentiating between their intentions and how they actually behave.)

During the discovery process, a participant will define goals, standards, or ideals as well as the way things actually are. These data will come from observations of others and oneself as well as reflections on internal processes and personal behavior. The trainer can facilitate discovery by:

1. Providing opportunities for participants to focus on their own behavior or the behavior of significant other people in their lives.
2. Helping the participants to express their observations. (Most people find it especially difficult to express feelings.)
3. Identifying and working with the group dynamics that influence risk taking.

Discovery is promoted by observing and thinking about one’s experiences and then sharing those thoughts and feelings with others who have had the same or parallel experiences. The sharing focuses on perceptions of the events, the dynamics of the sharing process itself, and the formulation of explanatory ideas or concepts. Ideally discovery would lead the learners to formulate and attempt new or alternative behavior.

The way in which individuals make discoveries about themselves and their behavior can influence the remainder of the learning cycle. Discovery for understanding is different from discovery for change. The task of the facilitator is to promote discovery for change (action) either by involving participants in specific events that lead to this type of discovery or by providing the opportunity for them to express and work with discoveries made outside the training event. Lewin's (1958) theory of change explains it as a three-step sequence: unfreezing current patterns of behavior, moving to new behavior patterns, and freezing the new patterns into place. The "unfreezing" sequence can generate anxiety but it also provides the motivation to continue the learning process as well as the experientially derived data that are needed in order to learn.

Several techniques can be used to unfreeze participants. Obviously, the one selected must be congruent with the needs of the group and the skill and preferences of the facilitator. Structured experiences can be used to promote discovery (see Pfeiffer & Jones, 1980); role playing is an excellent discovery process (Shaw, Corsini, Blake, & Mouton, 1980); and Argyris (1976) prefers to have participants write scenarios of their interactions.

### ***Phase Two: Formulating New Behavior***

One of the persistent dilemmas in psychology is the role of insight in behavioral change. Few of the learning-cycle theorists present a clear statement about this relationship. Most seem to treat thinking about behavior and actually behaving as the same process. Because learners frequently work out alternative behaviors verbally before actually attempting them, the learning model presented here encourages facilitators to focus on and encourage the development of new behavior at a verbal level before it is put into action.

The verbal expression of what needs to be done and how it can be done allows refinement of the plan. Other group members can say how the new behavior would affect them to provide the learner with unexpected consequences of or confirmation for the behavior.

Ideas about new behavior generally are:

1. Self-generated. Participants often know how they *should* behave and can be encouraged to explore alternatives. New behavior may be consistent with previously articulated principles or related only to the current task.
2. Leader generated. Leaders may suggest or model alternative ways of behaving in a situation. Leader behavior usually is based on a theoretical "should," i.e., certain behaviors are more effective. Such principles should be shared with the learner.
3. Member generated. Other members of the learning group also serve as sources of new behavior.

When helping participants learn to formulate new behavior, the trainer must be aware of dynamics within the learning group that could interfere with such creative

activity. Exploring these dynamics often becomes a discovery process in itself and can lead a group off in other directions. The dynamics may be perceived as resistances to learning. The response “It wouldn’t make sense to tell you what I’d do because no one here understands my problem” is loaded with information about dynamics and resistance.

The transition from discovery to formulation is not abrupt; the two phases often flow back and forth. Participants discover inconsistencies between what they hoped to accomplish in a given interaction and the actual outcome. They share their dilemmas and describe what they wish they had done. Other participants respond, perhaps by sharing their own reactions to the original learner’s behavior or by offering alternatives or similar experiences. These responses allow the original participant to refine discoveries and new behaviors. This process should lead to some clearly formulated behavior that would reduce or eliminate the dilemma.

### ***Phase Three: Producing New Behavior***

Discovering inconsistencies and describing desired behavior are significant steps in learning. However, for learning to be complete, it is important that people translate their formulations of new behavior into actual behavior. Theorists have used expressions such as “execute the solution,” “operate,” and “apply” to denote the implementation of the results of the discovery and formulation processes. Argyris includes the idea of producing the new behavior under moderate stress, noting that behavior in the real world (as opposed to the world of the training event) will probably be produced under such conditions.

The dynamics of the learning group are critical factors in the production of new behavior. Facilitators may need to:

1. Ensure that there is a situational demand for the new behavior. It is hard for individuals to produce meaningful new behavior without some stimulation. Role playing is a common technique for providing such stimulation.
2. See that the setting is conducive to risk taking. An atmosphere of acceptance within the learning group is critical during the process.
3. Provide feedback for the learner. Knowing how new behavior was perceived by others is necessary for growth and change. Encouraging such sharing in ways that promote rather than stifle growth is often a challenge to the leader.

The learning group provides an excellent arena for the practice of new behavior. In short, intensive workshops, the value of practice in the acquisition of human relations skills must not be underestimated. It is readily acknowledged that the development of a fluid golf swing requires hours of concentrated practice in controlling the body and club. The acquisition of complex relationship skills requires the same effort if fundamental changes in behavior are to become integrated and automatic.

## ***Phase Four: Generalizing to the Real World***

Theorists and facilitators recognize the necessity for a transition from the laboratory into the real world. A section of each training event commonly is devoted to back-home application and/or reentry. Inclusion of a specific phase devoted to generalizing learnings from the training event to the outside world provides a basis for what Lewin termed “refreezing.” Workshop participants return to an environment that has not changed significantly. A participant may have made valuable discoveries about behavior, systems, group dynamics, etc., but may not have acquired enough competence to be able to influence or change the outside system in any significant way. Thus, as Schein (1972) has noted, many good ideas and useful behaviors are lost because they never become integrated into the environment. Weekend or other short-term workshops preclude any real refreezing of participants’ behavior because useful generalization probably requires that the participants return to the workshop environment with examples of the application of their “new” behaviors. These experiences then become the bases for new discoveries and new learning cycles. So although there is value in encouraging participants to talk about how they plan to behave when they leave the training setting, how others will respond to their new behaviors, and how they expect to deal with these responses, such discussion is not a substitute for using real-world applications as the basis for new learning. Some factors can positively reinforce new back-home behavior. These are:

1. Support in the back-home environment. Consultation or the creation of an ongoing support group can provide continued help for the learner. Development of such a group requires significant effort on the part of the trainer.
2. Consistency between workshop design and the real world. Topics, learnings, and structures in training events ought to be compatible with what the learner will face back home or on the job.
3. The learning group as a resource. Ideally, learners would be able to return to the learning group with their new discoveries. One technique is to have pairs from the learning group agree to communicate with each other for a specified period of time. Norms for this interaction should be established during the training event.

## ***A FINAL CONSIDERATION***

Although the phases of the change process have been presented as discrete events, it is clear that the interaction between them (and within them) is complex. No learner goes through these phases step by step, and it would not be desirable to do so. Such a strategy too easily allows the members to become diverted. The danger always exists that participants might become fixed at one level because changing one’s behavior is frightening or emotionally demanding. Another danger is that a participant might engage

in what seems to be whimsical behavior because he or she fails to see how the training is related to issues or dilemmas in his or her own life.

If there is a major shortcoming in the area of change agency, it lies in the realm of generalizing. The economics of time and money have discouraged the development of programs that might result in more integrated and long-term behavioral change. All too often one is seduced by the exhilaration of the discovery and formulation phases of the learning cycle and finds generalization and application hurriedly relegated to the last hour of the last day. Thus, while the concept of learning cycles can be a valuable tool, it also reminds us of some pertinent issues. The criticism that has been applied to other parts of our society—namely, that technology has exceeded our ability to manage it and that important values related to technology have gone unattended—may often be applied to the work of the human relations trainer. Audiovisual technology has made it possible to package an exciting learning experience in a format that is easily presented. Jargon proliferates and the “science” in behavioral science is everywhere. Yet we all know people who have left workshops full of good intentions but have soon returned to their old ways of behaving. When long-term change in individuals and/or organizations eludes us, we may begin to blame it on the participants rather than examine the training design.

Perhaps the decade of the Eighties will be the time to examine the ethical dilemmas posed by the learning-cycle concept. Is it “right” in the name of a learning experience to offer a short workshop that emphasizes discovery and is clearly lacking in generalization and application? How long can we facilitate the discovery process in people without facilitating the actual production of new behavior in those situations that brought people to the workshop in the first place? How long can we continue to deal with resistances to learning while at the same time accepting (at face value) a client’s assertion that he or she cannot afford a longer, more substantial workshop? These issues may have as much impact on the credibility of our profession as will the creation of sophisticated scientific technology.

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## ■ THINKING ABOUT FEELINGS

### Walton C. Boshear

Those aspects of the helping professions that attempt to deal with feelings are the most subjective, tenuous, and hard to express because thinking and talking about feelings is difficult. There is no doubt that feelings influence behavior—and the stronger the feeling, the more it influences behavior. But exactly how feelings and behavior are related is difficult to say. To paraphrase Freud, we may someday be able to predict the behavior that will result from a known feeling, but we may never be able to deduce the feeling by observing the behavior because the same apparent behavior can result from many different feelings.

A framework for thinking about some of the aspects of feelings and a common vocabulary are needed to communicate with individuals and groups. The empirical model presented here was stimulated by a model developed by Albrecht (Boshear & Albrecht, 1977) to explore how people accommodate their strong feelings.

### A BASIC MODEL OF FEELINGS

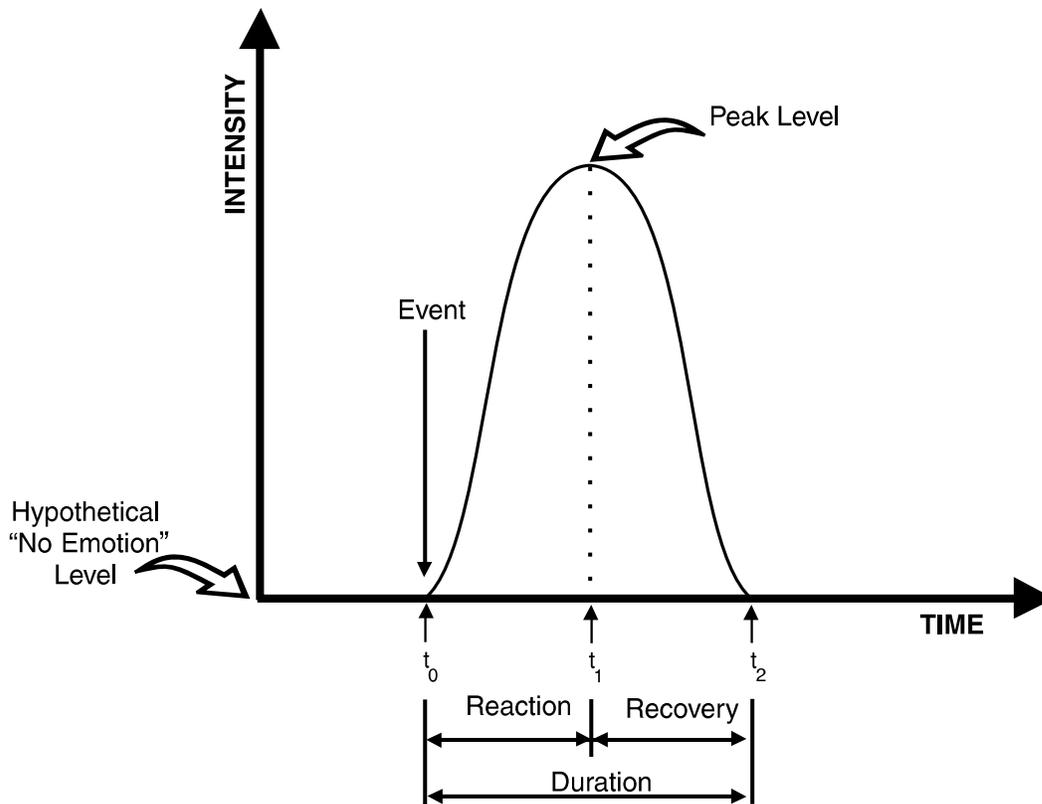
At the most basic level, feelings have two characteristics, *intensity* and *duration*. By using intensity and time as intersecting axes on a graph, we can plot an emotional episode as shown in Figure 1. The episode is initiated at  $t_0$  when the person perceives an event, which provokes an emotional reaction—feelings about the event. Between  $t_0$  and  $t_1$ , the reaction period, emotional intensity increases to a peak. Between  $t_1$  and  $t_2$ , the recovery period, the intensity of feelings lessens. The duration of the emotional episode is the entire period from  $t_0$ , the perception of the event, to  $t_2$ , the return to the base level of feelings. This is the *primary* episode, provoked by the actual event. Following the primary episode, *secondary* episodes may occur as the person recalls the event. These recurring secondary episodes will have the same basic characteristics as the primary episode, but will be of successively lesser intensity until at some future time the event will be recalled with no perceptible emotional reaction.<sup>1</sup>

Behavior varies depending on the peak level of intensity of an emotional episode. The intensity of the emotion can be thought of as the range between a hypothetical base of no emotion and some ultimate limit of the human system to tolerate the emotion. The intensity of an emotion does not seem to be on a continuum. As intensity increases, it

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<sup>1</sup> Under hypnosis people have relived the primary episode with essentially the same intensity of feelings. This, however, is an entirely different phenomenon from simply recalling an emotion-provoking event.

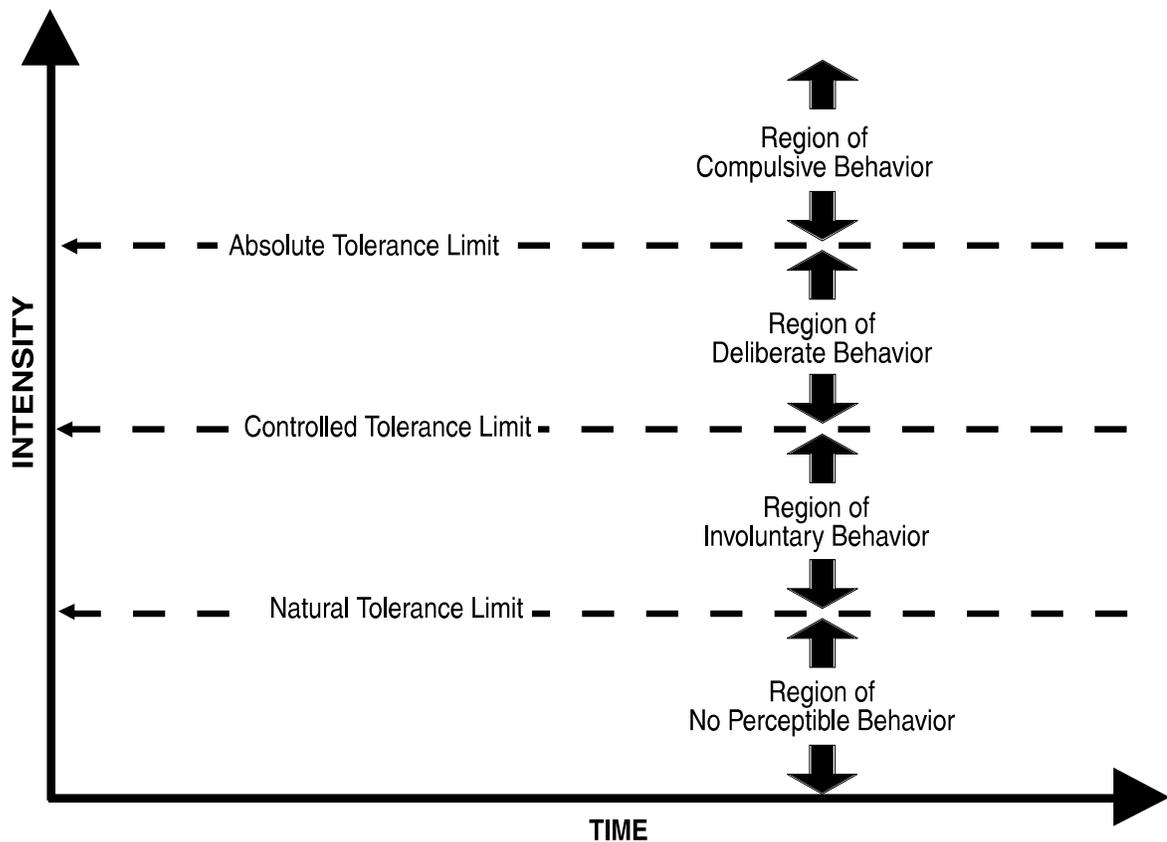


**Figure 1. Basic Characteristics of Feelings**

seems to pass through certain tolerance limits. As each limit is passed, there is a definite change in the person's state of awareness and type of behavior the feelings provoke. These tolerance limits and the characteristic regions of awareness and behavior are shown in Figure 2.

The first limit, the upper boundary of a Region of No Perceptible Behavior, can be called the Natural Tolerance Limit. If his or her feelings are below this limit, the person is not aware of any unusual emotion and will exhibit no observable behavior change. Feelings within this range do not seem at all unusual.

Beyond the Natural Tolerance Limit is a Controlled Tolerance Limit. Between these two is a Region of Involuntary Behavior. If his or her emotions are within this region, the person will be aware of an unusual emotional intensity but will be in control and will not deliberately react. Involuntary reactions, such as tensed muscles, nervous gestures, or flushed face, may be evident as the person attempts to control behavior. The Controlled Tolerance Limit seems to be established in part by conscious decision and partly by a person's unconscious reactions to the situation, social norms, personal values, and self-image. Conscious control of the Controlled Tolerance Limit is most evident in specific situations. A person may lower the limit to express joy at a ball game, but raise it to control the same behavior in church. The reverse may be true with respect to behavior provoked by grief.



**Figure 2. Emotional Tolerance Limits and Behavioral Regions**

The final threshold would appear to be an Absolute Tolerance Limit, setting the upper boundary of a Region of Deliberate Behavior. If an event provokes an emotional response within this region, the person will take some deliberate and overt action. The behavior will be deliberate in the sense that it is justified by the intensity of the emotion. It may not always be planned or the result of a strategy. It may well be impulsive.

Beyond the Absolute Tolerance Limit, a person is unable to rationalize behavioral responses to emotion. He or she may react compulsively or may be immobilized by the intensity of feelings. In this Region of Compulsive Behavior there may be an apparent disconnection between cause and effect. The person may exhibit behavior that he or she does not understand and cannot later rationalize. There is a suspension of intellect when the peak of the emotional episode is in this region.

### ***IMPACT OF VARIED REACTION TIMES***

The simplified curve shown in Figure 1 implies an even rate of reaction to and recovery from an emotional episode. This is not representative of real life. People react and recover at different rates. Some people react instantly and reach an emotional peak quickly. Others may reach the same emotional peak in reaction to the same event, but over a longer period of time. The same can be said of recovery times. Some people will

recover from an emotional peak very quickly; others may take a long time. Figure 3 illustrates the extreme cases of this phenomenon, showing the characteristic curve for each reaction/recovery type.

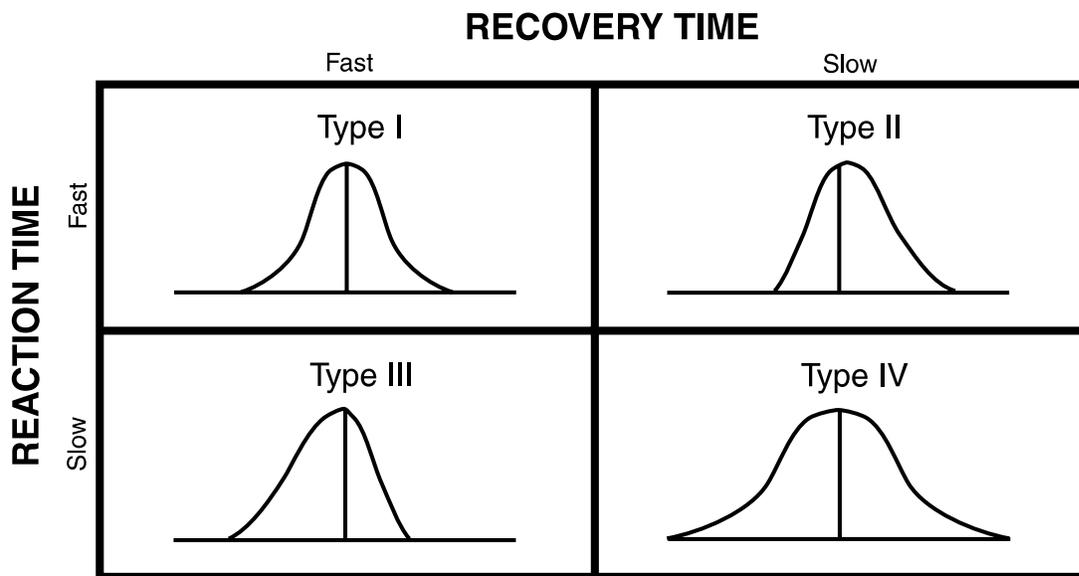


Figure 3. Comparative Reaction/Recover Times

There are strong implications of this difference in reaction and recovery times when people communicate about an experience that they have apparently shared. Figure 4 illustrates the problems that may occur between Joe, a Type I, and Mary, a Type IV. An emotion-provoking event occurs at  $t_0$ . Joe, a quick reactor, feels the full intensity of his emotions at  $t_1$ . Mary, who is slow to react, is still low on her reaction curve. If they attempt to communicate at  $t_1$ , they will not appear to share the same feelings about the event. At  $t_2$ , Mary will be at the peak of her emotional response, but Joe will have fully recovered. The discrepancy is even greater at  $t_2$ . If Mary brings up the subject at  $t_2$ , she could provoke a secondary episode for Joe, who would recall the event and experience a recurrence of emotion, but a lower intensity. Because of Joe's fast reaction/recovery style, he may recover a second time while Mary is still in the recovery mode from her primary episode. At  $t_3$  both Joe and Mary are fully recovered and appear to be on a common emotional basis.

At no point between  $t_0$  and  $t_3$  have Joe and Mary been able to communicate from the same experience base, even though both perceived the event at the same time and reacted to it with the same intensity of feelings. Communication at  $t_3$  and beyond may still be complicated by the fact that Joe has had two emotional experiences, one provoked by the primary event, the other provoked by Mary's delayed reaction to the primary event.

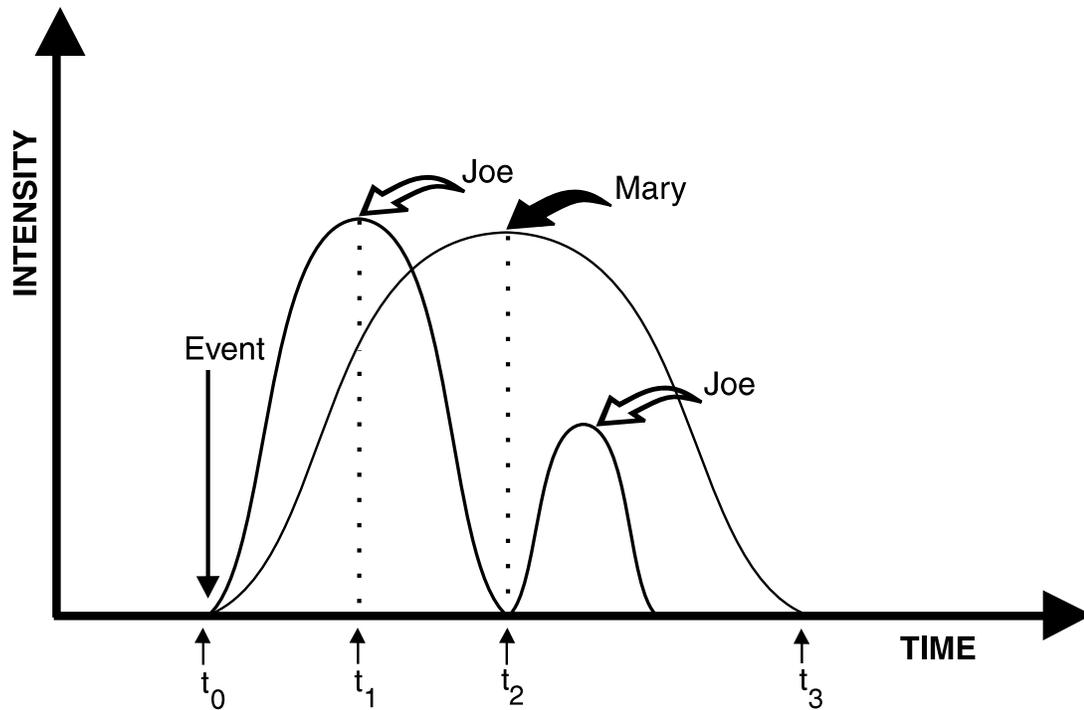
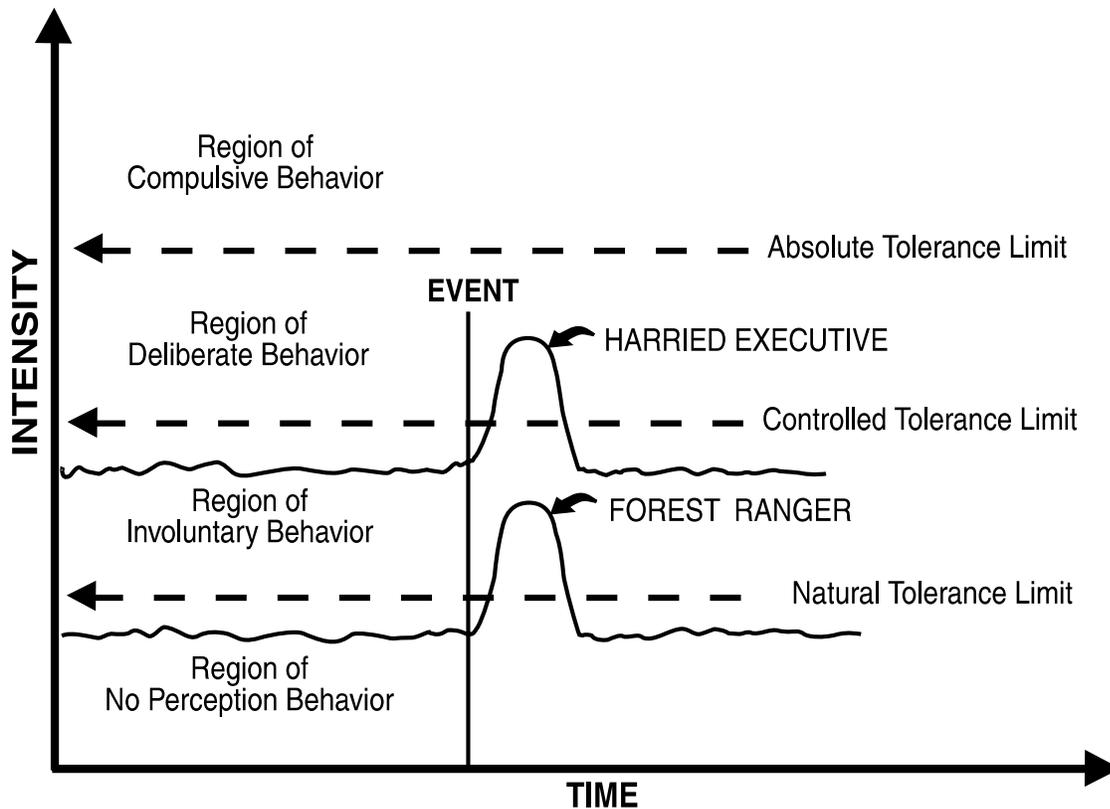


Figure 4. Communication Difficulties with Different Reaction/Recovery Styles

### IMPACT OF TOLERANCE LIMITS

The conceptual framework presented here is useful for exploring another important aspect of feelings. When emotion-provoking events occur at close intervals, a person's emotional intensity may be sustained at a high level for extended periods of time. If a second event occurs before the person has made a full recovery from a prior episode, the intensity of emotion may remain at, or even exceed, the level of the first episode. If the circumstances of a person's life are such that he or she is exposed to a series of emotion-provoking events, spaced closely together, then a situational base level may be established and maintained considerably above the hypothetical base level of no emotion. Figure 5 and the following example illustrate this concept.

A forest ranger may have a situational base level of anxiety that is below his or her Natural Tolerance Limit. This person will not be aware of any anxiety. A harried executive, on the other hand, may live in a daily environment with recurring crises that sustain his or her situational base level much higher, perhaps just below the Controlled Tolerance Limit. This person is constantly aware of experiencing anxiety but does not deliberately take any action to relieve this anxiety. If the forest ranger and the harried executive have an accident at an intersection, they share an anxiety-provoking event and react to it with the same relative increase in intensity of their anxiety. As shown in Figure 5, the forest ranger will become aware of an unusual amount of anxiety, but will be able to control behavior. The forest ranger may show signs of involuntary behavior such as nervousness, but will attempt to approach the problem logically. The harried



**Figure 5. Different Reactions to Emotional Episode of Same Relative Intensity**

executive, however, may appear to be reacting quite inappropriately to the incident. He or she may swear at the ranger or kick the car. The ranger and the executive will have difficulty talking about their different reactions to the same event. Even after they have both recovered from that particular episode, they may still have difficulty because of the discrepancy between their situational base levels of anxiety.

It is generally accepted that a sustained high level of emotion can be physically harmful. Because the human mind is highly adaptable and can accommodate a wide range of circumstances, a potentially dangerous situation can develop. If a person's environment contains a high level of emotional stimulation, e.g., in the Region of Involuntary Behavior, the person may become so accustomed to this level that he or she adapts to it mentally. In a sense, the Natural Tolerance Limit is raised to encompass the higher level and the person will cease to be motivated to seek any resolution to his or her life situation. In spite of the fact that emotional stimulation is higher and puts more strain on the body, the person will no longer perceive a problem.

## **APPLICATIONS FOR THE MODEL**

Practitioners in the helping professions may be able to develop better methods for recognizing and assessing the severity of this “problem of no problem” and discover ways to help clients learn to lower their Natural Tolerance Limits.

The phrase used most often to describe the process of inhibiting overt feeling behavior is “suppressing emotions.” This may be an unfortunate choice of words. To “suppress” an emotion implies that it is reduced in intensity. The conceptual framework we have developed here suggests that a more accurate description of the process may be “raising the Controlled Tolerance Limit”; the level of emotional intensity remains the same. Thinking in this way may lead to some entirely different strategies for learning to relieve negative tension through overt behavior. The old approach suggests that in order to get feelings out in the open to be acted on, they must be relived or raised in intensity into the Region of Deliberate Behavior. In fact, some practitioners use the technique of prodding at hidden emotions until the intensity level is raised to the point at which the client reacts overtly. This may work in some situations, but may lead to another problem. The person may be forced to misperceive events in order to realize a stronger emotional reaction to justify overt behavior. The inability to act out intense feelings is indicative of a high Controlled Tolerance Limit. If the limit remains high and the client is encouraged to use different strategies that raise emotional intensity until it is experienced in the Region of Deliberate Behavior, the strategies may become habitual.

Because the Controlled Tolerance Limit is “positioned” partly by conscious decision and partly by pressures of social norms, personal values, and self-image, an alternate strategy may be to tackle the source of these pressures so that people can exercise more conscious control over their limits. To exercise that control, people must recognize the mechanisms by which they respond to social norms, develop their values, or assess their self-images. In this way, people can learn how to maintain a lower level of feelings rather than increasing the level.

People can become more aware of their own limits and learn to manipulate deliberately the limit levels to meet their functional needs. With practice, people may be able to position their tolerance limits at the most functional levels for their current circumstances.

Another application of the conceptual framework presented here is to clarify communication about different responses by different people to the same event. People react with differing intensities to the same event as a function of their perceptions of the event and its relevance to them. For example, if the remark is made that “Fat people are clumsy,” a person of average weight will barely be aware of the emotional potential of the remark. Someone who is slightly overweight may feel hurt but not respond. However, a person who is considerably overweight and who has just failed miserably in attempts to diet may react very strongly.

People often feel guilty or inadequate if they act, or fail to act, on their feelings. When an event provokes an emotional response with a peak intensity at or near the Controlled Tolerance Limit, the person will feel some ambiguity about responding

overtly. If the peak intensity is just below the limit, the person feels a pressure to act, but the intensity is not quite sufficient to elicit an overt response. The recovery period, and the emotional episode, may be extended because of the person's inability to reconcile his or her failure to act with personal values, the pressure of social norms, and his or her self-image.

On the other hand, when the emotional intensity is barely sufficient to cause an overt response, as the person enters the recovery period and feelings are reduced in intensity, he or she wonders whether there was really sufficient cause to act. It is difficult to fully justify the reaction. In this case, too, the person's recovery period may be extended by anxiety over the possible consequences of the behavior.

The implications and inferences of the conceptual model presented here for thinking about feelings are numerous. The possible avenues for refinement and application are many. It is extremely useful for understanding and communicating about some of the more difficult aspects of feelings and how we deal with them.

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## INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CONTROL

### Udai Pareek

Two contrasting attitudes exist regarding the determinants of destiny. Some people believe that we can neither predict nor influence significant events, whereas others believe that we can do both. Issues related to prediction and causation of social and personal matters have intrigued philosophers, politicians, and psychologists alike. In the course of their studies they have developed many terms that serve as the basis for discussion of such issues. The most popular of these terms, “locus of control,” was suggested by Rotter (1954) and subsequently generated a great deal of research. This concept is based on the extent to which people perceive the contingencies that affect outcomes. Individuals who have *low* perceptions of such contingencies are said to have an *internal* locus of control; they believe that their actions produce outcomes. Those who have *high* perceptions of contingencies are characterized by an *external* locus of control; they believe that outcomes are the result of contingencies rather than their own actions.

A related concept is Weiner’s (1974) theory of *causal attribution*. Weiner asserts that a person attributes the outcome of an event to either internal or external “causes.” In addition, the dimensions of stability and variability are considered; both internal and external causes can be either stable or variable, thus yielding four categories of factors to which outcomes can be attributed (see Figure 1).

	Internal	External
Stable	Ability	Task difficulty
Variable	Effort	Luck

Figure 1. Categories of Causal Attribution

Weiner further proposes that the relationship between locus of control and stability significantly influences an individual’s perceptions regarding the causes of positive outcomes (success) and negative outcomes (failure). After several investigations, Weiner concluded that persistence in achievement activity results if the following attitudes exist:

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- Success is attributed to effort, the internal variable factor. If an individual perceives that his or her efforts, which are subject to direct, personal control, have a desired outcome, he or she will derive pleasure from increasing such efforts.
- Failure is attributed to both internal and external variable factors. If an individual perceives that his or her failure is due to either luck or effort, he or she still has hope that improvement can be achieved by expending more effort.

In contrast, if a person attributes failure to one of the stable factors, ability or task difficulty, he or she is likely to cease expending effort, realizing that such a factor will probably remain a hindrance and, therefore, that persisting in the activity is senseless.

## **INTERNALIZATION VERSUS EXTERNALIZATION**

Internalization is based on a belief in internal ability to “cause” or at least influence most events. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of internalization, it is useful to examine its different dimensions. An individual whose orientation is internal may attribute outcomes to either personal or group factors. When these factors are combined with the dimensions of stability and variability suggested by Weiner (1974), four categories of internalization result, representing dependence on the corresponding factors: *personal stable*, *personal variable*, *group stable*, and *group variable*.

Similarly, with externalization as a general orientation, one may attribute an outcome to either human factors (the social system or other people) or nonhuman factors (fate or luck). Combining these factors with Weiner’s stability and variability dimensions yields four categories of externalization, representing dependence on the corresponding factors: *human stable*, *human variable*, *nonhuman stable*, and *nonhuman variable*.

Figure 2 is a listing of all four categories of both internalization and externalization as well as the determinant and resultant mode of behavior associated with each category.

### **Internal Determinants**

Success or failure at achieving an outcome may be attributed to any of the four factors of internalization listed in Figure 2. As explained in the following material, the behavior of individuals or groups can be influenced by their perceptions of the determinants of these factors as the causes of outcomes.

1. The individual who attributes outcomes to *ability* (the personal stable factor) may come to feel that he or she has greater ability than most others and thus may behave like an extraordinary person or a prima donna. This type of individual is likely to dominate others and to become authoritarian, believing that he or she has a natural right to determine things not only for himself or herself but for others as well. Extreme dependence on the personal stable factor may result in an

Factor	Determinant	Resultant Mode of Behavior
<i>Internalization</i>		
Personal stable	Ability	“Superman” or prima donna syndrome
Personal variable	Effort	Self-determination
Group stable	Group abilities or characteristics	Acts of prejudice
Group variable	Group effort	Social determination
<i>Externalization</i>		
Human stable	Social system	Role assumption
Human variable	Other people	Compliance
Nonhuman stable	Fate	Resignation
Nonhuman variable	Luck	Persistence

**Figure 2. Characteristics of Internalization and Externalization**

attitude of self-righteousness and may lead to imposing one’s own values on others.

2. Attribution of outcomes to *effort*, the personal variable factor, may result in perseverance and a self-deterministic behavioral mode.
3. Attribution of outcomes to the *abilities or characteristics of a group* to which one belongs is indicative of the group stable factor and is likely to result in an exaggerated impression of the value of that group. Ultimately, this presumption of superiority may generate acts of prejudice. A self-righteous attitude on the part of the members of a group may convince them that they are special and that they should attempt to convert others to their own views or way of life.
4. By attributing outcomes to the group variable factor, the *effort of a specific group*, an individual begins to depend on social determination as a mode of behavior. Collective action is the result of this dependence. People with similar goals form a group so that through their collective action they can alter social conditions in accordance with their goals.

### ***External Determinants***

Outcomes may also be attributed to any of the four factors of externalization listed in Figure 2. The following material explains the way in which the behavior of individuals or groups can be influenced by their perceptions of the determinants of these factors.

1. Some people attribute outcomes to the human stable factor, the *social system* in which they live. This system may take any of a number of forms, such as that of a political structure, a work organization, or a specific arrangement of social strata like a caste order. Such people perceive individuals to be merely roles within a system. For example, a person whose particular system is the family may perceive his or her main responsibility in life to be the satisfaction of obligations associated with a specific familial role. Thus, the main mode of behavior for this type of person is role assumption and refusal to question the pressures of the system.
2. The individual whose locus of control is the human variable factor attributes outcomes to *other people* who are not a part of the stable system, but who are associated temporarily with that individual. Leaders and teachers from various fields are often included in this category. Such people often assume exaggerated importance to the individual who attributes outcomes to them, resulting in the individual's compliance with what is being demanded or suggested by them.
3. If a person attributes outcomes to *fate*, the nonhuman stable factor, he or she is likely to adopt an attitude of resignation, believing that no one is capable of affecting events.
4. Those who attribute outcomes to *luck*, the nonhuman variable factor, may believe in the probability of positive change and thus may be optimistic. Such people are often persistent in their efforts, hoping for more propitious circumstances in the future.

## **THE TIME PERSPECTIVE**

Still another perspective that enters into the consideration of attribution of outcomes is time. Of particular significance is the way in which people view what has happened to them in the past as well as what they expect to happen to them in the future. An individual does not necessarily perceive these two time dimensions, past and future, in a similar way. As illustrated in Figure 3, four basic attributional modes are derived when the concepts of internalization and externalization are combined with the dimensions of past and future.

1. The individual whose perspective is termed *authoritarianism* experiences guilt as a result of feeling responsible for an unsatisfactory past and, consequently, lacks self-confidence. At the same time, however, this type of person is provided with a means of deliverance in that he or she projects a strong image of an external authority who can be expected to change the situation. Thus, a combination of attribution of the past to internal factors and the future to external factors produces a person who is both independent and hopeful.
2. Those whose attributional mode is *fatalism* attribute both the past and the future to external factors, thus producing a state of helplessness.

	Past Internalization	Past Externalization
Future Externalization	Authoritarianism	Fatalism
Future Internalization	Religiosity	Activism

**Figure 3. Past and Future Dimensions of Internalization and Externalization**

3. *Religiosity* is the opposite of fatalism. Because religion instills a sense of internal determination, it is not surprising that correlations between internalization and religiosity have been reported (Sturgeon & Hamley, 1979). For example, a number of religions suggest that people themselves are responsible for their fates and can themselves change these fates through behavior in accordance with religious beliefs. Emphasis on the attribution of the past to internalization again builds a sense of guilt; but future-oriented internalization enables a person to become self-directed for action, leading to a search for religious or spiritual solutions. Religiosity also subtly develops a dependence on religion.
4. Those whose attributional mode is *activism* blame their past miseries and sufferings on external factors, such as a previous corrupt government, the social system, or a dominant class or race. Simultaneously, however, they possess a sense of internalization in that they believe themselves to be capable of changing their destinies through systematic action. Thus, such a belief provides significant motivation.

### **THE EFFECTS OF INTERNALIZATION**

On the basis of reported research, several generalizations can be made about internalization. For example, internalization appears to play a role in *learning*. Among other things, learning involves an awareness of and desire to understand situations and their contexts, curiosity, eagerness to obtain information, and the ability to process the information available. All of these aspects of learning seem to be related to internalization. When compared to those with an external orientation, individuals whose focus is internal have been reported as being more sensitive to new information, more observant, more likely to attend to cues that help resolve uncertainties (Lefcourt & Wine, 1969), and more prone to both intentional and incidental learning (Wolk & DuCette, 1974). The association of internalization with various aspects of learning seems to make sense. In order to influence or control outcomes, the person with an internal approach must acquire as much information as possible and then process that information as quickly as possible. Evidence supports the assumption that an internal locus of control leads to academic achievement (Crandall, Katkousky, & Crandall, 1965; Harrison, 1968; Lessing, 1969).

Some studies have also shown a high and positive correlation between internalization and *perseverance*, which is characterized by extra time spent on work (Franklin, 1963), continued involvement in difficult and complex tasks, and willingness to defer gratification. Lefcourt (1976) has summarized the research on the relationship between internalization and deferred gratification (Mischel, 1966). Involvement in long-term goals requires deferment of gratification; and persistence in effort requires undivided attention, which is not possible unless the temptation of immediate gratification is resisted. Because those with an internal locus of control believe that their efforts lead to favorable outcomes, they can rely on their own understanding and predictability. In contrast, those whose focus is external, perceiving a lack of personal predictability and fearing that unforeseen external factors will affect outcomes, may find it more attractive to seek immediate gratification than to try to achieve distant goals.

Internalization has been found to be an important characteristic of people with high achievement motivation (McClelland, 1961), and it has further been reported that an internal focus generates moderate or calculated *risk taking* (Wolk & DuCette, 1973). In fact, the results of one study showed that the correlation between achievement motivation and preference for moderate risk was significant and positive among those with an internal focus, but was almost zero among those representing an external orientation (Wolk & DuCette, 1973).

In addition, internalization seems to be the cornerstone of the process of *valuing*, which includes awareness of one's own values, willingness to declare those values in public, and adherence to them and the behavior associated with them in spite of outside pressures. This process of developing ethical norms and using those norms even in periods of crisis is also called "inner-direction"—the state of being directed by one's own, internalized standards rather than merely conforming to outside expectations, norms, or pressures. Some studies have also indicated the existence of a significant relationship between internalization and morality, which leads to resistance of temptation (Johnson, Ackerman, Frank, & Fionda, 1968), helping others (Midlarski, 1971), and low Machiavellianism (Miller & Minton, 1969). Apparently, internalization is important in the development of standards for judging one's behavior. Both personal autonomy and responsibility are involved in the process of valuing, which is necessary for the development of a healthy and proactive society.

One study (Mitchell & Smyser, 1975) has uncovered interesting relationships between internalization and certain organizational attitudes and behaviors. For example, those with an internal focus experienced greater job satisfaction than did those with an external orientation.

In addition, those who represented internalization preferred a participatory management style, whereas their counterparts preferred a directive style. The individuals who were internally oriented believed that working hard was more likely to lead to good performance, that good performance was more likely to lead to other rewards, and that they had more control over the ways in which they spent their time on the job. Another interesting finding involved supervisors' attitudes toward power: Those with an internal

orientation felt persuasive power was the most productive approach, whereas their counterparts relied on coercive power. Furthermore, the use of rewards, respect, and expertise was seen by internally focused supervisors as the most effective way to influence subordinates; those with an external orientation, on the other hand, saw coercion and their formal positions as most effective.

As is obvious from all of these findings, internalization plays an important role in human development and meaningful living. However, it is not without costs. Those who perceive their own abilities or efforts as solely responsible for failure experience stress and may become self-punitive. Attribution of failure or negative conditions to external factors may help people to cope with adverse experiences more effectively, to perceive social reality in the proper perspective, fight injustice, and to rectify undesirable situations.

### **THE EFFECTS OF EXTERNALIZATION**

Several interesting findings have been reported on the relationship between locus of control and issues associated with mental health. For example, among normal subjects, those externally oriented have demonstrated more *defensiveness* or rationalization for their behavior than those representing internalization (Davis & Davis, 1972; Phares, 1971). Some results involving the relationship between forgetting and internalization have been interpreted as the readiness of externally oriented individuals to recall negative information (which generates defensiveness) rather than to use forgetting as a mechanism for dealing with situations (Phares, Ritchie, & Davis, 1968).

Neurotic and psychotic symptoms are negatively correlated with behaviors exhibited by those with an internal focus, such as the tendency toward delayed gratification. In addition, psychopathological conditions such as *schizophrenia* and *depression* have been found to be associated with an external locus of control. Lefcourt (1976, p. 86) has summarized several studies on the relationship between locus of control and *anxiety* and has made the following conclusion: "In short, the evidence counterindicates the seemingly sensible assumption—that negative affect states such as depression and anxiety should be more common among those who are likely to hold themselves responsible for their successes and failures." The analysis of the various findings showed that two types of anxiety had been investigated: facilitating anxiety, which is motivating in nature, and debilitating anxiety, which inhibits progress toward a goal. Individuals with an internal orientation demonstrated more of the former, and those externally oriented demonstrated more of the latter.

Thus, the costs of externalization are high. Ultimately, an external locus of control leads to loss of hope, which, in turn, has been reported to lead not only to depression but also to suicide (Kobler & Stotland, 1964).

## WAYS TO DEVELOP INTERNALIZATION

Internalization is not an innate characteristic; people are ingenious at creating ways to develop it even under the worst societal circumstances. Evidence indicates that it can be fostered through work with children (Watson & Ramey, 1972), clinical work with mental patients (Masters, 1970), experiments in producing personal change (deCharmes, 1976), and specially designed management training (Reichard, 1975). Also, an understanding of the developmental process of internalization facilitates the search for interventions that are useful in this regard. Special training programs on the following subjects have been shown to be valuable in developing internalization:

1. *Self-Awareness.* In a variety of process or encounter programs, such as those offered in T-groups, individuals are assisted in confronting themselves, understanding their basic mental and emotional attitudes, and experimenting with new behaviors. Transactional analysis (TA) can also be used to help people understand their existential positions so that they can set new directions for their lives. In TA language, internalization is the “OK” position and externalization is the “not-OK” position.
2. *Motivation Development.* Internalization can be increased through achievement motivation training. McClelland and Winter (1969) have contributed a new approach to this type of training that concentrates on changing the basic attitudes of people so that they become more willing to take risks and to assume responsibility. This approach consists of altering an individual’s motives—defined by McClelland, Atkinson, Clark, & Lowell (1953) as an “affectively toned associative network”—by helping such a person first to analyze the imagery of his or her network and then to learn to change that imagery. The analysis process consists of conceptualizing the network, tying it to as many everyday situations as possible, and establishing the relationship between the network and such primary associative clusters as the self-concept. After analysis the network imagery is saturated with new content: concern for excellence and personal responsibility for outcomes.
3. *Valuing and Assertion.* Gestalt training has generated various programs in value clarification and assertion. The main approach of such programs is to help people understand their current value systems and then to teach them to incorporate awareness and assertion into these systems. Several types of activities have been developed for this purpose, including procedures for cognitive restructuring, behavior rehearsal, modeling, and assessment.
4. *Reinterpretation.* Everyone develops a personal cognitive world consisting of certain theories and interprets all actions and behavior according to these theories. A technique has been suggested (Reimanis, 1971) for assisting children in assessing their personal conceptual systems and in reinterpreting their own actions as well as those of others according to different theories. First they are helped to state how they would act in a given situation, and then they are helped

to change any terminology indicative of externalization into terminology associated with internalization. The objective of this intervention is to clarify the meaning of internalization and to show how it operates.

5. *Success Experience.* When people succeed in their efforts to control outcomes, they develop internalization. Programs that facilitate goal establishment and attainment can be instituted to offer individuals opportunities to experience this type of success. For example, children can be assisted in setting graduated, challenging goals and in achieving these goals one at a time. Independence training, which forms the basis of many child-rearing practices, is one example of this intervention.
6. *Supportive Demands.* To be able to expend effort, succeed, and develop internalization, people must receive sufficient warmth and support from others; in addition, they must have demands placed on them to cope with tasks and the consequences of those tasks. Training interventions such as simulation are useful in meeting these requirements.
7. *Social Awareness.* All activist programs are based on increasing the social awareness of people. Knowledge is power, and an individual feels much more capable of dealing with problems once he or she understands them. Training in consciousness raising, for example, can enhance the internalization of those who have very low selfregard.
8. *Collective Action.* Through collaboration people can help each other to increase internalization. When collective action results in mutual support, successful outcomes, and appreciation of effort expended, those who participated develop a sense of power and, thus, an internal orientation.

If people believe that they are capable of determining their destinies, they can enjoy life and attain self-actualization. A society that fosters internalization among its members can obtain maximum creative contributions from them and, therefore, can attain new heights of civilization.

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## ■ AN INTRODUCTION TO LIFESTYLE ASSESSMENT

### Daniel G. Eckstein and Robert Driscoll

The ability to understand as well as predict human behavior is one of the major goals of psychology. A significant contribution to the achievement of this goal was Adler's (1930) unified concept of personal "life style." Adler believed that understanding the human personality involves recognizing that each individual's behavior has social meaning, is unified and contains definite patterns ("life style"), is based on subjective perception, is purposeful and goal directed, and is motivated by a desire to overcome feelings of inadequacy coupled with an urge to succeed (Dinkmeyer, Pew, & Dinkmeyer, 1979).<sup>1</sup>

### LIFE-STYLE THEORY

A life-style investigation involves regression to formative childhood influences for the purpose of determining existential decisions regarding life, self, and others that affect present behavior and may affect future behavior. Thus, although the time reference is the past, determination of implications for the present and future is the goal of a life-style assessment. An investigation of this type focuses on such familial concerns as birth order, interpersonal relationships between family members, the siblings' main competitors, family values, and the individual's early recollections of formative experiences. Adlerian theory, which represents a departure from orthodox, "stimulus-response," environmental behaviorism, is based on the assumption that one's phenomenological personal decisions and conclusions ("private logic") are the crucial determinants of behavior (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

Such a position is similar to Allport's (1965) "mode of being in the world" as well as Van Kaam's (1966) "mode of existence." The optimistic philosophies of all such theorists include the belief that an individual's past decisions and patterns can be continually reviewed, modified, and/or changed.

As Ansbacher (1967) noted, the concept of "life style" is much more humanistic than that of a predestined "life plan." By exploring and assessing an individual's life style, it is possible to develop an understanding of that person as a self-consistent and self-directed entity whose central theme is reflected in all personal actions as forward

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<sup>1</sup> For further clarification of Adlerian theory, see D.C. Eckstein, An Adlerian Primer, in J.E. Jones & J.W. Pfeiffer (Eds.), *The 1981 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators*. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company, 1981. Also see the Life-style Questionnaire in J.W. Pfeiffer & J.E. Jones (Eds.), *The 1982 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators*. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company, 1982.

oriented, purposeful, and determined by individual values rather than by simple physiological responses to the environment.

As is the case with any data derived from self-revelation, information concerning an individual's life style is subject to a certain amount of bias. Gushurst (1977) speculated that interpersonal sharing is influenced by the following factors:

1. *The degree to which a person actually knows himself or herself.* To be able to identify patterns established early in life and to provide psychologically relevant data, an individual must possess a degree of self-awareness. The person who has not developed introspective abilities is at a disadvantage in this respect.
2. *The information that a person chooses to share.* Often an individual consciously decides to omit, emphasize, or distort data in a manner consistent with his or her life style. Avoidance behavior, for example, affects the degree of conscious distortion of data; it is used either to escape embarrassment, manipulation, or harm or to protect one's own civil liberties or those of significant others (by failing to discuss such issues as alcoholism or child abuse). "Gaming" also results in distortion of data and is characterized by attempts to seduce, discourage, or praise the person recording the data.
3. *A person's desire to avoid pain and hurt whenever possible.* This factor has less impact when an individual perceives the person recording the data as helpful, thereby minimizing the fear of being hurt.

## **LIFE-STYLE ASSESSMENT IN A GROUP SETTING**

The general procedure for assisting a group member in life-style exploration is as follows (Lombardi, 1973):<sup>2</sup>

1. Obtain case-history data.
2. Conduct a psychological interview.
3. Observe expressive behavior.
4. Carry out psychological testing.
5. Determine familial influences.
6. Investigate early recollections.
7. Examine interpersonal relationships.
8. Analyze systematic behavior to determine payoffs for psychopathology.

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<sup>2</sup> Additional information regarding life-style assessment skills is presented in D. Eckstein, L. Baruth, and D. Mahrer, *Life Style: What It Is and How To Do It*, Kendall/Hunt, 1981. Another approach that emphasizes applied counseling and clinical concerns is offered in L. Baruth and D. Eckstein, *Life Style: Theory, Practice, and Research*, Kendall/Hunt, 1981.

## ***Applications of Life-Style Exploration***

Any of several different approaches may be taken to implement the general procedure just described. In addition, the facilitator may want to experiment with the following applications of life-style exploration:

1. Members of an ongoing personal-growth group may be asked to complete a life-style assessment form at home. In subsequent group sessions, they are instructed to utilize a format similar to that of the Gestalt “hot seat” in which an individual shares the particulars of his or her life style and receives feedback from the remaining members.
2. Prior to conducting a formal life-style investigation, the facilitator may follow the suggestion of Dreikurs (1967) by assisting each individual in exploring his or her “subjective situation” (complaints, concerns, problems, stresses, and so forth) as well as his or her “objective situation” (functioning in the five basic “life tasks” of work or school, friendships, love, self-esteem, and the spiritual dimension). After the explorations and the formal investigations have been completed, each group member is asked to use both sets of information to answer the question “What would be different if all of your problems were solved and all of your concerns and stresses were eliminated?” Answering this question helps to determine personal payoffs for various concerns and stresses.
3. Discussing birth order may be useful when comparing the ways in which members function in the immediate group. The members are divided into four birth-order subgroups: oldest, only, middle, and youngest. Then each subgroup is asked to brainstorm answers to the question “What was it like to be in this birth-order position?” After the subgroup sharing, the facilitator presents a lecturette and/or handout summarizing birth-order research and then elicits comments from the group regarding personal applications of this information.
4. Each member of a group dealing with the effects of life styles on “here-and-now” concerns may be asked to consider answers to such leading questions as the following:
  - Who has been most influential in your life?
  - How has this person influenced you?
  - Who in this group is similar to your mother? your father? your brother? your sister? another person who has influenced you?
5. Life-style exploration may be integrated into an icebreaker (e.g., Sherwood, 1974). After subgroups have been formed, the facilitator asks the members of each subgroup to reach a consensus regarding which of the following they most identify with and why: tiger, chameleon, turtle, eagle, or salmon. Each subgroup is then asked to report its choice, its criteria for selection, and its reasons for not choosing any of the other four. After these reports, which usually generate

humor, the facilitator delivers a lecturette focused on such Adlerian concepts as the following:

- *Private logic.* Everyone makes choices based on perceived values and preferences. Such choices are representative of strengths as well as limitations or blind spots.
  - *Birth order and familial relationships.* Each individual has a particular birth-order position in relation to his or her siblings. Partially as a result of this order, he or she establishes a place within the family by using attributes such as intelligence or charm and through means such as athletic efforts or rebellion.
  - *The vertical versus the horizontal plane.* People often compete with each other because of a need to feel superior in some way. The notion of superiority suggests a vertical plane in which an individual's worth is determined by his or her position either above or below the positions of others. A more socially useful approach is the notion that people are simply different from each other and can be thought of as existing side by side in a horizontal plane. The basis of this concept is that everyone has unique qualities and is entitled to dignity and respect.
  - *The implications of social interest and empathy.* It is important to develop an ability to understand and respect one's own characteristics and behaviors as well as those of others.
6. The Life-Style Questionnaire may be administered and scored, personality attributes discussed, and a lecturette delivered concerning the derivation of Thorne's (1975) original five life-style types: aggressive, conforming, defensive, individualistic, and resistive. (The animal designations tiger, chameleon, turtle, eagle, and salmon have been used in the questionnaire to avoid possible negative stereotyping.) The authors suggest inclusion of the Adlerian concept of "encouragement versus discouragement" at this point. People often focus on what they consider to be undesirable behaviors and characteristics of others. For example, certain psychological tests, such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and the Draw-a-Person Test (DAP), primarily reflect pathology. This type of focus can be a source of discouragement to individuals. Thus, it is advisable for the facilitator to emphasize that such potentially discouraging labels as "aggressive" or "conforming" can also be a source of encouragement because of the strengths associated with them. The concept of situational leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1976) may also be presented to stress the need for an individual to change or combine characteristics and behaviors as appropriate.
  7. After completing the Life-Style Questionnaire or a similar instrument, group members may be asked to write paragraphs about what they have learned, to divide into subgroups to share the contents of these paragraphs as well as other

observations, and to reconvene in the total group for processing and for determining applications of learning.

### ***Applications of Early Recollections***

Another important component of life-style exploration involves analysis of the individual's generalizations about life, self, and others as reflected in early recollections (ERs). One method for conducting such an analysis is Mosak's (1958) "headline technique": Each specific memory is considered to be an article in a newspaper, and the facilitator's responsibility is to write the headline for each article.<sup>3</sup> The following guidelines (Eckstein, Baruth, & Mahrer, 1981) are useful in interpreting early recollections:

1. Employ unstructured, standardized statements such as "Think back as far as you can, and tell me the first thing you remember."
2. Record all events exactly as stated by the individual.
3. Distinguish between an early recollection (ER) and a report. An ER is a specific event and is related in phrases such as "One day I remember . . ." Conversely, a report is more global in scope and is typified by phrases such as "We used to . . .," or "Many times I . . ."
4. Look for recurring themes, such as whether the person is alone or with others, active or passive, and cooperative or competitive. Also note whether the relationships recalled are with peers or adults, males or females, and so forth.
5. Remember that ERs do not provide reasons; rather, they indicate movement toward goals or obstacles to be overcome.
6. Note whether the person's interests are constructive or destructive. For example, he or she may have sought attention and obtained it by excelling in school or by stealing automobiles.
7. Be aware that a desire to be with others does not always indicate a genuine interest in their welfare. For example, Adler (1937) recorded one woman's ER as follows: "I remember playing with my sister and two friends one day." However, this woman also indicated that her greatest fear was that of "being left alone." Under these circumstances the woman could be characterized more accurately as "lacking independence" than as "genuinely concerned about others."
8. It is not important to record the sequence of events in the chronological order in which they occurred; however, it is important to note the order in which the individual presents the memories.

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<sup>3</sup> For other specific uses of early recollections in a group setting, see D.C. Eckstein, An Adlerian Primer, in J.E. Jones and J.W. Pfeiffer (Eds.), *The 1981 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators*. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company, 1981.

9. The frequent appearance of the mother in recollections may indicate that the person was pampered during childhood, whereas the total absence of the mother may indicate feelings of neglect.
10. A recollection of the birth of a younger sibling is a good indication of later sibling rivalry.
11. Nikelly (1971) suggests that the people mentioned in an individual's ERs may not necessarily be the actual ones involved in that individual's life; for instance, "mother" may refer to a sister, teacher, or female peer.
12. Inner-directed individuals often recall observing others playing or working, whereas outgoing individuals mention their own active involvement and initiative.
13. Physicians often recall the illnesses of others or series of accidents, whereas artists mention the colors of clothes and scenery.
14. Athletes often cite sports and games in their recollections, and people who have academic problems are apt to remember difficulty with reading and writing. The same basic principle applies with religious or sexual concerns, marital conflicts, self-concepts, and so forth.
15. Encourage the person to share as many ERs as he or she can remember. A minimum of four and a maximum of ten are good guidelines.
16. Initial recollections should be considered more important than those cited later. Similarly, memories of commonplace events should receive greater attention than those of "spectacular" events. For example, recalling "sitting in the corner alone stacking blocks" is more significant than recalling a serious fire in one's home; few people would remember the former, but almost everyone would remember the latter.
17. Record both the content of the ER and the affective feeling associated with it. After a memory has been shared, ask the person how he or she felt at the time.
18. Because an individual's attitudes about the environment, self, and others change after counseling, so do his or her recollections.
19. Do not be reluctant to express an opinion as to the meaning of an individual's recollection. If the speculation is correct, the individual will signify this by means of a "recognition reflex," a slight smile or nod of acknowledgment; if the speculation is incorrect, the signal may be a confused or puzzled look. In either case, attempting to understand an ER and communicating that understanding can be a valuable learning experience.
20. Separate ERs are like individual beads on a necklace; it is always possible to find unifying themes that connect them and explain apparent inconsistencies.
21. According to Dreikurs (Allen, 1971), apparent ER theme inconsistencies are actually attributable to the observer's inability to grasp the logic that binds

individual recollections into a coherent unity. Dreikurs also maintained that if one is able to make a solid connection between the two most disparate pieces of information about a person's current life, it is possible to understand that person's behavior in a wide range of situations.

22. Mosak (1958) specified that if the person can visualize an incident, that incident is interpretable; if he or she proves unable to do so, the incident cannot be treated as a recollection.

## **BIRTH ORDER THEORY**

Another piece of life-style assessment involves an examination of where an individual stands in the birth order of his or her sibling group. An integral part of Adler's theory has been the importance of birth order on personality. Any comprehensive evaluation of life style thus necessarily requires an awareness of the individual's position in the birth order and the necessary consequences of that position on the individual's choice of life style, although birth order is obviously mitigated by other considerations.

The following characterization of individuals in specific ordinal positions (Eckstein, Baruth, & Mahrer, 1981) are based on group composites and are provided merely as guides for consideration rather than as standards for classification.

### ***Oldest Child***

The first child receives the parents' undivided attention until another child is born. Usually the oldest child conforms to the parents' standards because he or she does not want to lose their favor; as a result of this desire to meet adult standards, the child becomes quite responsible.

When a sibling is born, the first child may feel "dethroned" initially; but, because the first child is generally bigger and more capable than the younger sibling, the threat of the new arrival diminishes with time. However, if the second child is very close in age to the first, it is possible that the second might be more capable. In addition, when a male first-born child is only slightly older than a female, permanent dethronement can occur because of the girl's accelerated rate of growth and development.

Oldest children frequently are ambitious and anxious to achieve, often serving as pacesetters for the other children in their families. Disliking change, they generally develop conservative viewpoints. In addition, they are authority oriented, tending to relate better to adults than to peers.

### ***Middle Child***

The second or middle child enters into a situation in which the older sibling has been the center of the parents' universe. Consequently, he or she usually tries to overtake the first by competing in areas in which the oldest child is not proficient. If the first child is a

good student and athlete, the middle child may be a poor student and athlete but a skilled musician or artist.

Middle children tend to be more sociable than oldest children. They also are often sensitive to injustices, unfairness, and feelings of being slighted or abused or of having no place in a group. When a younger sibling is born into the family, the middle child often feels dethroned because of the new competition from the youngest child.

### ***Youngest Child***

The youngest child, unlike the oldest and the middle, is never dethroned. Because this child discovers many ways of inducing the parents and other siblings to do things for him or her, the youngest is often “spoiled” and is usually the most powerful person in the family. Frequently, however, because this sibling is generally the smallest, he or she is not taken seriously. It should also be noted that the youngest child benefits from having sibling models to observe.

### ***Single Child***

A similarity exists between the single child and the youngest child in that neither experiences displacement. The single child may refuse to cooperate when his or her every wish is not granted and may, in fact, grow to expect a “special place” in life without having earned it.

Single children develop in one of two basic directions: They either try to reach their parents’ adult level of competence or remain helpless and irresponsible as long as possible. They usually establish better relationships with people much older or much younger than with peers, experience difficulty with sharing, and often become loners.

### ***Adopted Child***

The adopted child reaps the benefits of having been planned and wanted by the parents and of the adoption agency’s investigation of the home environment prior to placement. A child who is adopted by parents who are unable to bear their own children is often overprotected or pampered. However, the development of an adopted child whose siblings were born into the family may be entirely different; in this type of situation, “in” and “out” groups of siblings often result.

## ***FAMILY GROUP***

Explorations of both early recollections and birth order lead to the obvious conclusion that a primary component of life-style exploration is an investigation of the individual’s family group. Gushurst suggested that the person responsible for conducting such an investigation is aided by the following types of knowledge and abilities (Nikelly, 1971):

- Familiarity with the importance attributed by Adlerians to such phenomena as organ inferiorities, pampering, abuse, sibling rivalry, subfamilies, and family

values. In addition, it is important to be able to recognize such common life-style types as the getter, driver, controller, victim, martyr, baby, avoider of feelings, and excitement seeker as well as such frequently observed life-style themes as feelings of inadequacy, contrariness, and the need to be right, superior, liked, or good.

- The ability to recognize, discover, and characterize behavioral patterns.
- The ability to compare the behavioral patterns of siblings for the presence of similarities and differences. Areas of contrast are thought to indicate either competition or inverse role modeling, whereas similarities may indicate the existence of alliances between the siblings, the common adoption of important family values, or the effects of parental imitation and effective role modeling (Dreikurs, 1953; Shulman, 1977).

The ability to make accurate inferences, either by extrapolation from stated information or through an intuitive, empathic grasp of the individual's perceptual world. Developing an accurate picture of this world necessitates taking risks and believing that the individual's own "recognition reflex" will provide diagnostic clues.

## **SUMMARY**

Adlerian theory emphasizes the necessity of building on an individual's strengths. The ultimate purpose of a life-style assessment is consistent with this emphasis: to identify personal assets as well as mistaken goals and self-defeating beliefs. As a technique of facilitation, life-style exploration can be used to develop a group member's awareness of personal strengths and of fact that less desirable characteristics can, in fact, be altered.

Life-style exploration involves two major considerations: early recollections and position in birth order. These in turn lead to an investigation of the family group as the developmental arena in which these twin forces influence life style.

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## ■ THREE FORCES IN PSYCHOLOGY

### Marshall Sashkin

The label “third force” has come into vogue (Goble, 1970) to describe those psychologists and social scientists who are disenchanted with two primary earlier psychological movements, Freudian psychology and behaviorism. Third-force psychologists share a more “humanistic” value orientation and offer a third alternative they believe to be consistent with more humanistic concepts.

### **FREUDIAN PSYCHOLOGY**

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) has had a tremendous impact on society. Although it is not possible to summarize his work in a paragraph or two, a few basic assumptions and the theoretical framework that came from them are given here. Further explications of theories are available in Freud (1977) and Branner (1973).

Freud, a physician, believed that a person’s behavior would ultimately be fully explainable in terms of biochemical processes; however, even today the biochemical functioning of the brain is not fully understood. In the absence of any physical technology for studying brain processes, Freud developed a hypothetical framework to explain some basic processes of mental functioning through observations of himself and of others who were both normal and mentally ill. For example, Freud hypothesized that certain areas of the brain acted like electrical switchboards in which nerve impulses come in and are routed to the appropriate parts of the brain. Freud’s three most important hypothetical constructs are the *id*, the *ego*, and the *superego*. Freud thought that people were born with a store of undirected energy impulses (the *id*) seeking discharge. For example, a hungry baby wants to be fed and is not concerned about the means. The *id* is associated with subjective feelings of pleasure or the removal of pain or discomfort. Of course, not all of a baby’s desires are met immediately, either because communication is limited or because parents are unwilling to satisfy certain *id* desires. As a child grows older, he or she has conditions put on obtaining pleasures until the energy impulses are organized into the *ego*, which mediates between the *id* and the real world. The *ego* functions to obtain whatever the *id* desires, but in a realistic manner. Over time, meeting the conditions and expectations of others becomes an end in itself to such an extent that a portion of the *ego* energy is reorganized as the *superego*, which acts to enforce parental and social conditions. The *superego* represents a set of internalized values that may really conflict with the *id* or *ego*.

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Basically Freud saw people as made up of instinctual self-interests, caring little about others, willing to do anything to achieve their desires, and constrained only by years of careful socialization that provide some internal controls that permit society to function. Freud thought that the psychic functions were pretty well defined during the first five years of life so any changes occurred only with great difficulty. Overall, Freud's picture was neither flattering nor hopeful.

## **BEHAVIORISM**

J.B. Watson (1878-1958) developed this approach at roughly the same time that Freud's work was beginning to win acceptance in Europe. Watson, however, took an approach almost opposite to Freud's. Watson (1979) was concerned solely with the prediction and control of behavior and his aim was to eliminate the "mind" as a focus for psychological study because, in his view, mental processes could not be scientifically studied. Watson was convinced that an individual's environment completely determines his or her behavior. He thought that people were flexible, passive victims of their environments and that the possibilities for shaping behavior in any direction were virtually unlimited. Like Freud, Watson saw people as no more than complex animals with similar destructive antisocial tendencies. Skinner (1971) carried out many experiments using Watson's theories and even showed how the behavior of pigeons and people could be "shaped."

In summary, although both the Freudian and behaviorist views of human nature are rather dismal, Freudians see behavior as primarily determined by our rather fixed (and ugly) nature, while behaviorists see behavior as almost totally dependent on environment and, therefore, changeable. Behaviorism is quite popular at this time, probably because behaviorists can point to experimental results. Freudians still generally hold to Freud's contention that his theories can be proven logically but not empirically.

## **HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY**

Humanistic psychology, the most common term for non-Freudian, nonbehaviorist psychology, is usually associated with Abraham Maslow. Maslow criticized Freudians for placing too much emphasis on abnormal individuals. He believed that the study of healthy individuals, especially outstandingly healthy ones, was of equal importance, and that mental illness could not be understood adequately enough to predict or explain behavior just by studying the behavior of the mentally ill. Maslow thought that behaviorists placed too much emphasis on statistics and averages, thus also losing sight of outstanding individuals. Maslow argued that a descriptive survey of what *exists* can never tell us what *can* be. He noted that although behaviorism and Freudianism emphasize the basic similarities between humans and animals, cooperation is more common within nonhuman species than is destructive aggression. The fact that various animal species possess unique instincts suggested to Maslow that human beings may

also possess unique instincts that cannot be studied by experimentation with rats or pigeons.

The humanists do not ignore or totally reject either Freudianism or behaviorism but see both as incomplete, inadequate approaches for understanding human behavior. Maslow (1968) said, “Freud supplied to us the sick half of psychology and we must now fill it out with the healthy half.” Behaviorism he felt “to be not incorrect but rather too narrow and limited.”

Humanistic psychology, in contrast to earlier approaches, has different and more clearly stated values. People are seen as basically “good.” Humanistic psychologists want to discover ways by which individuals may develop to the greatest extent of their abilities, rather than to adjust the individual to society or to predict and control behavior. Self-actualization—the individual’s need to become all he or she can be—is the major focus of humanistic psychology.

This description of humanistic psychology—the “third force”—is brief and rather oversimplified. More detail is available in Rogers (1970) or Maslow (1968). It is obvious, however, that the third force in psychology differs considerably in its view of human behavior and human potential. People are seen in an optimistic light as basically good, nondestructive, and filled with potential for growth and change.

## **CONCLUSION**

Just as each of the three descriptions above is oversimplified, it is simplistic to think that there are only three primary themes in psychology and behavioral science theory. The three frameworks reviewed center on the individual and his or her behavior, but many behavioral scientists were more concerned with social or group behavior (Lewin, 1948) or societal functions (Parsons, 1960). Other psychologists such as Carl Jung, a younger colleague of Freud who developed his own rather different viewpoint, have not been mentioned.

Maslow was in one sense an early attempt to take the best from the Freudian and the behaviorist approaches, which is different from an integrative approach or a true synthesis of apparently contradictory views. Modern psychology is still seeking an adequate synthesis of themes.

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## ■ ORGANIZATIONS AND THE SEARCH FOR APPROVAL

### Allen Johnson

Many of us unknowingly have become caught in a trap, one that snares people of all ages and backgrounds. The trap is the feeling that we must be accepted, or even loved, by all people at all times. When we think that people do not approve of us or do not like us, we become upset, sometimes even unable to function. We have become dependent on other people and on institutions for our sense of self-worth. Many of us have even ceased to choose for ourselves, instead selecting what we think others will approve of or have us do. The further one falls into this trap, the more one allows others to control one's destiny.

This phenomenon—searching for approval past the point where it is socially or psychologically functional—permeates our society. It can be found in our homes, on the playground, in schools, in factories, and in offices. The following are just a few examples of how it typically appears in organizations.

- Fred stifles an idea in a problem-solving or brainstorming session because he is afraid that others might think it is silly.
- Sharon is a purchasing agent. The materials she ordered are a month overdue, yet she decides not to renegotiate the price for fear of offending the vendor.
- Ralph is making a formal presentation. He begins with a joke that does not go over well. He begins to feel physical anxiety.
- Mary just led a training session and is reviewing the participants' evaluations. With the exception of one, they are all positive. She wonders who disliked the presentation and worries about what went wrong.
- Bill fails to confront an undisciplined subordinate.
- Rebecca decides that she does not like someone who does not seem to be interested in her or her contribution.

We continually allow ourselves to feel anxious, frustrated, angry, depressed, or inferior because we believe that others should or must like us, love us, or approve of us.

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## **THE TRAP IS SPRUNG EARLY**

Powerful social and cultural sanctions and mandates exert pressure on us throughout our lives. From birth we are taught to seek the approval of others, to allow external forces to control our lives. If we follow the rules, we receive hugs and kisses; if we break the rules, we are punished. Actions of independence often are labeled selfish, uncaring, or inconsiderate; spontaneity is frowned on. This training is begun by parents and reinforced by schools. Teachers direct children's daily actions from moment to moment. Disagreement with the teacher or professor is not allowed. Creative thought is praised in principle but discouraged in practice.

Many of us assumed that when we graduated and entered the business world, we would use our own instincts and intuition more. However, we soon discovered that we were expected to uphold certain standards: one does not discuss salary; one does not express emotion; one does not offer ideas that are slightly off center. One does please the boss, whatever that may mean.

Other institutions also demand that we relinquish our power. Government plays its part. It withholds a portion of each of our paychecks to pay future taxes. We cannot even choose what portion of our paycheck is deducted for Social Security. Our churches tell us to relinquish our will, that they will interpret for us how we should live and what we should believe. Popular songs and multimedia advertising tell us that we are "nobody" until somebody loves us, that we are unacceptable if we have bad breath, dull hair, or dirty shirt collars. The message is clear: we must seek the approval of others in order to be happy or successful. Others define how we are to think, feel, look, and behave. Many of us even have begun to believe that when we fail, the fault belongs to others.

It is easier for parents and teachers to maintain discipline and for society, religious institutions, and organizations to maintain order when those whom they are attempting to control are acquiescent and do not question. However, the history books are full of evidence that this phenomenon can be very, very dangerous.

## **THE PROBLEM COMPOUNDS ITSELF**

There is nothing wrong with wanting to be liked. The problem is the desperate need to be liked that has become so debilitating to so many people. Yet common sense tells us that this type of behavior is foolish. The person in an organization or family who is most liked or respected most often is straightforward, honest, autonomous, and self-fulfilled. Such people are seen as successful in the fullest context of the word. They realize that "perfection" is an unattainable goal because to be loved by one person is to be despised by another. What one person finds attractive, another finds dull. One can only please oneself.

Even those who are adept at changing to suit the whims of others will draw disapproval for reasons outside their control. One's sex, nationality, or color of hair often is enough to incur disapproval. If these do not, at some point one's age undoubtedly will. Furthermore those who seek continual love must always be lovable.

Marcel Marceau, the famous French mime, does a pantomime entitled “The Mask Maker,” in which he plays a craftsman who tries on a number of “invisible” masks, concluding with a smiling face. Somehow this mask becomes stuck, and the master desperately attempts to separate himself from his creation. While the body of the mask maker writhes in agony, the face remains joyful. As Marceau dramatically demonstrates, the experience is exhausting.

Those who continually seek approval have no time for other pursuits. Self-actualization is precluded because the seeker has no time to cultivate self-determined interests. Considering what others *might* think, the risk would be too great.

## **AUTONOMY IS NOT IRRESPONSIBILITY**

The way to avoid the trap is to become more self-directed, more autonomous. Autonomy does not mean exemption from established laws of propriety. Nor is it lack of responsibility; in fact, it is just the opposite. People are best suited for living responsibly, just as they are best suited for living autonomously. Autonomous people are on time, meet their commitments, and respond to action items—but for the right reasons. The motivation for acting responsibly comes from within, from a personal sense of integrity. Autonomous people accept the consequences of their actions; they respect the worth and dignity of other people; and they understand that most personal differences are merely differences, not faults.

Autonomous people know how to negotiate; they believe that it is responsible to seek resolution to issues that are negotiable. This is natural in those who believe in the dignity of others. They also are clear when an issue is not negotiable—when a basic value is on the line. At such times, these people will say, “Let’s agree to disagree and get on with living.”

## **WHAT CAN BE DONE**

It is obvious that the pressures to conform, to seek approval, to require love are enormous and pervasive. But we, as individuals, can adopt counteroffensive tactics. Although our thoughts, actions, and feelings can be influenced by others, we can make the final selection. We have that choice.

Our ability to choose is expressed dramatically in the writings of Victor Frankl (1962), a psychotherapist who survived a Nazi concentration camp. Despite the horror of his circumstances, Frankl declared that one still had the freedom to make choices.

The experiences of camp life show that man does have a choice of action. There were enough examples, often of a heroic nature, that proved that apathy could be overcome, irritability suppressed. Man can preserve a vestige of spiritual freedom, of independence of mind, even in such terrible conditions of psychic and physical stress.

We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but

they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way. (p. 65)

Obviously, there are ways in which we can help ourselves and others to break out of the trap. Some of them are described by Wayne Dyer (1976); others are suggested in the literature of therapy (Beck, 1976; Burns, 1980; Ellis & Harper, 1975). They include the following:

1. *Recognize that the thoughts, actions, and feelings of others belong to them.* You are not responsible for them. You are responsible for the integrity of your own behavior; how others respond to that behavior is their affair.

For example, imagine that you are giving a speech and notice that someone in the audience appears to be evidencing disapproval. Ignore it. Whether the person believes you or agrees with you is that person's problem. At the same time, avoid mind reading. Perhaps the person merely is trying to understand the implications of what you have said or is thinking about a personal problem that has nothing to do with your speech.

2. *Be honest.* When you are feeling pressure to acquiesce in order to gain approval, say it. It is a very simple technique, but can be disarming. Try saying something like, "You know, normally in a situation like this, I would shift my position to win your approval, but I really feel strongly about this issue and do not have a reason to change my point of view."

3. *Thank the person who, for whatever reason, disapproves of your behavior.* You are praising that person's independence while maintaining your own. At least the person has not fallen into the trap of agreeing with you to win your approval.

4. *Interact with someone who is likely to disagree with you or to try to manipulate you by withholding approval.* Practice not becoming upset by it or by the reaction of the other person.

5. *When tempted to seek approval, ask yourself "Would I be better off if this person approved?"* The answer most often is no. Your personal self-worth is not increased or diminished by the opinions of others, who know less about your thoughts or the reasons for your behavior than you do. You still own your talents, your interests, your lifestyle, and your personal dignity.

6. *Accept the fact that some people may not understand you.* In turn, you may not understand them. That is normal. You and they are not omniscient, and it is not your job to understand or to be understood by all people at all times.

7. *Do not engage in the habit of substantiating your opinion by asking, "Isn't that right?"* It does not matter if people agree if you are merely stating your opinion. You believe what you believe. Parenthetically, it also is offensive to attempt to use a third party to support your opinion because it is an attempt to "gang up on" or demean the second person. It says, in effect, "Boy, are you dumb; can't you see that everyone else sees this my way?" Rather than attempting to gather support, try talking about ideas.

8. *Correct yourself out loud when you realize that you have slipped into the trap.* Try saying something like, “Uh-oh, I just verbally changed my position in an attempt to win your approval. But I know that I haven’t really changed my mind, so I’d like to back up and start over. I maintain my ideas. If we can resolve our differences, fine; if not, we’ll just have to acknowledge that they are different.”

9. *Stop saying that you are sorry for your own mistakes or actions.* Saying that you are sorry is asking for forgiveness, for the person to like you or love you again. In effect such forgiveness gives you permission to repeat the same offensive behavior. Instead take responsibility for your action. Say simply, “My behavior was inappropriate, and I will do all I can to see that it does not happen again.” In this way, you are not asking the other person to accept your behavior.

## **THE SEARCH CONTINUES IN ORGANIZATIONS**

Most of us continue our search for approval in the organizations in which we work. A person who is dependent on the opinions of others will, in time, become less flexible, more reserved, and increasingly bland—uncreative and stagnant. This is called “playing it safe.”

As is true of individuals, the need for approval can seriously hamper the effectiveness of the organization. There are organizations that play it safe. This grows out of a corporate belief that managers make decisions and subordinates follow orders. If the attitude is pervasive, only the top executive(s) may actually make any decisions, with all other managers and employees merely agreeing or doing what they are told—being uncreative and stagnant. This is attractive to some managers because it eliminates risk. After all, asking another person’s opinion may result in a statement of disagreement or disapproval, and that can be uncomfortable.

Organizational norms and policies that foster employee dependence and passivity can be crippling for two reasons. First, a compliant environment fosters “group think.” Employees are so eager to please the boss, so intent on creating a sense of cohesion, that new ideas and significant concerns are not voiced. This may result in the implementation of solutions that are premature or undeveloped. The company’s focus becomes increasingly narrow; alternatives are not considered.

The second effect is that compliance stifles creativity. Organizations that ignore or discourage participation will extinguish the creativity of their employees. This does not take long; people are programmed quickly. A single, traumatic squelching can be enough to arrest further efforts on the part of the employee involved and those who witnessed or heard of it.

The negative effects of all this can include personal dissatisfaction, loss of effectiveness and efficiency, loss of key personnel, short-range thinking, poor planning, poor solutions, lack of innovation, and a lessening of growth and diversity.

## **HELPING PEOPLE IN ORGANIZATIONS TO BREAK OUT OF THE TRAP**

Managers can help their subordinates to avoid the trap by establishing an environment that encourages independence, personal responsibility, and acceptance of differences. In the same way, parents, teachers, counselors, spouses, and friends can adapt the suggestions that follow to help their children, students, clients, family members, friends, and others. Implementing these suggestions is a good start, but that in itself is not enough. Developing autonomy requires nothing less than a new way of thinking. The change must come from the inside out. To help others means to be continually aware and to reject even the most subtle evidence of dependency in oneself or one's associates, including one's subordinates, family, friends, and so on.

1. *Encourage creative thinking.* Creativity that is allowed to flourish is self-propagating. Creative thoughts are self-motivating to the individual; there is nothing quite so satisfying as experiencing a new idea. Furthermore, a creative act encourages more divergent thinking. This is valuable in generating more efficient and effective ways of conducting business and getting things done.

There are numerous ways of encouraging creativity. Individual and group brainstorming is one. Another is inviting employees to look at a problem in a new way ("How would John Wayne look at this problem?" "How would King Solomon solve this problem?") Employees can be encouraged to turn problems upside down or inside out.

Remember, however, that the reinforcement should be self-directed, not other-directed. The individual should recognize the joy of creative thinking because it feels good, not because the boss likes it. Instead of saying, "I appreciate what you are doing," try saying, "It must be very satisfying to come up with those creative ideas."

2. *Allow (encourage) employees to determine their own goals for success.* People do not like to be told how to behave; our prisons are full of people who have been told how to behave. But personal goal setting does work. We are committed to what we decide is important. Moreover, the act of setting one's own goals has some magic in it: One's subconscious begins to look for ways to satisfy wants and perceived needs. People who are motivated find ways to achieve. There may be room for negotiation with one's manager about one's goals, but the more a person can "own" his or her own goals or plan of attack, the better the chances of success.

3. *Have employees appraise their own performance.* This practice demonstrates that the organization promotes independence and self-control and believes that all employees—both managers and subordinates—have the right to self-expression. Managers have the right to describe what they see; their points of view have value. But employees should be involved equally in the appraisal process; they have unique perspectives about both their jobs and their performance.

The performance evaluation should be thought of as an adult-to-adult encounter in which ideas and concerns are expressed and discussed mutually. This may be difficult at

first, both for supervisors and for employees. In the long run, however, the effort will engender greater employee responsibility, self-regulation, and self-motivation.

4. *Allow subordinates to chair meetings.* This decreases the likelihood that “group think” will occur. It offers employees an opportunity to practice communication, leadership, problem identification, and problem-solving skills—thus reinforcing the development of self-responsibility in other areas of work. Most importantly it underlines management’s support of individual autonomy. It denotes that contribution is valued over acquiescence and that each employee has something to contribute.

5. *When you see that your presence is influencing the direction of a problem-solving meeting, excuse yourself and leave the room.* This is another way of avoiding “group think.” It will not take long for your employees to understand that independent thinking is valued in your department. Given the opportunity, most employees can learn to analyze and state the problem, identify alternatives, and select a solution that is equitable and workable. If the employees are not fully prepared to take on this challenge, develop their capacities in stages. For example, leave the room while alternatives are listed; then return during the proposal or selection of solutions.

Encouraging employees to participate in problem solving is not an abdication of managerial responsibility. It is drawing on the greater resources of the group, developing employees who can contribute more, thus expanding the manager’s own options.

6. *Encourage your employees to research problems and make recommendations.* Not only do employees have unique perspectives about organizational issues and problems, but they also may have access to some information that is not readily available to managers. Furthermore, taking responsibility for some aspect of the job increases an employee’s sense of ownership. It is likely to lead to increased motivation, self-direction, and greater contribution.

Before each case, it is important to let the employees know whether the recommendation will be subject to revision and by whom. Establishing clear expectations is important in building employee autonomy. An employee who understands the limitations of an assignment will not waste time “spinning his or her wheels” and is not likely to resent the part that the manager plays. When messages related to the extent of authority are misunderstood, the employee is likely to become resentful or defensive; when the task is clear, the employee is likely to accept it with a greater expectation of success.

## **THE NEXT STEP**

Succumbing to an excessive need for approval can be debilitating for both individuals and organizations. Whenever people are externally driven—as are those caught in the approval trap—they are operating under another’s view of the world. This creates personal dissonance. It thrusts the individual outside his or her established comfort zone, generating artificial behavior that is rigid, clumsy, and void of spontaneity. It is no

wonder that such people are less effective. A large part of their mental and physical energy is spent in trying to decide what others want, not in being or doing.

Understanding how the search for approval and affection creates dysfunctional behavior is beneficial to both managers and employees. Examination of the phenomenon and awareness and practice in overcoming it can be goals in employee training programs, in supervisory-skills training, in team-building sessions, and in other organizational contexts.

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## ■ CODEPENDENCE: LEARNED DYSFUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR

Judith A. Pfeiffer

### **THE ORIGINS OF CODEPENDENCE**

Although the term codependence has become a household word only since the late 1970s, researchers who have studied this phenomenon have known of its existence for much longer. Originally, the term was used to describe those people whose lives were affected because of their relationships with a chemically dependent person. The “codependent” partner or child of a drug or alcohol abuser was considered to have developed an unhealthy pattern of coping with life as a reaction to living with the abuser. Typically, the codependent minimized or denied his or her own problem.<sup>1</sup>

More recently, codependence was described as a behavioral condition, a stress disorder, and a mental disease. More attention is currently being paid to it because of the growing awareness that a large portion of the population may be codependent and because of increased interest in family psychology and, more specifically, in dysfunctional family systems.

Researchers now believe that codependent patterns do not necessarily develop solely as a result of having lived with a chemically dependent person. It is now clear that codependent behavior is learned in dysfunctional families and reinforced by our culture. Even more specifically, it is believed that codependence can emerge from any family system in which certain unwritten—even unspoken—rules exist. These “family rules” have a profound effect on the codependent’s approach to life.

### **DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY RULES**

Codependence is a dysfunctional pattern of living and problem solving that is fostered by certain behavioral codes held by the family of origin. A person in a dysfunctional family may receive messages such as “Go along with the crowd”; “Support your husband/wife/father/mother”; “Don’t air the family laundry in public”; “Listen to your father/husband”; and so on. Many rules are linked to traditional sex roles: for example, “Men should be mechanical” or “Women should be nurturing.” Such rules can produce “half-people” whose development and freedom are constricted by those rules. There also

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<sup>1</sup> For instruments to assess a codependant’s learned behavior patterns, see the LBP: Self (the self-administered Learned Behaviors Profile) and Other. Both instruments and an administrator’s guide are available from Pfeiffer & Company.

are many all-or-never rules: “Always be polite” or “Never talk back to your father.” People who grow up with dysfunctional family rules learn that they should be people pleasers and find healthy personal growth and change very difficult. Below are some examples of typical dysfunctional family rules:

1. *It is not permissible to talk about problems.* If a person is not allowed to talk about problems within the immediate family, a logical corollary is “Don’t air the family laundry in public.”
2. *Feelings should not be expressed openly.* In our society, when people begin sentences with “I feel . . .,” they usually go on to talk about something they think. For example, a person might say, “I feel that it is important to protect the environment,” in order to express a belief. The expression of a true feeling, such as “I feel sad today,” makes many people uncomfortable.
3. *Communication is best if indirect, with one person acting as messenger between two others.* Families with this rule rarely communicate directly with one another. Rules two and three generate an inability to say directly to another person “I feel [a certain way] about this situation.”
4. *Expect to be perfect.* Families with this rule continually think, “I should be strong; I should be good; I should be right; I should be perfect.” The parents will say, “Make us proud by doing that all the time.” People who are ruled by these “shoulds” are likely to feel shame, doubt, frustration, and anger when they fail to attain perfection.
5. *Don’t be selfish.* Individuals who have been taught always to think of others first often feel selfish and guilty when they think about their own wants, needs, or feelings.
6. *Do as I say, not as I do.* Rarely does a mother or father tell a child, “These are the family rules, so do as I say and not as I do.” However, many parents communicate this message quite clearly without words.
7. *Play and playful behavior are frivolous.* Many adults have difficulty enjoying themselves and are afraid to let others see the child in them. They believe what others expect them to act “mature” all the time. Many seem to be afraid that if they or others let go, things might not be in control. Children in the family learn this rule at an early age.
8. *Don’t rock the boat.* Members of dysfunctional families are taught not disrupt the status quo. Dysfunctional families strive to preserve homeostasis.

Each of the above rules contributes to a need to protect or isolate oneself from others by not taking the risk of getting close to another person. The rules stem from an avoidance of interpersonal issues and from a fear of confrontation or of facing the need for change. People who grow up with these rules do not realize that there are families in which individuals are free to talk about problems outside the family, to express emotions openly, or to make mistakes without undue criticism.

## ***The Result: Learned Dysfunctional Behaviors***

Patterns of living develop through practice. The ways in which people treat themselves and others and handle stress and conflict are direct results of the rules they learned to follow while they were growing up. For example, people who have grown up in perfectionistic families may expect every minor detail to go exactly as planned. If a child is scolded when things are left lying around the house or when minor tasks are left undone, that child may begin to believe that every mistake, however small, is a major transgression. That person may begin to say, "If only I were smarter (or prettier, or more athletic), then everything would be all right." It is difficult to feel good about oneself when one's every action fails to live up to someone else's impossible standards. The attempt to comply with dysfunctional family rules can lead to a variety of predictable behavioral patterns. These behavior patterns, which probably are learned unconsciously, can continue in later life even though they are dysfunctional (Pfeiffer & Pfeiffer, 1990a, 1990b).

People who come from families in which communication is poor, in which emotional expression is discouraged, in which personal identity and needs are secondary, and in which they are criticized or made to feel unable to meet parental expectations, may be unable to cope with the difficult process of growing up. They may not know how to be vulnerable, how to ask for help, or how to forgive themselves for making mistakes. They may isolate and deny themselves. They may expect themselves always to be kind, selfless, and concerned for others and may berate themselves when they are unable to live up to these unrealistic expectations. People from dysfunctional families tend to develop unhealthy patterns of coping, such as compulsive, perfectionistic, approval-seeking, or dependent behavior. In their search for others' approval, they may become doormat codependents. They may suffer from physical exhaustion, depression, and hopelessness, eventually becoming unable to meet their responsibilities. They may abuse or neglect their children. They may become suicidal; or in an attempt to meet unrealistic expectations, some codependents become self-destructive workaholics, alcoholics, chemical (drug) dependents, shopaholics, sexaholics, food abusers, or compulsive gamblers. Thus, codependents may become dependent on other people, circumstances, or behaviors. These toxic relationships can lead to self-delusion, emotional repression, low self-esteem, and feelings of shame. The severity of dysfunction can range from a slight degree in a limited area to nearly total inability in many areas.

## ***CODEPENDENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT***

Many researchers now believe that codependence stems from incomplete psychological autonomy. According to Erikson (1964), the first stage of development is the resolving of trust/mistrust issues. During the second stage of development, which takes place at about two and one-half years, the child should learn to establish his or her own autonomy. If this does not happen, the child begins to experience shame and doubt. In

many families, children are not encouraged to go out on their own and to establish their own boundaries. In these cases, the children never are completely free from their parental roots, and it is difficult for them to strike out on their own.

Weinhold and Weinhold (1989) define codependence as a failure to complete one or more of the important developmental processes of early childhood, especially the process of separation. If separation—or the establishment of autonomy—is not completed successfully, the individual relies on others to direct his or her life.

Moreover, studies (Gilligan, 1982; Lever, 1976) have shown that mothers (traditionally the primary caregivers) encourage separation and the formation of “ego boundaries” with male children but that—because they perceive female children as being more like themselves—they do not encourage individuation as much or as fast with their daughters. Thus, girls perceive themselves as more connected to and associated with others, whereas males are more self oriented. As a result, masculinity is defined through separation, and femininity is defined through attachment. Our society encourages independence, power, assertion, and similar characteristics in men and expects caretaking, empathy, and sensitivity to the needs of others from women. Children’s games make these differences evident. Boys more often play outdoors in large groups and in games that emphasize competition and adherence to rules. Girls, on the other hand, more often play indoors, in more intimate groups, in games that emphasize relationships. Girls also are more likely to make exceptions to rules. Boys routinely quarrel during their play, whereas the games of girls are likely to end if quarrels develop. Women, who are defined in terms of relationships, are threatened by separation; men, who define themselves as individuals, are threatened by attachment. Obviously, both types of sex-differentiated development limit an individual’s range of emotional and behavioral options.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF CODEPENDENCE**

Melody Beattie (1987, 1989), whose books on codependence are currently popular, focuses on the problem of “addiction to other people.” She states that the two most typical behaviors of codependence are (1) compulsive caretaking and (2) attempts to control others. A survey of the literature suggests that this view is shared by many.

Mellody, Miller, and Miller (1989) state that the two most significant problems of codependence are the relationships with oneself and with others; specifically, the problems of recognizing one’s own feelings and being able to share them. Others (Hayes, 1989; Wegscheider-Cruse, 1988) describe additional types of compulsive behaviors and diagnose codependence in terms of emotional and behavioral cycles. In general, codependent people share some or all of the following characteristics:

1. *Difficulty in identifying their own feelings.* Codependents often have trouble pinpointing what they are feeling. They wonder, “Am I angry? Am I lonely? Am I sad? Do I feel hurt?” The difficulty can range from emotional repression (denial of feelings)

to confused emotions. A codependent person who feels abandoned may describe his or her feelings as “closed down or numb” rather than in terms of his or her pain.

2. *Difficulty in acknowledging and expressing their feelings.* They are likely to think, “I am feeling hurt; but how might others act toward me if they knew how I feel and, worse, what might they think of me if they knew my true feelings?” Because of their early conditioning, many people are afraid to express emotions. To do so engenders the additional pain of fear, shame, or guilt. Thus, some codependent people are unable to acknowledge their own realities or communicate their emotions to others. Some codependents have trouble regulating their emotions; they are either too controlled or too effusive.

3. *Difficulty in forming or maintaining close relationships.* As soon as some people start getting close to another person, they begin to push the person away. They think, “I want to be close to others, but I am afraid of being hurt or rejected by them.” They may desire an intimate relationship, but intimacy seems too risky and frightening. Part of the reason for this fear may be an inability to trust others, which can range from difficulty in developing friendships to difficulty with deeper intimacy or sexuality.

4. *Being rigid or stuck in attitudes or behaviors.* An example of this characteristic is the wife who stays in a marriage for twenty years because she believes that divorce is unacceptable, that being single is unacceptable, or that she is unable to support herself. She may say, “Even though it hurts to live this way, it’s the only way I know.” She may already be unhappy in the marriage but stays with something that she was trained not to change. She may worry about what other people will think of her if she has a “failed” marriage or is single. Another rigid attitude is exemplified by the person who sacrifices a relationship in favor of a principle. For instance, if a codependent’s dinner partner is late, the codependent person may focus solely on the tardiness rather than on the more important goal of socializing with the other person. In part, this behavior may be the result of an inability to express feelings and to deal with issues as they arise. “Shifting gears” requires a certain emotional flexibility, which may be too risky for the codependent person. Similarly, many codependents have trouble moderating their experiences and expressions of reality; they maintain an “all-or-nothing” perspective.

5. *Perfectionism.* Having too many expectations for oneself and others is another form of “all-or-nothing” thinking. An example is a person who goes on a crash diet and then binges on candy bars afterward. Perfectionists feel pressure to be perfect, to perform tasks perfectly, and so on. They cannot forgive themselves, and they believe that others will not forgive them, if they make a mistake.

6. *Difficulty in adjusting to change.* This characteristic also is exemplified by people who stay in relationships far beyond what is good for them. Again, their perceived inability to solve problems, their inability or unwillingness to shift gears, and the difficulty of overcoming ingrained behavioral patterns contribute to this problem.

Many codependent people have learned one primary pattern and are unable to perceive emotional or behavioral options.

7. *Feeling overly responsible for the behavior or feelings of other people.*

Codependent people are embarrassed by the actions of others. They believe that the appearance and behavior of someone they are with reflects on them. A codependent mother may even be embarrassed when her baby cries. These feelings of responsibility and embarrassment may lead to the next characteristic.

8. *Attempting to control the behavior of others.* Symptoms include trying to do people's thinking for them, worrying about or attempting to solve other people's problems for them, and attempting to influence the behavior and emotions of others. Often, codependents will say, "I feel responsible for so much because the people around me feel responsible for so little." They may feel the need to control events and people around them because they think that everything around and inside of them is out of control. A person who believes that he or she will lose control without a tight hold on the reins may attempt to extend that control to his or her entire environment.

9. *Becoming so absorbed in other people's problems that they are unable to identify or solve their own.* People with this characteristic frequently give more than they receive. They may care so deeply about other people that they forget how to care for themselves. They may not be able to identify, much less satisfy, their own needs and wants.

10. *A continual need for approval from others in order to feel good about oneself.* According to Subby (1987), the codependent learns to do only those things that will earn others' approval. This is a continuing theme in codependence. Examples include agreeing with others when one does not really agree; saying yes when one wants to say no; doing things that one does not really want to do in order to please others; and trying to change one's personality in order to meet the preferences and expectations of others. Obviously, one cannot please all of the people all of the time. Unfortunately, the continual attempt to do so ultimately causes the person to deny much of who he or she really is.

11. *Difficulty making decisions.* Indecision can be the result of a lack of experience in decision making, from a belief that one cannot make good decisions, or from a fear of making the wrong decision and being criticized. Indecision can be caused by thinking or worrying so much about a problem that the person gets stuck. Codependents with this characteristic often let others make their decisions. For example, if the media bombards them with the message, "This is what you should be doing or wearing or driving," they may do things they do not enjoy, wear clothes they do not like, or buy automobiles they do not want. They fear that others will not accept them unless they make the proper decisions about these things.

12. *A feeling of powerlessness over one's life.* A person with this characteristic says, "Nothing I do makes any difference." Charlotte Kasl (1989) describes codependence as

an addiction to security. Although she was writing primarily about women, she also described today's society and its deeply rooted fears of giving up power. The codependent person may be waiting for someone else to save him or her.

13. *A sense of shame and low self-esteem.* This characteristic stems from perceived failures in one's life. It is impossible for anyone to continually live up to unrealistic rules and expectations. If one is raised in an environment of conflicting messages, incongruous behavior, and repeated criticism, one feels ashamed. People who are criticized repeatedly as children come to believe that they are ugly or stupid, cannot do anything right, and so on. It is extremely difficult for these people to experience appropriate levels of self-esteem as adults, because they have not experienced success; they do not know their potential strengths; and they do not have a wide range of emotional or behavioral options.

14. *Weak personal boundaries.* One definition of a personal boundary is the psychic space between oneself and others. Codependents may not be aware of where they end and other people begin. Thus, it is easy for others to invade their "selves" mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically. In addition to not being able to set functional boundaries for themselves, some codependents often are not able to recognize, or do not respect, others' invisible boundaries. Attempts to control the emotions, thoughts, and behaviors of others are examples of disregard for others' personal boundaries.

15. *Compulsive behavior.* Typical compulsive behaviors include excessive caretaking, overworking oneself, overeating, overdieting, overspending, excessive gambling, attempts to control others, promiscuity, taking drugs, and excessive consumption of alcohol.

Any of the above symptoms or problems are currently considered indicative of a codependency problem. When one is able to identify a codependency issue, then, through this awareness, steps to implement new alternatives can be taken. It seems clear that certain dysfunctional behavior patterns result from being raised in a dysfunctional family. In fact, recent literature suggests that codependence may be a characteristic of up to 90 percent of the population.

## **THE PRICE OF SECURITY**

Many codependent people appear to be self-sufficient, strong, and in control. In fact, friends and relatives of codependent people often come to them with problems. Friel (1988) terms this pattern *paradoxical dependency*; the paradox is that beneath the image of strength often lie insecurity, self-doubt, and confusion.

Kasl (1989) states that codependence is an addiction to security. Today's culture and social situations accept and endorse codependent behavior. People are taught to care for others, often at their own expense. Codependence causes people to become lost and then to shut down. They shut down emotionally, losing touch with their feelings; they shut down spiritually, avoiding things that could be inspiring; and they shut down

intellectually, having difficulty even organizing their thoughts. Finally, they shut down physically. New research indicates that many physical—not hypochondriacal—ailments such as ulcers, gastritis, headaches, and actual diseases can be the result of a lack of emotional sharing.

The first National Conference on Co-Dependency, held in Scottsdale, Arizona, in September, 1989, defined codependence as “a pattern of painful dependence on compulsive behaviors and on approval from others in an attempt to find safety, self-worth, and identity. Recovery is possible.”

Thus, codependent behavior is learned behavior that might at one time have been functional but is now dysfunctional. Fortunately, anything learned can be unlearned.

## **PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION OF THE PROBLEM**

Traditionally, codependents were people who lived with alcoholics and drug abusers; therefore, most forms of treatment until recently were related to Al-Anon programs and were offshoots of the Alcoholics Anonymous twelve-step recovery program. In fact, much light on codependence has been shed by recovered alcoholics and drug abusers who became counselors in their fields, then realized that staying clean did not solve the underlying problem of codependence.

Recently, codependence has become big business. In addition to the hundreds of books published by psychological and counseling presses, hundreds more are now available or planned by major commercial publishers. John Bradshaw’s television program “Bradshaw on: The Family” was seen on fifty public-broadcasting stations. There are more than 1,500 Co-Dependents Anonymous (CODA) support groups. The first and second (1990) National Conferences on Co-Dependency were sold out with over 1,800 registrants, mostly professionals in the field. There are several associations for adult children of alcoholics. The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy has recognized codependence, as has the U.S. government. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism has partially funded a treatise on codependence. Dr. Joseph Cruse, the founding medical director of the Betty Ford Center, has organized the first National Institute for Physicians Specializing in Co-Dependency.

Unfortunately, codependence has become such a popular issue that it has become a catch-all for all manner of symptoms and treatments. This is attributable, in part, to the large number of nonprofessionals who have capitalized on the shortage of professionals who are qualified to treat codependence. Professionals studying codependence now include family counselors, clinical and research psychologists, psychiatrists, and medical doctors, all of whom do not agree on the causes or scope of the problem.

## **TREATMENT**

Because codependence has become so widely recognized, many treatments currently are being used. These range from self-help (primarily in the form of books), to attending support groups, to psychotherapy, to inpatient treatment centers (there are currently close to twenty-five centers, located primarily in Arizona, California, and South Dakota). Most approaches include long-term treatment and a support system. They usually stress the importance of avoiding other dependent (nonrecovering) people and, thus, avoiding the formation of destructive codependent relationships. Support groups and psychotherapy are the primary methods of treatment used by professional counselors. As general knowledge of codependency grows and people identify their own codependency patterns (such as excessive caretaking), they can solicit feedback and support from their colleagues in implementing positive changes.

Today's society encourages and reinforces codependent behavior. Therefore, a more global intention rather than a strictly individual approach seems necessary. Socialization of children, school curricula, parenting practices, and so on, should be examined and reworked to ensure that they do not continue to reinforce codependent behavior.

## **CODEPENDENCE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE HRD PROFESSIONAL**

With the knowledge that (1) codependence is a deeply rooted problem that can be traced back to childhood, and thus is not easily eradicated, and (2) that most people are codependent to some degree, human resource development (HRD) practitioners may realize the need to be more tolerant of their trainees. Reviewing the list of common family rules, one becomes aware that HRD asks many people to do exactly what their family rules have instructed them not to do. For example, in team-building sessions, HRD professionals ask work teams to talk about the ways in which they function, to discuss whole-team and interpersonal problems, to look for ways to change and improve themselves, and to communicate openly and directly with one another. These tasks—which are often presented as operating norms—require people to behave in a manner exactly the opposite from the way many have been taught. It is important for HRD professionals to remember that, for many people, open communication, voicing of problems or concerns, personal disclosure, and the prospect of change are threatening. If, as stated earlier, almost 90 percent of the population suffers from codependence, HRD practitioners must bear these considerations in mind when working with others.

Furthermore, the phenomenon of codependence may explain in part to HRD professionals why groups—especially groups of people from various cultural and family backgrounds such as those in organizations—can experience such difficulty in learning to work together harmoniously. Perhaps a knowledge of codependence may make HRD professionals think that their tasks are impossible. On the other hand, knowledge of the codependence phenomenon can give HRD professionals a deeper sense of satisfaction—

and admiration for those groups who have learned to interact without codependent restrictions.

The HRD professional also must examine his or her own pockets of codependency. Does his or her need to achieve perfection discount a client's progress in conflict resolution? Does overcommitting to work alleviate some uneasiness about self-worth? Does helping others solve their problems become more important than finding personal solutions?

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## ■ EMOTIONAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS: EXECUTIVE PROBLEMS

**James Campbell Quick, Debra L. Nelson, Janice R. Joplin, and  
Jonathan D. Quick**

Emotional isolation and loneliness are problems that affect many people in U.S. culture and particularly executives, those at or near the top in the organizational hierarchy. These problems are important because of the adverse health consequences that result from them as well as the organizational problems they can create. Emotional isolation can lead to behavior that others find difficult to understand or respond to. For example, an executive whose emotional isolation leads to interacting with people in a manner that they find aloof and uncaring may experience difficulty in developing any mutual comfort or interdependence in working relationships. Often the behavior of a person experiencing emotional isolation can lead to recurrent, intense conflicts with others, sometimes creating unresolvable problems. Once the situation reaches this worst-case scenario, the individual experiencing the isolation and exhibiting the difficult behavior may resign or be asked to leave the organization.

In this article the authors identify the forces that contribute to emotional isolation and loneliness for executives, examine the adverse health consequences of these feelings, and explore the implications for human resource development (HRD) professionals.

### ***FORCES CONTRIBUTING TO EMOTIONAL ISOLATION***

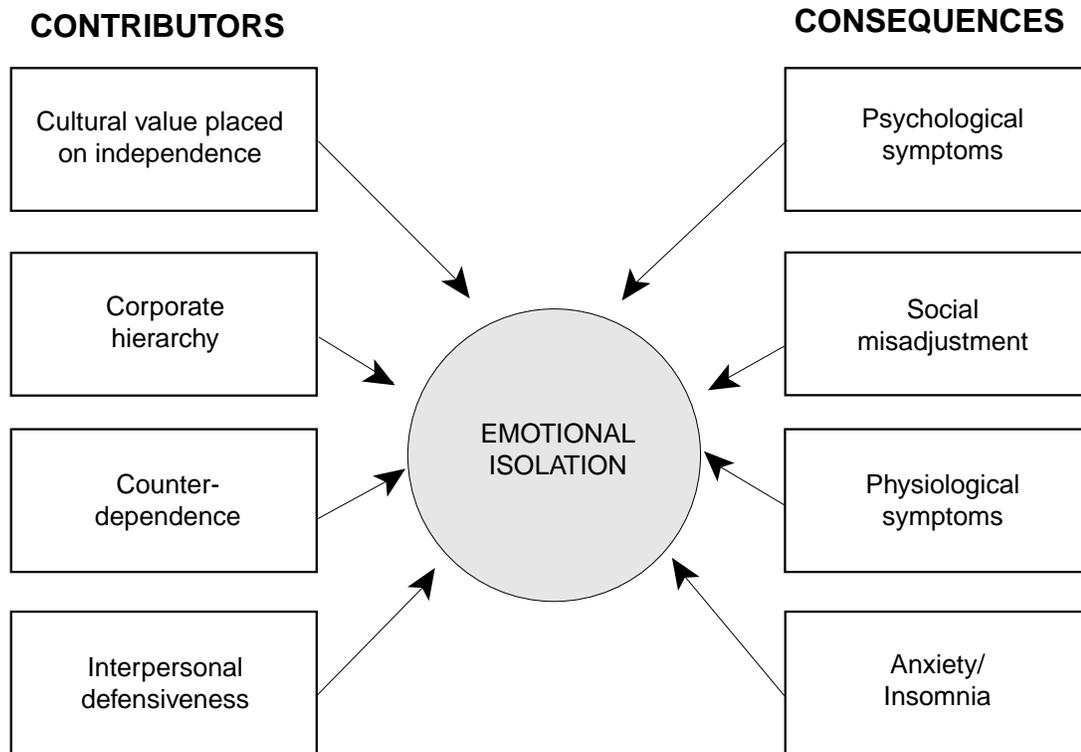
There are four forces in the late Twentieth-Century U.S. culture that contribute to the problems of emotional isolation and loneliness for executives. These forces, depicted on the left side of Figure 1, are (1) the value that the person places on independence, (2) the corporate hierarchy, (3) the behavioral strategy of counterdependence, and (4) interpersonal defensiveness in working relationships. These forces are examined in the following paragraphs.

#### ***Independence: A Cultural Value***

The U.S. culture places great value on independence (Hofstede, 1980a, 1980b). This value is reflected in the heroic figures that have emerged during the Twentieth Century,

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**Figure 1. Forces Contributing to Emotional Isolation and Possible Consequences**

such as Superman, the Lone Ranger, and John Wayne. These figures appear solitary and self-sufficient, communicating an omnipotence that is the basis of the myth of independence. The myth suggests that a “real” man or woman can grow up, if he or she is healthy, and not need anyone else. The reality is that achieving total self-sufficiency is a physiological, psychological, and practical impossibility.

However, the truth or falsehood of the logic inherent in this myth is less important than the extent to which people accept the myth. The executive who believes in this cultural myth is more likely to engage in autonomous behavior, which in the extreme can lead to emotional isolation and loneliness. Furthermore, the value placed on independence results in a dynamic that emphasizes the individual and leads to a process of separating the individual from the group. The consequences of this process are emotional isolation and loneliness.

Not all cultures foster this myth. In a study of 160,000 working people in sixty countries, Hofstede (1980a, 1980b) found significant differences across cultures with regard to the value placed on independence and individualism. While Americans prize this value, the Asian cultures place much less importance on independence and individualism. Instead, the values they prize emphasize the family system and the group. This different value system leads to a social process of attachment as opposed to

separation. The consequence of attachment is bonding in human relationship, not emotional isolation.<sup>1</sup>

Individual personality differences also operate within the larger value framework of a culture. For example, Zaleznik (1977) describes leaders and managers as fundamentally different types of personalities. In particular, he makes the point that leaders have the capacity to work in a solitary fashion for periods of time, whereas managers do not. This does not necessarily mean that leaders are lonely; there is a difference between being alone and experiencing loneliness. The ability to work alone for periods has to do with a phenomenon of human maturation: Over time people develop the ability to incorporate various perspectives into their internal conversations; they look at issues from different perspectives and carry on a kind of dialog with those perspectives. According to Zaleznik, leaders have a higher degree of this ability than managers do; managers need much greater social contact to avoid a sense of emotional isolation and loneliness. Also, in most organizational structures, managers—particularly front-line managers—must interact extensively with others to accomplish their work. Leaders, on the other hand, may tend to isolate themselves more than managers do not only because that is their inclination but also because their work is less dependent on interaction with others. Consequently, leaders may be at greater risk of emotional isolation than managers are.

### ***The Corporate Hierarchy***

Men and women have organized themselves in complex organizational hierarchies for millennia, most likely beginning with the temple corporations of ancient Mesopotamia (Sterba, 1976). The advent of the Industrial Revolution over the past two centuries has led to the evolution of the business corporation as the dominant organizational form in U.S. and other Western cultures. The vertical nature of a hierarchy forces those who are higher in that hierarchy to be increasingly isolated from those who are lower in the hierarchy. The discrimination that leads to this separation is based on authority and responsibility.<sup>2</sup>

Schwartz (1990) explains very well the psychological problems created by vertical separation in a corporate hierarchy. He refers to the situation as “ontological differentiation” because of the self-enhancing bias created for those higher in the hierarchy and the self-diminishing bias created for those lower in the hierarchy. The implicit message is that executives who are at or near the top of the hierarchy are better or more perfect than other employees; consequently, there is a social distance in relationships that exacerbates within the problem of emotional isolation organizations.

Schein (1989) argues that because we typically perceive working relationships in hierarchical terms, we do not have good alternative models for relationships of a

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to keep in mind that although emotional isolation may not be a problem within the Asian cultures, there may be an inhibition of individualistic and exploratory behavior that limits freedom.

<sup>2</sup> Not all organizational forms create the degree of vertical separation that becomes problematic in terms of emotional isolation. For example, Mintzberg (1979) discusses “adhocracy” as a professional form of bureaucracy that does not emphasize the vertical dimension.

different nature. Yet, he continues, the computer and information system revolutions have confronted us with the issue of how to reconceptualize work and our relationships at work. If he is correct and the future demands an organizational structure that is not hierarchical, the potential benefit for executives is less exclusion from human relationships.

### ***Counterdependence***

The corporate hierarchy and the value of independence are culture-based forces that move executives into positions of isolation. However, there are also personality-based forces that can contribute to emotional isolation. One of these forces is counterdependence.

Normal human development is dependent on a child's process of *attachment* (Bowlby, 1982), which consists of connecting himself or herself to reliable "attachment figures"—generally parents—during times of threat or danger. If the child knows that the attachment figure(s) will be there and will provide what is needed, that child will grow to become a self-reliant adult, accepting responsibility for his or her well-being and, at the same time, maintaining a support network of people who will be available and willing to help in times of need (Quick, Nelson, & Quick, 1991). However, if a child's attachment figures are absent, unreliable, or unresponsive during the developmental years, that child experiences separation anxiety. People who experience separation anxiety frequently and intensely during childhood may begin to employ alternative, dysfunctional strategies for achieving a sense of felt security in times of danger or threat (Bowlby, 1973; Kobak & Shaver, 1987).

One of these dysfunctional strategies is overdependence, a desperate clinging to others. The fundamental problem of the overdependent personality is the lack of autonomy or the ability to stand on one's own. Although this strategy may have a negative effect on an executive's decision-making ability and job performance, the authors have found no indication that overdependence is related to any psychological or physical disorders.

However, the same cannot be said of the second dysfunctional strategy, that of counterdependence. In working with groups of managers and graduate students, the authors have found a significant, positive relationship between counterdependence and a range of health disorders (see the section entitled "The Impact of Emotional Isolation on Health" in this paper). The counterdependent strategy consists of avoiding or denying one's needs in times of threat or danger. It represents an attempt on the individual's part to achieve self-sufficiency in relation to others. The fundamental problem of the counterdependent personality is the lack of close, personal or professional relationships on which to draw in times of need.

Situations involving danger or threat naturally trigger the experience of anxiety and fear. Counterdependent people attempt to achieve a sense of security in such situations by distancing themselves from others. Hence, counterdependent people become isolated and lonely at precisely the times when it is least appropriate to be so.

## ***Interpersonal Defensiveness***

Another personality-based force that can contribute to emotional isolation is interpersonal defensiveness. Although there are times in which it may be appropriate to defend oneself from physical and/or psychological attack, Wells (1980) has demonstrated how interpersonal defensiveness in working relationships can lead to powerlessness, isolation, loneliness, and other destructive outcomes for everyone involved. Interpersonal defensiveness always establishes barriers between people, creates distance in relationships, and may result in a wide range of communication dysfunctions.

Interpersonal defensiveness may take either an active or a passive form. The active form comes from the mind-set of “I am right and you are wrong.” This aggressive, controlling, dictatorial form of interpersonal interaction is illustrated in comments such as “Don’t argue; just do as I say” or “Now see, that proves my point.” The executive who uses an active defense likes to hold the upper hand in relationships. The passive form of interpersonal defensiveness comes from the mind-set illustrated in Willie Nelson’s song “Excuse Me for Livin’.” It is a submissive, withdrawn, nonaggressive and nonassertive form of interpersonal interaction. It may be best characterized by comments such as “I’m just doing what I was told” or “OK, whatever you say.” Apologies that are inappropriate to the situation and serious self-deprecation are clearly forms of passive defensiveness.

Both of these forms of interpersonal defensiveness create distance and alienation in relationships. The alternative to interpersonal defensiveness is nondefensive interpersonal interaction, which is characterized by responsibility, nonreactivity, power, control, openness, and choice. The executive who is nondefensive chooses how to relate interpersonally and is not simply reacting to the behavior of the other person. Nondefensive interactions have the potential to build and strengthen working relationships. Even though two people may not necessarily agree about the issues at hand or their positions, when they interact nondefensively they have a better understanding and appreciation for each other as individuals. Hence, mutual respect and common understanding are the least one might expect from nondefensive interactions.

## ***THE IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL ISOLATION ON HEALTH***

As depicted on the right side of Figure 1, several health consequences of emotional isolation are suggested in the literature. For example, House, Landis, and Umberson (1988) reported that lower levels of social support resulted in higher levels of distress and death. Specifically, they concluded that there is strong empirical evidence for the causal impact of social relationships on health. In addition, they concluded from their analysis of experimental and quasi-experimental studies that isolation is a major risk factor for mortality from a wide variety of causes. Emotional isolation, loneliness, and the absence of social relationships have been tied to mortality and a range of health disorders in earlier studies as well (Lynch, 1977). The authors’ research has confirmed a

set of significant, positive relationships between counterdependence and a range of health disorders: psychological symptoms, social misadjustment, physiological symptoms, and anxiety/insomnia. These disorders are discussed in the following paragraphs.

### ***Psychological Symptoms***

Emotional isolation can lead to a wide range of psychological symptoms of distress, including depression and burnout. Depression may be the most common of the psychological symptoms and is akin to emotional deprivation. Although the psychological consequences of emotional isolation appear rather early in infants and children, parallel effects in the adult stages of life may take significantly longer to manifest themselves for two reasons.

First, it is rare that an individual experiences total social isolation or loneliness. Instead, adults are far more likely to become “psychologically anemic” by operating “a quart low” in the arena of social relationships. Hence, an executive may have a mild depression that continues untreated for extended periods of time because it has minimal impact on the executive’s personal and work life. However, the depressed executive may experience decreased abilities in the areas of decision making, judgment, and other key cognitive processes. Depression awareness and treatment programs in industry have found that early awareness is often the best cure.

Second, it may take longer for the depression and other psychological symptoms to show up in an adult than in a child because an adult has a larger reservoir of emotional and life-history reserves to draw on. Thus, an executive may operate in a deficit position for an extended period before totally depleting his or her emotional reserves. Also, in some cases, the internal reserves may be strong enough to avert serious depression with only minimal social contact. For example, Brigadier General Bobby Reisner tells of his experience of emotional isolation in a North Vietnamese prisoner-of-war (POW) camp during the Seventies. He found that he was able to avert serious depression by (1) developing a self-talk dialogue about all of the positive events of his entire life and (2) forming as much of a POW support network as possible within the confines of the camp. Few executives will face constraints as severe as General Reisner’s, so the risks are not insurmountable.

### ***Social Misadjustment***

Executives and managers rely heavily on a wide range of social cues and role-related information developed within the network of relationships in the work environment. Thus, isolation leads to the loss of key information and expectations that flow through the network. Although mild social misadjustment may not lead to disaster, serious social misadjustment may result in errors from which it is difficult to recover: decision-making errors, miscalculations of planning risks, or problem-solving failures. In addition, social misadjustments can lead to distrustful and/or hostile working relationships and morale problems.

The authors' research has found a significant relationship between counterdependence and social dysfunction. The dynamic for this relationship is the denial and defensive distancing process that counterdependent personalities use in relationships with others. The attachment process, spoken of earlier, results in the formation of a support network that serves as a "guidance system" in times of need, analogous to any guidance system used by aircraft to effect safe landings. In times of need, counterdependent people disconnect parts of their "guidance systems"; hence the dysfunctions and misadjustments.

### ***Physiological Symptoms***

There are a variety of physiological symptoms that may result from emotional isolation, the most serious being premature death from any of a wide range of causes. Less-serious physiological and medical health problems, many of which fall into the realm of psychosomatic disorders, often precede premature death. Hence, health awareness is a very important issue for executives. Because of individual differences, these early-warning signs in the body may turn up in a variety of physiological systems, such as the digestive, respiratory, cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, and nervous systems.

The research on emotional isolation and the impact of relationships on physical health have not identified specific physical pathways through which the effects are developed. The point of impact of the physiological symptom is determined to a great extent by the "Achilles heel" phenomenon, also known as the "weak-organ hypothesis," which states that the physiological or medical breakdown occurs in the weakest link of the body. Studying family history is one of the best ways to identify a person's Achilles heel. For example, an executive whose family history contains cardiovascular or digestive problems is most likely at risk for the same disorders.

### ***Anxiety/Insomnia***

As mentioned earlier, the authors have found anxiety and insomnia associated with higher levels of autonomy in the work environment. They have found an even stronger, positive relationship between these symptoms and counterdependence. People who are counterdependent have distanced themselves in social relationships. The resultant anxiety is analogous to the separation anxiety experienced by the child in need who is unable to connect to attachment figures. Although averting the experience of anxiety is obviously not the sole purpose for being in a relationship, the key issue is to have people who are accessible in times of threat, danger, or need.

Self-reliant people display decisive, active behavior that is sometimes erroneously confused with counterdependence. The difference between the counterdependent person and the self-reliant person lies in the well-developed support network that the self-reliant person draws on in times of need and to achieve effectiveness. It is the support network that frees a self-reliant person to engage in autonomous behavior that may look like counterdependence. The counterdependent person, however, does not reach out in times

of threat, danger, or need and instead internalizes the experience in the form of anxiety. Anxiety and insomnia are overcome through supportive attachments and relationships.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR HRD PROFESSIONALS**

Although executives in particular are at risk of experiencing emotional isolation and loneliness, these problems can occur at any level of an organization. The human resource development (HRD) professional can take a number of steps to help prevent or minimize the experience of emotional isolation and loneliness:

1. Promote awareness by distributing copies of this article to the top-management team and leading a discussion on its content. Educate executives and others about the risks of isolation.
2. Encourage the people to give priority to establishment and maintenance of personal support networks.
3. Conduct team building, starting with the top-management team. Promote the view that teamwork is essential not only for front-line employees but for all levels of the organization.
4. Suggest that top management reward teamwork throughout the organization. Help top managers to set up and implement an appropriate reward system. Urge all teams in the organization to congratulate themselves and to celebrate successful team efforts.
5. Encourage top managers and other employees to develop an awareness of their health: to have annual physicals; to chart their family medical histories; and to recognize digestive problems, anxiety, insomnia, and other symptoms as early-warning signs that require attention.
6. Model self-reliant functioning by developing and nurturing your own support network and monitoring your own health.
7. Conduct training to build skills in nondefensive behavior in interpersonal transactions.
8. Support and encourage membership in interorganizational networks and professional societies.
9. Develop a mentoring system, and encourage mentoring at all levels.
10. Set up support systems for people at work. Give special attention to high-risk groups: new employees; those who travel frequently; those whose work environments are physically arranged in a manner that contributes to isolation; and those near retirement, who may gradually disengage from the work environment to the detriment of their health.
11. Develop a list of resource people that employees can consult in times of special need.

Ironically, U.S. organizations are now stressing the importance and the impact of group work—something that they have been taught is less valuable than individual achievement. However, the importance of teamwork in alleviating the problems of emotional isolation and loneliness has been largely overlooked. The HRD professional now has an opportunity to make this connection known and to take advantage of it to the benefit of executives and the entire organization.

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# ■ THE DUNN AND DUNN MODEL OF LEARNING STYLES: ADDRESSING LEARNER DIVERSITY

Joanne Ingham and Rita Dunn

## **INTRODUCTION**

Research on learning styles explains why individuals within the same family or organization perform differently. It demonstrates the differences in style among individual members of the same class, culture, community, profession, or socioeconomic group, and simultaneously reveals the differences and similarities among groups.

Every adult possesses unique learning style preferences (Dunn, 1986; Smith, 1976) that determine how he or she approaches work and responds to selected educational programs. These preferences are consistent over time and task (Elliott, 1975). When learning style theory and its related practices are properly applied, the following significant outcomes can be expected (Dixon, 1982; K. Dunn, 1982; Freeley, 1984):

- Increased achievement success;
- More positive attitudes toward learning;
- Improved interpersonal communication;
- More effectively designed educational programs;
- More efficient time management; and
- Greater application of newly acquired information and skills in the work setting.

## **BACKGROUND OF THE DUNN AND DUNN MODEL OF LEARNING STYLES**

In 1967, Rita Dunn undertook a project with the New York State Department of Education to design and to direct a program that would help educationally disadvantaged learners to increase their achievement levels. The conclusions that Rita and Kenneth Dunn reached through observation were corroborated by substantial educational and industrial literature concerning how people learn.

By 1972, the Dunns had identified twelve variables that significantly differentiated among learners; three years later they reported the existence of eighteen variables; by

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1979, they had incorporated hemispheric preference and global/analytic inclinations into their framework. The resulting model, which traces its roots to cognitive theory and brain lateralization theory, includes twenty-one variables that significantly affect how individuals begin to concentrate on, process, absorb, and retain new and difficult information or skills.

Research on the Dunn and Dunn Model of Learning Styles has been extensive. As of 1991, experimentation had been conducted at more than seventy institutions of higher education, with diverse age groups (kindergarten through adult), and at every level of academic proficiency, including gifted, average, underachieving, at risk, dropout, special education, vocational education, adult education, and corporate employee training. Furthermore, the experimental research in learning styles conducted at St. John's University, New York, has to date received one regional, twelve national, and two international awards and citations for its quality.

## **LEARNING STYLE: A DEFINITION**

A person's learning style is the way in which he or she concentrates on, processes, and retains new and difficult information and engages in challenging tasks (Dunn, 1990). This interaction process is unique to each person. Identifying a person's learning style requires first examining that person's multidimensional characteristics. This examination identifies many key traits inherent in a person's natural processing style, including what most likely triggers concentration, how it is sustained, and the bases of long-term memory. To conduct a truly successful examination, it is necessary to use a comprehensive model of learning style. Only a comprehensive model fully appreciates that different people are affected by different elements of style. Each of these elements is capable of increasing academic achievement to some extent among those for whom it is important.

## **THE DUNN AND DUNN MODEL OF LEARNING STYLES**

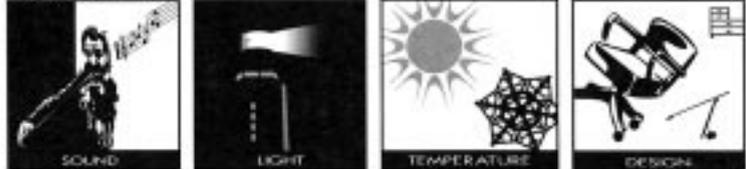
The Dunn and Dunn model includes twenty-one elements that, when classified, reveal that learners are affected by the following factors, illustrated in Figure 1:

- Psychological elements—global/analytic, hemispheric preference, and impulsive/reflective;
- Environmental elements—sound, light, temperature, and furniture/seating designs;
- Emotional elements—motivation, persistence, responsibility (conformity versus nonconformity), and the need for either externally imposed structure or the opportunity to do things their own way;

Stimuli

ELEMENTS

Environmental



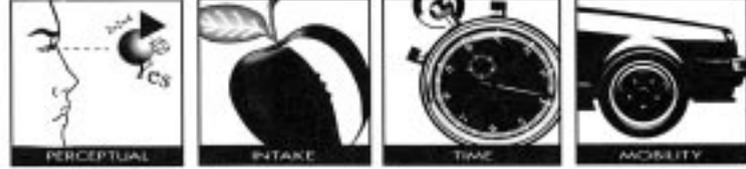
Emotional



Sociological



Physical



Psychological



Simultaneous or Successive Processing

Figure 1. The Dunn and Dunn Learning Styles Model

- Sociological elements—learning alone, in pairs, in a small group, as part of a team, with an authoritative or collegial adult, and wanting variety as opposed to patterns and routines; and
- Physical elements—perceptual strengths, time-of-day energy levels, and the need for intake or mobility while learning.

## **THE ELEMENTS OF LEARNING STYLE**

### ***Psychological Elements***

Individuals process new and difficult information in fundamentally different ways. The terms analytic/global, hemispheric preference, sequential/simultaneous, and inductive/deductive have been used interchangeably in the literature. The descriptions of these variables tend to parallel one other.

Those who tend to be analytics learn more easily when information is presented step by step in a cumulative sequential pattern that builds toward a conceptual understanding. Conversely, those who tend to be globals learn more easily when they understand the concept first. After they see the “whole picture” they then can concentrate on details. Globals also enjoy being introduced to the information with a humorous short story replete with examples and graphics. Whether analytic or global, however, what is crucial to understanding brain functioning is that both types do reason, but by different strategies (Levy, 1979; Zenhausern, 1980). Each strategy is “a reflection of a trend toward optimization of efficient use of neural space” (Levy, 1982, p. 224).

Thus whether adults are analytic or global, sequential or simultaneous, inductive or deductive, or have a certain hemispheric preference, they are capable of mastering identical information or skills and working productively if their processing styles are complemented. That conclusion has been documented at the high school and adult levels.

Analytic and global processors have different environmental and physiological needs (Cody, 1983; Dunn, Bruno, Sklar, & Beaudry, 1990; Dunn, Cavanaugh, Eberle, & Zenhausern, 1982). Many analytic preferents tend to opt for learning and working in a quiet, well-illuminated, formal setting; they often have a strong emotional need to complete the tasks they are working on; and they rarely eat, drink, smoke, chew or bite on objects while concentrating. Conversely, global preferents appear to work with what some describe as distractors: they concentrate best with sound (music or background talking), soft lighting, an informal seating arrangement, and some form of intake. In addition, globals take frequent breaks while concentrating and often stay with a task for a short amount of time, stop, do something else, and eventually return to the original task. Neither set of procedures is better or worse than the other; they merely are different. Many globals prefer learning with peers rather than alone or with an instructor or supervisor, and they also often prefer to structure tasks in their own way; they tend to dislike imposed directives.

The psychological element of impulsive/reflective is a function of individual verbal risk-taking behavior. Impulsives are quick to say what first comes to mind. Reflectives, however, need time to consider the question or problem and think through alternative solutions before verbalizing. Both response styles are beneficial. Instructors and managers should consider building buffer time into training discussions and office meetings to ensure the input of the reflectives is not compromised by pressure to move through the agenda.

Instructors and employers need to know how to guide and interact with both analytic and global processors whether on the job or in a learning environment. A necessary precondition to this management approach is understanding one's own learning style preferences. Understanding and capitalizing on an individual's preferred processing style clearly will enhance academic and job-related productivity.

### ***Environmental Elements***

How people physically react to the elements of sound, light, temperature, and design in the immediate environment is biologically based (Restak, 1979; Thies, 1979). Some individuals prefer absolute quiet while concentrating; others need background sound, such as a radio, to produce their best work. Light and temperature fall on a similar continuum. Some people prefer varying amounts of light, such as that provided by task lighting; some prefer a warm environment and others a cooler work area.

The study of the relationship between workers and their environment is called ergonomics. Studies have shown that such environmental factors as lighting, heating, furniture design, and noise affect individual employees differently. There is a direct correlation between those factors and the individual's productivity (Whitehouse, 1988). Accommodating an individual's unique preferences leads to an increase in productivity (Durante, 1988). Ergonomics takes a human-centered approach to addressing the requirements of workplace systems. Although people are adaptive, this adaptation effort creates a corresponding reduction in the individual's ability to devote energies and skills to job performance or learning. Excessive adaptation may lead to discomfort, fatigue, and in extreme cases a medical problem (Springer, 1988).

Similar differences are evidenced with varied seating arrangements. Some prefer concentrating in wooden, plastic, or steel chairs, but many others become so uncomfortable in conventional seats that they are prevented from engaging in productive thinking or learning. Few people are aware that when a person is seated in a hard chair, fully 75 percent of the total body weight is supported by four square inches of bone (Branton, 1966). The resulting stress on the tissues of the buttocks causes fatigue, discomfort, and frequent postural change. Only naturally well-padded people can tolerate conventional seating for long periods of time.

For those reasons, the physical layout and furnishings of offices, work spaces, and classrooms have profound effects on productivity levels. Flexibility in lighting intensity, type of seating, and quiet or sound (such as with portable stereos) will allow individuals to create personally productive work spaces. Employees' preferences in terms of

environmental elements can guide organization decision makers in the selection and furnishing of facilities.

### ***Emotional Elements***

Emotional elements address the ways in which a person approaches a learning situation or undertakes a difficult project. A key emotional element is motivation (how driven one is, whether one is a self-starter, and whether one is willing to take risks). Highly motivated individuals require little supervision and learn new skills quickly; individuals with low motivation require frequent positive feedback and constant supervision, even in tasks they easily can accomplish. Another emotional element is persistence. Learners who tend to be nonpersistent prefer to work with many short-term projects. Those who tend to be persistent are more productive working on one project at a time. Both types will be equally productive despite the dissimilarity in approach.

Responsibility (the extent to which one takes direction versus a preference to personalize a task) is an indication of degree of conforming behavior. Those who are conforming by nature take direction and feel compelled to do what they “should”; nonconformists question authority and thrive on collegial relationships. The element of structure impacts whether one wants directions spelled out specifically or prefers reaching the goal with choices and options. A mismatch of responsibility or structure orientations can be a source of conflict or discomfort between manager/employee and instructor/learner. An awareness of these differences when working or learning is critical to establishing productive relationships.

### ***Sociological Elements***

Sociological elements influence one’s preference for working independently; with a team, a mentor, or a colleague; or in a variety of groupings. The sociological preferences of an individual directly affect how successful small-group instructional techniques work as an instructional strategy or the degree to which one is perceived as a team player. Often a member of a quality circle or project team who prefers to work independently will work on specific portions of the project alone and then bring back to the group his or her finished product.

### ***Physical Elements***

Physical elements, which are also biologically based, include intake (the need to eat, drink, or chew); mobility (the need to move or stretch periodically); time of day (peak energy times); and perceptual preference (whether one learns best in an auditory, visual, tactual, or kinesthetic manner). Although some individuals need to eat, drink, or chew when they work, others prefer not to do so until they have completed their tasks. In terms of mobility, some individuals can sit at their desks for long periods of time when working on challenging tasks, whereas others need to get up frequently to take breaks, stretch, and move around.

The physical element of time of day has received substantial attention in terms of chronobiology, peak energy times for individuals, time management, and the implications for flextime. Task efficiency also is related to each person's temperature cycle (Biggers, 1980); thus it is related to when each person is likely to concentrate and/or learn best. Individuals have specific chronobiological cycles and times of day during which they can perform maximally. Performing challenging tasks or learning new information at the best time of day impacts the quality of the work produced. Furthermore, statistics show that information taught to an individual at his or her best time of day is more often used on the job than information taught at another time (Freeley, 1984).

Perceptual preference, or sensory modality, refers to the different paths through which people can absorb information (auditory, visual, tactual, or kinesthetic). Research has verified that when an adult is taught with instructional resources that complement his or her sensory strength, more is learned and the person experiences a more positive attitude toward basic learning itself (Buell & Buell, 1987; Farr, 1971; Ingham, 1989).

Perceptual preference tends to develop with physical maturation. The tactual/kinesthetic modes are strongest among young children; the visual mode takes over in approximately the second or third grade; and at the end of elementary school, the auditory mode predominates (Keefe, 1979; Price, 1980). According to Keefe (1979), adults tend to possess a preference for one modality or another. One cannot assume that individual adults will achieve optimal learning or concentration regardless of the instructional approach utilized. Based on tests of thousands of adults with the Productivity Environmental Preference Survey (PEPS), Dunn, Dunn, and Price (1989) concluded that many possessed only one perceptual strength, whether tactual/kinesthetic, auditory, or visual. Approximately 40 percent were visually oriented, 30 percent were auditory, and 30 percent were tactual/kinesthetic (Dunn, 1986). In short, a majority of adults have perceptual learning preferences dominated by one modality.

Some people can remember approximately 75 percent of what they hear; those are considered auditory learners. Visual learners remember 75 percent of what they read or see. As people get older, they tend to be more visual. The legendary command of "put it in writing" may reflect a real need for some people. Approximately 40 percent of the population tends to possess a visual strength. Others learn through physical engagement; they learn by doing. A person with a kinesthetic strength needs to be actively involved in a task such as a site inspection or field trip, or learning by doing. An on-the-job training program is far more effective for those people than an office manual, text, or lecture. Those with a tactual strength are best able to remember new and difficult information when they use their hands during the learning process. Building models, drawing diagrams or pictures, and using manipulatives all enhance the concentration of tactual/kinesthetic individuals.

It is imperative that a person's first exposure to new information or a new project be through his or her strongest modality. Using all four modalities in sequence does not ensure that each person is introduced to difficult material correctly (that is, through his

or her perceptual preference/strength). Using multiple stimuli is often counterproductive. For example, many highly auditory individuals listen better when they are not required to take notes; in effect, note taking interferes with their listening. These critical findings should guide instructors, employers, and individual learners to make wise decisions concerning selection of courses or training programs and strategies for accomplishing challenging tasks (Buell & Buell, 1987; Dunn, 1988, 1990; Ingham, 1990).

## **IMPORTANT RAMIFICATIONS**

Both Restak (1979) and Thies (1979) ascertained that 60 percent of learning style is biological; the remainder, apart from persistence, develops through experience. Individual responses to sound, light, temperature, seating arrangements, perceptual strengths, intake, time of day, and mobility are biological. Sociological preferences, motivation, responsibility, and a need for structure versus a need for self-direction are thought to be developmental. The significant differences among the learning styles of individuals in diverse cultures tend to support this theory (Dunn, 1989; Dunn, Gemake, Jalali, Zenhausern, Quinn, & Spiridakis, 1990; Dunn, Gemake, & Zenhausern, 1989; Dunn & Griggs, 1990; Guzzo, 1987; Jacobs, 1987; Jalali, 1989; Lam-Phoon, 1986).

Every person has an individual learning style, and every person has learning style strengths. People tend to learn more when taught with their own strengths than when taught with the instructor's strengths. However, no learning style is better or worse than another. Each style encompasses similar intelligence ranges. People tend to learn, concentrate, remember, and enjoy learning and working to a significantly greater extent when they are taught through their learning style preferences.

Responding to individual learning style characteristics increases the rate and level of retention of those adults trying to concentrate and learn new or difficult information. The lessons for instructors, trainers, and supervisors are manifest. First, one must analyze a person's learning style strengths. That information can be applied on a personal, interpersonal, and organizational level to enhance productivity. Individual differences must be assessed and respected and that information must then be integrated into educational programs and work environments.

A driving goal of adult educators and human resource development professionals is to support adults' individual strengths so they learn in ways that maximize performance. Learning style theory and practice will provide the framework for successfully accomplishing that goal.

As early as 1973, Hess and Sperry (1973) made the following observations:

The need to understand individual differences and how learners learn . . . is emerging as a number one concern for training directors . . . While it is obvious that much more theory and research is needed in this area [learning styles], it is equally obvious that the educational planner and the trainer in an organizational setting must become more aware of the individual differences in the learners and how these differences affect the organization's productivity and moral. (p. 825)

Knowles (1978) emphasized that adults learn in unique ways that should be considered when developing educational programs. At the heart of andragogy (adult learning) lies a respect for the differences in individual adult learners and the impact those differences have in various instructional situations. To facilitate the learning process, those individual differences must be taken into account. Dixon (1982) further indicated the following:

Information on learning styles is a relatively new consideration in the design of training programs . . . . By considering these [learning style] differences and taking them into account in designing training programs, greater gains can be made in learning . . . . Participants' reactions will be more positive and training time can be reduced. (p. 62)

Based on research conducted under a two-year, joint project of the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) and the United States Department of Labor, Carnavale, Gainer, and Meltzer (1988) drew the following conclusions:

Trainers seeking to teach the skill of learning to learn should attempt to identify the type of sensory stimulus—whether visual, auditory, or tactile—that helps each employee learn best, and then design multiple-use training that addresses all preferences. (p. 6)

Human resource development professionals and educators of adults have been asked by government agencies and corporate leaders to seek solutions to the training challenges to the twenty-first century. Given the vast resources companies have committed—and must continue to commit to training programs—the development and implementation of training programs effective in reaching individual adult learners remains critical.

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## ■ THERAPY OR PERSONAL GROWTH?

**Timothy A. Boone**

*“What is the difference between therapy and personal growth?”*

“Why are personal growth leaders practicing therapy with inadequate preparation and controls?”

“If this isn’t therapy, why do we use some of the same techniques my therapist uses?”

“If this isn’t therapy, why do I experience such a therapeutic change in my life after a personal growth lab?”

These questions frequently arise in personal growth labs. For ethical and legal reasons it is essential that an easily understood distinction be made between personal growth activities and therapy.

Growth group leaders operate in an aura of ambiguity that often unnecessarily frightens the general public. The following model is a way of understanding this situation; it represents a proposal for future development.

### **MEDICAL MODEL VERSUS EDUCATIONAL MODEL**

Many psychotherapists as well as psychiatrists tend to use the medical model of human health and development to explain the therapeutic process. The personal growth leader, however, typically works on the basis of a less well-known and currently less widely accepted educational model of human development.

The medical model, simply stated, says that people who are not “normal” are “sick.” Although no one has been able to establish satisfactorily a valid way of defining “normal,” physicians, psychiatrists, and other members of the medical professions frequently assume the responsibility for returning “sick” individuals to health or normality. In such an approach, the doctor must “do something” to the patient, who is believed to be relatively unable to help himself or herself. The doctor uses either a physiological intervention, such as drugs, or a “traditional” psychological intervention. Thus responsibility for “curing” people of their ills is transferred from the ill person to the doctor.

The educational model is an ancient one, based on the premise that each individual is ultimately and totally responsible for his or her own life. This concept of total responsibility has been championed by Will Schutz and Fritz Perls for many years. Although environmental and social pressures have an impact on the individual, he or she

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has the ability to interpret and integrate these influences in functional or dysfunctional ways. Learning how to do this functionally is the primary method of human development.

Recent biofeedback research by Brown (1974) and her associates shows evidence of a strong, learnable psychological influence on physical as well as emotional well-being. People can learn to control not only their own psyches but also their physiology, such as blood pressure, muscle tension, and heart rate. Control of many other functions is just beginning to be researched.

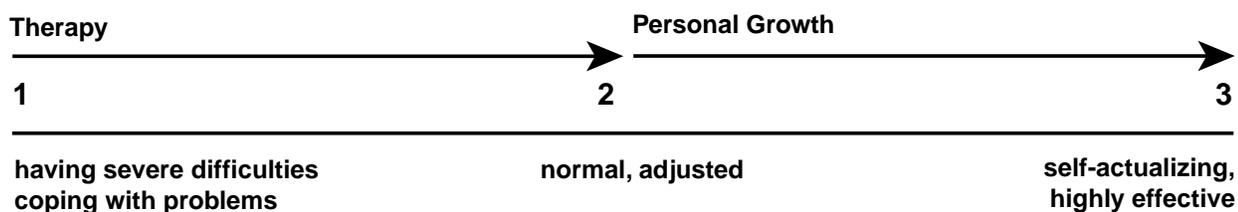
### ***Therapist Versus Personal Growth Leader***

The personal growth leader, who is a proponent of the educational model, perceives his or her role not as someone who “does something” to people, but rather as an aware, humanistic teacher who guides others to experience, explore, and experiment with their own bodies, minds, and spirits by structuring situations and clarifying communication processes. Such a facilitator uses inductive as well as deductive logic in this growth/education process to help people become more self-aware and to experiment with new behavior. Ideally, he or she does not attempt to make people fit any particular model.

Of course, many “modern” psychotherapists use exactly this method. How, then, is personal growth different from therapy—what does an effective personal growth leader do that is different from what an effective therapist does? The answer may be “nothing”!

### ***THE THERAPY/PERSONAL GROWTH MODEL***

The following model shows the relationship between therapy and personal growth.<sup>1</sup> This model places people who are experiencing severe problems coping with life situations at one end of a continuum, and self-actualizing or highly effective people at the other end. In the middle are “normal, adjusted” people who are effective in realizing a satisfactory fulfillment from most life situations.



As indicated, the technologies most frequently used to assist people in moving from point 1 to point 2 and from point 2 to point 3 are therapy and personal growth, respectively.

<sup>1</sup> Developed by Major Frank Burns of the Fort Ord (California) Personal Growth Center.

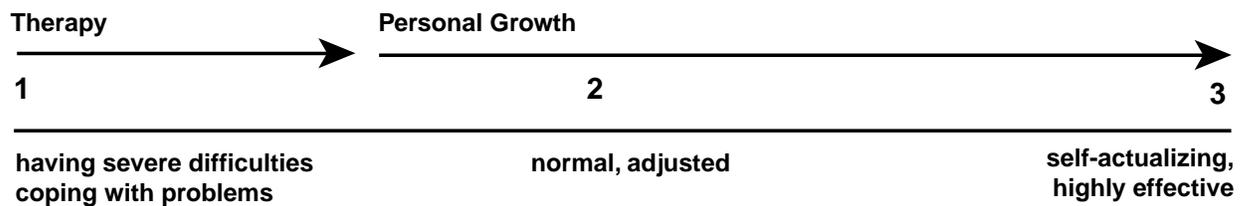
## RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHANGE

The way in which therapy and personal growth philosophies locate an individual along this continuum indicates the major difference between the two approaches. The therapist (medical model) uses diagnostic tools to label the patient while the personal growth leader (educational model) simply accepts the individual and develops a strategy to explore alternatives and try new behavior.

The principal difference, then, between therapy and personal growth can be determined by the locus of responsibility for change. Essentially, if the responsibility remains with the client, the process can be labeled personal growth. If the responsibility for change is shifted to the helper, the approach can be called therapy.

### **Implications for Personal Growth Leader**

It is crucial that a personal growth leader remain constantly aware of the locus of responsibility for change in any relationship with the client. Perhaps a more current and realistic view of Burns's model would look like this:



The crucial determinant for the personal growth leader today is self-awareness. Know yourself! If you are intervening in another person's life at his or her request by manipulating the environment to help the person learn and experiment with new behavior—while that person maintains the responsibility for changing or not changing—do it with assurance and your entire self. If, however, you are intervening in another individual's life by manipulating him or her and taking responsibility for changing the person to meet some expectation of yours—then beware.

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## ■ INTERROLE EXPLORATION

### Udai Pareek

Role is a central concept in the understanding of organizational dynamics. It can be conceived as the interface between the person and the organization. In organization development (OD) this important interface region has not been adequately used. Three important OD interventions reported concerning role are those by Dayal and Thomas (1968), Harrison (1971), and Sherwood and Glidewell (1973). The main focus of Role Analysis Technique (Dayal & Thomas, 1968) is to help define a given role in the organization clearly by focusing on the discussion of the purpose of the role, its prescribed and discretionary components, and its linkages with other roles. This technique has been reported to be very useful for role clarification. Role negotiation (Harrison, 1971) and role renegotiation (Sherwood & Glidewell, 1973) are more dynamic interventions, focusing on the help the various roles in an organization can give one another in order to increase their effectiveness. Although these three interventions skirt the problems of role conflict and role stress, they are, nevertheless, very useful for the purpose for which they have been used.

The intervention discussed here is focused on confronting the problems of role conflict and role stress and on evolving strategies of mutual help to cope with these problems among the various roles in an organization. It helps the various role occupants develop joint exploratory strategies. The concepts of role, role stress, and the strategies for coping with role stress are relevant for the intervention.

### ORGANIZATIONAL ROLES

The concept of role is the key concept in understanding the integration of the individual with the organization. It is through role that the individual interacts with and becomes (or does not become) integrated with the organization. Katz and Kahn (1966) give role the central place in the organization by defining human organizations as role systems. They use two terms: *office* and *role*.

Office is essentially a relational concept, defining each position in terms of its relationships to others and to the system as a whole. Associated with each office is a set of activities or expected behaviors. These activities constitute the role to be performed, at least approximately, by any person who occupies that office. (p. 173)

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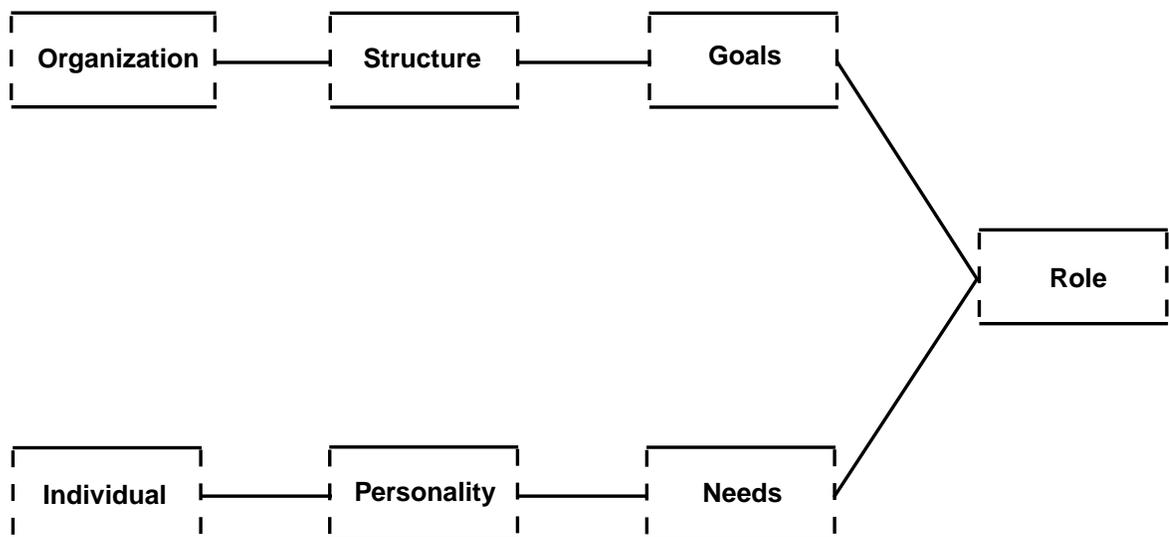
Other authors also make a distinction between position, or office, and role. Although Linton (1936), the first among the proposers of the concept of role, viewed the concepts of status and role in an integrated way, the word *role* has been given two meanings. Sometimes the term is used to denote the position a person holds in an organization—along with the expectations derived from that position, e.g., the role of a teacher, a police officer, etc.—and sometimes it is used to describe expected behavior or activities only (for example, the disciplinarian role or evaluator role of a teacher, task and maintenance roles, etc.). Thomas and Biddle (1966) have discussed the various terms used in role theory. In this discussion, the word *role* means any position a person holds in a system (organization), as defined by the expectations that various significant persons, including that person, hold of that position. The term *function* indicates a set of interrelated expectations from a role. In these meanings, “sales manager” is a role, and developing a sales force and customer contact is a function.

As shown in Figure 1, the organization has its own structure and goals, and, similarly, the individual has his or her personality and needs (motivation). These interact and become integrated to some extent in the role. (Pareek, 1974, discusses role as a central concept in work motivation.)

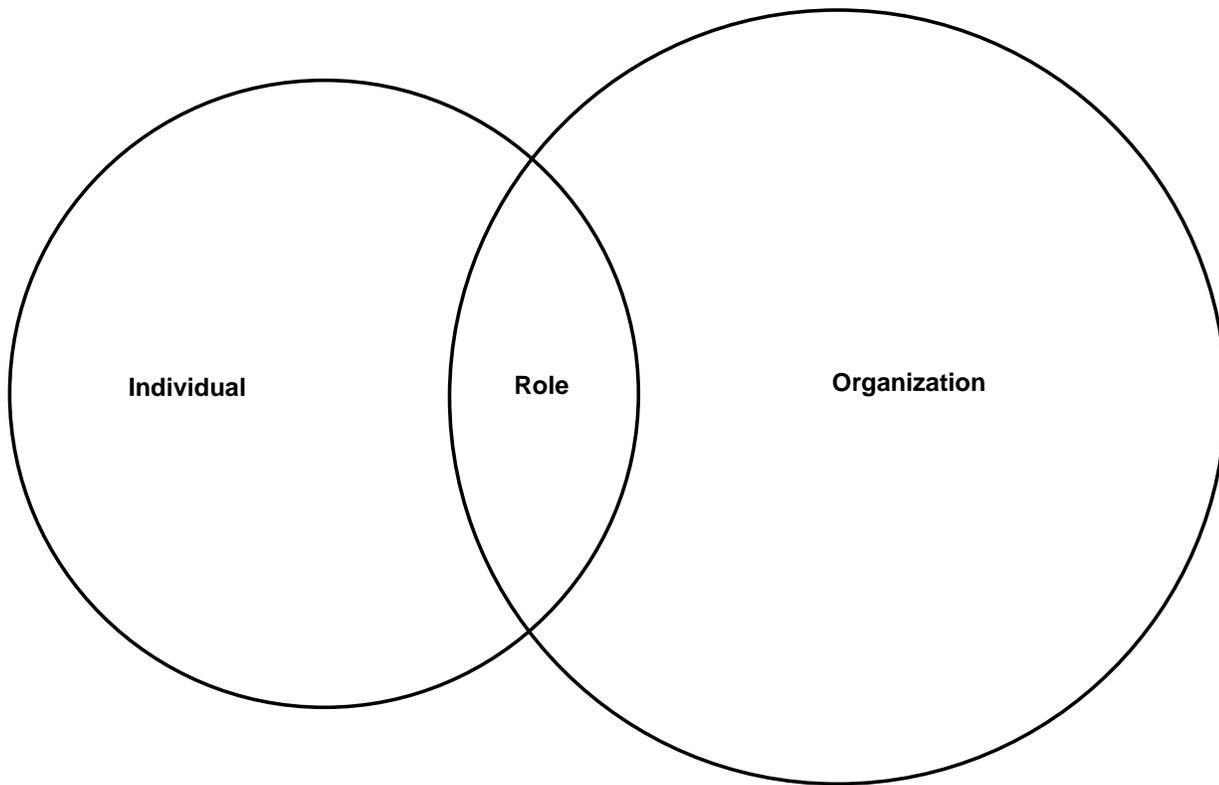
The overlapping region between the individual and the organization is the role, as illustrated in Figure 2.

### **Role Space**

As suggested by Katz and Kahn (1966), an organization can be defined as a system of roles. However, role itself is a system. From the point of view of an individual, two role systems are important: (1) the system of the various roles the individual occupies and



**Figure 1. Role as the Integrating Point of the Organization and the Individual**



**Figure 2. Role as the Interacting Region Between the Organization and the Individual**

performs and (2) the system of the various roles of which his or her role is a part and in which this role is defined by other significant roles. The first is called *role space*; the second is known as *role set*.

A person may be a child, a parent, a sales representative, a member of a club, a member of a voluntary organization, and so on. All these roles make up that person's role space. In the center of the role space is the self. Just as the concept of role is central to the concept of organizations, the concept of self is central to the concept of role.

The term "self" refers to the inferences the person makes about the referent for "I." It is a cognitive structure and derives from past experience with other persons and with objects. We define the self as the experience of identity arising from a person's inter-behaving with things, body parts, and other persons. (Sarbin & Allen, 1965, p. 523)

The person performs various roles revolving around the self, roles that are at various distances from the self and from one another. These relationships define the role space. Role space, then, is the dynamic interrelationship both between the self and the various roles an individual occupies and among these roles.

The distance between a role and the self indicates the extent to which the role is integrated with the self. When we do not enjoy a particular role or do not get involved in it, there is distance between the self and the role. Goffman (1961) and Ruddock (1969) call it role-distance. “When a person is not fully absorbed in [his] role behavior and allows it to be seen that this is so, we speak of role-distance” (Ruddock, 1969, p. 14). The phrase *self-role distance*, however, is used here to denote this. Similarly, there may be distance between one role and another role a person occupies. For example, the role of club member may be distant from the role of spouse, if the two roles conflict. This I call *interrole distance* or *interrole conflict*.

A role-space map of an individual can, then, be drawn by locating the self in the center and placing the various roles the person occupies at various distances from the self and from one another. In Figure 3, the numbers 1 to 9 identify various circles representing distance from the self—1 denoting the least distance and 9 the most distance. Each of an individual’s various roles may be located in one of the circles and in one of the four quadrants. For example, if roles A and B are both at a distance of 8 from the self but have maximum distance from each other, both can be located in the circle marked 8, but opposite each other. Self-role and interrole distance are important parts of personality. Some psychologists define personality as a system of action arising out of the interplay of self and role (Ruddock, 1969; Sarbin, 1964).

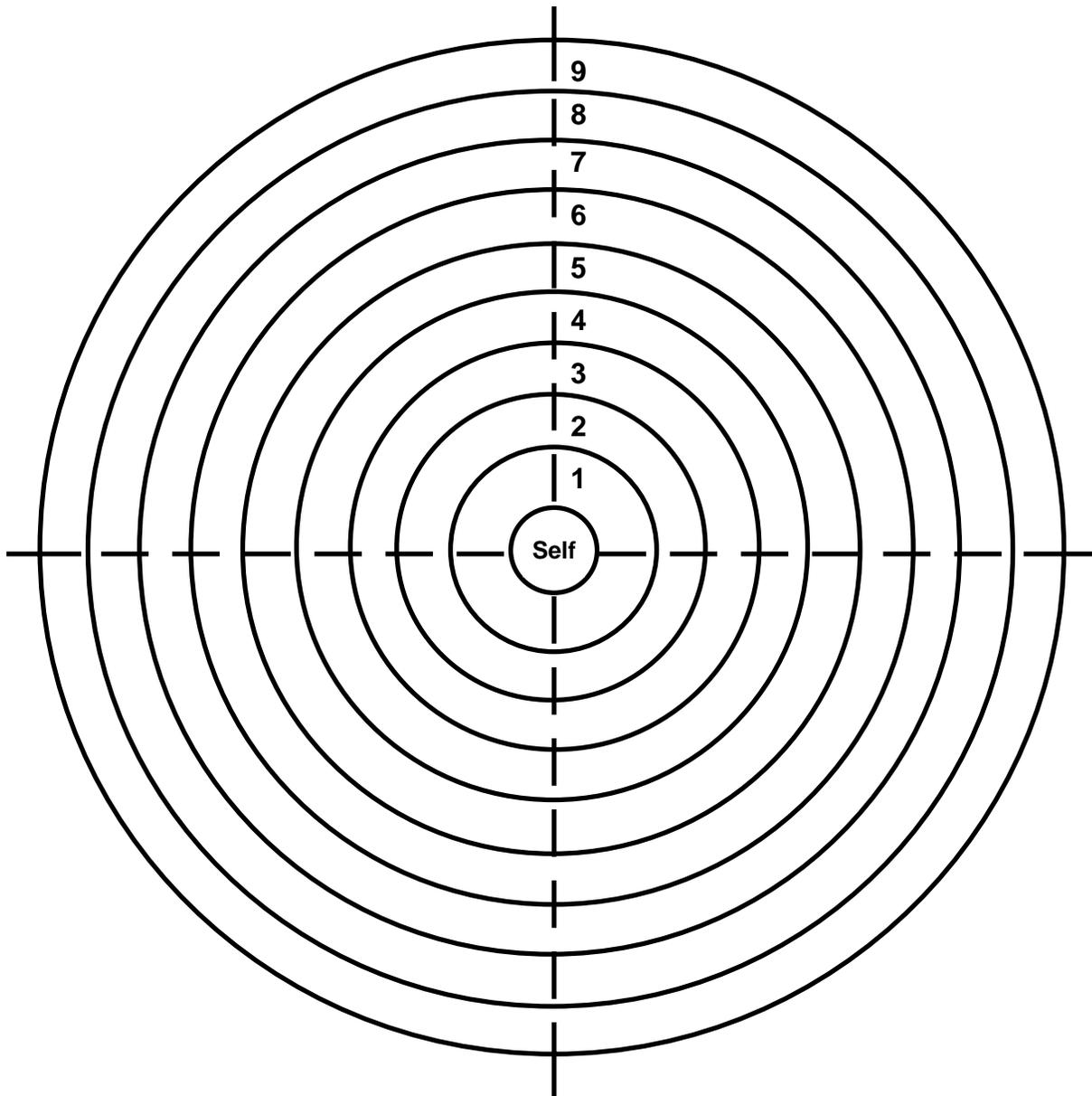
Banton (1965) has proposed the concepts of basic, general, and independent roles. Basic and general roles are related (e.g., “husband” is a basic role, and “working woman’s husband” is a general role). The term *role repertory* is used to indicate a collection of such roles. Ruddock (1969) uses the term *roletree* to indicate a branching network concept. The trunk corresponds to the basic role, the main branches to the general roles, the secondary branches to special roles, and the leaves to the transient roles.

## **Role Set**

As proposed by Merton (1957), *role set* is the “complement of role relationships which persons have by virtue of occupying a particular social status” (p. 369). The term has been widely used in the literature to mean the pattern of relationship between the role being considered and other roles.

The individual’s role in an organization is defined by the expectations held by significant roles—including those of the individual—in that organization. The individual’s own expectations of his or her role are termed *reflexive role expectations* by Kahn and Quinn (1970). Katz and Kahn (1966) use the term *focal person* for the individual who occupies the role and *role senders* for people in the role set of the individual. I use the term *role occupant* for the individual who occupies a particular role and *other roles* for all other roles in the role set of the individual.

A role-set map, like a role-space map, can also be prepared for an individual’s role. In this map the role of the role occupant will be in the center, and all other roles can be located at various points on the map. Using a circular model (such as in Figure 3), the



**Figure 3. Role-Space Map**

roles can be located in the circles marked 1 to 9—1 indicating the roles nearest to the role occupant’s role and 9 indicating the roles at the greatest distance from this role. The term *role-role distance* indicates the distance between the role of the role occupant and other roles. The smaller this distance, the higher the *role linkage*, which can be defined as the reverse of role-role distance. Role linkage is an important concept in role satisfaction and role conflict.

## **Role Taking**

The process by which the individual establishes identification with the organization is role taking. There are two aspects of role taking. One aspect relates to the individual's self-concept and the way he or she responds to the various expectations held by other roles of that role. The individual may react very positively and with great satisfaction to the expectations and fulfill these expectations to the best of his or her capability. Such a reactive approach will help the individual occupy the role effectively. In contrast, another individual may use his or her own expectations of the role occupied and develop role behavior in which these expectations play a major role. This is a proactive approach to role performance. Some authors have contrasted these two approaches by calling the first "role taking" and the second "role making."

The other aspect of role taking is concerned with the identification of the self with the role. If the role is so different from the self that the expectations conflict with the self-concept, what I have called self-role distance may result. This aspect of role taking may be called *role acceptance*. Even when there is no evident self-role distance, the degree of role acceptance may be low or high. Sarbin and Allen (1968) have proposed seven levels of intensity of role taking, defining this in terms of how much the individual is able to get into the role. These range from casual roles to the emergence of a moribund person.

Katz and Kahn (1966) have proposed the concept of *role episode* to explain the process of role taking. Role taking involves both role sending (by occupants of other roles) and role receiving (by the role occupant). The role occupant and the other roles (role senders) constantly interact; the process of role sending and role receiving influence the role behavior of the individual. The role senders have expectations on the basis of their perception of the role occupant's behavior. The role occupant acts on the basis of his or her perception of the role being sent. However, this person's role behavior also influences the expectations of the role senders. Thus, role episode has a feedback loop. Katz and Kahn have elaborated this concept to include interaction between role senders and the role occupant, as well as interpersonal and personality factors. (See Figure 4.)

## **THE NATURE OF ROLE STRESS**

In the role behavior of an individual, several variables are involved—the self, the other roles (role senders), the expectations held by the other roles, the expectations held by the self, roles undertaken and performed by the individual. It is extremely difficult to imagine situations in which there is no conflict among these variables. The very nature of the role has a built-in potential for conflict and stress. Thus, conflict is a natural variable in role performance. Conflict and stress need not, however, be necessarily negative in their effect on the individual and the organization. Some amount of stress is necessary for the effective working of both an individual and the organization. It is not

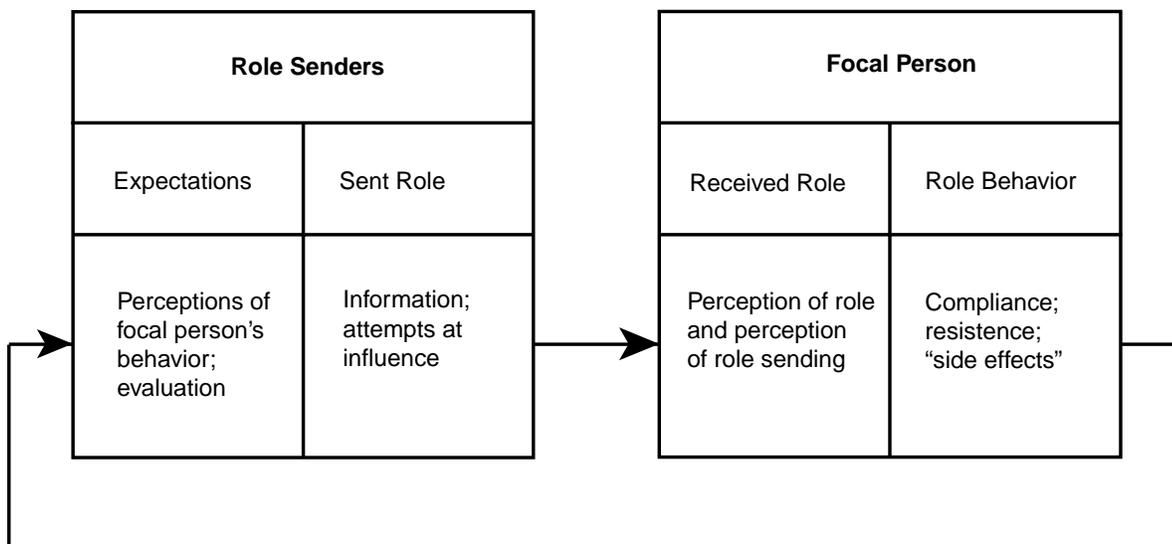


Figure 4. A Model of the Role Episode

the presence or absence of stress that makes the individual or organization effective or ineffective, but the way in which this stress is managed.

The concept of stress has been popular in psychology. Four common terms have been used that are synonymous in meaning: *stress*, *strain*, *conflict*, and *pressure*. Lazarus (1966) has defined stress as any force directed at an object. Role conflict has been defined in terms of conflicting expectations. The word *strain* has been used to denote the effect of stress on the individual; the word *pressure* has also been used. It is useful, however, to use these terms interchangeably in order to understand the incompatibility of certain role-related variables, their effects on the individual's behavior, and the efforts the individual makes in dealing with them.

Several systems of classifications have been used to discuss role conflict and stress. Kahn and Quinn (1970) have classified role stress under three main headings: expectation-generated stress, in which they include role ambiguity and role conflict; expectation-resource discrepancies, in which they include role overload, responsibility-authority dilemma, and inadequate technical information; and role and personality. I find it more functional to use the two main role constellations as areas of conflict and stress.

### **Role-Space Conflicts**

Any conflicts within the field of role space are referred to as role-space conflicts. These conflicts may be the following:

1. *Self-role distance*. If a person occupies a role that subsequently conflicts with his or her self-concept, that person feels the stress. For example, a usually introverted person, who is fond of studying and writing, may have self-role distance as a sales representative in an organization who comes to realize that the

expectations held of the role would include meeting people and being social. Such conflicts are fairly common.

2. *Intrarole conflict.* Because the individual learns to develop expectations as a result of socialization and identification with significant others, it is quite likely that the person sees some incompatibility between two expectations (functions) of his or her own role. For example, a professor may see incompatibility between the expectations of teaching students and of doing research. Inherently these may not be conflicting, but the individual may perceive them as such.
3. *Role-growth stress.* Just as an individual grows physically, so that person also grows in the role he or she occupies in an organization. With the advancement of the individual, roles change, and the need for taking on this new role becomes crucial. This is the problem of role growth; it becomes an acute problem especially when an individual has occupied a role for a long time and enters another role in which he or she may feel less secure. The new role demands that the individual outgrow a previous role and occupy the new role effectively, and this produces some stress in the individual. In organizations that are expanding rapidly and do not have a systematic strategy of human resource development, managers are likely to experience this stress when promoted to higher positions.
4. *Interrole conflict.* Because the individual occupies more than one role, there may be conflicts between two roles occupied. For example, an executive often faces a conflict between the organizational role as an executive and the familial role as spouse and parent. The demands from spouse and children to share time may be incompatible with organizational demands. Such interrole conflicts are quite frequent in modern society.

### **Role-Set Conflicts**

Conflicts that arise as a result of incompatibility among the expectations held by significant other roles and those held by the individual are referred to as role-set conflicts. These conflicts are as follows:

1. *Role ambiguity.* When the individual is not clear about the various expectations people have of his or her role, the conflict may be called role ambiguity. Role ambiguity may be due to a lack of information available to the role occupant or a lack of understanding of the cues available. Kahn and Quinn (1970) have suggested that role ambiguity may occur in relation to activities, responsibilities, personal style, and norms. They have suggested three loci of role ambiguity: the expectations that role senders hold of the role occupant, the expectations sent by the role sender to the role occupant, and the expectations the role occupant receives and interprets in the light of prior information and experience. They indicate four different kinds of roles that are likely to experience ambiguity: roles new to the organization, roles in expanding or contracting organizations,

roles in organizations exposed to frequent changes in demand, and roles in process. Role ambiguity may also result in various other conflicts.

2. *Role overload.* When the role occupant feels that there are too many expectations from the significant roles in the role set, the person experiences role overload. This term has been popularized by Kahn et al. (1964). They measured this stress by asking people whether they felt they could possibly finish work given to them during a modified work day and whether they felt that the amount of work they did might interfere with how well it was done. Most executive role occupants experience role overload. Kahn and Quinn (1970) have suggested some conditions under which role overload is likely to occur: in the absence of a mechanism for role integration, in the absence of power of the role occupants, in the large variations in the expected output, and when delegation or assistance cannot procure more time.
3. *Role-role distance.* In a role set, the role occupant may feel that certain roles are psychologically near, while some other roles are at a distance. The main criterion of role-role distance is frequency and ease of interaction. When linkages are strong, the role-role distance will be low. In the absence of strong linkages, the role-role distance may be high. The role-role distance can, therefore, be measured in terms of existing and desired linkages. The gap between the desired and the existing linkages will indicate the amount of distance between the two roles.
4. *Role erosion.* A role occupant may feel that some functions he or she would like to perform are being performed by some other role. The stress felt is called role erosion. Role erosion is the subjective feeling of an individual that some important role expectations he or she holds of that role are not shared by other roles in the role set. Role erosion is likely to be experienced in an organization that is redefining its role and creating new roles. In one organization, for example, one role was abolished and two roles were created to cater to the executive and planning needs. This led to great stress for the role occupants of both new roles, who felt that their roles had become less important compared to the older role.

Some factors associated with role stress have been identified in research studies. Snock (1966) has reported that the larger the role set of a role occupant, the greater the strain he or she is likely to experience. Age (younger), experience (less), and size (medium) of the department have been found to be significantly associated with role strain (Richardson & Stanton, 1973). Lack of empathy and the creation of new roles are two important factors contributing to role stress. However, role variety, i.e., a number of completely dissimilar occupational categories in the organization, has been found to be associated with the ability to cope with uncertainty (Tyler, 1973). Thus, role variety and role specificity (Danet & Gurevitch, 1972) have been found to be two important factors preventing role stress. But the fact remains that the various forms of role stress create

problems for the individual and for the organization. However, it is not the presence of stress that may affect the working of the organization, but the way in which stress is managed. The coping behavior of the individual and the organization is important in this respect.

## **COPING WITH ROLE STRESS**

When an individual or an organization experiences role stress, some way of coping with the stress is adopted. Individuals and organizations cannot remain in a continuous state of tension. The strategy adopted may be deliberate and conscious, or, for example, the strategy may be simply to leave the conflict and stress to take care of themselves. This, too, is a strategy, although the individual or the organization may not be aware of it. It is useful for both individuals and organizations to examine what strategy they are using to cope with stress. No strategy at all may lead to a lack of effectiveness. Hall (1972) has reported that simply coping (as opposed to not coping) is important to satisfaction, rather than a particular coping strategy.

Kahn and Quinn (1970) have suggested making a distinction between coping strategies in terms of whether the coping is directed at “the environmental stressors” or “the resultant affect it elicits in the role occupant” (p. 82). For the former, they cited Jahoda (1958) who has distinguished between “passive” adaptation (changes in the self or one’s behavior) and “environmental mastery” (active attempts to change the environment). Strategies for coping with the resultant affect of stress—like anger, dissatisfaction, guilt, tension, etc.—could take the form of ego-defensive mechanisms (rationalization, projection, displacement, etc.) or artistic redefinition of the situation (understanding the power of the other role, denying responsibility, minimizing the seriousness of the situation, etc.).

### ***Two Basic Coping Strategies***

Broadly classified into two kinds, coping strategies are used either to avoid the stress, in the hope that time will take care of it, or to face the stress and find a solution for it. The first strategy may be called an avoidance strategy. Such a strategy does not contribute to problem solving and, therefore, is dysfunctional. Most avoidance strategies would use defensive behavior and reduce tension but not resolve the problem. Using the term suggested by Golembiewski (1973), these may also be called degenerating strategies, because they lead to a lack of effectiveness on the part of both the individual and the organization.

The other set of strategies uses confrontation as the main approach. Instead of avoiding problems, these strategies help the individual and the organization solve the problem and thus are functional. In Golembiewski’s language, they may also be called regenerating strategies because they help the individual and the organization become more functional and increase their self-renewing capacities.

Role Conflict	Avoidance; Dysfunctional, Degenerating Strategies	Confrontation; Functional, Regenerating Strategies
<p><b>Role-Space Conflicts</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Self-Role Distance</li> <li>2. Intrarole Conflict</li> <li>3. Role-Growth Stress</li> <li>4. Interrole Conflict</li> </ol>	<p>Self/Role Rejection Role Shrinkage Role Fixation Role Elimination and Rationalization</p>	<p>Role Integration Role Linkage, Creativity Role Transition Role Negotiation</p>
<p><b>Role-Set Conflicts</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Role Ambiguity</li> <li>2. Role Overload</li> <li>3. Role-Role Distance</li> <li>4. Role Erosion</li> </ol>	<p>Role Prescription and Role Taking Prioritization Role Boundness (Efficient Isolation) Fight for Rights and Rules</p>	<p>Role Clarification and Role Making Role Slimming Role Negotiation Role Enrichment</p>

**Figure 5. Two Types of Coping Strategies**

One basic difference between the two sets of strategies is that a confrontation strategy implies that the role occupant believes that he or she, along with others, can influence the situation, while an avoidance strategy implies that he or she feels incapable of influencing the situation. Gemmill and Heisler (1972) have shown that the greater the belief in one's ability to influence the environment, the lower is the reported job strain.

Applying this broad classification of strategies, there are two ways in which any role conflict or role stress can be managed. Figure 5 summarizes the two main ways of managing the different conflicts discussed earlier.

### **Role-Space Conflicts**

1. *Self-role distance*. The individual may deal with stress in the form of self-role distance in two ways. In the extreme form, the individual may either choose self-concept and in turn reject the role, or choose role and in turn reject self-concept. Many individuals whose self-concept conflicts with the roles they occupy in an organization may simply play those roles in a routine way to earn their living. They have rejected the role. On the other hand, some other individuals may seriously occupy their roles and, in due time, completely forget their self-concepts and play those roles effectively, rejecting the self. One important personality characteristic that may influence the decision of the individual to reject the self or the role is inner or other directedness. It has been reported that self-oriented individuals deal with incompatibility by being consistent with their needs while other-directed individuals deal with it by being consistent with prevailing socially induced forces. Both these approaches are dysfunctional. If an individual rejects the role, he or she is likely to be ineffective in the organization. However, rejecting the self may cause the person to lose effectiveness as an individual, perhaps impairing his or her mental health.

A functional strategy for dealing with this stress is to attempt role integration. The individual may analyze the various aspects of the roles that are causing self-role distance and may begin to acquire skills to bridge this gap or may carry the self into the role by defining some aspects of the role according to his or her own skills. In other words, an attempt both to grow in the role and to make the role develop to suit the special capabilities of the person would result in role integration. With this strategy, the individual gets the satisfaction of occupying a role that is nearer to his or her self-concept. Such an integration is not easy to achieve, but with systematic effort, it can be done.

2. *Intrarole conflict.* Intrarole conflict is both a role-space and a role-set conflict. One way to deal with this stress is to eliminate from the role those expectations that are likely to conflict with other expectations. This is the process of role shrinkage, the act of pruning the role in such a way that some expectations can be given up. Although role shrinkage may help avoid the problem, it is a dysfunctional approach, because the advantage of a larger role is lost. Instead, role linkages can be established with other roles and the problem solved by devising some new ways of achieving the conflicting expectations. In this way, the individual can experience both growth and satisfaction. If for example, a professor is experiencing conflict among three expectations—teaching students, doing research, and consulting with organizations—he or she may find that the conflict occurs because of a lack of sufficient skills for doing research. He or she may thus take recourse in role shrinkage. A better way to deal with this problem is to develop role linkages with other colleagues who are good in research and work out an arrangement whereby research is not neglected. Finding more nontraditional and productive ways of doing things may be an even more satisfactory method.

3. *Role-growth stress.* When individuals get into new roles as a result of their advancement in the organization or as a result of taking over more challenging roles, there may be a feeling of apprehension because the role is new and may require skills that the role occupant does not have. In such a situation, a usual strategy is to continue to play the previous role about which the individual is sure and which has been achieved successfully. In many cases people at the top management level of an organization continue to play the role of a lower-level manager. A foreman, for example, in due course may become general manager and still play the role of the foreman, with consequent frustrations for the new foreman and for others who expect the person to devote time to more productive aspects. In one organization, for example, after several self-searching sessions, it became clear that the tendency of the senior management level toward close supervision was really a tendency to continue to play old roles. This occurs especially if the individual role requires more new skills that have to be developed, such as planning roles and the role of scanning the environment. In the absence of such skills, the usual tendency is to fall back on old tried-and-tested roles. This is role fixation.

It is nevertheless necessary for people to grow out of their old roles into new ones and face up to new challenges. A more functional way to resolve this conflict is through role transition, a phrase borrowed from Burr (1972). Role transition is the process by

which a previous role, no matter how successful and satisfying it may have been, is given up to take on a new and more developed role. Burr has suggested that role transition is helped by various processes, including anticipatory socialization, role clarity, substitute gratification, and transition procedure. In order to make role transition more effective, it is necessary to have anticipatory socialization, i.e., preparation for the taking of the new role. This would also include the delegation of responsibility and functions to people below one's own role, so that the person can be free to experiment and to take help in such experimentation from others. Such a process of role transition can be very useful.

4. *Interrole conflict*. The usual approach to dealing with this type of conflict is either to partition the roles clearly, so that a person is a spouse or a parent at home and an executive in the office, or to eliminate one role, i.e., accepting one role at the cost of the other role. In such a case, the individual takes recourse in rationalization. For example, an executive who neglects family and in this process eliminates the role of spouse and parent rationalizes the process by thinking that he or she makes a unique contribution to the company and, therefore, can afford to neglect the family or that his or her earnings pay the price of losing a spouse and a parent. Such rationalizations are part of the process of role elimination. Hall (1972) has used the words *partitioning* and *eliminating* in the sixteen specific behavioral strategies he has identified in dealing with role conflicts. He suggests that these strategies are dysfunctional because they only avoid the problem and do not help individuals confront and resolve the issues.

A more functional approach to the problem is *role negotiation*. Role negotiation has been developed by Harrison (1971) as a technique of dealing with various problems of role conflict. The process of role negotiation is the process of establishing mutuality of roles and getting necessary help to play the roles more effectively and of giving help in turn to the other role. For example, an executive who is not able to find time for family may sit down and negotiate with the family on how best to spend time meaningfully within the given constraints. One executive in the largest nationalized bank in India solved the problem by discussing it with the family and working out an arrangement whereby entire Sundays would be devoted to family; they would not normally accept invitations to dine out unless both the wife and the husband were invited. This negotiation was highly satisfying because neither of the roles had to be sacrificed and eliminated.

### **Role-Set Conflict**

The various coping strategies for each of these four previously identified conflicts are discussed here.

1. *Role ambiguity*. The usual approach to the conflict of role ambiguity is to clarify the roles by writing things on paper. This is *role prescription*. The various expectations are thus defined more clearly, or the individual may remove ambiguity by fitting into the role as described in some expectations. This is the process of role taking. A more

functional approach may be to seek clarification from various sources and to define the role in the light of such clarifications. A more creative way is to define the role according to one's own strengths and to take steps to make the role more challenging. This is the process of role making.

2. *Role overload.* To deal with the problem of role overload, i.e., a feeling of too many expectations from several sources, the role occupant usually prepares a list of all functions in terms of priorities. This kind of prioritization may help put things in order of importance; however, the problem may be that the functions with which a person is less familiar tend to be pushed lower down the priority list and neglected, while those functions that a person is able to perform without any effort get top priority. This approach, therefore, may be dysfunctional. A more functional approach may be to redefine the role and see which aspects of the role can be delegated to other people who may be helped to assume these functions, thus helping other individuals to grow also. This may be called role slimming. The role does not lose its vitality in the process of delegating some functions; in fact, the vitality increases with the decrease in obesity.

3. *Role-role distance.* When there is tension between two roles in an organization, the distance between these roles is likely to be large. The linkage in such a case will be weak. The usual tendency in such a stress situation is for each role occupant to play the role most efficiently and avoid interactions. The role occupant confines himself or herself to that role. This may be called *role boundness* (Garg & Parikh, 1975), in which the role occupant voluntarily agrees to be bound by the role. In some organizations individual executives and managers may be highly efficient in their own roles but do not take corporate responsibility; their linkages with other roles are very weak. The individual withdraws in an isolation of efficiency. He or she gets satisfaction out of playing the individual role effectively and efficiently but does not contribute as much to the overall organization. This approach is thus likely to be dysfunctional. A better method of approach is role negotiation (Harrison, 1971), which can be used for resolving such conflict, as well as the previously discussed interrole conflict.

4. *Role erosion.* The usual reaction to a situation of role erosion is to fight for the rights of the role and to insist on a clarification of roles. However, this is not likely to be functional and helpful, because the basic conflict continues. A better approach may be that of role enrichment. Like job enrichment, the concept of role enrichment involves a vertical loading of the role.

Cummings and ElSalmic (1970) have proposed the idea of role diversity, similar to the concept of role enrichment. According to them, role-set diversity is measured in terms of the number of roles with which the role occupant maintains work relationships. They have reported that a highly diversified role set provides the executive with varied sources of stimulation and, therefore, leads to managerial satisfaction. They found that this variable contributed more to satisfaction than the company size or subunit size.

Role enrichment can be done by analyzing the role systematically and helping the individual see the various strengths in that role and the various challenges that the role

contains but that may not be apparent to the individual when he or she occupies it. Significant role members can help make the role more challenging and satisfying to the role occupant.

## **INTERROLE EXPLORATION**

The various coping strategies outlined make it clear that confrontation strategies are more functional and contribute to the regenerating process. In order to use these strategies it is necessary to work out systematic ways of implementing them. A method evolved and tested in several organizations in India is discussed briefly here.

Interrole exploration (IRE) is used for strengthening various roles in an organization, through a joint effort on the part of these roles. IRE is used for role-set conflicts. Occupants of all the roles in a role set participate in IRE.

The main focus of IRE is on developing confrontation and functional coping strategies for various kinds of role stress. There are various dimensions of interrole interaction that are significant in this connection. IRE is not only a technique of coping with stress, but an approach, a philosophy of working in an organization. The following dimensions are particularly relevant for IRE:

1. *Mutuality versus exclusiveness.* IRE attempts to build mutuality among roles. Giving help and receiving help are possible only in a relationship of mutuality. Davidson and Kelly (1973) have reported the social effect on stress reduction. Mutuality is a function of trust and the perception of the importance and power of the other role as well as of one's own role. (See Figure 6.) If a role occupant perceives his own role or the other role to lack power, other kinds of relationships may develop between the two roles.

2. *Creativity versus conformity.* IRE attempts to stimulate people in an organization to search for new solutions to the problems they face in working together. The emphasis is on attempting alternative ways of solving a problem. IRE deemphasizes the use of traditional methods of problem solving, if these methods have not proved to be effective. Creativity can be achieved by looking at the problem from different angles, and IRE stresses this. Creativity is related to an internal locus of control. Gemmill and Heisler

		<b>Perceived Power</b>			
		Neither	Only Role Occupant	Only the Other	Both
<b>Trust</b>	Low	Isolation	Coercion	Withdrawal	Exclusiveness and/or Rivalry
	High	Mutual Sympathy	Nurturance	Dependency	Mutuality

**Figure 6. Relationship Patterns Under Different Conditions of Trust and Perceived Power**

(1972) have reported that the greater the belief in one's ability to influence the environment, the lower the reported job strain.

3. *Confrontation versus avoidance.* The main philosophy underlying IRE is that problems can be solved if they are brought to the surface and a conscious attempt is made to search for a solution. Instead of avoiding the problems either by not looking at them or by working on nonissues in the organization, IRE attempts to help the various role occupants confront the problems they face in order to find a solution for them. According to this approach, the confrontation of problems is necessary to reach a lasting solution.

4. *Exploration versus expectation of ready-made solutions.* IRE attempts to help people evolve a solution rather than expect any such solution from experts or from people in the organization. The usual tendency is to look for a ready-made solution to relieve the tension, especially if it is suggested and prescribed by an authority figure like an expert or a member of top management. The underlying philosophy of IRE is that such a solution may not be effective in solving a problem. Effective solutions can come about only through exploration rather than acceptance of an ideal solution. Exploration means a joint effort at understanding the problem and weighing the alternate solutions to that problem.

IRE, as an intervention, uses a structured approach with process orientation. Although the various steps involved in IRE are aimed at generating data using structured exercises, the work on these data involves group work, and the solutions can be achieved only through process-oriented work on the problems brought to the surface by the data generated in the structured exercises. By using the structured exercises, the problems and issues of interrole relationships are confronted (Pareek, 1975).

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## ■ ANDROGYNY

### Jean Campbell

Being female or male is an important aspect of one's self-identity. Most of us were brought up to be a "boy" or a "girl." Boys get a clear message: achieve. Girls are given warmth and protection and are encouraged toward interpersonal activities, particularly by their fathers (Block, 1973). When we were growing up, many of us did not think to question what these messages meant. There is an increasing awareness now, however, that being a "boy" or a "girl" has negative consequences if the cultural script is followed too closely. Women connect their career diffusion to elementary school memories of being careful not to be the best in the class. Men find themselves struggling to express their feelings in T-groups, with images of themselves at age 9, turning away a much-wanted hug or refusing to allow themselves to cry when they were hurt.

#### ***The Negative Aspect of Sex-Role Typing***

The stereotype of each sex can be seen negatively. Women are regarded as dependent, incompetent, and weak. Men are pushy, insensitive, and brutal. Either sex type, carried to an extreme, is a caricature.

Each sex has an emotional price to pay for strict adherence to the cultural script. Men in our society are competent, "together," and tough, and they suffer the emotional and physical consequences of hiding feelings—heart disease and ulcers, for example (Jourard, 1971). Women are sensitive, gentle, and caring, but they pay a price in lack of confidence, lack of self-realization through "agentic,"<sup>1</sup> or achieving, projects, and poor psychological well-being. The conflict between femininity and mental health, as both are culturally defined, is extensively documented (Broverman et al., 1970; Chessler, 1972; O'Leary, 1974). There is a particularly difficult double bind for women between femininity—and, by extension, sexuality—and both competence and self-worth.

#### ***Men as Achieving, Women as Communal***

Everyone seems to agree that in U.S. society the female role is predominantly communal, interpersonal, and expressive, and the male role is predominantly achieving and instrumental. With this basic distinction, agreement ends. Which things "ought" to be regarded as typical of women or of men or whether any characteristics ought to be regarded as more appropriate for men or for women; whether any of the characteristics

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<sup>1</sup> The word "agentic" is derived by Block (1973) from Bakan (1966), who says that *agency* and *communion* are fundamental characteristics of living forms.

associated with males or females have a genetic base or whether they are a result of socialization—on all these questions there is disagreement. Nevertheless, the current social reality, the “average” societal frame, is that women, as a group, are oriented toward caring and interpersonal activities and men toward achievement in instrumental areas of life.

### ***Female- or Male-Associated Traits***

Cross-cultural research (with boys and girls in six countries) has isolated traits that are male or female associated (Block, 1973). Boys tend to describe themselves more in terms of agency and girls in terms of communion. None of the adjectives identified by boys are classified as communal and most are classified as instrumental: practical, shrewd, assertive, dominating, competitive, critical, self-controlled, rational, reasonable, ambitious, self-centered, independent, and adventurous. The adjectives that girls associate with their views of themselves are mostly communal: loving, affectionate, sympathetic, generous, sensitive, artistic, helpful, considerate—with only one instrumental characteristic: vital or active.

### ***Individual Versus Group Differences***

Although there are sex-group differences in the level of interpersonal behavior, there is tremendous variation among members of both sexes. Although aggressive behavior has been demonstrated to be sex-linked, with males showing a higher level than females, there is significant variation among cultures, indicating that much of the difference between men and women is learned rather than genetic. Also, there is tremendous variation within the two groups. Many women are predisposed to higher levels of aggressive behavior than many men. Conversely, many men are involved in a higher level of caring activities than many women. We must guard against an average reality presented as a cultural prescription. Men may show a general achieving orientation and women an interpersonal one, but neither men nor women are exclusively oriented in one or the other direction. Women in all areas of life initiate and complete tasks, and men are part of an interpersonal network. Both instrumental and communal skills are necessary for survival for both men and women.

## ***INTEGRATED SEX-ROLE IDENTITY: ANDROGYNOUS ORIENTATION***

With our increased awareness of our cultural script has come an attempt to choose those traits or values, associated with either men or women, that are appropriate for an individual. A person can learn to integrate salient traits of the other sex into his or her personality in order to develop an androgynous orientation.

Androgyny, from the Greek *andro*, male, and *gyne*, female, refers to a blending of what are usually regarded as male or female characteristics, values, or attitudes. It aims at integrating into one's personality the positive characteristics of the other sex as well as one's own sex. In her analysis of sex role and personal integration, Block (1973)

defined sexual identity as the “earning of a sense of self in which there is a recognition of gender secure enough to permit the individual to manifest human qualities our society, until now, has labeled as unmanly or unwomanly” (p. 512).

Rigid sex roles restrict behavior. Sex-typed feminine women (which Bem [1975] termed “fluffy women”) attend to babies and people in need but do not exhibit appropriate independent and assertive behaviors, whereas sex-typed masculine men (which she called “chesty men”) are the opposite of this. On the other hand, androgynous persons of both sexes, that is, those who describe themselves on the Bem Sex-Role Inventory as incorporating independent-assertive behaviors and responsible-helping behaviors, are more spontaneous than either of the groups when they, for example, play with a kitten, and they are able to respond appropriately to situations calling for both assertiveness and caring.

Personal maturity is associated with a high integration of agency and communion in both men and women, that is, with an androgynous orientation. High levels of both ego development and moral development are also associated with an integration of agency and communion (Block, 1973).

Men operating at a high level of personal maturity have qualities of self-assertion, self-interest, and self-extension, as would be expected, but these are tempered by considerations of *mutuality*, *interdependence*, and *joint welfare*. Similarly, high-functioning women show a concern for the harmonious functioning of the group and for submersion of self, and they affirm the importance of consensus—qualities characteristic of communal concerns; however, they combine these with qualities of *agentic self-assertion*, *self-extension*, and *self-expression*.

### **Unisex**

The concept of androgyny is not well described by “unisex.” This word seems to connote that everyone’s sexual identity is alike. Androgyny, instead, affirms certain human characteristics and values, and, within this context, further asserts that each individual be able to establish whatever sexual identity is appropriate for him or her. Androgyny really asks us what kind of *people*—not men or women—we want to be.

## **ANDROGYNOUS VALUES AND THE HUMAN RELATIONS MOVEMENT**

There is an interesting correspondence between androgynous characteristics and the goals of the human relations movement. Qualities seen as representing an integration of agency and communion are mutuality, interdependence, and joint welfare, on the communal side; and self-extension, self-expression, and self-assertion on the instrumental side. The goals of the human relations movement (as stated by Schein & Bennis, 1965) are (a) a spirit of inquiry—experimenting with one’s role in the world; (b) an expanded interpersonal consciousness; (c) increased authenticity, feeling freer to be oneself, (d) acting in an interdependent way with peers, superiors, and subordinates

rather than in authoritative or hierarchical terms; and (e) resolving conflict through problem solving rather than through coercion or power manipulation.

The human relations movement has been promoting an androgynous orientation for years; a further integration of these qualities into our interpersonal behavior is a next step.

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## ■ CENTERING

**Anthony G. Banet, Jr.**

“Where are you?”

Asked to locate their “self” somewhere in their bodies, most adults will point to their chest or to a spot behind their eyes. Children, in contrast, are likely to indicate their bellies as the center where the “self” resides. As in many other matters, the children are more correct: Since antiquity, many esoteric disciplines have located the “self”—the core of being—in the body’s center, the belly or lower abdomen. Centering, a term used in contemporary growth and transpersonal endeavors, refers to a series of processes that strive simultaneously to increase an awareness of the body center and to promote the discovery of the true self that is beyond the mask of ego. Centering is the integration of body, mind, and spirit into a harmonious whole.

The body’s literal center, the center of gravity, is deep within the abdominal cavity formed by the pelvic girdle, an area richly endowed by the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. Here, behind a spot two or three fingers below the navel, is the mythical acupuncture organ, the organ that was thought to circulate psychic or nervous energy. The center in some systems is visualized as a light, a flame, a sphere, or as nothing at all—a void, a pivot around which body movement flows. The center as a metaphoric or “real” space seems to be a belief peculiar to Eastern philosophical systems; in Japan, for instance, the center is *seika-no-itten*, the one point, the still point, the intersection of mind and body, “where the laws of mind and body are joined together” (Tohei, 1966, p. 63). Western thinkers since Aristotle, however, either have ignored the concept of center or have identified “mind” with various brain functions or as being diffused throughout the body. Descartes regarded the pineal gland in the brain as an organ in which the soul resided, but this concept only emphasized the dualism of body and mind in traditional Western thought. The practical significance of these differences in Eastern and Western thinking has been considerable. In the East, personal growth, transpersonal development, and spirituality have been regarded as nonrational processes that involve the body and physical activity, while in the West, progress toward personal perfection has been seen largely as a rational, scientific process carried on by a brain caged or fettered by a demanding body. Although the differences between the allegedly “spiritual” East and the “materialistic” West have at times been exaggerated, some differences are obvious and have resulted in different approaches to growth. The current emphasis on actualizing potential has been the occasion for a blending and

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intermingling of the Eastern *yin* (the receptive and the docile) and the Western *yang* (the creative and the active) into a harmonious whole (Banet, 1976).

## **CENTEREDNESS**

What does it mean to be centered? We have a greater awareness of the absence of centering than its presence: we speak of being unbalanced or off-balance; we know the frantic impatience when our thoughts and energies are “scattered” and our nerves are “worn to a frazzle”; we “go crazy” when chatter, trivia, and disjunction shatter our sense of inner focus and attention. To be off-center, in the Greek sense of the word, is to be sinful, off-target; its opposite is to be virtuous. To be virtuous, which can be accomplished by methods rooted in ancient practice but recently re-annointed by the discoveries of humanistic psychology, is to be centered. The virtues of centeredness include (a) present-centeredness, living in the here and now; (b) an efficient use of energy; (c) a unity of inner calm and outward action; (d) being in touch with the inner flow of experience and the external flow of the universe; (e) economy and simplicity of movement and behavior; (f) willingness to transcend polarities; (g) belief in inner control and responsibility.

### ***Present-Centeredness***

Living here, living now. The self is a continuum; I have a past, a future, and a *now*. Present-centeredness means that I develop an awareness and a response to what is happening now, an awareness unencumbered by preoccupation with the past or speculation regarding the future. This awareness involves a point-to-point sensory contact with reality in its purity and simplicity. This continued freshness of appreciation of the now is the “original child mind” of Zen, the “separate reality” of Castaneda’s Don Juan, the “here and now” of Gestalt therapy. Such awareness is atheoretical and nonintellectual; in present-centeredness, reality and time unfold, and the self “lets it happen” without an attempt to control it.

### ***Efficient Use of Human Energy***

Everyone “knows” what human energy is; consequently, energy is an oftused but rarely defined term. Energy is life, the life-force, *élan vital*, alertness, spirit, the absence of fatigue, attention, responsiveness to stimulation, the soul, the divine spark. In the centering disciplines, energy is frequently associated with breath and breathing, and attention is paid to the process of the body energizing itself and using that energy in an economical fashion. Energy encompasses the concept of nourishment and care of the body, mind, and spirit.

### ***Unity of Calm and Action***

Inner calm and peacefulness is much sought after in centering processes, but this is not to be confused with withdrawal, sleep, or inertia. Inner calm is the source of action; centering involves both. Tohei (1966), the aikido master, uses the analogy of a spinning top. “Tops that children often play at spinning approach a state of calm stability the faster they spin . . . their most perfect state of calm is reached when they move at the greatest speed. The truest calm must contain the nature of the most rapid movement” (p. 168).

### ***In Touch with the Flow***

Energy flows within; the flow of the universe is the perpetual movement and expansion of energy forces. When the inner experience of the self matches the flow of the universe—that is, when my inner awareness is consonant and “right” and natural—I forget myself, and my thought and action merge with the task at hand. As Goleman (1976, p. 53) states, “Flow arises when there is an optimal fit between one’s capability and the demands of the moment.” Definitions of flow are inadequate; it involves some synchrony between the self’s inner spark and the larger spark of life and cosmos. Total immersion in what I am experiencing is the ecstatic feeling of flow.

### ***Economy and Simplicity of Movement and Behavior***

Centering results in simplicity, naturalness, and the lack of complication. The centered person finds it easy to eliminate unnecessary movement and behavior. Focused attention means that memory is improved and “forgetting” less frequent. Contentment comes from simple, natural activities and pursuits. The centered person is less dependent on external stimulation; he or she has internally what is required to enjoy the here and now.

### ***Willingness to Transcend Polarities***

The work of centering is the resolution of the self’s experience of paradox and polarity. In an effort to make sense of reality, human beings engage in either/or thinking, as though intellectual abstractions could freeze change and make experience comprehensible. Because life is too complex to take whole, it seems, the dichotomized options come easily: yes/no, you/me, male/female, right/wrong, work/play, weakness/strength, good/bad, love/war, body/mind—even centering itself supposes there is a fringe or periphery that is not the center. These polarities wrap round the self like a cocoon, imprisoning while giving apparent comfort and shelter. The work of centering involves a transcendence of these polarities, an integration of apparent opposites so that the butterfly within the cocoon—the true self—can emerge and become something new, something whole.

## ***Belief in Inner Control and Responsibility***

As the true “self” is delivered from the bonds of ego, the individual’s sense of self-sufficiency and independence grows. The centered person becomes aware that he or she makes choices and decisions, is responsible for his or her own behavior. This sense of inner control means less attribution and projection of power to others.

## **THE WORK OF CENTERING**

Like all other change processes, centering develops through phases and movements. The rush of excitement that comes with the discovery of the possibility of centering is followed by the awareness that centering is not just an exercise but a way of life. A “dark night” follows, in which the struggle to become whole seems an impossible, thankless task. As Zinkus (1976) has commented, we must recognize that the time for awareness is not only during the centering exercise but during the whole of our day; otherwise our lives are fragmented and our growth of understanding is undermined. Every moment, every thing, every state of mind, every situation is appropriate for awareness. The necessity for centering ends when the center becomes the fringe, and vice-versa—a becoming that, for most of us, is only approached, not achieved.

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## PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

### Udai Pareek

Although one precondition for personal effectiveness is better self-awareness, understanding oneself does not alone make a person effective.

#### *The Johari Window*

One simple model for self-awareness that is widely used is the Johari Window, developed by Luft and Ingham (Luft, 1973). In this model, there are two main dimensions for understanding the self: those aspects of a person's behavior and style that are known to him or her (Self) and those aspects of behavior known to those with whom he or she interacts (Others). A combination of these two dimensions reveals four areas of knowledge about the self (Figure 1).

	Known to Self	Not Known to Self
Known to Others	Arena	Blind
Not Known to Others	Closed	Dark

**Figure 1. Johari Window**

The upper left-hand square is the Arena or the public self—that part of an individual's behavior known both to the person and to others with whom he or she interacts. The Arena includes information such as name, age, physical appearance, and familial or organizational affiliation.

The Blind area contains those aspects of the person's behavior and style that others know but that the person himself or herself does not. A person may have mannerisms of which he or she is not aware that are perceived by others as funny, annoying, or pleasing. For example, an individual might be surprised to hear that his or her method of

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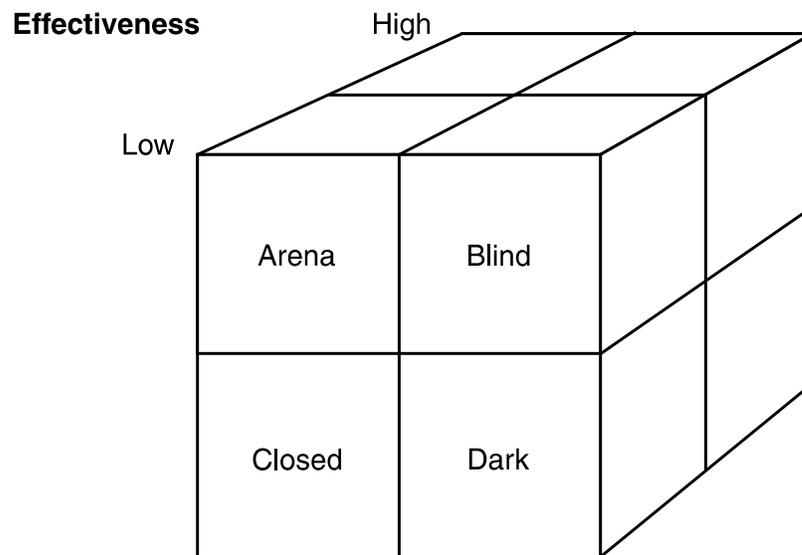
asking questions annoys others because it is interpreted as cross-examination rather than curiosity or a request for information.

The Closed area involves that which is known to the person but not revealed to others; things in this area are secret. For example, a subordinate may be annoyed if a supervisor does not ask him or her to sit down during a meeting, but will remain standing without letting the supervisor know about the annoyance. The supervisor may think that the subordinate does not mind standing and accept this behavior as part of their hierarchical relationship. Most of us have many such feelings in our Closed areas that we are unwilling to reveal to the persons concerned.

The fourth area is the Dark area, inaccessible both to the person and to others. Some psychologists believe that this is a very large area indeed and that certain circumstances (for example, an accident), a particular life stage, or special techniques such as psychoanalysis or psychodynamics may suddenly make a person realize some hidden aspects of himself or herself. Because the Dark area cannot be consciously controlled or changed and therefore cannot be considered in a discussion of personal effectiveness, this discussion will be limited to the Arena and the Blind and Closed areas.

### **THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL PERSONAL-EFFECTIVENESS CUBE**

Although it might be assumed that a large Arena and small Blind and Closed areas would be desirable and would contribute to personal effectiveness, this is not necessarily so. A person with a large Arena may still be ineffective because a large Arena is not the *only* factor in effectiveness. By adding the dimension of effectiveness to the Johari Window, we produce a three-dimensional cube or grid (Figure 2) similar to those proposed by Blake and Mouton (1964) and Reddin (1970).



**Figure 2. Personal-Effectiveness Cube (PEC)**

## **Effectiveness as Communication**

In order to use the dimension of effectiveness, however, we must first decide what effectiveness is. Personal effectiveness may be seen in the context of communication, according to the following criteria:

1. *Fidelity of Communication.* The distortion-free quality of a message is called fidelity. An effective person gets the message across to others with a minimum of misunderstanding. If the gap between what a person wants to communicate and what the other person understands is large, the effectiveness of the person who is sending the communication is low. For example, if a supervisor intends to communicate confidence in an employee by not oversupervising, but the employee hears the message that the supervisor is not interested, the supervisor has low effectiveness.

2. *Economy.* Economy is an important criterion of communication effectiveness. An effective person uses a minimum of energy, time, symbols, and cues to communicate a message that can be understood. A person who spends excessive time communicating is less effective.

3. *Influence.* The most important criterion of effectiveness is the influence that the communicator is able to exercise over the receiver of the communication. Influence does not mean control; it means that the communicator achieves the result intended. If the communicator wanted an empathetic response and achieved that as a result of the interaction, he or she influenced the other person. If a supervisor sends a message of trust and confidence to a subordinate and helps the subordinate develop autonomy and the ability to take the initiative, the supervisor has succeeded in influencing the subordinate.

4. *Congruence.* An effective communication integrates both verbal and nonverbal cues. If a verbal message conflicts with the speaker's nonverbal cues, the speaker's effectiveness will be low. For example, if a supervisor tells a subordinate that he or she is pleased, but frowns while doing so, this gives a conflicting message and is not likely to be effective.

5. *Relationship Building.* A communicator's influence is also to some extent in proportion to his or her ability to build a trusting relationship. Communications that contribute to the building of trust and better interpersonal relationships among individuals are more effective than those that do not.

## **Ranges of Effectiveness**

Effectiveness may be categorized as ranging from low to high. A person who is not economical in communication, is low in fidelity, and uses conflicting cues, for example, would have very low effectiveness. The highest effectiveness would result from the most economical communication, the least distortion between what is communicated and what is understood, integrated verbal and nonverbal cues, a communication that contributes to a trusting relationship, and a communication that has maximum influence.

## **Possible Effectiveness Combinations**

By combining high or low effectiveness with a large or small area in the Arena and the Blind and Closed areas, the three-dimensional Personal-Effectiveness (PEC) Cube shown in Figure 2 reveals twelve possible personality combinations (Table 1).

**Table 1. Personal-Effectiveness Cube Combinations**

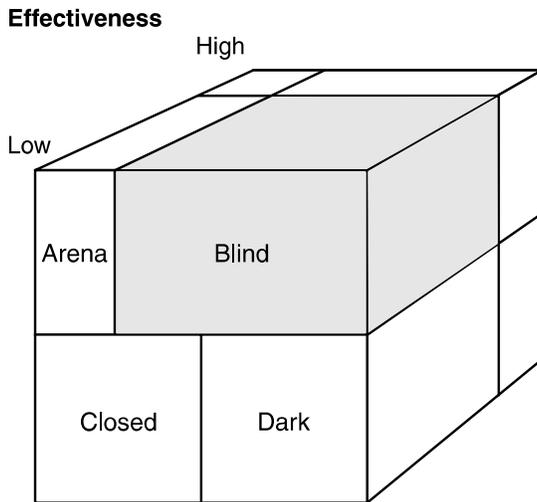
<b>Arena</b>	<b>Blind Area</b>	<b>Closed Area</b>	<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>Type of Person</b>
	Large Large Small Small		High Low High Low	Self-Confident Unperceptive Perceptive Overly Cautious
		Large Large Small Small	High Low High Low	Good Listener Secretive Frank Egocentric
Small Small Large Large			High Low Low High	Task-Oriented Closed Superficial Open

### *Self-Confident*

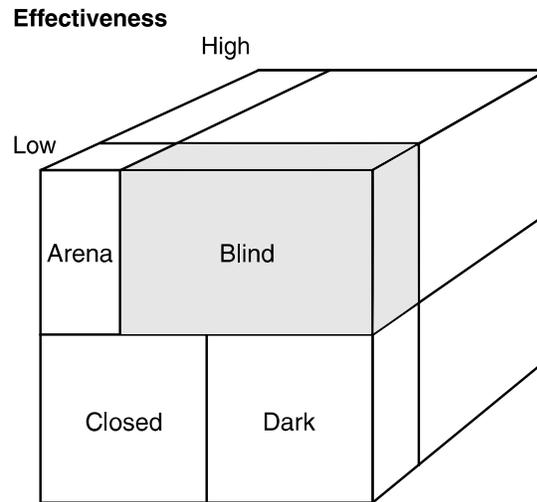
A person with a large Blind area and high effectiveness (Figure 3) is likely to be self-confident. He or she may not be aware of limitations, but may also not be aware of some strengths. However, this person is likely to rely on strengths and be blind to weaknesses. Although effectiveness may see him or her through situations, it will certainly be limited because of this person's lack of awareness of some limitations and strengths.

### *Unperceptive*

A person with a large Blind area and low effectiveness (Figure 4) is unperceptive to the nonverbal cues that people may send about his or her behavior. For example, a professor who cannot see that the whole class is drowsy from a dull lecture may continue to bore the class. Unperceptive people find it difficult to understand subtle sarcasm, subdued communication of resentment and negative feelings, and body language.



**Figure 3. Self-Confident Person**



**Figure 4. Unperceptive Person**

### *Perceptive*

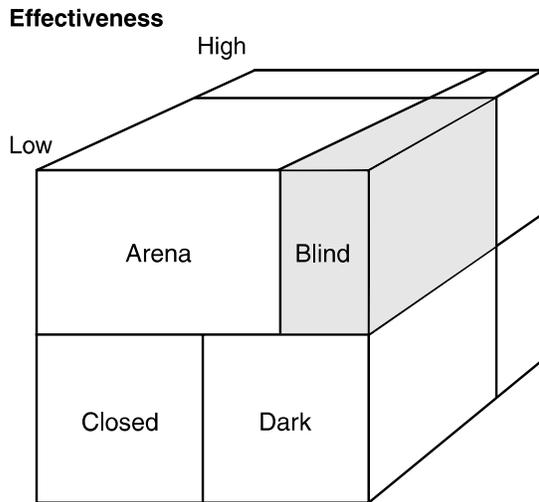
A person with a small Blind area and with high effectiveness (Figure 5) is quite perceptive of verbal and nonverbal cues. This perceptiveness helps him or her to pick up such cues quickly and use them to change strategy and hence effectiveness. A perceptive supervisor who sees that a subordinate is preoccupied with some problem asks the subordinate about the trouble before pursuing task-related topics. This is likely to help the subordinate become more open and relate to the supervisor more effectively.

### *Overly Cautious*

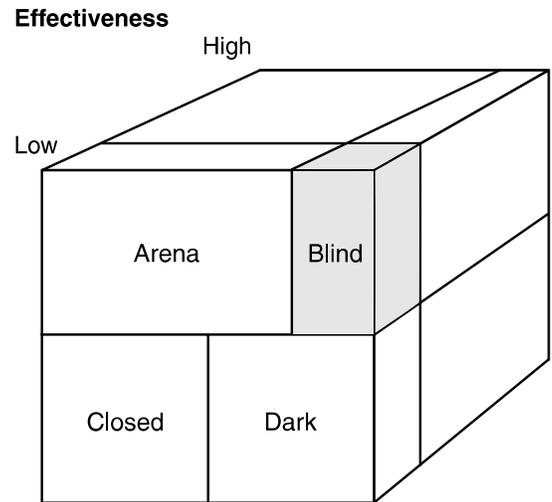
A person with a smaller Blind area knows more about strengths and limitations. However, if such a person has low effectiveness (Figure 6), he or she is more likely to be overly concerned with weaknesses than to concentrate on strengths. An overly cautious person finds it difficult to take the initiative and to risk because these limitations loom large and may immobilize him or her. Just having a smaller Blind area does not make a person effective.

### *Good Listener*

A person with a large Closed area and with high effectiveness (Figure 7) is likely to be a good listener. Instead of giving personal opinions, he or she listens to the opinions of others and makes decisions based on his or her own judgment. This person may not share about a personal point of view, even if this view is not close to the views of others.



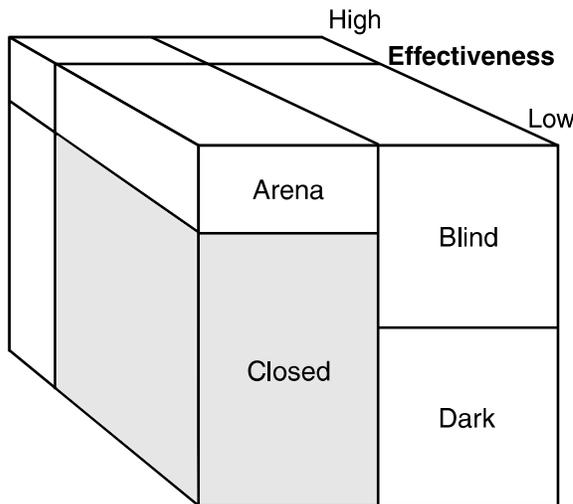
**Figure 5. Perceptive Person**



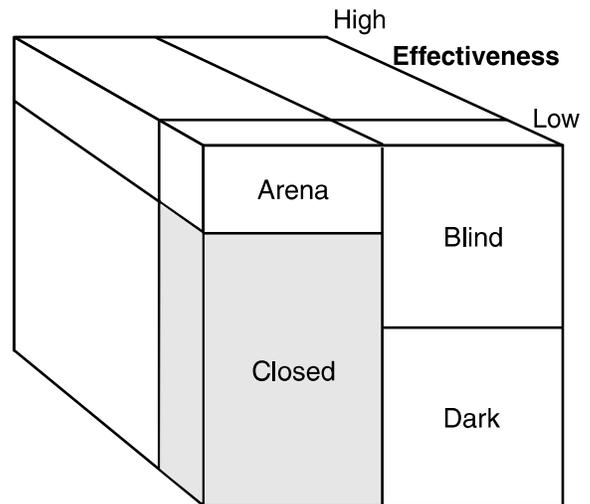
**Figure 6. Overly Cautious Person**

*Secretive*

A person with a large Closed area and with low effectiveness (Figure 8) is likely to be secretive. Other people may wonder what criteria he or she uses to judge them or what he or she expects from them. They are also not likely to know how this person feels, because he or she will not share feelings with others.



**Figure 7. Good Listener**



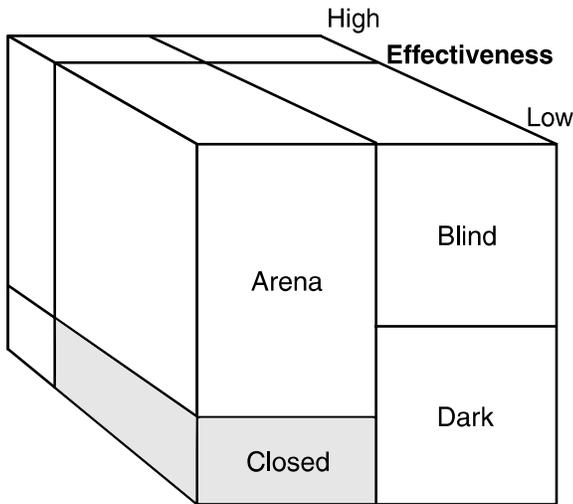
**Figure 8. Secretive Person**

*Frank*

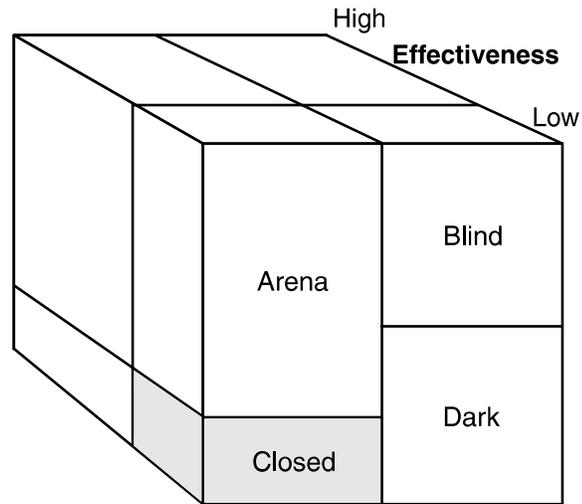
A person with a small Closed area and with high effectiveness (Figure 9) is likely to be quite outspoken and frank. He or she gives feedback and expresses opinions and points of view without any inhibition. This person shares personal feelings, experiences, joys, and sorrows also.

## *Egocentric*

A person with a small Closed area but with low effectiveness (Figure 10) may tend to talk excessively about his or her own achievements, talents, experiences, and even personal life. This person is so egocentric that he or she is not likely to pay attention to others and their needs.



**Figure 9. Frank Person**



**Figure 10. Egocentric Person**

## *Task-Oriented*

A person with a small Arena can be quite effective in a limited way (Figure 11). One model for an effective administrator is a person with a small Arena and a high task orientation. Such a person does not relate to others on a personal or social level. He or she is mainly concerned with task performance and may restrict communication and interaction with others only to the tasks involved.

## *Closed*

A person with a small Arena and low effectiveness (Figure 12) is usually closed, neither sharing personal impressions nor listening to others and using the feedback he or she receives. Such a person will be quite ineffective.

## *Superficial*

A person with a large Arena but with low effectiveness (Figure 13) does not use openness to good effect with others. He or she may interact with others, offer opinions, and listen to others, but these acts are usually of a superficial nature. This person does not exercise judgment about when to be open and what to look for in the feedback received from others.

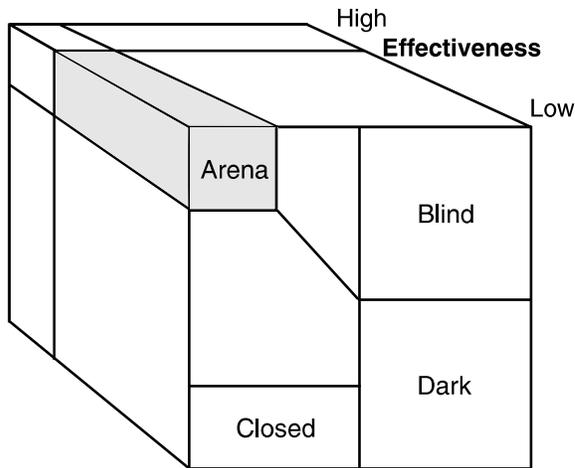


Figure 11. Task-Oriented Person

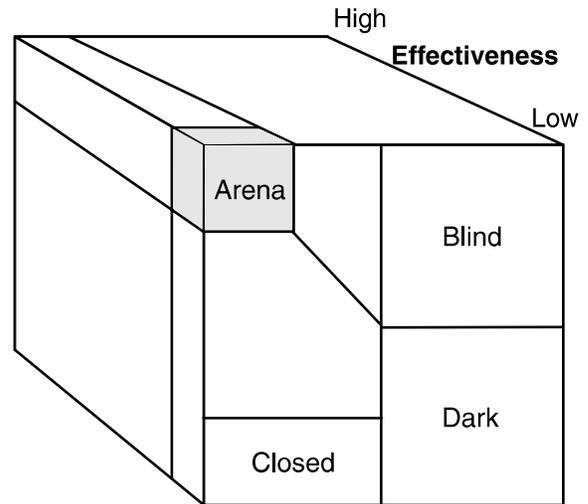


Figure 12. Closed Person

### Open

A person with a large Arena (the open self) and high effectiveness is open (Figure 14). Personal opinions are given freely and are well understood, he or she feels free to communicate impressions and to give feedback to others with a sensitivity that they appreciate. Similarly, this person is eager to receive feedback from others; he or she solicits it and then critically examines and uses it to good effect.

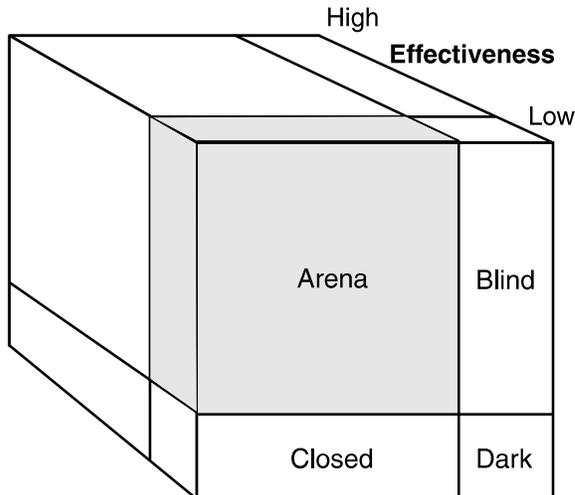


Figure 13. Superficial Person

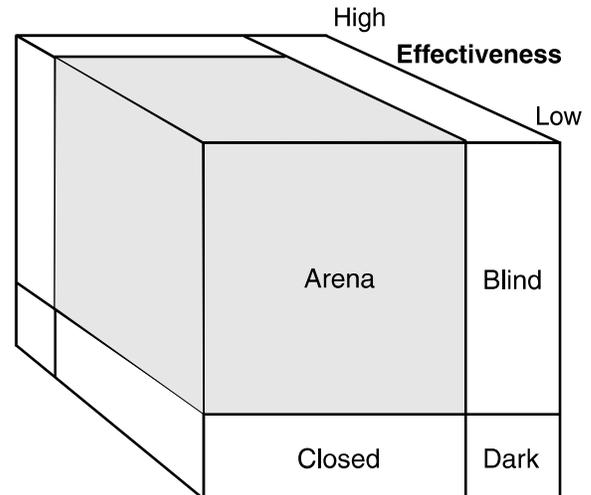


Figure 14. Open Person

## DEVELOPING PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Personal effectiveness must be viewed across three dimensions: openness, perceptiveness, and communication, all significant dimensions in interpersonal relationships. By becoming more open, a person reduces the Closed area; the Blind area

is reduced by increasing perceptiveness; and communication can be improved in various ways discussed previously. These three dimensions, however, do not function in isolation; each interacts with the others. In order to increase effectiveness, it is necessary to work on a combination of all three.

### **Openness**

The extent to which one shares ideas, feelings, experiences, impressions, perceptions, and various other personal data with others, openness is an important quality and contributes a great deal to a person's effectiveness. But openness can also be dysfunctional. Openness in combination with perceptiveness and communication does make a person much more effective, but openness alone is often misunderstood as sharing everything with everyone. Pfeiffer and Jones (1972) have used the term "Carolesque" openness to describe openness without accompanying sensitivity to others in a situation. The word was coined from Carol's behavior in the movie *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice*. Carol, recently "turned on" by a weekend growth center experience, pours out her feelings in a way that embarrasses her dinner companions and confronts a waiter with feeling data. Although such behavior may indicate that the person is "in touch" with his or her own feelings, it also indicates that that person is out of touch with the feelings of others.

Pfeiffer and Jones suggest that "destructive openness can result from an inordinate value being placed upon 'telling it like it is,' from insensitivity to the recipients of the communication, or from a desire to be punitive" (p. 197). They suggest what they call "strategic openness" as an alternative, that is, "determining how much open data flow the system can stand and then giving it about a ten-percent boost."

Openness can be characterized as effective, first, if the person sees that sharing what he or she wants to share is appropriate. Inappropriate sharing does not contribute to effective openness. For example, a typical task group is usually an inappropriate place for a person to share marital problems. Second, openness can be characterized as effective if the person is aware of what his or her openness is likely to do to others. Those who practice openness by calling others names or pouring out all their feelings are not likely to be effective. For example, a supervisor who takes out anger on a subordinate without taking into consideration that person's ability to process and use the data generated will not be effective. The supervisor would be better advised to listen to the subordinate and share concerns in a manner that will help the subordinate use the data received.

### **Perceptiveness**

The ability to pick up verbal and nonverbal cues from others indicates perceptiveness. However, like openness, this dimension must be combined with the other two dimensions. A person who is not open may receive many cues and much feedback from others at first, but if a person is not open with others he or she may be seen as manipulating them and as generally unavailable. Perceptiveness and openness reinforce

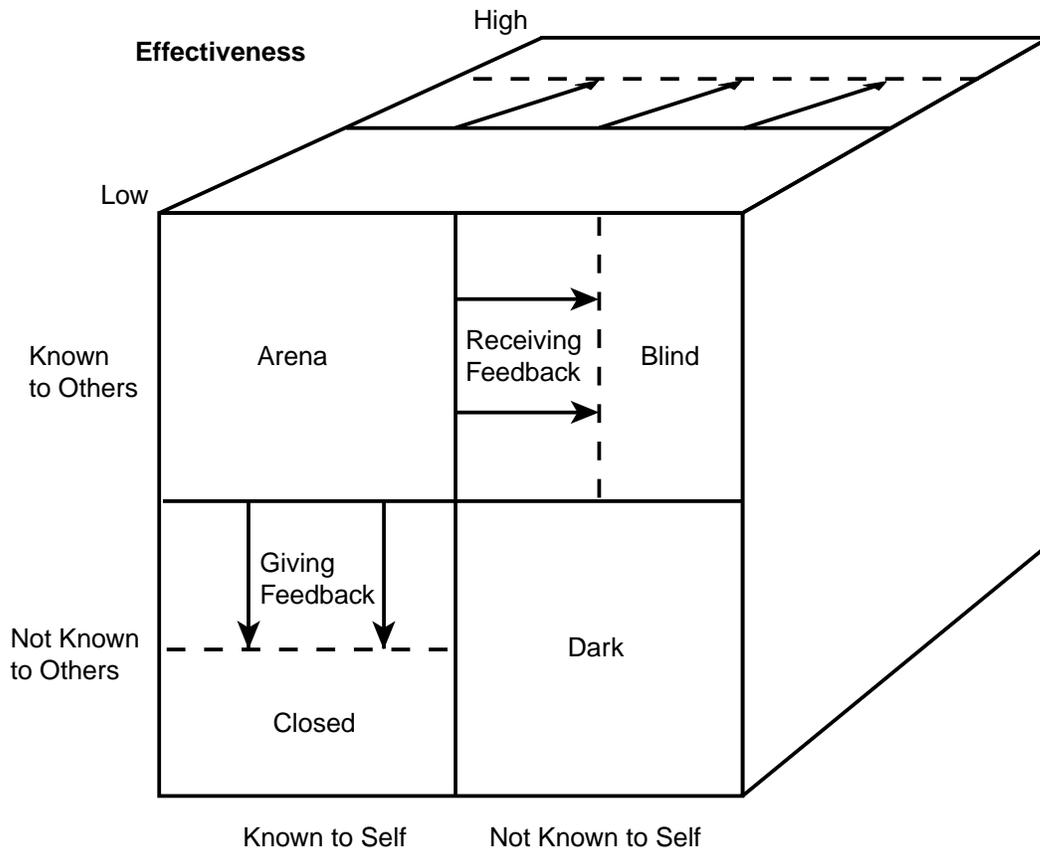
each other and, used effectively, are likely to increase personal effectiveness. Like openness, perceptiveness can be used appropriately or inappropriately. If a person is too conscious of what others might feel, he or she may inhibit interactions. Similarly, a person who is overly concerned with his or her own limitations will tend not to take risks. Effective perceptiveness can be increased by checking with others about their reactions to what was said. If a person does not do this (in other words, without being open), he or she may become overly concerned about the cues received.

## **Conclusion**

In short, personal effectiveness can be increased by moving toward appropriate perceptiveness and openness. Organizational consultants and trainers, while working on the processes leading to increased effectiveness, will find it useful to emphasize the role both of openness and of perceptiveness as contributing factors to effectiveness. However, movement in these directions is possible only through a greater emphasis on communication. People must learn to take risks in giving feedback to others and to use in an appropriate manner the feedback they receive. Only in this way can personal effectiveness truly be increased. Figure 15 demonstrates the effect on the Blind area of receiving feedback and the effect on the Closed area of giving feedback. In both instances, the Blind and Closed areas are reduced by this interaction, thus improving personal effectiveness. Using feedback this way is one of the continuing goals of human relations trainers.

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**Figure 15. Use of Feedback to Increase Personal Effectiveness**

## ■ THE CENTERED BOSS

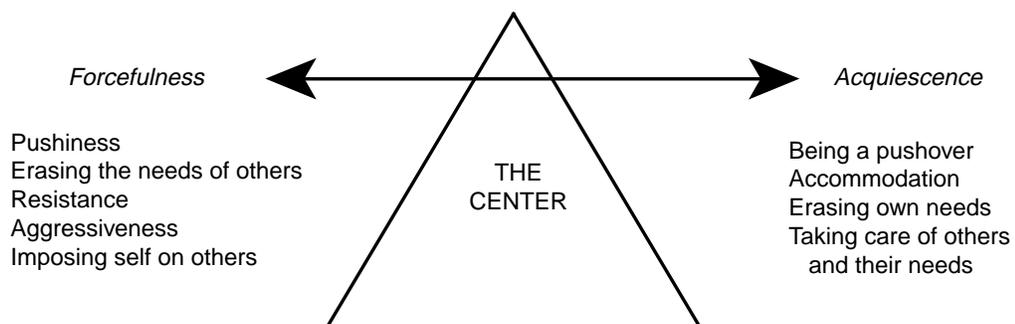
### Peter Scholtes

The concept of being “centered” is borrowed from Eastern mysticism and the Asian martial arts. In a physical sense, to be centered is to maintain a grounded balance in which the body is neither rigid nor relaxed but in a posture in which nothing impedes or constricts the circulation of energy. From a centered posture the body can move freely and gracefully in any direction, maintaining balance and strength. In a nonphysical sense, a person is centered when that person is aware of herself or himself—aware of internal processes and external stimuli, able to separate such forces as sense experiences, thoughts, emotions, expectations, imaginings, preferences, and needs.

An extreme example of a noncentered person is someone who sees every passing pedestrian to be an attacker. That person has imposed a filter of fears or expectations on his or her observations and is unaware of the internal process that transforms pedestrians into attackers. A centered person can say, “I’m aware that I see strangers, that I’m scared of being attacked, and that right now I don’t want to trust these strangers.” In his or her awareness, the centered person can separate feelings (“scared”), observations (“strangers”), and choices (not to trust).

### WHAT THE CENTER IS

The center can be experienced in contrast to the polar extremes on a continuum of feeling and behavior. At one end of the continuum is forcefulness; at the other end is acquiescence.



When you feel an obligation to change yourself for the sake of others, you are being pulled off center toward acquiescence. When you feel a need to persuade others to

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change for your sake, you are being pulled off center toward forcefulness. Sometimes people see these extremes of behavior as the only options open to them. “I have to be aggressive and persuasive . . . a real ‘boss’ . . . I can’t run this place if I am soft. They’d run all over me.”

Being centered, however, means that you do not have to choose either passive/dependent or aggressive/dictatorial behavior. It requires neither foregoing what you want nor depriving others of what they want. The center is a place from which you can move freely and gracefully, maintaining balance and strength. It is the “at home” place where you allow yourself to be you and others to be themselves. It is an unpretentious place, away from everyday absurdities. It is a place where you act on what is going on within you rather than react simply to outside stimuli. It is a place of heightened awareness, where you do not need to immunize yourself from what you see and hear around you, for you have freed yourself of the responsibility to “make it ‘better.’” It is a place without roles or expectations.

## **MANAGERIAL CENTEREDNESS**

The concept of centeredness is enormously relevant to a manager. Perhaps more than anyone else, the man or woman in a position of authority needs ready access to that place within, where he or she is not a “boss.”

It is important, for instance, for a manager to be aware of a variety of competing realities:

- What each individual (including the manager) wants or prefers;
- What the situation absolutely requires—the “givens”;
- The impact of each individual’s style (“Am I reacting to what that person says or how the person presents himself or herself?”);
- Assumptions and imaginings: How do these affect each individual’s process and the group’s process?

From a centered position a manager can far more easily sort out his or her own process while remaining aware of the processes of others. The centered manager is far less likely to confuse what is demanded by a given situation with what he or she or some other individual prefers in that situation.

For example, an uncentered boss might say, “Our organization is highly structured because the nature of our work demands rigid communication and strict control,” a statement that probably describes less what is required than what the manager personally prefers. Subordinates would find it easier to respond to a supervisor who says, “I run a tight ship because I like a tight ship. It’s what I’m used to and it’s what I prefer. I imagine if things were less structured around here people would goof off.” When the supervisor keeps his or her own preferences separate from what is absolutely required,

subordinates can more easily surface their own preferences, thus creating the possibility of a negotiated solution that satisfies everyone's needs.

Perhaps more than anyone else in an organization, the manager needs to be an observer, an overseer. He or she needs a sense of what is happening inside and outside the organization. A centered manager is more likely to have this sense of balance, while a manager who is uncentered is more likely to view the organization through personal fears or expectations.

Because much of our energy is spent sifting what we see through our expectations and assumptions and trying to reconcile it with the reality that exists on the other side of those filters, being uncentered is an exhausting and exasperating posture for a manager. An uncentered manager might view as a problem a particular behavior that a more centered manager would see merely as an endearing idiosyncrasy. Being uncentered creates needless tension around nonproblems; it tends to trap the manager and the organization in a myriad of unnecessary and self-inflicted conflicts and crises. Being centered, on the other hand, helps separate reality and necessity from myth and caprice.

## **CONCLUSION**

Pretense is the "Dutch Elm disease" of managers and their organizations. It is what results from unchallenged assumptions and unquestioned expectations. It is what happens when a manager censors what he or she sees. It is what happens when a manager reacts to things by reverting to a typecast "boss" role. It is what happens when the manager is not being himself or herself and subordinates are not being themselves.

To be centered is a way of lifting the game-like confinements to a manager's vision and behavior. Centering helps the manager sort out the competing realities within and without and take responsibility for those realities that he or she has created.

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## ■ HOW TO MAINTAIN PERSONAL ENERGY

### John E. Jones

A manager's task is many things, but one of the most important is to coordinate, direct, and manage the work of other people—to get things done through other people and to accomplish those tasks in a humane way. Tasks need to be defined, resources utilized, human relationships developed, conflicts managed. The manager becomes the person whose energy is directed toward getting other people to do their work and supporting them in their work.

Essentially, this means that the manager must manage change. It would be easy if today were like yesterday, like the day before, like the day before that, but management and leadership occur necessarily in a state of flux. Some things get better, and it is easy to manage improvement. But some things, in changing, may get worse—and the manager may have no control over some of those. But for many things there are options. The manager needs to know how to maintain personal enthusiasm and energy in a changing climate—because change can be either depressing or invigorating, depending on one's approach.

### ***De-Energizing Methods***

There are ways that we can keep ourselves fresh, alive, and enthusiastic, but there are some other ways that we inadvertently keep ourselves from being positive and effective. We can say that change is disruptive, disturbing (“Ain’t it awful?”) or we can whine, “If only . . .”—*If only* those people were competent. *If only* my boss would get off my back. *If only* my kids behaved better. If only . . .—And we feel worse than before. Or we can respond to every suggestion for change with “Yes, but . . .” We can concentrate on the worst and refuse to see some of the good things. We can concentrate on the uncertainty of life and be afraid to walk across the street because we might not ever get to the other side.

“Us against them” and an emphasis on competition is another way for us to make ourselves unhappy. When we become competitive within organizations, we burn up some of our energy in the struggle, and less of our attention can be directed toward the work tasks for which we are accountable. This “we-they” attitude can cut off our sources of support and information.

We can spend a great deal of time moaning and groaning with other managers or colleagues, reinforcing one another's dejection and depression. Moaning and groaning is an interesting disease with a de-energizing effect. It doesn't make things better; through

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selective evidence, it only supports a previous suspicion about how bad things are: “Yes, of course, that just proves it!” Experts at selective evidence can overinterpret anything. They made suggestions to the boss and they got turned down. So of course nobody loves them, everybody hates them. Anytime professionals or managers get together, they can collude and reinforce one another’s negative attitudes.

Procrastination is another way we often de-energize ourselves. We can even add to our depression by telling ourselves that we are the world’s best at postponing things—to no effect. Then we not only have to do the work that we put off, but we also have to cope with the negative feelings that result from our inactivity. This self-flagellation takes energy.

We can focus nostalgically on “the good old days,” meeting some emotional needs to look back and idealize through selectively screened perceptions something that used to be—and, in the process, losing the energy to deal with the present. But if most of us thought about it for a moment, we would probably never want to go through any part of the “good old days” again.

It is possible to attribute power to other people that they do not have. “There’s nothing I can do about my boss. She has too much influence.” It is the speaker who is attributing power to that person—adding power to her. It is an unhappy syndrome that prevents a person from doing the things he or she does well and from making choices.

Blaming other people or taking personal blame for everything are other ways to decrease energy. Most organizational problems are overdetermined; that is, there are more “causes” than can be taken into account at any one time. Focusing on the personalities involved can lead a person to oversimplify the situations that need to be improved and can lead to excess emotionality regarding blame.

### ***Focusing Energy Positively***

But we do have options, and a great deal of energy can come out of that simple realization; knowing that there is a choice can help our state of mind. Setting goals and making plans is an obvious first method to focus energy: lists, goals, things to do, checklists—these are helpful methods to organize efforts and lend energy. When we focus on options, we must be careful not to focus on something we cannot do anything about, but on something we can change. And we must accept the givens at the same time. We may not have chosen them, but they are there and must be dealt with. We can tell ourselves that we choose to stay in the running under those circumstances—we choose those givens: the work we are doing, the boss we have, the place in which we are living, the salary we are earning. Having a choice gives us control.

Another energizing effort is to focus on a better world. It is very easy to make a list of all the bad things in the world and look at it every day and become depressed. But it is just as easy to do exactly the reverse. It serves our purpose of maintaining our personal energy to believe that the flow of our entire human culture is positive. There is less disease today, there are better organizations, there is better food available than we have ever had, there is better transportation and better communication than ever before.

We can think optimistically instead of negatively. If a manager or consultant does not believe in what he or she is doing, in that organization, in coworkers, in the exciting possibility of improvement and change, he or she will certainly not encourage anyone else to feel so.

On the other hand, we should not try to plan too grandly, not bite off more than we can chew. Our plans can be broken down into little bits, steps, increments—small tasks instead of huge ones. It is possible to reach a goal by taking one step at a time. That way we can help ourselves earn a sense of accomplishment—a success experience. For the manager, it is important to set goals for his or her own behavior in terms that are consistent with organizational objectives and to set goal-directed targets daily.

Confronting our own problems and asserting ourselves are important steps in maintaining personal energy. If we “take it out” on someone else (shout at a spouse or scream at the children), the real source of the problem is not being confronted. If someone is failing in a task that he or she has agreed to do, we have to call attention to that, confront that. It is not necessary to shout at that person, just acknowledge a problem that needs some work. In general, it takes less energy to confront than not to confront. When the bound-up energy is released through ventilation and problem solving, the manager is less distracted and more enthusiastic.

And when we accomplish something that was difficult for us, we should find a way to reward ourselves. Because our accomplishments may be known only to us, others may not be able to reinforce our achievements. We can take some time off, give ourselves a gift, or tell a friend. Boasting or claiming credit for a job well done is an energizing activity, so long as it does not become bragging.

It is necessary to claim the importance of our work, whatever we do. We may tell ourselves that the world could do without us, but our work itself is important. What we are doing is significant. It needs doing. It is important that we stress this to ourselves.

Another way of gaining self-energy is to focus on the here and now. We need to ask ourselves what it is about what we are doing right here, right now, that we feel good about, that satisfies us, that pleases us, and look for that ingredient. If we catch ourselves looking back, taking the blame for things, or anticipating the future, then we are not listening to the person we are talking to right then—and it is the “now” that needs attention. We can use our energy at the moment, rather than siphoning it off to distractions. If we cannot keep our attention on the here and now—for example, if, while the boss is talking, we are mentally rehearsing a phone call that we are going to be making at lunch—we are not listening. Perhaps we should, instead, be making that phone call.

Taking time for sufficient recreation and simply shutting off the motor sometimes is necessary in order for a person to function well. Perhaps we should not take home a briefcase loaded with work, take business phone calls at home, or plan to write a report during vacation. Almost invariably, the report will not get written anyway, and we will only have added another element of guilt to our burden.

Another way to give ourselves energy is to confide in other people, to let them get to know us. In fact, some people might know us better than we know ourselves. That does not imply that we need to confide all our facts, feelings, worries, wants, and so on to any given person; we can selectively confide in people. But Carl Rogers (1973) said that in a couple relationship, everything that is significant had better be shared, otherwise that coupleship erodes. The important thing is that confiding in people what we know about ourselves can help us to use those people to learn more about ourselves. If we keep secrets inside ourselves, there is a good chance we can make ourselves sick. Everyone knows people who have ulcers because they keep everything to themselves.

Self-analysis helps, too. We can stop and analyze why we are upset, what we are really afraid of, and, if that happened, whether it would be the end of the world. We can analyze what we are doing that feels really good to us or call friends and ask them about it. We can remember that we are not the targets of conflict; we are not responsible for the world, and we did not create the problem. And, finally, we can tell ourselves that we are not only the sum of our separate elements: we have bodies, but we are not our bodies; we have minds, but we are not our minds; we have feelings, but we are not our feelings. We are all of those—body, mind, and feelings—and a great deal more. Each of us has a higher self. We can put ourselves in a different perspective; we are not trapped inside what we understand in our minds, we can transcend our minds and look into things we do not comprehend. Everything does not have to make sense. If we insist on experiencing only what we understand, then we are narrowing our world. Our choices stem from our own sense of personal potency and our caring about others. When we make those choices from the center of our higher selves, they are better for us and for the others in our lives.

Keeping ourselves optimistic, energetic, effective, and caring, then, is a continuous process and an important one—one that can be either hindered and obstructed by working against ourselves with negativism or helped immeasurably by allowing and encouraging our own optimism and therefore our best energy.

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## ■ DIMENSIONS OF ROLE EFFICACY

### Udai Pareek

Role efficacy can be thought of as the potential effectiveness of a role occupied by an individual in an organization. The higher the individual's role efficacy, the more likely that the role and the individual are effectively integrated. Individuals must have the appropriate skills for their roles, but the roles must also be designed to use these skills. Ten dimensions of role efficacy are explored here.

#### **1. Centrality**

If people occupying a particular role in the organization generally feel that the role they occupy is central to the organization, role efficacy is likely to be high. If people occupying a particular role feel that their role is peripheral, i.e., not very important, their potential effectiveness will be low. This is true not only of people at a high level in the organization, but also of people at the lowest levels.

In a large hospital, ward attendants had very high motivation when they joined the hospital. They would proudly bring their friends and relatives to show them the place where they were working. However, within a few months, they began to neglect their work and were rated very low in their effectiveness. An investigation showed that their perception about the perceived importance of their role had changed: They felt that their role was not important at all. Their low motivation stemmed from the perceived lack of importance of their roles.

#### **2. Integration**

Every person has a particular strength—experience, technical training, special skills, some unique contribution. The more that the role a person occupies provides an opportunity for the use of such special strengths, the higher the role efficacy is likely to be. This is called self-role integration. The self and the role become integrated through the person's use of special strengths in the role. In one organization, a person was promoted to a responsible position that was seen as a coveted prize and was at first quite happy. However, the person soon discovered that the new position did not use his training, counseling, and diagnostic skills. In spite of the fact that he worked very well in the new role, his efficacy was not as high as it had been in the previous job. When the role was redesigned to enable him to use his skills, his efficacy went up. Because all of

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us want our special strengths to be used so that we can demonstrate how effective we can be, integration contributes to high role efficacy.

### **3. Proactivity**

A person who occupies a role responds to various expectations that people in the organization have of that role. This gives the individual a certain satisfaction, and it also satisfies others in the organization. However, if a person is able to take some initiative in his or her role, efficacy will be higher. Reactive behavior (responding to the expectations of others) helps a person to be effective to some extent, but proactivity (taking initiative) contributes much more to efficacy. If a person would like to take initiative but has no opportunity to do so in the role, his or her efficacy will be low.

### **4. Creativity**

Not only initiative is important for efficacy. An opportunity to try new and unconventional ways of solving problems or to be creative is equally important. In one state government department, as a part of a reorganization experiment, people performing clerical roles met to discuss suggestions of individuals for cutting processing time. The results were amazing. Not only did the satisfaction of the people in that department go up, but delays were considerably reduced and some innovative systems emerged. The opportunity people had to be creative and to try innovative ideas increased their role efficacy and their performance.

### **5. Interrole Linkage**

Linkage of one's role with other roles in the organization increases efficacy. If there is a joint effort to understand problems, find solutions, etc., the efficacy of the various roles involved is likely to be high. Similarly, if a person is a member of a task group set up for a specific purpose, efficacy, other factors being the same, is likely to be high. The feeling of isolation if a people works without any linkage with other roles reduces role efficacy.

### **6. Helping Relationship**

In addition to interrole linkages, the opportunity for people to receive and give help also increases role efficacy. If people performing a particular role feel that they can get help from some source in the organization whenever they have such a need, they are likely to have higher role efficacy. On the other hand, if no help is given when asked for, or if respondents are hostile, role efficacy will be low. A helping relationship requires both the expectation that help will be available when it is needed and the willingness to respond to the needs of others.

## **7. Superordination**

When a person performing a particular role feels that the role he or she carries out is likely to be of value to a larger group, that person's efficacy is likely to be high. The roles that give role occupants opportunities to work for superordinate goals have the highest role efficacy. Superordinate goals serve large groups and cannot be achieved without some collaborative efforts. Many people have voluntarily accepted reduced salaries to move from the top level of the private sector to the public sector mainly because the new role would give them an opportunity to serve a larger interest. Thus roles in which people feel that what they are doing is helpful to the organization in general usually have some role efficacy.

## **8. Influence**

Related to superordination is the influence a person is able to exercise in his or her organizational role. The more influence a person is able to exercise in the role, the higher the role efficacy is likely to be. One factor that may make roles in the public sector or civil service more efficacious is the opportunity to influence a larger sector of society.

## **9. Personal Growth**

One factor that contributes greatly to role efficacy is the perception that the role provides the individual with an opportunity to grow and develop. There are many examples of people switching roles primarily because of the opportunity to grow. One head of a training institute accepted a big cut in her salary when she took a new position because she felt that she had nothing more to learn in her previous role. The factor of self-development is very important for role efficacy. Institutions that are able to plan for the growth of people in their roles have higher role efficacy and gain a great deal of contribution from role occupants.

## **10. Confrontation**

In general, if people in an organization avoid problems or shift them to someone else to solve, their role efficacy will be low. Confronting problems to find relevant solutions contributes to efficacy. When people face interpersonal problems and search for solutions their efficacy is likely to be higher than if they either deny such problems or refer them to their superiors.

## **SUMMARY**

In summary, the performance of people working in an organization depends on their own potential effectiveness, their technical competence, their managerial skills and experience, and the design of the roles they perform in the organization. Integration of individuals and their roles ensures effectiveness.

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## ■ JEALOUSY: A PROACTIVE APPROACH

### Colleen Kelley

An increasing number of self-actualizing people are reexamining their views of and personal styles of reacting to the “difficult” emotions such as anger, shyness, depression, and jealousy. Their aim is to expand both their understanding of how these emotions develop and their means of dealing with these emotions within themselves.

Jealousy is one of the least studied emotions. It has long been a key element in novels but has made few appearances in journals, scientific studies, or even popular psychology books (see Clanton & Smith, 1977, for exceptions). Jealousy has generally been viewed as an unwelcome emotion to which people have strong negative reactions; yet, when treated proactively, jealousy can be a very helpful and useful emotion. A closer look at some characteristics, targets, and causes of jealousy; some personal styles of reacting to this unwieldy emotion; and a theoretical model for constructively facing jealousy should help us gain a greater understanding of and more effective ways of dealing with the “green-eyed monster.”

### CHARACTERISTICS

Jealousy is the fear of losing to a third party something to which one feels one has a right and something that one finds desirable. Thus jealousy involves (1) a valued thing and (2) a perceived threat of loss of this valued thing (3) to a usurper.

### *Jealousy Versus Envy*

Often confused are the two emotions of jealousy and envy; both stem from wanting something that we perceive someone else to have that we consider to be important to our personal well-being, but they are created by somewhat different stimuli. Jealousy is based on wanting to keep something to which we feel we have a right or which we have already experienced as our own. Envy is a desire for something that another has but of which we have not experienced ownership.

This feeling of ownership inherent in jealousy usually derives from a psychological contract, either real or imagined, between the person experiencing jealousy and the person who is the target of the jealousy. Just as people generally do not envy a person but rather such things as that person’s money, position, or characteristics, so with jealousy one does not generally feel ownership over another person, but only over those things that one believes to be part of one’s psychological contract with that person. For

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example, I may not need my partner in a primary relationship to be by my side constantly, but I may become jealous if my partner is not available when I need him or her for substantial emotional support and I feel this support is being given elsewhere.

### ***Perceived Threat of Loss***

Generally, the jealousy that most of us have difficulty handling involves the perceived threat of loss of a relationship that is important to us because we depend on it to meet certain of our needs—to be who we are in the world. Thus jealousy is a reaction to a threat to our self-esteem and feeling of security. Many times we have become so dependent on the thing we fear to lose, have come to identify ourselves so clearly with it, have made ourselves so vulnerable through the trust we have placed or investment we have made in it, that our own feelings of identity, adequacy, and self-confidence may be shaken by the threat of its loss. Conversely, when we have less self-esteem or feel less secure, we are more vulnerable to jealousy.

In many ways, jealousy is based on a belief in scarcity rather than abundance. I choose to believe that something important to me is scarce and necessary to my well-being, I invest myself in the psychological contract and trust that the other person will remain faithful to it. The more I have invested or trusted or valued, the greater the potential threat of loss and the stronger the potential jealousy.

## **TARGETS AND CAUSES OF JEALOUSY**

Jealousy takes many forms; both the target person and the cause of jealousy can vary widely. Romantic jealousy, especially between husband and wife, is the type of jealousy most commonly understood. However, many people, even as adults, wrestle with the jealousy they feel over the parental attention or approval that their siblings receive; some people are jealous of the attention and affection their friends give to others; others are jealous of their child's affection for their spouse.

Just as the most common type and target of jealousy is usually thought to be romantic jealousy directed toward a spouse, the most commonly presumed cause of jealousy is sexual infidelity. Yet many people who are jealous of their spouses are far less concerned about exclusivity in sexual relations than they are about the spouse's time, attention, or companionship. Jobs or avocations can as easily be the "other woman" or the "other man." The potential targets and causes of jealousy are as numerous as the number of people one has relationships with and the number of things one feels one has a right to and wants to keep.

## **PERSONAL STYLES OF COPING WITH JEALOUSY**

Reactions to jealousy are unique to the person experiencing it. Most people have developed a definite personal style of coping with jealousy and are reinforced in that style by certain outcomes or payoffs of which they may not even be aware. Some air

their feelings immediately by attacking angrily and asking questions later. Others withdraw into themselves and their misery until the other person feels guilty and comes to their aid. Whatever our styles of coping, it is important for us to become aware of them and the positive outcomes we receive from them. Even if our present style is destructive, we receive some payoffs from it. Before we can adopt a more constructive style, we must be willing to give up the payoffs we are receiving from our present style.

Another variable in coping styles is one's philosophy or view of jealousy. Some people see jealousy as a proof of another's real love, others think it shows that the other person does not believe in their love for that person. The former group tends to react tolerantly and even encouragingly to jealousy, the latter in a violent or depressed manner. How each of us perceives or understands jealousy will have a great impact on our particular response to it.

## **A PROACTIVE PHILOSOPHY OF JEALOUSY**

Inherently, jealousy is neither helpful nor harmful. It is our view of it and our reaction to it that determines its impact and import. If examined in this light, some constructive ways of dealing with jealousy emerge—ways that can be very beneficial.

### ***Making Psychological Contracts Clear***

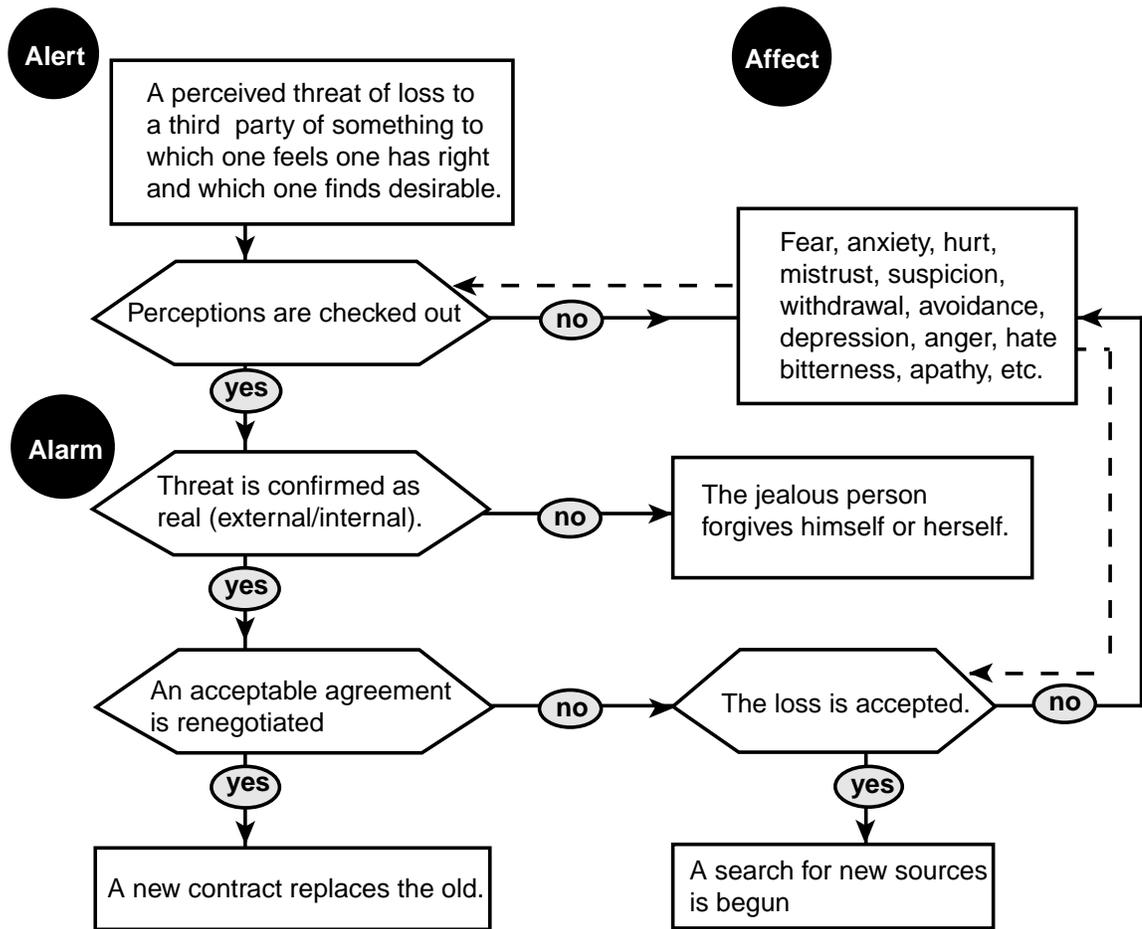
Most people have certain assumptions and expectations about their psychological contracts or relationships with friends, lovers, children, parents, coworkers, etc. These assumptions and expectations are largely colored by personal values and past experiences. Two people who believe they both share the same relationship are often unpleasantly surprised to find that something one partner has become fearful of losing the other never saw as part of the contract in the first place. Thus probably the most proactive step two people can take to avoid jealousy is to be clear and specific about the assumptions and expectations each holds regarding the behavior of each member of the relationship.

## **A MODEL FOR CONSTRUCTIVELY DEALING WITH JEALOUSY**

Viewing jealousy as an alarm system—a valuable signal designed to protect our own needs and emotional life—is the basis of the Proactive Jealousy model. Jealousy is a warning to us that someone on whom we depend for certain things may be giving those things to someone else at our expense. Through this model, jealousy can be seen as a way of looking after our own welfare.

In the three-stage (alert, alarm, affect) Proactive Jealousy model (Figure 1), jealousy is seen in its preliminary stage as an alert system by which we perceive a threat of loss. Because at this point there is only a *perceived* threat, the constructive step is to check out the perception to see if it is based on reality. We might share our feelings with the person involved and ask whether these fears have any basis in fact. We might also

check within ourselves to determine whether the fear springs from our own feelings of insecurity or inadequacy.



**Figure 1: The Proactive Jealousy Model**

For example: Dale has been Robin’s boss for some time. Robin has worked hard to do a good job and has earned Dale’s respect and support. New staff members were added recently, and the boss has been spending a great deal of time on Chris, a new colleague of Robin’s. Robin fears losing Dale’s attention and decides to discuss these feelings with Dale; but first Robin must decide if the fear is based on personal feelings of inadequacy.

If perceptions are not verified at this stage, one moves to the affect stage of the model—a pool of emotions generally associated with jealousy. The combination of emotions can change at any given time, but the cycle feeds on itself and does not allow for a great deal of rational thinking. The affect stage of the model is primarily a feeling state and is ultimately destructive to the individual choosing to remain there.

At any stage in the Proactive Jealousy model, a person has two choices: to take a constructive path or to wallow around in the affective pool of emotions. The

constructive choice is not always free of these emotions, but they are not the principal means of dealing with the situation.

If the constructive path is taken at the Alert stage—the perceived threat is checked out—and we find our fear has no basis in reality, we can forgive ourselves for feeling jealousy and let go of our fear. On talking to Dale, Robin finds that the plan is to train Chris to help Robin so that Robin can be promoted to work on a special project with Dale. Rather than engaging in self-blame for having felt jealous in such a situation, Robin can be proud of recognizing the feeling of a threat and proactively investigating it.

If, however, the perceived threat is found to be based on reality, either internal (Robin realizes that the fear is based on insecurity) or external (Dale confirms that Chris is being considered for a position that Robin has been working toward), the alarm stage has been reached, and the constructive step is to try to renegotiate an acceptable agreement. In the case of an internal threat, Robin can work on some new ways of increasing self-esteem or self-confidence; in the case of an external threat, Robin can discuss with Dale a more acceptable way of handling the situation.

If renegotiation occurs, the constructive outcome is a new contract—a mutually agreed-on way of approaching the situation or redefining the relationship. If renegotiation is not possible, either because no acceptable agreement can be found or because the other person involved is not willing to renegotiate, the constructive step is to accept the loss and to begin a search for new sources or relationships to replace the old. If the loss is not accepted, however, we find ourselves in the affect stage.

## **SUMMARY**

Jealousy is based on the fear of loss and will probably be with human beings as long as we have needs. It has many targets and causes, and we all have our own individual ways of reacting to and coping with this emotion. Proactive methods based on a view of jealousy as a protective signal can be used both to prevent the emotion and to deal with its effects. Perhaps jealousy is most usefully viewed as a very special friend, sometimes prone to sending out false alarms but always watching out for some of our most precious possessions.

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## ■ INTRAPERSONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

### Hugh Pates

With the development of psychology has come a recognition of the conflicting needs, values, and attitudes inside many people. These intrapersonal conflicts are now recognized as a major source of personal problems; the person frequently becomes antagonistic toward himself or herself and then transfers, or projects, this turmoil and discontent to associates and to relationships or systems of which he or she is a part.

An individual can discover these inner conflicts by identifying the “shoulds” that he or she has internalized. Parental criticism, the implication that one will not be loved or accepted if one does not do as he or she “should,” and the *anger* that results from this situation are crucial issues in personal development. Inability to measure up to one’s internalized standards creates feelings of guilt and a lack of personal acceptance. This lecturette focuses on the recognition of one’s own strengths and the acceptance of one’s own limitations—in effect, a process of coming to terms with oneself.

One must accept oneself before one can truly accept, or expect to be accepted by other people. A major step in achieving this is through the development of a sense of personal power.

### **DEVELOPING A PERSONAL POWER BASE**

The first step in self-acceptance is the recognition of those “shoulds” that are unnecessary or unrealistic, as well as a realization that people *punish* themselves for failing to live up to their own standards. When a person feels that he or she has not been, or done, what was expected, this becomes translated into “I don’t deserve to feel happy (energetic, rested, content, etc.)” and, thus the person may experience depression, insomnia, irritation, restlessness, or lack of energy. As long as the inner conflict continues, the guilt, punishment, and discontent will occur. Figure 1 illustrates this cycle.

In childhood, the fourth stage of the cycle occurred when the punishment had “paid one’s debt” and one’s sense of “goodness” was restored (until the next infraction). In self-punishment, however, there is no sense of relief. The person’s sense of strength and purpose becomes diminished and he or she begins to feel deserving of all the bad things that happen—partially as a result of his or her own weakness. The person is depressed because he or she is “bad;” only when he or she is “good” will this person be allowed to be happy or successful.

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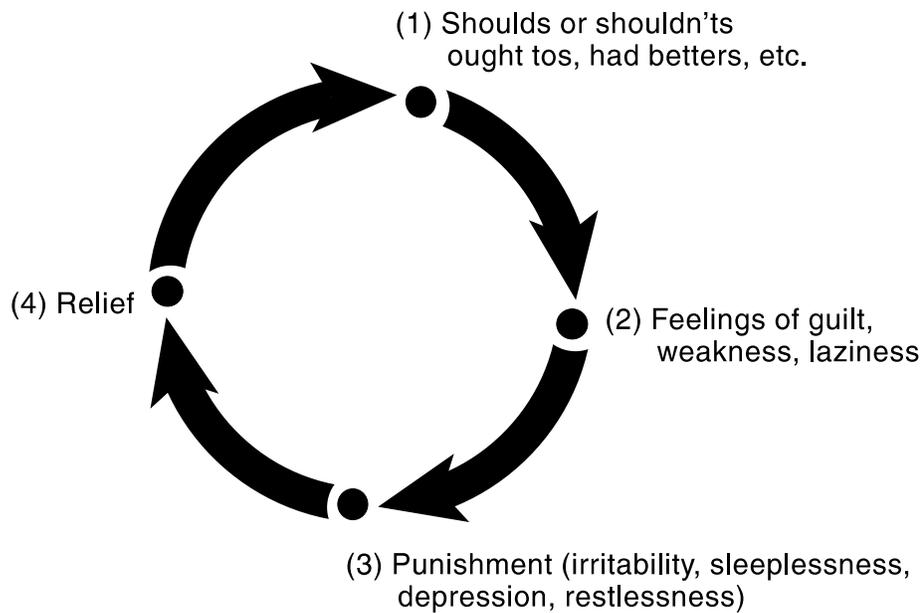


Figure 1. Personal Conflict Cycle (Punishment Cycle)

### ***Breaking the Cycle***

The first step in breaking the cycle is to identify the “shoulds” and “shouldn’ts” and where they come from. Often the first discovery is that these come from *outside* oneself, that they are, in fact, the values or rules of one’s parents or of a particular influence from one’s childhood. These edicts are often “swallowed whole” without being examined; they are called “introjected” values.

The second step is to ask “Is this ‘should’ really something that I want to do? What do I want to do?” Identification of one’s own needs, responses, and purposes helps to restore personal power. It is important in this phase to distinguish between what one *wishes* to do and what one sincerely *wants* to do. Wishing leads to daydreaming and continued conflict. Authentic wanting leads directly to a specific behavior.

One way to distinguish between wishes and wants, or actual intentions, is to test the person’s commitment to action. For example, consider the following dialogue:

A: “I want to get together with you to discuss it.”

B: “How about tomorrow?”

A: “No, tomorrow’s not good; I’m pretty busy.”

B: “Well, how about next week?”

A: “Oh, next week is worse.

B: “O.K., let’s set a date for two weeks from now.

A: “I never plan that far ahead, but I do want to talk to you.

At this point, person B probably doubts A’s intent. Although this example is simple, the same test is true for dieting, working overtime, getting in shape, taking a trip, or whatever.

The third step, then, is to ask “What is keeping me from doing it?” People usually do what they want to do, so if a behavior is contrary to a stated want, the next question may be “Do you want to give that up or do you want to accept yourself as you are?” The last question is “What changes will you make from the way you now behave to the way you want to behave?” A stated want is probably more functional as a wish if the date of its implementation is repeatedly delayed. This can be all right if the person can accept that realization, enjoy the wish, and not feel guilty about not implementing it.

Implementation of a plan, on the other hand, resolves the conflicts about avoiding it and—assuming that the results of the action are not disastrous—reinforces the person. He or she takes charge and may even *feel* a surge of power.

So the ultimate goal of breaking the conflict cycle is to create a sense of personal power, of being able to analyze, choose, and act on one’s *own* challenges. This power base increases the chance that the person will not punish himself or herself unnecessarily in the future.

## **ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY**

It is important to realize that people generally give themselves permission to do what they really want to do. Some situations or people may make it easier to give oneself permission; for example, being more open with someone one knows well, or having ice cream with a group of friends who also are ordering ice cream. However, ultimately it is the individual who allows the action or denies the freedom.

The most crucial step in developing self-acceptance is to assume responsibility for oneself. A person who assumes responsibility in any situation probably feels strong; in the case of personal responsibilities the act contributes to the feeling of strength. Like physical exercise, the more one does it, the easier it seems.

A person refusing to grant himself or herself permission to do something frequently says, “I can’t do it.” The question then is “Who is keeping you from doing it?”—not “what,” but “who.” The answer usually is that the person really means “I *don’t want* to do that.” By admitting this, the person accepts the responsibility for the *decision*. At the same time, by realizing that he or she has made a choice, the person assumes responsibility for whatever *action* is chosen.

Another answer that may be used to forestall a decision or action is “I don’t know.” The next question here is “What do you want to do with your lack of knowledge?” (Do you want to explore possibilities or alternatives? Do you want me to ask you questions?) If the answer repeatedly is “I don’t know,” the person clearly is avoiding responsibility. The same is true of “I’m confused.” If this is said repeatedly, or after a clear explanation, the person probably chooses to be confused. Some progress can be made here if the person is willing to take responsibility at least for the decision to remain confused in order to avoid further responsibility.

A third tactic used to avoid responsibility is to ask a question when one really has a statement to make. An example is when one says “Where do you want to go next

weekend?” when one actually means “I want to go to the races next weekend.” The *intrapersonal* conflict here is between the desire and the failure to assume responsibility for it. In addition, *interpersonal* conflict is likely to result because one appears to be offering an option when that really is not the case at all.

An indication that a person is going to assume responsibility is the phrase “*I am* going to . . . .” Likewise, it is likely that choice is exercised when a person says “I won’t” or “I do not want.”

## ***BEHAVIOR IS BELIEVABLE***

The proof of, and most critical step in, any conflict resolution is *behavior*. The sequence is to be aware, for oneself, of what one wants to do and gives oneself permission to do (or not do); to assume responsibility for the decision or choice; to assume responsibility for and *do* the action. The behavior then becomes part of oneself, and the experience strengthens one’s base of personal power. In this way, the person is more able to avoid the personal conflict cycle and to make decisions based on personal evaluation, in effect, to manage his or her own life.

## ■ THE SUPPORT MODEL

**Juliann Spoth, Barry H. Morris, and Toni C. Denton**

Support probably is most often thought of as an effort on the part of one person to comfort, express approval of, provide encouragement to, or help “shoulder the burdens” of another person. However support also can be sought or created by an individual in an effort to tolerate difficult or uncomfortable circumstances in a group setting. Creating self-support results in the freedom to be oneself and, hence, the strength to act. The freedom and strength that flow from support result in personal power for the individual, allowing him or her to maintain a sense of balance in the face of unsettling situations.

Supporting oneself is one way of resisting something potentially harmful in the environment. Such resistance protects self-esteem, which is critical for contact. Satir (1976) points out that “anything that injures self-esteem reduces the opportunity to make good contact.” This does not imply that all parties involved must feel completely comfortable to make contact with one another, but rather that a minimal degree of comfort must be experienced by each in order for contact to be possible.

Seeking self-support results not only in individual gains but also in benefits for the group. An individual who feels comfortable in a group is sufficiently freed from personal concerns to be able to concentrate on the group and to act as a catalyst, aiding the group’s development.

Thus, support is both an act and a consequence of that act and, as such, must be viewed as a dynamic process.

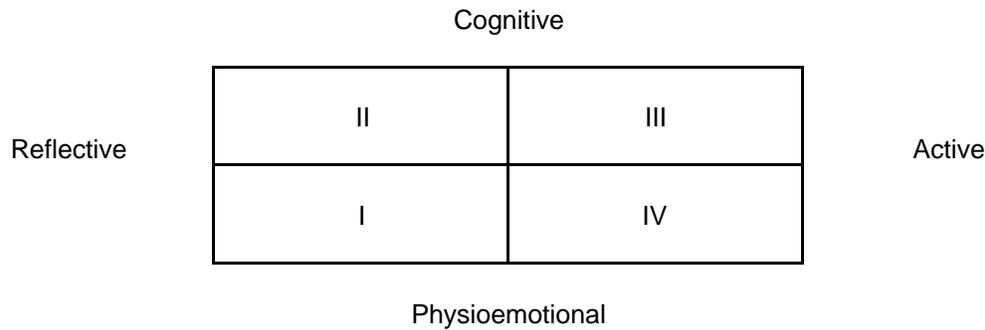
### **THE SUPPORT MODEL: AN OVERVIEW**

In the process of developing support within a group, a person makes two major choices: the content of support and the primary source of that support. In the case of content, the choice is between cognitive or “head” information and physioemotional or “gut” information. With regard to source, the choice is between oneself (assuming a private, reflective posture) and other group members (assuming a sharing, active posture). The combination of these two choices results in four types of support that can be actively developed (see Figure 1).

- *Reflective-physioemotional* support, in which content is focused on feelings or physical cues and the contact remains with oneself (Quadrant I);

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**Figure 1. The Support Model**

- *Reflective-cognitive* support, in which the focus is on intellectual content and the contact is with oneself (Quadrant II);
- *Active-cognitive* support, in which the focus is on intellectual content and the contact is with others (Quadrant III); and
- *Active-physioemotional* support, in which content is focused on feelings or bodily cues and the contact is with others (Quadrant IV).

This model helps group members to become aware of the ways in which they presently are supporting themselves and it also offers them alternatives. It is important to note, however, that each choice creates both connection and disconnection (with the group or with oneself). For example, someone who is focusing on his or her feelings is not focusing on other possible sources of support, such as cognitive information or another group member's view of reality.

In addition, the various options are not without constraints; internal and external pressures favor some choices over others. One major internal constraint is a person's preferred style with regard to obtaining support. All of us carry our pasts with us, and the past shapes the ways in which we support ourselves. For example, a woman who, as a child, was punished by her family for expressing feelings is unlikely to seek support by sharing feelings with others in the group.

Similarly, because individuals in a group are not isolated, external pressures are brought to bear. Regardless of the personal support styles represented in the group, certain support behaviors may be rewarded or punished depending on the culture and developmental phase of the group. The group culture is affected by many factors, such as the personal profiles of members and leaders, the norms that develop, and the main purpose or focus of the group. In a task group, for instance, norms against sharing personal feelings often develop. On the other hand, in a T-group, the members are likely to be discouraged from sharing intellectual explanations of behavior in favor of focusing on feelings.

The group's phase of development also can affect individual choices regarding support. For instance, in the early life of a group, when allies and enemies are unknown and rules about the type and intensity of information that can be shared publicly are

unclear, all information tends to remain private. Even when an individual does share information in an attempt to gain support, the content of that information is likely to be cognitive rather than emotionally charged.

Because the choice of support is shaped by so many constraints, it is important that individual group members expand their options by learning to develop more than one type of support.

### ***Reflective-Physioemotional Support***

Quadrant I represents a set of choices that involve seeking support by turning attention inward and acknowledging one's present physical and emotional state. With this approach, an individual notes internal signals of discomfort and acknowledges them, thereby alleviating the discomfort and supporting himself or herself in a difficult situation. Examples of behaviors that are characteristic of Quadrant I include the following:

- Attending to personal indications of stress;
- Examining information derived from the senses;
- Noticing body posture; and
- Slowing down breathing or movement.

For example, a group member may become aware that she is tapping the floor with her foot in an agitated manner. She acknowledges this behavior as a cue that something is bothering her, reflects on how she is feeling, and becomes aware that she is experiencing anxiety. She then decides to decrease her anxiety by concentrating on breathing slowly. Her decision allows her to relax, is immediately supportive, and frees her to take other actions. Once she knows her personal reactions, she can better decide whether to engage the group and how to engage it.

However, as is the case with all these approaches to developing support, negative as well as positive consequences exist. Concentrating on one's own physioemotional reactions diminishes the individual's awareness of other people and the group as a whole.

### ***Reflective-Cognitive Support***

The choices represented by Quadrant II involve supporting oneself through cognitive means. Through this reflective activity, an individual gains support by making sense of his or her own experience, another's experience, or a group event. Comfort and personal power are achieved by associating events, identifying patterns, comparing, and analyzing. For example, a situation might arise in which two group members make strong negative statements about a fellow member who is less influential than they. The recipient of these comments responds in his own defense, apparently without affecting their perceptions and feelings about him. In this instance he could support himself by turning inward and using his cognitive function. He could, for instance, speculate that

not all group members feel negatively toward him and that the two who made the comments acted on the basis of subjective perceptions. He might further support himself by remembering that he knows many people outside the group who love the qualities that were just criticized. Then he can actively reconnect with the group or simply maintain a stance as an observer. In either case, he can act from a position of support. It is important to note that by choosing this approach, he eliminates the possibility of deriving support from another potential source, those group members who also may feel that the comments were not justified.

Other types of affirming thoughts characteristic of Quadrant II are as follows:

- Recognizing that other group members may be uncomfortable, too;
- Acknowledging that no single group member is responsible for filling in silences; and
- Remembering that members may be transferring their own emotions or reactions from past personal experiences to individuals in the current group.

### ***Active-Cognitive Support***

Quadrant III reflects a set of behaviors that consist of extending one's intellect toward the group by sharing and explaining information of a cognitive rather than a physioemotional nature. Active-cognitive support often is stimulated by an emotional incident in the group. A member who is uncomfortable with intense emotional expression in response to such an incident is prompted to support himself or herself by explaining what has occurred. The active stance of sharing an explanation offers an opportunity to be influential or to feel included. With this approach, an individual can meet his or her needs in the group by using the group rather than the self as the medium of expression. A major consequence of this choice is that connection with oneself is minimized.

This manner of developing support includes, but is not limited to the following behaviors:

- Sharing thoughts, analyses, and explanations;
- Asking questions about group events; and
- Offering theories about group events or members' behaviors.

### ***Active-Physioemotional Support***

As is the case with Quadrant III, Quadrant IV reflects the choice of seeking support in an active mode in which contact with the group is maximized and contact with the self is minimized. However, with the type of support represented by Quadrant IV, the emphasis is on physioemotional rather than cognitive reactions. These reactions can be in response to the group, another person inside or outside the group, or oneself.

Behaviors that are characteristic of active-physioemotional support include the following:

- Making eye contact with others in the group;
- Hugging another group member; and
- Expressing anger, frustration, joy, and so forth.

For example, a group member may feel angry with several other members because they have chosen to remain silent during an important group discussion. Choosing to express this anger enables her to reveal rather than sublimate her personal feelings and thereby support her need to be open with the group. By selecting this option, she also directly addresses the issue of silence, which may be negatively affecting the functioning of the entire group. This action may generate a dialogue that will lead to positive growth for the silent members and for the group as well. On the other hand, she not only takes the risks incurred with this kind of confrontation but also sacrifices cognitive data that she might have found useful in handling the situation.

## **CONCLUSION**

Support is essential to learning and contact because it enables the individual to act from a position of strength. Each of the four types of support that can be developed by an individual within a group carries positive as well as negative consequences. In addition, both internal and external pressures are brought to bear on each member in any group setting. However, if people can learn to develop support in more than one way, they can increase their chances of achieving comfortable and satisfying group experiences and of benefiting their groups as well. An awareness of this typology of support should be useful for both group members and facilitators.

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## ■ DEVELOPING AND INCREASING ROLE EFFICACY

Udai Pareek

### THE CONCEPT OF ROLE

When people become members of a social system (family, club, religious community, work organization, etc.), they are expected to fulfill certain obligations to the system and to fit into defined places in that system. These are mutual and interacting functions. The first can be called the role and the second the position or office. For example, when one joins a new club, one is admitted as a member (which is the position). One's position as a member is defined in terms of the club's hierarchy and privileges. The new member also agrees to follow certain rules and is expected to participate in certain activities, volunteer for certain types of work, relate to the other members in a certain way, and so on. These sets of expectations, and what one does in response to them, is the role. It can be defined as a set of functions an individual performs in response to the expectations of the significant members of the social system and his or her own expectations about the position he or she occupies in the social system.

Role and position are two sides of the same coin; they are, however, two separate concepts. According to Katz and Kahn (1966):

Office is essentially a relational concept, defining each position in terms of its relationships to others and to the system as a whole. Associated with each office is a set of activities or expected behaviors. These activities constitute the role to be performed, at least approximately, by a person who occupies that office. (p. 173)

Thus, *position or office* is a relational and power-related concept, and *role* is an obligational concept. Figure 1 contrasts these two concepts.

An organization can be represented in terms of positions/offices or in terms of roles (Brahmam & Pareek, 1982). An office becomes a role when the behaviors expected of the office holder are clearly defined and determined by the expectations of other office holders. Each role has its system, consisting of the expectations held by the role occupant and the expectations of those who have direct relationships with the role occupant. To follow the terminology suggested by Katz and Kahn (1966), the significant people who have expectations from the role will be called *role senders*, that is, they send expectations to the role. The role occupant also has expectations from the role, and in that sense the role occupant is also a role sender.

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Position/Office	Role
Is based on power relations	Is based on mutuality
Has related privileges	Has related obligations
Is usually hierarchical	Is nonhierarchical
Is created by others	Is created by others and the role occupant
Is part of the structure	Is part of the dynamics
Is evaluative	Is descriptive

**Figure 1. Differences Between Position/Office and Role**

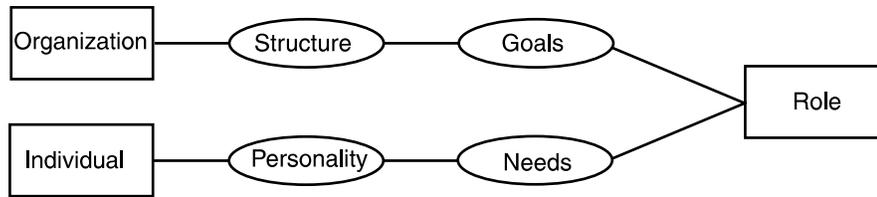
For example, in a family the father has both a position (office) and a role. The father's position defines his authority in the family. In some cultures he is the final decision maker and can direct the behavior of other family members. There are also expectations of the father that define his role: that he will earn money for the family, will protect the family against threats, etc. Thus, his position may be head of the family system, and his role may be to maintain and protect the family. The position implies privileges, the role implies obligations.

In a larger social system, the expectations about general roles such as "father" or "sales clerk" are largely shared and have common elements. Thus, we can talk about the role of a bank president or an in-house trainer and assume some common perceptions or expectations of the role.

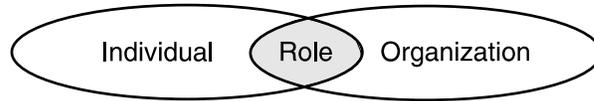
Confusion arises because the word *role* has been used to denote the *position* a person holds in an organization (along with expectations of that position) as well as to describe the expected *behavior* or activities of the role holder (for example, disciplinarian or evaluator or provider of maintenance). In order to distinguish between them, in this article the word *role* will be used to mean a position one holds in a system (organization) as defined by the expectations of various significant people, including oneself. The term *function* will be used to indicate a set of interrelated behavioral expectations from the role. In this context, sales manager is a role, while developing the sales force and contacting customers are the functions of that role. To further distinguish among terms, "work" will have an overall meaning of what needs to be done in the organization; "office," "role," and "job" are ways of organizing the work; "functions" are subunits of a role or job; and "tasks" are the smallest units of the work.

The concept of role is the key to the integration of the individual within the organization. As shown in Figure 2, the organization has its own structure and goals, and the individual has a unique personality and needs. These interact and become integrated to some degree in the role. Otherwise, neither the organization's nor the person's goals will be realized.

It is only through the role that the individual and the organization interact with each other. This concept is depicted in Figure 3.



**Figure 2. Role as Integration Between the Organization and the Individual**



**Figure 3. Role as Region of Interaction Between the Organization and the Individual**

### ***Adopting a Role***

When people become members of a social system, they receive expectations from other members and they respond to these and their own expectations. Either set of expectations may dominate the other. One may react positively and with great satisfaction to the expectations of others and fulfill these expectations to the best of one's ability. In this situation, the individual is usually said to have assumed the role effectively. In contrast, other individuals may develop role behavior that is based primarily on their own role expectations, rather than those of others. The first approach is called "role taking" or "reactive," and the second is called "role making" or "proactive." The basic difference is the degree to which one's own expectations are involved in defining the role and determining one's own role behavior.

Katz and Kahn (1966) have proposed the concept of role episode to explain the process of role taking. Role taking involves both role sending (by occupants of other roles) and role receiving (by the role occupant). The role occupant and the role senders continually interact, and this influences the behavior of the role occupant. The role occupant's behavior also influences the expectations of the role senders. Thus, role episode has a feedback loop. Katz and Kahn's model appears in Figure 4.

The other aspect of adopting a role is the identification of the self with the role. If the role is so different from the self that role expectations conflict with self-concept, it may result in self-role distance. Even when there is no evident self-role distance, the degree of role acceptance may be low or high. The degree of role acceptance can be defined in terms of the intensity with which the individual is able to "get into" the role.

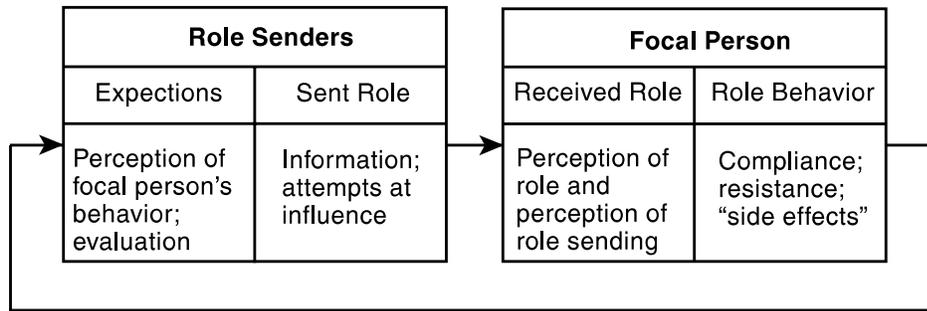


Figure 4. A Model of the Role Episode

### Two Role Systems

An organization can be defined as a system of roles. However, any role itself is a system. From the point of view of the individual, two role systems are important: the personal system of various roles that the individual performs and the larger system of various roles of which his or her role is a part and in which his or her role is defined by other significant roles. The first we shall call *role space* (Pareek, 1976). The second is known as *role set* (Merton, 1957; Katz & Kahn, 1966).

Each individual occupies and plays several roles. A woman may be a daughter, a mother, a manager, a member of a club, a member of a voluntary organization, and so on. All these roles constitute her role space. In the center of the role space is the self. As the concept of role is central to the concept of an organization, the concept of self is central to the concept of a person's roles. Self-concept is cognitive and derives from past experience with other people, things, and systems (Cooper & Erid, 1979).

The various roles a person performs surround the self. These roles are at various distances from the self and from one another, and these relationships define the role space. Role space, then, can be defined as the dynamic interrelationship both between the self and the various roles an individual occupies, and among those roles.

The distance between a role and the self indicates the extent to which the role is integrated with the self. When we do not enjoy a particular role or do not become involved in it, there is distance between the self and the role. The term *self-role distance* is used to denote this. There also may be distance between two roles that one person occupies. For example, the role of club member may be distant from the role of spouse, if the two roles conflict. This is called *interrole distance* or *interrole conflict*. The term *role-role distance* can be used to indicate the distance between the roles of the individual. Less distance indicates higher *role linkage*, which is the opposite of role-role distance. Role linkage is a very important concept in role satisfaction and role conflict.

## ***From Job to Role***

The concept of role widens the meaning of work and the relationships of the worker with other significant individuals in the system. The concept of job is more prescriptive in nature; the concept of role includes more discretionary parts of work. “Job” assumes the relationship of the worker with the supervisor; “role” emphasizes the worker’s relationships with all those who have expectations from him or her (as he or she has from them).

An understanding of the concept of role is very useful in understanding the integration of the individual within a social system. It also helps to explain the problems that arise in the individual-organization interaction and integration. Such understanding can help in planning for the greater effectiveness of the individual in the social system—for the benefit of both.

## **THE CONCEPT OF ROLE EFFICACY**

The performance of people working in an organization depends on their own personal effectiveness, their technical competence and experience, and the ways in which the roles they perform in the organization are designed. It is the integration of the person and the role that ensures a person’s effectiveness in an organization. Unless people have the requisite knowledge, technical competence, and skills required for their roles, they cannot be effective. But equally important is how their roles are designed. If their roles do not allow them to use their competence, and if they feel frustrated in their roles, their effectiveness is likely to be low. The integration of the person and the role occurs when the role is able to fulfill the needs of the individual and the individual is able to contribute to the development of the role. The more that role taking (responding to the expectations of others) becomes role making (taking the initiative in designing the role creatively so that the expectations of others are integrated with those of the role occupant), the more the role occupant is likely to be effective. This potential effectiveness can be called efficacy. Role efficacy is the *potential* effectiveness of an individual occupying a particular role in an organization. Role efficacy is the psychological factor underlying role effectiveness.

### ***Dimensions of Role Efficacy***

Role efficacy has several dimensions (Pareek, 1980a,1980b). The more these dimensions are present, the higher the efficacy of the role is likely to be. These dimensions can be classified into three groups. The first is role making, in contrast to role taking. The second is increasing the power of the role, making it more important. This can be called *role centering*, in contrast to *role entering* (accepting the role as given and reconciling oneself to its present importance or unimportance). The third category is *role linking* (extending the relationship of the role with other roles and groups), in contrast to *role shrinking* (making the role narrow, confined to work-related expectations).

## *Role Making*

*Self-Role Integration.* Every person has certain strengths, technical training, or special skills. The more the role a person occupies provides an opportunity for the use of such special strengths, the higher the role efficacy is likely to be. This is called *self-role integration*. In one organization, a man was promoted to a responsible position. This was seen as a reward, and the man was quite happy about the well-deserved promotion. However, he soon discovered that in the new position he was not able to use his special skills of training, counseling, and organizational diagnosis. In spite of the fact that he worked well in the new role, his efficacy was not as high as it had been in his previous job. Later, when the role was redesigned to enable him to use his skills, his efficacy increased.

*Proactivity.* A person who occupies a role responds to various expectations that people in the organization have about that role. However, if the person also takes the initiative in starting some activity, his or her efficacy will be higher. People who feel that they would like to take initiative, but who have no opportunity to do so in the roles they occupy, report lower role efficacy (Sayeed, 1985).

*Creativity.* An opportunity to try new ways of solving problems or an opportunity to be creative is also important. In one governmental department, people who performed clerical roles met to discuss how each of them could experiment with correcting delays in processing papers. The results were amazing. Not only did the satisfaction of the people in the department increase but delays were reduced considerably, and some innovative procedures emerged (Singh, 1982).

*Confrontation.* In general, if people in an organization avoid problems or shift the problems to other people to solve, their role efficacy will be low. The tendency to confront problems and to attempt to find relevant solutions contributes to efficacy.

## *Role Centering*

*Centrality.* If a person feels that the role he or she occupies is central to the organization, the person's role efficacy is likely to be high. Everyone wants to feel that his or her role is important. If people feel that their roles are peripheral, their effectiveness probably will be lower. This is true of people at all levels in an organization.

*Influence.* A related concept is that of influence or power. The more influence a person is able to exercise in a role, the higher the role efficacy is likely to be. One factor that may make some roles in the public sector or civil service more efficacious is the opportunity to influence part of the society. On the other hand, people who feel that they have no power in their roles are likely to have low role efficacy (Pareek & Chattopadhyay, 1982).

*Personal Growth.* An important part of role efficacy is the perception that one's role provides an opportunity to grow and develop. There are several examples of people

leaving roles and becoming very effective in others primarily because they felt that they had more opportunity to grow. Organizations that plan for the growth of their employees increase role efficacy and receive greater contributions from their employees (Pareek & Chattopadhyay, 1982).

### *Role Linkage*

*Interrole Linkage.* Linkage of one's role with other roles in the organization increases role-efficacy. If there is a joint effort in understanding problems, finding solutions, etc., the efficacy of the individuals involved is likely to be high. Members of task groups set up for a specific purpose, with other factors being common, are likely to have high role efficacy. The feeling of isolation in a role that has little linkage with other roles reduces role efficacy (Pareek & Chattopadhyay, 1982).

*Helping Relationship.* In addition to interrole linkages, the opportunity for people to give and receive help also increases role efficacy. If people performing particular roles feel that they can obtain help from someone in the organization when they need it, they are likely to have higher role efficacy. On the other hand, if there is a feeling that either no help is given when requested or that the respondents are hostile, role efficacy will be low. A helping relationship implies that people are free to ask for help as well as willing to give help in response to the needs of others.

*Superordination.* A role may have linkages with systems or groups outside the organization. When people feel that what they do is of value to a larger group, their efficacy is likely to be higher. The roles that provide opportunities to role occupants to work for superordinate goals have the highest role efficacy. Superordinate goals are goals of serving large groups and those that cannot be achieved without some collaborative efforts. One major motivator of successful people who move into the public sector is to have the opportunity to work for larger goals that are likely to help larger sections of society. Many people have voluntarily accepted lower salaries to move from the private sector to the public sector because their new roles would provide opportunities to serve a larger interest. The feeling that one's role is helpful to the organization also results in some role efficacy.

Role efficacy has been found to be negatively related to some rolestress variables, ". . . implying that role efficacy not only helps in experiencing job behavior as purposeful but also in overcoming the experience of some kind of role conflicts" (Das, 1984, p. 34). The coefficients of correlation were not significant for role overload and interrole distance, but were negative and significant for other role-stress variables.

People with high role efficacy seem to rely on their own strengths to cope with problems (Sen, 1982); show less defensive behavior (Shingala, 1985); are active and interact with people and their environment (Sen, 1982); solve problems mostly by themselves and sometimes with the help of others (Sen, 1982); show positive approach behavior (Sen, 1982); and feel satisfied with life and with their jobs and roles in their organizations (Sen, 1982; Surti, 1983).

## **INCREASING ROLE EFFICACY**

Role efficacy can be increased through a joint effort of the role occupants, their managers, and the organization (top management). Several role occupants in a group can generate ideas for increasing the efficacy of their own roles. Similarly, a supervisor can suggest ways to increase the efficacy of those whom he or she supervises. Ideas also can be generated by groups of managers at various levels. Primarily, role efficacy can be increased by increasing each of its ten dimensions.

### ***Role Making***

Role making involves active participation by the role occupant to define the role—the priorities, the ways in which they can be achieved, and ways of increasing the effectiveness of the role. The four dimensions of role making are self-role integration, proactivity, creativity, and confrontation.

### ***Self-Role Integration***

Unless a person is able to use his or her education and special training in a role, the person may not feel satisfied in the role and may be less effective. In addition to formal education and training, each person has special skills and other qualities. If such qualities are utilized, high self-role integration is more likely to be achieved.

There are two approaches to self-role integration. Careful selection and placement help to place suitable individuals in roles. However, another approach is more proactive: an attempt within an organization to discover what strengths each individual has and how these can be utilized in the person's role. Employees can be used in temporary systems (committees, task groups, etc.) that can benefit from their special strengths and qualities. The role itself can be redesigned to utilize the strengths of the role occupant. Effective managers continually redesign their own roles in order to be able to use their strengths to help to achieve organizational goals. This is the essence of role making.

The organization can redesign roles to increase the responsibilities of the roles or to make the tasks more interesting or more meaningful to the role incumbents (Pareek & Rao, 1981).

### ***Proactivity***

Proactivity involves unusual behavior. It means freeing oneself from, and taking action beyond, immediate concerns. A person who is proactive functions at the feeling, thinking, and action levels.

At the feeling level, the person transcends role boundaries and sees things from the point of view of the role senders. This person can transcend logic and reasoning to find the feelings of others.

At the thinking level, the person may transcend his or her own, immediate feelings and emotions and use reason to understand a problem. Such a person thinks in terms of

the future (long-term implications) and may be able to transcend individual events to see a pattern.

At the action level, proactivity means transcending immediate cause, i.e., taking initiative. There are three ways in which this can be done: transcending symptoms (not looking for causes of a problem); transcending tradition and uniformity (searching for several alternatives); and transcending content (initiating a new process—for example, the process of joint exploration). Proactivity indicates a high level of maturity.

### *Creativity*

People often are so concerned with their daily tasks that they use traditional ways of dealing with problems as short cuts. Although this may save time and energy, it also prevents us from perceiving the advantages of new ways of solving problems. The more we work under pressure, the less is our inclination to try a different approach. Yet complex problems require new approaches and new solutions. Organizational learning does not result from repetitive action but from creativity and innovation, i.e., experimentation.

Creativity can be developed through the joint efforts of employees and management.

However, how creativity is handled within the organization is very important. In one bank, a suggestion made by an employee that results in a substantial savings also results in a monetary reward to the person who developed the suggestion. In another bank, the suggestions made by employees are simply filed away. As may be expected, more creativity is generated in the first bank, and little is forthcoming in the second. Creativity needs to be reinforced; criticism of innovative attempts stifles creativity.

### *Confrontation*

The term “confrontation” is used here in the sense of facing a problem and not attempting to escape from it. Confrontation does not mean shouting, expressing oneself aggressively, or being unwilling to explore. It does involve recognizing a problem, studying various dimensions of the problem, searching for alternative solutions (often with the help of others), and developing a higher level of collaboration. Openly sharing feelings is a necessary part of this process. The emphasis is on empathy rather than on aggression.

### *Role Centering*

A role occupant can take steps to increase his or her influence. One way to do this is to increase one’s knowledge and skills. This process is called centering (making the role central), in contrast to merely accepting the role and performing it (role entering). The dimensions of role efficacy concerned with role centering are centrality, influence, and growth.

## Centrality

Centrality is the perceived importance of a role. There are three ways in which a role is seen as important: if the role is linked with a larger cause, if the effectiveness of other roles is seen as dependent on the performance of the role, and if the role occupants are identified as representatives of the organization, the role will be seen as important.

Centrality needs to be communicated as well as perceived. If the importance of a role is not communicated, it probably will not affect the sense of centrality.

Communication through action is more critical and effective than communication in words. The following actions “communicate” the importance of a role:

1. Inviting the role occupants to meetings regarding their jobs or roles;
2. Including the role occupants in important committees or task forces;
3. Encouraging the role occupants to offer suggestions;
4. Complimenting the role occupants on their performance (especially in front of others); and
5. Tangibly rewarding the good work of the role occupants.

## Influence

Every member of a group wants to have influence, to have impact on other individuals or matters. Influence can be direct or indirect, and the latter can be far more extensive than the former. Influence is not a fixed quantity in an organization. It can increase or decrease; it can be spread out or held narrowly; and its boundaries can change.

The higher the sense of influence, the higher the efficacy.

Figure 5 illustrates the matrix of influence in any one role, with the axes representing scope and level of influence.

<b>Level of Influence</b>	Delegate	21	22	23	24	25
	Allow	16	17	18	19	20
	Accept	11	12	13	14	15
	Invite	6	7	8	9	10
	Listen	1	2	3	4	5
		Own role	Section	Organization	Department	Beyond Organization
<b>Scope of Influence</b>						

**Figure 5. Matrix of Role Influence**

The narrowest *scope* of influence is one's own role. A trainer who is given freedom to prepare a training design and choose the methods of training probably will have higher role efficacy than one who is told what to do. The trainer's efficacy probably will increase as he or she is able to influence people in larger segments of the department and the organization and probably will be highest if he or she is able to make an impact on other trainers outside the organization.

The first level of influence is represented by having a friendly "ear." If a supervisor or manager listens to the ideas of the role occupant, he or she may have a sense of influence. The level of influence increases when the role occupant is invited to contribute ideas, and the influence is higher if these are accepted and implemented. A much higher level of influence is represented by the freedom (autonomy) to do things by oneself without checking with others. The highest level of influence is complete delegation.

The matrix can be used to develop specific ideas for increasing the influence of a role occupant. For example, each scope of influence can be achieved, and action suggestions can be developed to increase the level of influence. Steps to increase the influence of a role occupant can be phased. Movement on either axis can be spaced out over several months.

Influence can be direct (controlling the behavior of another individual) or indirect (influencing another who retains free choice). The latter obviously is more desirable. Examples of indirect influence are encouraging, experimenting, rewarding desirable behavior, and modeling.

Modeling has been found to be a very effective means of influencing others (Robinson, 1982). People are not as influenced by what they hear as they are by what they see. For example, a manager who is always punctual will have greater impact than a manager who merely talks about the virtues of punctuality.

## *Growth*

Self-development or personal growth is important to role efficacy. Most people have a need to grow and to become more effective and they also want to experience advancement as a result of their development. There are three dimensions of growth: current role, transition to the next role, and general development. Attention should be paid to all three.

In an organization, growth is associated generally with training. However, all the human resource systems can aid in employee development. Performance appraisal can help employees learn how to set challenging goals and how to analyze their own performance. Performance counseling can help people to develop new skills and attitudes. Potential appraisal and career development systems can help them to develop attributes that will help them to be effective in higher roles. Reward systems can reinforce and develop desirable behavior. The growth potential of all HRD systems needs to be exploited.

Managers can go beyond formal systems to increase growth opportunities for employees; employees themselves can do a lot in this regard; and the organization can provide special facilities or opportunities that contribute to self-development efforts. These might include: a good library, reimbursement for membership in a professional association or subscription to a professional journal, special seminars or meetings to share new developments, reimbursement and/or time for educational efforts, rewarding people who successfully complete appropriate courses, and so on.

Encouragement also contributes a great deal to growth. A crucial part of encouragement is to become aware of self-development efforts and to reduce discouraging messages. It may be useful for managers to become aware of positive messages that provide encouragement.

### ***Role Linking***

A role can be linked to other roles by interaction as well as by helping relationships. Linkage can be further extended to larger groups. The dimensions of efficacy concerned with role linking are interrole linkage, helping, and superordination.

### ***Interrole Linkage***

The number of linkages between a role and other roles is measured against the desired amount by the role occupant. The dimensions of interrole linkage are the level, the basis, and the type of linkage.

A role occupant desires to have linkages with roles at all three levels in his or her role set—with senior employees and managers, with subordinate employees, and with peers.

Such interlinkages can have several bases. At least four seem to be important. These are: common goals, interdependence, empathy, and crisis management. Interrole linkages may be made when two or more role occupants work for a common goal. Most interdepartmental linkages are the result of common goals. Two role occupants may develop linkages if they have an interdependent relationship and *perceive* such interdependence. Finally, in dealing with a crisis situation, some role occupants may be required to interact.

Interrole linkages are either task linkages or emotional linkages. Both are important. The availability of another role occupant and his or her eagerness both to respond to linkage needs and to take initiative to create linkages contribute to a satisfactory interrole linkage.

The organization can do several things to promote interrole linkage and to deal with areas of role isolation.

## *Helping*

A helping relationship goes beyond work-related linkages. Helping can be personal or role related. In either case, at least three processes are involved: empathy, support, and sacrifice.

The beginnings of a helping relationship are found in empathy. Unless a person has empathy for the other person, there can be no help: Helping out of sympathy (or pity) is not helping in the real sense. Moving beyond empathy, a helping relationship involves providing support to another individual to enable that person to be effective. Finally, helping involves some sacrifice on the part of the helper, perhaps in the form of giving some time and energy to the other person. The helper is prepared to suffer some inconvenience to be useful to the other person.

A healthy helping relationship is bidirectional. Although a person may be ready to help, he or she also should be willing to seek help from the other person. Such mutuality should exist in all relationships. A supervisor or manager should seek the help of subordinates in many areas.

## *Superordination*

The concept of superordination comes from the concept of superordinate goals. A superordinate goal is one that: (a) is valuable to two or more persons or groups, (b) is sharable, and (c) cannot be achieved by a single person or group working alone. The term “superordination” indicates the relevance of a person or role to a larger entity. Superordination may take several forms.

Superordination may be reflected in the perception of a desirable, common goal whose achievement would require collaboration with others. Superordination increases if the role occupants realize that they are part of an organization that has high prestige or is working for a larger cause.

People also have a sense of superordination when they realize that their roles are useful (and are perceived as such) to society or to the organization. A sense of higher linkage is developed. A story is told of three stone cutters. One had little interest in his work; he thought he was cutting a stone and doing nothing else. The second worker had more interest because he knew that he was cutting stone to build a temple. The third worker had the highest satisfaction because he knew that the stone he was cutting would be used to create the main idol in the temple.

Superordination is also higher when one’s role provides an opportunity to serve others—customers, less fortunate members of the community, educational institutions, etc.

Finally, superordination emerges from linkage of a role with a larger group outside the organization, for example, with a professional group.

In summary, a participative organizational climate, in which the employees experience higher job satisfaction, contributes to role efficacy. Sen (1982) has found that such an organizational climate includes a concern for excellence, the use of individual expertise, and a concern for larger issues. All of these factors seem to contribute to role

efficacy. On the other hand, a climate that is characterized by control and affiliation seems to contribute to lower role efficacy. In other studies, Surti (1983) found that role efficacy was affected by the organizational and motivational climate, role stress, internality and job satisfaction, and length of service.

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## ■ TRAINERS AND THE DISCIPLINE OF PERSONAL MASTERY

**Michael O'Brien and Larry Shook**

*Abstract:* Organizations must embrace continuous learning—and the active sharing of learning among all parts of the organization—if they are to survive. The basis for organizational learning is individual learning, and the pursuit of personal mastery is the cornerstone of individual learning and growth. Moreover, it leads to the wise and beneficial use of what we have learned.

This article presents four, basic, adaptive skills of personal mastery and explains how individuals, especially trainers and HRD professionals, can transcend inherent and learned limitations to change and enrich themselves and their organizations through this discipline.

Peter Senge is a humble messenger. When he published *The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization* in 1990, he said that the ideas in the book were not his, that many of them were a century old, and that he was merely a recording secretary. Nevertheless, the professor from MIT struck a deep chord with U.S. business. There is general agreement today that Senge was onto something, that the learning organization is not just another fad, and that organizations composed of people who are not actively learning together probably will not be around long.

In the movie *Scent of a Woman*, there is a scene that subtly—even poignantly—reflects this aspect of our times. The colonel and his young aide are getting out of a cab in front of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, “the pinnacle,” the colonel declares, “of all things civilized.” Looming over the elegant tableau is the Pan Am building. Although the once-proud name still blazes in the night, it is only the reminder of a once-great company.

### **THE NEED FOR LEARNING ORGANIZATIONS**

Learn or die. That is the message. We all know the grim statistics regarding the life expectancy of U.S. corporations; few survive past the age of forty. It is like an actuarial table from the Dark Ages and is a sad commentary on the status of learning in the U.S. workplace.

Even so, half a decade after Peter Senge added “the learning organization” to the U.S. business vocabulary, and although many organizational leaders are working hard to make elements of the learning organization a reality, we know of no organization that is a complete learning organization.

A learning organization, according to Senge, is one in which “people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire . . . .” The learning

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organization also can be described as a place in which people sit up, pay attention, and talk freely about what they learn. They do this because the organization's operational phenomena—values, systems, policies, and procedures—invite them to and reward them for it.

On the other hand, the typical organization expects employees to “sit down, shut up, and hang on” until the ride is over. The real difference between the two is that, in the learning organization, individual and collective learning amounts to a business within a business. The fruits of this learning enterprise—the gross learning product—lets the organization continuously anticipate and adjust to changes in the environment. This also makes the organization less likely to need a very expensive reengineering effort.

## **PERSONAL MASTERY: THE CORNERSTONE OF LEARNING**

Senge identified *personal mastery* as one of the five disciplines of the learning organization. It may be the cornerstone. An organization is an intangible thing, an invisible repository of will and competence; organizations exist in the thin ether of our actions and values. But there is nothing abstract about the people who make them up. They dream, worry, attend meetings, call on customers, and phone home. You can weigh them, poll them, and clock them. It makes sense that when an organization learns, the locus of that learning is the individual and groups of individuals.

The term “personal mastery” may just be another way of saying “learning,” but we must be clear about the kind of learning we mean. It is not just the accumulation of technical and functional information, but the wise and beneficial use of that information. This is an important qualification, because it introduces the issues of self-knowledge and personal values. Here is where we find the answer to the riddle of the learning organization and the reason that the learning organization (as a whole, functioning entity) is so important.

### ***Transcending Our Inherent and Learned Limitations***

When he was an old man, an attorney named Ben Kizer, one of the great civic leaders of the Twentieth Century, observed, “The last thing we learn about ourselves is our effect.” Personal mastery entails honing our effectiveness in the world through brave self-observation. It also involves creating a high-tension energy field in one's life by facing the truth of current reality and boldly envisioning something different: a future of one's choosing. The creative tension is where the juice of mastery comes from.

Through the ages, sages have testified to the virtues of the examined life and lamented a mind left untended. The following are the observations of three of them.

Those who know much about others may be smart, but those who understand themselves are even wiser.

—Lao Tzu

You could drop a leaflet or a Hubbard squash on the head of any person in any land and you would almost certainly hit a brain that was whirling in small, conventional circles. There is something about the human mind that keeps it well within the confines of the parish, and only one outlook in a million is nonparochial.

—*E.B. White*

We have met the enemy and he is us.

—*Pogo*

We happen to believe that the “something” E.B. White was talking about amounts to a biological imperative faced by humanity, and that the imperative is as inescapable in the organization as elsewhere. Medical research reveals that within the first six months of life, the human brain doubles in neural capacity, doubling again by age four. No other creature on the planet experiences comparable brain expansion. The body has about a hundred billion nerve cells, and every time the brain thinks a thought, a record of the transaction is preserved in the archives of muscle, blood, bone, and organ. Experience shapes us. Events compose our lives.

Throughout childhood, the human brain is a frenzied construction site in which neural structures are assembled in response to stimulus. During this time, countless circuits in the brain are rushed to completion. In the course of construction, some connections are bolstered into massive conduits of habit. Others are systematically diminished, sometimes even dismantled.

This is not metaphysical speculation, but part of the best current explanation that science has to offer about what makes us tick. It is this process that lays the foundation for what Dr. Robert B. Livingston—a leading brain researcher and former faculty member in the medical schools at Stanford, Yale, Harvard, and UCLA—calls the human “world view” (Livingston, 1990). Each of us has one, says Dr. Livingston; it is the highly subjective image of reality presented to us by our senses, which are created by the interplay of heredity and the impressionistic sculpture of our life experience. But there is more.

Livingston reports that the intensive brain development of early childhood is followed by an amazing event. During a single three-week period of adolescence, power to the construction site of the brain is drastically cut back. The brain’s metabolism falls to half its previous rate, and we are “biologically wired,” as Livingston says, with the conclusions, attitudes, suspicions, biases, inklings, and anxieties of our most impressionistic years. This occurs in all of us, and it so profoundly impacts the ways in which we lead our lives, it might be the most important event in all of human history. It locks us into a way of being that will govern us more forcefully, more ruthlessly, than any tyrant, unless we learn to intervene.

Livingston concludes that this “biological wiring,” this deceptive “knowing” about the world (which accounts for our pig-headedness) could threaten humanity more than any other factor. It can lead to dysfunctionally rigid ways of perceiving and interacting with the world around us. It can cause great companies, such as Pan Am, to become extinct; fuel holy wars; result in economic systems that jeopardize ecosystems; and lead us to misuse technology in the waging of wars that weapons can win but people cannot.

The only hope, as Livingston concluded at the end of a long and distinguished career, is for humanity to learn a lesson about itself that has eluded us so far.

We believe that “personal mastery” is as good a name for the lesson as any. Liberating ourselves from the conditioned, automatic responses to life that endlessly loop us into the same frustrations is one of the hardest things that we can ever attempt. Accepting the need for this is not an admission of inadequacy but a recognition of what it means to be human. It is understanding that we possess a psyche on which the world has long been at work before we get much of a shot at responding to the world. Dealing with this reality is always worth the effort, because even the smallest successes are immediately rewarded with proportionally greater personal freedom. This, in turn, leads to greater creativity, productivity, satisfaction, joy, and expanded life possibilities.

Although the task is difficult, people regularly accomplish even greater goals. Changing one’s world view, says Livingston, is actually easier than overcoming chemical dependence, and people break such deadly habits all the time.

### ***The Ripple Effect in Organizations***

One person inside an organization (e.g., a trainer) on the trail of personal mastery would be good news for that organization. Think of the ripple effect. Two people would be even better, and the implications of ten people struggling with the ways of personal mastery are even more exciting because of the dynamics of critical mass. The cumulative rate at which individuals within the organization change themselves in pursuit of personal mastery defines the rate at which the organization can change.

Personal mastery is very personal, revolving as it does around the unique mechanisms of the mind. It is challenging enough at the personal level. In the organization, the challenge is compounded not just by numbers but by the fact that no one can choose the pursuit of personal mastery for us; we must choose it for ourselves. Nevertheless, it is a challenge that people and organizations must face if they are to survive individually and collectively. Organizational leaders who have the courage to confront this issue will need all the help they can get from the training profession.

The challenge can be described as follows:

1. Because of the rapidity of technological change and global competition, becoming a learning organization is now the real ante of doing business.
2. The pursuit of personal mastery by individuals is the essence of the learning organization.

Unfortunately, the practice of personal mastery by an organization’s employees remains a taboo subject for management. A manager who addresses an employee with, “Excuse me, but I think you need to improve your personal mastery” will likely be as welcome as a religious pamphleteer at the door on Saturday morning. As Peter Drucker says, managers have no business messing with their employees’ minds.

We must disagree with Drucker. Although we believe that organizations should not stick their noses into the private lives of their employees, we do not think that you can

separate the person's work from the person. The general manager of the Four Seasons Olympic Hotel in Seattle corroborated this view when he explained why his company screens new hires with exquisite care. "We can teach people what to do," he said, "but not what to be."

The notion that we have a work life and a personal life is a dangerous illusion. Each of us has one mind, one body, and one spirit, and we take them with us wherever we go. We do a lot of messing with one another's minds; it may constitute the majority of human affairs. Every time a manager says "Thank you" or "You did it wrong again" to an employee, the manager is messing with the employee's mind. Every bonus paid, every new team assembled, every reorganization effort is an exercise in messing with minds. The challenge, again, is to do it responsibly.

By practicing personal mastery as individuals, trainers and other HRD professionals will make their practice more forceful than any sermons they could ever preach on the subject. Happily, the discipline of it will almost inevitably confine one to constructive, ethical interaction with others.

### ***Components of the Discipline***

The question is "How do you pursue personal mastery?" The answer is that the biological and psychological force of habit is so great that you must have a discipline. To harness the incomprehensible power of your brain, you need a "technology" that equals the switching capacity of the entire U.S. telephone network and can store 100 trillion bits of information. Such power dwarfs the largest computer.

The personal-mastery technology we propose (O'Brien & Shook, 1995) rests on four adaptive skills:

- Raising consciousness,
- Imagining,
- Framing and reframing, and
- Integrating new perspectives.

"Raising consciousness" means not just thinking, but thinking *about* thinking: noticing and managing the workings of your mind so that your mind will not run away with you like a startled horse.

When you "imagine," you create a mental picture—the most vivid image you can—of an outcome you desire. It works, and you do it all the time. If you are typical, however, most of the imagining you do goes by the name "worry." This most common form of imagining leads not to something you want but to something you do not want, and it works depressingly well.

"Framing and reframing" are the foundation of human experience and the essence of personal freedom. They mean interpreting the world, deriving meaning, and assigning significance to the events of life. When the Greek Stoic Epictetus noted two-thousand years ago that it is not the events of life that matter but our opinion of them, he was

talking about framing and reframing. You do not have to think about anything in any particular way, but some ways of thinking about things are more helpful than others. Learning to frame and reframe means learning to see things in the most helpful light.

When Livingston refers to changing one's world view, he is describing what happens when you "integrate new perspectives." What we see depends on where we stand. And where we stand—that is, the view of the world our senses present to us—is profoundly influenced by the biases of our families of origin and the hands that fate has dealt us. However, each of us is not stuck with just one world view. We can get new ones any time by learning to integrate the perspectives of others. In this sense, the points of view of other people rank among life's most priceless gifts.

This is not esoteric; in fact, the irony of personal mastery is that it rests on practices that are deceptively mundane. These practices employ a series of studies and exercises that methodically engage the individual in raising consciousness, imagining, framing and reframing, and integrating new perspectives.

In thinking about personal mastery and its application in the organization, two paradoxes are clear. The first is that the actual steps to personal mastery are so straightforward, it is tempting to *think* about them but not actually *take* them. This is like trying to flatten one's stomach by reading about situps.

The second paradox is that personal mastery cannot be taught, at least not like computer skills. It can only be modeled. What those who pursue personal mastery do is notice their mental models and change them as needed, which is not easy. They dream in living color about the results they want, which takes passion. Based on good will and high purpose, they assign the most constructive interpretations (rather than knee-jerk reactions) to the events of their lives. And they respect and incorporate the useful ideas of others. Genuine curiosity and humility help them to do this.

### ***The Impact of Personal Mastery***

It probably is not possible for someone to engage in these activities without impacting events around them, without creating powerful and effective relationships with others. But any words that someone who pursues personal mastery could speak about these things would be pale next to the things themselves. In the story of Pinocchio, it is the master's love and the behavior of love that brings the puppet to life. It may be that way with personal mastery. Only to the extent that we are willing to step into these practices and give them life do they have the potential to shape our destinies and those of the organizations we form.

All this is a matter of considerable importance to organizational leaders, to trainers, and to organizations. Many organizations currently are trying to change themselves from the outside in, by reengineering new organizational forms into existence in the hope that structure alone equals performance. We doubt that it does. The catalyst missing from such efforts is the inside-out change offered by personal mastery. We doubt that the best team players can be made by teaching the external strategies of teamwork alone. To be constructive members of a team, people must examine their attitudes about collaborating

with others, resolving conflict, coping with mistakes (their own and others'), dealing with anger and fear, and so on. That comes from the never-ending pursuit of personal mastery.

When the leaders of an organization sincerely embrace personal mastery themselves, they will automatically begin shifting the parent-child relationship between management and workers to adult-adult relationships. Although the former is still the dominant organizational paradigm, it is the latter that holds the power to drive truly empowered workers and an organization that is capable of continuous learning and fluid response to a dynamic marketplace.

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## ■ **INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AND ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS: AN EXPERIENTIAL LECTURE**

**Anthony J. Reilly**

One of the main objectives of human relations training is to coordinate what is known about human behavior with what actually takes place in the working world. Behavioral scientists have generated a wealth of knowledge about people and how they relate to their work environments.

This paper presents a framework for introducing a number of theoretical orientations around three work-related topics: individual needs, the psychological contract, and managerial style.

There are many ways to explore with managerial and staff personnel various concepts and approaches that can be used to develop the human potential of organizations. This paper considers each of its topics both experientially and theoretically. Specific experiences are emphasized to allow participants to become personally involved in the concepts discussed and to discover and validate certain aspects of human behavior theory.

No effort, however, has been made to present in-depth theoretical positions. Instead, the facilitator is referred to a number of investigators who have done significant research relating to the concepts discussed. The facilitator is encouraged to supplement the activities suggested here with additional appropriate theory.

### ***HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT***

The human relations consultant, whether functioning as an internal consultant or as an external facilitator to an organization, is concerned with human resource development. Individual needs must be meshed with organizational goals. In working with organizations, the consultant generally sees individuals as possessing much more potential than is ever actualized in most settings. If it is properly tapped, this potential—which includes physical skills as well as creative energy—can lead to greater satisfaction for the individual as well as to improved organizational effectiveness.

The identification of individual needs and organizational needs and the relationship between these two sets of needs are the central issues of this paper. The concept of the psychological contract seeks to mesh individual and organizational needs, thus bringing into play the component of leadership behavior—getting work accomplished through people.

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## **INDIVIDUAL NEEDS**

This activity is designed to clarify what individuals want from their work.

### **Goals**

1. To make individuals aware of their personal work needs and how they vary in intensity.
2. To allow participants to discover the relationships between their needs and their opportunities to meet those needs.
3. To highlight theory related to people's needs in organizations.

### **Process**

The time required for this activity is approximately one hour.

1. *Individual list.* Participants are asked to write short phrases answering the question "What do individuals want from their work?"

2. *Group list.* Representative items generated by individual participants are then listed on a piece of newsprint. The group's list should indicate the major dimensions of all the individual lists. Some of the items that generally emerge on this topic include the following:

- Good salary
- Promotion potential
- Sense of achievement
- Good working conditions
- Job security
- Freedom of self-expression
- Feeling "in" on things
- Being with other people
- Challenge
- Supportive supervision

3. *Rank ordering specific needs.* The next step is to ask participants to copy the group list and to rank order each need as it applies to themselves in their present work situation. Number 1 would indicate "most importance," and so on. Participants are told that they will be sharing their rankings with another person in the group.

4. *Rank ordering the availability of opportunity.* After rank ordering the list, participants are asked to fold their sheets so that they cannot see the rank order they just completed. Then they rank order each item on the list again, this time in terms of the

amount of opportunity available in their present work for meeting that particular need. Number 1 again would indicate “most opportunity” and so on. The following is a typical response pattern:

<i>Importance</i>	<i>Individual Need</i>	<i>Opportunity</i>
<u>3</u>	Good salary	<u>3</u>
<u>7</u>	Promotion potential	<u>4</u>
<u>2</u>	Sense of achievement	<u>5</u>
<u>5</u>	Good working conditions	<u>1</u>
<u>6</u>	Job security	<u>2</u>
<u>1</u>	Freedom of self-expression	<u>6</u>
<u>8</u>	Feeling “in” on things	<u>9</u>
<u>10</u>	Being with other people	<u>7</u>
<u>4</u>	Challenge	<u>10</u>
<u>9</u>	Supportive supervision	<u>8</u>

5. *Sharing of rankings.* A number of short activities may be used at this point to involve participants.

- a. For each item, the participant should determine the difference between his or her ranking for “importance” and ranking for available “opportunity.”
- b. Participants can be paired to exchange their ranking sheets and discuss similarities and differences that they perceive between needs and opportunities. Older and younger participants, long-tenured and short-tenured persons, and management and nonmanagement personnel are possible pairings of participants.

6. *Participant learnings.* Next, a group discussion is conducted in which participants are asked to share their personal learnings. One way to focus the discussion is to ask each participant to offer to the group the one most significant point that resulted from his or her discussion with a partner. A poster can be made by the facilitator listing the points made by participants.

## **Theory**

The work of three well-known motivational theorists may be introduced to participants (Maslow, 1968; Herzberg, 1973; McClelland, 1967).

If, for example, the facilitator chooses to present Maslow’s Need Hierarchy and general approach to human needs, he or she may ask participants to classify each work need generated by the group into Maslow’s hierarchy. The results might look like this:

### **Self-Actualization Needs**

Freedom of self-expression  
Challenge

### **Ego-Status Needs**

Promotion potential  
Sense of achievement

### **Belonging Needs**

Feeling “in” on things  
Being with other people  
Supportive supervision

### **Safety Needs**

Job security

### **Basic Needs**

Good salary  
Good working conditions

Herzberg has extended Maslow’s thinking by applying it to a work setting. Further, he has contributed his own theory concerning work needs and has done considerable research in the area of motivation and its relation to work.

A theory of need achievement which also may be tied in to human work needs is McClelland’s (1967) contribution to research about this topic. The facilitator can introduce the idea of the need for achievement by showing how it is reflected in the need list of the participant.

### ***Application***

If this activity is to be successful, it is important that the facilitator consider how the participants’ learnings may be applied on a day-to-day basis. He or she may discuss such points as selfawareness, the understanding of individual differences and similarities, and the implications for job assignments.

## ***THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT***

This topic deals with the meshing of individual needs with organizational goals.

### ***Goals***

1. To have participants identify specific expectations that organizations have of workers.
2. To contrast “people” needs with the needs of organizations.
3. To introduce the notion of the psychological contract.

## **Process**

This experience requires approximately thirty minutes. It is a natural extension of the activity on individual needs.

1. *Listing organizational needs.* The entire group generates a list of specific wants that organizations have of their employees, and a poster is made of these expectations.

The following is a representative list that could emerge:

- High-quality work
- Loyalty to the company
- Growth for employees
- Employee satisfaction
- Commitment to the organization's objectives
- Conformity
- Creative ideas
- Risk-taking behavior
- Status quo
- Cooperation

2. *The psychological contract.* In the next step, the list of individual needs is posted side by side with the list of organizational needs, thus highlighting the interdependence of the two lists. This introduces the idea of the psychological contract, an implicit agreement concerned with meeting each set of needs as fully as possible. The two lists might then appear like this:

### *Individual Needs*

Good salary  
Promotiona potential  
Sense of achievement  
Job security  
  
Freedom of self-expression  
Feeling "in" on things  
Being with other people  
Challenge  
Supportive supervision

### *Organizational Needs*

High-quality work  
Loyalty to the company  
Growth for employees  
Commitment to the  
organization's objectives  
Conformity  
Creative ideas  
Risk-taking behavior  
Status quo  
Cooperation

## **Theory**

In numerous organizations, formal, explicit contracts exist between management and nonmanagement personnel. These contracts aim at meeting workers' needs and at the same time guarantee that the organization will continue to thrive and be productive. Historically, formal contract negotiations are cast in terms of a win-lose model, which can have costly effects on organizational life.

Management "wins" a labor arbitration or the union "wins" a pay increase. In reality, however, the losers wield considerable power. Management may "win" a labor dispute, but workers can join hands and make life miserable for management. On the other hand, management can lay off the very workers who have "won" a pay increase. Such win-lose struggles abound.

In contrast, the psychological contract that exists between an individual and the organization for which he or she works is implicit, although it can be made quite explicit. The contract is concerned with meshing individual and organizational needs in such a way that both sides "win."

Kolb, Rubin, and McIntyre (1971) have some good insights into this mutual influence:

The dynamic quality of the psychological contract means that individual and company expectations and individual and company contributions mutually influence one another. High expectations on the part of the company can produce increased individual contributions, and great contributions will likewise raise expectations. From the company's point of view, the question becomes "How can we manage our human resources so that we can maximize individual contributions?" "How can we socialize our members to accept our expectations and norms as legitimate?" For the individual the questions are "How can I get the satisfaction and rewards that I want from this organization?" "How can I manage my personal growth and development?" [p. 8]

Several other investigators have studied related variables (Argyris, 1970; Schein & Bennis, 1965; and McGregor, 1960). Their research carries important concepts that can well be introduced at this point.

The work of Argyris relates directly to this activity. He has made in-depth studies in various organizational settings, and he states that both labor unions and management have missed the main point with regard to individual employee needs. He agrees with Herzberg's findings that needs centering around pay, job security, and benefits are necessary but not sufficient for today's workers.

Today's frustrations, Argyris feels, center on the underutilization of employees' talents. He sees a direct, interdependent relationship between individual needs and organizational needs.

Schein and Bennis have investigated the effects of an individual's early experience with an organization and has written extensively about the socialization of individuals in organizations.

McGregor, generally regarded as being one of the most influential behavioral scientists of our time, is probably also one of the most misquoted. He has contributed

widely to the field and is especially noted for clarifying and translating behavioral science research into practical implications for managers.

### ***Application***

Participants may be encouraged to share the results of this activity—especially the idea of the psychological contract—with their own supervisors. A supervisor might find the activity very helpful in the orientation of new employees. Its value in this context is that both individual and organizational needs can be made clear, specific, and concrete.

The activity could also be used as a selection tool, matching organizational and individual needs with job requirements. Usually, prospective employees—and employers—attempt simply to make a favorable impression on each other. Seldom are real needs discussed. An activity such as the Psychological Contract can set the stage for rewarding exchanges between employer and prospective employees.

## **MANAGERIAL STYLE AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT**

### ***Goals***

1. To coordinate a person's managerial style with individual and organizational needs as reflected in the psychological contract.
2. To give participants feedback about management style.
3. To consider concepts related to management style.

### ***Process***

Approximately one hour is required for this topic.

1. *Choice of instrument.* The consultant chooses one of several instruments that yield information about a person's management style. Pfeiffer and Heslin (1973) review a number of such instruments that are applicable.

2. *Administration of instrument.* After the instrument is administered, the consultant presents some leadership theory that relates to the chosen instrument.

### ***Theory***

Because of the nature of the psychological contract, it is the responsibility of both the individual and the organization to see that the contract is implemented.

The manager represents the organization. It is his or her job to see that organizational needs are met. Indeed, management's key function is to accomplish work through and with people—i.e., to mesh organizational needs with individual needs.

Likert (1967) and Hall (1968) are two theorists who have published widely in the area of leadership behavior.

Likert has studied the long-term effects of leadership style on organizational effectiveness. His concept of a “supportive relationship” respects individual needs and values while matching high demands of employees.

Hall has approached leadership theory in a practical way through a number of instruments that provide feedback to individuals about their leadership styles. His matrix approach places individual needs along one dimension and organizational needs along a second dimension in such a way as to allow an individual to see how his or her leadership philosophy and behavior condition responses to each set of needs.

### **Application**

The idea of leadership style is directly relevant to day-to-day events in the life of any manager or supervisor who must accomplish work by means of other people. Feedback from an instrument on style can easily be translated into specific events related to participants’ jobs.

### **CONCLUSION**

For work efficiency and employee satisfaction, both organizational needs and individual needs must be met. If people are to be productive and to have the sense that their talents are being utilized, it is important that their needs be clearly known to their organization. On the other hand, organizational needs must also be specified and clearly communicated to employees.

One of the aims of human relations consultants is to coordinate these two, often differing, sets of needs in ways that meet the requirements of both employer and employee, thus leading to improved work situations for all involved.

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## ■ LIFE/WORK PLANNING

### Art Kirn and Marie Kirn

Our interest in life/work planning had its origin in our own life/career transitions: for one of us, from an academic church career as a priest, philosopher, and teacher to a consulting career, marriage, and a family; for the other, from involvement in college administration, the poverty program, a monastic retreat center, and innovation in education to human-potential consulting, marriage, and a family.

These transitions were slow and painful, involving two distinct phases. The first involved coming to some sense of who we were. In the second phase, we had to decide what we were going to do now that we knew ourselves well enough to make some choices.

This double experience provided the stimulus for a rationale, a design, and a set of practical guidelines for reproducing some of the essential conditions that made possible our own life/career transitions.

Our experiences showed us that all the institutions we had experienced—church, education, government, business—were based on the Theory X assumptions that people lack ambition, dislike responsibility, and prefer to be led, and that the institution's responsibility is to manage people's lives to its own advantage. Along with the vast majority of people, we have found it only too easy to let circumstances and the objectives of others control our lives.

In the development of a group program in life and career planning over the last three years, we have evolved a philosophy about the process—a collection of assumptions, conclusions, and values that form the rationale for the training design we have worked out and used extensively. At this writing, about one thousand people have experienced Life/Work Planning, some with us and others with leaders we have trained.

### ***RATIONALE FOR THE PROGRAM***

#### ***1. Vast, Untapped Potential***

Most of us possess many unused resources that lie dormant most of the time. Many people secretly nurture fantasies of a second (and sometimes a third, fourth, or fifth) career. We are all “Walter Mittys” at heart.

It is thought that 95 percent of the human race lives on 5 percent of its potency. Maslow's (1962) studies of self-actualizing people reveal immense creative resources,

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quite apart from specific talents, in very ordinary people. The creativity curve in most children levels off at six, seven, or eight years of age, when school experiences and socialization effectively close them down. Transactional Analysis (TA) describes the stance of everybody early in life as “You’re OK, I’m not OK.” Indeed, the entire human potential movement is based on the assumption that the capacity to grow is largely untapped in most people.

## **2. Fear of Potency**

Many people are afraid of their own power. Too common in our culture are such working assumptions as “pride goeth before a fall.” Many people are much more comfortable with negative criticism than with praise, because they are more used to feeling bad than good about themselves. Getting in touch with one’s own strengths and resources often evokes a wave of guilt at not having used them as one might. Otto (1972) has written extensively about how these negative feelings tend to immobilize us and about some of the training issues involved in getting in touch with them and working with them.

## **3. Responsibility for Self**

The key to successful life/career planning is the willingness to take responsibility for oneself. This implies that it is indeed possible for individuals to take control of their lives in the midst of the forces around them. In any organizational or life situation people have three choices—*change it, love it, or leave it*. “Change it” requires people to change behavior, goals, or circumstances. “Love it” means that people must recognize that it is their choice to stay with it, for whatever set of reasons. “Leave it” means that people find another environment for their energies. Feeling forced to stay with it and hating it is not a viable and productive human alternative. When choice is removed, violence results. Prisoners are subject to violence. A person “trapped” in a job (“look at what they’ve done to me”) has given up something of his or her humanness. This person is not in the same situation as someone who *chooses* to do something unpleasant for whatever reason he or she might have.

## **4. Resistance to Responsibility**

Many people tend in practice to resist taking responsibility for themselves. This statement is not an acceptance of the Theory X assumptions underlying authoritarian management practices; it simply describes the way many people in fact behave. In addition to the factors that build up fear of one’s own potency, institutional life as we know it heavily encourages dependence, conformity, submission, role playing, and lack of responsibility. Gibb (1972) has pointed out how this defensive and submissive behavior in the individual is a direct expression of fear. He has also shown that fear and the behaviors flowing from it are largely matters of choice. Too many people too often choose fear and defensiveness.

Theory Y, which supports more participative management practices, assumes that people are capable of not choosing fear—that they naturally prefer trust and the authentic, spontaneous, and open behavior that flows from it. Certainly, some of our institutions were conceived in the belief that people will take responsibility for themselves.

### **5. Resentment of Loss of Control**

Even if most people resist taking responsibility for themselves, they resent their own sense of impotence and loss of control when somebody assumes responsibility for them. This is a paradox for a designer-trainer. Its real meaning seems to be that the deeper dynamic in people is the urge to grow, to change, and to take charge of their own lives. But sometimes growth and change are painful. Forcing, provoking, helping, controlling, persuading, and strategizing sometimes work, but more often these strategies tend to heighten fear and deepen resistance.

### **6. Enthusiastic Response**

When people begin to experience trust and openness and to realize that they are truly free to set and achieve their own goals, they tend to respond with enthusiasm and ingenuity. Patience and some degree of risk are required for a trainer to trust that others will grow when they are ready to. Participants may need some time to test the credibility of a situation in which, perhaps for the first time, the responsibility is fully theirs. Nevertheless, the reward of crossing the crisis point together is an exhilarating release of energy that makes a participant of the leader and leaders of the participants.

### **7. Change a Constant**

Many people—and organizations—are uncomfortable with change or at least the blinding rate of change in these times. They find it confusing, unsettling, taxing. But change is a constant, both around us and within us.

Our assumption is that people do not need to be changed or influenced nearly as much as they need to develop their ability to handle change around them as it happens. This is mostly a matter of realizing and utilizing their own resources. It does not always require that a person change his or her goals or career; an adjustment of behavior or circumstances may suffice. It is often enough to accept full responsibility for a personal career choice and its implication in order to mobilize one's energies to cope with change.

### **8. Unprecedented Opportunities**

Opportunities to grow, to find interesting work, to vary one's life and work experience, to travel and live in different places exist in our society today to an unprecedented degree. We do not imply that we live in a perfect or a perfectly just world, merely that the freedom and opportunity to realize one's potential are relatively rich and available to

a relatively large proportion of people. Minorities, women, the aged, the poor, the young, and many other disadvantaged groups have a greater scope for choice than ever before. Conformity in dress, in organizational standards of behavior, in social customs, even in economic patterns, is under heavy pressure. We must continue to work to make our choices even wider, but we must also actively pursue the possibilities we do have.

## **9. Organization of Self-Knowledge**

Moving effectively toward significant goals in one's life requires more than personal insight. It is, of course, an essential part of any life/career planning experience, but by itself it is not enough to produce results. Self-knowledge must be organized and focused in order to contribute to practical progress. If we are to choose a direction or course of action wisely, then systematic approaches to self-diagnosis, goal-setting, generating new alternatives, decision-making, planning, and anticipating future problems are clearly in order. Without these ways of organizing self-knowledge, valid insights may never bear fruit.

## **THE LIFE/WORK PLANNING DESIGN**

Given the richness of human resources, the rapid rate of change, and the multiplicity of opportunity, it is paradoxical that so many are afraid of their potency, resistant to change, and blind to opportunity. This paradox is the central issue to a facilitator working in the arena of life and career planning. He or she can take heart, however, from the fact that the paradox can be broken by the very resources that people have and fear. The facilitator need only encourage people to share their fears and their problems for a climate of mutual support, trust, and openness to develop, permitting people to focus on the positive in themselves and one another. Then the way is open to growing self-realization, autonomy, and interdependence. People begin to use their own and one another's resources freely. The effect is a synergistic burst of energy.

The central objective of our Life/Work Planning design (summarized in the following section) is to initiate and foster this mobilization of self in a group setting by providing frameworks for developing a data profile for oneself (Phase I) and for organizing those data to achieve the goals one identifies as significant (Phase II).

### **Scope of the Design**

#### ***PHASE I: Finding Out About Your Work and Your Life***

To the Participant: Overview

1. Where are you? Statement of your life/work situation.
2. An introduction to learning from your own experience. Microlab.
3. Where have you been? Your lifeline.
4. What is a peak work experience?

5. What is important? What can you do without?
6. What can you do? An inventory.
7. Who are you? A self-inventory.
8. Who are you? Two self-portraits.
9. Your work preferences. Some hard choices.
10. Who needs you? Redefining your work.
11. What do you see? The newspaper exercise.
12. A conversation with Peter F. Drucker.
13. Profile of this decade.
14. Marshall McLuhan on work.
15. What do you like to do? An inventory.
16. What means most to you? An inventory.
17. What do you want to be doing? A look at your future.
18. Obituary and epitaph.
19. Summing up. The life/work checklist.
20. Interconnections. A grid.

## *PHASE II: Putting It All Together*

### Introduction to Phase II

21. Where are you now? Restatement of your life/work situation.
22. What comes first? Priority setting.
23. What's going for and against you? Force-field analysis.
24. Where are you taking yourself? Trend analysis.
25. What next? Decision making.
26. How do you get there? Planning.
27. What can go wrong? Getting ahead of trouble.

### *Wrap-up*

Phase I provides a series of closely timed and carefully structured activities for reflecting on and sharing experience, values, and reactions. They cut across past, present, and future; focus on aspects of self-image; and use a variety of approaches and media for stimulating perception. The pace is rapid and varied.

The result is a low-key atmosphere in which critical behavioral or personal issues are not dealt with by open-ended encounter. Rather, the expectation is that significant issues will come up again and again, each time from a different point of view. This

produces a cumulative effect—themes and conclusions tend to emerge. There is a large block of time at the end of Phase I for more extended exploration of particular issues.

At the end of Phase I, Life/Work Planning participants typically find themselves in one of three types of situations. They need further diagnosis, clarification, or ordering of their goals; they need to make one or more basic choices of goals or means of attaining them; or they need to plan how to achieve them.

### ***Conceptual Tools***

To facilitate thinking through these situations, Phase II adapts for individual use conceptual tools long in use by managers and administrators for handling similar situations in organizational settings. Each of the following tools is presented in an instrumented manner.

- *Priority-setting* assesses the relative seriousness, urgency, and growth potential of goals, tasks, or concerns.
- *Force-field analysis* assesses the feasibility of a proposed goal or course of action by laying out the forces for and against it, analyzing the importance and probability of these forces, and establishing actions to minimize negative forces.
- *Trend analysis* scans past behaviors for positive or negative trends and factors in outside circumstances and makes projections on where behavior patterns are leading. The outcome is to adjust goals and/or behaviors and/or circumstances. It is a useful tool for clarifying goals.
- *Decision making* presents a matrix for comparing how well alternatives meet objectives on the one hand and what elements of risk are involved in each alternative on the other. On the basis of this information an informed choice is possible.
- *Planning* helps one think through objectives, assumptions, resources, constraints, and key decision points, before detailing and scheduling tasks or action steps.
- *Getting ahead of trouble* systematically identifies specific high-priority potential problems along with their likely causes and establishes actions both to prevent them from becoming actual and to cope with them if they do. These actions become a means of improving plans.

These tools afford a continuing and much-used resource for thinking through situations as they arise in a participant's life long after the workshop. No one uses all of them at the time of the workshop, but over a year or two, one would probably find all of these conceptual tools useful at one time or another.

## ***PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS ON DESIGN AND EXECUTION***

We hope that some comments on our experiences with this design will be useful to those building their own designs, using others, or undertaking the Life/Work Planning design.

### ***Trust Building***

We place heavy emphasis in the opening activities on trust building. Several activities invite participants to share descriptions of their life/work situations and reactions, feelings, and observations about a series of questions that focus on key issues of life and work. As they share, trust begins to grow.

We encourage participants from the start to take responsibility for the choices they make—the pace and depth of their participation, the issues they wish to deal with, the people with whom they wish to interact.

We urge participants to “pass” at any given point if they so wish. We ask that they are clear about why they make this choice, but we do not demand that they defend their choice to others.

Freedom from coercive group norms encourages people to be more open and responsible than they might otherwise be. When they see others beginning to be proactive, they are encouraged to be so themselves. When they see that others are not there to “help” them, they find it easier to relax and take responsibility for helping themselves. They also see that nobody is going to act for them and that nothing will happen if they do not act for themselves.

### ***Positive Emphasis***

Throughout the program there is an emphasis (although not an exclusive one) on positive experiences and perceptions. What has been your peak work experience? What are the things you can do? What means most to you? What do you like to do? What do you like about yourself? As people get into this positive mode, some of the fears they have about their abilities begin to dissolve. But because looking at the positive side of oneself is a potential threat, it is important that trust be sufficiently established early in the life/work program.

### ***Avoidance***

The fact that no one need feel constrained to deal with what he or she does not wish to produces some avoidance. But a strong counter force toward movement is the realization that avoiding the issue is self-defeating.

It has been our experience, often repeated, that even people who seem to be avoiding reality or who are being highly defensive are really learning.

## ***Refraining from “Helping”***

In the course of prolonged and disciplined experience with refraining from “helping” participants to deal with what we think they ought to do, our respect for people’s ability to know their own priorities and to act on those priorities has grown immeasurably.

We assume that people are capable of taking charge of their own lives. Any behavior that contradicts that assumption, no matter how well intentioned, is ultimately counterproductive.

The exciting corollary of this is that it leaves the leader free to administer the program and to interact spontaneously out of his or her own needs and goals. Authentic behavior of this kind is, in fact, often very helpful, besides being more interesting, productive, and enjoyable for the leader.

## ***Subgroups***

Vital to the momentum of proceeding through a long series of structured experiences is the play between the dynamics of the subgroup and the total group.

The largest total group we have experienced so far is sixty-five. The only limitation seems to be logistical: Can a facilitator be heard and seen, and can the group function in the available space?

An ideal size for subgroups is four or five, large enough for good interaction but small enough to give everyone air time on a tight schedule.

## ***Space***

A space large enough for the total group to meet together and to break down into subgroups when needed makes it easy for the leader to move around, answer questions, clarify procedures, and participate where or when he or she wants to. It makes for an easily varied and well-paced flow between activities done in the total group and in subgroups and makes it easy for anyone to switch groups if desired. It also facilitates ending one activity and starting another.

Groups tend to become sensitive to the need for pacing themselves reasonably. The single large room allows the group to keep in touch with what is going on elsewhere in the total group. On occasion, some of the total group activities generate very powerful and intense experiences for participants. Finally, the large room makes it easy for the leader to take quick readings of the group’s needs and priorities, against which he or she can make adjustments in the choice, sequence, or pace of the activities.

## ***Administering a Program***

We have found the distinction between leading a group and administering a structured program to a group very useful and liberating. In the latter case, the group is leaderless. When we are free of a leader or helper role, we find that administering the program does not get in the way of our participating actively and spontaneously.

## ***Subgroup Membership***

Assuming responsibility for oneself is most critical in the choice of membership in subgroups. The initial choice comes after enough introductory activities to give some data. Choices are not irrevocable, and people feel easier if they realize they can switch later. However, subgroups tend to get involved and find it difficult to give up the common data base they quickly build together.

Occasionally subgroups or individuals find themselves working less productively or with unwanted obstacles. The most effective resolutions are generally those that the total group designs for itself, often very informally—an easier process in larger groups and much facilitated by having a single large working area for the entire program.

## ***Group Versus Individual Experience***

The group dimension of Life/Work Planning gives it several powerful advantages over one-to-one or individual (private) experiences. The group provides the trust and support needed to face difficult situations and to explore one's growth frontier. Participants find comfort in the fact that others share similar difficulties. The group affords exposure to values and experiences other than one's own and the chance to compare perceptions with others. The group is a rich source for new ideas and potential problem solutions.

## ***Materials***

Immeasurable aids to the pace and changing focus of the program are duplicated materials in a binder. They provide the instruments for many activities, but, more important, they provide a log for perceptions, insights, information of all kinds. The response of participants to "putting it down on paper" is almost uniformly positive, even when one discounts the fact that such a log strongly reflects the time and circumstances when it was written.

One pitfall to the use of written materials—indeed, to the use of structured activities at all—is the tendency many people have to respond to them in ways they feel they "ought" to. This tendency usually diminishes when attention is called to it and when it becomes evident that the responses are for sharing and learning among group members. The key here is the individual's realization that he or she truly has responsibility for his own experience and growth.

## ***Some Results***

We have observed rather consistently over the last three years that participants tend to see Life/Work Planning not as an event but as an introduction to a continuing process. Occasionally someone comes back to repeat the program in a new time and location and has a totally different experience from the first. Many have stayed in touch with us, offering evidence of continued growth and the use of their learning and, particularly, of the Phase II tools.

It is the combination of the human relations approach in Phase I and the practical, results-oriented conceptual approach in Phase II that seems to make these results possible. We have observed the same combination at work in successful organization development projects (as opposed to training events) in which the objective is a continued engagement with organizational growth linked with the achievement of organizational results.

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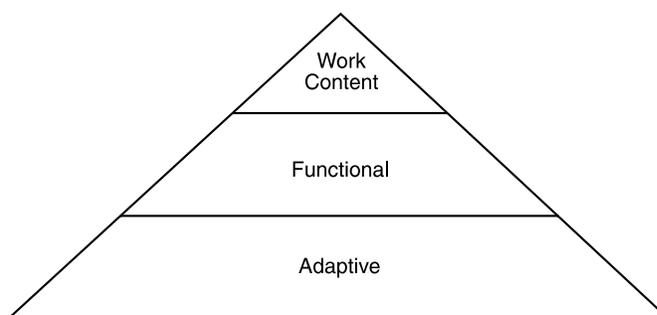
## ■ JOB-RELATED ADAPTIVE SKILLS: TOWARD PERSONAL GROWTH

**John J. Scherer**

The term “skills” is often used rather loosely. There are various levels and kinds of skills, and this discussion is an attempt to classify and to detail in some depth the job-related adaptive skills that lead one toward personal growth.

Three different levels of job-related skills can be identified (see Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> At the top of the pyramid are work-content skills. These are competencies required to perform a particular job. They frequently include theories, concepts, or procedures that are highly specific and not transferable. A dentist, for instance, needs to know how to do a crown preparation or an extraction, and a lawyer must be knowledgeable about the rulings and precedents in a certain kind of case. These skills are applicable only to the particular kind of work content in which the person is involved and will not be useful in any other job.

Functional skills, the second level, are transferable. These skills, learned in order to perform one job, have applicability or usefulness in a wide variety of other situations. There are approximately one hundred or more transferable skills that are required of a minister, for example, to prepare and preach a sermon, including the ability to speak to a large group of people, the ability to persuade through verbal interaction, the ability to take abstract ideas and translate them into more concrete illustrations, and so on. The human relations field requires many such skills, for example, leading a meeting, communicating well with others, supervising others, listening to employees’ needs.



**Figure 1. Three Levels of Job-Related Skills**

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<sup>1</sup> This concept is based on the work of Bolles (1972) and Fine (1967).

The bottom level is called adaptive skills. These are the competencies developed when a child is very young that center around how that person interacts with his or her world. How the *child* adapts to his or her environment has a great deal to do with how the *adult* gets along with authority, how high one's self-esteem is, how fluctuations in self-esteem are handled, how available a person's feelings are, how defensive or receptive a person is to criticism.

The skills that can cause a person trouble in many jobs and professions—particularly people-oriented professions—are not the work-content skills or the functional skills but the adaptive skills. These are the skills that apply to individuals themselves and to their personal growth. People find themselves in unhappy conflicts with work colleagues and, because of poor adaptive skills, are not able to work their problems through even though their views may be “correct” from the point of view of work-content skills or functional skills. The way people behave at the adaptive-skill level seems to affect greatly their performance no matter how competent they are at the other two levels. For this reason, it is especially important to consider the adaptive skills from a job-related perspective.

## **A LIST OF ADAPTIVE SKILLS**

### ***Participation in Learning Experiences***

If job performance were based purely on competence, all a person would need to do would be to pass a test indicating the possession of certain knowledge, and there would be no further problem. But people are parts of groups, work in one-to-one relationships with colleagues, subordinates, and supervisors, and are members of larger organizations. Contact with others is inevitable. People who refuse to expose themselves to new learning experiences may fear that they are inadequate or believe that “if people discover who I am, they will see through my facade and will not like or respect what they find.” Even though many of us are anxious when we take risks with others, an essential adaptive skill involves confronting that anxiety and developing a growing capacity to deal with it. If nothing else, learning to articulate one's anxiety is a step in the right direction.

### ***Relationship to Authority***

Dealing with authority is one of the most significant job-adaptive skills. No matter what supervisors do, employees project their own stance toward authority into the relationships they have with their bosses. Attitudes range from dependent to counterdependent to independent to interdependent.

Each person has his or her own particular areas of expertise and abilities that others may not possess, but each can be influenced by and influence other people. The best way for a person to begin that process is to develop the ability to discern what one's own authority relationship is like and to articulate it, if only to oneself, so that eventually one

will be able to tell at a particular moment when one is in a dependent or counterdependent stance toward a person of authority.

### ***Availability of Affect***

A basic adaptive skill is the ability to be aware of an emotional state and to do something appropriate with it. There is no list of “right” or “wrong” feelings. Our feelings have a will of their own and come and go as they please without any influence from us. The goal is to be able to track our feelings and utilize them creatively and constructively in our relationships with other people. Our feelings are built-in protective and expressive phenomena, designed to serve us under stress or pleasure. They are a source that needs to be available to us in such situations. The only clues others have about a person’s feelings are what show on the outside. Are feelings expressed occasionally, frequently, never? Are there certain emotional states that a person will allow to be seen and certain others that will be hidden? The goal is to allow most of the four major feelings (mad, sad, glad, scared) to show.

The other part of this skill is to be able to describe our own emotional states, not being controlled by the feeling but simply describing it to another person. This is an essential skill in a conflict when problem solving becomes necessary.

### ***Receiving Feedback***

We all receive feedback, on or off the job, every day. How we receive it, however, is an extremely important adaptive skill; our success at this skill seems to be linked to our experience of receiving feedback when we were young. If such experience was painful or humiliating for us, we are likely, as adults, to resent receiving feedback. If we sensed a large measure of acceptance along with our early criticism, we will tend to be less anxious and defensive today about the feedback process.

We need to develop the ability to receive feedback “cleanly,” watching our feelings of defensiveness or argumentation as they develop. The goal is not to receive feedback nondefensively; that seems almost impossible, given the nature and the depth of the feedback that a person is likely to encounter in his or her job or professional life. But one must begin to develop the capacity to be aware of defensiveness and to describe it in such a way that one can get enough distance from it to be more receptive to the feedback. A simple rule of thumb is to ask, “How ‘costly’ is it for others to give me feedback?”

### ***Giving Feedback***

Giving feedback is obviously important, too. If we view getting feedback as a learning experience, then giving it will cause us less anxiety. In most segments of our lives it is hard to get helpful information about ourselves because people either do not want to, or do not know how to, give good feedback. It is usually loaded with inferences, judgments, and projections of the person’s own issues and values and feelings about the

other. A manager or supervisor must be able to give feedback cleanly, which means noting his or her own issues as they invade the feedback being given to the other person.

In most places the dictum “If you don’t have anything nice to say, don’t say anything at all” is the norm. This means that it is precisely those things that an individual needs most to hear that he or she never hears. People are “protected” from what they need by well-meaning friends, coworkers, and colleagues. There are, of course, those colleagues who “hit and run,” tossing off a criticism like a hand grenade and disappearing safely out of reach of the explosion. Obviously, that approach is at the other end of the scale.

### ***Capacity for Self-Correction***

The basic question is what to do with the feedback we receive. Some people deflect it, deny it, explain it away, or in some other way try to protect themselves from the potential impact of the feedback they receive. One’s personal goal ought to be to be able to develop the capacity to stay open to the feedback at precisely those moments when it is easier to become defensive, to be able to report the defensiveness, but to stay with the process until the individual has discovered what is happening. When someone feels about to shut down and get defensive, it can mean that the feedback is getting close to the point where that person can learn something very important about himself or herself.

A person who is highly practiced in this skill will frequently solicit feedback from supervisors and work colleagues as a way to learn from mistakes and to make changes.

### ***Self-Esteem: The Accuracy of One’s Self-Image***

There is a biblical notion called “humility” that has been widely misunderstood in this context. It is often interpreted as the “worm syndrome”—people are supposed to make themselves as low as possible and have the lowest possible opinion of themselves. But the word “humble” does not mean this at all; it simply means “to have an accurate self-image”: to think neither more highly nor less highly of oneself than is warranted. We should be able to recognize where we are strong and where we are weak and to accept our strengths and weaknesses.

Some people have an extremely inflated self-concept, and other people seem to have a much lower self-image than would be appropriate. The goal with this skill is for individuals to develop the ability to see themselves accurately, knowing what they are capable of, what they are not capable of, and what they are learning to be more competent at. There is an implicit assumption that this skill also includes the capacity for self-acceptance. Any place along the line in a person’s development is an acceptable place for that person to be.

### ***Self-Esteem: Adapting to Fluctuations***

All of us experience fluctuations in self-esteem; there are three classic kinds of patterns. In the first one, the person has fairly high feelings of self-esteem punctuated by

moments of feeling “down.” In the second, the person feels down most of the time with pleasantly surprising moments of feeling “up” or acceptable. The third is a kind of middle ground where the fluctuations are extremely minute.

The people in each of these patterns will adapt to the fluctuations in their self-esteem in different ways. A person in the first pattern may feel like a failure during those moments of being down and may in fact be out of touch with significant weaknesses while he or she is feeling high. The second pattern may cause a person to be totally paralyzed by feelings of inadequacy, when in fact he or she is quite capable of performing at a high level of proficiency but does not know it. A person in the third pattern may be out of touch with feeling either high or low and has learned to protect himself or herself from fluctuations by denying changes in those feelings.

The important ability in this adaptive skill is to develop a way not to believe totally either extreme of feelings. We should be aware of them, notice them, and experience them, but not use them to make a final judgment on ourselves. A person’s actual worth or competence is not connected with his or her feelings of competence. It is essential that one develop the ability to step back from those feelings and to watch oneself having those feelings, but to try, through the highs and lows, to determine the actual value of one’s efforts. Competent individuals know that their feelings of self-esteem are not valid indicators of their own value in the world. However, even though large fluctuations in a person’s self-esteem may not be connected with actual competence, they may be useful to examine, because they may reveal other important factors in the situation that led the individual to feel inadequate.

### ***Awareness of Impact on Others***

Some people seem to be able to go through life totally unaware of the impact their behavior has on other people. This is an impossible luxury for anyone in a supervisory or managerial position. It is essential that a person be able to assess what his or her impact on others is. It is not enough to know that one is having a general impact on other people; it is necessary to be able to describe in very specific, concrete terms the kind of impact one is having on others and to be able to connect it to personal behavior. In that way, an individual can correct or guide his or her personal behavior with some idea of its effects on others.

### ***Congruence***

One attribute that is difficult to describe is congruence, or naturalness. Yet we all know when it is present or absent. Some people, in an effort to become competent in their role, spend much of their energy “role playing” their idea of a competent person in that role.

They try hard to be someone that they may not be or may not be ready to be, and it is apparent to their colleagues that there is a gap between the self they are trying to project and other pieces of themselves that peek out from behind the projection. For example, they may try to appear 100 percent in control of everything, but the stress of

holding it all together may show in their voice, facial expressions, and other nonverbal behaviors.

The important adaptive skill here is the ability to know when we are pretending, when we are trying to be something we are not, and to be able to describe the fears or other feelings that are prompting us to pretend. As soon as we have described those fears, we are once again natural and congruent.

When people continually deny that they are pretending or role playing in the face of frequent feedback to the contrary from their colleagues, it may be that they are in a “blind spot” and need to do some intensive work in a one-to-one relationship in order to discover what is stopping them from accepting the possibility that there may be a gap between who they are and the image they are trying to project. This is difficult to work on because people will frequently become irritated when they are told that they are not trusted. A climate of open mutual inquiry is absolutely essential for any progress to be made.

### **Confronting Conflict**

Because we are constantly encountering differences around us—in our jobs, in our personal relationships—we need to be able to confront those conflicts and to work through them. Again, we learned what conflict meant when we were young and how to react to it, and now we may respond in one set way to whatever conflict we encounter: We may fight, or run away, or demand help. What we need to develop is our ability to respond in a flexible way, according to the situation.

The competent human needs first to recognize that conflict is a normal, inevitable phenomenon of life. Developing our repertoire of reactions to conflict so as to include all response patterns is an adaptive skill that will lead us toward our own personal growth.

### **SUMMARY**

The competent human being is not necessarily the one who has all these skills perfected, but the one who is open to exploration and insight in each of these dimensions, is struggling to be or she can about himself or herself, and allows those gifts, strengths, and forces that lie within to be released in a slow but perceptible movement toward wholeness as a person.

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## ■ POWER TO THE PRACTITIONER

### H.B. Karp

Of all the constructs used in the practice of human resource development (HRD) and organization development (OD), none is more controversial or misunderstood than power.

The inability or unwillingness on the part of many HRD practitioners and managers to deal with “power” as a valid HRD construct paradoxically renders that practitioner or manager powerless. Practitioners must come to grips not only with the issue of the use of power in organizations but also with the issue of individual comfort with the use of power. Unless practitioners are comfortable with their own power, they will not be able to deal effectively with issues of power in organizations. It is time that practitioners and managers begin to deal with the issue of power freely and with confidence in order to build stronger individuals and organizations and, where needed, to effect positive change in systems.

### **DEFINITION OF POWER**

A universal definition of the word “power” implies agreement about the word that does not change according to varying values, theories, or personal philosophies. To that end, this author defines power as: “*the ability to get all you want from the environment, given what is available.*” This definition can be applied to power in any context (e.g., military, organizational, political, personal, intimate, etc.). The definition is composed of three parts, each of which requires a brief explanation.

First, power is cast in terms of a single human dimension, the *individual’s ability*. This places total responsibility for obtaining what is wanted on the shoulders of the person who wants it. To the extent that you have gained an objective, you will be regarded as having been powerful. If, however, you have been less than successful in your attempt, rather than asking, “Why won’t these people cooperate?,” it is far more appropriate to ask, “How did I stop myself from getting what I wanted?” For example, if all members of a group suddenly become unresponsive in the middle of a team-building session, it is much more productive for the facilitator to look for clues that he or she may have missed, rather than to castigate the group members for being low risk-takers or “betrayers” of the intervention.

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Second, the object of power is not focused on other people, but on obtaining something of value to you. This could be a personal desire such as being successful or being attractive, or it could be a successful outcome for a client or an organizational problem to be solved. Power is not an end in itself, but a process that has relevance only in terms of gaining results or achieving objectives. It is the outcome that is important. In this light, power can be measured objectively in terms of “track records,” i.e., number of things attempted against number of things gained.

Power is an *intrapersonal* phenomenon. You cannot empower or disempower someone else; nor can anyone else empower or disempower you.

Although power can be viewed as the ability to gain compliance or support from other people, this is not a necessary element. The pursuit of power for its own sake has little to recommend it as a healthy or productive pastime. Without a clear objective in mind, the pursuit of power for its own sake makes as much sense as the pursuit of oats when one owns neither a horse nor an oatmeal factory.

The third element in the definition of power relates to the last phrase: “given what is available.” One of the most important premises underlying the effective use of power is that each individual has responsibility for, and control of, himself or herself. To exercise power effectively, you must first ascertain what you want. Next, you must be willing to take full responsibility for getting it. However, you must also be able to determine whether what you want is available from the environment. Although you are totally responsible for the desire for something and for its pursuit, you have no responsibility for its availability. This is a very important distinction.

For example, suppose that you want a particular expert to work with your group. You call this person and find out that this person simply is not available. From that point on, any further pursuit of this particular objective is not an exercise in power but a venture in futility. That is, the limiting factor is not an overestimation of your power but, rather, an inaccurate assessment of what is available at this time.

This point has a great deal of relevance for the HRD practitioner or manager, particularly in working with interpersonal relationships in an organization. For example, although it is almost always worth exploring, sometimes people are not going to like or trust others any more than they do at any given time. It usually is far more productive to honor such feelings as they are and to work with them, rather than to attempt to better the relationship.

Finally, although attempting something and not achieving it reflects a lack of power in that situation, to want something and *not to attempt* to achieve it is the *ultimate* in powerlessness.

## **THE NATURE OF POWER**

Power has several identifying characteristics. They are as follows:

1. *Power Is Uniquely Expressed.* Despite numerous myths concerning what a powerful person looks like, there is no one way to express power. The strong,

charismatic manager who charges ahead and is successful is no more powerful than his or her three-year-old daughter who crawls up, hugs, murmurs, “Please . . . ,” and gets what she wants. Power is expressed in an infinite number of ways because each person is unique. The only requirement for the effective expression of power is that it be authentic, that is, that the expression of power is characteristic of the individual.

2. *Power Implies Risk.* Whenever one attempts to gain something, a potential risk or cost is involved. A few of the possible costs or risks associated with power are risk of failure, loss of prestige, and loss of alternative opportunities.

3. *Power Is Neutral.* Power is neither good nor bad; unfortunately, some managers pursue power because it is “good,” and some HRD practitioners avoid it because it is “bad.” If “good” and “bad” are relevant in any sense, it is in the judgment of the thing that is wanted, not in the ability to obtain it.

4. *Power Is Existential.* The only time and place that power can ever be expressed is in the present. Your capacity to successfully pursue an objective is contingent on your ability to stay aware and responsive to changing conditions within yourself and the environment. The moment you start worrying about how things *should* be or about what *might* happen rather than attending to what is happening, you have lost the ability to make an impact.

5. *All Power Resides in Conscious Choice.* Of primary importance is the realization that the power is actualized in the conscious act of choosing. The particular choice that one makes at any given time is of secondary importance. Furthermore, locking oneself into a fixed position, value, or attitude, regardless of changing conditions or present circumstances, precludes choice and, thus, limits power. Two choices (i.e., “yes” or “no”) are better than one, but still not good enough because both are *reactive*. An “either/or” strategy frequently results in internal deadlock, increased frustration, and subsequent loss of effectiveness. The minimum number of choices needed for a full expression of power is *three*. This implies the ability to freely generate another *option*, which places one in a position of independence. The choices then become “Yes, I will,” “No, I won’t,” and “I will under the following circumstances.” When blocked, regardless of the situation, one’s power depends on one’s ability to generate a minimum of three alternatives and then to consciously choose among them.

## **WHAT POWER IS NOT**

One of the major problems in working comfortably with power is that power is frequently confused with, or mistaken for, other concepts. These concepts are: authority, leadership, manipulation, intimidation, and domination. It is important that HRD practitioners and managers distinguish between these concepts and power.

## **Authority**

Power is the *ability* to obtain what you want, whereas authority can be defined as the organizational *right* to attempt to obtain what you want. Power and authority differ in several ways. The function of power is to obtain specific objectives, whereas the function of authority is to protect the integrity of the organization. For example, authority determines who reports to whom, areas of accountability, rules and regulations that are responsive to the needs of the organization, and so on. Authority is used only as a last resort to get things done. Whenever a manager relies on authority rather than power (e.g., “Do it because I’m the boss and I said to do it!”), that manager has disempowered himself or herself even if he or she attains a short-term objective.

Power originates in the individual; authority originates in the charter of the organization. Thus, there is no such thing as “position power.” Power can be exerted anywhere, whereas authority is limited by position. (I can tell *my* subordinate what to do, but I cannot tell *your* subordinate what to do.) Finally, although one’s power cannot be affected by anyone else, one’s authority can be increased or decreased by someone who holds a position of higher authority.

## **Leadership**

Leadership can be defined as the art of getting people to perform a task willingly. It differs from power in that it focuses solely on compliance from others, requires an organizational identity of some kind (e.g., production department, scout troop, or military unit), and is in service to task completion for the common good. Power is not dependent on others, requires no special identity, and is in service to one’s own wants or objectives.

## **Manipulation**

Manipulation simply means “to handle”; however, in regard to power it usually connotes the *secret* use of power—the implication being that another person is being used without that person’s full awareness of what is happening. It implies such things as ulterior motive, withheld information, and/or using another person without any regard for that person’s views or welfare. Power, in contrast, is open, does not necessarily involve another person, and implies no ill will or disregard for others.

## **Intimidation**

Intimidation is an extreme case of disempowerment because it is self-generated. Regardless of how aggressive or invasive someone else is, if you think or say, “That person intimidates me,” you have made the other person dominant and have rendered yourself powerless. Once you have done this, you are generally incapable of doing anything to change the situation.

On the other hand, if your initial response to the other person’s aggressiveness is, “I am feeling intimidated by this person. How am I doing that to myself?,” you are taking

responsibility for your own feelings. Having done that, you can begin to generate some options.

## ***Domination***

Domination is the concept most frequently confused with, or mistaken for, power. First, the objective of power is to gain an end; the objective of domination is to bend someone else to your will. Second, power is an attribute of one person, whereas domination, like the other concepts, requires a minimum of two people: the “bender” and at least one “bendee.” Third, the function of power is to strengthen or better oneself; the function of domination is to weaken others. Fourth, power is measured against one’s past performance; domination requires only that one be stronger than another person. Finally, the end result of power is freedom—one obtains what one wants and then moves on. The end result of domination is slavery. The dominator continually must expend effort and energy making sure that the subordinates are still subordinate.

## **THE USE OF POWER IN HRD**

With a clear understanding of what power is and what it is not, an HRD practitioner can help a client to use power more comfortably and appropriately in a number of ways.

1. *Assist the Client in Clarifying “Wants.”* The HRD practitioner’s greatest contribution to the empowerment of the client is to help the client to clarify what is wanted and what risks and costs are associated with each option. For example, a client might be clear about a want but unaware of what the cost might be; or the client might have a general sense of what is wanted, e.g., “better communications,” but might not be able to translate that into specific behaviors or objectives. In some cases, a choice may have to be made between cost savings and programs. Some programs are more relevant than others; some have higher costs than others; some are more readily available than others; and some are mutually exclusive at any given moment.

The more the practitioner can help the client to be clear about what is wanted and the costs/risks involved, the more likely the client is to feel powerful in achieving a successful outcome, that is, “getting what he or she wants.”

2. *Take No Responsibility for the Client’s Choices.* It is important to remember that in every HRD intervention there are two experts. The first is the practitioner, who has expertise in HRD. The second is the client, who is the expert about what is in the best interests of his or her organization. As long as there is no violation of personal values or professional ethics, it is not essential that the practitioner approve of the client’s choices, only that he or she assist the client in attaining them.

While conducting a needs analysis for a small, independent, sales organization, a consultant came to the inescapable conclusion that this highly effective and very profitable organization operated in a way that only could be described as a cult! The leader controlled the subordinates solely by giving or withholding personal approval.

The subordinates—managers and salespeople alike—were totally dependent on the leader, and this dependency was reinforced by the leader and appeared to be on the increase.

In discussing the survey findings, the consultant was very frank with the leader about the potentially damaging effects of this strategy. The leader acknowledged the information, and the consultant disengaged from the organization.

If the consultant had attempted to design an intervention or change the values of the organization, it would have met with failure and damaged the system in the attempt. Both the leader and the subordinates clearly were aware of what was going on and actually embraced it. It was their choice to structure the organization in any way they wanted, and the consultant's function simply was to help them to be clear about that choice.

3. *Say What You Think.* OD practitioners frequently become caught up in the values of process and refuse to offer a personal opinion, for fear of unduly influencing the client. As a case in point, some years ago the author was the last consultant of six who was interviewed by a particular client. During the interview, the client said, "If I ask you for an opinion, will you give it to me?" The author hesitated and then said, "Sure." The client said, "Great, you have the contract. Nobody else would do that for me."

The author realized during that incident that a consultant does not have the power to "unduly influence" a client. When a consultant intentionally withholds an opinion, whether it deals with content or process, he or she robs the client of another option to consider. Although one's tendency may be to stay out of content areas, if one has an opinion and it is appropriate to state it, one should do so. The best that happens is that the consultant's view brings a new perspective. The worst that happens is that he or she is not particularly helpful, but at least he or she learns something. The trick is to state your opinions clearly, but only as opinions, not as the best choices.

4. *Stay Focused on the Result; Any Process That Gets You There Is a Good One.* Sometimes practitioners become so involved with the process, they lose sight of the intended result. The primary objective of any HRD effort is to attain a specific result. If the practitioner keeps the focus primarily on the result, a choice of processes becomes more available.

For example, a practitioner who is committed to a collaborative approach may discover that collaboration is not available in a particular situation. By focusing the group on the desirability of the result and the costs of not achieving it, the practitioner may be able to obtain temporary collaboration. Failing that, other processes may emerge that would be more appropriate to the existing conditions, e.g., a delay or a situational compromise.

5. *Make Change a Conscious Choice.* One of the characteristics of power is that it can be expressed only in the present. The practitioner fosters the empowerment of the client most by assisting the client in staying responsive to what is occurring. Given the

infinite number of things that could happen, there is always a range of potentially effective responses.

By periodically asking the client, “Are you getting what you want right now?,” the practitioner helps to make the choices clearer. If the answer is “No,” then change is appropriate. If the answer is “I’m not sure,” putting things on hold and exploring the situation is most appropriate. If the answer is “Yes,” there is no need to attempt change to meet the client’s needs.

By seeing the role of “practitioner” only as “change agent,” the practitioner risks encouraging the client to throw the baby out with the bath water.

## **CONCLUSION**

Probably no word in the lexicon of HRD conjures up more myth and fervor than does the word “power.” In reality, there is nothing awesome or evil about power. It is just one of the essential forces in maintaining and developing strong, productive organizations and positive working relationships. Power is the foundation of organizational effectiveness and HRD practice, regardless of the specialty in which an HRD practitioner or manager works. It is part of the everyday life in the work setting, and nothing can be accomplished without it. The problem lies in its ownership; many managers who are powerful deny their power or disavow it for fear of being seen as “not people oriented.” The solution is for HRD professionals to start asking the question, for themselves and for their clients, “How am I stopping myself from doing what I have the ability to do?”

## ■ CAREER STAGES AND LIFE STAGES: A CAREER DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

**Daniel C. Feldman**

Implicit in the concept of a career is the idea of *change*, because a person's job skills and career aspirations change over time. In their twenties, people are more willing to do technical work assignments and take direction from others; in their fifties that type of career seems much less attractive. Moreover, the experiences in the early years of a career influence later career aspirations (Hall, Schneider, & Nygren, 1970). Early career success on highly specialized assignments might well influence individuals to pursue career paths in staff areas; for others, early success as project managers may convince them to pursue careers as general managers.

Careers are not the only aspects of people's lives that change as they grow older; people change biologically and emotionally as well. Freud's early work suggested that most of the major psychological development of individuals occurred before they reached fifteen. Since that time, psychologists and psychiatrists have grown much more aware of the extensive emotional development that takes place in adults (Kegan, 1982; Levinson, 1986). The boundless optimism that "you can have it all" gives way to the realization that tough choices have to be made and that many decisions (e.g., having or not having a child) are irreversible. Also the emotional reactions of single adults are frequently different from those of parents or grandparents.

This article examines the different career stages and life stages that people pass through as they mature and the interaction between life stages and career stages. The article also considers the implications of several developmental models for individual and organizational career planning.

### **CAREER STAGES**

To understand career stages, one must look at the commonalities in job experiences of workers at the same point in their careers without regard to their occupations. Although the work of doctors is dramatically different from that of lawyers or engineers, research suggests that the types of challenges and frustrations these various workers face at the same stage in their careers are remarkably similar. Thus, what is discussed in this article is, in one sense, the ideal career—not ideal in the sense of perfection, but rather what a career would look like if it were pursued fully and successfully from beginning to end (Schein, 1978).

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## ***The Career Cone***

Perhaps the earliest and most influential work on career stages was done by Edgar Schein at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. To illustrate how individuals change jobs within an organization, Schein (1971) developed the concept of a career cone. Schein argues that individuals' careers in organizations can develop along three directions: vertically, horizontally, and "radially."

### ***Vertical Moves***

The most common type of career move is along the hierarchical or vertical dimension. People can obtain promotions and rise to levels of increasing leadership within the organization. In some occupations (e.g., general management) there are many steps between the bottom and top of the organizational hierarchy; in other occupations (e.g., doctor or lawyer) very few promotions are available.

### ***Horizontal Moves***

Although many people pursue the same job function or technical specialty throughout their careers, others switch their functions or specialties. For example, a person may move from accounting to marketing or from engineering to human resource management. Schein refers to such career moves as horizontal or lateral career growth. Individuals who move horizontally into second careers change their type of work but do not necessarily change the amount of their responsibilities.

### ***Radial Moves***

A more subtle dimension of career growth involves radial movement, that is, movement toward (or away from) the inner circle of the organization. People who move toward the core of an organization are given access to its special privileges and organizational secrets about future business decisions and personnel decisions. Although radial movement often follows vertical movement (promotion), these two types of movement are conceptually and practically distinct. Examples of radial movement toward the center without promotion are common, and there are also cases of simultaneous promotion and radial movement away from the core. For example, an employee may be "kicked upstairs," that is, the employee receives a promotion to a less critical work area.

Schein (1971, 1978) also uses the career cone to discuss the concept of aborted or ruined careers. When a person is unable to move as desired within an organization—or is forced to move in an undesired direction—then the person has evidently failed in some way to make a crucial transition from one position to another.

## **Stages of a Professional Career**

Schein's work focused mainly on the series of jobs an employee would hold within an organization. Building on Schein's concepts, Dalton, Thompson, and Price (1977) developed a model (which will be referred to as the "Dalton model") of professional careers (see Table 1). They considered the question of how careers in the professions (e. g., medicine, law, engineering, accounting, and management) typically unfold. Because few people spend their entire work life in one firm, an important issue is how careers in professions develop when viewed independently from the organizations in which they are pursued. Dalton and his colleagues identify four stages of a professional career: apprentice, colleague, mentor, and sponsor. At each stage an individual has both important work activities to attend to and important psychological issues to resolve.

**Table 1. Four Stages of Professional Careers<sup>1</sup>**

	<b>I</b>	<b>II</b>	<b>III</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>Central Activity</b>	Helping, learning, following directions	Independently contributing	Training and interfacing	Shaping the direction of the organization
<b>Primary Relationship</b>	Apprentice	Colleague	Mentor	Sponsor
<b>Major Psychological Issue</b>	Dependence	Independence	Assuming responsibility for others	Exercising power

As Table 1 suggests, important issues in career development include dependence, independence, and control. At the earliest stage of the professional career, individuals are relatively dependent on their supervisors for training; their work is primarily technical and they are learning how to apply their knowledge from school to real-world situations. At the next stage, employees are expected to work more independently, to make contributions to the organization, and to work collegially with coworkers. At the third stage, employees are expected to take on more responsibility for others. At the fourth stage, they are expected to extend their controlling responsibilities from developing subordinates to managing the growth and development of the organization.

By drawing from childhood-development literature and extending the important ideas to adult development, Dalton and his colleagues made salient two facts about career stages. First, the Dalton model makes clear that career stages are defined not only by the main work activities, but also by critical psychological issues that need to be resolved. Individuals who master the learning and the day-to-day job duties of their early assignments are sometimes unable to obtain important promotions because they are emotionally unready to work independently. Only when a person has mastered both the work issues and the psychological issues at one career stage will he or she be able to advance to the next stage.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Dalton, Thompson, & Price (1977, p. 23).

Second, the Dalton model suggests that organizations do not value very highly those individuals who fail to make the expected progress through these four career stages. Even a casual look at organizations indicates that very few of the older professionals are still in junior positions. Organizations expect professionals to take on increasing amounts of independence at work and, ultimately, responsibility for others. If individuals fail to grow professionally, organizations are likely to try to push them out of their jobs even if they are technically competent in their present positions. Organizations would rather fill these positions with new employees who are younger, more enthusiastic, more recently trained, and more likely to grow into responsible positions in the firm.

### ***Age-Based Models***

Whereas Dalton and his colleagues focused mainly on careers in the professions and on four broad stages of careers, a number of scholars (e.g., Arnold & Feldman, 1986; Schein, 1978) have developed a set of career-stage models (the age-based models) that are linked to the individual's age. Refining the Dalton model, these authors suggest that Dalton's four career stages can be broken down into smaller, more discrete stages and that career stages apply not only to professionals, but to most other occupations as well. Although different authors use slightly different terminology for the names of the stages in the age-based models and they differ on the exact age ranges, Table 2 represents a distillation of the major age-based models of career development.

Like the Dalton model, the age-based models suggest that employees need both to master work activities and to resolve important psychological issues at each point in their careers. These models also suggest a repeating pattern of career growth, stabilization, and transition. In each stage of a person's career (early, middle, and late), the individual must first grow and develop new skills. Next comes a period of stabilization, in which the employee performs the new skills in a highly productive way. In the third period, the employee makes a transition between the demands of the present stage and the anticipated demands of the next stage. In general, the times of growth are marked by excitement and challenge; the times of stabilization, by outstanding performance; and the times of transition, by reassessment and anxiety.

## ***LIFE STAGES***

This section looks at the life-cycle stages and the way emotional needs change over time. Personal lives also go through cycles of growth, stability, and transition.

Increasing attention has been paid to identifying the life stages of adults (Gould, 1978; Lowenthal, Thurnher, and Chiriboga, 1975; Vaillant, 1977). Levinson (1978, 1986) called these stages the *seasons* of a person's life. Central to all these treatments of life stages is the idea that at each stage of life a person is faced with important psychological issues to resolve (e.g., how to deal with the death of a parent). How—or even whether—a person resolves such issues will determine whether or not that person

**Table 2. Career Stages and Career Concerns<sup>2</sup>**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Career Stage</b>	<b>Career Tasks</b>	<b>Psychological Issues</b>
15-22	Pre-Career Exploration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Finding the right career.</li> <li>2. Obtaining the appropriate education.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discovering one's own needs and interests.</li> <li>2. Developing a realistic self-assessment of one's abilities.</li> </ol>
22-30	Early Career: Trial	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Obtaining a viable first job.</li> <li>2. Adjusting to daily work routines and supervisors.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Overcoming the insecurity of inexperience; developing self-confidence.</li> <li>2. Learning to get along with others in a work setting.</li> </ol>
30-38	Early Career: Establishment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choosing a special area of competence.</li> <li>2. Becoming an independent contributor to the organization.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Deciding on level of professional and organizational commitment.</li> <li>2. Dealing with feelings of failure of first independent projects or challenges.</li> </ol>
38-45	Middle Career: Transition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reassessing one's true career abilities, talents, and interests.</li> <li>2. Withdrawing from one's own mentor and preparing to become a mentor to others.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reassessing one's progress relative to one's ambitions.</li> <li>2. Resolving work-life personal-life conflicts.</li> </ol>
45-55	Middle Career: Growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being a mentor.</li> <li>2. Taking on more responsibilities of general management.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dealing with the competitiveness and aggression of younger people on the fast track up the organization.</li> <li>2. Learning to substitute wisdom-based experience for immediate technical skills.</li> </ol>
55-62	Late Career: Maintenance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Making strategic decisions about the future of the business.</li> <li>2. Becoming concerned with the broader role of the organization in civic and political arenas.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Becoming primarily concerned with the organization's welfare rather than one's own career.</li> <li>2. Handling highly political or important decisions without becoming emotionally upset.</li> </ol>
62-70	Late Career: Withdrawal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Selecting and developing key subordinates for future leadership roles.</li> <li>2. Accepting reduced levels of power and responsibility.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Finding new sources of life satisfaction outside the job.</li> <li>2. Maintaining a sense of self-worth without a job.</li> </ol>

<sup>2</sup> Based on material from Arnold & Feldman (1986) and Schein (1978).

can grow emotionally and lead a satisfying life. Models of life stages—like those of career stages—identify a series of stages based on age; and for each stage, they identify a set of psychological issues to be confronted.

Theories of life stages also examine the impact of family status on adult development (Arnold & Feldman, 1986; Levinson, 1978; Schein, 1978). Marriage and parenthood involve major commitments to other people; decisions about what type of family to have and about how to integrate family demands and work demands play a large role in a person's psychological development. Thus, models of life stages include family status (e.g., married with no children or married with young children) and the psychological demands precipitated by each stage of family development. Table 3 summarizes the major theories of adult life stages. As with the career-stage models, the life-stage models represent the typical pattern of adult development and not necessarily what all adults experience at each point in life.

The life-stage models have made salient the constraints that biological aging and family growth put on career development. When people are young, they have the physical and emotional energy to have an active career and a family with young children. As they grow older, the psychological demands of the career and the family become greater, and the trade-offs become more and more difficult to make. During their thirties, for example, most professional and managerial workers have to invest a great deal of energy in their careers if they are going to make it to the top of their professions. During this period, time is also running out for having children. At each stage, reverses or disappointments in either arena will spill over into the other, making choices in each arena even more difficult.

Life-stage models point out another important phenomenon about career development. In periods of transition (ages twenty-two to thirty; thirty-eight to forty-five; fifty-five to sixty-two) people are more self-centered. These periods are marked by introspection and ambivalence about intimate relationships. In the twenties, people have to balance their needs for independence with their desire for a spouse and stability; from ages thirty-eight to forty-five, people have to balance their desire for a new life with their attachments to their present life; from fifty-five to sixty-two, people have to start coping with a new life ahead that will be less focused on children and work friendships.

The periods of stability are more other-centered and are marked by whole-hearted investment in important social relationships. From ages thirty to thirty-eight, individuals are typically committed to the nuclear family with young children; from forty-five to fifty-five, they are typically committed to reestablishing an intimate relationship with the spouse; in late adulthood, they put energy into nurturing both spouse and friendship relationships.

Three issues are important about the research on life stages. First, much of the basic work on adult development has been conducted with middle-class white males. More recently, researchers on life stages have extended their analyses to the adult development of black men (Gooden, 1980) and women (Lowenthal, Thurnher, & Chiriboga, 1975;

**Table 3. Life and Family Stages<sup>3</sup>**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Life Stage</b>	<b>Family Stage</b>	<b>Psychological Issues</b>
15-22	Adolescence	Single adult	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discovering a self-identity separate from parents and teachers.</li> <li>2. Balancing the need for total independence with need for emotional support from adults.</li> </ol>
22-30	Young-Adulthood Transition	Married adult	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Balancing one's own needs with those of another person in an intimate relationship.</li> <li>2. Making commitments to spouse about life style, family values, child-rearing.</li> </ol>
30-38	Young Adulthood	Parent of young children	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adjusting to the emotional demands of parenthood.</li> <li>2. Maintaining intimate relationship with spouse in light of children's demands.</li> </ol>
38-45	Mid-Life Transition	Parents of adolescents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reassessing current values and commitments; feeling this might be the last chance to make major changes in life.</li> <li>2. Dealing with ambivalent feeling of love and anger toward adolescent children.</li> </ol>
45-55	Middle Adulthood	Parent of grown children	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Building a deeper relationship with spouse, not focused on children.</li> <li>2. Dealing with feelings of loss when children leave home and parents age or die.</li> </ol>
55-62	Late-Life Adulthood Transition	Grandparent of young children	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developing new hobbies, activities, and friendships that will be more appropriate with a declining work role.</li> <li>2. Helping children cope financially and emotionally with their new family responsibilities.</li> </ol>
62-70	Late Adulthood	Grandparents of adolescents; widow/widower	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dealing with increased awareness of death, perhaps brought on by illness or death of spouse.</li> <li>2. Coming to terms with one's life choices.</li> </ol>

Stewart, 1976). Nevertheless, the models of adult development are weighted more heavily to the seasons of a man's life than to the seasons of a woman's life.

Second—with only a few exceptions (e.g., Vaillant, 1977)—researchers have not watched a set of individuals grow and develop over a period of years. Instead, the research has been mainly cross-sectional; researchers have compared the emotional needs of twenty-, thirty-, forty-, fifty-, and sixty-year olds at one point in time. This is problematic, because some of the differences between the age groups may be because of

<sup>3</sup> Based on material from Arnold & Feldman (1986), Levinson (1986), Schein (1978), and Super (1977).

changes in the environment rather than changes within the individuals. For example, sixty-year-old people may have a higher need for stability than do the thirty-year-old group because the older people grew up in a depression instead of prosperous economic times. The difference would not be due simply to a difference in age.

Third, implicit in several of these models is the notion of the stable nuclear family with children, with one spouse not in the work force on a full-time basis. Today's high divorce rate, the large number of single parents and remarriages, the increasing frequency of the stepparent role, and the growing number of married couples (now over 50 percent) who work full-time outside the home make the "typical" family stage far less typical.

## **A CAREER DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE**

By understanding the nature of career stages and life stages, people can cope more effectively with important transitions in their lives, and organizations can manage more smoothly the career transitions of their employees. The career-stage and life-stage models that have been discussed address four career-development issues: the integration of work life and home life, nontraditional career paths, the impact of career stage on job satisfaction, and critical choice points in career planning.

### ***Integration of Work Life and Home Life***

Kotter (1975) notes:

People occasionally like to deny that [career and personal life] decisions are interdependent. They want to believe that what they do at work and what they do out of work can be totally separated. They want that "freedom." As they soon learn, the world as we experience it today is one big interdependent mass, and the interdependencies are growing, not shrinking. And those who do not understand that, or who refuse to accept it, are in for a tough time.

Parents have to make some conscious decisions about how to integrate career growth and family growth, and they must recognize that trying to wall off one arena from the other is fruitless. Schein (1978) and Bailyn (1977) suggest several strategies for work-family integration:

1. *Limiting the impact of family on work.* If the parents have only one or two children, they may subcontract the child rearing to day-care centers or household help.
2. *Taking turns.* Partners may trade career-growth opportunities and parenting responsibilities at different times.
3. *Participating in joint ventures.* Both partners may have the same career or different careers in the same organization.
4. *Choosing independent careers.* Both partners may pursue their respective careers to the fullest degree and cope with the consequences as they arise.

5. *Subordinating one career to the other.* One partner may be out of the work force or may have a job with a much lower investment.

One strategy is not necessarily better than another. Each places the burden on a different place in the family-work network. The joint-ventures strategy is likely to increase stress for both partners (Cooke & Rousseau, 1984), and subordinating one career or taking turns is likely to create stress for the less-dominant partner (Yogev & Brett, 1985). Limiting the family impact is likely to increase stress for the children (Bartolome & Evans, 1979), whereas independent careers often cause stress for the colleagues of the couple (Hall & Hall, 1978). However, without a conscious strategy, individuals will not be able to develop a career plan, a family plan, and a life style that mesh. Such a strategy would also help couples to evaluate important life and career decisions (e.g., whether to have another child or whether to accept a geographical transfer) in terms of overall goals to be attained and constraints to be considered.

### ***Nontraditional Career Paths***

The theories of life stages and career stages present an explanation for why employees who enter careers either early or late will experience unusual amounts of stress. For example, implicit in the Dalton model is the idea that employees are relatively young when they are apprentices, becoming middle-aged when they become mentors, and relatively old when they are sponsors. However, people who enter a career late or start a second career may find that the work demands of the professional career stage are out of synchronism with their emotional demands.

At age twenty-two, an engineer may adjust well to being in a dependent psychological relationship with his or her manager, but a forty-year-old engineer who has just graduated from college would have much more difficulty with that type of relationship. On the other hand, a fast-track employee who reaches the mentor stage by the age of thirty-five may feel uncomfortable advising older subordinates. Organizations often expect employees in their forties or fifties to take on more responsibility and to be free to travel; therefore, an organization may not know how to handle a forty-year-old employee who has just started a second family.

Individuals who decide to start new careers or new families at a nontraditional age need to recognize in advance the peculiar emotional demands of these roles. Decisions to take on these roles should be based not only on career growth factors, but also on willingness to experience some personal frustration. Organizations that employ individuals at a nontraditional age should recognize that what may seem to be recalcitrance at work may not be as much disapproval of the job as it is discomfort at the lack of synchronism between job demands and personal needs. Some organizations are recognizing these factors and are providing support groups and extra training and orientation for employees who switch careers or enter a career at a nontraditional age (Schein, 1985).

## ***Impact of Career Stage on Job Satisfaction***

Research on the impact that career stages have on job satisfaction (Alderfer & Guzzo, 1979; Gould & Hawkins, 1978; Veiga, 1983) suggests that workers in their twenties are somewhat dissatisfied with their wages and the dependent nature of their relationships with their supervisors but are very satisfied with their peer relationships and with opportunities to learn on the job. Workers in their thirties tend to be satisfied with their jobs in general. Workers in the mid-life transition notice a marked decrease in their satisfaction with most aspects of their jobs. After age forty-five, the employee's satisfaction with the job increases, but older workers tend to show lower professional commitment and job involvement.

Employees need to understand that their career stage has a major impact on their satisfaction with their occupation and organization. The tendencies discussed in the last paragraph are independent of the occupation or organization. Before changing careers or organizations, a person should determine which parts of the dissatisfaction are due to the particular career stage and which are due to the specific idiosyncrasies of the job situation. Otherwise, employees will make job changes that alleviate only the symptoms, but not the causes, of their unhappiness. Similarly, in dealing with employees' complaints about the organization, managers should separate the issues that are peculiar to the immediate situation and those that are generic to the occupation or career stage (Storey, 1986a, 1986b, 1986c).

## ***Critical Choice Points in Career Planning***

The models of career stages and life stages suggest three critical choice points in adult development and that the choices at these points will strongly influence how productive and content individuals will be in the years ahead.

The first critical choice point occurs around age thirty. At this time most individuals are faced with several irreversible—or hard-to-reverse—decisions; for example, whom to marry, whether to start a family, the extent to which the career or family will be the central life interest, and whether to go back to school and/or change careers. Another major decision at this stage is whether to pursue a primarily technical career or to switch to a broader managerial or administrative career.

The second critical choice point occurs in the early forties. At this time most people are faced with both major family decisions and career decisions; for example, whether to have a last (or first) child, whether to end a marriage or to substantially redefine the relationship, what—after coming to terms with how far one can go professionally—will have to be done to arrive at that point, and whether to remain with the same organization or, perhaps, start one's own business.

The third point occurs in the late fifties. At this time most people are faced with important decisions about how to lead the rest of their lives; for example, whether to move (perhaps from a house to an apartment or even to a different state), how involved to be with their children and grandchildren, and whether to remain active at work until retirement or withdraw gradually.

The decisions made at each of these points have a tremendous impact on the quality of life for years to come. At age thirty, a decision to pursue a primarily technical career commits the individual to remaining current in the literature and competing with younger, more recently trained graduates. A decision for a managerial career commits the person to more intense social and political involvements with subordinates and superiors. The decision about whether to have an additional child has implications for career growth, the intimacy of the spouse relationship, and family finances. The decision to take a low career-investment path after one reaches forty can mean less stress but more apathy or bitterness as younger colleagues climb the organizational ladder. The decision to strike out on one's own at this stage can mean freedom from certain constraints but less financial security, less social contact, and more anxiety about the future.

## **CONCLUSION**

Career options constitute a double-edged sword. Many people believe that by delaying a decision or remaining in a holding pattern (e.g., remaining in a job but constantly hunting another one or living together for years without getting married) they are keeping their options open. However, keeping options open is more difficult than it seems, because the decision to delay a family or a job change is indeed a decision; it is a decision to remain at a lower level of psychological involvement. The trade-off is between a low-commitment, low-risk position and a high-commitment, high-risk position; the decision to delay is a decision in favor of the former.

Furthermore, many people try to make life-style and career decisions that will keep their options open without realizing that any decision may close more doors than it opens. For example, the decision to accept job A is the decision to reject all other offers. The models that have been discussed suggest that in making important career and life-style decisions, individuals should think as much about what they are eliminating from their lives as what they are including. An emotionally healthy resolution of these transitional periods should leave people focused on the road ahead and not regretting the path not taken.

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## ■ CENTRAL ISSUES IN CAREER PLANNING

**Daniel C. Feldman**

Career planning is essential if employees are to maintain some self-determination with regard to their own careers. Career planning helps employees to discover what they want to achieve in life and to balance the demands of family, friends, recreation, and work. It also helps employees make better decisions about their careers: when to accept jobs and when to reject them, when to seek job mobility and when to stay put, when to seek more challenging job assignments and when to escape from ones that are too stressful. Most importantly, career planning assists employees in adjusting to the changing personal needs and job demands they face as they pass from one career stage to another (Feldman, 1988).

From the organization's perspective, too, career planning is a critical function. Effective career planning is essential to hiring and retaining the most talented employees available and is useful in helping employees avoid career plateaus and obsolescence. At a much broader level, career management helps organizations achieve a high quality of work life for employees and fosters positive attitudes and corporate loyalty among workers (Feldman, 1988).

This article explores career planning from individual and organizational perspectives. The first part addresses the broad spectrum of individual career-planning approaches, ranging from "get-rich-quick" advice on one end to systematic career-planning strategies on the other. The second part identifies the elements that are critical in setting up an effective organizational career-development program. Consideration of both the individual and the organizational perspectives will help individuals make better decisions about career goals and will help organizations and human resource development (HRD) professionals make better decisions about how to assist employees in achieving these goals.

### **INDIVIDUAL CAREER PLANNING**

#### ***Practical Advice on Career Advancement***

Much of the practical advice on career advancement focuses on four issues: (1) dress, (2) symbols of power, (3) visibility to superiors, and (4) management of interpersonal relationships at work. Often there are few real differences in the abilities and the job performance of aspiring managers; consequently, several authors have argued that slight

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differences in appearance and style become important in determining who receives promotions or desirable job assignments:

1. *Dress*. Interested readers of books on business image learn about choosing power colors (gray and burgundy); avoiding “the four P’s” (plaids, polyesters, pleats, and pointed collars); standing in the correct way (with arms hanging down and feet apart in military fashion); and using “correct” facial expressions (allowing positive feelings to show and revealing negative ones selectively).

2. *Power symbols*. Several writers have described how upwardly mobile managers can use symbols of power to advance their careers. For example, Korda (1975) writes “it is particularly helpful to make sure that all the ashtrays are just slightly out of reach so that visitors sitting in low chairs and unable to rise have to stretch awkwardly to dispose of the cigarette ash.” Upwardly mobile managers are also advised to sit at the ends of tables with their backs to windows so that adversaries will have to sit with the sun in their eyes.

The use of time can also evoke an image of power. For example, an upwardly mobile manager is advised to keep people waiting. Similarly, visitors to a manager’s office should be seated facing the clock so that they realize they are taking up the manager’s valuable time.

3. *Visibility to superiors*. A major issue confronting the aspiring manager is how to catch the special attention of important executives. Contrary to the old military advice of “never volunteer,” aspiring managers are encouraged to volunteer for projects that afford direct access to their supervisors’ bosses. Fast-track employees are encouraged to choose assignments that will be relatively short term and will produce tangible results quickly so that their careers can keep moving.

Visibility can be pursued through the social realm as well as the work realm. Employees desiring visibility, for instance, are urged to take up the sports that their supervisors play or to frequent the same restaurants for lunch.

4. *Managing interpersonal relationships*. Three pieces of advice are given to individuals interested in furthering their careers through interpersonal relationships: (1) get close to the boss, (2) find out about “the smoking pistols” in the boss’s personal and professional life, and (3) do not feel guilty about using the smoking-pistol information to get ahead.

To some extent the premise of this kind of advice is legitimate. In many organizations career decisions are random; consequently, employees should be more assertive in making their desires known. Because so many performance evaluations are based on subjective biases, it may indeed be rational for aspiring managers to look and act according to organizational norms.

However there are several problems with advice of this nature (Feldman, 1985). First it seems based on the assumption that real ability and performance have virtually no impact on career advancement. Although ability and performance may not be

correlated with advancement, they are generally related; image management is not an adequate substitute for day-to-day competence.

Second, advice that deals primarily with image implies a confusion of career advancement with career success. Career advancement means getting ahead; career success implies feelings of self-worth and esteem on the job. For many people, unethical behavior toward their supervisors such as that suggested by some proponents of the image approach might help these people get ahead; but whether it would make them feel more successful is a different issue. Although some managers may not see such strategies as offensive, others find them repugnant.

Finally, implicit in the image approach is the creation of a persona who is an acceptable consumable product. The notion is that one's own self is not good enough, so a new-and-improved self has to be put in a package and sold. This splitting of the real self and the consumable self can lead eventually to disenchantment and disillusionment.

### ***Self-Assessment and Career Planning***

A second common approach to individual career planning involves self-assessment. While different authors have taken varying perspectives on this topic, most view self-assessment and career planning as occurring in five stages (Beach, 1980; Haldane, 1974; Storey, 1986): (1) engaging in self-appraisal, (2) setting goals, (3) identifying threats and opportunities, (4) examining alternatives, and (5) implementing career plans. By thinking analytically about themselves, their goals, and their situations, individuals should be better able to make good decisions about career paths and to attain their goals more quickly (Orth, 1974).

There have been several positive outcomes from including self-assessment as a key element in career planning. It encourages people to take a longer-term perspective toward their careers and, more importantly, to confront their own personal responsibilities in managing their careers. Self-assessment activities force people to face the choices they have made in the past, the consequences of these choices, and the likely consequences of future career decisions. Such activities are also frequently an impetus for change; employees learn that career changes are possible and that, in fact, a variety of options are open to most people. Also, career self-assessment encourages employees to branch out, to try new tasks, and to experiment. Implicit in all these efforts is the idea of broadening oneself, both in terms of work responsibilities and in terms of personal interests (Feldman, 1985).

However, self-assessment does not always produce perfectly accurate self-portraits. People are particularly disinclined to see their negative traits or to perceive threats in the environment with accuracy. They often resort to the use of stereotypes and false generalities when making situational analyses. Some people get so caught up in the search for information or in self-diagnosis that they are unable to come to any conclusions. For these reasons, among others, self-assessment should be accompanied by some feedback from objective bystanders who can confront individuals about their rationalizations, assumptions, and delusions; the role of objective bystander is one of the

more important ones that can be assumed by the HRD professional who helps people with career-planning efforts.

### ***Critical Issues and Choice Points***

When the problems and challenges of career planning are reviewed, several recurring issues emerge. To enhance the effectiveness of their career planning, employees should focus their attention on the ten specific issues that follow (Feldman, 1988). In addition, HRD professionals who are responsible for assisting people in planning their careers should emphasize the importance of these issues:

1. *Skills and needs.* Beginning with the choice of vocation and then throughout their careers, individuals should consider what activities they excel at and what their personal needs and interests are. Career decisions based on consideration of only one of these factors seem to lead to both short-term unhappiness and long-term dissatisfaction with career paths. Moreover, because people's skills and needs change over time, their initial choices about jobs and careers should be reviewed at regular intervals and revised if appropriate.

2. *Costs of being successful.* Throughout their work lives people are faced with the knowledge that putting extra effort into their careers can take its toll on their personal lives. Thus, at every career stage people must reconsider what aspects of career advancement they are willing to give up for their personal lives and what aspects of their personal lives they are willing to forgo for their careers. Failure to address this issue directly can result in erratic decision making, first to one extreme and then to the other, that confuses family, friends, and coworkers alike. At best, failure to make these tradeoffs consciously results in lingering feelings of ambivalence and discomfort both at work and at home.

3. *Work and family integration.* Although perhaps many people strive to "keep work at work and home at home," the reality of most people's careers and personal lives makes this separation untenable. As Kotter, Faux, and McArthur (1978) note:

People occasionally like to deny that [job and nonjob] decisions are interdependent. They want to believe that what they do at work and what they do out of work can be totally separated. They want that "freedom." As they soon learn, the world as we experience it today is one big interdependent mess, and the interdependencies are growing, not shrinking. And those who do not understand that, or who refuse to accept it, are in for a tough time. (p. 178)

Family life and work life can be integrated in a variety of ways. Bailyn (1978), for example, notes that couples can use at least four different strategies: (1) limit the impact of home on career by delaying having children, employing live-in help, and so on; (2) "recycling" or taking turns investing energy in careers versus family life; (3) joint ventures, in which both partners work in the same career or the same organization; or (4) independent careers, in which both partners pursue their own careers to the fullest and have long periods of separation or long-distance commuting. However, no matter which

option is chosen, conscious decisions will have to be made. Moreover, as job challenges increase and as the family unit grows and changes, new ways of integrating work and family will have to be negotiated.

4. *Performance and career success.* Another consistent theme of career planning involves the importance of on-the-job performance for career success. At each career stage employees who have demonstrated outstanding performance are given greater opportunities for more challenging assignments, for additional training, and for increased visibility. In many ways the numerous books on “how to get ahead in business without really trying” do a great disservice to individuals engaging in career planning. They tend to lead people to focus on the peripheral aspects of managing their images and their social relationships at work rather than on the heart of the matter: that in the long run truly outstanding performers advance more quickly than average performers. Thus, a recurring, important career issue that should be faced by any employee is “What do I need to do to improve my performance and to excel?” The question “How can I get ahead?” too often leads an individual away from the path to career success (Feldman, 1985).

5. *Growth versus stability.* A fundamental choice that people have to make at each stage in their careers is whether they should try to develop professionally or try to maintain the status quo. The evidence is quite convincing that the strategy of “arrive and defend,” even if it makes people happy in the short run, cannot be an effective career-planning approach in the long run.

Often growth is stressful, arouses anxiety, and forces changes in personal routines both for oneself and one’s family. Stability is less stressful, arouses less anxiety, and causes little disruption, but is extremely difficult to sustain. Implicitly or explicitly, however, organizations expect employees to move up or out. Trying to hold onto one job for life—especially if one is only middle-aged—is a near impossibility.

6. *Luck and careers.* There is no question that luck plays an important role in careers (Jencks, 1972). However, individuals in many ways enhance—or undermine—their own chances of becoming lucky. Being outgoing, making social contacts, and being active in civic and professional associations increase the size of the network one can draw on for career opportunities; being a loner decreases that network dramatically. Being assertive in expressing one’s desires and campaigning for particular assignments may increase the chances of obtaining what one wants; being passive and silent about one’s wishes and ambitions does not. Thus, while some lucky episodes can make or break a career, planning for those episodes is a matter of personal control and responsibility.

7. *Independent versus sequential career decisions.* In analyzing potential career decisions, people need to understand that earlier career decisions greatly constrain the options available for later career decisions. Career decisions are not independent events; they are sequential and interdependent. For instance, a decision to pursue graduate studies in one field almost always prohibits pursuing extensive graduate studies later in

another field; finances are exhausted, and so is patience with the role of student. Thus, when making career decisions, people cannot just consider the immediate consequences of their actions. They also have to consider the impact that the present decisions will have on future options—or the lack of options.

8. *Falling into, and avoiding, career traps.* All too often people fall into career traps that drag down their opportunities for advancement or decrease their chances for career success. For example, employees may be persuaded by their organizations to believe things that are objectively untrue—that they are not mobile, that their skills are not transferable, and that they are not sufficiently competent to get better jobs elsewhere (Lewicki, 1981). Organizations may engage in such tactics not out of malevolence, but because they do not want to lose good people or because they honestly believe that these employees could not survive in the outside world. People themselves often define their jobs as “no-exit” situations so that they can feel “excused” from making changes in their careers. They will not give up security for challenge, one geographical location for another, or salary for promotion. They literally box themselves in by defining their current predicaments as unresolvable.

Culbert (1974) suggests that there is a general strategy for avoiding these career traps. People need to understand the basic conflicts between their own needs and organizational demands. Ultimately, they must realize that they have to take responsibility for their own careers. No matter how much time and money organizations put into career development, there are times when an organization’s plan for an individual and the individual’s own aspirations cannot be made congruent.

9. *Accurate information versus stereotypes.* Another recurrent theme in the career-planning literature is the importance of obtaining accurate information about current situations, available options, probabilities of success and failure, and realistic previews of potential employers. Because career decisions are often made under time constraints, people often rely on false stereotypes instead. At every career stage making “good” decisions depends as much on accurate information about the environment as on perceptive self-insight. Expanding the information search, increasing the rigor of the information analysis, and systematically questioning assumptions and stereotypes are all likely to improve the effectiveness of career planning (Feldman, 1985).

10. *One career versus multiple careers.* Whether a person hopes to pursue a single career or several of them over a lifetime has fundamental implications for career planning. That choice influences the types of job assignments that should be pursued, the types of training that should be undertaken, and the types of family and social life that should be developed. However, the odds of being able to sustain a single career over a long period of time are becoming smaller and smaller. Dramatic changes in technology and the business environment virtually ensure that the content of jobs and the nature of organizations themselves will be very different in the years ahead. Trying to plan for a single, traditional career today may be not only difficult, but nearly impossible.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL CAREER PLANNING**

Several kinds of career-management activities are becoming more common in organizations. Some of these activities are extensions of traditional human resource activities: sophisticated human resource planning, career counseling, and periodic skills assessment and training. Other activities that have recently become popular are more closely focused on career planning per se: the establishment of career-information systems, career-pathing software, career-development programs for disadvantaged groups, career-development programs for fast-track employees, and career-development workshops for supervisors.

An examination of the success of such corporations as Sears, AT&T, 3M, and Lawrence Livermore Laboratories in career planning in an organizational setting points out the key elements of their efforts (Feldman, 1988):

1. *Coordination with other human resource activities.* Career planning succeeds best when it is not relegated to the periphery, but becomes integrated with other important human resource functions such as selection, training, and performance appraisal.
2. *Involvement of immediate line supervisors.* In successful career-development programs, immediate supervisors are nearly always trained in key diagnostic and coaching skills.
3. *Use of HRD professionals as consultants.* Although it is essential for line supervisors to be involved in career-management activities, HRD professionals also play an important role as internal consultants; they help set up the programs, evaluate their effectiveness, and train line supervisors.
4. *Realistic feedback about career success.* A vital component of successful career development programs is providing participants with realistic information about skill assessment results, chances for promotion, and opportunities for changing career tracks.
5. *Top-management support.* When top management demonstrates its support for career-development activities, it creates positive incentives for other members of the organization to administer or participate in these programs enthusiastically.
6. *Equal access and open enrollment.* Although companies may provide extra training for and monitoring of special groups of employees, career-development programs that are run exclusively for a chosen few tend to drown in charges of favoritism, prejudice, and fiscal extravagance.
7. *Climate for career development.* Career-development programs thrive best when the overall organizational climate is supportive of HRD activities in general.
8. *Small pilot programs.* In their desire to develop comprehensive career management programs, HRD professionals sometimes advocate these activities overzealously. Career-development programs are more likely to survive and grow when

small-scale pilot programs are undertaken as the first step and when a constituency for more career-development programs can be built gradually.

### ***Future Issues in Organizational Career Planning***

Over the past twenty-five years, career-planning programs have become more extensive in scope, and popular with employees and potential recruits alike. Organizations have begun to see some payoffs from these programs in terms of productivity, morale, employee retention, affirmative-action compliance, and work-force forecasting. In the years to come, four issues in particular are likely to become more prominent and require the attention of HRD professionals (Feldman, 1988; Miller, 1978)

1. *Rising expectations.* One potential risk in the years ahead is that career-management programs will raise employees' expectations and that these expectations will not be met. Participants in career-development workshops must not be led to believe that promotions are either inevitable or imminent (Walker, 1978).

2. *Invasion of privacy.* Some of the self-assessment activities and coaching experiences that organizations provide may give managers information about their subordinates that the subordinates feel is too personal. In order to counteract such pressures, participation in these activities must be truly voluntary (Dowd & Sonnenfeld, 1984).

3. *Training for immediate supervisors.* Although first-line managers are often held accountable for career-development activities, many feel poorly equipped for these responsibilities. Unless supervisors are adequately trained in and rewarded for their efforts to assist in career development, they will be ineffective in this role (Dowd & Sonnenfeld, 1984).

4. *Evaluation of career-management programs.* When career-management programs were first offered, they were advocated as an experiment in human resource management; occasional failures were more readily written off than they are today. In the years ahead, HRD professionals are going to have to evaluate their career-development efforts more carefully and systematically. It will become increasingly important to determine which programs are most popular and which are most effective in terms of employee retention and productivity. After the past few years in which organizations freely experimented, the next years will demand more reflection on past successes and failures as well as more attention to the consolidation or winnowing of programs.

## **CONCLUSION**

Career planning enables people to experience a sense of control over their careers. Contrary to the fears of many supervisors, an organization that assists its employees in career planning is more likely to retain its best people; such planning promotes learning

and helps employees to avoid dissatisfaction, burnout, and other negative outcomes. Human resource development professionals who assist in career planning must help employees learn:

- How to choose and complete appropriate self-assessment activities;
- How to identify and realistically assess skills and needs;
- How to integrate work and nonwork priorities;
- How to evaluate the cost of success
- How to arrive at goals;
- How to devise and execute career plans;
- How to recognize and respond appropriately to obstacles and opportunities;
- How to choose between growth and stability;
- How to keep focused on improving work performance;
- How to campaign for desirable work assignments;
- How to relate present career decisions to future options; and
- How to avoid career traps.

In addition, HRD professionals must train supervisors in career counseling and must determine which career-management programs are best for organizations. These responsibilities constitute difficult but intriguing challenges for the future.

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## ■ CAREER PLANNING AND THE FALLACY OF THE FUTURE

**Patrick Doyle and Jerry Zabel**

When people talk about the future, they frequently fail to realize that what they are discussing is already upon them. As they consider the future, they may find that career planning is one of the most important elements in their lives. Nevertheless, they frequently postpone the planning until it is too late to create their own futures (see Ford & Lippitt, 1988). Toffler (1970) cautioned that the information age had begun its exponential growth cycle. Those who choose—through ignorance or disbelief—to disregard the warning in relation to their careers are at a serious disadvantage. About a decade later *Megatrends* (Naisbitt, 1982) provided a number of predictions that have important implications for career planning. This paper considers the implications that the organization of the future has on today's plans for a career, and it relates them to the human resource development (HRD) professional's own career planning and to career counseling.

### **PREDICTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

The following predictions are based on Naisbitt's *Megatrends*, and their career-planning implications for the HRD professional are presented.

**Prediction 1:** Industrial society is transforming itself into a society whose most valuable commodity would be information.

#### *Career-Plan Implications*

The job search in the industries to which we have historically turned may not be as beneficial as job searches in the new industries. In 1988 more was being produced by the same number of workers as in 1968 (Toffler, 1990), and the manufacturing sector of the economy is quickly declining in terms of the percent of total employment it provides.

Already there are organizations devoted entirely to supplying and interpreting information. For example, organizations such as Dialog and Comuserve are serving as sources of employment. Although many government agencies may decline in size,

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services that provide information (such as U.S. Bureau of the Census or Statistics Canada) can be expected to continue to grow. One organization in the private sector earns its income from tracking information on members of both houses of the U.S. Congress. This information relates strictly to how the members voted on specific issues and to public statements they made about various issues. The organization's customers are the Fortune 500 companies. We can expect the same trend in countries throughout the world.

The mission of some organizations is to track the advertising of their clients' competitors. They supply the information on trends in advertising but do not design advertising nor deal with it in any other way. These wave-of-the-future organizations do not require a great many *high-tech* people. The technology is centralized in the organization, and most of the jobs require only low or medium technological knowledge.

As the move continues toward providing information, career planning would be unrealistic if it did not consider this trend.

**Prediction 2:** Forced technology (for example, assembly-line regimentation) is giving way to high technology (robot production and computers) combined with high touch (because high technology would be rejected without active human interaction).

### *Career-Plan Implications*

One of the great myths of the computer age is that technology will eliminate human interaction. Nothing could be further from the truth. The amount of human interaction may increase as technology allows us to interact over greater distances with more people. For example, the technology of the citizens-band radio enhanced communication between travelers instead of reducing it. Today's modems and computers should be seen as having the same potential to open up communications. Some HRD professionals will find that even though they are communicating less frequently face-to-face, opportunities to communicate with greater numbers and more diverse groups of people are continuing to increase. The message here is clear: If human interaction is important to people, they should not dismiss high-technology organizations as being an unsuitable career choice. Another myth is that high-tech organizations demand a significant degree of new skills not widely distributed in the general population. If there is any truth in that statement, the reason is that people have failed to develop the skills—not that the skills are difficult to acquire. Many people who think they are not capable of using computers do not realize that they in fact use computers every day—when they drive automobiles or use an automated teller. Not everybody, of course, wants to be a programmer. That is the reason computers are being produced that require less and less expertise on the part of the operator. Software companies that are dedicated to making their packages more user

friendly are flourishing. Therefore, the requirement to use a computer should not discourage a person from seeking a career that he or she really wants.

**Prediction 3:** National economies will have to adapt and compete in the world economy. The question is not if there will be free trade globally, but when.

### *Career-Plan Implications*

In the Western Hemisphere, Canada and the United States already have an agreement, and very soon they will be joined by Mexico. South America will not be left out for very long. In 1992, Europe will have a true common market. Consider companies that are competitive in the North American market for long-term careers. Having a competitive advantage in this case could be brought about by having a product that is protected by patent laws, innovative marketing techniques, or production advantages. As the barriers between countries melt away, no one should disregard a career solely because it would take the employee outside his or her own homeland. However, training in foreign languages and diverse cultures must be considered for these types of careers.

**Prediction 4:** In comparing the short-term strategies of North America with the long-term strategies of Japan, it may appear that the long-term strategies have won.

### *Career-Plan Implications*

Although long-term strategies are directed at the success of the organization, they are not necessarily related to the concept of “lifetime” employment (Ouchi, 1982). This topic can be misleading for the person planning a career. Although companies consider long-term strategies, in the future the average term of employment will decrease. The college graduate in the United States can expect to stay with one company for about six years. The two major reasons for change are (1) there are no opportunities for promotion, so the employee decides to leave, and (2) the companies focus on fast movers. The day a person finds a new job or receives a new appointment is the day he or she updates his or her career-path plan and initiates the next series of activities to ensure its success.

**Prediction 5:** We are moving from a centralized concept of work, whereby employees report to a main location each day, to a decentralized concept in which employees may be working from their homes or remote offices and reporting to headquarters infrequently.

### *Career-Plan Implications*

Major manufacturers not only cannot afford to design large office buildings so that each salesperson has an office, but they have also found that such offices entice salespeople to spend too much time in the offices and not enough with their customers. Given today's technology, there is little justification for the salesperson's office. With a computer and a modem, the salesperson can work from his or her own home. Given this trend, people should emphasize areas in their career-path plans where they have demonstrated self-starting and self-discipline capabilities. Being able to work successfully in an independent environment is going to become more and more important, and training will be necessary to teach employees how to do their work at home.

**Prediction 6:** We are turning from institutional help to self-help programs.

### *Career-Plan Implications*

This prediction is already being fulfilled inasmuch as major tax burdens are being shifted down to the municipal level. The concept is that if local communities want services (such as hospitals), let them raise the taxes to pay for them. Further extension of that philosophy will work its way down until it reaches the level of the individual. This has major implications for HRD programs.

**Prediction 7:** Representative democracies are beginning to shift to participatory democracies.

### *Career-Plan Implications*

At all levels people are demanding a voice in the decisions that they perceive as affecting them. Technology through various means is enabling these voices to be heard. Unfortunately, while the technology enables people to participate more fully in the democracy, the "technocrats" that facilitate the running of the democracy are still trying to cope with obsolete approaches to the new demands (Toffler, 1984). Nevertheless, the future-oriented person—whether manager or subordinate—will expect participative management to be a part of his or her job.

**Prediction 8:** We are shifting from hierarchies to networking. Pyramid structures are being slowly dismantled for flatter, broader organizations.

### *Career-Plan Implications*

Fewer intermediate levels of organizational structure will exist. In marketing we must announce the death of the position of sales manager. Sales personnel will be classified into sales technical support or account executives. The account executives (formerly sales representatives) will have a much broader range of responsibilities and will be part

of the strategy to distribute the responsibilities of the sales manager and thus eliminate that position. In creating career plans, focusing solely on the hierarchy of the organization may result in disappointment and frustration. The strategies of job enrichment or job expansion should be considered.

**Prediction 9:** Populations are shifting in the United States, and the great northeast control of the economy is giving way to the southwest.

### *Career-Plan Implications*

The old advice to go west, young man (or young woman) is appropriate today. Or even go south or, better yet, try southwest.

**Prediction 10:** The either/or (yes/no, win/lose) society is becoming a multiple-option society.

### *Career-Plan Implications*

The new society reflects momentary truth and situational ethics. Careers in this society demand broad looks at every decision. Trainers will find an increasing demand for problem-solving skills.

## ***FUTURE GROWTH OF INDUSTRIES***

Studies quoted in the *Globe and Mail* ("Business Trends," 1990) support the general information available on the influences that will determine the future growth of various industries. Some of these influences are discussed here, because they are important considerations in planning a career path.

1. *Aging.* The graying of North America is a fact of life. Young entrants into business are not able to keep up with the combination of expansion of business and the rate of retirements. Although available positions are being eliminated, the gap still indicates that we need to increase our population of the young through immigration just to fill the available positions. This may seem like a ridiculous statement in times of recession, when the heavy burden of layoffs and reductions are being imposed on the younger members of the work force. However, recessions do not last forever, and the adjustments are primarily in the areas already predicted.
2. *Two-Income Families.* The growth of the two-income family is well established. The two-income family requires a different economy from that of the classical family of the 1940s and 1950s. Many organizations are making employment

more attractive for parents, and mothers can be expected to include a lifetime of employment in their career plans.

3. *Specialization.* Markets and social demands are becoming more specialized than they were in the 1950s and 1960s. Now we question the wisdom of advertising lawn mowers to apartment dwellers. Niche markets or micromarkets will also be directed toward the service industry. As Naisbitt predicted that democracy would become more participative, more specialized groups are demanding attention to their individualized causes.
4. *Home Operations.* More businesses are operating from the home. Various businesses—from desktop publishing to specialized furniture making—can easily operate in homes.
5. *Global Competition.* Global competition is now a fact of life. Franchisers from around the world are welcome in one another's economic environments.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO ORGANIZATIONS**

Futurist Frank Odgen stated that accounting firms that have “learned to walk on quicksand and dance on electrons will survive in the next decade” (Hamilton, 1990, p. 26). This section relates some of his recommendations for the accounting industry to organizations in general.

Smaller organizations will be able to react to changing conditions better than larger organizations will. An associated concept is that organizations that have a large number of clients—each supplying a small portion of business—is in a better position than a large organization that has fewer clients, each bringing in a significant amount of the business. As the baby boomers push through the system, the competition for higher-level jobs will increase while there will not be enough applicants for the positions at the entrance level. Organizations need to look ahead and plan for this situation. Many people are working in jobs today that will not exist in the near future; this situation has been referred to as *discontinuous futures* (Pfeiffer, Goodstein, & Nolan, 1989). In organizations with discontinuous futures, the HRD professional will be in great demand to help employees either to fit into new careers in the organization or to make plans for careers outside. As the eventual demise of bureaucratic organizations takes place, entrepreneurial organizations will rise. The “paperless” society is still expected, and organizations must realize that global boundaries are transparent to the electronic world.

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## ■ WHY JOB AND ROLE PLANNING IS CRITICAL TO THE FUTURE

### Edgar H. Schein

Job and role analysis and planning are becoming increasingly important activities because work and organizations are changing at an ever more rapid rate, and all the indications are that work will become more fluid and will involve more complex relationships with others in superior, peer, and subordinate roles. The following are what I believe are some of the most important trends and their consequences for the nature of work. These trends all interact in complex ways and must be treated as a single system of forces, even though they are described one at a time.

### **STRUCTURES ARE BEING REEXAMINED**

Organizations worldwide are reexamining their structures and engaging in “downsizing” or “rightsizing.” In order to remain competitive in an increasingly global marketplace, organizations are discovering the need to be concerned about perpetual improvement and stringent control of costs. This has led to a wave of layoffs and restructuring of organizations. As a result, many jobs have simply disappeared, and work has been reallocated and redesigned so that a smaller number of people can perform it.

The possibilities inherent in the creative use of information technology, especially “groupware,” have opened up new ways of thinking about work and jobs (Johansen, Sibbet, Benson, Martin, Mittman, & Saffo, 1991; Savage, 1990). The way in which people will be connected to one another will vary and will require all kinds of new relationships. Strategic job and role planning will be a primary tool for assessing and reassessing those relationships.

### **BOUNDARIES OF ORGANIZATIONS, JOBS, AND ROLES ARE CHANGING**

Globalization, new technology, and “rightsizing” have loosened the boundaries of organizations, jobs, and roles. At the organizational level, we see in many industries a loosening of the boundaries between suppliers, manufacturers, and customers (Kochan & Useem, 1992; Scott-Morton, 1991). By using sophisticated information-technology tools, customers can directly access a company’s sales organization, specify in detail what kinds of products or services they require, and get immediate prices and delivery

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dates from the computer (Davis & Davidson, 1991). As such systems become more common, not only do the roles of purchasing agent and salesperson become much more ambiguous, but also a chain reaction occurs throughout the organization that necessitates the redefinition of order processing, marketing, and even design and manufacturing.

At the same time, the automation of everything from secretarial work to complex production processes makes all kinds of jobs much less manual and more conceptual. Operators who work in automated refineries, nuclear plants, paper mills, and other such organizations know as much about the running of their plants as the managers do. This knowledge creates new power relationships. The role of management becomes more ambiguous as managers no longer have the power of knowing things that their subordinates do not know. It is especially important for managers to discover that their relationships to their production workers fundamentally have changed and that workers have come to occupy a much more central position in the role network.

### **OPERATIONAL ROLES ARE FEWER**

As work becomes technically more complex, fewer people will work in operational roles and more people will work in the service and staff roles that support the operation. The goal of automation generally is to reduce head count, but the result typically is more of a redistribution of workers. Fewer operators are needed, but more support services are needed. The total cost of the operation ultimately may not change much, but the kinds of work that are performed will change radically. The relationships between sets of workers will, therefore, change in unknown ways. Operators have greater immediate responsibility for doing things right, but the programmers, systems engineers, and maintenance engineers have greater ultimate responsibility to keep the systems running—to keep the computers from “going down.” Management becomes more of a coordinating and liaison function and less of a monitoring and control function. Peers in service roles come to be seen as much more central in the role network than they have been previously.

### **STRESS LEVELS ARE INCREASING**

As conceptual work increases and job and role boundaries loosen, anxiety levels will increase. Human organisms depend on certain levels of predictability and stability in their environments. Although we all have needs for creativity and stimulation, we may forget that those needs operate against a background of security, stability, and predictability (Schein, 1992).

As organizations face increasing competitive pressures, as jobs become more conceptual, and as levels of responsibility in all jobs increase, we will see levels of stress and anxiety increase at all levels of the organization. Formalization and bureaucracy have been one kind of defense against such anxiety, but have the kind of work that needs

to be done in the information and knowledge age requires more flexibility and innovation, thus making more anxiety an inevitable result.

An increasing role for management will be the containment and working through of anxiety levels, although it is not at all clear by what individual or group mechanisms this will occur. When people are anxious, they want to be with others, so one of the most important functions of groups in organizations is the management of shared anxiety. The increasing emphasis on groups and teams that we hear about may be the result not only of the growing complexity of work but also of the growing anxiety levels attending work.

The concept of sociotechnical systems has been promulgated for several decades, but as we project ahead, it would appear that it becomes a more important concept than ever (Ketchum & Trist, 1992). One cannot separate the technical elements of a job from the social elements, as the network analysis in job and role analysis and planning is intended to illustrate. It also should be noted that job and role analysis and planning, when carried out regularly in a group setting, can be an anxiety reducer in that employees and managers can share their concerns about the loosening of boundaries and role overloads and conflicts while, at the same time, beginning to resolve them.

### **“FLAT,” PROJECT-BASED ORGANIZATIONS ARE EMERGING**

In the process of “rightsizing,” organizations are (1) reexamining their hierarchical structures, (2) moving toward flatter structures, (3) relying more on coordination mechanisms other than hierarchy, and (4) “empowering” their employees in various ways. In the flat, project-based organization of the future, power and authority will rotate among different project leaders, and individual project members will have to coordinate their own activities across a number of projects with different leaders. Operational authority will shift rapidly from one project leader to another, and individual employees may find themselves working for several bosses simultaneously. At the same time, as knowledge and information are more widely distributed, employees will become empowered *de facto* because, increasingly, they will know things that their bosses do not know.

However, hierarchy is fairly intrinsic to human systems, so we will probably not see the abandonment of hierarchical structures so much as a change in their function (Schein, 1989). For example, broad hierarchical categories such as civil-service grades, degrees of partnership in a law firm, or levels of professorial rank may continue to serve broad career-advancement functions but may not be good guides as to who will have operational authority over a task or project. Respect for people and the amount of influence they exert will have more to do with their operational performance than with their formal rank, and hierarchy increasingly will be viewed as a necessary adjunct to organizational life rather than its prime principle.

Power and authority will derive from what a person knows and what skills he or she has demonstrated. Because conceptual knowledge is largely invisible, the opportunities

will increase for misperception or conflicting perceptions of who knows what and who should be respected for what. This development will make the exercise of authority and influence much more problematic, which, in turn, will increase anxiety levels in organizations. By bringing groups together to do job and role analysis and planning, one can help to contain this anxiety and, more importantly, overcome the limitations of traditional job analysis, which attempts to evaluate the level of each job. One can speculate, in this regard, that pay will be tied more to formal rank, length of service, and number of skills that an employee has than to the particular job he or she is doing at any given moment.

## **DIFFERENTIATED AND COMPLEX ORGANIZATIONS ARE EMERGING**

Organizations are becoming more differentiated and complex. With the rapid growth of technology in all fields of endeavor, the number of products and services available is increasing. At the same time, growing affluence and more widely distributed information about products and services are creating more demanding consumers. Organizations are, therefore, having to respond by becoming more able to deliver more different kinds of products and services faster, in greater variety, and in more different places all over the globe.

One of the major consequences is that the organizations that make the products and/or deliver the services have to be more differentiated and complex. That, in turn, means that there will be more different kinds of occupational specialists who must be managed and whose efforts must somehow be tied together into a coherent organizational whole. Many of these specialists are neither motivated nor able to talk to one another, which creates special problems of integration of effort (Schein, 1992). The highly specialized design engineer working in the research and development end of the company often has little in common with the financial analyst whose specialty is the management of the company's investment portfolio or the personnel specialist who is concerned with the most recent affirmative-action legislation. Yet all of these and many other specialists contribute in major ways to the welfare of the total organization, and their efforts have to be integrated. Such integration cannot take place unless all the specialists and managers involved become conscious of one another as stakeholders and begin to make an effort to respond to one another's expectations.

Beyond this, senior management must begin to worry about and plan for the specific career development of such specialists, because many of them will be neither able nor willing to go into managerial positions (Schein, 1990). Such developmental planning cannot occur without a clear understanding of the role networks within which these specialists operate and the involvement of those employees in planning their own development.

## ***SUBUNITS ARE BECOMING MORE INTERDEPENDENT***

In order to produce a complex product or service effectively over a period of time, the many subspecialties of the organization will have to be coordinated and integrated, because they are simultaneously and sequentially interdependent in a variety of ways. For example, if the financial department does not manage the company's cash supply adequately, there is less opportunity for capital expansion or research and development (R & D); on the other hand, if an engineering design sacrifices some elements of quality for low cost, the result may be customer complaints, a lowered company reputation, and the subsequent decreased ability of the company to borrow money for capital expansion. In this sense, engineering and finance are highly interdependent, even though each may be highly specialized and neither may interact with the other directly.

Sequential interdependence is the more common situation. The engineering department cannot design a product or service if R & D has not done a good job of developing the concept or prototype; in turn, manufacturing cannot build the product if engineering has produced unbuildable designs; and sales and marketing cannot do their jobs well if they have poor products to sell. Of course, R & D cannot get its concepts right if marketing has not given it clear descriptions of future customer needs, and the process innovations that occur within manufacturing often influence both marketing and engineering in terms of the types of products that are thought to be conceivable and feasible (Thomas, 1993).

These types of interdependence always have existed within organizations, but as specialization increases, interdependence also increases because the final product or service is more complex and more vulnerable to the malfunctioning of any its parts. Nowhere is this clearer than in computer products or services. The hardware and software have to be designed properly in the first place and then implemented by a variety of specialists who serve as the interfaces between the final users and the computer system. If any of the specialists fails to do his or her job, the entire service or product may fail.

Job and role analysis and planning are designed to reveal these interdependences through analysis of the role network and the identification of key stakeholders. What often is most surprising as one does the analysis is the large number of stakeholders whom one must take into account simultaneously. And, as one looks ahead, that number is growing, so the skills involved in dealing with multiple stakeholder expectations become more and more central to organizational performance (Rosell, 1992).

## ***ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATES ARE BECOMING MORE COLLABORATIVE***

One major effect of the recognition of increased interdependence is that competition between organizational units or individuals is perceived as potentially destructive. Teamwork and collaborative/cooperative relations increasingly are touted as necessary to get the job done. This trend runs counter to the external marketplace philosophy that

competition is a good thing, but it increasingly is seen to be a necessary adaptation within organizations, even if *interorganizational* relations continue to be competitive.

If this trend is worldwide, one will begin to see more evidence of interorganizational collaboration as well, not for political reasons but for practical reasons of technological necessity. Increased levels of coordination will not be achieved by more centralized planning, as was attempted in the communist/socialist economies, but by more distribution of information and decentralization, which will permit the various units to coordinate among themselves. However, for this self-managed coordination to occur, not only must information be widely available, but all of the actors in the system must be able to decipher their roles in it. The same information can be framed and interpreted in many different ways. For collaboration and cooperation to work, common frames of reference must be established, and that process will involve organizational members in much more group- and team-oriented activity. Building shared frames of reference also increasingly will become a primary task of leadership (Rosell, 1992; Schein, 1992).

This trend poses a particular dilemma for managers whose own careers have developed in very competitive environments and who simply do not have the interpersonal competence to redesign their organizational processes to be more supportive of collaborative relations. I have met many a manager who pays lip service to “teamwork” but whose day-to-day style sends clear signals of not really understanding or supporting the concept, with the predictable consequence that this person’s “team” does not function as a team at all. Unfortunately, both the manager and the subordinates may draw the erroneous conclusion that it is the teamwork *concept* that is at fault rather than their failure to *implement* the concept. Once they understand the nature of the network they are in, they can do a better job of implementation. Thus, the very activity of job and role planning, when carried out in a team, becomes an important team-building function.

## **LATERAL COMMUNICATION CHANNELS ARE INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT**

Closely connected with the need for more collaborative work is the need for information to flow laterally between technical specialists rather than going through a hierarchy. For example, some companies are putting the product-development and marketing departments closer to each other geographically and stimulating direct contact between them rather than having higher levels of management attempt to translate marketing issues for the development people. The customer, the salesperson, and the marketing specialist in a complex industry such as electronics all probably know more about the technical side of the business than the general manager does and, therefore, must be brought into direct interaction with the designer and engineer if a usable product or service is to result.

Jay Galbraith (1973) has argued very convincingly that the information-processing needs of organizations based on task complexity and environmental uncertainty are, in fact, the major determinants of organizational structure and that hierarchical structures work only so long as task complexity and uncertainty are fairly low. Lateral structures such as project teams, task forces, ad hoc committees, cross-functional organizational units, and matrix management become more common with increased complexity and uncertainty.

Technological possibilities and consumer demands are driving toward greater complexity, and information technology will make it possible for organizations eventually to adapt by creating the kinds of lateral communication that will make coordination, integration, and genuine teamwork possible.

Here again, managers face a novel situation because of the likelihood that their own careers have been spent in organizational settings dedicated to principles of hierarchy and chains of command. In such “traditional” organizations, communication with people outside the chain of command is discouraged and punished. Not only will the organizational reward system and climate have to shift to encourage lateral communication but, in addition, managers will have to be trained to create lateral structures and to make them work. Job and role planning will facilitate this trend by showing how many of the key stakeholders are neither superiors nor subordinates but peers in interdependent relationships.

## **SOCIOCULTURAL VALUES ARE CHANGING**

In this section, I will refer mostly to trends that have been observed in the United States.

### ***More Value on Individualism and Individual Rights***

People are placing less value on traditional concepts of organizational loyalty and the acceptance of authority based on formal position, age, or seniority and are placing more value on individualism and individual rights vis-à-vis the organization. Increasingly, people are demanding that the tasks they are asked to perform make sense and provide them with some challenge and opportunity to express their talents. Increasingly, people are demanding that the rights of individuals be protected, especially if the individuals are members of minority groups or are likely to be discriminated against on some arbitrary basis such as sex, age, disability, religion, or ethnic origin. Increasingly, people are demanding some voice in decisions that affect them. These developments are leading to the growth of various forms of industrial democracy, participative management, and worker involvement in job design and corporate decision making. From the point of view of the employing organization, worker involvement makes sense to the extent that the trend toward specialization of tasks is occurring. For many kinds of decisions, it is the worker who has the key information and who, therefore, must be involved if the decision is to be a sound one. Thus, employee “empowerment” has taken on almost fad status.

### ***Changes in How Success Is Defined***

People are placing less value on work or career as a total life concern and less value on promotion or hierarchical movement within the organization as the sole measure of “success.” More value is being placed on leading a balanced life in which work, career, family, and self-development all receive their fair share of attention. Success increasingly is defined in terms of the full use of all of one’s talents and in contributing not only to one’s work organization but also to one’s family, community, and self. Careers are built on different kinds of career anchors, and the measure of success and advancement varies with whether or not one is oriented toward the managerial, technical/functional, security, autonomy, entrepreneurial, service, pure challenge, or lifestyle anchor (Schein, 1990).

### ***Equal Employment Opportunities***

People are placing less value on traditional concepts of male and female sex roles with respect to both work and family. In the career and work areas, we are seeing a growing trend toward equal employment opportunities for men and women, a breaking down of sex-role stereotypes in regard to work (for example, more women are going into engineering, and more men are going into nursing), and a similar breaking down of sex-role stereotypes in regard to proper family roles (for example, more women are becoming the primary supporters, and more men are staying home to take care of children, do the cooking, and clean the house). Our society is opening up the range of choices for both men and women to pursue new kinds of work, family roles, and lifestyles. Two of the major changes have been the “dual-career” family in which both husband and wife are committed to career development and the single-parent family. These changes are forcing organizations to develop new personnel policies and are forcing social institutions to develop new options for child care.

One of the most important elements of job and role planning is to determine the positions of spouses or significant others, children, and friends in the role network and as key stakeholders. As dual careers and single parents become more common, one will see complex, overlapping role networks in households, requiring more complex, adaptive solutions both at work and at home.

### ***Focus on the Environment***

People are placing less value on economic growth and are placing relatively more value on conserving and protecting the quality of the environment in which they live. Assessing the impact of technology is becoming a major activity in our society. We see increased willingness to stop progress (for example, reluctance to build the supersonic transport or to allow our airports to admit existing SSTs; an abrupt halt to highway construction in the middle of a city; and refusal to build oil refineries, even in economically depressed areas, if the environment would be endangered). However, as

we saw in the early 1990s, if a recession continues, economic-growth values resurface, and conflict increases between the need to protect the environment and the need for jobs.

### ***Organizational Generation Gap***

These value changes and conflicts have created a situation in which the incentives and rewards offered by the different parts of our society have become much more diverse and, consequently, much less integrated. We see this most clearly in the organizational generation gap—older managers or employees who operate from a “Protestant work ethic” versus young employees who question arbitrary authority, meaningless work, organizational loyalty, restrictive personnel policies, and even fundamental corporate goals and prerogatives.

As options and choices have opened up and as managers have begun to question the traditional success ethic, these managers have become more ready to refuse promotions or geographical moves, more willing to “retire on the job” while pursuing family activities or off-the-job hobbies, and more likely to resign from high-potential careers to pursue “second careers” that are perceived to be more challenging and/or rewarding by criteria other than formal hierarchical position or amount of pay.

### ***IMPLICATIONS OF THESE TRENDS***

What all this means for the managers of tomorrow is that they will have to manage in a much more “pluralistic” society, one in which employees at all levels will have more choices and will exercise those choices. Managers not only will have to exhibit more personal flexibility in dealing with the range and variety of individual needs they encounter in subordinates, peers, and superiors, but also will have to learn how to influence organizational policies with respect to recruitment, work assignment, pay and benefit systems, working hours and length of work week, attitudes about dual employment of couples, support of educational activities at a much higher scale, development of child-care facilities, and so on.

With respect to all these issues, the manager will be caught in the middle among several key stakeholders, including the following:

1. Government agencies, with respect to discrimination (on the basis of sex, age, race, disabilities, and other characteristics), environmental issues, and occupational safety issues;
2. Community-interest groups, with respect to equal rights, environmental protection, product quality and safety, and other forms of consumerism;
3. Stockholders, who are eager to maintain an efficient and profitable operation and a fair return on their investments;
4. Competitors, who also are caught in the struggle to meet the challenges of a changing work force;

5. Employees—whether unionized or not—who are anxious to improve the quality of working life, create flexible corporate policies, provide challenging and meaningful work, and be responsible “corporate citizens”; and
6. Family and self in terms of a need to maintain a balanced life.

Role ambiguity, role overload, and role conflict are likely to be chronic conditions, and the processes of setting priorities and negotiating with different stakeholders are likely to be perpetual rather than one-time activities. Boundaries of all kinds will be perpetually defined and redefined, and anxiety levels around those activities periodically will be very high. We see this at the national level in the tension resulting from globalization on the one hand, and the breaking up of countries into ethnic or cultural units on the other hand, even if those units will have a difficult time surviving economically as nations.

### **THE FUTURE AS SEEN FROM 1994**

The trends identified previously are themselves not stable. In fact, if there is anything to be learned from the last few decades, it is that our ability to predict is declining rapidly. The management of “surprise” is the order of the day. For example, we cannot really predict the future economic impact of the Asian bloc of countries (especially China) or the future behavior of the European Economic Community. We cannot predict the rate at which the formerly socialist or communist countries will become politically or economically viable and, when they do, what impact that will have on the global scene.

We cannot predict the rate at which information and biotechnology will evolve low-cost products and services that will fundamentally change the nature of work, the nature of organizations, and the nature of life itself. The potential ethical issues implicit in bioengineering boggle the mind.

On the political front, we cannot predict the outcome of the simultaneous trends toward globalization and fractionization into smaller, ethnically pure countries. As of this writing, the roles of the United States and of the United Nations remain unclear and unpredictable in conflicts between nations and in aid to starving nations.

Within the U.S., we cannot predict the impact of the Clinton presidency, what will happen to the budget deficit, how health-care costs will be brought under control while health-care delivery is improved, how our educational system will be revitalized, and how we will solve the racial problems in our inner cities. Our current systems of governance are strained and possibly not up to the tasks facing us.

What all of this means is that we must become *perpetual learners*. As a growing number of observers and analysts have noted, it will be the ability to learn that will make the difference in the future (Michael, 1992; Peters, 1987; Rosell, 1992; Senge, 1990). If we cannot cope with surprise and develop new ways of framing problems and new responses, we will lose. Ultimately, this challenge puts more emphasis on dynamic processes, on learning to live with perpetual change, and on developing the diagnostic skills that permit us to see what is needed.

It is this need for dynamic processes that leads us back to job and role analysis and planning. Projecting this need to the extreme suggests that job and role planning should become virtually a perpetual activity that is integral to the management process itself. Every time there is a new project or a new assignment, the manager and his or her subordinate should do a truncated version of job and role planning to ensure that there is consensus on what will need to be done and who will need to be involved. Job descriptions will become dynamic documents, perpetually renegotiated as the work of the organization changes in response to changing environmental circumstances.

Perpetual job and role planning will require much higher levels of interaction among members of the organization, especially between managers and their subordinates. On the one hand, such an increase in meetings will increase frustration because of the time these meetings will take, but, paradoxically, people will discover that meetings are the best way of coping with the increasing anxiety that future jobs and roles will precipitate. Job and role planning will provide opportunities for supportive role negotiation that will reduce anxiety while, at the same time, increasing our conceptual understanding of what we must do to best fulfill our own needs and those of the organization.

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## ■ THE FLEXIBLE CAREER: RIDING THE CAREER WAVES OF THE NINETIES

**Caela Farren**

*Abstract:* Surfing can be a metaphor for the work world of today. Today's workers need new and flexible approaches to riding the work waves. Work waters are becoming more and more turbulent for those who are operating out of the old pictures of success. Navigating the new waters of global business requires the perspective, maneuverability, energy, durability, stamina, and zest of surfers. The basic principles that all surfers follow to master the ocean waves offer clues for how to be successful, confident, and competent workers in the 1990s.

People with broad vision who scan vast horizons of industry trends, organization trends, and work trends will be more buoyant than people with limited vision who are dependent on the next raise, the next rung, and the next skill to master. Many former work and career success images now generate failure. New work success maps are needed that will orient workers about the gear, preparation, exercises, companions, equipment, and qualifications needed.

In this article, the author illustrates how navigating the winds of change requires finding balance, seeing patterns, choosing environments, learning to specialize, staying connected, making changes, and discovering passion. With such skills, surfers and workers succeed, regardless of the waves they encounter.

Work and play are two cornerstones of human life. Surfing merges the two in an almost seamless, exciting, challenging rewarding experience. Career success today calls for riding the work waves with the expert skill of a surfer. One must see the approaching waves and possess the agility to change direction quickly and reposition oneself while holding a steady course. Skilled work surfers accept the waves of change as a given. They do not fight the industry or economic change waves; instead, they watch them diligently and plot appropriate courses of action. Rather than wasting time commiserating about the past or present, they look to patterns in the work system to direct their day-to-day learning. They know how to read the tides, ride the crests, choose the waves that fit their levels of competence, and surf with people on whom they can count for learning and support.

### **FINDING BALANCE**

What could be more turbulent, more changing, more exciting, and more unpredictable than the changing tides and currents of the ocean? Surfers search for waves, whitecaps, foam, and tubes; they match the turbulence and excitement of the pounding waves with their well-honed skill and agility. They demonstrate a flexibility that captures observers'

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respect and enthusiasm. Day after day they ride the waves. They demonstrate the harmony that can exist between the relentless power of the ocean and the personal power, determination, and flexibility of surfers. This temporary, always-sought-after balance (harmony) between the ever-changing waves and the wave riders is the best possible metaphor for demonstrating a worker's delicate balancing act with the ever-changing workplace waves.

Workers today feel shaky. They encounter unpredictability at every turn of the work world—technology, downsizing, acquisitions, alliances, demographic shifts, closings, and regulations. The workplace offers no steady state, no rest, no predictability, and little or no security. Some workers thrive on this uproar; they look ahead, keep learning, keep searching, keep seeing new opportunities, predict changes, and so on. Others are surprised, thrown off guard, outplaced, underutilized, or insecure about the future; they often experience unrecoverable wipeouts.

## **SEEING PATTERNS**

For the untrained eye of the superficial, craftless worker, the work world seems totally out of control. Like unskilled surfers, these workers cannot read the patterns in the waves, cannot scan the horizon for the “right” waves to ride, have not chosen the best surfing companions, or do not have teachers; they topple easily, sometimes forever. They do not foresee plant closings, changes in office technology, the flattening of middle-management layers, the need for increased specialization, or the ebb and flow in market conditions. They do not know what jobs to take, what organizations to join, what parts of the country to locate in, or what crafts, trades, or professions in which to develop skills. They are at the mercy of the turbulent workplace oceans.

Those with trained eyes, who have made a serious study of reading work waves, have fewer spills, fewer short rides, fewer lost surfboards, and many exciting, thrilling, and challenging rides. These flexible workers match their mettle against the speed and power of the ocean.

Although the wave world is out of the surfer's control, many changes can be anticipated by watching the waves and feeling the wind. Skilled surfers (flexible careerists) see the big picture—what is coming, where it is moving, and when it is coming. Futurists spend their time watching and gathering the work trends, and they anticipate the possible results of various waves on the world of work. These future-gazers watch the intersection of various currents (economic, government, technology, global interests, and so on) and how they position themselves to bash industries, demolish companies, or wipe out jobs. They study patterns in the waves with enough distance and perspective and in enough segments of the work world to make very accurate assumptions.

So, too, skilled surfers have the broad perspective. The ocean is always changing, moving, and in transition. The waves lap the shores and appear random; yet there is a pattern and predictability in the tides, the hurricanes, the size of waves, and so on.

Watching for only a minute or hour in time, a person can see no predictability, no pattern, no clear direction. But students of the wave begin to have confidence in the ocean. They know how to time themselves and become more skilled at predicting changes as they pick up the subtle nuances of the wind and water. They become less scared of changes, for they begin to be forewarned.

Surfers love and accept the changing quality of the ocean. They can even become hypnotized and calmed by the very inevitability of the change. Flexible workers also can learn to read and ride the work waves. They can begin to trust that motion will continue and tides will come in; they begin to pace and time their comings and goings to fit the waves, the tides, the storms, and so on. They move respectfully from apprehension to appreciation, from fear to freedom, from caution to confidence. They ride the waves and give in to their changing shapes. Awkwardness gives rise to awe. Perspective and power come from looking at the broadest horizon and reading the patterns in order to choose the best wave possible for their current skills and abilities.

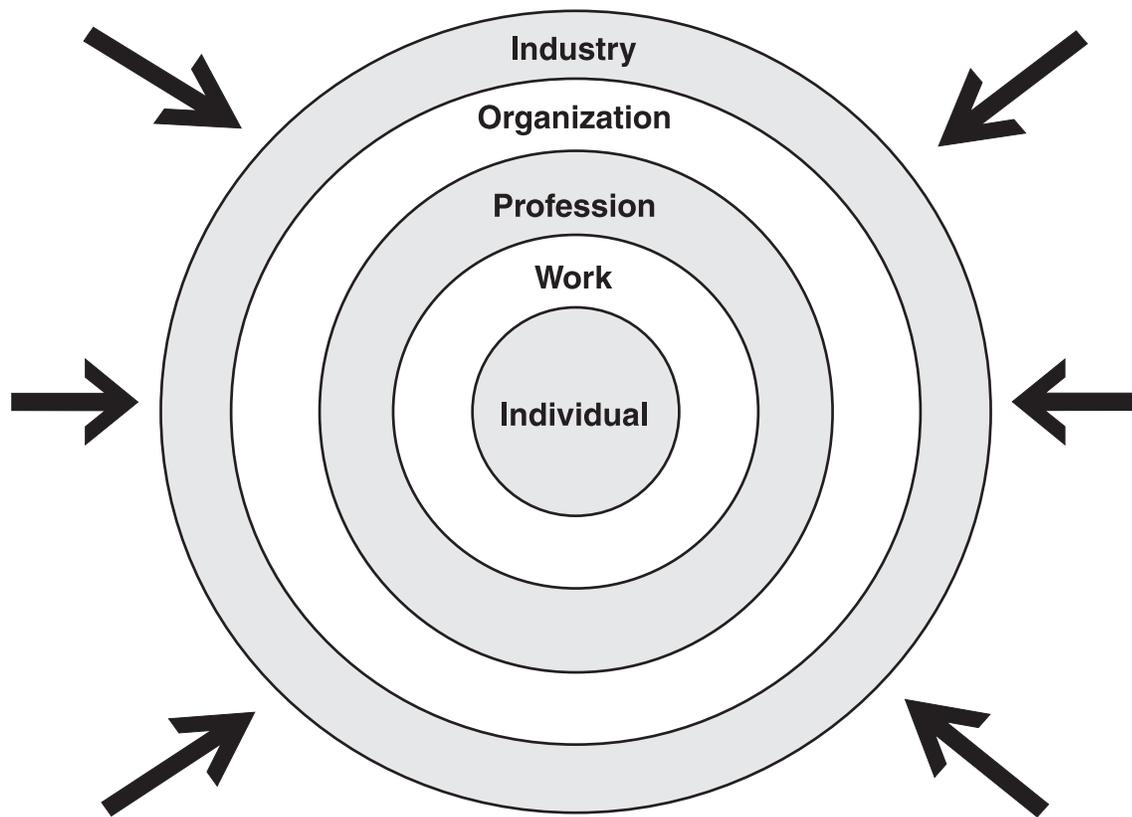
## **CHOOSING ENVIRONMENTS**

Work and careers are not only about people and their jobs. Work life unfolds in interrelated systems that are constantly changing and influencing future choices. Imagine five concentric circles, pulsating with life and energy, bombarded by waves of change from inside and outside. When one ring of the circle changes form, the others also change because they are part of a single system, like waves in an ocean.

Learning to read the waves is simply a matter of paying attention to the whole system. The world of work (Figure 1) has five rings: the industry, the organization, the profession or field, the work/job, and self. Like waves in the ocean, each of these five work waves are constantly in motion. However, by learning to see the patterns and trends in the waves and by positioning themselves accordingly, smart workers can plan for the longest, most exciting ride possible.

The first step is for people to identify the industry that they are in and the major technical changes and trends that have affected that industry in the past few years. Who are the leaders in that industry? Which companies, individuals, and countries predominate? How are they addressing the technical, economic, and social changes in the industry? These are critical areas for colleagues to discuss if they are to ride the waves of industry changes. The trends in an industry are observable in trade publications, newsletters, company slogans or advertising campaigns, computer bulletin boards, and in discussions with colleagues, clients, strategic planners, and managers. It is difficult for people to design smart careers if they are not cognizant of the change waves in motion and the options they unleash.

Second, people must examine their own organizations or companies. What social, technological or economic waves are hitting—higher labor costs, shorter product-life cycles, new alliances and partnerships, increased teamwork, global markets? Any one of these waves could force workers to acquire new skills, develop teams, learn new



**Figure 1. The World of Work**

languages, or change dreams. Clues about direction and learning abound in company newsletters, job posting boards, technology choices, strategic business plans, and company missions. As directors of their own work destinies, people have to read between the lines and speculate about the impact changes in the organization will have on their career choices. They need to ask the kinds of questions that shed light on new company directions and learn what it will take to stay on top of the waves rather than be caught in the currents.

### **LEARNING TO SPECIALIZE**

Some surfers ride the big waves at Sunset Beach while others specialize in the tubes of the Banzai Pipeline. Like the ocean waves, work fields and trades are constantly changing as a result of technology, economic factors, globalization, and changing business directions. Choosing and developing a craft, trade, or work specialty is critical for riding the work waves of the future.

Therefore, the third step is for people to study their business professions or specialties. Too many people concentrate on their jobs and lose track of how their professions are evolving; they then are surprised to find themselves obsolete. A profession is an area of specialization with clear boundaries, recognized experts, and a

set of practices and principles requiring mastery in order to be a qualified practitioner. Examples are engineering, finance, marketing, nursing, education, architecture, or accounting. Early in their careers, it is important for people to explore several areas of work. However, eventually they must choose one profession in which to specialize and develop a sense of personal mastery and competency. Some people stay in the same field for a lifetime, and others have careers that span several different fields. What is critical is to choose a profession, study the trends and evolution of that profession, and commit to staying current.

Professions cross industrial and organization boundaries. People need to know whether their professions are primary or secondary to the mission of a particular organization. People working in secondary professions are more at risk and can find their work contracted out or given to temporaries. Because of this, they need to be aware of the major changes in their professions over the past three to five years. They need to identify the experts in the profession and what they are saying about new directions and new expertise requirements in the field. This information contains important clues to maintaining career flexibility.

## **STAYING CONNECTED**

The best surfers have both built their own surfboards and purchased or used state-of-the-art surfboards. As surfboard masters, they always seek to redesign their equipment to give them a new edge or advantage over the ocean power.

Surfers also observe other surfers. They watch how they paddle out to the big waves, how they gaze, their subtle moves on the board, their preparations for springing onto the board, the curve of their backs while surfing the tubes, and myriad other moves that make the difference between wave riders and wipeouts. Surfers are always refining their techniques to have the perfect ride.

In contrast, consider the plight of the average worker. Jobs are designed to meet the mission of the organization and the needs of its customers. Work is bundled into discrete jobs, projects, or work processes. This is a convenient way of dividing the tasks that need to be accomplished on a day-to-day basis. Certain jobs are unique to an industry (such as stockbrokers), while others cross industry lines (such as managers). Jobs come and go at an increasingly rapid pace. Thousands of jobs will emerge this year that were unknown last year. Thousands of jobs will disappear this year, never to be seen again. People who equate their careers to their jobs often experience anxiety and insecurity. They know their jobs are changing and could even disappear. Increased work power is the result of careful answers to the following questions:

- How has this work/job changed in the last year?
- What changes are anticipated in the future?
- What new skills will be needed for success?
- How can more value be added for customers?

- How could work be redesigned or changed to be more productive or more effective?

## **MAKING CHANGES**

Individual needs are changing; moving, marriage, divorce, children, health, leisure, time, financial status, and family pressures all contribute to changing needs. Given these changes, certain companies or industries may be more appealing than others. Being more available for a teenager may require reducing travel time. Taking care of sick parents may require working from home. The more people can anticipate the changes in their personal lives, the more they can tailor their work situations to meet their own needs as well as those of the company.

## **DISCOVERING PASSION**

Surfers have been around for hundreds of years, engaged in the eternal struggle of man against the elements. A sense of harmony and timelessness exists when the surfer, the ocean, the equipment, the wind, the sand or coral underneath become temporarily bonded in the act of “riding the waves.” This ride parallels the desires people have to be captivated by work—so drawn into it that they will push all limits to reexperience a sense of accomplishment, union, and personal fulfillment. Nothing is more exciting for the surfer than riding the waves. Nothing is more exciting for today’s worker than riding the work waves with confidence, competence, and alignment.

Surfers choose ocean conditions that meet their needs for excitement and safety. Workers need to choose industries and organizations that provide the same. Surfers choose companions who can challenge them, teach them, and support them. Workers need to choose organizations that fit their needs for learning, support, risk, and reward. Surfers read the waves and move in the direction of challenge or security. Workers need to read the patterns of change and determine new skills and competencies required for success. Successful careerists assess the trends in a given company and seek out projects and positions that enable them to take maximum advantage of the waves of change.

## ■ CRITERIA OF EFFECTIVE GOAL-SETTING: THE SPIRO MODEL

**John E. Jones**

Personal growth goals and achievement goals in business and in school are more useful and effective if they are made explicit rather than remaining implicit in one's behavior. Thinking that is purposive is more effective than thinking that is random, jerky, or disjointed. Goal-directed behavior is more efficient and more effective than behavior that is completely spontaneous, unplanned, and unorganized. The alternative to being goal-directed is to drift, to float, to achieve in a random manner. Establishing goals explicitly has a great deal of utility. For one thing, planning the next step is much easier if goals are explicit. The management of personal, social, intellectual, and economic development is easier if goals are attainable and have some directional quality to them. Having explicit goals also helps a person in developing a sense of accomplishment. Another benefit to objective goal-setting is that a person is far more likely to inventory the available resources and to utilize those resources, if the goals are clear. That is not to say that there is no room for serendipity and spontaneity in one's development. In fact, some of the most significant scientific achievements have been made by people who were working toward goals and discovered side effects or observed phenomena that they were not looking for.

The purpose of this lecturette is to provide some criteria for judging or critiquing statements of personal goals. Five criteria will be discussed. These five criteria, taken together, constitute the SPIRO model. The five criteria are: Specificity, Performance, Involvement, Realism, and Observability. Applying these five criteria to personal goals can result in more effective goal-setting and more efficient planning.

*Specificity.* General goals are less useful than specific ones because the specific ones imply next steps or imply behaviors that need to be changed. An example of a nonspecific goal would be "to improve my sales record next year." An example of a specific goal statement would be "to produce five percent more sales volume in the next year."

The second criterion is *Performance*. "What will I be doing?" Performance-oriented goal statements are more effective in guiding what the person is going to do than some nonperformance statements. An example of a nonperformance goal would be "to gain the respect of fellow class members." An example of a performance goal might be "to make at least one point in each seminar meeting."

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The third criterion is *Involvement*; that is, the extent to which the person himself or herself is involved in the objective. An example of a noninvolving goal might be “to get the boss to accept criticism.” An example of a goal that meets the criterion of involvement might be “to give negative feedback to the boss in private and to check whether it is heard accurately.”

The fourth criterion of effective goal-setting is *Realism*; that is, the attainability of the goal. An example of an unrealistic goal might be “to change the attitudes of the teaching staff to accepting minority group students.” An example of a realistic goal related to that concern might be “to acquaint teachers with the value orientations of parents of minority group students.”

The fifth criterion in the SPIRO Model is *Observability*. This has to do with whether other people can see the result, whether it is obvious that the criterion has been met, or whether the results are covert. An example of a nonobservable goal might be “to build more self-confidence.” A corresponding goal that meets the standard of observability might be “to reduce the frequency with which I began declarative statements with the phrase ‘I guess.’ “

Applying these five criteria to one’s own personal growth goals should result in greater understanding of where one is going. It helps if one’s goals are made public, if one confides them to another person or publishes them in some way. To commit oneself publicly to growth goals is a way of using one’s environment for support to try new behaviors. It is also helpful if goals are time-bound; that is, if there are some deadlines involved in the attainment of the objectives. It also helps if one’s goals are planned in such a way that there is a good likelihood that there will be some reward from the environment for trying the attainment of that goal.

One idea related to goal-setting is contracting. One may write personal goals, critique them alone, critique them with the help of another person, and develop a contract with the other person to accomplish the goal by a certain time or a certain consequence will take place. For example, a professor may contract with his or her spouse to write three journal articles in the next six months; if this does not occur, the spouse will mail a check for \$50 to an organization the professor despises. That is a kind of avoidance training.

Goal-setting is a continuous activity and is a core behavior in a continuous stream of effort that is coming to be called in the human potential movement Life Planning. What happens in life planning is that a person stops every now and again to reassess his or her goals, to apply criteria such as the SPIRO model to them, and to restate them as he or she improves in self-understanding.

There are basically four core questions that are useful to ask oneself over and over again in life planning. One of those questions, which is perhaps the most difficult, is “Who am I?” It sounds like a very simple question, but it is an exceedingly complex and difficult question to answer cogently. The second question, of almost equal importance, is “What am I up to?” That is, what is going on with me right now, what am I trying to get done right now, and what are my motives right now? The third question is “Where

am I going?” That question relates directly to effective goal-setting. The fourth question, which perhaps overarches all the other three, is “What difference does it make, anyhow?” If one recycles these questions through his or her consciousness from time to time and applies hard standards in terms of personal objectives, his or her life management is much more likely to be effective and satisfying.

The motto of the state of South Carolina is a Latin phrase, “Dum spiro spero.” Translated, that means, “While I breathe, I hope.” Goals represent hopes while we are alive and being spirited, and those goals that are objective and explicit are more attainable and are more likely to help us realize our hopes than are those that are less obvious.

## ■ RISK-TAKING AND ERROR-PROTECTION STYLES

### John E. Jones

The kinds of inferences that people make from statistical samples are applicable to styles of human risk taking. Basically two types of inferential errors can be made in drawing generalizations about a population from a sample from that population: Type I and Type II. A Type I error is committed when one decides that the population has a certain characteristic when in fact it does not. The opposite kind of mistaken inference is a Type II error, when one decides that the population does not have certain characteristics when in fact it does. These two types of errors are reciprocal in that protecting against one increases the probability of making the other. That is, if a person sets up a statistical procedure to attempt to diminish the possibility of making errors of the first type, it increases the chances of making the second type of error, meaning that the person may fail to detect a characteristic that is a real attribute of the target population.

These two types of errors may be graphically illustrated by what might be termed an Inference Window (Figure 1.). This is a window with four panes or a chart with four cells. In the upper left-hand cell are the predicted positive outcomes that actually turn out negatively—the “false positives.” In the upper right-hand corner of the window are those predicted positive outcomes that actually are affirmed, called “true positives.” In the lower left-hand pane of the window are predicted negative outcomes that are in fact negative, called “true negatives.” Finally, in the lower right-hand part of the window are those predicted negative outcomes that in fact become positive, the “false negatives. The upper left- and the lower right-hand portions of the window are false predictions, false positive and false negative. The false positive decisions are Type I errors, and the false negative predictions are Type II errors.

So we can see that there is a possibility of making two basic kinds of mistakes in drawing inferences from samples to populations. To give an example, we can test the hypothesis that happy sales representatives make more money. We could take a sample of sales representatives by some defensible method, obtain a measure of their happiness and an indication of their earnings, and correlate the two. Now we are going to decide whether in this population of sales representatives there exists some kind of relationship between happiness and earnings. When we apply the statistical test of significance, we determine whether we can have any confidence in generalizing to the population of sales representatives about this relationship. If we come up with some statistically significant results, we may conclude that there is a relationship between happiness and earnings among sales representatives. If in fact that is wrong, we have made a false positive

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inference. Let us assume that in our sample we found no relationships between happiness and earnings but, in fact, out there in the real world of millions of sales representatives there is some relationship. We have made an error called false negative.

		Actual Outcome	
		-	+
Predicated Outcome	+	False Positives (Type I Errors)	True Positives
	-	True Negatives	False Negatives (Type II Errors)

**Figure 1. The Inference Window**

Notice that the window also clearly indicates that the kinds of inferential errors that we make from our observations do not necessarily put us into a double bind. If our observing system is effective, we may, in fact, have a preponderance of true positive decisions and true negative decisions and not make a lot of errors. The errors that we are talking about, the mistakes in judgment that we make, can be considered to be analogous to what some people call sins of omission and sins of commission, that is, failing to act and acting in a way that we should not act.

People can be crudely classified into one of two types also: people whose major decision-making strategies tend to protect against Type I errors (“sins of commission”) and persons whose major decision-making styles protect against Type II errors (“sins of omission”). Type I protectors tend to want a lot of data; they tend to be low risk-takers and have the general need in decision-making to protect themselves from making public mistakes. They tend to take on easy tasks as opposed to very challenging jobs; they tend to see the world as somewhat dangerous, risky and chancy; their major approach to the world and decision-making is to be careful; their attitude about themselves tends to be, “I may not be able to do it.” On the other hand, people whose major decision-making style is to protect against Type II errors can be characterized as risk-takers. Their major approach to choices is to protect against the possibility that they may fail to try something that might work out well. They take on challenges, tend to see the world in terms of possibilities, chances, and resources, and test themselves against the world.

Len Miller, a rehabilitation counselor educator, draws an analogy between Type I and Type II protection styles and counselor behavior. Rehabilitation counselors have to decide whether to take on particular clients for services. The Type I protectors tend to take only easy cases—people who need eyeglasses or people who may need only minor surgery—and want to protect themselves against taking on people with multiple disabilities, people who are difficult to rehabilitate. On the other hand, Type II

protectors tend to take on more difficult cases, be more risk-taking in their relationship with their supervisors, and view the world in terms of what is possible rather than what needs to be prevented. Another illustration may serve to explain the application of the statistical concept to the way people make ordinary everyday decisions. Imagine a man and woman sitting in a college classroom together. The man has been observing her, has some interest in her, would like to ask her for a date, thinks she is good looking, has admired the way she relates to other people in the class, has respect in her contributions to class discussion, and so on. He has several strategies that he can use. He can ask her for a date in such a way that permits her very easily to turn him down; he can fail to ask her for a date when in fact she may be interested in him, and he may never know it if he does not ask her.

If he is a Type I protector, he may be very cautious, wait a long time, and try to be very careful in his approach to her. If he is a Type II protector, that is, he doesn't throw away the chance of building happy harmonious relationships that he wants, he may be more aggressive in his approach to her and may test out whether she is in fact interested in spending time with him.

Seeing decision making in this way implies that the person has some sense of the probabilities of positive and negative outcomes when committing to a decision. There are people who protect against very low probability outcomes and are so timorous that they refuse to cross the street under the very small chance that they may be run over and killed. There are other people that don't even look before they walk into the street, figuring that the probability is so low that they are going to be hit, they can take that chance. These extremes illustrate the fact that people differ greatly in terms of subjective probabilities underlying their decision making. We differ quite a bit in our willingness to take risks. But it is important to consider that the line between risk and folly is very thin. What is needed is a way of managing one's risk-taking. This is perhaps best done by relating one's "stretching" to one's personal growth goals. If people are in touch with where they want to go, the kind of people they want to become, and the kind of life they want to lead, then their risk-taking takes on significance and direction. If they are not goal-directed, if they are not in touch with some directives in life, then their risk-taking may, in fact, become foolish. It is important to consider also that one person's risk may be another person's ordinary behavior.

What constitutes a risk for a person depends on whether that is new behavior and whether he or she has a subjective sense of danger involved in the behavior. Let us look at some examples of risks that might be related to one's personal growth goals. One risk that surfaces fairly rapidly in human relations training is the risk to be open with other people. Self-disclosure is one of the most creative and potentially useful risks that a person can engage in. Letting other people know who you are, letting other people know how you relate to them, and letting them know how they relate to you are risks because they may endanger people's acceptance of you. Being open can be a very chancy thing, but it can also be a very useful productive pattern of behaving if it is done with sensitivity. Another goal is getting involved with people, getting committed to people,

linking up with people, being included and including people in one's own activities. These risks of pairing, being with people, are much more difficult for some people than for others. A third risk that is related to human relations training is giving feedback. Some people have great difficulty in giving positive feedback, giving compliments, saying that they love somebody, saying that they are pleased, and so on. Other people have difficulty in giving negative feedback and tend to sit on, or "gunnysack," negative reactions to other people's behavior. The risk to be open about one's reactions to other people can be enormously stimulating to personal growth. Another risk is touching and being touched. For some people this is a big problem, and for other people it's a very pleasant activity. Another risk is becoming intimate with people, becoming close and personal with people. Another risk is confronting conflict. We tend to shy away from conflict, smooth it over in our boss-subordinate relationships, peer relationships, teacher-student relationships, and so on. One risk that might be considered is surfacing conflict and dealing with it in a sensitive but direct way. Conflict can be viewed as useful rather than dysfunctional. Another action full of risks is trying new ways of behaving toward other people. That may include being quiet, or it may include being more aggressive. This will vary from person to person, and each person defines his or her own new behavior. Perhaps the biggest risk that a person might take is not to take any risks. As Harvey Cox once remarked, "Not to decide is to decide."

What this lecturette has attempted is the application of a statistical concept to the kinds of decisions that we make in our everyday lives, to take risks in relation to our personal growth goals. If we decide to be risk-takers, what we are doing is deciding to protect against Type II errors, looking at the world in terms of possibilities and trying new things, trying new ways of behaving, testing new approaches to the problems we run into each day, and trying to protect against throwing away opportunities.

## ■ RISK TAKING

### J. William Pfeiffer

Real life often tends to produce situations in which individuals are punished, sometimes severely, for crossing normative boundaries. Children may have their hands slapped for touching pretty objects on their mother's dressing tables; children may be spanked for saying "I hate you" in a moment of anger; children may be teased by playmates for playing with "girls' toys" or "boys' toys;" and when children fall and skin their knees, they may be told, "Big kids don't cry." As adults, people may be jailed for participating in civil rights demonstrations; they may lose their jobs for repeatedly showing the boss to be wrong in front of the rest of the staff; and they may be sued for divorce when their spouses discover that they have loving relationships with another partner. We are constantly in the process of having normative boundaries established, redefined, or reinforced through the feedback that keeps us on target for a relatively smooth existence.

It is important to understand, however, that risk is something perceived, not absolute; risk-taking behaviors vary greatly from society to society and among individuals within the societies. We are thrilled and awed to see the "risk" behavior of a tightrope walker whose act, in our eyes, is truly "death-defying." In the performer's perception, however, the feat on the tightrope may be of little risk because of his or her skill in its accomplishment; yet the same person may not be able to "risk" air travel, which most people easily enjoy. Challenging a supervisor may not be a risk for someone who has other job opportunities. That same challenging behavior could be perceived as a risk by a bystander who does not have other job options. Losing one's temper with a friend may be seen as an enormous risk to an individual who has been brought up to avoid conflict and as a healthy "letting off of steam" by another individual who has not been taught to suppress anger. One person's risk, then, may be another's ordinary behavior. Frequently we tend to err on the safe side, i.e., we imagine the normative boundary to be more constraining than it, in fact, is.

The term laboratory education is enjoying a renewed currency. It is highly descriptive in that both the connotative and denotative meanings of laboratory tend to legitimize risk taking, i.e., actively seeking out the location of existing normative boundaries and at the same time providing the potential to stretch existing boundaries after they have been located. The laboratory is, after all, a controlled, experimental environment in which both the old and the new can be tested, expanded, or modified without fear of endangering the world outside the laboratory. It is necessary for those working in the laboratory to be aware of the unique freedom for experimentation within

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the laboratory and the cautions involved in attempting to apply new learnings outside the laboratory.

A major issue in group work is how to keep the participants from being reluctant to translate the reality of high accountability for behavior, as it exists in the “real” world, to what is, hopefully, a lower accountability for behavior as it exists in the laboratory setting. The growth group, functioning as a learning laboratory, should make it possible for that individual who has been taught to avoid conflict to say, “I’m feeling angry with you.” I have found that a heavy emphasis on the meaning of laboratory can free individuals to openly experiment with new behavior.

One of the chief learnings to be gained from a laboratory education experience is an awareness of the impact of the individual’s behavior on others, but this learning cannot be true growth experience for the individual unless he or she is given the climate within the laboratory group that fosters experimentation with new behaviors that are seen by that person as “risks.” The learning from this experimentation has the capacity to be transferred to the person’s “real” world. It is in this manner that boundaries falsely constricted by an individual’s mind can be identified and put into a more reasonable perspective. It may also give the individual the opportunity to identify “real” world boundaries over which he or she may exercise some control and to redefine them in his or her life. The person may learn that it is sometimes appropriate in “real” life to touch, to be angry, to cry, to be assertive. The person may also learn what there is about his or her own behavior that is sometimes not appropriate in “real” life. Or the person could discover the importance of listening to others, of allowing himself or herself to be dependent on others occasionally, and of learning the sources of his or her anger.

Risk taking is seen, then, as a matter of individual perception. The laboratory can be designed in such a way that “wholesale” openness is not the goal; rather, the goal is the freedom to experiment with openness in risk taking as the occasion and the individual demands. The participant ideally leaves the laboratory experience with the confidence to risk changing or stretching restrictive normative boundaries, but with the sensitivity to know how and what is appropriate in this process within the “real” world.

## ■ PERSONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PAIN: COSTS AND PROFITS

**Philip J. Runkel**

We have no choice whether life will be painful. We cannot do away with stress, conflict, apprehension, disconfirmation, hurt, failure, and loss in social interchange; it is unlikely that we can reduce very much the overall number of occasions for pain without reducing the opportunities for interpersonal interaction itself. Practitioners of organization development (OD) sometimes seem almost to promise their clients that an OD “treatment,” so to speak, will erase the personal pains ordinarily encountered in organizational life. Some practitioners in the field express the hope that this will happen. Both the promise and the hope should be foregone.

### ***Increasing the Profit of Pain***

Despite the fact that we probably cannot reduce by much the total amount of pain with which we must cope, we can do a great deal to increase the profit we get from our pains. Much of our pain—certainly most of our psychological pain—is pain we give one another, and it is within our power to redistribute the occasions on which pain arises. We can, through explicit agreement about responsibilities and the careful practice of new sorts of collaboration, share more equally the burden of pain. More than that, we can deliberately and collaboratively choose the purposes for which we shall expose ourselves to pain, instead of finding ourselves ambushed by pain dumped on us by others; we can agree with our colleagues on what we hope to purchase with our pain. To give a commonplace example, we can buy greater satisfaction in the work we do with our colleagues if we are willing to pay the cost in admitting to certain ineptitudes, learning some new role patterns, and persevering in the face of rebuffs. On the other hand, we can avoid risk, rebuff, and stumbling relearning if we are willing to pay the price in joyless work and in shrivelling withdrawal from our colleagues. In short, we can often purchase longer-lasting satisfactions with shared pain than we can usually buy with hidden pain. Finally, once the necessity for honest pain is openly agreed on, and once the risk is jointly undertaken with colleagues, we can learn that pain need not be seen as shameful and that it need not cripple action. What OD can do is to move pain from one occasion to another and from one person to another. This is no small achievement. Our society is built to concentrate pain on certain segments of society and in certain behavior settings. Medical and psychological treatment is much more

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available to the rich than to the poor. The president's chair is more softly padded than the clerk's.

### ***Necessity of Pain***

Without saying very much about it, we all recognize the fact that the conduct of human business must cause pain among those who carry it on. In any large-scale engineering project such as erecting a building, a bridge, or a dam, it is taken for granted by the engineers that a certain number of people will be crippled and a certain number will die. When a large engineering project is completed without a death, engineers congratulate one another. When a stretch of highway is built, it is built with the firm knowledge of all concerned that some of the workmen will be hurt; beyond that, all know that the highway will soon be stained with the blood of some of its users. People enter the profession of medicine with the sure knowledge that a certain number of them must catch the diseases of their patients. People enter business schools and go into high-pressure occupations under the known risk of psychosomatic ailments and various neuroses. Schools are built with the sure knowledge that those who "fail" in them will be psychologically damaged and marked for life.

### ***Inappropriate Pain***

We expect people to encounter pain and damage of certain sorts in certain places: miners in mines, executives in meetings, students in classrooms, spouses in families, motorists on the highways, and soldiers in war. But we do not expect that executives will suffer from cave-ins, spouses from failures on examinations, students from shrapnel wounds, or miners from psychosomatic ulcers; and when they do, we feel that something has gone awry. We are especially likely to be outraged, in brief, when a certain kind of pain occurs in an unaccustomed setting.

### ***What OD Can Do***

Organization development alters the settings in which pains appear and the persons on whom they descend. Furthermore, OD raises questions about the propriety of the previously existing distribution of pain. Beyond that, it challenges the old ways of coping with pain. When undertaking to change the distribution of pain and the ways of coping with it, OD begins with what may be the hardest lesson of all; it begins by asking participants to expose their personal pains in the work group. This in itself, if only because it violates existing norms, is painful. Describing personal pains requires the participants to consider explicitly both in words and actions what sort of pain is being paid for what sort of gain, and by whom. Significant OD cannot occur except through this step. Another way to say all this is that OD does not and cannot merely "improve" organizations in the sense of making the wheels turn a little more quietly. It cannot leave organizations unchanged in their structure or norms and still make them "better." Practitioners of OD are sometimes challenged (and properly) on the point of whether

they are merely making life more comfortable for the bosses—merely giving management still more subtle ways to keep employees pacified. To the extent that practitioners go through superficial motions—such as arranging meetings where the employees are allowed to talk but where pains are not allowed to be shown—the charge is accurate.

### ***Change—Cost and Reward***

To the extent that members of the organization are enabled to uncover their reciprocal human resources, despite the risk of exposing the long resentment of an unproductive task or the grief of revealing a talent long wasted, the work will get done more surely. It will bring deeper satisfactions to workers—but only at the cost, if cost it is, of new relations and a new sharing of duties and powers between workers and bosses. A worker can only put more of himself or herself into the work by finding satisfactions for more of needs. This deeper transformation of the individual's relation to work can occur only if it is supported by a corresponding transformation in the norms and processes of the organization. This deeper transformation puts inevitable stresses on the old ways by which members of organizations have adapted themselves to organizational life. The change will inevitably be painful. And after the change, many people will find themselves facing new pains in new places. Organization development, if effective, will not merely “improve” organizations—it will change them. It will produce new kinds of behavior settings, new kinds of norms, new potentialities, a new scope for achievement. The new way of life, the new collaboration, the new sharing of achievement and defeat, of joy and sorrow, will be exhilarating and fulfilling beyond what most people have known. But the new way will not be placid nor will it arrive comfortably; its price will be the acceptance of pain in unaccustomed places and the effort of learning to use pain in new ways.

## ■ THE PENDULUM SWING: A NECESSARY EVIL IN THE GROWTH CYCLE

**Beverly A. Gaw**

A person involved in the growth process can be thrown off balance by feedback such as “Say, have you changed! You used to be so quiet (cooperative, sweet, etc.). Now you’re loud (difficult, hard, etc.).” The pendulum swing offers a healthy perspective to help surmount this obstacle to continued growth. By providing a developmental framework, it allows negative feedback to be more easily assimilated.

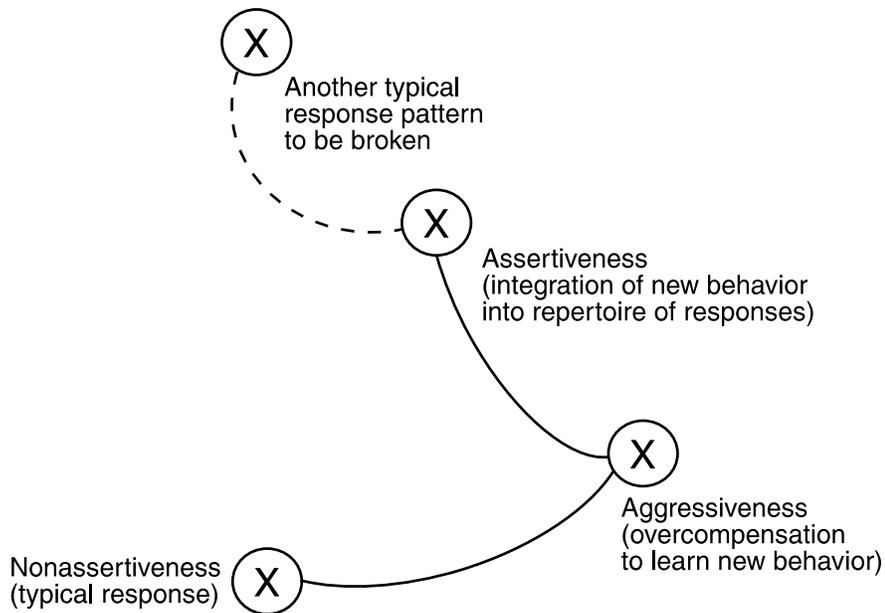
### ***Definition of the Pendulum Swing***

At its most basic level, the pendulum swing is what learning theorists might term a simple matter of overcompensation or overlearning. Although this phenomenon is readily recognized in the development of new motor and memory skills, it is less accepted in the area of personal growth.

In experimenting with and adopting new behaviors and subsequently creating new feelings about the self, a person performs a new behavior that is generally the opposite of that individual’s typical pattern of behavior. For example, if the person is usually nonassertive and decides to develop assertiveness, the pendulum does not swing immediately from nonassertiveness to assertiveness. It first swings from nonassertiveness to aggressiveness (or an insistence on assertive behavior at all times, regardless of necessity and without sensitivity to the unique situational elements and interpersonal needs of a situation). Once the behavior is practiced sufficiently so that it becomes “natural,” i.e., is integrated into the person’s repertoire of available responses, the pendulum centers at assertiveness (or assertive behavior when it is the appropriate response to situational elements and interpersonal needs). However, because a new behavior has been integrated, the pendulum comes to rest at a higher plane; i.e., it transcends both nonassertiveness and aggressiveness. The pendulum repeats this ascending pattern whenever a new behavior is tried out, practiced, and finally synthesized (Figure 1).

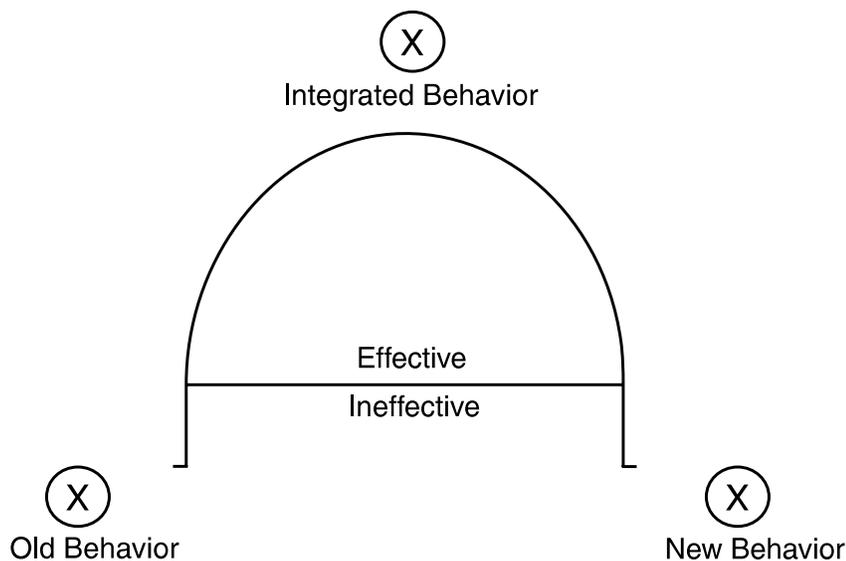
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**Figure 1. The Pendulum-Swing Model**

The pendulum swing can also be illustrated by a curvilinear model (Figure 2). In this model, both ends of the continuum are less effective responses and share similar characteristics. The centered and integrated point, instead, shows a more effective, i.e., appropriate, response to the total situation.



**Figure 2. The Pendulum Swing as a Curvilinear Model**

## DIMENSIONS OF EFFECTIVE AND INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Ineffective (polarized) behavior (both old and new) and effective (centered) behavior can be viewed from several dimensions (Figure 3).

Dimension	Ineffective (Polarized) Behavior		Effective (Centered) Behavior
	<i>Old</i>	<i>New</i>	<i>Integrated</i>
<i>Pattern</i>	<i>Rigid</i>		<i>Flexible</i>
	habitual	planned	spontaneous
<i>Awareness</i>	<i>Partial</i>		<i>Total</i>
	interpreting-acting	intending-acting	sensing-interpreting- feeling-intending- acting
<i>Movement</i>	<i>Lateral</i>		<i>Upward</i>
	static	extreme	transcending
<i>Level of Development</i>	<i>Over</i>		<i>Complete</i>
	overused	overpracticed	synthesized/ integrated
<i>Focus</i>	<i>Partial</i>		<i>Full</i>
	self-preservation	goal	self-other-situation
<i>Response</i>	<i>Coping</i>		<i>Expressive</i>
	reflexive	problem-solving	emerging from self-in-situation
<i>Feelings</i>	<i>Negative/Dissonant</i>		<i>Positive/Consonant</i>
	frustration	anxiety	harmony

**Figure 3. Dimensions and Characteristics of Effective and Ineffective Behavior**

### ***Pattern***

Both the old and the new behaviors share similar characteristics. Although the old behavior is habitual or compulsive (performed without choice) and the new response is consciously planned to occur, both behaviors exhibit rigid patterns of response.

The effective (centered) response is neither habitual nor specifically planned. It arises spontaneously in the situation and is therefore flexible and accommodating.

## ***Awareness***

With both old behavior and new, awareness is only partial. In the old behavior (of the “interpret-act” type), past experience determines present action without utilizing data about the situation or one’s feelings or intentions. The newly developed behavior is the “intend-act” type: What the person wants to do or accomplish primarily directs action.

The centered behavior, on the other hand, is executed with full awareness. Sense data, interpretation of those data, acknowledgment of feelings or emotions, recognition of one’s own and others’ wants are utilized as a basis for the behavior performed.

## ***Movement***

Although the old behavior actually has no movement, being static and unchanging, and the new behavior moves laterally to the extreme or opposite end of the continuum, both the old and new behaviors operate from the same baseline. In contrast, the centered behavior transcends the baseline, going beyond polarities, opposites, and the original continuum.

## ***Level of Development***

An ineffective level of overall development is exhibited by both the old and the new behaviors. The old behavior was overused, while its opposite was underdeveloped; then the new behavior is overpracticed to the point of excluding the old behavior.

In the centered behavior, however, both ends of the continuum have been integrated and synthesized; both behaviors are available for use in the person’s repertoire of responses.

## ***Focus***

Both the old and the new behaviors exhibit a partial, or selective, focus. The old behavior focuses on the preservation of the person’s self-image within the framework of past experience, while the new behavior focuses on the behavioral goal to be attained. Neither takes into account the unique elements of the situation.

The centered behavior exhibits a full focus. There is awareness and acknowledgment of the self and the goal and also of others and the contextual elements of the situation.

## ***Response***

In this dimension, both the old and new behaviors are characteristic of a coping response. The behavior performed in the past is utilized reflexively in the present because it renders consequences more predictable. The new behavior is a goal to be achieved, and problem-solving activity is used as a means to that goal.

The centered behavior is an expressive response. It arises naturally, without conscious planning or direction. At the centered point, it is an integral part of the person-in-the-situation.

### **Feelings**

Negative feelings of dissonance, disharmony, or incongruence are involved in both the old and new behaviors. The old behavior is usually accompanied by vague feelings of frustration with the interaction pattern and its results. When the reason for these feelings becomes apparent, the feelings surface and the time for change has arrived. The new behavior is usually accompanied by feelings of anxiety, discomfort with the unusualness of the behavior, and concern over a less predictable outcome.

The centered behavior is accompanied by positive feelings of consonance, harmony, or congruence: The person is in harmony with self and situation.

### **ILLUSTRATION**

The differing characteristics of the polarized behaviors as they occur before being stabilized in the centered behavior can be illustrated by the move from nonassertiveness (never upholding one's individual rights) through aggressiveness (always upholding one's rights regardless of the context) to assertiveness (upholding one's rights appropriately within the situational context).

Nonassertiveness is a habitual behavior pattern developed over time. For the nonassertive person, options are limited to nonassertive behavior because the person finds it difficult to respond in any other way. Nonassertive behavior is based on partial awareness. Because the old behavior is habitual/compulsive, past experience (interpretation) is the main information utilized in action; i.e., only one possible alternative is seen as viable—nonassertion. Likewise, because options are limited, and the need to experiment and change has not yet been felt, there is virtually no movement. Because only one behavior is available, nonassertiveness is at the level of overdevelopment; it has been executed so often that other behaviors have atrophied, or latent behaviors have not been exercised. The focus is partial because nonassertive behavior concentrates on defending the self in the way it has been functionally defended in the past. Therefore, the behavior is a coping response because it stays with the predictable, or what has worked before. Finally, the feelings accompanying nonassertiveness are dissonant and involve some level of frustration. There is a feeling that something is not quite right, that in some way one is being taken advantage of. When the frustration approaches the level of awareness at which the cause (loss of one's rights) can be identified, the decision to change the pattern can be made.

Once this decision to change is put into effect, acquiring the behavior of assertiveness becomes the objective. However, before assertiveness is achieved as a centered behavior, the pendulum swing through aggressiveness is necessary. Learning a new behavior also involves a rigid pattern, because upholding one's rights must be

consciously planned and directed to be executed. Because asserting is conscious, awareness is only partial, concentrating mainly on the desire to uphold one's rights as the sole basis for action. The movement involves a lateral swing to the extreme, in order to practice the behavior directly opposite from the norm. The behavior is consistently, frequently, and intensely asserting, always upholding one's rights regardless of whether that is the necessary behavior in the present context. Therefore, once again the behavior is at the level of overdevelopment—the overcompensation involved in learning. The focus of aggressiveness is on acquiring a new or underdeveloped behavior, and problem-solving activity characteristic of a coping response occurs: nonassertiveness is no longer seen to be as successful as it once was; the status quo has become undesirable and a goal (assertiveness) is chosen. Because the behavior is new and must be consciously practiced and because the outcome is not as predictable as with the former pattern, feelings of unnaturalness and ambiguity produce dissonance and anxiety.

After the individual has practiced the new behavior for some time, it usually becomes centered in, or a part of the person. The pattern becomes less rigid and more spontaneous and flexible, as it is based on full awareness. The situation is sensed and interpreted with a minimum of reliance on past assumptions; emotions are acknowledged; desires and intentions of self and others are recognized and accommodated. The movement transcends the static and extreme polarities of never asserting and always asserting; the level of development, which now includes both these responses, is synthesized or integrated. At this point, the focus is complete and full, taking in all factors involved in self, other, and situation. With all elements being considered, the behavior is now a natural part of the person's repertoire, and the response is an expressive one, arising naturally from self-in-situation. The person will choose to be assertive or nonassertive, depending on what is necessary and appropriate in the here and now. The consequent feelings—which are based on total awareness, integration of dimensions, and, therefore, a full and sensitive response—are consonant. The options have been increased. The person can choose among more alternatives, and the person, rather than habit or a planned goal, makes the decision. At this point, the new behavior is centered.

## **CONCLUSION**

The important point to stress with this model is that the pendulum swing appears not only to occur in growth but to be necessary to it. Because a new behavior must be desired, chosen, learned, practiced, and developed before it can be integrated, this swing needs to be supported and encouraged. It should be recognized as a natural, necessary, positive stage in the growth spiral. Far too many people become discouraged because they feel anxious when rigidly practicing a new behavior. Negative feedback from others about their new behavior only hinders the growth process; the person may see change as futile. Instead, the growing person needs to be assured that this phase will pass: learning the latest dance or a new language is not “natural” initially either.

The pendulum swing fits into other therapeutic models, especially psychosynthesis and Gestalt, which focus specifically on owning and exercising latent potentialities or personalities. Methods of treatment used by these two psychotherapies can be utilized to accelerate centered behavior by encouraging the pendulum swing from one extreme to the other and by promoting this necessary step in growth with a minimum of conflict.

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## ■ THE EMOTIONAL CYCLE OF CHANGE

### Don Kelley and Daryl R. Conner

Change projects, such as those typically associated with organization development activities, are more likely to meet their objectives when those affected by the change have a general understanding of what to expect in terms of the project's goals, logistics, and rewards. It is equally important, however, to prepare the participants for any emotional shifts that might occur in themselves or others as a result of the project. The responsibility of this preparation lies with the organization development (OD) consultant or change agent. A simple model can be used to explain (1) that significant emotional shifts, which can affect acceptance during organizational change, do occur in people and (2) that these shifts develop in accordance with a predictable sequence of events, thus producing an "emotional cycle of change."

Models of change such as Lewin's (1947) classic unfreezing-change-refreezing proposal and Kubler-Ross's (1969) acceptance sequence in dealing with death (denial-anger-bargaining-depression-acceptance), have been applied predominantly to understanding and managing imposed or unavoidable change and resistance to that change. But people also react emotionally to change that they have chosen or that they see as helpful or useful. The question arises whether the sequence of emotional phases that people experience as a result of voluntary change is different from that produced by imposed change or change entered into unwillingly. By isolating specific types of change and identifying the unique human responses to those situations, it may be possible to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the total spectrum of human reactions to change.

At first glance, it is easy to think that voluntary change is immune to resistance and implementation problems. A good example that this is not true, however, is the dilemma faced by many husbands and wives of former alcoholics. The divorce rate among rehabilitated alcoholics is surprisingly high, especially since in many cases the divorce action is not initiated until after the alcoholic partner has achieved sobriety. After twenty years of emotional and physical abuse, shouldering the responsibility of being both mother and father to the children, being forced to make all the major decisions alone, and praying daily for the time the spouse would no longer be controlled by alcohol, why would a person seek a divorce after the alcoholic had been sober for a year? Perhaps the couple no longer screams at each other about drinking, but they have forgotten how to talk of anything else. The recovering alcoholic spends time with the children now, but the spouse realizes they have different ideas about raising children. They are now both

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Originally published in *The 1979 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators* by John E. Jones & J. William Pfeiffer (Eds.), San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company.

interested in major family decisions, but the spouse begins to wish for the old power of making decisions without a struggle. Although the spouse cannot explain these feelings, discomfort in the new relationship has outweighed guilt, and her or she must get out.

The same dilemma is faced by supervisors who want human relations training for their subordinates, managers who want team building for their work group, or presidents who want OD for their company. All are unaware of a basic axiom of change—any change, positive or negative, in one part of a system will always result in spin-off effects in other parts of the system, which result in increased complexity and difficulty in implementing the change. In other words, change is always tougher than it looks.

Figure 1 shows five distinct phases in a continuum of emotional responses to change. Although the model has many applications to personal types of voluntary change (i.e., marriage, raising children, attending college, starting a new job, etc.), this discussion will focus on OD types of change projects.

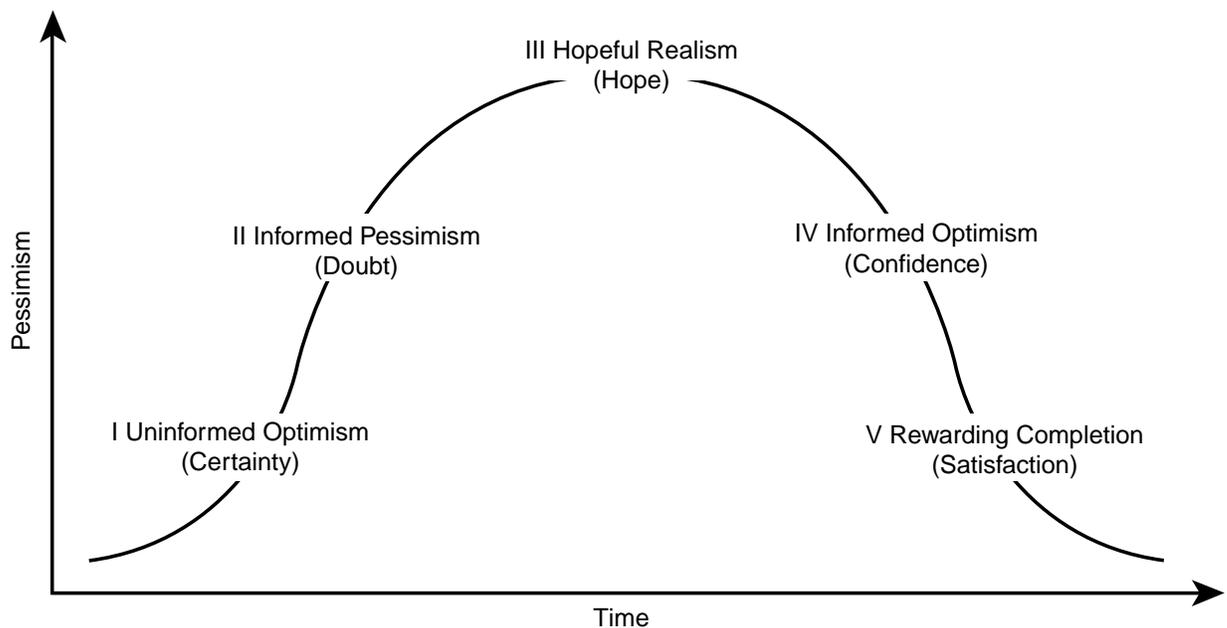


Figure 1. The Emotional Cycle of Change

### **Key Assumption**

The model's focus is on feelings and attitudes as they shift from the certainty of success in the early stages of a change project to satisfaction at the project's completion. Basic to this movement are three statements that form one key assumption critical to the model's formation:

1. When an individual becomes voluntarily involved in a significant change activity or project, the level of positive feeling (optimism) concerning that venture is often directly related to the person's expectations of what will be involved.

2. The more one learns about what is involved in the project, the more pessimistic one may become about one's ability or willingness to accomplish the task.
3. Therefore, the level of pessimism or optimism about the project is a function of the data that are available concerning the task's requirements of the individual or the organization.

## **SEQUENCE OF EMOTIONAL PHASES**

### ***Phase I: Uninformed Optimism***

At the beginning of an OD change project, there is frequently a "honeymoon period" with high hopes among those involved. The project looks great on paper. It appears that all the major obstacles have been identified and planned for. Feelings are running high and morale is at a peak. Such optimism is real and, in fact, very valuable, for without it most people would not embark on major organizational changes such as institutionalizing participatory management concepts, management by objectives, or team building. This initial certainty about the project's success, however, is based on low-data, or uninformed, optimism. Problems and difficulties that will make the task much more complex than it appears early in its life almost certainly exist.

### ***Phase II: Informed Pessimism***

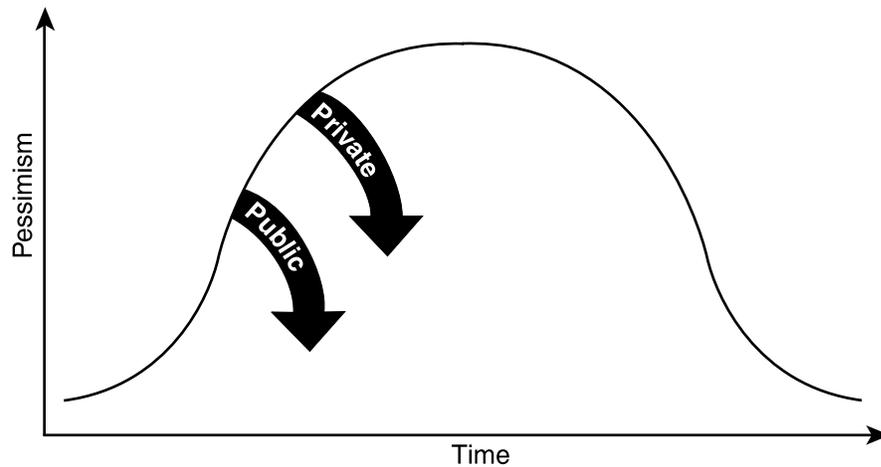
When the change project has developed further, more and more problems surface: unplanned events, the generation of inadequate or distorted data, the development of political resistance, or the lack of the necessary personnel, money, or time to complete the project. Critical problems have been identified, but few solutions are available, and the project may seem unattainable or unrealistic. Morale drops, and people ask themselves why they ever got involved or thought they could accomplish the task in the first place.

This phase is a dangerous one for OD projects. For example, management-by-objectives (MBO) sounds great in the articles, and the uninformed optimism may last even through the initial company-wide orientation training program. Then the real problems begin. An irate manager says, "You mean I actually have to sit with each of my people separately and discuss objectives? I was going to use an interoffice memo. I don't have time for that." Or a frightened subordinate reports, "Well, I tried it, but my boss comes on like a drill sergeant. I don't think my boss knows how to negotiate." These comments are symptoms of learning how difficult the job really is—and the result is usually increased doubt or pessimism.

During this phase, it is natural and even desirable for negative feelings to be generated. The result, however, is usually extreme caution and concern, reflecting the sobering effect of facing reality. The positive energy of the honeymoon is balanced by a negative response to the real problems of implementation. Such a balance must occur before a change project and its participants can mature and succeed. However, if the

negative data increases the pessimism beyond the individual's or organization's tolerance level, a loss of commitment and a withdrawal of personal investment will occur.

There are two primary exit avenues or methods (Figure 2) that people use to “check out” of a project.



**Figure 2. Exit Avenues**

1. *Public withdrawal:* behavior that reflects a high level of pessimism and a low level of project commitment and that is easily observable and recognizable to others. For example, a person may refuse to take part in the MBO process, not develop statements of goals or objectives, or not schedule periodic performance appraisal meetings with subordinates. Or an organization may terminate the project, officially announcing that the MBO project is too time consuming, and withdraw all management support.
2. *Private withdrawal:* emotions that reflect a high level of pessimism and a low level of project commitment and that are not easily observable and recognizable to others. A person may develop only superficial statements of goals or objectives or develop statements that are then filed, never to be seen or used again. An organization may simply lose interest: officially the MBO project is intact, but everyone knows that the management does not really place much importance on it any more.

Although both forms of withdrawal (public and private) have a severe negative impact on the probabilities of a change project's success, private withdrawal is the more dangerous of the two. By definition, public resistance is overt and recognizable and thus easier to acknowledge and manage. Public withdrawal is an open statement of resistance to either the change process, those implementing the project, or the change itself. Such resistance may be appropriate or inappropriate, but, in any case, it can be responded to directly. The more private resistance, however, is never acknowledged externally so that

it can be dealt with openly. Some examples of the internal dialogue that accompanies private resistance might better convey an understanding of the dynamics involved.

<i>Dialogue</i>	<i>Dynamics</i>
“In this company, you just don’t tell the boss his pet idea is causing problems.”	Suppression
“I’ve tried to discuss our problem concerning the change, but they aren’t interested in how we feel.”	Indifference
“The change can’t possibly work and our manager knows it, but she’s afraid if she says anything, she won’t get her promotion.”	Politics
“I really want this change to work, but I can’t seem to find the time to come to the meetings and get involved.”	Ambivalence
“I’m not sure I am up to this job. Every time I try something it backfires on me. I wish I could get reassigned without anyone thinking I blew it.”	Image Maintenance
“I wonder if everyone on this committee is as confused as I am. This approach we’re taking just doesn’t make sense, but I don’t want to rock the boat or give the impression I’m not interested.”	Groupthink
“That’s it! I’m not offering any more ideas on this project. Every time I do, I get put down—who needs it!”	Protection

Because these dialogues are never shared with others, those “checking out” privately often appear to be involved or at least neutral to the change project when, in fact, they have negative feelings. Both avenues of “checking out” are, however, legitimate defense mechanisms; terminating a project or withdrawing from involvement may be the most appropriate behavior, given certain circumstances. But once “checking out” begins among key people involved in the change, the project’s success is severely threatened.

### ***Phase III: Hopeful Realism***

Overcoming the temptation to quit or withdraw requires hope, determination, and support from others, as well as confidence in both self and project. Once the danger area of informed pessimism has been confronted, participants in change usually begin to perceive the project differently, and pessimism declines. It is at this point in the change project that the sense of pushing against problems begins to give way to the sense of flowing with achievement. At this critical turning point comes the awareness that successful completion of the project has shifted from a possibility to a probability—there is light at the end of the tunnel. The project’s problems certainly have not disappeared, but the people involved begin to feel a sense of realistic hope based on

solid reality testing. They have not only survived past problems, but have also developed a new confidence in their capability to handle whatever new problems may surface.

### ***Phase IV: Informed Optimism***

In this phase, optimism continues to develop, based on the growing confidence in self and project. There is a fresh burst of energy linked to overcoming problems and uncertainty and sensing that completion is near. For example, in spite of all the logistical problems and resistance from some key managers, the usefulness of MBO for the organization begins to emerge and become real for the participants, thus increasing everyone's optimism.

### ***Phase V: Rewarding Completion***

At last a successful change has been made, the experience processed, and the project formally closed. The outcome, however, is frequently much different from that anticipated during the first phase. Each phase in the change cycle has had its impact on the perceptions, values, feelings, and needs of those involved. To accommodate for these shifts, the project's ends and means are usually altered accordingly. For example, the MBO project may have started with the focus on objectives for individuals and ended with the focus on work groups. Difficulties in passing through phase II (Informed Pessimism) may have resulted in a delay in the MBO project until trust levels were raised enough to make MBO understandable and desired. In any case, this last phase is characterized by participants feeling rewarded and satisfied with the accomplishment of the task.

## **SUMMARY**

It is useful for the people involved in a change effort to have a general understanding of what to expect at the emotional level of the change experience, in order to prepare them both for the emotional shifting of gears that typically accompanies major change and for any resistance to that change that may occur. Understanding the process provides a method for interpreting and dealing with current behavior and developing more realistic expectations of the future.

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## ■ CREATIVE RISK TAKING

Richard E. Byrd and Jacqueline L. Byrd

### **UNCERTAINTY AND RISK TAKING**

Risk taking has become a necessity for individual and corporate success in a changing world. Surviving in the current business environment is analogous to standing in the surf; as the sand seeps away those who stand still lose their footing. Restructuring in such fundamental industries as health, transportation, communications, and finance adds to the prevailing uneasiness. If mergers and acquisitions are not enough to disrupt a sense of equilibrium, companies in the United States are reorganizing on the average of every eighteen months; in the past, a five-year time frame was more typical. Many managers as well as employees feel their careers and their companies have one foot in the boat and the other foot on shore. All, in fact, share the paradoxes that come with change.

This erosion of business and community infrastructures has increased the sense of anomie and has loosened the bonds of employee loyalty to career corporations. Furthermore, consumers have lost allegiance to brand names, often because these brands failed to deliver value as manufacturers rushed production to increase profits. Crime has invaded even small towns with waves of burglaries, rapes, and robberies. The numbers of people installing security systems is itself a statement about changing times.

Will the stock market regain stability, or will it continue to be volatile, with a life of its own, apart from the classic drivers of the economy, interest rates, or the value of the dollar? Will mortgage rates ever again be predictable? Will product-development cycles continue to be shortened, and will these tougher demands cause neglect of human values and increase burnout in the name of corporate success—or survival? More and faster change means greater uncertainty for all. Rules for success are increasingly unclear and a person's true capacities are often untested when confronted by choices.

Uncertainty is an opportunity for those not afraid to take risks, but it is an enemy to those dominated by fear of failure. Change creates uncertainty; uncertainty leads to possible risk because of unfamiliar choices; and risk fires people up, making them lightheaded or exhilarated, making their adrenaline run faster. Risk creates that special kind of fear that causes the hair to stand up on the back of one's neck. Change creates the opportunity to experience new situations, but people differ in how comfortable and how prepared they feel to take the required personal risks (Moore & Gergen, 1985).

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Fear is the major inhibitor of creative risk taking and each person reacts individually to fear. Keyes (1985) says some people avoid and deny feeling fear; others abuse it for the sake of excitement and self-mastery; and still others try to control it directly in order to put its energy to work. Every reasonable person experiences fear on occasion.

This article describes the nature of personal risk taking. It compares the creative risk taker with the addicted risk taker and addresses the organization's expectations about risk as well as the human resource development (HRD) professional's use of risk taking.

### ***Taking Personal Risks***

Personal risk taking is not gambling. In personal risk taking, outcomes are affected by the individual's skill, talent, judgment, physical condition, and experience. Thus, most managers who are positive about taking risks are not enamored of gambling (March & Shapira, 1987). Personal risk taking then involves individual acts or decisions that exceed ordinary expectations. These may be the expectations of one's family, of coworkers, or even those of society. Personal risk involves more than money; it might involve rejection, career threat, loss of self-esteem, or physical disability. When someone says of the local hero who jumped into freezing waters to save a stranger, "How could he have done that?" it is clear that the boundaries of ordinary expectations were exceeded.

Individuals who generally take greater personal risks than other people are betting on a level of happiness, achievement, love, justice, self-esteem, or satisfaction that promises exponentially greater gains than the potential loss. Examples of such people include Olympic athlete Mary Lou Retton, entrepreneur Donald Trump, intrapreneur Lee Iacocca, politician Jesse Jackson, and Secretary of State George Schultz. All of these people are personal risk takers. Some of them are creative risk takers.

### ***Assessing Risk Taking***

Risk taking is in the eye of the beholder. What appears to be an incredible risk to one person may seem to another to be a natural response to a given set of circumstances. Two recent situations illustrate this point. After discovering that Tylenol packages had been tampered with, executives of Johnson & Johnson pulled all Tylenol from stores, lest the tampering recur and endanger even one more life. They took a short-term high risk for the potential gain of keeping faith with their customers and saving the reputation of a very profitable product. On the other hand, Beechnut executives, after discovering that their apple juice formula for infants lacked apple juice, permitted lawyers to persuade them to ignore the facts and stonewall. They took the long-term risk of losing credibility with their customers in exchange for short-term profits. Who took more risk?

Each person observes and judges risk-taking styles, measuring others by his or her own personal standards. To a reserved person, openness may be seen as high risk taking. Yet a person's lack of openness might limit spontaneous, trusting relationships—

something considered high risk to another person. Consider the case of a vendor who does not let the customer know that the schedule is in trouble. Is that vendor taking a risk? How large a risk? What might happen if the customer were told? One can quickly see that not only are short- and long-term risks pitted against each other, but the perceived degree of either risk will depend on the observer's judgment of the potential to modify the odds against success.

The subjective character of risk taking can be seen in an experiment in which Rowe (1983) sought to determine what words connote what level of risk to whom (Figure 1). Participants were asked to assign a percentage figure to each of the words, quantifying the certainty the word suggested to them. The results of this research are shown in Figure 1, with the numbers representing the mean percent value of the responses.

<b>WORD/PHRASE</b>	<b>LEVEL OF CERTAINTY</b>
1. Almost certainly	90
2. Highly likely	84
3. Very good chance	74
4. Doubtless	82
5. Probable	66
6. Likely	67
7. Believed to	60
8. Doubtful	33
9. Probably	64
10. Improbable	18
11. Unlikely	21
12. Probably not	23
13. Little chance	13
14. Almost no chance	6
15. Could be	51

**Figure 1. Levels of Certainty**

Even people with similar backgrounds differ on the meanings of the words in the list, yet they use these words with others to describe the levels of risk being taken. Differences among participants, friends, and colleagues demonstrate the subjectivity of risk assessment. This phenomenon is supported by the work of March and Shapira (1987), who state that most managers portray themselves as judicious risk takers and less risk averse than their colleagues or their supervisors. On the other hand, their supervisors considered themselves greater risk takers. Risk taking again is subjectively measured in the eye of the beholder.

## **RISK TAKING IN INDIVIDUALS**

### ***Personal Risk Taking As a Trait***

Some investigators believe that risk taking is a partly stable aspect of personality (March & Shapira, 1987). However, more evidence points to the conclusion that risk taking is not a personal trait (Wallach & Kogan, 1964).

A trait is a genetic characteristic or predisposition, something with which a person is born. It is predictable and consistent. What might be considered a risk-taking trait would cause a person to react to all situations in a predictable and consistent manner. Yet each situation faced is unique; one's individual characteristics, combined with the particular factors present in a given situation, create a once-in-a-lifetime event. Consistent and predictable risk taking then is not a trait; it is more accurately termed addicted risk taking.

Addicted risk taking is more obvious in those who take risks for thrill, for the excitement engendered by the unknown or dangerous. Who wants to work for a manager who takes personal or organizational risks for thrills? On the other hand, few want a supervisor who, when feeling the thrill, consistently backs away. Consistency thus is the hobgoblin of risk taking. It proves only that a person is not considering all the facts. Addicts—whether they are addicted to sex, drugs, money, caution, or thrills—are dangerous to everyone. Creative risk takers, on the other hand, consider the facts and trust their intuition.

### ***Creative Risk Takers***

Creative risk takers are those who do not pursue risk for its own sake, but rather invest their resources, their lives, and their companies for an appropriate return, an accomplishment of value to them. They are not gamblers; they take risks only when they have some control over the outcome.

Research has shown that intelligence, ability to handle stress, strong religious faith, personal security, and high self-esteem are common attributes of creative risk takers (Byrd, 1974; Skrzycki, Horn, Moore, Golden, Linnon, & Dworkin, 1987). These characteristics seem to fortify individuals to cope with uncertainty. Creative risk takers are less controlled than others by irrational levels of fear. They seldom see failure as something from which they cannot recover. They are self-directed enough to tolerate rejection, albeit painfully at times. These are people who take responsibility for their actions and seldom are afraid of true success with its continual burden of decision making.

Creative risk takers are more likely to have honed their judgment on previous experiences from which they truly learned. For this reason, corporations rarely leapfrog employees from lower to higher positions, even in exceptional cases. Bypassing the development process increases risks for the inexperienced, almost assuring failure.

Creative risk takers also tend to control the odds. They set limits on their losses, not risking more than they can afford to lose (Byrd, 1982). Realizing that stress distorts judgment, creative risk takers seek input from knowledgeable people; they weigh risks on the scale of their own fears before taking action (Keyes, 1985). Although stress creates pressure and affects judgment, creative risk takers are less likely to have delusions. These are not people who believe winning is always “just around the corner.” They do not volunteer for the toughest job regardless of its chances for success. In acting or deciding to act, creative risk takers are realistic in appraising people and circumstances, including themselves.

### ***High- and Low-Risk Takers***

All people have a certain risk-taking propensity; their decisions and acts tend to be higher or lower in risk within a relatively consistent range. For example, a person who risked changing employers once is more likely to take the chance again. The person who has worked for the same company for twenty years is unlikely to seek employment elsewhere unless the pain of staying outweighs the risk of leaving. Some people change jobs every few years, considering it part of their growth process;<sup>1</sup> for these people, new jobs bring opportunities to meet people, to learn, and to experience other challenges and responsibilities. To other people, changing jobs may mean loss of self-esteem, feelings of incompetence, and a loss of friends and predictability. One person’s challenge is another’s threat.

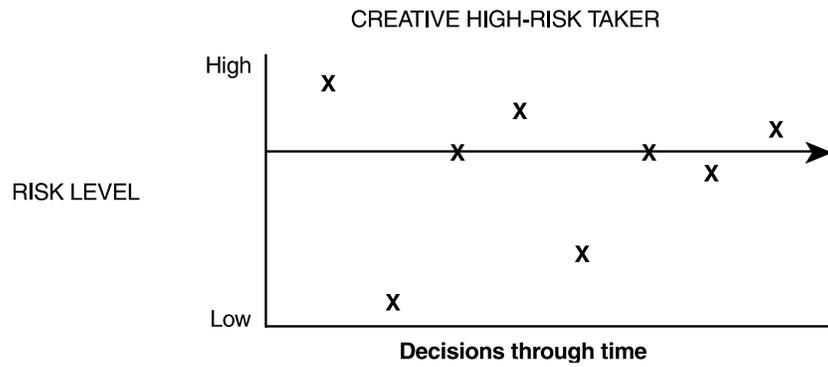
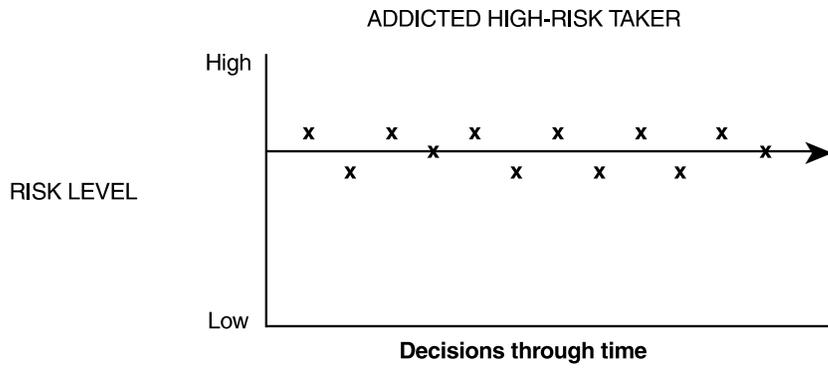
The following diagram (Figure 2) illustrates the differences between the *addicted* high-risk taker and the *creative* high-risk taker. An addicted high-risk taker, as represented in the upper part of the figure, is consistent in the level of risk taken. A creative high-risk taker, as represented in the lower part of the figure, chooses a level of risk based on circumstances, rewards, punishment, and odds. Both addicted and creative high-risk takers have central tendencies, as depicted by the line through each diagram.

The same principle applies when one considers the addicted low-risk taker and creative low-risk taker (Figure 3).

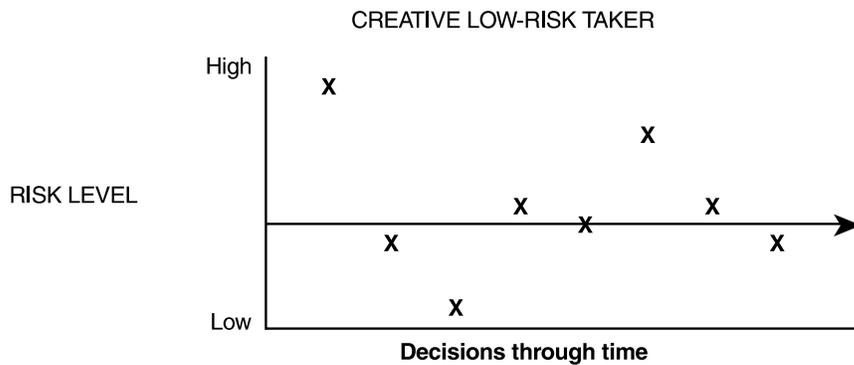
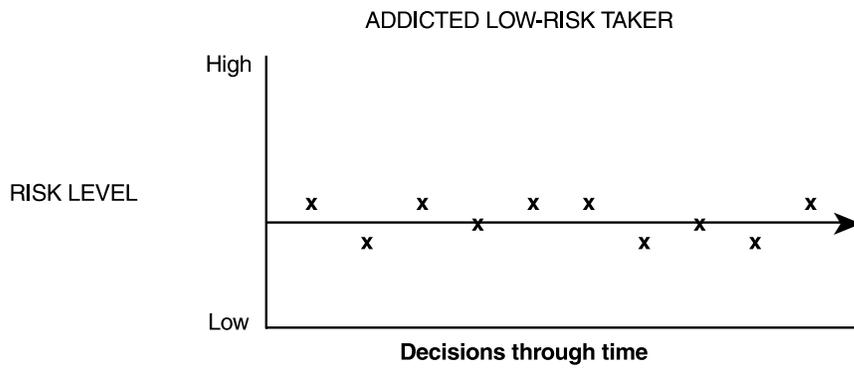
Addicted high- or low-risk takers venture the same personal risk in every situation. On the other hand, the creative risk taker—high or low—will almost never choose the same level of personal risk. Individuals who are creative risk takers have a general bias toward or against greater risk taking; the same holds true for organizations. For example, Federal Express takes a variety of risks in the name of progress, inventing new services, products, or distribution methods. In contrast, the U.S. Postal Service is bound by conservative rules, traditions, and labor agreements and thus cannot and does not take comparable risks.

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<sup>1</sup> For further exploration of the power of planned personal growth, see *Creating Your Future* by G.A. Ford & G.L. Lippitt, published by and available from Pfeiffer & Company.



**Figure 2. Addicted Versus Creative High-Risk Takers**



**Figure 3. Addicted Versus Creative Low-Risk Takers**

## **RISK TAKING IN ORGANIZATIONS**

### ***Organizations with Risky Missions***

One could make a case that people either are attracted to or repelled by organizations with risky missions. Are those organizations or people necessarily addicted to risk? Think about tightrope walkers, aerial-steel connectors working on high bridges, emergency workers in electrical companies, local rescue squads, or police and fire departments. Although some higher-order motivation is served by choosing such occupations, most of these people know that working with people who are consistently high- or low-risk takers could be hazardous to their health. No police officer wants a trigger-happy partner. No high-bridge worker wants a fearless supervisor.

Authors such as Keyes (1985) accept thrill seekers as a legitimate category of risk takers. They describe these people as motivated by their fears, abusing fear for the sake of action, change, excitement, freedom, intensity, speed, and variety. However, these people also can be seen as risk addicts who place themselves and their organizations in jeopardy for the satisfaction of feeding their addiction.

### ***The Need for Greater Risk Taking***

Many corporate culture change processes have demanded, both explicitly and implicitly, greater personal risk taking from managers. Such newly aggressive companies include IDS Financial Services under its new owner, American Express; First Bank Systems in its centralization process; and Minnesota's largest hospital company, the newly merged Health One Corporation. These examples represent only a smattering of what has happened to U.S. business and industry. In recent times, ordinary employees and managers live in a shifting paradigm, that of change versus status quo. They no longer have implicitly understood criteria to assess the degree of personal risk taking that their managers will tolerate from them on behalf of the company. The old rules were easier to follow (or to deviate from) because everyone knew them: stay within budget, squeeze for short-term profit, and be predictable.

In the past, government regulations inhibited risk taking in some industries (see Figure 4). Today's picture is changing, however, to one of deregulation, in which survival depends on the introduction of new or timely products of better quality and lower cost, as well as on better distribution or a unique market position. Greater risks are being demanded; the matrix box of low regulation and higher competition increasingly is the home of the many rather than the few (Figure 5).

These diagrams (Figures 4 and 5) point out the changing situation and the new demands on the ordinary worker and manager. If industries are to compete successfully in the United States, not to mention in world markets, they must take more short-term risks for long-term gains. Some companies are talking a good game; others are doing it. The "Big Board" is keeping score.

		COMPETITION	
		Low	High
REGULATED	High	Communications Airlines Utilities Hospital/Health Government	Banks Alcohol and tobacco Trucking Insurance Securities Drugs
	Low	Smokestake Medical profession Legal profession Architects After-market companies	Computer Defense contractors Consumer products Automobiles

Figure 4. Regulation and Competition in the Past

		COMPETITION	
		Low	High
REGULATED	High	Utilities Government	Alcohol and tobacco Trucking Drugs Oil and gas companies
	Low	After-market product companies	Communication Insurance Securities Banks Hospital/Health Consumer products Defense contractors
			Computer Smokstake Advertising Professionals Automobiles Airlines

Figure 5. Regulation and Competition in the Present

## TRANSFORMING THE ORGANIZATION

### Individual/Organization Relationships

Why people work; what they believe about people; and their attitudes toward ethics, achievement, and teamwork are rooted in their personal and educational histories before they begin work. Later shaping and honing are accomplished through experiences, both negative and positive, that motivate them. Corporations also condition or shape values and expectations. What have organizations shaped people to do—to risk or not to risk?

In the past, no business book with the title *Thriving on Chaos* (Peters, 1987) would have made the best-seller list. However, modern corporations need to deal with uncertainty as well as to adapt and to innovate. It is clear that reasonable, creative risks to master uncertainty produce positive results for individuals and for their corporations. Managers can build strong self-esteem, especially if their results are positive at least 50 percent of the time. Fewer tasks are neglected, fewer self-serving games are tolerated, and questionable ethics is less a problem (Byrd, 1974). Schedules are met, promises are kept, and customers are better served.

Although all people have certain propensities for personal risk taking, empirical studies indicate that preference varies with context. Therefore, organizations that expect managers to “make things happen” must create an environment that supports and fosters risk taking (March & Shapira, 1987). Creative risk taking is encouraged in an environment that does not punish people who try and fail, one that expects and accepts mistakes, one that values differences in perspectives, one that provides the resources necessary to create success (Moore & Gergen, 1985). Creative risk taking is a crucial element in change, transition, and intrapreneurship. In turn, fear of risks is a key factor in resistance to change, both for managers who need to decide whether or not to initiate change as well as for employees required to adapt to change (Byrd, 1974). Therefore, the question arises as to whether intrapreneurship actually can be created in organizations or if it requires waiting for the few natural, internal entrepreneurs to come along (Moore & Gergen, 1985).

### ***Fostering Risk Taking in Organizations***

Matching an individual’s propensity to take personal risk with an organization’s willingness to support risk is a delicate matter. As a first step, managers must understand their own risk-taking styles and those of the people who work for them. People differ in their comfort levels and readiness to take risks. The sensitive manager knows and accepts these differences by promoting an environment that allows people to feel secure and accepted as they confront the riskiness of change or choice.

In 1971, Richard Byrd developed the Creativity and Risk Taking (C&RT) Creatrix Inventory<sup>2</sup> to help individuals explore their own risk-taking tendencies and how these tendencies affect the organization. This questionnaire has helped both managers and employees to understand one another better and to create an environment that nurtures creativity in the midst of change. The instrument has been used by over seventy-five companies, government agencies, and not-for-profit organizations in the United States and Canada.

Questionnaire data project the respondent into one of eight zones on a matrix, each representing a risk taking/creativity style. Assessing the risk-taking and creativity style

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<sup>2</sup> C&RT (Creativity and Risk Taking): The Creatrix Inventory is published by and available from Pfeiffer & Company.

of individuals in organizations can help to explain why some organizations stagnate and die, others take excessive risks and end in bankruptcy, and still others succeed (Byrd, 1982).

The eight zones of the matrix are represented in Figure 6. The C&RT zones indicate general tendencies rather than a stable personality type. Although the instrument is continually in the process of reevaluation and revalidation, thus far the zones have been more stable than expected.

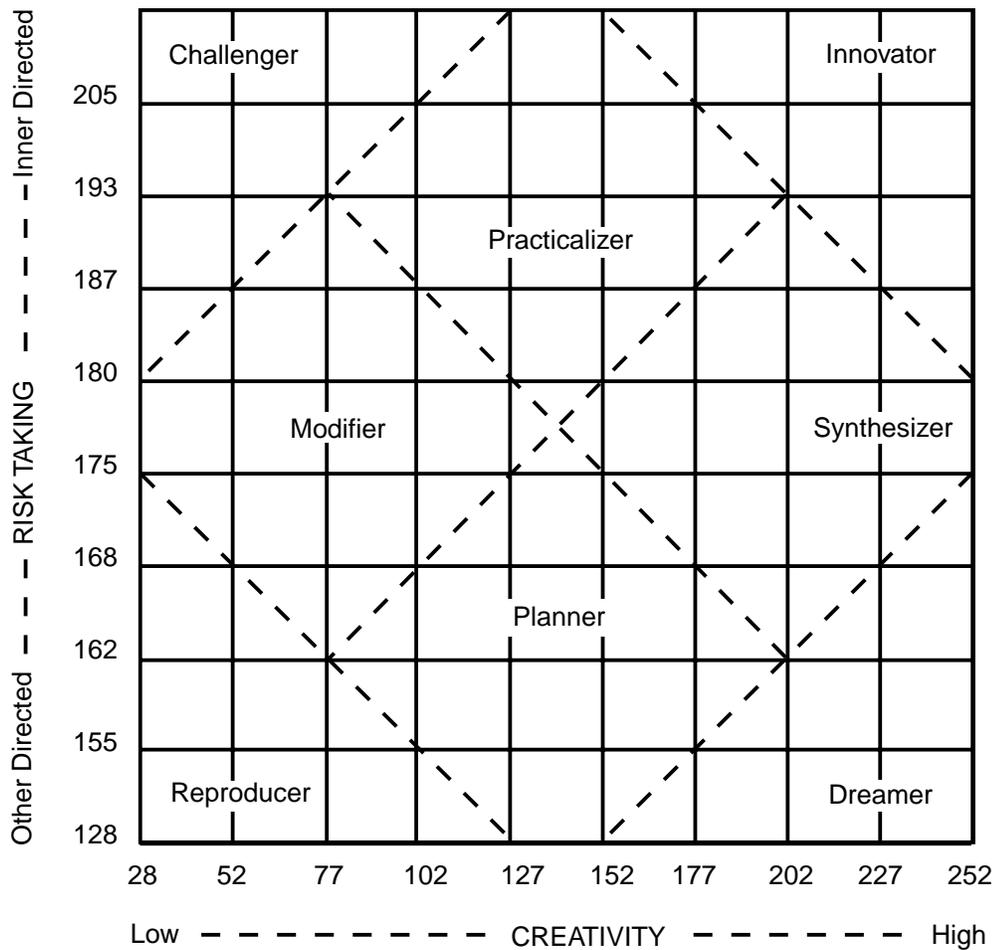


Figure 6. The Creatrix

If the first step in fostering creative risk taking is understanding one's own personal risk-taking style as a manager and the styles of one's subordinates, the next step is to put this understanding into action. Not all organizations can tolerate high risk takers, even creative ones. Those who are in organizations that do not reward or forgive employees who take reasonable risks should not take many risks if they want to remain with that organization. Often the unwritten rules determine the limits of risk possible. Creative risk takers assess situations realistically and take the greatest reasonable risk, realizing that corporate risks are essential in today's environment.

## ***Personal Initiatives***

Personal initiative is the key to the following seven strategies, designed to help employees encourage their organizations to move toward a greater level of creative risk taking. Regardless of one's individual style according to the C&RT, a person can take these steps:

*Personal initiative 1.* Diagnose the unwritten rules of the organization, as well as one's own rules, to determine tolerable limits on personal risk taking.

*Personal initiative 2.* Build a power base; for example, become more competent technically, more skilled interpersonally, or more connected to the power network.

*Personal initiative 3.* Be prepared to exceed expectations of acceptable organization behavior. A low personal risk taker must assume "immaculate perception" on major issues until proven wrong. This action will compensate for any self-doubt; at most, such a person will appear to others to be modestly self-confident.

*Personal initiative 4.* Know when to admit defeat and cut losses. However, beware of the predilection toward built-in fear (Jeffers, 1987). Owning up is rarely a true risk; rather it is a short-term risk for long-term potential gain of building trust.

*Personal initiative 5.* Take short-term loss for long-term gain. For instance, tell customers the truth; lose face if necessary to preserve the relationship; or work with someone who grabs credit if it gets the job done.

*Personal initiative 6.* Observe the obvious. Delusion of self and the organization may be the worst enemies of success in today's business world. Saying the unsayable often prevents disaster even though it causes some immediate pain.

*Personal initiative 7.* Break rules to get the job done. However, breaking the spirit of corporate policy should be approached very carefully. Individuals should never risk more than they, their supervisors, or their companies can afford to lose.

## ***THE ROLE OF THE CONSULTANT IN CHANGE***

A trainer or consultant is always involved in the process of change. Regardless of the object of change, the change agent is the primary tool. Books, techniques, role plays, simulations, and team-building skills are all part of the process. More than twenty years of organization development experience confirms that trust begets trust, candor begets candor, seeking feedback begets reciprocal requests, and a lack of defensiveness begets self-examination. In other words, the consultant must model the desired behavior. He or she must know, be, and do what others are being asked to become. Thus the change agent, by definition, must take more personal risk than the ordinary manager or individual contributor.

Consultants therefore take tremendous risks by not risking. They may lose contracts by being perceived as not value added. Avoiding personal risk can undermine long-term

goals of real change; if the consultants do not “walk their talk,” they will not establish credibility. Such inconsistencies make the consultant/trainer role that of entertainer rather than change agent.

Not being risk averse is also risky. As change agents, taking totally unnecessary risks may defeat the change-agent role. Such things as doing one’s homework with regard to the client, managing the environment toward a positive outcome, getting as much information from the client as is needed, preparing carefully, considering alternatives and developing one’s approach with the client are all risk-averse behaviors. They serve as the net beneath the high wire. Once on the wire or in the situation, the consultant must take all personal risks necessary to achieve the objective.

However, consultants need to be wary of taking more risk than the clients can handle. As an esteemed associate once said, “You can’t exceed the system’s openness norms more than .5 and still be seen as credible.” Highly overt expressions of trust, openness, candor, and vulnerability can appear to be false or manipulative. The change agent has to behave at a level of personal risk that the client system can tolerate. As a client once complained, “You mainline on this stuff. Give me a chance to catch up. Right now I’m just scared to death.” Such a reaction can undermine the consultant’s efforts; it is best therefore not to risk more than the client can afford to lose or the consultant might lose the client.

## **SUMMARY**

The nature of personal risk taking is situational, not a gamble, not genetic, and always in the eye of the beholder. This application of the concept of risk taking has been limited to a narrow but significant area—that of the work place that shapes values by rewarding, protecting, and giving a relative sense of making a contribution. This sense of contributing is threatened by the speed of change and the lack of a clear and obvious direction in most enterprises. Uncertainty creates a need for creative risk-taking norms that are higher than U.S. business and industry ever has sought or rewarded in the past. Industries are beginning to address the need for greater personal risk taking and to use instruments such as the C&RT to match individual and corporate styles. The personal initiatives outlined are designed to promote creative risk taking in organizations. These same initiatives, combined with the usual consultant skills, ethics, and willingness will increase a consultant’s effectiveness as an agent of transformation or change.

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## ■ OVERCOMING MIND TRAPS: SELF-CHANGE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE HRD PROFESSIONAL

**Tom Rusk**

All things change, but only people can choose to change themselves. Active change—self-change—is different from the passive process of erosion and shaping caused by time and changing external conditions. In active change, individuals consciously and deliberately decide to innovate with themselves; then they experiment with novel behaviors strategically designed and value driven to satisfy their goals to a greater extent than their former behaviors did.

Professionals in the field of human resource development (HRD) have a special concern with active individual change. All forms of training are individual-change enterprises, even when accomplished through group processes. For example, no organization can change its patterns of customer service or any other facet of its operation unless its individual members change; and organizational change is more likely to occur when a company's individual members are motivated to change and are skilled at self-change. The better HRD professionals understand what encourages and what interferes with self-change, the more effective they can be not only in fostering their own growth but also in helping others to improve their personal and professional lives.

This article describes the process that an individual completes in undertaking self-change:

1. Recognizing one's debilitating "mind traps" (self-defeating attitudes), which are linked to a self-doubting identity;
2. Deciding to change the self-doubting identity;
3. Enduring the identity crisis that accompanies the practice of new attitudes and behaviors that are more compassionate and self-respecting than former ones; and
4. Achieving a more productive, more satisfying, self-accepting identity by persisting in these new attitudes and behaviors.

In conclusion, the article presents implications for the HRD professional as change agent.

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## **RECOGNIZING MIND TRAPS AND DECIDING TO CHANGE**

Mind traps are self-defeating attitudes generated by self-doubt. Self-doubt is pervasive in many people's lives; it affects their fundamental beliefs about themselves. Self-doubt is what causes many talented people to be dissatisfied with themselves and their lives. For example, when they are complimented on their talents or their abilities, they feel uncomfortable and attempt to explain away the evidence.

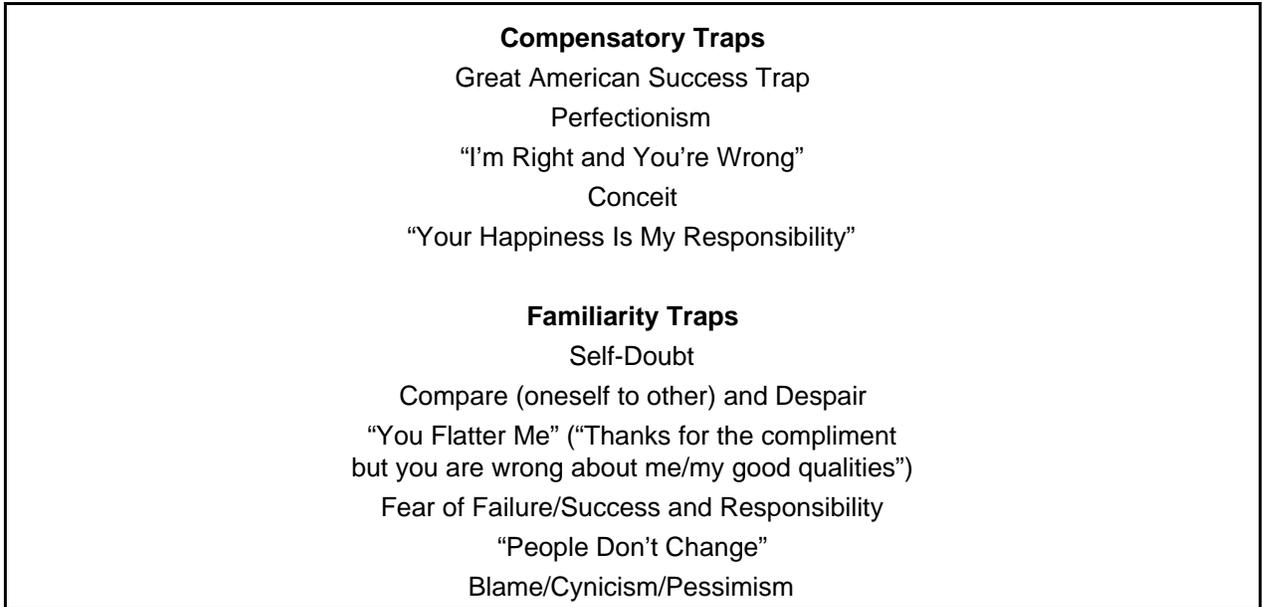
Given the fact that self-doubt is disturbing, why is it that so many people cling to it? Those who experience self-doubt have never known another way of thinking. Their self-doubt functions as an uncomfortable but safe harbor from two alternative dangers: (1) a terrifying sense of worthlessness and (2) the fear and awkwardness associated with attitudes and behaviors that have never been tried. To these individuals it is better to harbor some doubt about their worth than to be thoroughly convinced they are worthless or to try new ways of thinking and acting that are totally foreign.

Thus, there are two kinds of mind traps (Figure 1), each of which serves a fear-reducing function:

1. *Compensatory* mind traps are attempts to reassure oneself that one is not irreparably flawed. These mind traps prevent self-doubt from growing into a feeling of worthlessness. One example is "the great American success trap," an obsessive pursuit of success at exorbitant cost to oneself and others. Other examples of compensatory mind traps are conceit; perfectionism beyond the necessity of the task; and a compulsive need to please others or to obtain their approval, even at the cost of losing self-respect.
2. *Familiarity* mind traps are attempts to reassure oneself that one is the person one has always believed oneself to be. Inherent in this way of thinking is the notion that self-doubt is preferable to change because change entails the loss of one's familiar identity, and it is terrifying not to know who one is. Examples of familiarity mind traps include a tendency to compare oneself unfavorably with others, difficulty in believing honest compliments, and reluctance to commit oneself fully and to try eagerly.

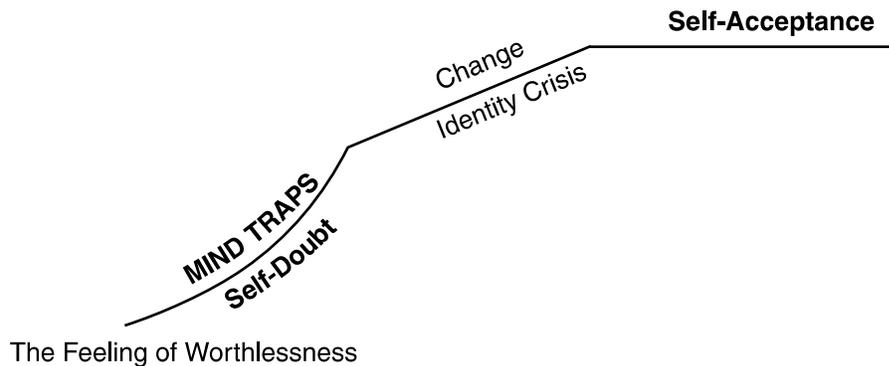
The two kinds of mind traps can drive people to try to prove they are good at something and yet refuse to believe it when they succeed. A typical example of someone with this conflict is a diligent student who panics before an exam; receives her usual "A"; and then explains away her success, saying "I'm not that smart. The grading was easy, and the teacher just happened to ask the questions I had prepared for."

In essence, mind traps allow one to say to oneself, "I'm not worthless, but I'm not that great, either. I'm just who I've always believed I am." They keep a person sliding down and scrambling up the slippery slope of self-doubt in continual fear of falling into the feeling of worthlessness at one end and catapulting into an identity crisis at the other (see Figure 2). Mind traps keep people from realizing their potentials, from having compassion for their own pain, and from acting with self-respect. As a result, self-acceptance and well-being are impossible.



**Figure 1. Examples of Compensatory and Familiarity Mind Traps**

Any of several different sources can evoke thoughts of change. For example, friends, loved ones, or coworkers may express concern about my obvious unhappiness. I may widen my perspectives by reading extensively or by associating with new companions; either of these sources may make me see life differently and want something better for myself. I may even experience a more immediate and compelling reason to change, such as the threat of being fired, a heart attack, or a stroke. Regardless of how thoughts of change arise, the determination, desperation, and/or inspiration to change always comes from within. Those who are successful at escaping mind traps are the ones who make the leap of faith in themselves that is necessary to empower themselves to change their self-defeating attitudes and behaviors and to accept their own worth.



**Figure 2. How Mind Traps Reinforce Self-Doubt and Prevent Growth**

## **PRACTICING NEW ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS: ENDURING AN IDENTITY CRISIS**

All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy; for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter into another!

Anatole France  
*The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard*, 1881

Throughout their lives people change themselves; they learn how to ride a bicycle, how to speak a foreign language, or how to use the skills of a profession. Everyone has experienced the difficulties involved in learning something new. These difficulties have to do in part with the complexity of the skills involved. But another part of the struggle involved in learning is attributable to relinquishing a familiar identity and becoming someone different. The urge to cling to the former self is known as the familiarity principle: it is uncomfortable to act or to be treated in unfamiliar ways.

The phrase “comfort zone” is sometimes used to describe habits, actions, and feelings that are familiar; but “comfort zone” is a misnomer. Although people consciously prefer comfort to discomfort, the familiarity principle has far more influence over behavior than the pleasure principle. When given a choice, people are likely to choose pleasure over pain, unless they are unaccustomed to pleasure and accustomed to pain. People usually do what is familiar, not what is more logical, comfortable, or beneficial. As they move from malleable and impressionable childhood into adolescence and beyond, they live in increasingly predictable familiarity zones of their own creation.

Overcoming this familiarity principle in order to adopt a new identity is one of life’s most difficult challenges. A person can become distressed by change even when he or she knows that the change is for the better, as is the case with graduating from school, receiving a promotion, or getting into shape. The old self does not leave willingly. The old self desperately wants to survive, no matter how unhappy it is, and it fights tenaciously to preserve itself. (The same is true of organizations, as any organizational-change agent can attest.) This habitual self can be so insistent that some individuals tortured by self-hatred and emotional pain may even resort to suicide because they cannot imagine being able to change themselves and feel better.

Identity determines destiny. Who I believe I am, for example, determines how I observe the world and affects everything I do. All of my experiences and actions pass through the filter of my familiar identity—how I am accustomed to acting, how I am accustomed to feeling about myself, and how I am accustomed to being treated. This means that behaving or being treated in ways that are inconsistent with my experience will make me feel awkward and artificial and will plunge me into an identity crisis.

How one reacts to an identity crisis can mean the difference between success and failure in trying to change. For example, a successful but lonely and unfulfilled workaholic executive may begin a change effort to take better care of himself; to

become involved in recreational activities; and to treat his wife, children, friends, and colleagues at work with greater respect. In doing so he stops bullying people with his explosive temper. But people’s reactions to his new behavior make him feel strange. Some people act unusually warm toward him; others are obviously wary of his uncharacteristic attitude. His new behavior makes him feel like a good person; this perception, inconsistent with his lifelong self-doubt, causes him to feel like a hypocrite. He finds himself in the midst of an extremely uncomfortable identity crisis. Then, instead of enduring the crisis and the period of discomfort necessary for change, he finds that his familiar identity keeps reasserting itself in eruptions of habitual behavior patterns until eventually he settles back into his old identity.

The Chinese word for “crisis” is an apt combination of two characters: danger and opportunity. Unfortunately, when faced with the identity crisis essential to any significant personal change, many people are so intimidated by the danger that they miss the opportunity. The person who feels awkward and proud while trying to change—and who persists despite the discomfort of an identity crisis—is on the right track.

### ***The Nature of the New Attitudes and Behaviors***

The shift from self-doubt to self-acceptance depends far more on the practice of particular, value-driven attitudes and behaviors than it does on achievements. These attitudes and behaviors—compassionate self-observation as opposed to self-consciousness, visualization, behaviors that satisfy personal needs and generate self-respect, and enthusiasm—are described in the following paragraphs.

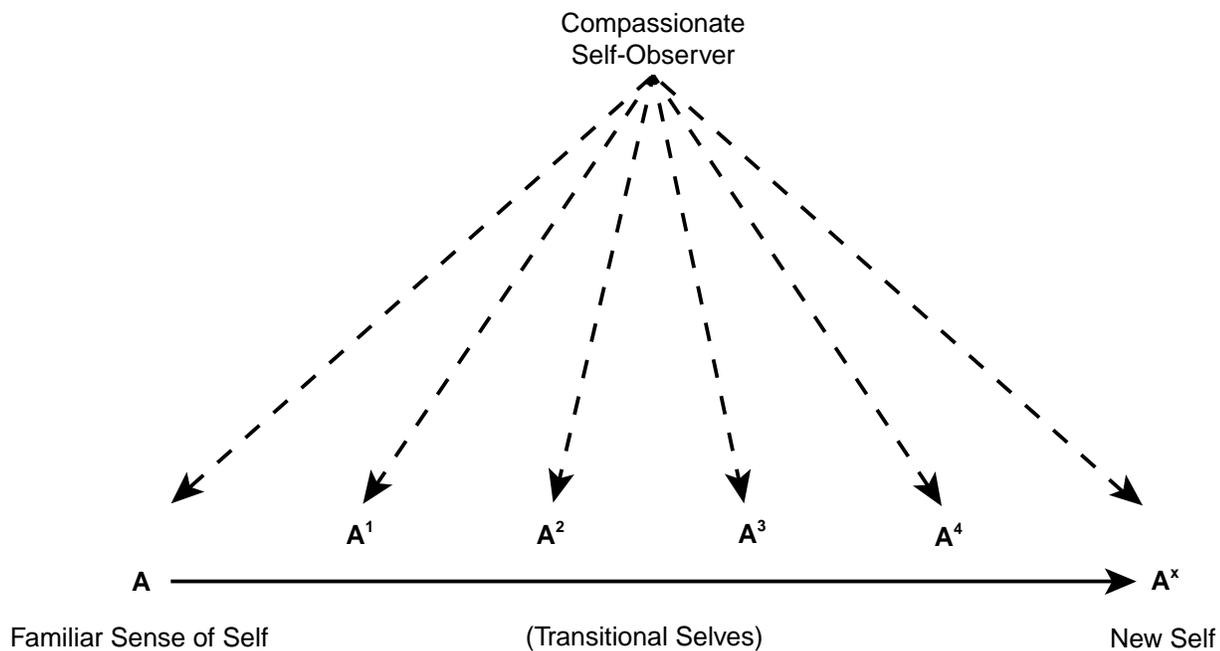
### ***Compassionate Self-Observation Versus Self-Consciousness***

Self-initiated, self-directed change is a paradox that comes from having to be both the agent and the object of change. Achieving success means that the person who initiated the change no longer exists (see Figure 3).



**Figure 3. The Paradox of Self Changing Self**

The solution to the paradox of self-change resides in the human capacity to self-observe. People have the ability to divide their attention; they can stand back and observe themselves while doing something else. This capacity to observe the acting self enables a person to consider the impact of the familiar identity, to conceive of becoming different, to investigate various new identities, and to choose one enticing enough to warrant experimenting with change (see Figure 4).



**Figure 4. The Role of the Self-Observer in Self-Transformation**

Self-observation is different from self-consciousness. The process of abandoning one's familiar identity necessitates a struggle to avoid self-consciousness. Unless a deliberate effort is made to avoid it, self-consciousness will make someone undergoing change feel so uncomfortable when trying new behaviors that he or she may start to have thoughts like "Who are you trying to kid, acting as if you're someone different from the person you've always been?" Self-consciousness keeps the self-observer in the full-time employ of the familiarity principle, loyally working to maintain the habitual identity.

A person can overcome self-consciousness by developing self-awareness that is first objective and then eventually compassionate, supportive, and even enthusiastic. People cooperate most with those who show concern about them and who are interested in helping them develop their talents; therefore, it follows that if I learn to appreciate my own talents, sensitivities, and vulnerabilities, I will give myself the best chance at self-change.

A good model for a positive self-observer who can help in the change and growth processes (a compassionate mentor, unfortunately a rarity in private or public-sector organizations) is any of the spiritual founders of the great religions of the world, who have urged people to emphasize the best in themselves and others and to have compassion for human failings. Another, perhaps less awesome or intimidating model might be a kindly grandparent or a tough coach with a gentle heart—someone who has seen and heard it all; who is fooled by nothing, but can understand and forgive anything; who has more faith in the changing person's potential than that person has; and who expects that person to give himself or herself a better chance in the future.

Adopting a consistently compassionate self-observer is the most difficult step of the self-change process. Compassion for oneself conflicts with self-doubt; doubting one's worth makes it hard to believe that one deserves compassion and to be cheered on to a better life. But by developing a compassionate self-observer, a person completes the most crucial step of the change process and overcomes the two major obstacles to self-change: the self-changing-self paradox and the fear of losing a familiar identity. The compassionate observer functions as a "sub-self" within a person, a resource to turn to and to rely on while changing for the better. This resource then becomes the dependable, guiding part of the self. Unlike the familiar identity, the compassionate self-observer is not lost in the process of self-change; it remains as a source of support, urging the nurturing of the *spirit* (a person's unique hereditary endowment of energy needs, talents, sensitivities, and will).

### **Visualization**

The technique of visualization involves devising mental pictures of behaving/thinking/being a desired way. This technique works best if the image brought to mind is "specific, clear, controlled, positive, active, simple, repeated, and self-rewarding" (Byrum, 1989). Many successful athletes and musicians have demonstrated the effectiveness of this "rehearsal" by seeing themselves over and over again in the act of optimal performance. Also, there are accounts of seriously ill people who have used visualization successfully to better their conditions (by repeatedly picturing themselves as healthy, strong, and free of disease). The application of this technique in self-change is particularly appropriate; the more the self-observer visualizes a new, preferred identity, the more likely the person is to achieve that identity.

### **Behaviors That Satisfy Personal Needs and Generate Self-Respect**

The first stage of any change requires a person to play a role. For example, if I were unable to type, I would sit at a keyboard, practicing and pretending to be a typist; if I were unable to ski, I would make stilted efforts at copying the motions of accomplished skiers; and if I were unable to speak a foreign language, I would mouth the words of that language in imitation of native speakers.

This deliberate, difficult, and awkward stage of practicing continues until the new behavior is no longer an act. To accomplish self-change, people must change *how they are and who they believe they are*. Change in self-concept comes only after a great deal of practice in acting like a different person.

New behaviors must *satisfy personal needs and generate self-respect*. To persist at self-change, one must be more concerned about what one's spirit needs than about what others think; one must feel right about the change and be willing to take loving responsibility for one's own needs. Self-respect comes from sincere efforts to do something worthwhile. The more difficult and frightening the challenge and the harder one tries—regardless of whether success is achieved—the more self-respect one earns. Challenging oneself is important for another reason as well: innate abilities, which are

part of one's spirit, cry out to be exercised and refined. If they are not used, one feels the discomfort (boredom and loss of self-respect) that comes from wasting talents.

## ***Enthusiasm***

The interval between the decay of the old and the formation and establishment of the new constitutes a period of transition, which must always be one of uncertainty, confusion, error, and wild and fierce fanaticism.

John C. Calhoun

*A Disquisition on Government*, 1850

The more passionately one throws oneself into the affectation of a new identity, the better one is at visualizing oneself as the new person, the more successful one is at suspending disbelief about being the new person, and the less self-conscious one is, then the more quickly one becomes skillful at new behaviors. Emotional intensity helps to neutralize the self-conscious fears of making mistakes, of humiliating oneself, and of risking the unknown. Whether that intensity comes from indignation about what has been endured and resented for too long or simply from whole-hearted enthusiasm to try something different, strong feelings are necessary to overcome the inertia produced by one's own habitual expectations as well as those of others.

Children's capacity to set aside their fledgling identities and to lose themselves in more romantic and satisfying fantasies has a great deal to do with how quickly they learn, change, and grow. Adults who emulate this childlike curiosity and excitement are those who keep growing. Shedding the habitual identity and its self-consciousness and immersing oneself in a new challenge requires a willingness to feel somewhat anxious and out of control while practicing new attitudes and behaviors. It helps to have a sense of humor about oneself. It also helps if the new behavior generates more self-respect than one is accustomed to experiencing.

## ***THE OUTCOME: ACCEPTANCE OF THE NEW SELF***

Figure 5 summarizes the process of change and resistance to change. The individual who is caught in mind traps and does not attempt a change effort retains the familiar, self-doubting identity. The person who attempts change and achieves improvement in self-concept but then cannot endure the ensuing identity crisis eventually lapses into old attitudes and behaviors. But if someone undergoing the change process is willing to persist despite a prolonged identity crisis and to keep practicing the attitudes and behaviors associated with the unfamiliar role, eventually the mistakes decrease, the floundering of transition disappears, and that individual becomes the person he or she has been trying to be. For this person, the new identity becomes the natural and familiar self; the old identity seems strangely like an old friend who has gone away and would no longer fit in the new life—a self who evokes poignant memories or possibly even embarrassment and now is purposely left behind.

When people make what they believe to be positive changes in how they act, how they treat themselves, and how they allow themselves to be treated, they increase their self-respect. Eventually they are able to accept their own worth and to shed their self-doubting attitudes. They feel pride in their accomplishments and their new identities, and they keep learning and growing.

## ***IMPLICATIONS FOR THE HRD PROFESSIONAL***

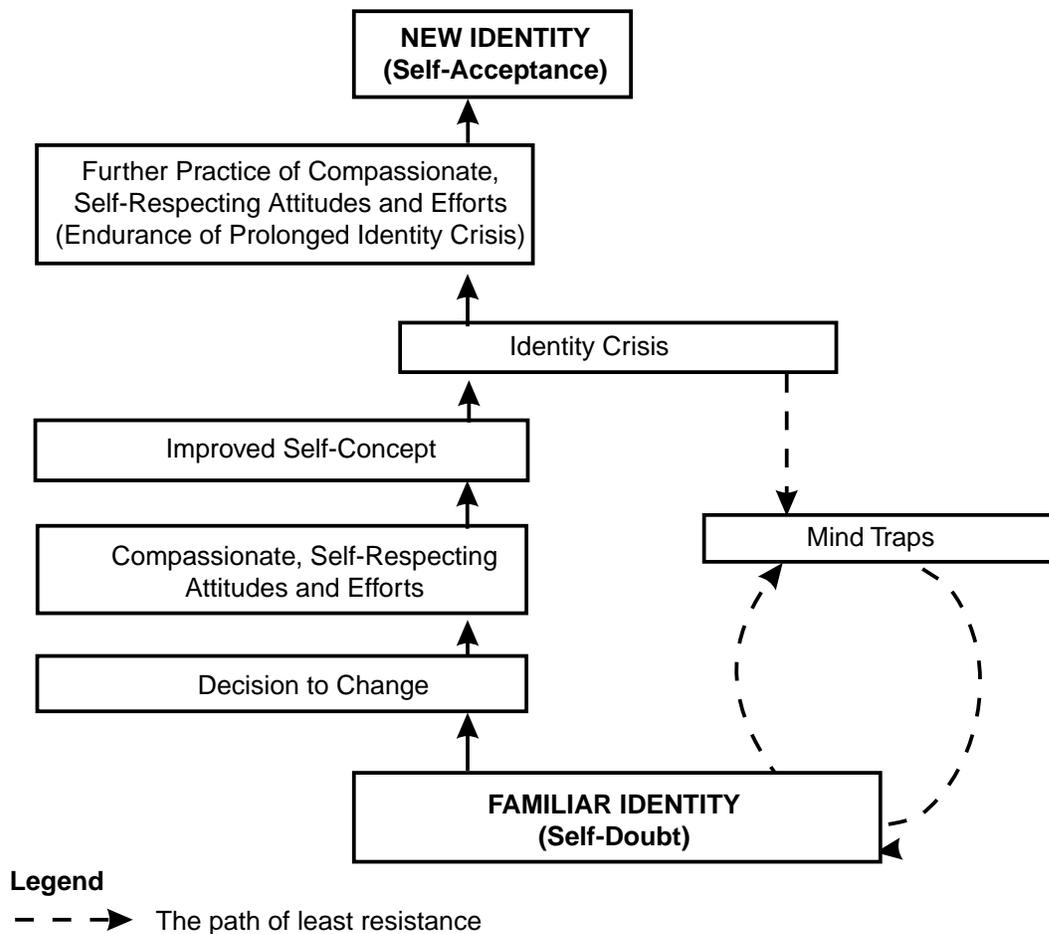
The self-change process described in this article emphasizes the need to experiment with new attitudes and behaviors consistent with an explicit set of values. It also makes clear the importance of learning how to decipher the data of one's feelings in order to make good decisions that will enhance relationships with oneself and others.

HRD professionals have an obvious and vital interest in being effective change agents. The self-change model has important implications for those wishing to help others to change and grow. As people can choose to change, so can organizations; but all organizational change begins with individual changes on the part of organizational members.

### ***The Familiarity Principle in Organizations***

The familiarity principle is often seen at work in organizations. For example, an organization may implement quality circles, only to become disenchanted with them in a year or so. At first everyone is filled with anticipation about the possibility of altering organizational life for the better. However, if employees at all levels are inadequately prepared, encouraged, and supported, the suggestions generated by circles may meet with resistance, thereby stifling significant change. If the resistance continues over time, circle members may become disillusioned; eventually the circles themselves may disband. This pattern is common, and trainers and consultants everywhere have seen it: The identity crisis associated with change is as inevitable in an organization's life as it is in an individual's life. Because organizational change is accomplished only through many self-change efforts on the part of individual employees, the HRD professional has a special responsibility to prepare those individuals adequately so that they will persist with their change efforts—and be receptive to the new attitudes and behaviors that accompany change—despite the pain of a prolonged identity crisis. If the organization does not foster its individual members' self-change efforts, those individual changes may not endure long enough to become organization-wide change.

Professionals in HRD also need to be aware that the familiarity principle can manifest itself in ways that are positive but that still may cause difficulties in organizations. There are some people whose childhoods accustom them to feeling worthwhile, respected, and respectful; anything else feels wrong and makes no sense to them. Their parents were warm, sensitive, considerate of their feelings, and respectful of their ability to learn from experience. When supervisors or coworkers treat them with disrespect, they are hurt and angry and assertively refuse to endure such treatment.



**Figure 5. The Process of Change and Resistance to Change**

When these people enter organizational environments that are characterized by authoritarian values and practices, they may rebel and the HRD practitioner may need to intervene. It is important to note, too, that as more and more people participate in New Age training (see Byrum, 1989) and concentrate on eliminating their debilitating mind traps, tomorrow's organizations are likely to be faced with increasing numbers of employees who are actively working on enhancing their self-images. The inevitable outcome is that these employees will expect to be treated in respectful, caring ways; and HRD practitioners need to be prepared to provide assistance when these employees encounter difficulties in their organizations.

In organizational environments that stress personal empowerment and intrapreneurship (Pinchot, 1989), such people thrive and excel. But even an organization dedicated to autonomy and respectful treatment for its people occasionally hires an employee who is not accustomed to treating coworkers with respect. For example, Hewlett-Packard employees, who are used to a nurturing environment, would resist strongly any manager's attempts to treat them in a disrespectful, uncaring way or to stifle their innovative ideas. Such a manager would be so foreign to the long-standing

culture that he or she would be unlikely to survive there for long without help from the HRD staff or from a patient mentor.

### ***Individual Change in an Organizational Setting***

The impetus for individual change and growth can come from many different sources in an organization. Because all self-change is value driven, activities designed for the purpose of helping participants to identify and understand their values can lead to the desire to change. Managers may complete appraisals of their leadership abilities and may uncover avenues of growth. Similarly, team-building efforts may reveal ways in which individuals want to grow in order to be more effective in their roles. An organization's strategic-planning efforts, the strategic plan itself, or performance appraisals may lead to the identification of growth possibilities for individual employees. Feedback from friends or acquaintances outside the work environment may encourage people to ask for similar feedback from coworkers, which may, in turn, stimulate thoughts of change. Recurring negative experiences, such as the ineffective handling of conflict, may even generate the desire to alter attitudes and behavior.

Many organizations also encourage their people to become more self-assured and to take responsibility for their own organizational lives, but often employees need assistance in preparing themselves to behave differently and to assume new responsibilities. This may mean that the HRD staff will be called on to conduct training and/or administer ongoing personal-growth programs in any of a number of areas that coordinate particularly well with overcoming mind traps and the familiarity principle: assertion, creativity and risk taking, empowerment, affirmation, visualization, life and career planning, stress management, networking, mentorship, and coaching.<sup>1</sup>

Another way in which the HRD practitioner can help is by serving in the capacity of compassionate observer or mentor when employees are undergoing change. This role consists of providing wise, nonjudgmental counsel when appropriate or when called on to do so. For example, an organization's top management may wish to increase the employees' willingness to take risks. Personal risk taking involves doing something that exceeds one's ordinary expectations of oneself (Byrd & Byrd, 1989); often people want to reach into the unknown and add something new to their personal and professional lives, but the risk involved stops them or the enormity of the change seems overwhelming. One way in which the HRD professional can assist is by providing advice about some approaches to change that have worked for people in the past:

1. Weigh the pros and cons of all changes being considered; then prioritize them.
2. Break a desired change into small increments, each with its own specific, written statement and deadline date.

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<sup>1</sup> Pfeiffer & Company offers a number of books and other materials on these topics. The reader is referred especially to the *C&RT* (Creativity and Risk Taking) instrument, *The Empowered Manager: Positive Political Skills at Work*, *Creating Your Future: A Guide to Personal Goal Setting*, *Understanding and Managing Stress: Instruments to Assess Your Lifestyle*, and *Coaching for Commitment: Managerial Strategies for Obtaining Superior Performance*.

3. Enter into a written contract with a significant other, a close friend, or a coworker—someone who is capable of functioning as a compassionate observer or coach.
4. Start with the easiest part of the change so that success is likely in the beginning, when it is needed for inspiration to keep going.
5. Write an affirmation—a statement of the change as if it has already been achieved (Adams, 1989)—and post this statement where it can be seen readily and often. For example, such a statement might read “I am capable. I believe in myself, my instincts, and my judgment.” The written statement might be affixed to an employee’s desk, filing cabinet, or bookcase. Similarly, some individuals might find it helpful to post a copy of The Self-Change Creed (Figure 6) in prominent view while working on personal change.
6. Work on only one major change at a time; complete one part or aspect of a change before proceeding to another.
7. Be patient. Lasting change takes time and effort.
8. Recognize in advance—and every step of the way—that change is often painful and awkward not only for the changing person but also for those who know that person.
9. Seek and participate in workshops, training programs, or growth experiences that seem to be challenging and worthwhile.
10. Celebrate each success, no matter how small.

#### **The Self-Change Creed**

- I accept loving responsibility for my mind, body, and spirit.
- I will frequently “step back” to observe my feelings, attitudes, and actions as well as how my actions affect others.
- I will have faith in my potential, and I will stay open to the idea that I may be more than I previously believed possible.
- I will use my imagination and my curiosity to think of ways in which I would like to change.
- I will have compassion for myself because risking the unknown is awkward and painful.
- I will enthusiastically encourage myself to experiment with new ways of behaving.
- I will have courage enough to do what would earn my self-respect, despite my fears, because self-respect is my highest priority.
- I will maintain my excitement about becoming a new person with greater capacities, realizing that it takes a year or more to consolidate any significant change.
- I will appreciate how good I feel about myself when I am willing to act with self-respect despite the risks.

**Figure 6. The Self-Change Creed**

In addition, the practitioner might consider instituting a networking program within the system, helping to establish relationships between people who are comfortable with change and risk taking and people who are not. A networking or mentorship program can be extremely useful in helping to bring about organizational change through individual change.

### ***Organizational Benefit from Individual Change***

Every organization has a stake in helping its employees to make the transition from self-doubt to self-acceptance—that is, to become more empowered. Employees who are self-confident, autonomous, assertive, creative, and not afraid to take calculated risks—and who are able to meet their own needs for change and growth while fulfilling the organization’s needs—are an invaluable asset.

Effective customer relations, for example, are at least partially dependent on the customer-service employee’s level of self-confidence. Mind traps based in self-doubt may lead a person to approach a customer with a defensive attitude that conveys the message “I’m right and you’re wrong.” In contrast, a person with a healthy self-image is more likely to approach customer relations with an attitude that is respectful, considerate, and open—a “win-win” perspective. Employees who have accepted themselves and are satisfied and fulfilled in their jobs are also likely to stay longer, to contribute more, and to affect organizational climate in a more positive way than their self-doubting, dissatisfied, and unfulfilled counterparts. Any role that the HRD practitioner plays in helping employees to achieve self-acceptance can be immensely rewarding not only to the organization but also to the practitioner.

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## ■ CONSULTANT BURNOUT

**Michael D. Mitchell**

The term “burnout” is very graphic—suggestive of extinguished fires and charred remains—and one may well wonder how it relates to consulting and what consultant burnout means.

As I have come to know the burnout phenomenon—by living through it and from conversations with many organization development (OD) practitioners—it involves a “using-up” of energy and of the “internal fires” that drive an OD consultant. To say that someone is “in burnout,” then, is to say that he or she is somewhere in a progressive process of fatigue and depletion of personal resources.

A consultant who has a three-day workshop scheduled to begin the next day but feels somewhat depressed and unwilling to go; a consultant who glances at his or her watch when working with a group, thinks about going home in twelve hours, and suddenly realizes that he or she has not heard a word said in the group for the last ten minutes; a consultant who begins to muse about his or her own life plans—doing what he or she “*really* wants to do”—and then becomes aware that none of the things in that category even remotely resemble conducting a workshop like the one in which he or she is involved—these are examples of consultant burnout.

Many OD practitioners are indeed driven by internal fires. Perhaps we see other possibilities, new alternatives for living in organizations, alternatives that we focus on because—despite our insistence on pragmatism—we are often idealists. Many of us are in the field because the work we do is consistent with our values: we get satisfaction out of helping others and making the world a better place in which to live. If this is admirable, it also makes us vulnerable to burnout.

When I say that burnout is a depletion of the internal fires that drive a consultant, I mean that the *energy* is reduced; I do not mean to suggest that the values behind the energy are necessarily modified. Of course, idealism is not the only factor that motivates consultants. The need for achievement, the desire for pleasure in one’s work, the inability to say no to clients, the hunger for fees, the fear of failure, the fear of not being fully utilized, the need for acceptance and affiliation—these drives are familiar to many of us.

Although this paper is directed to the phenomenon as it affects consultants in the OD field, burnout is certainly not limited to organization specialists. On the contrary, it seems to afflict people in a wide range of helping professions, including teaching, the ministry, and therapy (see Freudenberger, 1975). It seems to occur because of the often

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nonreciprocal balance of the relationship between consultant and client. The relationship is often characterized by giving, supporting, listening, empathizing—much investment on the part of the consultant with little feedback or even acknowledgment on the part of the client. Although nonreciprocity is inevitable and acceptable, it is also draining. No one can function long in a helping profession without feeling its impact.

In fairness to clients, responsibility for the nonreciprocity is partly the consultant's. Many professionals have a *need* to give and to overwhelm themselves in the consultation/helping process. I cannot count the consultants I have talked to who have no time for themselves, who live in hotels and airplanes, whose marriages dissolve while they seek desperately to meet all the needs of all their clients. Being overwhelmed with work has many gratifications, but it has a tendency to be self-destructive.

## **BURNOUT STAGES**

When one is in the process of consultant burnout, a series of progressive stages are involved, although each person may have different symptoms and varying rates of progression. Burnout typically begins after several years of strenuous professional activity. In my case, it was after three years of on-the-road consulting, laboratories, and workshops. The more intensive one's personal professional investment, the more rapidly one can expect the stages of burnout to appear: *stage one*, physical fatigue; *stage two*, psychological fatigue; *stage three*, spiritual fatigue.

### **Physical Fatigue**

At this stage of burnout, the consultant often feels tired, dragged out, and lethargic. Some of the fatigue is real, caused by long hours, jet lag, and intensive, demanding work—but part of it is not. The consultant simply feels drained. Whereas a good night's sleep used to take care of rejuvenation, now it no longer brings recovery. Colds, flu, aches, and pains also seem to be more common. If the consultant does not consciously do so, his or her body may take responsibility for temporarily withdrawing him or her from action.

### **Psychological Fatigue**

This stage includes many of the physical symptoms and more. It involves an alienation from clients and from tasks facing one and a significantly increased desire for variety and uniqueness in consulting activities. The consultant not only tires easily, but finds it difficult to invest as much in the client as before. Clients can seem grasping, self-centered, and unappreciative. The consultant may have the feeling that he or she has to conserve energy because “everyone wants a piece of me, and there is not enough to go around.”

Many of the symptoms of this stage may be quite unconscious, but they are recognizable: spontaneous feelings of depression when traveling to client meetings, increased irritability and susceptibility to minor trauma, unconscious avoidance of

present and potential clients, and increasing sensations of déjà vu in consulting situations. The consultant not only craves greater uniqueness and newness in his or her work, but at the same time experiences a reduced ability to see the uniqueness that actually exists in ongoing relationships. Feeling very much alone, alienated, tired, and bored, the consultant easily moves into the third stage.

### ***Spiritual Fatigue***

This stage is a natural consequence of the one preceding it. As the consultant progressively feels unable to invest in others, threatened by others' needs, and drained of energy and interest, he or she turns, consciously or otherwise, to thoughts of escape. The consultant thinks about changing jobs, "hiding out" for a while, moving to a different area, or even moving into an entirely new profession.

Consultants at this stage frequently find themselves doubting their effectiveness (Do I really have an impact?), their values (Who am I doing all this for, anyway? Is it worth it?), and perhaps even the morality of their efforts (Have I really helped the organization, or have I just set up the people to get hurt the next time there is a power shift? Have I "helped" people become open when they should be defensive, trusting when they should be skeptical, and risking when they should be wary?).

At this stage, the consultant's ability to invest in clients drops even lower. This lack of involvement and the consultant's own state of personal peril are communicated all too clearly to the client. The client's ability to derive help from the consultant decreases proportionately. Client relationships weaken, and some drop away. The perceived time for change has materialized.

## **COPING**

Consider for a moment the consultant's dilemma. Like a priest or minister, the consultant sees a better world. He or she believes it can become reality yet knows the inappropriateness of "selling" it. It has to be modeled, to be demonstrated, to be made easily available to others. Too, the work of the consultant is often intangible. Not only is the impact of his or her efforts rarely visible directly, but there is a dynamic quality to individuals and organizations that tends to blur the importance of the consultant's contributions to perceived changes. There is also the sensation of impermanence. Time moves on (What have you done for me lately?). Additionally, the needs of the clients cause them to take more and more from the consultant. The consultant feels less and less able to be human and more and more like a dispenser. And on top of it all, there is the continual aloneness—often simply a result of the way the consultant works—that leaves the individual little time to devote to his or her own needs.

How does one cope with this dilemma? I think the answer is obvious: take care of yourself.

1. *Put limits on your consulting time*—both in terms of hours per day and days per month. Treat your limits with respect.

2. *Set time aside for yourself and use it*, even if you feel “high” and think you do not need it. If you do not need it now, you soon will. Reserved personal time (one week out of five, two days per week, and so on) serves replenishment needs for the consultant in the same way that sabbaticals do for teachers and retreats do for religious leaders. Do not be ashamed to recognize and meet your own needs.
3. *Work with co-consultants—particularly with people you like*—whenever possible. It is not only fun and potentially more productive for the client, but when you team up with a colleague, you are reducing the chances of your own depletion. You may even achieve some replenishment.
4. *Develop long-term consulting relationships*. Maintaining ongoing relationships with clients allows the consultant to avoid some of the alienation and aloneness of the “hired gun” professional. Not only is the work likely to be more enjoyable, but the chances are greater for the consultant to see the results of his or her efforts.
5. *Arrange to be with “significant others”* on a regular basis, if possible. You need support, recognition, reassurance, and opportunities to step out of your consulting role in order to share your feelings and thoughts with others.

Whether as a *prevention* of burnout or as a *response* to its symptoms, I think the foregoing are the requisite coping mechanisms. Of course, there are other possibilities, including the following:

1. *Limit your investment in clients*. This is a theoretical solution only; personally, I do not know how to do this. For instance, if I am working with a client, I begin to care about that client, and as I care, I invest. If you can limit your investment, however, I recommend trying it.
2. *Limit your clients*. This is more practical, but not many consultants seem willing to do it.
3. *Change your career*. This is drastic, but there are many who have responded to burnout by doing exactly that.

## **CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

Consultant burnout may not be inevitable; neither may it be avoidable. It is, instead, common, tremendously debilitating, and likely to be unrecognized for what it is until the symptoms become problems. For the internal consultant, the difficulty of coping may be greater than for the external consultant, who has greater control of his or her time and can thus schedule “personal time” without confronting organizational constraints.

It is clear that the consultant can gain a great deal from the experience of burnout: (1) a realization of his or her own limits and fragility; (2) an acquisition of the skills for renewal, as the consultant is forced to pay attention to his or her own needs; (3) a strengthened commitment to changing ineffective behaviors and nonproductive

investments; (4) increased personal growth as a result of struggling to cope with and to reduce the pain of burnout.

One result that burnout does *not* produce, unfortunately, is immunization from burnout in the future. It can occur repeatedly, or it can stretch out, with minor regressions, over a period of years. Both for consultants who have not experienced burnout and for those who have, coping with its causes will continue to be a necessity.

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## ■ **STRESS-MANAGEMENT SKILLS: SELF-MODIFICATION FOR PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT TO STRESS**

**L. Phillip K. Le Gras**

### **STRESS, STRESSORS, AND STRESS REACTIONS**

Stress can be understood best as a state of imbalance between demands made on us from outside sources and our capabilities to meet those demands when the expected consequences from meeting or not meeting the demands are significantly different. Stress describes a hypothetical state caused by events called “stressors,” that result in behavioral outcomes, called “stress reactions.” A stressor can be any physical event, other people’s behavior, social situations, our own behavior, feelings, thoughts, or anything that results in heightened physiological awareness. Pain, anger, fear, depression, and ecstasy are examples of stress reactions.

All people do not react to stressors in the same way, nor do individuals always react the same way to a particular stressor. Some people handle stress better than others; in fact, some people suffer from overstress while others are stress seekers. Individual differences in our reactions to stress are not as important as learning how to manage the stress we do feel. Through learning certain stress-management skills, we can develop self-control when stressful events occur.

The way we feel and behave under stress is determined by what we think (self-statements or private speech) in a given situation. The stress reaction involves two major elements: (1) heightened physical arousal, e.g., increased heart rate, sweaty palms, rapid breathing, or muscular tension, and (2) anxious thoughts, e.g., a sense of helplessness, panic at being overwhelmed, or a desire to run away. Because behavior and emotions are controlled by inner thoughts, the best way to exert control over them is by acquiring skills that change these thoughts.

### **CONTROLLING PHYSICAL AROUSAL**

One method is as follows: Sit in a comfortable position in a quiet place with no distractions; close your eyes and pay no attention to the outside world, concentrate on your breathing, slowly inhaling and exhaling; softly say “relax” when each breath has been exhaled completely. This should be a gentle, passive process—a relaxing

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experience. Eventually the word “relax” will be associated with a sense of physical calm and just saying it in a stressful situation will induce a sense of peace.

Another simple, effective way to induce relaxation is through tension release. The general idea is to first tense a set of muscles and then to relax them so that they will be more relaxed than they were before they were tensed. Each muscle group is practiced separately, but the ultimate goal is to relax all groups simultaneously to achieve total body relaxation. For each muscle group, in turn, tense the muscles, hold them for five seconds, then relax them. Repeat the tension-release sequence three times for each group of muscles. Next, tense all the muscles together for five seconds, then release them, take a slow deep breath, and say “relax” softly to yourself as you breathe out. This sequence is also repeated three times. To incorporate this technique into everyday life, notice your bodily tension, identify the tense muscle groups, and then relax them while saying “relax” inwardly.

Total relaxation can also be obtained through exercise, either aerobic or Yoga type. The relaxation experience can be extended into daily life through personal fitness programs in conjunction with inner messages to “relax.” With practice we have the capability to call up the relaxation response whenever it is needed.

## **CONTROL OF THOUGHTS**

Flexibility in thinking about situations is necessary to manage stress effectively. We must take alternative views and keep from attaching exaggerated importance to events. By taking a problem-solving approach, we can learn not to take things personally. Adverse events should not be seen as personal affronts or as threats to our egos. By taking a task orientation, we can focus on desired outcomes and implement a behavioral strategy that results in those outcomes.

A very effective mental intervention for stress management consists of talking to ourselves to guide thoughts, feelings, and behavior in order to cope. The control of stress through self-instruction is accomplished by considering a stress experience as a series of phases. The phases and some examples of coping statements are as follows:

1. *Preparing for a Stressor.* What do I have to do? I can develop a plan to handle it. I have to think about this and not panic. Don't be negative. Think logically. Be rational. Don't worry. Maybe the tension I'm feeling is just eagerness to confront the situation.
2. *Confronting and Handling a Stressor.* I can do it. Stay relevant. I can psyche myself up to handle this. I can meet the challenge. This tension is a cue to use my stress-management skills. Relax, I'm in control. Take a slow breath.
3. *Coping with the Feeling of Being Overwhelmed.* I must concentrate on what I have to do right now. I can't eliminate my fear completely. but I can try to keep it under control. When the fear is overwhelming, I'll just pause for a minute.

4. *Reinforcing Self-Statements.* Well done. I did it! It worked. I wasn't successful this time but I'm getting better. It almost worked. Next time I can do it. When I control my thoughts I control my fear.

We must become aware of and monitor anxiety that causes self-defeating statements in stressful situations, e.g., "I'm going to fail" or "I can't do this." We must listen to what we say to ourselves with a "third ear." The occurrence of such thoughts is a cue to substitute coping self-statements. We can cope with many stressors by employing relaxation methods and coping self-statements, but at critical moments when the stress reaction is exceptionally intense and seemingly beyond our ability to cope, we can extend self-control by applying whichever of the following techniques is compatible with our needs in the particular situation:

1. *Distraction.* Focus on something outside the stressful experience (e.g., mental arithmetic, sexual fantasy);
2. *Somatization.* Focus on body processes and sensations (e.g., closely observe and analyze physiological responses at the time);
3. *Image Manipulation.* Manipulate stress experiences by creating complex, detailed images that reinterpret, ignore, or change the context of the experience (e.g., putting the experience of pain into a fantasy of being tortured by a sadistic foreign spy).

## **SUMMARY**

Several useful skills have been presented for use in managing stress. Each of us should consider stressful situations he or she has experienced in the past and will face in the future, then practice stress-management skills to cope with these stressors in the future. The more we practice the skills, the greater our ability to effectively adjust to stress will be. Deep breathing, the tension-release technique, aerobic activities, and Yoga-type exercises permit us to relax physically simply by saying softly "relax." Using a problem-solving approach and using thought control to develop a repertoire of coping self-statements incompatible with self-defeating thoughts will help us to cope with stress.

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## ■ SURVIVING ORGANIZATIONAL BURNOUT

### John M. Shearer

The phenomenon of individual burnout has received considerable attention recently (Adams, 1978, 1980; Lauderdale, 1982). People in organizations wonder how they can keep up with the demands made on them. If enough people in an organization feel that they cannot keep up, general productivity goes down and the organization starts to decline. The result is organizational burnout.

Certain steps can be taken to reduce the pressures that push an organization into decline. Priorities can be altered to reduce the strain on individuals. The following steps can be applied to all organizations—public or private, large or small—but most organizations need outside assistance to begin. The aim is not to point out faulty management practices or to correct inefficiencies but to stop to take stock of what is causing the stress on employees.

1. *Identify Functions.* Why does the organization exist? What were the original goals and subgoals? Are they out of date? What values are implicit in each goal? Do the goals accurately reflect company values? Unfortunately, organizations tend to add to the work force or change structure before reviewing function or goals. This often means perpetuating a losing situation. If goals have changed, employees may have the impossible task of striving to achieve the unachievable.

2. *Identify Resources.* What staff, funding, physical space, equipment, and materials are available? Are these permanent resources? What other resources are available through the community, the state, or Federal government? Should priorities be adjusted according to resource availability? What costs are associated with adding resources?

3. *Compare Goals with Resources.* Are resources available to carry out the goals identified? What do others in the organization think? What do clients say? Is the probability of additional resources high enough to justify existing or expanded functions? Functions must be compared with resources before decisions are made about priorities. Limitations in resources must be identified so people are not attempting to meet impossible deadlines or to produce products that cannot be produced.

4. *Set Priorities.* After identifying any disparities between resources and goals, it is important to identify priorities. This may require obtaining outside legal interpretation, interviewing clients, or checking with supporting organizations or suppliers to find out

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how they assign priority to a group. If good public relations or interagency relations is an issue, a marketing approach may be needed to find out what others want.

It may be that there is no hope of success with a particular client group. To provide equal services is to reduce the impact on groups with whom success is even more likely, thereby increasing organizational decline and poor public relations. Consider who can be served adequately before assigning priorities. If enough resources are not available for recognized priorities, documentation can be provided to those who have the authority to make policies and allocate resources. They can choose among alternatives available or find more resources.

5. *Revise Organizational Form and Structure.* Determine what new forms and service structures must be adopted to carry out all necessary functions. Look at all three phases of the work flow: *intake of orders*, *delivery of services*, and *long-term follow up*.

One or all of these phases of doing business may require modification. For example, priorities may not be set at the intake point. High-priority business should receive better service than low. Low-priority business may need to be channeled elsewhere. Or delivery of services may be inefficient. For example, educational services could be delivered to groups rather than to individuals, leaving more staff time for other services. Or follow up may be taking a disproportionate amount of time so that priority services suffer. This is akin to police officers spending so much time giving court testimony that high-crime neighborhoods are not patrolled.

6. *Stick with Priorities.* It is difficult for most organizations to stick to their priorities because they are diverted by feelings of responsibility and helplessness. It is seductive for those running organizations to think that no one else can do something “right,” or that something will not be done if the organization does not take it on as a project. Informal mandates from “higher authorities” are compelling and hard to resist. The answer is to learn to say “No” and to stick with preset priorities. Organizations need to practice assertion as much as individuals do.

7. *Take Time to Plan.* Planning time must be allowed as an organizational renewal mechanism to incorporate changes in need, mandate, or market. Although time consuming, planning at regular intervals can save time and effort in the long run and may increase productivity (Fordyce & Weil, 1971).

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## ■ STRESS-MANAGEMENT TRAINING FOR THE NINETIES

**Beverly Byrum-Robinson**

Stress is everywhere: in the workplace, in the home, in the streets. At no time in history has stress been so much discussed nor considered such a problem. In a survey of six hundred workers, 46 percent reported their jobs to be highly stressful; in fact, 34 percent reported so much stress they were contemplating quitting (Farnham, 1991). Whether or not the people who feel stressed really are stressed is almost a moot point. The fact is that as more and more people talk and behave as if they are stressed, stress has become the career buzzword of the Nineties. Moreover, American society appears to promote stress as the socially desirable road to and outcome of achievement. As Farnham (1991, p. 71) notes, "Inner peace is seen as the prerogative of dweebs. It's hip to be stressed."

Managing stress appears to be a real need rather than a fad. In a survey of people currently employed, 80 percent desired more information on stress (Sailer, Schlacter, & Edwards, 1982). Stress affects everyone from factory workers to executives. Because of the high incidence of perceived stress both on the job and in external arenas that may affect job performance, human resource development (HRD) professionals must take an interest in this national phenomenon. This article defines stress, explains the importance of stress to HRD professionals, reviews what is being done and recommended in terms of combating stress, outlines a feasible cognitive-centered stress-management training program, and discusses the advantages and disadvantages of such a program.

### **A DEFINITION OF STRESS**

In defining stress, there are three terms to consider: stress, distress, and eustress. Selye (1974, p. 14), considered to be the father of stress research, defines stress as "the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it." *Nonspecific* refers to the adaptation or effort required in order to resume normal bodily functioning. A specific demand on the body, such as running, requires nonspecific adaptation to return the body to a less active state. Another scientific definition of stress, which includes the consequences of stress, states that stress is "a fairly predictable arousal [referring to Selye's nonspecific demand for adjustment] of psychophysiological (mind-body) systems that, if prolonged, can fatigue or damage the system to the point of malfunction or disease" (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990, pp. 1-2). Complete damage of the biological system is known as physical exhaustion or death. Complete damage of the

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motivational system is known as emotional exhaustion and withdrawal, or burnout (Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987a; Watts, 1990).

Stress, or the stress response, is triggered by a stressor, which is any stimulus, internal or external, with the potential to set off a physiological fight-flight response (Greenberg, 1990). *Stress reactivity* is the individual's tendency in the moment to be vulnerable to stress by perceiving an event as a stressor. Therefore, stress can be viewed as the combination of a stressor and stress reactivity or the interaction of a person's ability to deal with alarming external and internal events. For example, Terry's boss has issued the team a tight time frame for a big project (stressor). Terry has a tendency not to delegate and to feel fully responsible for results (stress reactivity). The combination of the deadline and Terry's anxiety about results might result in tension headaches every day (stress response).

Stressors that are negative or cause damage are called *distressors*. However, not all stressors are negative or cause damage. Stressors that are positive and challenging enough to promote action are called *eustressors*. However, any change—whether positive or negative—still requires a response from the body or an adaptation to an event. For example, Terry's receiving a promotion for being able to meet deadlines is a positive consequence, produces new challenges, and still is an event to which Terry will need to adapt.

*Stress management* refers to any program that reduces stress by understanding the stress response, recognizing stressors, and using coping techniques to minimize stressors, stress reactivity, and/or the negative consequences resulting from stress. *Coping techniques* are thought and/or behavior patterns that neutralize stressors or establish resistance to negative stress outcomes. *Coping* is the effort to manage stressful demands, which can take two equally valid forms. The first form is *problem-focused coping*, activities designed to alter a stressful situation. The second form is *emotion-focused coping*, activities designed to regulate distress by a change in perception or attention, very often when the situation cannot be changed. For example, Terry could refuse the promotion (problem-focused coping to reduce the stressor). Alternatively, Terry could decide to get done what needs to be done (emotion-focused coping to relieve stress reactivity). Or Terry could practice relaxation to lower the potential for headaches (problem-focused coping to reduce stress consequences).

These definitions demonstrate that stress is unavoidable; people will always have demands placed on them. In addition, people seem to need a certain level of demand in order to avoid boredom and stagnation. The point at which the HRD professional needs to become involved is when stress begins to reach the debilitating level.

## **STRESS AND THE HRD PROFESSIONAL**

In addition to the fact that stress affects everyone in the workplace, the following statistics should alert the HRD professional to the importance of understanding stress and managing it in the workplace:

- Approximately 75 percent to 90 percent of visits to physicians are estimated to be stress related.
- Between 11 percent and 14 percent of all workers' compensation claims for occupational diseases are stress related.
- Claim benefits paid for stress average \$15,000—twice the amount paid to the normal physical injury claim.
- Executive stress is estimated to cost between ten and nineteen billion dollars a year; stress-related illness in general has been estimated to cost \$150 to \$200 billion per year because of absenteeism, disability, and lower productivity.
- Alcohol abuse, considered to be stress-related, costs businesses approximately \$44.2 billion a year.
- Nationwide, 15 percent of executives and 45 percent of managers suffer enough stress to affect their job performance and the job performance of others; 46 percent of workers find their jobs highly stressful and 34 percent are contemplating quitting their jobs because of stress; 61 percent of workers in high-stress jobs say that stress undermines productivity.

In addition to these statistics, stress is believed to cause increases in child abuse, drug consumption, and violence—and this is only the beginning. The real problem may be broader and deeper than current statistics reflect. If this situation is not addressed, increasing numbers of workers' compensation claims for stress can be expected; along with this will come an expansion in the ability of employees to sue for emotional distress and an adoption of stress into the definition of workplace safety rights. In fact, it is predicted that regulations governing allowable amounts and levels of workplace stress will be instituted within the next five years (Visions, 1991).

What is the impact of all this for the HRD professional? First is the personal impact. One million professional and managerial jobs have been eliminated nationwide, with threats of more layoffs yet to come. As a result, the average professional work week is now estimated at 52.2 hours. Clearly the HRD professional is bound to be exposed to personal stress. Additionally, the HRD professional's role has been expanded to the point that "today [he or she] has responsibilities for maintaining the health of the organization that go far beyond the traditional functions of a decade ago" (Landon, 1990, p. 37). The majority of the responsibility for workplace stress reduction will be placed in the hands of the HRD professional. The second impact is professional. If the organization counts on the HRD professional to care for its people and its corporate culture and also contribute to the bottom line, that person must be committed to managing personal and organizational stress.

## **CURRENT STRESS-MANAGEMENT EFFORTS**

Stress-management efforts can be categorized according to organizational interventions and individual interventions. Organizational interventions address stressors by taking management action to reduce the harmful effects of stress. Primarily preventive in nature, such interventions center on eliminating or reducing stressors before they can function as sources of stress. Individual interventions address stress reactivity by teaching activities that can be used by individuals acting on their own, regardless of what the organization does. Primarily curative in nature, individual interventions focus on relieving stress once the individual experiences it. Organizational interventions include such programs as the following:

- corporate restructuring/job redesign/job enrichment
- compensation/reward systems
- participative decision making
- team building/outdoor leadership courses/executive retreats
- management and supervisory training
- recruitment/orientation and organizational socialization
- job fit
- performance management/goal setting
- career development
- communication and organizational policies/survey feedback systems
- change of workloads and deadlines
- change in work schedules/flex-time/summer hours/sabbaticals
- casual-dress days
- wellness programs/fitness centers
- employee assistance/counseling programs
- community involvement

From this variety of organizational interventions, goal setting, participative decision making, job enrichment, change in work schedule, and survey feedback systems have some scientific proof of effectiveness (Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987a). Qualitative positive results have been found for sabbaticals, flexible work schedules, summer hours, casual-dress days, executive retreats, outdoor leadership courses, fitness centers, and community involvement in the companies who used these methods of reducing organizational stress (Landon, 1990; Losey, 1991).

Stress-management training is one of the primary methods used by organizations to offer their employees an individual means for coping with stress. In 1989, stress-

management training had decreased in organizational popularity; by 1991 it had risen again. In a survey of a local chapter of the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), 53 percent of the forty-seven respondents said their organizations did not offer stress-management training; however, 96 percent thought that it should be offered.

Individual stress-management interventions include training in various knowledge and skill areas, such as diet, exercise, time management, assertiveness, support groups, relaxation/meditation, autogenic training, cognitive restructuring, and biofeedback.

Of the variety of individual techniques available, exercise, relaxation and meditation, biofeedback, support systems, assertiveness, time management, and cognitive restructuring have been found to have positive stress-reduction effects (Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987a; Higgins, 1986; Norvell, Belles, Brody, & Freund, 1987; Nelson, Quick, & Quick, 1989). However, in terms of long-range results, relaxation was found to lower absenteeism for the first year only (Murphy & Sorenson, 1988) and only those who were trained one-on-one spent increased time in managing stress after training (Jenkins & Calhoun, 1991). In a study of nineteen work-site stress programs, of which 80 percent used relaxation/meditation, the most common finding was that subjective feelings of anxiety were reduced, while physiological measures did not show continued benefits. The authors concluded that these programs seem to lack an understanding of what works in reducing stress and the costs attached (Pelletier & Lutz, 1991).

Having reviewed the various organizational and individual interventions available, this article will now focus on a cognitive-centered stress-management training program.

## **WHY FOCUS ON THE MIND?**

Given that individual stress-management training may avoid a hard look at organizational policies and procedures that need to be changed, and given that other individual interventions seem as useful as cognitive training,<sup>1</sup> why focus on the mental aspect of stress reduction?

There are five compelling reasons to use a cognitive-centered stress-management training program. First, inasmuch as stressors occur on and off the job, and inasmuch as people carry their own individual levels of stress reactivity around with them, a program that assists them in all life areas is useful. In other words, a cognitive-centered stress-management training program is generalizable to any situation and stressor (Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987b). Cognitive training is portable; it can be carried with the person to use before, during, and after a stressful event.

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<sup>1</sup>Cognitive training involves three ways of thinking differently about a situation. *Cognitive appraisal* involves gaining perspective about the seriousness of an event. *Cognitive restructuring* involves understanding that one's thoughts about an event stimulate reactions and then learning to change thoughts in order to change reactions. *Cognitive rehearsal* involves mental practice in managing a stressful event before it occurs. (Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987a).

Second, a cognitive-centered stress-management training program can be administered with ease and at low cost. People can be taught how to think differently with few materials other than pencil and paper; the rudiments of changing perceptions and consequent thoughts can be taught in a short time. Compared to equipment required for biofeedback, facilities required for fitness programs, and typically huge costs associated with organizational interventions, cognitive training is highly cost effective.

Third, a cognitive-centered stress-management training program has face validity; it makes intuitive sense to people. Participants can easily identify with examples of how their minds have an influence on their emotions and reactions, both positive and negative.

Fourth, there is strong evidence of the effectiveness of cognitive training in arenas other than the organization. Studies applied to a number of groups have indicated positive results (Burns, 1989; Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987a). Indeed, a change in cognitive style can change pessimism into optimism and helplessness into hopefulness (Seligman, 1991).

Fifth, a tremendous amount of testimony exists as to the mind's power to effect change and deal productively with stress. Sources as ancient as Epictetus ("People are not disturbed by things, but by the view they take of them"), the Bible ("For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he"), and Shakespeare ("Nothing is good or bad, but thinking makes it so") testify to the mind's ability to determine behavior. The following current testimony from stress literature is supportive of what has been concluded for ages:

- The "more mastery or control a person feels he has over circumstances, the less stress he's apt to feel, even if his control extends no further than the power to decide how he's going to feel about change" (Farnham, 1991, p. 72).
- "In the final analysis, most causes of stress stem from our thought processes." The "impact of life change will be as intense and chronic as you perceive and allow it to be" (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990, pp. 60, 72).
- "The most powerful—and the most controllable—stressor in the world is the human mind" (Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987a, p. 156)

Taken alone, each of these reasons may not prove sufficient for encouraging organizations to adopt a cognitive-centered stress-management training program as an important intervention to reduce stress. Together, however, "in terms of time, dollar costs, and effort expended relative to benefits," cognitive approaches may be one of the best stress-management investments an organization can make (Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987b, p. 27).

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR A STRESS-MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM**

A cognitive-centered stress-management training program should meet the following requirements (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990; Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987a; Greenberg, 1990; Pelletier & Lutz, 1991):

1. The program should be capable of addressing both intraorganizational and extra organizational stressors; it should be individualized enough that participants can focus on the stressors that presently affect them.
2. The program should be multidimensional in addressing various coping or stress-reduction techniques to combat stressors, stress reactivity, and stress consequences.
3. The program should be multisensory, using visual, auditory, and kinesthetic processes.
4. The program should use terms and concepts that are meaningful to the participants.
5. The program should attend to potential consequences to job performance by demonstrating links between coping techniques and job performance.
6. The program should be thorough; it should assist participants to understand how stress works, to identify stress symptoms, to identify stressors, to learn coping techniques, to explore resources and obstacles, and to allow for incorporation into life-style patterns by an action plan.
7. The program should take place over time, with small numbers of participants (twelve to fifteen), so that learning can solidify, generalization can occur, and progress can be monitored.
8. The program should be evaluated for its long-term results.

## **COGNITIVE-CENTERED STRESS-MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM**

The following program, although focusing primarily on cognitive training, also incorporates other stress reduction techniques that will allow the participants to explore additional helpful coping mechanisms. This program consists of the following ten “D’s”: define, discuss, dig, and delineate “how to’s”: decide, detach, declare, dispute, dream, and do.

### **Define**

A variety of approaches can be used to introduce the program, including the following:

- Present some of the statistics provided in this article.
- Ask participants to estimate their current stress levels on a scale of one to ten.

- Ask participants to estimate their abilities to deal with their current stress levels on a scale of one to ten.
- Share cartoons, jokes, or “war stories” about stress.
- Have participants briefly share stressful situations that brought them to the program (this also establishes their expectations of what they hope to learn from the workshop).
- Administer a pretest to assess participants’ conceptual knowledge of stress.
- Introduce the workshop goal as producing hardy individuals who can handle stress successfully, explaining that the difference between the hardy and nonhardy is not in the events that occur, but in how individuals appraise them. Hardy individuals do not deny their reactions to incidents. They simply appraise them differently as interesting natural changes that have some meaning to them; in other words, they transform the experience (Rosenbaum, 1990).

After the usual sharing of expectations and objectives of the program (the knowledge, attitude, and skill components involved in these ten modules), the facilitator should define stress and its related concepts.

Any of the definitions used previously in this article are adequate; the more technically oriented the participants are, the more the definition should be scientifically based. The facilitator should define stress or stress response, stressor, and stress reactivity and distinguish among them, as was done in this article’s introduction.

The following formula, tying these three concepts together may be useful:

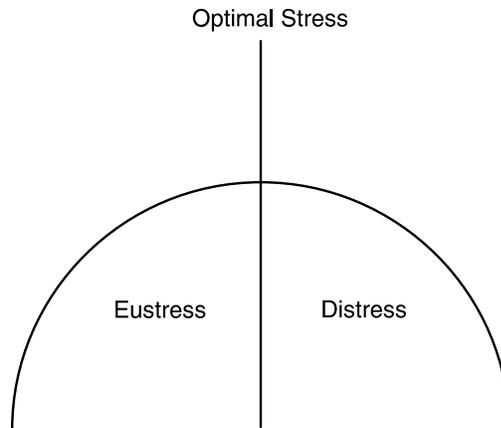
$$\text{STRESS} + \text{STRESS REACTIVITY} = \text{STRESS RESPONSE}$$

Also, the concepts of positive and negative stress (eustress and distress) should be distinguished. Figure 1 depicts a simple model that demonstrates that people need some challenges that require adaptation in order to remain vital (optimal stress) (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990, p. 4).

Finally, stress can be related to coping skills (stress prevention and reduction techniques), by the following layman’s definition of stress: “the physical and psychological distress that we experience when our day-to-day problems exceed abilities to solve them” (Flannery, 1991, p. 1).

If there is sufficient time and the participants have an interest, the concept of burnout can be defined, related to stress, and explained briefly in terms of its stage. Burnout occurs when the stress of feeling helpless to meet expectations destroys motivation (Watts, 1990); “when people can’t or won’t do again what they’ve been doing” (Levinson, 1990, p. 69). Burnout progresses through the following three stages (Lauderdale, 1982):

1. Confusion: Feelings of anxiety and minor health problems stem from a sense of expectations not being met without having the answer to “why.”



**Figure 1. Optimal Stress**

2. Frustration: Feelings of anger and hostility and more pronounced health problems stem from a sense of being unappreciated and unrewarded.
3. Despair: Feelings of inadequacy and physical and emotional fatigue stem from thinking that actions have no meaning and a sense of depersonalization (being treated like an object).

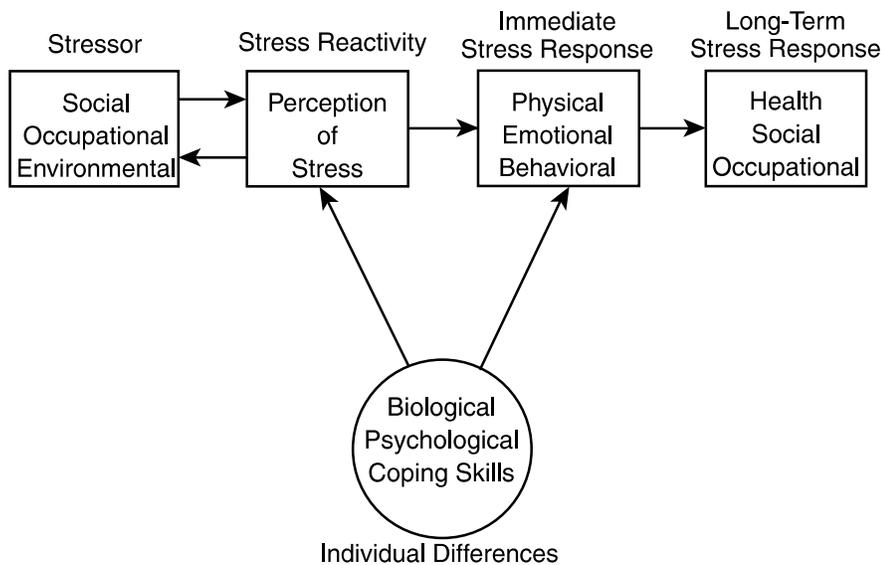
### ***Discuss***

Having defined the terms necessary to understand stress, the facilitator's second step is to discuss how stress works by explaining its causes and symptoms. The model that follows (Figure 2) is a simple yet complete view of how stress occurs; the model relates the terms to the process and gives an overview of stress causes and symptoms (Greenberg, 1990; Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987a).

First, a stressor occurs. A stressor is usually thought to be something that occurs outside of a person. For example, a change in work schedule (occupational), puts a person in a noisier location (environmental), and requires seeing less of his or her family (social). However, the notion that people can manufacture their own stress also should be introduced here. For example, an internal need to be perfect can operate as a stressor even when nothing external occurs.

Stress reactivity then combines with the stressor: The event is perceived as stressful. If it were not perceived as stressful, the process would terminate here. For example, if a change in work schedule were viewed as rewarding and positive, little stress would exist. Adaptation would be necessary, but would occur more quickly because of the optimistic perception.

Stress reactivity is influenced by individual differences. Individual differences have three forms: biological, psychological, and coping. An example of a biological difference is an individual's biological rhythm; if the individual is alert and energetic in the morning, a second or third shift assignment would be stressful. An example of a psychological difference is the need to control. An individual with a high need to control will react to a different work schedule with stress because the change was beyond his or



**Figure 2. How Stress Works**

her control (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990). An example of a coping difference is an individual who has learned and will apply knowledge of nutrition and exercise to ease the adaptation to a different work schedule.

The stressor, combined with stress reactivity, leads to an immediate stress response. An example of a physical response to stress is a headache. An example of an emotional response to stress is irritability. An example of a behavioral response to stress is overeating. Individual differences will continue to influence and can determine whether there will be longterm stress responses or effects.

If nothing changes (the stressor or stress reactivity), short-term stress effects will become long-term stress responses. An example of health effects is ulcers. An example of social effects is marital problems. An example of job effects is absenteeism. The most extreme long-term effect would be death.

### *Causes of Stress*

To review, the two basic causes of stress are external and internal. Three external causes of stress are social, occupational, and environmental. The chart that follows (Figure 3) provides examples.

Internal causes can be based on biology or personality. Again, examples are provided in the chart that follows (Figure 4).

In ending this section on causes with the personality, the facilitator can reinforce the importance of the belief system as the most important filter through which events are perceived (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990). Again, the mind's power can be emphasized with the following quote: "We learn how to scare ourselves to death, worry ourselves until we're distraught, and catastrophize even the most harmless situation" (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990, p. 57). This leads directly to a discussion of the symptoms of stress.

<b>Social</b>	<b>Occupational</b>	<b>Environment</b>
Marriage	Change in job responsibilities	Noise pollution
Divorce	Lack of training	Overcrowding
Death in the family	Poor relationship with boss, coworkers, subordinates	Temperature
Major loan	Urgent deadlines	Lighting
Problems with children, in-laws, neighbors	Overload of information	
	Lack of information	
Trouble with the law	Lack of financial rewards	
Beginning or ending school	Lack of career guidance or opportunity	
	Discrimination	
Isolation and lack of social support	Introduction of new technology	
	Mergers or takeovers	
	Job insecurity	

**Figure 3. External Causes of Stress**

<b>Biology</b>	<b>Personality</b>
Biological rhythms (morning or night person)	Level of self-esteem (feelings of worth, confidence, etc.)
Nutritional intake (intake of caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, etc.)	Need for control
Body fitness (presence or absence of an exercise program or physically active hobbies)	Locus of control (feeling that others are the cause of events)
Genetic tendencies (metabolic rate, predisposition to disease, etc.)	Patterns of behavior (Type A—impatient; aggressive, competitive, depressive; Hardiness—committed, feeling in control, liking challenges, etc.)
	Belief system (“I must be perfect,” “I must be respected,” etc.)

**Figure 4. Internal Causes of Stress**

## Stress Symptoms

Symptoms can be categorized as short term or long term. Short-term symptoms can be physical, emotional, or behavioral, as shown in Figure 5.

Physical	Emotional	Behavioral
Headache	Apathy	Irritability
Backache	Anger	Decreased attention span
Skin problems	Anxiety	Substance abuse
Stomach and intestinal problems	Impatience	Overeating

**Figure 5. Short-Term Stress Symptoms**

Long-term symptoms of stress can have health, social, or occupational consequences, as shown in Figure 6.

Health	Social	Occupational
Ulcers	Relationship dissatisfaction	Absenteeism
Heart Disease	Relationship termination	Turnover
Respiratory infections	Removal of support	Accidents
Allergies	Withdrawal into isolation	Decrease in quality and quantity of work
Insomnia		Reduced decision-making effectiveness

**Figure 6. Long-Term Stress Symptoms**

At this point, the facilitator may move on to the next section or continue with the discussion provided in the appendix of this article, which offers a more in-depth understanding of the physiology of stress.

## Dig

After discussing the process and the causes and symptoms of stress, participants can be helped to analyze their own levels of stress. Many inventories exist to assist participants in analyzing their own levels of stress; representative examples are discussed in the section that follows. All inventories use the self-report technique; although they are not all scientifically produced and validated, they can still serve as useful discovery and discussion tools for the participants in a workshop.

*External Causes (Stressors).* The Holmes-Rahe Social Readjustment Scale (1967) is a popular inventory for assessing “life-change units,” or the amount of occupational and social stress to which a person has had to adapt. Participants use a checklist to indicate

changes that have occurred in the previous year (such as a new job, a change in living situation, and so on) and total the numerical values provided for the items. On this scale, the higher the individual's score, the more susceptible he or she is to illness.

The Hassles Scale measures "daily hassles," which are thought to contribute more to stress and be more effective predictors of health than life events (Lazarus, 1981, 1984). The hassles are analyzed according to frequency and severity. A corresponding Uplifts Scale also rates positive occurrences for their frequency and intensity (Kanner, Coyne, Schaefer, & Lazarus, 1982). When combined, these two scales measure overall stress level. An additional focus can be on life roles and the stress that conflict or imbalance among them may create.

Focusing specifically on work stress, the Stress Diagnostic Survey (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1983) measures both organizational (macro) and job-related (micro) stress. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981), a widely used and researched instrument, measures the frequency and intensity of burnout in terms of depersonalization, personal accomplishment, and emotional exhaustion. Self-assessment exercises to measure occupational stress and burnout can also be found (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990; Pareek, 1983; Warley, 1992).

*Internal Causes (Stressors).* The variety of scales and inventories for internal stressors cover the different personality aspects that affect perceptions of stress and stress reactivity, including the following:

- Locus of control instruments measure where participants believe control over events resides (Greenberg, 1990; Pareek, 1992; Rotter, 1966).
- The Hardiness Scale uses three subscales that measure the components of hardiness: commitment, control, and challenge.<sup>2</sup>
- Type A personality instruments measure responses to situations that might trigger competitive, impatient, or hostile responses (Friedman & Rosenman, 1974; Haynes, Levine, Scotch, Feinleib, & Kannel, 1978; Matteson & Ivancevich, 1982; Wright, 1991).
- The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory measures anxiety as either a personality attribute or a fleeting experience (Spielberger, Gorsuch, & Lushene, 1970), while the Taylor Anxiety Scale measures how anxious one is and how anxiety is manifested (Taylor, 1986).
- The Alienation Scale measures perceptions of social support versus isolation (Dean, 1961).

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<sup>2</sup> In a personal communication with Kobasa, Rosenbaum explains that a new fifty-item version of the Hardiness Scale has been developed. This scale encompasses five different scales: Alienation From Self and Alienation From Work Scales (Maddi, Kobasa, & Hoover, 1979); Locus of Control Scale (Rotter, 1966); Powerlessness Scale (Maddi, Kobasa, & Hoover, 1979); Security Scale (Hahn, 1966); and Cognitive Structure Scale (Jackson, 1974).

- The Self-Reliance Inventory measures acceptance of self-responsibility and willingness to establish support systems (Quick, Nelson, & Quick, 1991).
- The Optimism Scale measures how people explain both positive and negative events to themselves (Seligman, 1991).
- The Beliefs Inventory (Davis, McKay, & Eshelman, 1982) measures the number and strength of irrational beliefs a person holds.

*Symptoms.* Inventories and checklists are available to measure symptoms of stress. The Physiological Reactions to Stress Inventory covers a wide variety of physical symptoms (Ebel, et al., 1983). A quick checklist of physical as well as emotional symptoms can be found in *The Relaxation & Stress Reduction Workbook* (Davis, McKay, & Eshelman, 1982).

*Lifestyle.* Some inventories measure more than one stress dimension; these take a broad view of the person's quality of life and cover everything from sleep and nutrition to sense of purpose. The five scales in the Personal Stress Assessment Inventory (Kindler & Ginsburg, 1990) measure individual predisposition, resilience, occasional work- and personal-stress sources, ongoing work- and personal-stress sources, and health symptoms. The Health-Behavior Questionnaire ("Health Style: A Self-Test," 1981, in Greenberg, 1990) covers the lifestyle behaviors of smoking, alcohol and drugs, nutrition, exercise and fitness, stress control, and safety.

*Coping Skills.* A final type of measure examines the coping techniques a person uses to combat stress. The Ways of Coping Scale (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) measures which cognitive and behavioral strategies people use to cope with specific stressful events. Lists of potential coping techniques identified by stress researchers can serve as checklists for participants to assess the number and type of techniques they use (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990; Sailer, Schlacter, & Edwards, 1982). The "Coping Strategies: Managing Stress Successfully" exercise (Gregory, 1992) allows individuals to list and then to discuss successful and unsuccessful means of coping with stress. Time-management (Douglass & Douglass, 1980; Lakein, 1973), self-control (Rosenbaum, 1990), assertiveness (Bower & Bower, 1976; Rathus, 1973), and support-system (Prokop, 1992) inventories allow participants to explore their competence in specific stress-management techniques. Depending on available time and participant interest, the facilitator can choose which instruments to use in the workshop and, if the design allows, as homework.

The entire digging step, regardless of its depth and breadth, can help participants to see where they deviate from balance, whether it be in perspective, roles, or coping techniques (Selye, 1984).

### ***Delineate "How To's"***

With the foundation of definition, discussion, and personal analysis of stress, the participants are ready for practical coping techniques.

## *Decide*

The first step in coping with stress involves recognizing a stressor or one's stress reactivity and then committing to do something about it. Stressors and stress reactivity can be identified from the material presented and from the participants' lives. Additionally, participants can be encouraged to recognize a stress reaction immediately—"In general, if your heart rate is more than 100 beats per minute, beware . . . if you're aware of your heart beating fast, calm down" (Bernstein & Rozen, 1989, pp. 91, 92).

## *Detach*

To become calm requires detaching from the stress reaction by a shift in focus. Shifts in focus can be accomplished visually, mentally, and physically. A visual shift in focus requires looking at something else. For example, if low figures on a sales report induced a stress reaction, the person could look at a picture on the desk or wall. A mental shift in focus requires thinking about something else. In the preceding example, the person could think about a comedy show that was on television the previous night. A physical shift in focus requires that the person do something else. The physical shift in focus appears to be the most powerful and can be accomplished in the following ways:

*Gross-muscle movement* will aid in using up the stress products that have been generated by the stress response (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990). In the example above, the person could take a quick walk to get coffee or deliver a message instead of making a phone call. These short and quick energy breaks can also be used preventively. Exercise, although time consuming, is highly recommended for detaching from a current stress stimulus and also for decreasing stress reactivity over time (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990). A sales manager who regularly uses the lunch hour to jog would get immediate detachment as well as long-term benefits.

*Relaxation* quiets the physical and psychological internal environments and therefore aids in reducing arousal level (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990; Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987b). One can relax immediately and quickly by starting to breathe slowly and deeply. The sales manager could simply sit back for a few moments and focus on breathing. A regular program of relaxation is preventive as well as curative if participants practice the "relaxation response," outlined by Benson (1984), which follows:

1. Choose a comfortable position.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Relax your muscles.
4. Become aware of your breathing.
5. Maintain a passive attitude when thoughts surface.
6. Continue for a set period of time (twenty minutes are recommended).

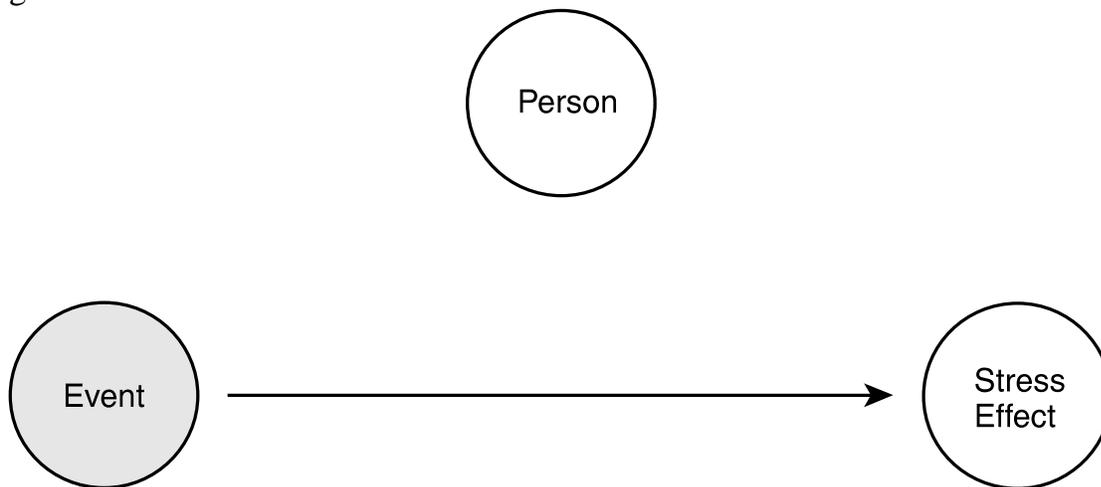
7. Practice the technique twice daily.

Additional research by Benson (1984) has demonstrated that if the above technique is practiced with a phrase or word that reflects the person’s basic belief system, then relaxation and its curative powers will be enhanced. Some examples of phrases used in teaching the expanded relaxation response are “My peace I give unto you” (John 14:27) or “Shalom” (the Hebrew word for peace) (Perlmutter, 1991a). This relaxation procedure thus incorporates meditative techniques that have also been found useful in managing stress (Byrum, 1989).

*Mindfulness* is a user-friendly mini-meditation that promotes paying attention to the present moment and not being distracted by constantly demanding stimuli (Perlmutter, 1991b; Findlay, Podolsky, & Silberner, 1991). The notion of a mini-technique seems quite appropriate to a training session geared toward generally fast-paced participants. Most of these techniques can be demonstrated in less than five minutes but still allow the participants to witness immediate results from shifting focus.

This can be explained as conditioning the mind to reduce arousing and increase calming thoughts, thus lowering stress reactivity and the consequences of stress (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990). The facilitator can also introduce the model that follows, which demonstrates that the stress response is a result of the perception of stress.

Many people view the event or stressor as causing the stress effect or response, as in Figure 7.



**Figure 7. A Common Perception of Stress**

A more useful approach, which puts the individual in charge, is viewing the person’s perception as causing the stress effect or response (Figure 8).

## *Declare*

The next step is to teach participants how to reduce stress by making positive statements, called affirmations. An affirmation is a positive thought, a specific prescription that you consciously choose to produce a desired result by immersing that thought in your consciousness (Ward, 1984). Affirmations should be phrased positively, actively, and simply; be phrased in the present tense; include the person's name; and refer only to the individual's behavior. Some examples for the sales manager might be as follows:

“I, Chris Hamilton, now see profits increasing by 10 percent.”

“I, Chris Hamilton, now find ways to increase sales.”

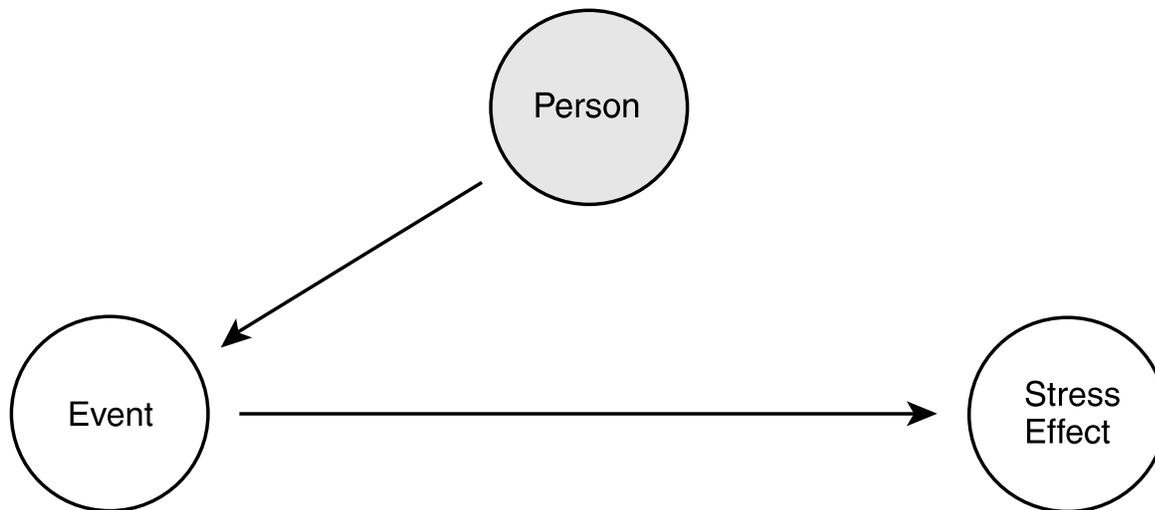
“I, Chris Hamilton, now manage the most successful sales office in the region.”

It is useful to have participants pick a stress-related goal, develop some affirmations for it, choose the most appropriate affirmation, and write it down. Although affirmations are more powerful when they are written down at least ten times a day in the first person (“I”), in the second person (“you”), and in the third person (“he or she”), the facilitator may find that the participants resist the time they see this process consuming. In reality, the process takes only about fifteen minutes; however, the facilitator will be dealing with people who believe they do not have that much time. In meeting this objection, the facilitator can take two approaches. The first is to ask participants if they can give fifteen minutes a day to reduce their stress and preserve their health. The second is to provide some alternatives such as writing the affirmation on a card and looking at it frequently or recording it on an audiocassette and playing it while traveling in the car (Byrum, 1989).

Affirmations can be preventive, “I, Chris Hamilton, now can handle calmly and productively whatever sales report faces me” or curative, “I, Chris Hamilton, now know methods for increasing sales in the next month.” Because there is little scientific proof that affirmations change mood or achievement level, participants may object to the process as naive. However there is intuitive force and numerous case examples behind the notion of “what you think is what you'll get” (Baldwin, 1985). Additionally, the use of specific coping statements, such as “I can do this,” while not in affirmation format, have been found to contribute to athletic success (Roshies, 1991). Similarly, hardy students have been found to use more positive thinking than the nonhardy (Allred & Smith, 1989).

## *Dispute*

The facilitator will need to acknowledge that negative thoughts will surface in the initial process of affirming. For example, in response to “I, Chris Hamilton, now see profits increasing by 10 percent,” thoughts may surface about “Who are you kidding? The economy's been down for months now and the outlook is grim.” However, participants can be taught to dispute these negative thoughts.



**Figure 8. A More Useful Perception of Stress**

This step can be used in response to negative thoughts about affirmations, or it can be used whenever any negative thoughts appear in response to a situation. Before participants are taught the disputation method, the facilitator should explain the notion of explanatory style.

*Explanatory style* is the “manner in which [one] habitually explain[s] to [oneself] why events happen” (Seligman, 1991, p. 15). After defining explanatory style, the facilitator might have the participants think of both a positive and a negative event, write down how they explained the events to themselves, and how those explanations affected their feelings and actions.

Explanatory style influences an optimistic or pessimistic outlook on life and therefore has an effect on stress reactivity. After years of research, Seligman (1991) concluded that optimists take credit for success and blame things outside themselves for failure, while pessimists reverse the explanatory procedure. He is also quick to assert that a positive explanatory style does not negate taking responsibility; it simply increases control over how one perceives negative events.

Explanatory style is understood along three dimensions: permanence, pervasiveness, and personalization. The *permanence* dimension determines how long a person will feel helpless and want to give up; the *pervasiveness* dimension determines what aspects of one’s life will be influenced; and the *personalization* dimension determines what one feels about oneself.

The optimist would explain a positive event in term’s of permanence, universality (pervasiveness), and internal causes (personalization); a negative event would be explained in terms of temporariness (permanence), specificity (pervasiveness), and external causes (personalization). In the example above, an optimistic sales manager would think, “It’s only temporary that figures are down. Besides, costs for the region are down and that offsets a profit loss. It’s the recession and everyone is going through it.” A pessimistic sales manager would think, “This situation is terrible and there’s no end in

sight. I must be a lousy manager. I'll probably have to go back out to the field. I guess I'm just a failure." When the profit increases, an optimistic sales manager might think, "Well, things have really turned around now. Life is great and I'm a great sales manager to get those people out there selling again." The pessimistic sales manager might think, "Thank goodness we have some relief this month, though it probably won't last. The economy's going to do what it will do." With examples such as these, participants can quickly identify their own thought processes and easily see how explanatory style contributes to stress. Participants can also be asked to share what they wrote about their positive and negative events and how they could now rewrite their explanations.

Once explanatory style is identified conceptually and personally, the facilitator explains how to turn a pessimistic style into an optimistic style. The primary method is disputation (distraction is the secondary method, which has already been discussed in the section about shifting attention and focus). Disputation involves arguing with oneself, and it can help one detach from a negative internal dialogue.

Disputation uses four steps. The first is *evidence*, demonstrating that the negative thought is factually incorrect. The second is *alternatives*, scanning for all possible causes and emphasizing changeable, specific, and impersonal ones. The third is *implications*, asking how likely the imagined negative consequences are to occur. The fourth is *usefulness*, questioning how functional it is to maintain the present belief and exploiting ways to change the situation in the future. In the example above, the sales manager might dispute as follows: "It's not true that I'm a lousy sales manager. I've recruited more successful sales representatives than any of my predecessors. Everyone knows it's the economy, and that could change tomorrow. It's not at all likely that I'll have to go back to the field. The national manager is pleased with my work. Thinking this way just isn't helpful to me, although there are probably some ways I could better support my employees. Maybe I'll start going on some calls with them." The result of this self-argument is feeling better and having more energy to make changes in the existing situation.

After explaining the disputation process, the facilitator can ask participants to practice disputing negative statements.

### *Dream*

The next step is to dream or to visualize. After composing positive statements about a stressful situation and disputing negative statements that arise, participants are ready to imagine themselves being calm in a stressful situation. This section can be introduced by a quote from Dick Rutan, Voyager pilot, "What you can do is limited only by what you can dream" (McGee-Cooper, Trammell, & Lau, 1990, p. 283). Used primarily for preventive purposes, visualization is a powerful stress-management tool because the mind does not know the difference between fantasy and reality. In other words, the vision of calm is equivalent to the actual experience.

Already acknowledged as a powerful tool for organizational change and used effectively by managers in a variety of situations, visualization is becoming a widely

used and researched area in stress management (Girdano, Everly, & Dusek, 1990) and training in visualization is increasing (Ungerleider, 1992). It is most often recognized for its success in sports psychology (Zilbergeld & Lazarus, 1987; Cox, 1991; Roshies, 1991) and in clinical settings for stress-related problems (Pelletier & Lutz, 1991).

Visualization can be used receptively to relax the mind and body or it can be used actively to consciously imagine a desired experience. For example, the sales manager could use receptive visualization to imagine a relaxing experience, such as sitting by the ocean and hearing the waves, feeling the breeze, and seeing the sun sparkle on the water. Or, the sales manager could use active visualization to imagine an experience that he or she wants to occur, such as sharing productive ideas about how to increase sales with sales representatives.

Visualization can also be internal, whereby the person visualizes himself or herself coping with a stressful event or succeeding at some task (that is, being inside one's body looking out); or external, where the person watches himself or herself as an observer (that is, being outside one's body looking in). Internal visualization is considered to be more powerful because it stimulates actual muscular activity (Cox, 1991).

Effective visualizations have many of the same characteristics of effective affirmations: They are positive, active, simple, and repeated, and they are used to replace negative experiences with positive ones. They are also controlled by the visualizer and are intrinsically rewarding. An additional benefit of visualizations, like affirmations, is that repeated use has generalizable effects; it changes not only the reaction to a specific experience, it can also change the way one views oneself and one's ability to cope (Zilbergeld & Lazarus, 1987).

Participants can be asked to visualize themselves handling their particular stress situation effectively. Because each participant will have a different situation in mind, it is helpful to ask each to write out the image, including what he or she sees, hears, smells, touches, and tastes in the vision, before the facilitator provides time for the participants actually to practice visualizing. This allows the participants to include all of their senses for the richest possible experience. Depending on the comfort level of the group, participants can be asked to share their visions with a partner or volunteer to share their visualizations aloud. Helpful questions to guide the participants in forming positive visualizations are as follows:

- Where are you?
- Who is with you?
- What is going on?
- What else do you see?
- What is the other person saying?
- What else do you hear?
- What might you want to touch, taste, or smell?

- How do you want to respond?
- How do you want to feel inside?
- What do you want to do?
- What do you want the response to be?

## *Do*

The final step is to assist the participants in carrying out what they have developed to this point. Conceptualizing and completing an action plan helps participants step out and act “as if” they will manage stress effectively. Such contracting is useful in changing behavior because it involves a commitment to action. For example, the sales manager might contract to go on calls with each sales representative and to develop three new ideas for increasing sales within the next month.

This final step can be introduced to the participants with the following quote (Myers, 1992, pp. 44-45): “Don’t worry that you don’t feel like it. Fake it. Pretend self-esteem. Feign optimism.” Participants can be told that even one step will be useful because each time they act, they reinforce and solidify the underlying thoughts; attitudes follow actions and new habits replace the old by creating new mental paths, which lead to new behavioral paths.

An action plan can assist in reinforcing the process or the participants can be allowed to choose one step on which they will focus. It is recommended that the complete list of steps be included in an action plan because they build on and reinforce one another.

A sample action plan is provided below:

1. The situation in which I will use the six steps (decide, detach, declare, dispute, dream, and do):
2. What I will do to decide to deal with the stress . . .
3. The method I will use to detach . . .
4. The positive statement I will declare . . .
5. The statements I will use to dispute negative thoughts . . .
6. The dream I have about success in this situation . . .
7. What I will actually do . . .
8. When I will do this . . .
9. I will know I’ve been successful when . . .
10. The obstacles that I expect to encounter . . .
11. The resources that I can use . . .
12. I will celebrate my success by . . .

It is most important that action plans be followed up. If the stress-management program is only a one-time occurrence, it can be predicted that not much change will occur because participants may be returning to an organizational environment that does not support these stress-management techniques. The techniques are powerful instruments for individual change and for increasing one's ability to handle stress productively, but the techniques must be reinforced. It is advisable to have a follow-up session after one month in order to share successes and difficulties, to rework action plans or make new ones, and to support the participants in and motivate them to continue the changes.

The program can be concluded in one of the following ways:

1. Participants can share action plans and contract with a partner or share with the group.
2. The pretest can be readministered to demonstrate gains in learning.
3. Participants can reestimate their abilities to deal with stress on a scale of 1 to 10.

## **ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES**

The organizational and individual benefits of cognitive stress-management training have been previously cited: generalizability, face validity, low cost, administrative ease, testimony, and evidence of effectiveness. The generalizability of the skills must be reemphasized. The ability to change one's perceptions—to change one's mind about a situation—is an essential element in empowerment. As the world moves toward the twenty-first century, people in organizations will need this critical capacity to operate in self-directed work teams and to contribute to participative management. Authority and responsibility will need to be perceived in new ways to meet future challenges and changes. Cognitive training in stress management can contribute to empowerment in many other organizational areas.

There are also advantages to the HRD professional involved in such a program. Personally, the professional can benefit from learning or further enhancing these cognitive stress-management skills in his or her own life. Professionally, the HRD professional has the opportunity to serve as a better model for adapting to change and its accompanying stress, both in the training room and in the organization.

However, some argue that individual stress-management training does not address organizational causes of stress and may encourage blaming the victim (Pelletier & Lutz, 1991). Such criticism does not render the training ineffective; rather, it points out that multiple efforts are needed to reduce organizational stress. If there were only organizational responses to stress, the organization would still stand to lose from employees improperly armed to face the changes ahead.

The charge could be made that the program is not comprehensive. As it is presented here, it is not; the intention of this paper was to focus primarily on cognitive skills. However, other stress-management techniques, such as exercise, relaxation, and support

systems, were mentioned and could be expanded at will. This program could be enhanced by the addition of such topics as nutrition, assertiveness, conflict management, and time management.

Finally, in comparison to some stress-management techniques, cognitive training may appear to be inactive. With the suggested exercises, the participants can be fully involved in examining and learning methods to better deal with stress.

In summary, this article has provided a cognitive-focused stress-management training program that will have organizational and individual benefits. The individual employee is assigned a primary role “in the perception and management of disturbance. Rather than being the passive victim of environmental forces . . . [one] is seen as . . . actively monitoring his or her relationship with the environment and seeking to maintain or improve it” (Roshies, 1991, p. 420). However, just as learned optimism does not relieve people from responsibility for their actions, providing a solid, individually based stress-management training program does not relieve the HRD professional from the responsibility to explore organizational causes of stress and to work to overcome them. With appropriate organizational changes, the employee who knows how to change his or her thinking will be even more empowered to contribute to the organization’s financial success and quality of life in the next decade.

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## APPENDIX: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF STRESS

Although not all participants will care about the physiology of stress and will be attending the training program primarily to determine how to deal with stress, the facilitator needs to be prepared to offer explanations of the physiology that is involved in stress.

A simple and memorable explanation of the stress response involves relating it to the fight/flight/freeze response. Participants can be asked to think of a stressful situation and to recall what happened to their bodies. Their responses can be matched to the list that follows, which details what occurs when the response is triggered (Smereka, 1990, p. 72):

- Digestion slows
- Breathing quickens
- Heart rate increases and blood pressure soars
- Sugars and fats pour into the bloodstream
- Muscles tense
- Perspiration increases
- Eyesight and hearing become more acute

A more detailed and scientific explanation can be offered for people who desire it. The facilitator should be prepared to give this type of explanation with highly technical or scientific people. The facilitator begins by explaining Selye's (1974, pp. 25-27) *general adaptation syndrome*, whose three stages illustrate that the body's ability to adapt to continued stress is finite.

1. *Stage One: Alarm Reaction.* The body shows changes that are characteristic of its first reaction to a stressor. Resistance is diminished.
2. *Stage Two: Resistance.* Resistance continues and increases as the body adjusts. The bodily signs that are characteristic of the alarm reaction disappear.
3. *Stage Three: Exhaustion.* Adaptation energy is exhausted. Signs of stage one appear; now they are irreversible, and death results.

More specifically, a perceived stressor sets off a reaction in the hypothalamus (in the brain's subcortex) to initiate the stress response through two pathways. One pathway is stimulation of the sympathetic nervous system and the adrenal medulla; this is the alarm stage of the general adaptation syndrome. The second pathway is stimulation of the pituitary gland and adrenal cortex; this is the resistance stage of the general adaptation syndrome.

The hypothalamus initiates the alarm reaction by instructing the sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system and the adrenal medulla (in the adrenal gland) to secrete catecholamines (epinephrine and norepinephrine), which supplement and

prolong the sympathetic responses. The visceral effectors (cardiac muscle, smooth muscles, and glandular tissue) respond immediately to mobilize resources for physical action and to stimulate a number of stress responses. The heart rate and contraction of cardiac muscles increase to circulate blood quickly to needed areas. Skin and visceral blood vessels constrict, decreasing blood to unneeded organs, while blood vessels in the skeletal muscle, the brain, and the heart dilate to route blood to organs needed for the stress response. The spleen discharges stored blood into general circulation to provide more blood; red blood cell production is quickened as is blood-clotting ability. The liver changes stored glycogen into glucose and releases it into the bloodstream to provide additional energy. The breathing rate increases and bronchial tubes dilate to handle more air and to give the body more oxygen. Saliva, stomach, and intestinal enzymes decrease because they are not necessary to the stress response.

The resistance reaction is stimulated by regulating hormones secreted by the hypothalamus: corticotropin releasing hormone (CRH), growth hormone releasing hormone (GHRH) and thyrotropin releasing hormone (TRH). The CRH stimulates the pituitary to increase ACTH (adrenocorticotropic hormone), which in turn stimulates the adrenal cortex (in the adrenal gland) to produce more corticoids. The mineral corticoids result in sodium retention, which leads to water retention, which maintains high blood pressure. The glucocorticoids increase protein breakdown and conversion of amino acids into glucose to provide an energy supply after immediate glucose has been used. The glucocorticoids also sensitize blood vessels to constriction and inhibit inflammation. Finally, glucocorticoids are thought to suppress production of the protein in T-cells that assist in immunity.

The GHRH causes the pituitary to secrete human growth hormone (HGH), which stimulates the breakdown of fats and the conversion of glycogen to glucose. The TRH stimulates the pituitary to secrete thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH), which, in turn, stimulates the thyroid to produce thyroxine, which increases the breakdown of carbohydrates.

Arousal can be further prolonged because the limbic system (responsible for emotion, memory, and homeostatic regulation) responds and the cerebral cortex contributes perception and conscious thought about the stressor.

The following bodily systems can develop conditions related to stress. The muscle system produces such symptoms as headaches and backaches. The gastrointestinal system produces dry mouth, difficulty in swallowing, gnawing or nauseated sensations in the stomach, diarrhea or constipation, and ulcers. The cardiovascular system produces increased blood pressure and atherosclerosis. The immune system produces such diseases as the common cold, cancer, asthma, and rheumatoid arthritis.

## ■ STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR HRD PROFESSIONALS: TAKING TIME TO PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH

**Herbert S. Kindler and Marilyn Ginsburg**

*Abstract:* Professionals who teach stress management often neglect applying what they know to themselves. This failure is common among “helpers” whose chief focus is on the needs of clients rather than on concern for their own burnout. A three-phase stress management program appropriate to trainers is suggested: (1) understand your stress level in the context of an overall system; (2) assess where stress is excessive and deserves attention; and (3) design an action plan that you will commit to implementing.

Even trainers, consultants, and counselors who teach stress management as part of their jobs are not immune from excessive stress. In times of organizational restructuring, layoffs, and turbulent change, human resource development (HRD) professionals face an array of challenges: dealing with “downsizing” survivors, pursuing diversity initiatives, adding training programs with tighter budgets, and so on.

As the typical trainer scrambles to leave home on time, overwhelmed by thinking about the day’s workload, he or she feels a twinge of conscience. How will he or she be able to attend that parent-teacher conference or that Little League game? This trainer has not even found time for that sixty-second “conscious breathing” exercise.

Trainers have promoted stress-management training in their organizations to lower health care costs, increase productivity, reduce absenteeism and accidents, and improve morale. How can they feel so stressed out and squeezed for time themselves?

Learning about exercise, nutrition, deep relaxation, play, rest, and even romance are not enough. The ingredients most frequently missing in stress-management programs are:

- 1 Knowing how stress management integrates into one’s life,
- 2 Knowing how to assess how much stress you are currently experiencing and where it is coming from, and
3. A modest action plan.

This three-step program is recommended for trainers first and then, after it has proved successful, for their trainees.

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## **STEP 1: GET THE BIG PICTURE**

This step employs a cybernetic systems model. “Cybernetic” comes from the Greek word “to steer”; the model in Figure 1<sup>1</sup> enables you to manage stress by keeping you connected to your personal vision. An inspiring vision and a systems map help you to steer a safe and satisfying course through life without drifting.

### ***Personal Vision***

To articulate your vision for this period in your life, do the following: turn your attention inward, stretch beyond where you are, dream, allow possibilities to gently unfold. See yourself healthy, radiant, enjoying life fully, and handling your job with mastery.

### ***Feedforward***

To move your vision from possibility to reality, share it with others. As you clearly communicate your aspirations and values, you are likely to attract people and resources helpful in advancing your personal vision.

### ***Stress Trigger***

A trigger or stress source is any impulse or event that has the potential to elicit a stress response. Typical triggers are:

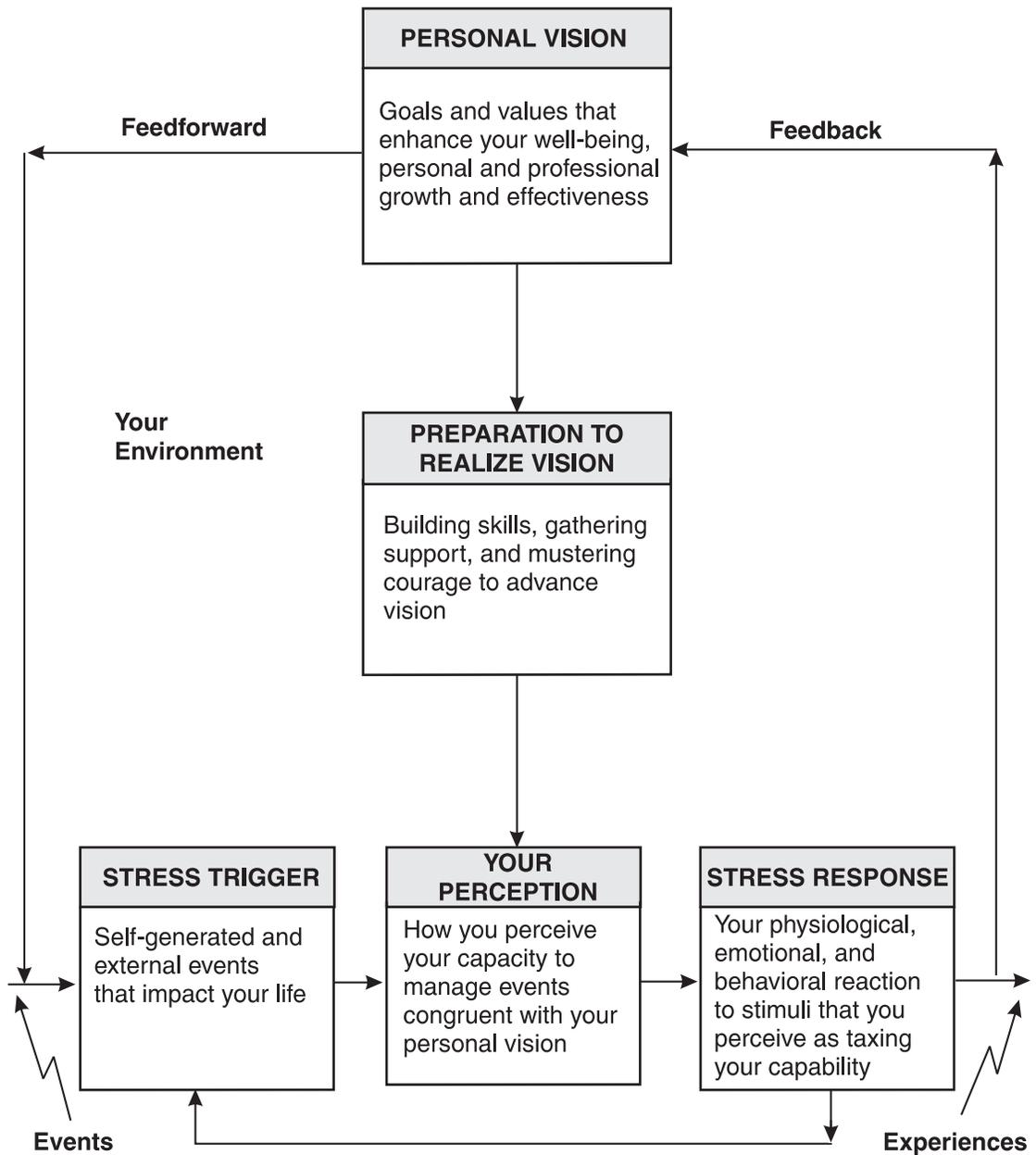
- Outer events such as a demanding boss, an insensitive coworker, heavy traffic, a bounced check, a quarrel with a family member, and air pollution.
- Inner impulses such as the restimulation of a past trauma, and activation of an inner perfectionist, critic, or worrier.

### ***Perception***

Stress comes largely from the inside. Your interpretation of a stress trigger determines your stress reaction. For example, if a stranger brushes against you, the irritation you feel dissipates the moment you see that she is carrying a white cane. Perception is the intervening process in which you give meaning to outer events and inner dialogue. When you assign new meanings, you alter your stress response. Events that might otherwise evoke stress become challenges when perceived as opportunities to advance your personal vision.

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<sup>1</sup> Used with permission from *Stress Training for Life*, by Herbert S. Kindler and Marilyn Ginsburg, New York: Nichols Publishing Company.



**Figure 1. Cybernetic Systems Map for Stress Management**

## ***Stress Response***

Your body reacts to recurring triggers by sending you messages, such as headaches, indigestion, and rashes, to capture your attention. Chronic, continuing messages are asking for deeper examination. Until you identify the source of the problem, stress responses recur or escalate. When you consciously read early warning signals and begin managing stress with awareness, you empower yourself.

## ***Feedback***

Your own stress response to each trigger is valuable feedback.

- Notice if your reaction is appropriate to the triggering source. Rather than react automatically, consciously choose your response to each new circumstance.
- Call time out each day to ask yourself, “What are my stress responses trying to tell me?” Your body’s signals are a gift.

Through comparing each stressful experience with your personal vision, you open the possibility of enlarging your self-concept.

## ***Preparation to Realize Your Vision***

The road to mastery requires patience, practice, and perseverance. On the path to attaining your vision, life’s inevitable difficulties will be much less unsettling as you increase your competence.

## ***STEP 2: ASSESS THE MAGNITUDE AND SOURCES OF YOUR STRESS***

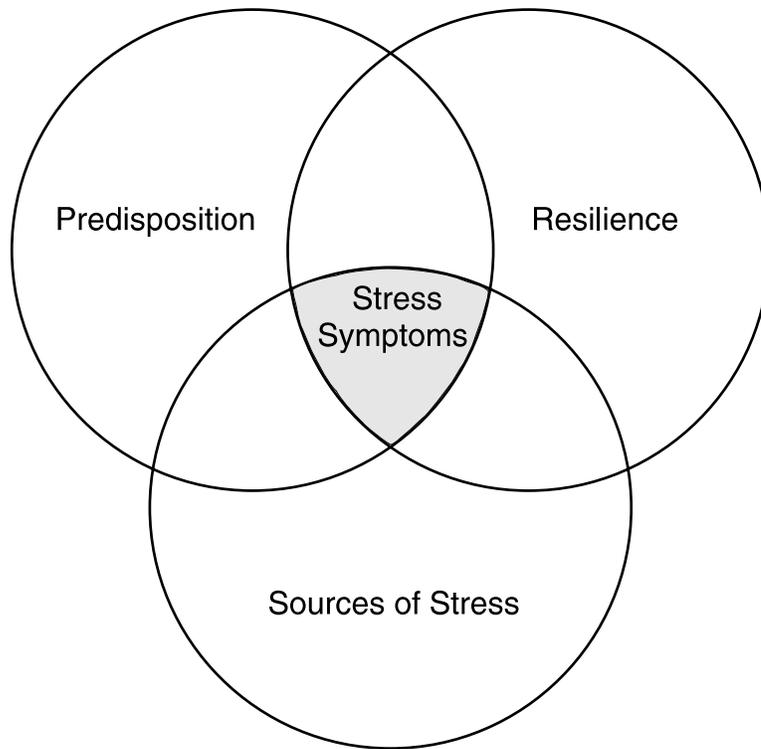
It is important to know exactly where your stress is coming from at this particular time and how great an effect it is having on your well-being. One way to obtain this information is through inventories such as the Personal Stress Assessment Inventory.<sup>2</sup> The inventory was developed from the conceptual model in Figure 2, which relates stress symptoms to three kinds of interacting variables: predisposition, resilience, and stress sources—occasional and ongoing, personal, and work related.

## ***Predisposition to Stress***

Some people have a predisposition to rush even without a compelling reason, to compete aggressively even when it is not necessary or is dysfunctional, and to be hostile in dealing with others. These are referred to as “Type-A behaviors.” People who

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<sup>2</sup> H.S. Kindler, Personal Stress Assessment Inventory (rev. ed). Pacific Palisades, CA: Center for Management Effectiveness, telephone 310-459-6052.



**Figure 2: Stress-Symptom Model**

manifest this predisposition are creating stress for themselves and others. If you have this predisposition, one concern is that you are putting your cardiovascular system at risk.

### ***Resilience***

Resilience is the capacity to bounce back from life's pitfalls. Its essence is balance. Unfortunately, most people develop a preference for one or more of four basic human dimensions—mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual—at the expense of others. Highly mental people may neglect their bodies; highly emotional people may ignore logic; highly physical people sometimes are insensitive to feelings; and spiritually oriented people may shun earthly passion. For resilience, we need to be grounded in all four areas.

### ***Sources of Stress***

The wear and tear of daily pressures, whether from internal or external sources, makes us more susceptible to chronic illness. The depletion of energy needed to adapt to intermittent life events further increases our vulnerability.

### **STEP 3: TRANSLATE YOUR VISION TO ACTION**

Time is not money; it is a lot more valuable. Time is life. Time management boils down to two strategies: work smarter and do less. Trainers know how to work smarter; they teach it. Doing less, on the other hand, is a greater challenge. Use your personal vision to get the clarity to say “no” to activities that distract you from its realization, and “yes” to the few things that really make a difference.

As you draft your personal action plan, which areas in your life do you want to cultivate and which do you want to diminish? Balance your challenging career with a nurturing home life; balance excitement and adventure with quiet time for inner reflection and creativity. The following are ten options to consider in designing your action plan.

1. *Clarify your personal vision.* A prime cause of professional-helper burnout is losing the connection to goals you find personally satisfying. Keep a vision before you that is relevant to your needs, one that is realistic and rewarding.

2. *Call “time out” every day.* Spend time alone each day to review the day’s events. Did you advance your personal and job visions? Do you see recurring patterns? What did you learn today?

3. *Change Type-A behavior.*

- **Motivation:** Appreciate how a serious illness would affect your life and others who love you.
- **Awareness:** When you hurry or compete aggressively, make your action a conscious, deliberate choice, not a knee-jerk reaction.
- **Practice:** Start modestly and congratulate yourself for small successes.

4. *Play more.* Do what you enjoy doing for its own sake, with no goal in mind. Start each day by asking, “What can I look forward to today?”

5. *Keep humor in your life.* Consider doing things such as placing a small sign on your bathroom mirror that says, “Don’t take this person too seriously.”

6. *Celebrate.* Break life-deadening routines. Create transcendent moments. What might you celebrate to keep your life fresh and exciting?

7. *Empower yourself.* Do not become a victim of circumstance. In a stressful situation, consider changing your perceptions, addressing the source of stress directly, or leaving.

8. *Deal constructively with disagreement.* Learn the core principles of conflict management and decide on a systematic process for dealing with disagreement and conflict. (See “Managing Conflict and Disagreement Constructively” by Herbert S. Kindler in *The 1995 Annual: Volume 1, Training*, pages 169-174.)

9. *Monitor critical self-talk.* If you have a harsh “inner critic,” analyze the negative messages bemoaning your failings and incompetence. As you expose these messages to the light of who you really are and the true level of your professional competence, much of the negativity will be neutralized.

10. *Be more self-caring.* Develop an active network of close friends. Get adequate rest. Eat slowly and consciously. If you are not inclined to more vigorous exercise, at least walk briskly each day.

If you choose only one action option that makes your life feel better, you will have taken an important step. You may initiate other steps as you feel ready to make a further commitment. Good luck!

## **REFERENCES**

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