

Promoting Advanced Ego Development Among Adults

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An intervention study was conducted to investigate whether advanced ego development could be promoted if account was taken of the factors likely to be involved in the ego stage transition process in adulthood. A conceptual framework that identified such factors was described, in which it was hypothesised that stage transition occurs in response to life experiences that are structurally disequilibrating, personally salient, emotionally engaging, and interpersonal. The intervention was designed in accordance with these proposed types of life experiences, and was targeted toward adults at the modal stage of ego development. Using an experimental design, a significant increase in ego level was found in 2 equivalent intervention groups, with no increase found in a matched control group. The findings demonstrate the possibility of continued ego development in adulthood, including development to the advanced ego stages, and provide clarification regarding some of the processes involved in such development.

KEY WORDS: ego; development; adulthood; promotion.

Loevinger's stage theory (Loevinger, 1976) of ego development provides a framework for understanding the development of the personality through the lifespan. The theory delineates nine stages of development occurring from infancy through to adulthood, with each progressive stage representing increased personal and interpersonal awareness, self-regulation, autonomy, conceptual complexity, and integration. An extensive body of research has provided substantial support for the conceptual soundness and validity of the theory (Hauser, 1976, 1993; Loevinger, 1979, 1993; Manners & Durkin, 2001; Novy, 1993; Novy, et al., 1994; Novy & Francis, 1992; Westenberg & Gjerde, 1999).

One of the intriguing findings that emerges from the research into ego development in adulthood is that only a minority of adults progress to the advanced stages of ego development. The majority of adults in the general population stabilize by early adulthood

at or below the Self-Aware ego stage, a stage involving rudimentary self and interpersonal awareness and incipient conceptual complexity (Holt, 1980; Loevinger, et al., 1985; McCrae & Costa, 1980; Novy, 1993; Redmore, 1983). Cohn's meta-analysis (Cohn, 1998) of 92 studies of ego development, involving over 12,000 participants, demonstrated that these earlier findings were consistently replicated across a wide range of samples.

These findings invite the questions of whether further development beyond the modal stage of stabilization is possible, and if so, what the processes may be that lead to such development. The question of the possibility of further development to the advanced stages has theoretical and practical implications. From a theoretical point of view, a finding that further development in adulthood is not possible would represent a challenge to the validity of ego development as a lifespan developmental theory. From a practical point of view, if further development to the advanced ego stages were possible, then its facilitation would enable a greater number of adults to experience the advantages found to be associated with advanced ego stage functioning. These advantages include greater competence and health of marital interaction style among couples (Zilbermann, 1984);

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among mothers, higher levels of nurturance, support, and understanding of infant children (Biekle, 1979; Dayton, 1981) and affective enabling of adolescent daughters (Hauser, Powers, & Noam, 1991); higher levels of competence, more effective problem definition, and more use of collaborative decision making among managers (Bushe & Gibbs, 1990; Merron, 1986; Smith, 1980); and higher levels of physical self-care among the aged (Gast, 1984; Michaelson, 1985). The theoretical and research literature provides little clarification regarding the question of whether advanced ego development can and does occur in adulthood. It is clear from the research regarding the effect on ego development of significant midlife experiences (Bursik, 1990; Helson & Roberts, 1994), and of intervention programs (Alexander et al., 1990; Hurt, 1990; Lasker & Strodbeck, 1975; MacPhail, 1989; White, 1985), that ego stage development is possible in adulthood. However, what remains unclear is the extent to which sustainable development to advanced ego stages is possible, and what the specific processes are that may lead to such development. Loevinger has acknowledged that "There is no generally accepted theory of what accounts for progress in ego development" (1994, p. 4). The absence of such a coherent theoretical account of stage transition processes has been one of the criticisms of Loevinger's theory of ego development (Broughton & Zahaykevich, 1988).

This study sought to investigate the issues of whether further development to advanced ego stages is possible in adulthood, and what the processes may be that lead to such development. An intervention study was conducted to determine whether transition beyond the Self-Aware ego stage could be promoted, with the intervention designed in accordance with a conceptual framework formulated to explain the processes involved in adult ego development (Manners & Durkin, 2000).

This conceptual framework was based on the findings from four areas: Loevinger's theoretical reflections on adult ego stage transition and the related research, intervention programs designed to promote adult ego development, the theory and research in relation to moral stage development in adulthood, and the theory and research in relation to general personality change in adulthood. Two key aspects were relevant for this research. The first was that ego stage transition is possible in adulthood. The second was that adult ego stage transition represents an accommodative response to specific types of life experiences. The specific types of life experiences were identified

as those that are structurally disequilibrating for the person's existing ego stage, personally salient, emotionally engaging, and of an interpersonal nature. Each of these four elements was incorporated into the program. This meant that the intervention was designed to be disequilibrating for adults at the Self-Aware ego stage by being structured at one to two stages higher than that stage (Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975; Turiel, 1966), and the content and format were designed to be personally salient for the participants, emotionally engaging, and interpersonal.

There have only been four previous studies concerned with promoting ego development among adults (Alexander et al., 1990; Hurt, 1990; MacPhail, 1989; White, 1985). Although all of these studies succeeded in promoting ego development, only the study by White clearly demonstrated transition to the advanced ego stages among some participants. However, it is unclear what precipitated this stage transition, as no control group was employed, and the intervention consisted of a broad-based nursing training program conducted over a 2-year period. Some of the elements in the above conceptual framework were present in some of these intervention programs; for example, Hurt's program involved empathy training and was consequently emotionally engaging and of an interpersonal nature. However, the study by Alexander et al. incorporated none of the elements in the proposed framework, with the program consisting of the practice of Transcendental Meditation for a 12-month period. None of the four studies included designing the program to be structurally disequilibrating for the participants.

The study was also designed to incorporate a number of features that take account of critical comments made in the context of intervention studies in the area of cognitive development (Wohlwill, 1973), moral development (Lawrence, 1980), and ego development (Loevinger, 1976, 1993). This meant the employment of a true experimental design with random allocation of participants either to an intervention or a control group, the duration of the intervention being sufficient for the occurrence of stage change, follow-up evaluation of the sustainability of any changes precipitated by the intervention, and the use of alternate short forms of the WUSCT for the pre-, post-, and follow-up assessments, to avoid measurement error effects found in short-term repeat testing (Redmore & Waldman, 1975). Following Loevinger's comments (Loevinger, 1976) about designing appropriate interventions, the content and form of the intervention was linked to the theory of ego development.

It was hypothesised that for participants at or below the Self-Aware pretest ego stage, there would be a significantly greater degree of ego stage increase among those in the intervention group than among those in a control group. It was expected that for intervention-group participants at or above the Conscientious ego stage, ego stage increase would be minimal. Stage transition was not expected among this latter group, because for them the program was not structured to be disequilibrating.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were sought through two sources that were considered likely to have a sufficient proportion of people who would be functioning at the Self-Aware ego stage, and who would be interested in a training program. The first source was a University Graduate School of Management (GSM) mailing list, which consisted of names of men and women working in the corporate sector who may be interested in management courses. The second source was a suburban church with a membership that was considered likely to match the GSM mailing list in terms of age, educational levels, and gender distribution.

A total of 88 people enrolled in the program, 65 from the GSM and 23 from the suburban church. The sample was divided into two intervention groups to ensure optimal size for group intervention (Yalom, 1985), and one "wait-list" control group. Those randomly allocated to the first intervention group, drawn from the GSM list, commenced with 31 participants, with attrition (failure to complete the program or incomplete questionnaires) resulting in a final total of 21. The second intervention group, drawn from the church group, commenced with 22 participants, with attrition resulting in a final group of 15. Those randomly allocated to the "wait-list" control group consisted initially of 34 adults, with attrition resulting in a total of 22 participants.

The final sample consisted of a total of 58 participants, ranging in age from 22 to 53 years. A sum-

mary of the sample characteristics is shown in Table I. The sample was heterogeneous with regard to occupation and level of education. Twenty-six percent were employed in professional occupations and 50% had university qualifications.

The intervention groups and the control group were matched on gender distribution, education, age, and ego stage. One-way analyses of variance indicated no significant difference between the three groups on mean age, $F(2, 57) = 1.53, ns$, or on mean pretest ego stage, $F(2, 57) = 0.27, ns$. The mean ego stage for all three groups was the Self-Aware ego stage (based on the convention of numbering each successive ego stage with an ascending numerical value from 1 to 9 (Hy & Loevinger, 1998), where 1 = *Presocial* (E1), 2 = *Impulsive* (E2); 3 = *Self-protective* (E3); 4 = *Conformist* (E4); 5 = *Self-aware* (E5); 6 = *Conscientious* (E6); 7 = *Individualistic* (E7); 8 = *Autonomous* (E8); 9 = *Integrated* (E9).

One-way analyses of variance showed no significant difference between the study sample and those who were excluded because of failure to complete the program or to complete questionnaires, on mean age or mean ego stage. The distribution of females and males in each group was also similar.

MATERIALS

Washington University Sentence Completion Test (WUSCT)

The two alternate short forms of the WUSCT (Loevinger, 1985) were used to assess ego development. The correlation between the two forms has been found to be .96 in a large sample of adults, and .95 between each half and the original 36-item version of this test (Novy & Francis, 1992). The two alternate forms were used for pre- and posttest assessment of ego stage, and for the follow-up assessment, to prevent the measurement error effects found in repeated use of the full test (Redmore & Waldman, 1975). The WUSCT was scored by two independent scorers, using the criteria provided by Loevinger and her colleagues (Loevinger & Wessler, 1970; Loevinger, Hy,

Table I. Sample Population Characteristics

Group	<i>n</i>	Female	Male	Mean age	Mean ego stage	Ego stage E4	Ego stage E5	Ego stage E6	Ego stage E7
Intervention 1	21	13	8	37.7 (7.2)	5.2 (.8)	3	11	6	1
Intervention 2	15	9	6	32.9 (9.1)	5.2 (.6)	1	10	4	0
Control	22	12	10	36.6 (8.6)	5.4 (.8)	3	9	9	1

Note. Numbers in parentheses represent standard deviations.

& Associates, 1989; Loevinger, Wessler, & Redmore, 1970). Interrater reliability was assessed using proportionate agreement and Cohen's kappa, calculated separately at the three time intervals, on all test items for a random sample of 10% of the participants. Proportionate agreement for the WUSCT at pretest was .91 (Cohen's $\kappa = .81$), at posttest was .93 (Cohen's $\kappa = .83$), and at follow-up was .92 (Cohen's $\kappa = .86$). The final score for each WUSCT item was based on resolution of differences through discussion.

PROCEDURE

A flyer advertising the training program, entitled "Building Better Relationships," was sent to approximately 500 people on the mailing lists of the participating organizations. The course offered training in self-awareness, communication, conflict resolution skills, stress management, and goal setting. The program was described as jointly sponsored by the University Graduate School of Management and the researcher's private practice, and an enrolment fee of \$15 was charged. The fee size was small compared to what would be normally charged for such a program, and this was explained to participants as compensation for the extra demands that would be placed on them to complete evaluation questionnaires as part of the research component of the training program. Participants were also eligible for a certificate of completion, as a further incentive to complete the program.

Participants were randomly allocated to either an intervention or a control group. Two intervention groups were conducted contemporaneously, with each using the same program and the same facilitator. The "wait-list" control group matched both groups on age, education, gender distribution, and ego stage.

The intervention program involved one 90-min session per week, for a total of 10 weeks. The program was facilitated by the senior author, who was blind to the ego stage of participants. Ego stage was assessed at three time intervals: immediately prior to the program, immediately following the program, and 4 months after the completion of the program. All participants completed the tests at the three time intervals. The two alternate short forms of the WUSCT were used (Loevinger 1985; Novy & Francis, 1992), with the first form administered at pretest and at follow-up, and the second form administered at posttest.

The Intervention

The intervention program focused on four aspects that were conceptually relevant for ego development: emotional discrimination, identity definition, understanding of relationships, and effective communication (after Loevinger, 1976). A combination of three formats was employed in each of the four content areas: didactic input from the facilitator, group discussion, and experiential exercises, both during and between sessions. All of the elements in the proposed conceptual framework were incorporated into the program. It was personally salient, in that participants had voluntarily enrolled in a program that was advertised as offering training in skills that would be relevant for their work and personal relationships. Emotional engagement was promoted through the inclusion of experiential exercises that required cognitive and affective engagement with the material being taught, as well as consideration of its applications to and implications for their existing way of perceiving themselves and others. The interpersonal component of the conceptual framework was incorporated into the program content by focusing on the way in which participants perceived and functioned in different types of relationships, and into the program format by including individual and group interactions with other participants regarding the implications for their existing relationships.

To ensure that the program would be disequilibrating for participants at the Self-Aware ego stage, the content was structured at one to two stages higher than that stage, (cf. Turiel, 1966). That is, participants were taught the four content areas of emotional discrimination, identity definition, understanding of relationships, and effective communication, from the structural framework of the Conscientious and Individualistic ego stages. The structural ego level of the aims and methods of the program was independently rated by a researcher familiar with ego development theory, and trained in scoring WUSCT protocols. Fifty percent of the program was rated as being at the Conscientious ego stage, and 50% at the Individualistic ego stage.

The approach in the training program drew on various psychological schools of thought: humanist, existential, cognitive-behavioral, and psychodynamic (Clarkson, 1989; Duck, 1991; Egan, 1990; Fromm, 1956; Greenberg & Safran, 1987; Jung, 1954; Kuehlwein and Rosen, 1993; May & Yalom, 1989; Stevens, 1971; Wertheim, Love, Littlefield, & Peck, 1992; Yalom, 1980). A brief outline of the intervention

program is provided in the appendix, and a detailed outline is available with the first author. The program did not include teaching aspects of ego development theory, or coaching in items on the WUSCT.

RESULTS

The Effect of the Intervention

Both global and specific evaluations were made of the effect of the intervention on ego stage transition. First, analysis of changes in the mean ego stage for all participants provides an overview of the effect of the intervention. Second, analysis of changes in participants at the Self-Aware ego stage, as the primary target group for the intervention, provides a more specific picture of the effect of the intervention on stage transition. In view of the structural level of the intervention, little or no change was expected in participants functioning at the Conscientious or Individualistic ego stage.

Changes in Ego Stage Scores for All Participants

Table II shows the mean ego stage for the two intervention groups and the control group at pretest, posttest, and follow-up. A one-way analysis of covariance was conducted, with group as the independent variable, posttest ego stage score as the dependent variable, and pretest ego stage as the covariate. This analysis yielded a significant main effect of group, $F(2, 55) = 13.31$, $p < .0001$, $\eta^2 = .39$. Pairwise comparisons using the Tukey b test ($p < .05$) indicated that each of the two Intervention groups was significantly different from the Control group, and the difference between the two Intervention groups was non-significant.

The mean increase from pre- to posttest in ego stage scores for Intervention group 1 ($n = 21$) represented half a stage, which was sustained at follow-up. For Intervention group 2 ($n = 22$), the mean increase

from pre- to posttest represented more than half a stage, which was sustained at follow-up. In contrast, the Control group showed no increase from pre- to posttest.

Changes in Ego Stage Scores According to Pretest Ego Stage

The number of participants from each pretest ego stage who developed to the next ego stage in response to the intervention is presented in Table III.

All of the participants at the Conformist pretest ego stage developed in response to the intervention, and sustained the change at follow up. Only one of the large majority of those at the Self-Aware pretest ego stage who developed to the next stage in response to the intervention participant failed to sustain the stage increase at follow-up. In contrast, only 1 of the 11 participants at or above the Conscientious ego stage at pretest developed to the next stage postintervention. Among the Control group, only one participant showed evidence of stage transition from pre- to posttest.

Thirty participants were at the Self-Aware ego stage at pretest, the target group for the intervention. This consisted of 11 individuals in Intervention group 1, 10 in Intervention group 2, and 9 in the Control group. The mean ego stage scores for each of the three groups at pretest, posttest, and follow-up, are presented in Table IV.

With the posttest ego stage score as the dependent variable, and group as the independent variable, a one way ANOVA yielded a significant main effect of group, $F(2, 29) = 13.15$, $p < .0001$, $\eta^2 = .43$. Pairwise comparisons using the Tukey b test ($p < .05$) indicated that each of the two Intervention groups was significantly different from the Control group, and the difference between the two intervention groups was nonsignificant. For Intervention groups 1 and 2, the mean increase from pre- to posttest represented almost three quarters of a stage, which was sustained at follow-up. In contrast, the pre- and posttest means

Table II. Mean Ego Stage Scores at T1, T2, T3: All Ego Stages ($n = 57$)

	Intervention 1	Intervention 2	Control
Pretest	5.24 (.77, $n = 21$)	5.20 (.56, $n = 15$)	5.36 (.79, $n = 22$)
Posttest	5.76 (.54, $n = 21$)	5.87 (.52, $n = 15$)	5.32 (.65, $n = 22$)
Follow-up	5.75 (.64, $n = 20$)	5.92 (.29, $n = 12$)	

Note. Numbers in parentheses represent standard deviations and subsample size, respectively.

Table III. Proportion of Participants Advancing One Ego Stage at Posttest

Pretest Ego Stage	Intervention 1	Intervention 2	Control
Conformist	3/3	1/1	1/3
Self-aware	8/11	8/10	0/9
Conscientious	0/6	1/4	0/9
Individual	0/1	0/0	0/1

for the Control group showed no change. The results from the 15 “wait-list”–Control group participants who subsequently completed the training program are of interest as a quasi-replication study. The mean ego stage scores showed a significant increase from pre- to postintervention for those at the Self-Aware stage at preintervention ($n = 8, t = -2.65, p = .03$), but not for the whole sample ($t = -1.78, ns$). Four of the eight participants at the Self-Aware ego stage developed to the Conscientious stage, whereas the other four remained stable. Three of the seven participants at the Conscientious stage developed to the Individualistic stage, whereas two remained stable and two regressed to the Self-Aware stage.)

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to determine whether advanced ego development could be promoted by an intervention program. It was proposed that ego stage transition in adulthood occurs in response to exposure to particular types of life experiences that are disequilibrating in relation to existing ego structures. This framework was evaluated by exposing adults to an intervention program that was structured to be disequilibrating for those at or below the Self-Aware ego stage, and determining whether there was significantly greater stage transition among participants for whom the program was disequilibrating. The results may be summarised as follows:

1. There was a significant increase in mean ego stage for both intervention groups in response to the intervention, and no increase in mean ego stage for the control group. The significant

increase in mean ego stage was maintained at follow-up.

2. This significant mean increase in the mean ego stage for the two intervention groups represented 20 of the 25 participants at or below the Self-Aware ego stage increasing one stage in response to the intervention. The majority of these participants maintained the stage change at follow-up.
3. Only 1 of the 10 participants at the Conscientious ego stage in the two intervention groups advanced one stage in response to the intervention, and this was not maintained at follow-up.

These findings will be discussed in terms of their implications for the question of advanced ego development in adulthood, and the types of life experiences that may precipitate ego development.

Advanced Ego Development in Adulthood

One of our central concerns was to address the question of whether further ego development beyond the modal level of stabilization by early adulthood was possible. The findings provide substantial support for the view that further advanced ego stage development is possible among adults. Although presumably the participants had stabilized in their ego stage prior to the commencement of the intervention, those at the Conformist and the Self-Aware ego stages were able to develop to the next stage in response to the program.

This finding represents the first clear empirical demonstration that sustainable stage transition beyond the Self-Aware ego stage is possible in adulthood. It raises questions regarding the view that stage stabilization by early adulthood is an inherent characteristic of adult ego development, and that there is little change in personality during adulthood (Caspi & Bem, 1990; Costa & McCrae, 1980). It also provides important empirical support for the validity of ego development as a lifespan stage theory, where stage development may continue to occur through adulthood.

Life Experiences and Adult Ego Development

The effectiveness of the intervention program in promoting stage transition among participants at or below the Self-Aware ego stage provides substantial support for the types of life experiences identified

Table IV. Mean Ego Stage Scores Pre- and Postintervention: Selfaware Ego Stage ($n = 30$)

	Intervention 1	Intervention 2	Control
Pretest	5.00	5.00	5.00
Posttest	5.73 (.47)	5.80 (.42)	5.00 (.00)
Follow-up	5.64 (.50)	6.00 (.00)	

Note. Numbers in parentheses represent standard deviations.

in the proposed conceptual framework as necessary for ego stage transition. The effect of the program was greatest among those for whom the intervention was most disequilibrating in relation to their existing ego structures. For those at or below the Self-Aware pretest ego stage, all of the intervention was structured at one to two stages above their existing ego stage. In contrast, the intervention was not effective for those at the Conscientious ego stage, for whom the intervention represented a lesser degree of structural difference from their existing ego stage.

This effectiveness needs to be interpreted in the context of the structuring of the intervention being in relation to the content. All of the content and the majority of the format of the intervention incorporated personal salience, emotional engagement, and interpersonal. Structurally disequilibrating experiences alone have not been found to be sufficient to precipitate ego development (Adams & Fitch, 1983; Loevinger et al., 1985). That is, ego stage transition requires exposure to experiences that are not only structurally disequilibrating, but also personally salient, emotionally engaging, and of an interpersonal nature. Whether each of the specific aspects have varying degrees of effect on stage transition is not clear from the present findings.

The substantial response to the intervention among participants at or below the Self-Aware ego stage invites the question of why they had not developed earlier. It might be expected that among this sample of participants with a mean age in the 30s, there would have been exposure to a number of disequilibrating life experiences. If this assumption is valid, why did they respond to the intervention with stage transition, when they had not responded in that way to these prior experiences? One explanation may be that this was their first exposure to a disequilibrating life experience with these specific nonstructural characteristics. A further possible explanation is that this was their first exposure to such a life experience at a time when they were ready for change. The importance of the timing of life experiences in personal change has been discussed by Helson (Helson & McCabe, 1994; Helson, Mitchell, & Moane, 1984) in terms of the degree of synchrony with the person's "social clock," and by Baumeister (1994) in terms of the crystallization of a number of previously overlooked or denied areas of discontent with the self, life, or relationships. The timing may have been right for personal change for these participants, as they had voluntarily responded to an

advertisement that offered a program designed to improve their relationships.

In summary, the findings from this intervention study provide important insight into the processes involved in transition beyond the Self-Aware ego stage in adulthood.

The indications are that stage stability is not an inherent characteristic of adult ego development, and that further development to the advanced ego stages is possible. Development beyond the Self-Aware ego stage is highly probable when there is exposure to experiences that are sufficiently disequilibrating, personally salient, emotionally engaging, interpersonal, and occurs at a time when the person is ready for change. Both the structural and nonstructural aspects of the experiences are necessary for the occurrence of stage transition.

APPENDIX: BRIEF OUTLINE OF TRAINING PROGRAM TO PROMOTE EGO DEVELOPMENT BEYOND THE SELF-AWARE STAGE

Developing Emotional Discrimination (Sessions 1–2)

There are three aims: to understand the important role of emotions in diverse aspects of our life, to be able to identify, describe, and communicate complex primary, secondary, and instrumental emotions, and to have an awareness of individual differences in emotional responses.

The methods used to achieve these aims include didactic input, facilitated discussion, and experiential exercises. The didactic input provides an explanation of the nature and bases of primary, secondary, and instrumental emotions. The discussions focus on how these emotions interact with different aspects of life, and cultural and personal suppression and denial of emotion. The exercises, which include relaxation, listening to music, and diary keeping, focus on identification, ways of experiencing, and communication of different complex emotions. The rudiments of attending and reflective listening to other's emotional experience are also explained.

Identity Definition (Sessions 3–5)

There are three specific aims: to understand the importance of clarity of identity, to have an understanding of personal identity based on personality and

inner reference points, and to be able to express personal identity in self-reflective, conceptually complex and congruent ways.

The methods used to achieve these aims include didactic input and facilitated discussion regarding the characteristics and effects of a healthy sense of identity, and experiential exercises to promote identity definition. The exercises include guided imagery, the creation of a personal identity collage, dyadic discussion of personal characteristics, and seeking feedback from friends regarding personality characteristics that may be outside awareness. The identification and differentiation of core and peripheral aspects of identity are incorporated into these discussions and exercises. The process of expressing the core self in everyday life is explored and discussed.

Relationship Patterns (Sessions 6–7)

There are three specific aims: to have an understanding of varying types of relationships, to be able to identify personal fears and needs in intimate relationships, and to be able to identify personal attitudes and responses in relationships

The methods used to achieve these aims include didactic input and group and dyadic discussion of the varied types of relationship, the differing degrees of intimacy in each type, the expectations, needs, and fears that can be associated with each type, and the psychological basis of attraction and repulsion toward particular people. Experiential exercises focus on facilitating the identification of personal experience in each of these areas. The exercises include reflection on current personal and work relationship, guided imagery, and dyadic discussion to encourage awareness of individual differences.

Communication Skills (Sessions 8–10)

There are three specific aims: to be able to understand and apply the principles of active listening, to be able to understand and apply the principles of effective communication, and to be able to understand and apply the principles of effective conflict resolution.

The methods used to achieve these aims include teaching and practising the principles of effective communication, conflict resolution, and primary-level empathy and active listening. Application of these principles to participants' personal situations is discussed.

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