Individual Psychodynamic Development:

The Imago Relationship Approach in Organisational Context

by

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my husband, Mike; my children, Andrea and Irini; my late father-in-law, Peter; and my mother-in-law, Irene. I also dedicate this thesis to all of my friends for enduring the endless cancellations of our social engagements as well as for providing continuous encouragement and support.

Acknowledgements

Declaration

I declare that *Individual psychodynamic development: The Imago relationship approach in organisational context* is my own work. I declare that all the sources I have used or quoted from have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Summary

Imago relationship therapy was originally applied to couples counselling by Dr Hendrix (1992, 1993). This model was applied to a group of senior managers from the Lonmin Platinum Mine to create an understanding of intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics to reduce the conflict levels they experienced in the workplace. Imago theory is applicable to the workplace because of the influence of intrapersonal processes on interpersonal dynamics, which is the same influence that causes conflict in romantic relationships.

Love relationships consist of three stages, namely romantic love, the power struggle stage, and the real love stage. In the organisational context, these stages are the initial excitement phase, the power struggle stage, and the conscious relating stage. The study aimed to obtain quantitative and qualitative data on the effects of the Imago theory programme presented to the group of managers. The study thus aimed to determine whether the managers experienced a shift in their consciousness after the programme had been presented. Furthermore, the study aimed to determine whether such a shift in consciousness would have an effect on the individuals' overall emotional wellbeing and if it would increase their overall life satisfaction. Furthermore, the study investigates if the programme had a positive effect on their interpersonal relationships (particularly with their subordinates).

Twenty-two senior managers and 22 subordinates participated in the study. Certain pre-tests were conducted, followed by the seven-module intervention. The same post-tests were conducted after the training had taken place. Quantitative and qualitative results were obtained. The quantitative results showed that the participants' problem solving abilities improved and that they experienced marginally higher levels of life satisfaction. The

reactivity levels experienced by the participants during conflict situations decreased, and their levels of marital satisfaction improved. The results also showed that the managers responded more positively to their subordinates after the intervention. Furthermore, the subordinates experienced their managers as being more flexible after the intervention. The qualitative results indicated that a shift in consciousness did take place as envisaged. The group understood both intrapersonal and interpersonal psychodynamics. They also willingly applied Imago concepts to improve their functioning in the organisational context.

Key Terms

Childhood wounding

Conscious relating

Developmental stages

Imago relationship therapy

Intentional dialogue

Organisations

Power struggle stage

Projections

Socialisation

Workplace functioning

Preface

The basic thesis of Imago Relationship Therapy is that each person is a creation and function of relationship and in turn is a creator of a relationship in which they function. Each person begins life essentially connected to all aspects of himself and to his physical, social and cosmic context. He is whole and experiences a oneness with everything. The human problem results from a rupture of this essential connection, a rupture caused by unconscious parenting which does not support the maintenance of original connection. This results in separation from self parts and alienation from others which creates the problematic character of the social context in which we live – flawed mental health, interpersonal tension, and social ills. The fundamental human yearning is to restore this original connection. (Hendrix in the foreword of Luquet, 1996, p. ix)

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Fourteen years ago, I co-presented a workshop on conflict management to a group of mining employees. The workshop focused on collective, pre-determined dimensions with regard to how to deal with interpersonal conflict. Most of these dimensions were regarded as applicable to the working community as a whole as well as to most interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, these dimensions could be generalised with regard to both the organisational and interpersonal context. One of the senior participants who attended that workshop was sceptical of the presentation and appeared to be suspicious of the process both throughout the workshop and to the frustration of the other participants. This person often commented on the applicability of the workshop's concepts and stated that she believed that "that stuff does not work." She stated that she had attended a similar workshop in the past and that she had repeatedly tried to apply the previous workshop's suggestions to her marital relationship. However, she stated that the suggestions did not work for her.

Although the workshop I co-presented was conducted in an organisational environment, some of the participants occasionally referred to interpersonal difficulties they experienced outside of the organisational context, such as the marital problems the woman mentioned above had been having. During one of the breaks of the workshop, I spoke to this woman, and I recommended that she and her partner attend couples counselling sessions. Six months later, I heard that she had committed suicide by walking in front of a train.

This incident made me realise that personal issues, difficulties, and problems arising from outside of the workplace also need to be dealt with from within the context of

the workplace. I found that many of the issues raised during these work-related forums by the individual participants influence their personal emotional state. The organisational setting can also create an environment where these emotions may surface. Many participants need to talk about their personal issues and often mistakenly use training sessions to discuss their issues with others. As a therapist, I came to realise the need to recognise these signs and to flag them as essential concerns that need to be addressed – whether by means of individual follow-up sessions or by applying interventions when these issues are discussed within the group. It is essential to deal with such issues as unhappy people often bring their frustrations to work. Thus, consultants that work with people in organisational settings should always consider the fact that group interventions do not always address an individual's particular needs.

Koortzen and Cilliers (2002) state that, when consultants use traditional approaches to work with groups of people in organisations, they usually tend to focus on the employees' general competencies. Thus, according to Koortzen and Cilliers (2002), individuals are overlooked within the group setting. Unfortunately, when an individual is overlooked in favour of the group, conflict between team members can result – thus increasing the individual's anxiety and use of defences (Koortzen & Cilliers, 2002). The development of one's personality begins with intrapersonal awareness on an individual level (Koortzen & Cilliers, 2002). Thus, consultants should aim to provide individuals in these organisational groups with the opportunity to understand their intrapersonal dynamics because an awareness of these dynamics is central to interpersonal awareness and to developing relationships (Koortzen & Cilliers, 2002).

It is difficult to assess a group of people and to generalise the average results produced by such an assessment without recognising the possibility of individual dysfunction. Personal issues may be diverse, but they will all influence the outcome of an

intervention. Thus, it is challenging to achieve success if there is no way of assessing the individuals within a group. In connection with the above, Lowman (2002) states that

consulting psychologists work at multiple levels, as with executive coaching, with dysfunctional or functional groups, or with the organizational system as a whole. Fundamentally organizations are composed of individuals. Consulting psychologists are wise to understand people at the individual level if they wish to be effective in their various roles. (p. 5)

Every individual will interpret the content presented at a workshop from within their own psychological history and framework, and they will thus respond accordingly. Anchin and Kiesler (1982) state that "groups are composed of individuals, and the personal dispositions that each person brings to any relationship affects the interactions that take place in the relationship" (p. 152).

I realised that whatever I present to a group of employees and however I present the content to them, my expectation is always to attempt to bring all the participants to an equal level of consciousness. However, the reality is that, although the participants experience a shift in consciousness, the level of consciousness attained by each individual differs because of their different value systems and unresolved issues that can create disparities in their interpersonal psychodynamics. However, the successes I have achieved by teaching Imago principles in couples workshops relates to the fact that Imago training creates a greater intrapersonal understanding within each individual. This intrapersonal understanding, in turn, results in greater interpersonal understanding and connectedness overall. These successes prompted me to apply the same processes to the organisational context to test if I could achieve the same results.

One of the shortcomings of most training programmes is that there is very little reference to the impact of earlier influences on individuals with regard to how their

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characters and personalities were formed. Lowman (2002) states that a "thorough knowledge of life span human development is absolutely critical for anyone wishing to become an interventionist with people and their organizations" (p. 119). In private practice, I often realise that people need to understand themselves intrapersonally and interpersonally. Many conflicts could be avoided if people could develop an understanding of interpersonal psychodynamics. As I work with individuals on a daily basis, I constantly become more aware of the frustrations they experience in their interpersonal relationships, whether at home or at work. These frustrations are often rooted in their developmental years. The following two case studies that are discussed are examples of deep-rooted frustrations stemming from childhood and the developmental years.

Case Study 1

A senior employee of a prominent mining company was referred to me for therapy for his aggressive behaviour. He was issued a final warning for swearing at junior employees. The company expected him to have an open door policy because he was in a position where he was responsible for managing these junior employees. The junior employees struggled to make appointments with their managers because the junior employees worked underground. When they surfaced, they wanted to address their issues with an available manager. It often happened that when these employees entered the senior employee's office unexpectedly, he would get upset. He would then have an outburst and would say something inappropriate. The employees would then lodge written complaints against him.

When I questioned him about why this would happen, he stated that he felt as if he had no control over his behaviour, but he also felt that he consciously tried to avoid these outbursts. When exploring his feelings, he stated that it felt as if there was always somebody in his office and thus also in his space. However, he did indicate that he wanted

to uphold the company's open door policy. He also stated that his administration work was behind schedule because there were always people coming to him with complaints. Furthermore, he felt that his seniority did not count and that he was expected to attend to junior employees immediately when they came to see him at any time of the day.

Later, during a two-hour session, I did regression work into his childhood. It surfaced that he was one of three boys from a divorced family. He reported that his mother remarried and that his stepfather had one son from another marriage. In total, there were four boys in the family, but he was the eldest. The family lived in a three-bedroom house so some of the boys had to share a room. He stated that, although he was the eldest, his stepbrother (who was younger than he was) got a separate room, while he had to share a room with his brothers. He said that it was so crowded that there was always somebody in his space. Again, he mentioned that his seniority did not count because his stepbrother, who was younger than he was, got the better room.

Case Study 2

A senior employee from a chain store was referred to me for refusing to attend his regular meetings in a particular city. For five years, he had attended these meetings without any problems. When I asked him why he no longer wanted to attend these meetings, he stated that he had been experiencing intense anxiety attacks for six months since returning from an overseas holiday. He and six other employees were awarded an overseas trip for outstanding work performance. He stated that he had never before experienced any anxiety attacks and that the anxiety was affecting him so severely that he could not even drive a vehicle.

During his sessions with me, he mentioned that he remembered feeling very uncomfortable for the first time during his overseas trip when they experienced severe turbulence during the flight. He stated that he was scared that they would fall into the sea.

Later on during the holiday, he went up in a lift of the World Trade Centre. With regard to this experience, he stated that the lift was moving very quickly and that it felt like it was completely out of his control. He further stated that he had had the same uneasy feeling when he went on a dangerous Disneyworld ride that his colleagues encouraged him to try. He said that he felt uncomfortable when the ride started ascending. He stated that he wanted to get out when all the doors locked automatically, but he could not. Again, he stated that he felt as though the situation was out of his control.

During the flight back home, he experienced his first anxiety attack. After their return, he could not drive a vehicle because he felt very anxious when he sat behind the steering wheel. He said it was as if he was learning to drive again. During further sessions, it surfaced that he remembered playing in a river that was quite shallow as a child. He could even climb out on the sides of the riverbank and slide back into the water. He mentioned, however, that later on that day, the sluice gates of a nearby dam opened and the river filled rapidly. Thus, the riverbank became very slippery and he could not get out. He stated that he had nearly drowned. He emphasised again that the situation was out of his control while he was fighting to stay alive in the river.

Purpose of the Study

The two case studies given above are examples of the many issues that can stem from childhood. It is difficult for people to realise that their current problems might be rooted in their childhood experiences. Behaviour is also often judged in organisations without taking the underlying triggers of the behaviour into consideration. In adulthood, underlying material from childhood can be triggered and can present itself in many different ways. Individuals can be seen as psychological representatives of their childhood. Thus, an individual's childhood will have an effect on the way in which he or she behaves in his or her working environment. Thus, this study focuses on making individuals more

aware of why they and other people function in the ways which they do. If people could understand themselves intrapersonally, it would result in them developing an understanding of interpersonal psychodynamics. This shift in consciousness could be achieved by presenting training sessions relating to Imago theory.

Medical aids and most employee assistance programmes (EAPs) do not allow clients to enrol for long-term therapy because of limited funds. I often used to wonder about the effectiveness of short-term therapy because I have been applying Imago principles to counselling sessions with individuals and couples for over twelve years. My experience with regard to teaching Imago theory to individuals is that they are presented with valuable knowledge relating to changes that are necessary and essential to their intrapersonal configuration. These changes can create transformation in a short period of time and the lessons learnt can be applied during any future interpersonal encounters. There has been much research confirming that Imago training brings about a shift in consciousness. Some of this research is discussed below briefly as a starting point.

Grounding the Research Problem in Psychological Knowledge

Applicability of Imago Concepts

Imago relationship theory has been widely applied to and researched with regard to many different purposes. Early research such as that of Luquet and Hannah (1996) revealed that scores on relationship scales improved after the application of short-term Imago therapy. Luquet and Hannah (1996, pp. 67-75) state that Imago practices and concepts make a positive difference in people's relationship awareness and interactions. As the workplace is characterised by daily interactions with many people, short-term application of Imago theory may be beneficial to these relationships between employees.

Furthermore, Stanley and Markham (1997) suggest that marriage and relationship programmes should include content that will raise awareness and promote change of

people's attitudes and beliefs. Such programmes should also promote skills training and the use of structure (Stanley & Markham, 1997). Imago practices fulfil all of these criteria. Hannah, Luquet, and McCormick (1997), as cited in Beeton (2006), tested the use of the COMPASS (Compass Outpatient Treatment Assessment System) scale that usually provides information about individual functioning in areas related to "family, health, intimacy, social skills, self-management, and work" (p. 46). According to Beeton (2006),

> The results of this study suggest that brief Imago relationship therapy could be useful in treating relationship difficulties. The study suggests that intrapersonal and interpersonal measures might be useful factors in evaluating the outcome of couple's therapy. (p. 47)

Luquet and Hannah (1996), as cited in Beeton (2006), completed a preliminary study "to explore the use of short-term Imago therapy with nine couples completing the study course of treatment" (p. 47). The couples completed a short-term intervention of Imago relationship therapy that explored relationship quality by using the Marital Satisfaction Inventory (MSI) (Luquet & Hannah, 1996, as cited in Beeton, 2006). The post-treatment scores showed significant improvements regarding three of the target areas, namely global distress, affective communication, and problem solving (Luquet & Hannah, 1996, as cited in Beeton, 2006). According to Beeton (2006), "[t]he results of this study support the possibility for relationship improvement" (p. 47). These improvements experienced by the couples are important as they indicate that Imago therapy does have an effect on relationship functioning.

Kilburg (2000) states that psychodynamic theory can be a remarkable and useful tool for psychologists as it can provide both complex explanations for the motivations and behaviours of individuals, groups, and families, and it can assist in resolving general human problems. Imago theory can therefore prove useful to therapists because it can be

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used in solving general problems that people experience, including problems and conflict experienced in the workplace.

According to Corcoran (n.d.),

Gottman (1993) identified four relationship patterns as predictors of divorce or relationship failure. These patterns include: criticism, defensiveness, stonewalling and contempt. Imago skills address the negative relationship behaviors, by providing processes and techniques that help to override and suggest alternatives to the common practice of these relationship behaviors. (n.p.)

These alternatives can prove very useful in addressing workplace conflict. Related to this point, Carr (1999) suggests that "the psychodynamics associated with our essential being, or character, would seem a particularly potent starting point if we are to come to an understanding of the meaning of behaviour in organisations and, more specifically, emotion and emotionality" (pp. 574-575).

Motivation and Approach

Based on the examples of the successes of Imago theory and my observations in the working environment discussed above, I decided to present an Imago-based model to a group of senior employees from the Lonmin Platinum Mine to attempt to reduce the levels of conflict they experienced in the workplace. I adapted Lowman's (2002) model on psychodynamic conflict and adaptation to reflect Imago concepts that I found applicable to the organisational context. I use both a qualitative and quantitative research approach as discussed in subsequent chapters.

Outline of Study

Chapter 2 presents an overview of Imago relationship therapy by discussing the key stages found in Imago theory. It also explores the brain in relation to the mechanics of Imago theory as well as the stages involved in the psychosocial journey of the self. This chapter primarily relies on the work of Hendrix (1992, 1993) to discuss Imago relationship theory and its main features.

Chapter 3 proposes a model concerning psychodynamic conflict and adaptation in organisations. This model is an adaptation of Lowman's (2002) model. The chapter also discusses the various types of the self, namely the hidden self, the disowned self, the denied self, and the lost self. The chapter investigates the adapted model in detail regarding the various aspects included in the intervention.

Chapter 4 covers the research design. It delineates both the problem statement and the aims of the research. The target population is also identified and described in this chapter. The content of the modules of the intervention presented to the employees is also discussed. Furthermore, important ethical considerations and the measurement instruments used in the study are given and discussed.

Chapter 5 presents the quantitative results of the intervention obtained by using the measurement instruments. The results are presented in tables and are statistically analysed in order to generate applicable interpretations.

Chapter 6 provides a discussion of the qualitative results of the intervention. These are grouped into three themes, namely basic, organising, and global themes, to make the interpretation easier to follow. Examples of each of these themes are identified in each of the modules and are thoroughly discussed.

Chapter 7 provides a summary of the study's findings and integrates these findings. The limitations and strengths of the study are then discussed. Recommendations for future research are also examined.

Chapter 2: Imago Relationship Theory

Introduction

In the foreword of Luquet's (1996) book, *Short-term couples therapy: The imago model in action*, Hendrix states the following:

> The basic thesis of Imago Relationship Therapy is that each person is a creation and function of relationship and in turn is a creator of a relationship in which they function. Each person begins life essentially connected to all aspects of himself and to his physical, social and cosmic context. He is whole and experiences a oneness with everything. The human problem results from a rupture of this essential connection, a rupture caused by unconscious parenting which does not support the maintenance of original connection. This results in separation from self parts and alienation from others which creates the problematic character of the social context in which we live – flawed mental health, interpersonal tension, and social ills. The fundamental human yearning is to restore this original connection. (p. ix)

This chapter is a discussion of the concepts of Imago relationship theory. This discussion is based on the interpretations and explanations of Dr Harville Hendrix (1992, 1993)[1]. Imago relationship therapy is a relational paradigm in which Hendrix's (1993) work with couples inspired and challenged him to develop a therapeutic approach that would be effective in helping couples to understand and to gain insight into the dynamics of their relationships.

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[1] Although most of the information discussed is referenced, any general discussion of Imago concepts throughout the thesis refers to my own interpretation of Hendrix's (1992) work. Throughout the thesis, the information used in relation to Imago theory is largely based on Hendrix's (1992, 1993) work.

In order to understand intrapersonal and interpersonal psychodynamics, one needs to understand the impact of deficit nurturing that takes place during one's developmental years. Both Hendrix's work and Erikson's work on individual development are helpful in understanding the developmental years. Thus, the work of both Hendrix and Erikson are used to elucidate individual development. According to Meyer (1997), Erikson writes "repeatedly about the influence of society on individual development" (p. 204). Furthermore, Erikson views people as beings "with a variety of needs, potentials and possibilities, all of which are accepted and supported by society" (Meyer, 1997, p. 205). Also according to Meyer (1997), Erickson believes that "the human being's development consists of the progressive and lifelong evolution of the individual's innate potential" (p. 205).

Erikson identifies that "individual development is the result of two simultaneous and complex influences, namely *genetic* and *social* factors" (Schultz, 1990, cited in Meyer, 1997, p. 208). In addition, Meyer (1997) states that Erikson's concept of development includes "the manifestations of characteristics according to a *genetically determined ground plan*" (p. 208). Erikson explains this plan through the use of the "*epigenetic principle*" (Meyer, 1997, p. 208), which puts forward that "the individual's characteristics (including potentials and needs) emerge at certain stages and in a particular, genetically determined sequence, but in such a way that the person constantly develops as a whole" (Erikson, 1959, & Roazen, 1976, both cited in Meyer, 1997, p. 208).

During a person's development, they are exposed to various "*social influences*" (Meyer, 1997, p. 209). These influences include the demands made by society with regard to individuals and the growth opportunities presented by society at the same time (Meyer, 1997). According to Meyer (1997), "These demands and opportunities are in accordance with, and are complementary to, the developmental potential and needs of the individual at

each stage of development" (p. 209). With regard to the stages of development, Erikson identifies eight developmental stages, namely infancy, early childhood, the play age, the school age, adolescence, early adulthood, adulthood, and maturity (Meyer, 1997).

Hendrix (1992), however, refers to six developmental stages, namely attachment, exploration, identity, competency, concern, and intimacy. Hendrix's (1993) efforts regarding couples and human development resulted in the formulation of Imago relationship therapy. The two people in any relationship can use knowledge of the Imago concepts and tools to shift their relationship from one where they are largely unconscious of the relationship's dynamics to one where they become conscious of these dynamics. This co-creation of a conscious relationship is the key to establishing and maintaining a healthy relationship. The purpose of Imago therapy is thus achieved by changing unconscious relating to conscious relating.

The individual is always considered within the context of the relationship. Thus, Imago therapy shifts the focus from pathology to a normalisation of the power struggle within relationships. Although the self is viewed in terms of childhood wounding, an individual is not considered a victim of their past. Instead, the therapy gives individuals a way to obtain what they needed from the past in order to grow and heal in the present.

In comparison to Hendrix's (1992) identification of individuals needing certain things from their past, Erickson identifies the following factors as the basic motives of human beings (Meyer, 1997):

- to develop their inherent potential;
- to know and accept themselves and their possibilities; and
- to know that they can feel at home with these characteristics and potentialities in their social environment. (p. 205)

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Although Imago therapy was developed in the context of helping couples to understand the forces that impact on their intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics, it is possible that these same underlying forces also have an influence on interpersonal relationships in the organisational context.

Key Stages of Imago Theory

A brief overview of the key stages of the Imago theory as developed by Hendrix (1993) is provided. The first two stages of a relationship are largely unconscious – the romantic stage initiates a couple's relationship, but it will inevitably give way to the power struggle that constitutes the second stage (Hendrix, 1993). This power struggle arises because both partners have unmet needs resulting from developmental influences. It is these needs that come to the forefront within relationships. These needs, which are largely unconscious, also play an influential and mostly damaging role in relationships. A more detailed explanation of these concepts follows later in the chapter.

As couples learn to use the Imago tools, they become more conscious of why they experience differences, and they realise that these differences are vital for growth. As individuals become more conscious and intentional in their relationships, they progress to higher levels of functioning, and more of the relationship's potential is thus realised. A key tool in this process is the intentional dialogue, which is a method of communication that helps people to stay engaged during conflict. This dialogue replaces the human tendency to react unconsciously with defences (fight, flee, freeze, or submit) in order to protect the self.

According to Hendrix (1993), the final stage of real love results from this conscious and intentional way of relating to others. Imago therapy can therefore be described as a universal way of resolving conflict and facilitating positive change in human relationships. In an organisational context, it is anticipated that a more conscious, intentional way of

relating to others can be achieved by employees learning and using Imago concepts. A more detailed discussion of the Imago stages is provided below.

The Mystery of Attraction

Romantic attraction is the process through which humans select their mates, whereas reproduction is the primary driving force behind this selection. According to Hendrix (1993), a "mate is therefore selected with the purpose of ensuring the survival of the species" (p. 5). Also according to Hendrix (1993), the initiating behaviours that form the basis of romantic attraction are similar across all cultures. In general, men pursue women whom they consider to be attractive in accordance with their own concepts of attractiveness. Women, in turn, attempt to enhance their attractiveness and attempt to make themselves more appealing to men through the ways in which they dress and adorn their bodies. Women are more focused on the so-called "alpha qualities" (Hendrix, 1993, p. 7) than men. These alpha qualities include factors such as financial security, safety, trust, the ability to provide for a family, motivation, and ambition (Hendrix, 1993).

The exchange theory provides additional perspectives regarding the way in which human beings choose their partners (Hendrix, 1993). According to Hendrix (1993) referring to the exchange theory, "it's not just youth, beauty, and social rank that interest us, but the whole person" (p. 7). A relationship is entered into and has a chance of being successful when the rewards outweigh the risks. However, when the risks outweigh the rewards, the relationship may never be initiated, or it may be rapidly terminated. Individuals may pursue relationships across class and other social divisions in this way. For example, a very pretty woman may respond favourably to an unattractive or much older man if his alpha qualities are superior when compared to the alpha qualities of other men (Hendrix, 1993).

The persona theory provides another explanation for the development of partnerships. Hendrix (1993) states that "an important factor in mate selection is the way a potential suitor enhances our self-esteem" (p. 7). This theory is based on the assumption that people do not show their true selves during social interactions, but instead put up a 'front' or mask (persona). In this way, individuals show others what they would like them to see in order to impress them. According to Hendrix (1993), the persona theory (developed by Jung in the early 1900s) posits that the choice of a partner may be influenced by how the partner enhances an individual's self-esteem because individuals take pride in how others perceive their choice of partner. When other people recognise and compliment the qualities of the partner, it enhances the individual's self-esteem as it affirms the choice they have made.

In an organisational context, individuals usually have little or no choice in terms of their work colleagues. Kroeger and Thuesen (1994) state that "when it comes to nonintimate relationships – friend, neighbours, colleagues, and the like – the opposite holds true: we were drawn to people who share our basic personality styles, values, religions, politics, and other things that make us who we are" (p. 47). However, the theories of attraction discussed above can also be applied to the organisational context and can explain how choices are made regarding associations, why conflicts arise, and why some people are avoided by others.

Within the organisational context, the first stage of a relationship could be called the initial excitement stage, which is traditionally known as the romantic stage in love relationships. The initial excitement stage occurs when an individual starts a new job or begins working for a new company. Simon (2003) states that individuals bond with people they see as partners in their efforts to reach shared goals, dreams, and visions. This stage involves excitement, enthusiasm, and the illusion that partners (or colleagues in this case)

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will always agree and have harmonious relationships and connections. The stage also involves pledging loyalty. However, just like the romantic stage, the initial excitement stage is not destined to last. The more time individuals spend together, the more likely they are to realise that they have different views and different ways of handling things (Simon, 2003). Fears in interpersonal relationships (for example, rejection or criticism) can lead to conflict, which may cause people to resort to survival strategies developed earlier in life.

The evolution of romantic love is a complex process shrouded in mystery. The following section provides more in-depth information regarding the role of neurological chemicals in the romantic attraction stage of romantic love. No research could be found regarding the role of these chemicals in the initial excitement stage with regard to organisational contexts.

The Chemistry of Love

The feeling of falling in love is the result of complex interactions between a number of chemicals in the brain (Obringer, 2005). Feelings of giddiness, flushed skin, a racing heart, and sweaty palms are attributed to the release of hormones such as dopamine, noradrenaline, and phenyl ethylamine (Obringer, 2005). Dopamine is known as the pleasure chemical because of the feelings of bliss it produces (Obringer, 2005). Noradrenaline has a similar effect to adrenaline and produces a racing heart as well as a sense of excitement (Obringer, 2005). A schematic outline of the hormonal pathways in the brain is presented in Figure 2.1 below.
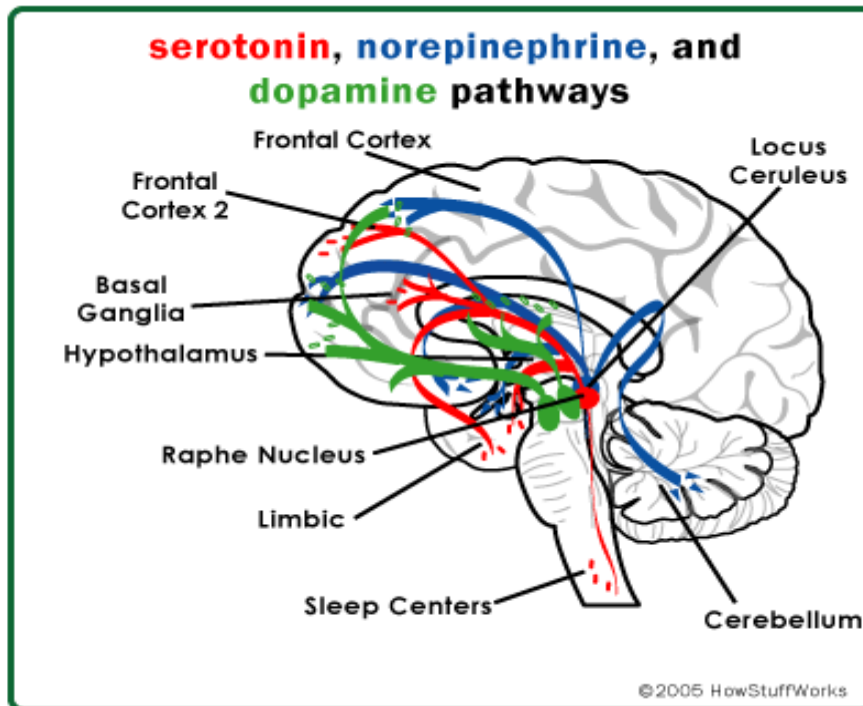
Figure 2.1. Hormones in the brain (Obringer, 2005,

http://people.howstuffworks.com/love6.htm)

Functional magnetic resonance imaging (FMRI) is used to study the changes that

occur in the brain during the romantic stage of love (Obringer, 2005). Findings show that,

during the intense stage of romantic love, there is increased blood flow to the areas of the

brain that contain a high concentration of dopamine receptors (Obringer, 2005). According

to Obringer (2005), these elevated levels of dopamine are also accompanied by raised

levels of noradrenaline (norepinephrine), and the presence of both dopamine and

noradrenalin is associated with a state of euphoria, craving, and addiction. Noradrenalin is

also associated with heightened attention, hyperactivity, and sleeplessness (Obringer,

2005). The presence of these hormones could explain why couples focus so intensely on

their relationship in the romantic stage of love, which usually results in the exclusion of

everything else.

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Hendrix (1993) observes that the brain can only tolerate the production of excessive volumes of these hormones for a maximum period of two years. This observation indicates that romantic love has a definite starting point, but it is also supposed to end naturally. Although heightened excitement and anticipation are usually experienced when starting a new job, it is not known if the chemical changes experienced during romantic attraction are also present during the initial excitement stage.

Imago and the Brain

Human beings are found at the top of the food chain because of their highly developed brains that allow them to plan, organise, execute, and analyse numerous things all at the same time. The highly developed cerebral cortex is continually being stimulated to keep up with the evolving pace of technology. Masses of new information are constantly being stored and absorbed allowing us to develop and to advance our standing as custodians of our planet continually. We are also born with a developed instinct for survival.

When we are born into the world, the only part of us that projects our needs is the part of the brain which is responsible for our need for safety. This part of the brain encompasses the brain stem and the limbic system. It is aptly named the 'primitive' or 'reptilian' brain and constitutes what is termed the old brain (Hendrix, 1992). The old brain is responsible for functions such as muscle response, instinctual survival, and blood circulation (Hendrix, 1992). The old brain cannot always distinguish between subtle changes of emotion or even emotional responses that are more severe in nature because it exists outside of a timeframe and is "eternally concerned with survival" (Hendrix, 1992, p. 41) because it can only associate with basic emotions, including love, loss, anger, and danger. Hence, our frequent inability to control our reactions (for example, road rage,

severe reactions to perceived emotional wounding, or even reactions to rejection) results in automatic reactions that are usually complete overreactions to subtle stimuli.

The old brain also appears to have only a hazy or indistinct awareness of the outside world (Hendrix, 1992). It has no concept of time and cannot distinguish why, where, and when something happened. For example, the old brain cannot distinguish between a caretaker's rejection that took place in the past and the rejection emanating from a partner in the present. The rejection experienced in the present evokes the same feelings and reactions as it did in the past. These reactions are instinctual and form part of the subconscious survival drive. In this way, everything that has ever existed continues to exist because the past and present live side by side in a person's consciousness. The emotional feelings that result from unfulfilled expectations from childhood can be triggered within a relationship and can thus lead to emotional reactions by adults that are out of proportion to the events that trigger these reactions. These reactions usually stem from unfulfilled and unmet needs created by parenting inadequacies experienced during childhood (Hendrix, 1993). These reactions are categorised as either fight or flight responses (Hendrix, 1992).

Our new brain understands the reactions of the old brain and can help to override the instinctual need for protection from perceived threats. For example, fire fighters can control the natural human instinct of avoiding a burning building. They are fully aware of the danger of such a situation. Although the old brain will be on high alert, their training and the ability to understand their role, as assessed by the cerebral cortex (or new brain) (Hendrix, 1993), allows them to overcome their fear and enables them to rush into the building to save other people's lives. The same methods are applied to emotions experienced in relationships. For example, a fit of jealous rage triggered by the perceived actions of a partner can be overcome by the rational brain. The rational brain will perceive the actions of the partner as a harmless incident that is not worthy of a kneejerk reaction.

Hendrix (1993) states that "the brain stem has a profound impact on human behaviour in relationships" (p. 40). This impact can be seen in the above examples. The old brain and new brain function differently, but they are both constantly engaged in exchanging and interpreting information. The old brain's main concern is the safety of the person, and its focus is on self-preservation (Hendrix, 1993).

There are many trigger points stored in the brain which are related to incidents in the past. Partners can sometimes unintentionally activate these trigger points in relationships. These triggers then instigate a reaction based on what one partner perceives to be similar to danger from their past. This same underlying information that is triggered in a marriage (and which subsequently results in conflict within the marriage relationship) can also be triggered in other relationships. Co-workers, for example, can often unintentionally trigger this underlying information in the organisational context.

People are highly selective in their choice of partners and usually seek out a specific person with particular positive and negative traits. This person will normally exhibit character traits similar to those of their partner's childhood caretakers. Hendrix (1993) uses the Latin word *imago* (image) to describe this process. People retain an image of both the positive and negative traits of their early childhood caretakers. Therefore, it is during the romantic attraction stage that the old brain remains trapped in the 'eternal now' and tries to re-create the childhood environment by matching the partner's qualities with those of the childhood caretakers (Hendrix, 1993). When the old brain finds a person to match these qualities from its childhood, it believes that it has found the ideal person to help heal the psychological and emotional damage experienced during childhood. The term *imago* also plays a role in the organisational context where it is possible that the people we feel attracted to (not necessarily in a romantic manner) resemble the positive and negative traits of our childhood caretakers.

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Childhood Wounds

Childhood wounding refers to the psychological and emotional damage experienced during childhood (Hendrix, 1992). The term 'childhood trauma' can include trauma such as exposure to sexual abuse, alcohol abuse, verbal abuse, and physical abuse. However, the term also includes events that go wrong in the normal course of daily contact between caretakers and children. It is assumed that these ordinary events result in the unintentional wounding of the children and can result in serious consequences for the individuals (Hendrix, 1993).

According to Hendrix (1992), caretakers are engaged in two key processes while children are growing up, namely nurturing (both physiological and psychological nurturing) and socialisation. Psychological nurturing involves meeting and fulfilling personal and internal needs, whereas socialisation refers to the child's orientation and their responses to the outside world (Hendrix, 1992). Wounding can occur in relation to both of these processes and has a significant influence on later relationships (Hendrix, 1992). I contend that wounding, as described by Hendrix (1992), has an impact on interpersonal relationships in organisations.

While Hendrix focuses on wounding (Hendrix, 1992), Erickson focuses mainly on "healthy development" (Meyer, 1997, p. 222). According to Meyer (1997), Erikson has "an optimistic view of development and makes provision for spontaneous recovery from developmental mistakes or inadequacies" (p. 222). Erikson refers to positive and negative poles (Meyer, 1997). The positive poles "of the developmental crises and the ego strengths which result from satisfactory crisis resolutions define the core characteristics of the optimally developed person" (Meyer, 1997, p. 222). The negative poles, however, "form the basis of mental illness" (Meyer, 1997, p. 222).

With regard to the negative poles, which are similar in function to Hendrix's (1992) concept of wounding, Meyer (1997) explains Erickson's view on mental disorders as the following:

> He sees schizophrenia in children and schizoid and depressive conditions in adults as being characterised by a lack of basic trust (1963, p. 248); shame and doubt are linked to compulsive neurosis and paranoia (1963, p. 252); while ineffective resolution of the crisis named *initiative versus guilt* is associated with hysterical neurosis, exhibitionism and psychosomatic illnesses (1963, p. 257). Erickson links role confusion with various mental problems such as megalomania, phobias and prejudice (1963, Chapter 9: *The legend of Hitler's youth*, p. 326-358). (p. 222)

The Psychosocial Journey of the Self

Hendrix's (1992, 1993) concept of the psychosocial journey refers to the six stages of development experienced by children and adolescents before they reach adulthood. Certain needs must be met during each developmental stage because various forms and degrees of wounding can occur during these stages if such needs are not met. Figure 2.2 below illustrates the psychosocial journey and provides an approximate timetable for this journey.

The Psychosocial Journey of the Self

| Self-Development | Relation to Others |

Creating

Generating

Loving

Integrating

Caring

Sympathizing

Responsibility to Self and Society

13–19 years
INTIMACY

Intact Sexuality
Ability to Love

Doing

Competing

7-13 years
CONCERN

Concern for Others

Being

Asserting

4-7 years
COMPETENCE

Sense of Personal Power to Achieve

Becoming

Exploring

Existential Mode

Existing

3-4 years
IDENTITY

Secure Sense of Self

Developmental Behaviour

Reaching

18 months – 3 years
EXPLORATION

Differentiation and Intact Curiosity

Developmental Task

0-18 months
ATTACHMENT

Emotional Security

Figure 2.2. The psychosocial journey (Hendrix, 1992, p. 58)

The birth of a child heralds the start of the psychosocial journey. The child emerges from a world (the womb) where all its needs have been met automatically to a world where it is obliged to make sure its needs are met in a completely different way. Caretakers provide for the infant in accordance with the way they were nurtured as children. The caretakers' success in nurturing the child determines the nature and severity of the wounding experienced by the child during each stage of development. Hendrix (1992) suggests that between one third and one half of newborns do not experience enough safety and do not have all their needs met.

The infant uses their experiences during this stage to create an image (*imago*) of their caretakers and an image of the self in the context of the world. The infant also develops coping mechanisms in order to survive. These coping mechanisms take the form of either the minimiser or the maximiser response. The minimiser response is characterised by the infant diminishing their reactions and then withdrawing or becoming passive

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(Hendrix, 1992). Children using the maximiser response exaggerate their affect by exploding or by being very expressive in order to make sure that their needs are met (Hendrix, 1992). The degree of reactivity displayed by an individual depends on the developmental stage in which the primary wounding occurs. The earlier the dominant wounding which an individual experiences, the greater their degree of reactivity or withdrawal will be.

The developmental stages and the socialisation process are discussed in the sections below. These stages and the socialisation process form part of the psychosocial journey. This journey is discussed in order to provide insight regarding the wounding that can occur during certain developmental stages and the possible adaptations resulting from such wounding.

Developmental Stages

In Imago theory, the developmental stages start at birth and end at around 19 years of age. Each of these stages is discussed in detail below.

Stage 1: Attachment (0 to 18 months)

Introduction. The individual's primary task after the experience of separation from the mother at birth is attachment. The infant needs physical and emotional contact in order to feel safe and to become "securely attached" (Hendrix, 1992, p. 64). The infant needs to know that the world is safe and that their efforts are successful in meeting their needs. When difficulties occur in this nurturing process, the individual might lose contact with their original "joyful state" (Hendrix, 1992, p. 65). This loss could result in the development of an insecure and anxious attachment as well as the use of maladaptive coping mechanisms. The experience of security during this development stage establishes the way in which an individual experiences security throughout their life. Children

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wounded during this stage develop coping mechanisms that involve minimising or

maximising the expression of their energy, as discussed above.

Minimiser. Children become minimisers if they are exposed to caretakers who are

consistently emotionally cold and inconsistently physically available. Although the child

desperately needs to attach, they develop defences and do not approach others because

attachment results in emotional pain. The caretaker cannot cope with the responsibility of a

child and is caught up in their own problems, which leads to the caretaker emotionally

rejecting the child (Hendrix, 1992). The child starts rejecting the caretaker in response to

the caretaker's initial rejection, which ultimately results in the child's rejection of their life

force. Once this happens, the child no longer cries or expresses their needs. The old brain

remains in a constant state of alarm because the denied needs are essential for survival. The

child's life energy is thus minimised. A false self is constructed and the child appears

independent. People might admire this independence, but such an individual lives in

isolation, is determined to avoid pain, and remains vulnerable to rejection. Their primary

adaptation is to avoid contact.

Maximiser. Children who become maximisers experience inconsistent caretaking

during the attachment stage. The caretaker may sometimes be appropriately warm and, at

other times, they are cold. Such a caretaker is likely to be self-centred, preoccupied, busy,

and may manifest various moods (Hendrix, 1992). The caretaker's occasional warmth

causes the infant to try to fulfil their needs continually, and they thus develop a clinging

response. The infant cries louder or longer as they keep trying to attract the caretaker's

attention. However, the infant also experiences anger as a result of the caretaker's

unpredictability. The infant's dilemma is that its primary object is one of both pain and

pleasure. The infant then develops an ambivalent defensive structure which involves

simultaneously clinging to and pushing away the caregiver. The maximiser infant's

adaptation is to cling to the caretaker. The central adaptations of clinging to and avoiding

the caretaker are displayed in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1

Adaptations to wounding at the stage of attachment (Hendrix, 1992, pp. 73-74)

The avoider: Minimiser, rigid boundaries	The clinger: Maximiser, diffuse boundaries
Basic fear (wound): Contact may lead to emotional and physical rejection, loss of self through contact with parent (partner)	**Basic fear (wound):** Separation and abandonment, loss of self through loss of contact with parent (partner)
Internal message: Don't be	**Internal message:** Don't need me
Core belief: I have no right to exist	**Core belief:** I can't get my needs met
Relationship belief: I will be hurt if I initiate contact with you	**Relationship belief:** I am safe if I hold on to you
Image of partner: Demanding, all consuming	**Image of partner:** Unavailable, has no feelings, a rock or wall
Relationship to partner: Detached, avoidant	**Relationship to partner:** Clinging, demanding attempts to fuse
Core issue: Too much togetherness, too many feelings, too much chaos	**Core issue:** Separateness
Typical frustration: You hate me, you feel too much	**Typical frustration:** You are never there
Recurrent feelings: Terror and rage	**Recurrent feelings:** Voracious rage and terror
Conflict management: Hyper rational, avoidant, passive aggressive withdrawal and coldness	**Conflict management:** Hyperemotional, uncompromising, demanding, then giving in
Growth challenge: Claim right to be, initiate emotional and physical contact, express feelings, increase body awareness and sensory contact with environment	**Growth challenge:** Let go, do things on your own

In comparison to Hendrix's (1992) attachment stage, Erickson refers to this first

developmental stage as infancy (Meyer, 1997). This stage "covers the first year of life"

(Meyer, 1997, p. 216) and involves trust versus mistrust (Meyer, 1997). According to

Erikson (1963, cited in Meyer, 1997), "The extent to which infants learn to trust their

environment depends mainly on the quality of the mother-child relationship" (p. 216).

Healthy trust is "tempered with a degree of distrust which leads to caution" (Meyer, 1997,

p. 217), and thus healthy trust "is not naïve or blind" (Meyer, 1997, p. 217) – this is what Erikson calls hope (Meyer, 1997).

Stage 2: Exploration (18 to 36 months)

Introduction. Exploration is characterised by the processes of leaving and returning (Hendrix, 1992). Children leave because they are curious and wish to explore the world on their own. Children return because they want the assurance that they can return to the safety provided by the caretakers at any time. The assurance of a safe haven is fundamental to the child being confident enough to explore the world. During this stage, the child retains the desire for attachment. The child does not wish to rebel against the caretakers, but does desire to assert the self and to explore the world. The different experiences of minimisers and maximisers are discussed in the sections below.

Minimiser: Distancing child with a fear of absorption. This child's caretakers are overprotective and set strict limits (Hendrix, 1992). They constantly check on the child, and the child is not allowed to wander freely. The child is forced to remain physically close by to the caretakers. This overprotective parenting often occurs in parents who are unsure of their parenting abilities. The child has a need to explore and will try to stay away from the caretakers. At times, the child may return to the caretakers physically, but they will be emotionally cut off. The child thus develops a distancing mechanism not because of a fear of contact, but because of a need to keep boundaries in place to avoid absorption. Their adaptation is to isolate themselves.

Maximiser: Ambivalent child with a fear of loss. The caretakers encourage the maximiser child to leave and to explore before the child is ready (Hendrix, 1992). The caretakers keep sending the child away or ignoring the child. In addition, they show irritation when the child tries to connect with them. The caretakers are anxious to be free of the needs of the child. When the child returns, the caretakers are unavailable and have

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disappeared either physically or emotionally. The child then becomes fearful and is scared to leave the caretakers in case this action results in loss. The child needs constant reassurance, fears abandonment, and also exaggerates their affect through mechanisms such as storytelling, being tearful, and questioning everything in order to attract their caretakers' attention. This child's adaptation is to pursue the caretaker. Adaptations to wounding at the stage of exploration are detailed in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2

Adaptations to wounding at the stage of exploration (Hendrix, 1992, pp. 82-83)

The isolator: Minimiser, rigid boundaries	The pursuer: Maximiser, diffuse boundaries
Basic fear (wound): Being smothered, absorbed, humiliated, loss of parent (partner)	**Basic fear (wound):** Unreliability of others, abandonment, loss of parent (partner)
Internal message: Don't be separate	**Internal message:** Don't be dependent
Core belief: I can't say no and be loved	**Core belief:** I can't count on anyone
Relationship belief: I will be absorbed if I get close	**Relationship belief:** If I act independently, you will abandon me
Image of partner: Insecure, too dependent, needy	**Image of partner:** Distant, has no needs
Relationship to partner: Sets limits on togetherness, passive aggressive, acts out absorption fears by distancing	**Relationship to partner:** Ambivalent pursuit and withdrawal
Core issue: Personal freedom, autonomy	**Core issue:** Partner reliability, support, standing
Typical frustration: You need too much	**Typical frustration:** You are never there when I need you
Recurrent feelings: Fear and impotent fury	**Recurrent feelings:** Panic and anger
Conflict management: Oppositional, distancing	**Conflict management:** Blaming, demanding, chasing, complaining, devaluing
Growth challenge: Initiate closeness, share feelings, increase time together, integrate positive and negative traits in partner	**Growth challenge:** Initiate separateness, develop outside interests, internalise partner, integrate positive and negative traits of partner

In contrast to Hendrix's (1992) exploration stage, Erickson refers to the second developmental stage, which covers "the second year of life" (Meyer, 1997, p. 217), as early childhood. It is during this time that an awareness of autonomy versus shame and doubt develops (Meyer, 1997). According to Meyer (1997),

children's physical development enables them to experiment with two

psychosocial modalities: holding on or letting go. At this stage, children want

to exercise and develop their new-found muscle control, an ability which

leads them either to autonomy (if they perform successfully) or shame and

doubt about their abilities (if they perform unsuccessfully). (p. 217)

Stage 3: Identity – 'This is me' (3 to 4 years)

Introduction. The child develops a sense of self during this stage by creating an

inner image of the self (Hendrix, 1992). This process is characterised by the child briefly

identifying with cartoon characters, film and television heroes, and their primary

caretakers. The caregiver, through encouraging, acknowledging, and mirroring these

identities, assists the child in integrating these various identities, which results in the

development of a unique and differentiated sense of self. This process involves

self-assertion and not rebellion (Hendrix, 1992).

Minimiser: Rigid child with a fear of being shamed. Children begin to assert

themselves during the identity stage (Hendrix, 1992). Many caretakers suppress the child's

new identity, especially when this new identity does not match the parents' desires for their

child. The child is then unable to express their new identity. They also develop a fear of

losing their caretakers, and they respond by repressing the rejected parts of the self. They

resentfully become what their parents want them to be.

Selective mirroring occurs when caretakers praise the identities they approve of and

reject the identities of which they disapprove (Hendrix, 1992). This process results in the

child being unable to remain whole, and they thus develop a false self by identifying only

with the traits that their caretakers endorse. The repressed parts of the self are referred to as

the lost self or the shadow parts of the self. If caretakers laugh and disapprove when a child

displays a particular identity, these reactions activate a fear within the child. The child

becomes a rigid minimiser with a controlling personality. This adaptation thus involves the child becoming a rigid controller.

Maximiser: Invisible child with a fear of being a self. In this form of wounding, caretakers are preoccupied with their own needs and almost completely lack the ability to mirror the child's new identity (Hendrix, 1992). The child expresses a self, but nobody reflects this new identity. They thus lose sight of themselves and remain undefined, diffuse, and fragmented. The child is unable to distinguish between the self and others. Their emotions vacillate. They also appear to have more than one personality. They feel invisible and complain that others do not notice them. The child responds by seeking attention and constantly performing in order to be noticed. Their boundaries are diffuse. They also invade others' territories and cannot prevent others from invading their territory. They adapt by becoming a compliant diffuser. Table 2.3 below displays the results of wounding at the stage of identity.

Table 2.3

Adaptations to wounding at the stage of identity (Hendrix, 1992, pp. 92-93)

The rigid controller: Minimiser, rigid boundaries	The compliant diffuser: Maximise, diffuse boundaries
Basic fear (wound): Being shamed, loss of control, losing face, loss of parental (partner) love	**Basic fear (wound):** Being invisible, self-assertion, loss of parental (partner) love
Internal message: Don't be what you want to be, be what we want you to be	**Internal message:** Don't assert yourself
Core belief: I can't be me and be accepted and loved	**Core belief:** I'll never be seen, valued and accepted
Relationship belief: I'll be safe if I stay in control	**Relationship belief:** I'll be loved if I go along with and please others
Image of partner: Unorganised, scatterbrained	**Image of partner:** Insensitive, controlling
Relationship to partner: Domineering, critical, invasive, withholding	**Relationship to partner:** Submissive, passive aggressive, manipulative
Core issue: Partner's emotional liability, chaos and passivity	**Core issue:** Partner rigidity and dominance
Typical frustration: You want me to be somebody else, you don't know what you want	**Typical frustration:** You never see me, you want everything your way
Recurrent feelings: Shame and anger	**Recurrent feelings:** Shame and confusion
Conflict management: Rigidly imposes will, super-rational with occasional angry outbursts, takes charge, punishes	**Conflict management:** Confused, alternates between compliance and defiance, exaggerates emotions, makes few suggestions, self-effacing
Growth challenge: Relax control, mirror partner's thoughts and feelings, develop flexibility and sensitivity	**Growth challenge:** Assert yourself, set boundaries for yourself, respect boundaries of others

Erickson refers to this third stage, which takes place over the ages of three to six years, as the play age (Meyer, 1997). It is during this stage that initiative versus guilt develops (Meyer, 1997). Through this stage, the child learns purpose (Meyer, 1997). According to Meyer (1997),

> Children at this stage can act on their own initiative, and can therefore feel guilty about their behaviour .... Children experience conflict between their abilities to intrude into other people's lives ... and their new-found realisation of moral rules. (p. 217)

Furthermore, "[t]his stage is important exceptionally important in the development of the conscience" (Meyer, 1997, p. 217), and "[t]he danger of this stage is that the conscience will develop too strictly or in a moralistic way" (Meyer, 1997, p. 218).

Stage 4: Competence – 'I can do it' (4 to 7 years)

Introduction. Children acquire a variety of practical and social skills during the identity stage. These skills enable them to manage their environment, assess their influence on their social world, and compete against siblings, parents, and others (Hendrix, 1992). Caregivers can play a key role in assisting and motivating children to overcome obstacles. The parental tools for this stage include encouragement, positive mirroring, and praise. Children in this stage learn about establishing boundaries, understanding limitations, handling frustration, and exercising perseverance.

Minimiser: Competitive child with a fear of failure or disapproval. The child attempts to express their competence during the identity stage (Hendrix, 1992). Some caretakers feel threatened and selectively reward or punish the child's expression of competence. The occasional positive rewards cause the child to keep trying to express their competence. The child attempts to produce results by excessively competing, performing, and striving to win. They strive for success and therefore abandon intimacy. The child fears that they might lose and disappoint others so they constantly work harder, but they never feel successful. This adaptation involves becoming a compulsive competitor.

Maximiser: Helpless or manipulative child with a fear of aggressiveness and/or success. Some caretakers constantly criticise their child's attempts to achieve personal power (Hendrix, 1992). This criticism confuses the child and generates alternating feelings of helplessness and resentment. A fear of failure leads the child to refuse to compete openly and results in a lack of empathy. This child will eventually give up trying to compete and will be unwilling to make an effort. They feel that they cannot please their

parents, nor do anything right. They also develop a feeling of helplessness. This child also treats others as incompetent. The adaptation involved here is to become a manipulative compromiser. The results of wounding at the stage of competency are displayed in Table 2.4 below.

Table 2.4

Adaptations to wounding at the stage of competency (Hendrix, 1992, pp. 98-99)

The compulsive competitor: Minimiser, rigid boundaries	The manipulative compromiser: Maximiser, diffuse boundaries
Basic fear (wound): Being a failure, guilt and disapproval, fear of parental (partner) disapproval	**Basic fear (wound):** Being aggressive, successful, competent, powerful, losing parental (partner) approval
Internal message: Don't make mistakes	**Internal message:** Don't be powerful
Core belief: I have to be perfect	**Core belief:** I don't know what to do – I can't be expressive or express anger
Relationship belief: I'll be loved if I am the best	**Relationship belief:** I'll be loved if I am good and co-operative
Image of partner: Manipulative, incompetent	**Image of partner:** Never satisfied, has to win
Relationship to partner: Competitive, aggressive, puts partner down	**Relationship to partner:** Manipulative, compromising, sabotaging
Core issue: Control, battle for being in control	**Core issue:** Feeling controlled, efforts not valued
Typical frustration: You are never satisfied	**Typical frustration:** You always have to win
Recurrent feelings: Anger and guilt	**Recurrent feelings:** Helpless and resentful
Conflict management: Competes for control	**Conflict management:** Compromises, manipulates
Growth challenge: Accept competence, become cooperative, mirror and value partner's efforts	**Growth challenge:** Be direct, express power, develop competence, praise partner's success

This fourth stage is identified by Erickson as the school age (age 6 to 12 years old) (Meyer, 1997). Industry versus inferiority develops during this stage (Meyer, 1997). It is during the child's experience of industry versus inferiority during this stage that they will develop a sense of competence (Meyer, 1997). According to Meyer (1997),

Children have by now mastered the various organ modes and learn to get recognition by producing things. They develop a sense of industry, learn to

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handle the tools of their culture and become keen collaborators in any

productive process. Society meets these tendencies of children by creating

opportunities for learning and co-operation. (p. 218)

However, "[t]he danger of this stage is that children may fail to acquire the skills

and tools of their culture, which causes feelings of inferiority to develop" (Meyer, 1997, p.

218).

Stage 5: Concern and moving out into the world (7 to 13 years)

Introduction. During this stage, the relationship focus shifts beyond the family

(Hendrix, 1992). Children begin to relate to other adults and to their own peer group. They

develop close relationships with others and may even have a best friend. This relationship

with a best friend is normally serious, intense, and based on co-operation. The existence of

a friend circle allows children to develop relationship skills and to feel attached to others.

Friendships allow children to find their own identities, to develop confidence, and to

develop a feeling of competence. The caregiver's role in recognising and approving the

choice of friends is instrumental in the child's sense of self-esteem and competence when

choosing friends.

Minimiser: Lonely child with a fear of others. Some children experience

difficulties with being accepted by a group and therefore fail to make friends. The

adaptation that results produces a lonely child who fears others (Hendrix, 1992). The

emergence of the lonely child can be attributed to a combination of various factors. These

factors include the presence of overprotective parents who restrict the child because of a

fear of losing the child, parental disapproval, and the caretakers' criticism of the child's

friends. The child's development is also influenced by the parents' inability to provide

proper social skills – in particular, inabilities regarding the acquisition of friends and the

resolution of conflicts within friendships. Environmental factors, such as race, religion,

nationality, and one's socio-economic background, can also contribute to isolation and to the child directing their energy inwards. The child then becomes preoccupied with the self as a result of experiencing rejection and responds to this experience by becoming a 'loner'.

Maximiser: Gregarious child with a fear of neediness and/or being alone. The maximiser child's parents convey the message that personal feelings and self-care are unimportant. These children thus live to please others and cannot see themselves as important (Hendrix, 1992). They need to be needed by others and are scared of being alone. They are also dominated by others. They are trained to care for and to give to others. They thus experience feelings of guilt if they do not do these things. Social responsibility is particularly important to them. They may have many friends, but only their best friend is close to them. This adaptation is known as becoming a caretaker. The adaptations to wounding at the stage of concern are described in Table 2.5 below.

Table 2.5

Adaptations to wounding at the stage of concern (Hendrix, 1992, pp. 106-107)

The loner: Minimiser, rigid boundaries	The caretaker: Maximiser, diffuse boundaries
Basic fear (wound): Ostracism by peers, parental (partner) rejection	**Basic fear (wound):** Having or expressing needs, being excluded, parental (partner) rejection
Internal message: Don't be close	**Internal message:** Don't have any needs of your own
Core belief: I am not lovable	**Core belief:** Others need me
Relationship belief: I'll be hurt if I try to be close	**Relationship belief:** I'll be loved if I meet your needs
Image of partner: Gregarious and intrusive	**Image of partner:** Unappreciative
Relationship to partner: Exclude partner from inner world, make unilateral plans, counter dependent	**Relationship to partner:** Self-sacrificing, intrusive
Core issue: Partner intrusiveness	**Core issue:** Partner exclusion
Typical frustration: You don't like me, you won't leave me alone	**Typical frustration:** You don't appreciate me or my efforts
Recurrent feelings: Resentment and depression	**Recurrent feelings:** Resentment, depression
Conflict management: Avoid conflict, sulks	**Conflict management:** Tries to be understanding and nice
Growth challenge: Develop same sex friends, join partner in socialising, share feelings and thoughts with partner, become inclusive	**Growth challenge:** Express needs to partner and others, self-care, respect partner's privacy, take time alone

In contrast to Hendrix's (1992) fifth stage, Erickson refers to stage five of development as the adolescence stage (Meyer, 1997). This stage starts at about 12 years old and ends anywhere between the ages of 18 and 25 years old (Meyer, 1997). It is during this phase that identity versus role confusion develops and a sense of reliability is formed (Meyer, 1997). Erikson (1963, cited in Meyer, 1997) identifies the following with regard to this stage:

> Erickson calls this quest for a self-image, continuity in life and congruence between the self-image and the role expectations of society, the *search for identity*.... People have a sense of identity when they manage to integrate all their identifications, drives, wishes and expectations, abilities and skills, with the opportunities society offers them. (pp. 218-219)

Stage 6: Intimacy (13 to 19 years)

Introduction. During this stage, the child forms relationships beyond the family and begins to experience a greater degree of separation from the caregivers (Hendrix, 1992). They also begin to engage in more intimate emotional and sexual relationships with members of the opposite sex. These changes occur as a result of the child's intellectual, emotional, and sexual development as well as the desire to find their own partner. The nature of the caretakers' support and enthusiasm during this process has a profound influence on the child's transition into more mature relationships. The child's experience of their own parents' marital relationship has a major influence on their view of marriage.

Minimiser: Rebel – The rebellious child with a fear of being controlled. Some caretakers become fearful as their child matures and then become restrictive because they are not ready to let their child go (Hendrix, 1992). These caretakers give their child the message that they are not ready for the world. The child experiences anger because of all the restrictions and feels that their caretakers do not trust them. If the rules set by the caretakers are too limiting, the child will respond by breaking them and by challenging authority. This adaptation involves rebellion.

Maximiser: Conformist – The model child with a fear of being different. The caretakers of these children are afraid of being different (Hendrix, 1992). They criticise other people, point out oddities, and are very conservative in their outlook. They teach their child to conform and to blend in to avoid becoming a target. Conformity is seen as the only way of establishing friendships. The child absorbs the message that it is necessary to be liked in order to be loved. They appear to be model children, are well behaved, and are well groomed. The adaptation is to become a conformist. The adaptations to wounding at the stage of intimacy are presented in Table 2.6 below.

Table 2.6

Adaptations to wounding at the stage of intimacy (Hendrix, 1992, pp. 110-111)

The rebel: Minimiser, rigid boundaries	The conformist: Maximiser, diffuse boundaries
Basic fear (wound): Being controlled by others (parent or partner)	**Basic fear (wound):** Being different from others, disapproval of parent (partner)
Internal message: Don't grow up	**Internal message:** Don't make waves
Core belief: I am not trusted	**Core belief:** I have to be good
Relationship belief: I'll be controlled if I give up, dissent	**Relationship belief:** I have to hold things together
Image of partner: Too nice, counter controlling, guilting, parental	**Image of partner:** Rebellious child
Relationship to partner: Rebellious, controlling, devalues partner	**Relationship to partner:** Condescending, critical, controlling
Core issue: Freedom to break the rules	**Core issue:** Stability and co-operation
Typical frustration: You are never on my side	**Typical frustration:** You won't grow up, you always want to be different
Recurrent feelings: Anger and disappointment	**Recurrent feelings:** Angry self-righteousness
Conflict management: Rebellious, suspicious of motives	**Conflict management:** Tries to impose rules
Growth challenge: Maintain self-identity, be responsible to others, learn to trust others	**Growth challenge:** Experiment with being different, take risks, develop identity

Erickson refers to stage six of development as the early adulthood stage during which intimacy versus isolation develops (Meyer, 1997). It is during this stage that a sense of love develops (Meyer, 1997). According to Erikson (1963, cited in Meyer, 1997),

> The achievement of ego identity enables individuals to share their identity with another person, that is, to have ongoing relationships and to develop the ethical strength to continue the relationship despite the sacrifices and compromises they might demand. (p. 219)

Although Erickson refers to two additional developmental stages, namely adulthood (ages 25 to 65) and maturity (ages between 60 and 70) (Meyer, 1997), these are not discussed here as Hendrix's (1992) developmental stages end with the sixth stage.

The Developmental Stages: Conclusion

The storehouse of unmet childhood needs, which consists of the unfulfilled childhood desires to be nurtured, protected, and allowed to proceed unhindered along the path of maturity, is an important feature of what Hendrix (1992) called the "unconscious marriage" (p. 228). These unmet needs and expectations may result in unreasonable demands which can also have a profound effect on interpersonal relationships in organisations.

Meyer (1997), commenting on Erikson's work, states the following:

Even though optimal development might look like an impossible ideal, it should be kept in mind that Erikson has an optimistic view of development and makes provision for spontaneous recovery from developmental mistakes or inadequacies. He believes that it always remains possible for a person who experiences developmental problems in the early stages to develop optimally in later stages. (p. 222)

Erickson's theory of development, as discussed by Meyer (1997), can be said to have "many implications for society as a whole" (Meyer, 1997, p. 224), which is similar to the impact of Hendrix's (1992) Imago theory. According to Meyer (1997),

The fact that he [Erikson] sees such a close tie between the epigenetic development of the individual and society (1963, p. 73) means that the group can gain many benefits from the healthy development of its members, and that education and mental health should therefore have a high priority in any society (Roazen, 1976, p. 22). (p. 224)

The following section focuses on childhood injuries that occur as a result of the socialisation process. The socialisation process involves all the messages that the child receives from their caretakers and from society. These messages tell the child how they should behave and dictate the type of person they should become. These socialisation messages play competing and hidden roles in relationships.

Socialisation Journey (The Lost Self)

As we progress from infancy to adulthood, we are unwittingly subjected to the same principles, norms, and regulations that our caretakers were exposed to during their upbringing (Hendrix, 1992). Caretakers consciously and unconsciously pass their childhood wounds to their children because of their belief that conformity is in the child's best interest. Individuality is thus sacrificed in favour of survival. However, the innate drive to attain wholeness remains intact. Individuals constantly strive to recover the true self and to reclaim the parts of the self that they have denied in the attempt to survive. The Imago image is a blend of how the individual experiences their nurturing and socialisation processes.

Figure 2.3 below depicts the four functions of socialisation (Hendrix, 1992). The circle represents the inner core which is known as the self. The section outside of the circle represents the outside world that consists of society and nature. The core expresses itself through four functions. These functions, which are the pathways through which individuals connect to the world, are known as thinking, feeling, acting, and sensing.
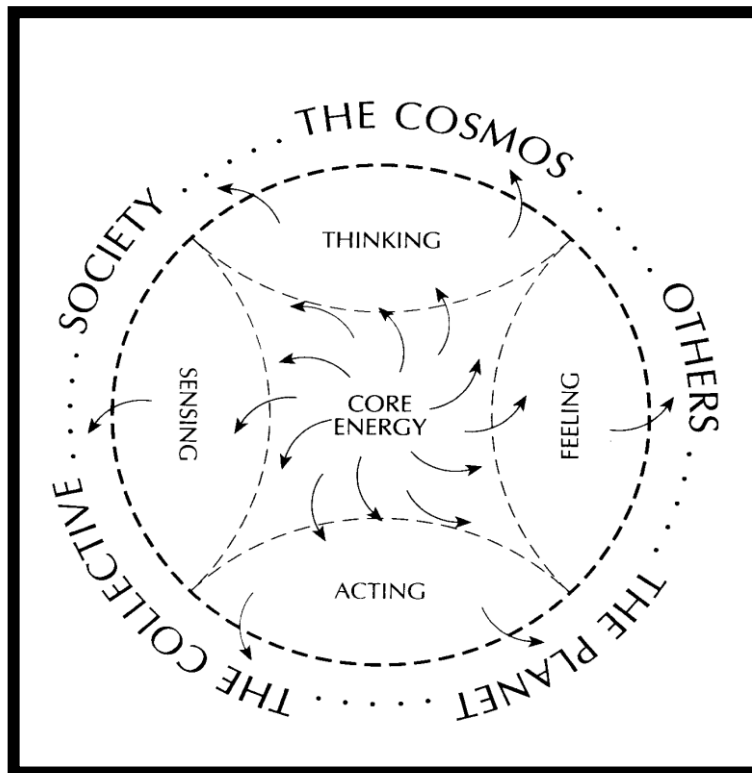
Figure 2.3. The four functions of socialization (Hendrix, 1992, p. 141)

Thinking involves the functions of the cortex such as analysis, rationalisation, deduction, and intellectualisation. People are trained and encouraged to think and are rewarded for thinking. Intellectual accomplishments are not rewarded equally though as achievement is emphasised differently for boys and girls. These descriptions refer mainly to Western individualistic cultures.

Feeling involves emotions and is the opposite of thinking. People are expected to control their emotions through the use of calm and rational thoughts. Boys and girls experience different expectations with regard to feelings and emotions. As an example, girls are generally allowed more freedom to express their feelings than boys are.

Acting refers to the ability to act or do as well as the confidence individuals have in their ability to act and do. Society expects people to behave in a certain manner that usually involves being quiet and non-disruptive as well as putting the wishes of the group

ahead of personal desires. This process causes individuals to lose touch with their spontaneity and their confidence in their ability to behave and to act normally. Gender also plays an influential role in determining appropriate behaviour.

Sensing refers to the experiencing of the senses, the body, and sexuality (in particular). Repressed sensuality often manifests itself in distorted forms. Sadism, celibacy, frigidity, impotence, and obsession with pornography are all examples of this distortion of sensuality. Gender differences are at their most extreme in this area of socialisation.

These four functions are the focus of the socialisation process. The free flow of energy to and from the core is impacted on during socialisation (Hendrix, 1992). Children close off or inhibit the flow of energy through the pathways in accordance with the encouragement or inhibition received from the outside world consisting of the caretakers and society. This inhibition results in connections that are broken and distorted or that lack vitality. Interactions with the outside world then become more limited and rigid.

Institutions in the environment (such as schools and churches), as well as practices and values found in books, magazines, and on the television, provide the models for acceptable behaviour and values in society. Individuals model their behaviour on these examples. The behaviour of society is not merely modelled, but it is also internalised in the form of beliefs and attitudes. This belief system provides order and stability, but it can also be rigid and inflexible. Reactions are likely to be the result of this belief system, rather than a response to the particular characteristics of a situation.

The Social Self

The social self is the part of the self that individuals show to the outside world (Hendrix, 1992). This self develops as a result of the ways in which parents and/or caretakers, as well as society in general, modify children's behaviour in order to produce conformity to what is regarded as acceptable social behaviour. The modification of the self

that occurs during the socialisation process results in parts of the original self disappearing or going missing. These parts then reappear in different guises. The missing self consists of the lost self, the denied self, and the hidden self.

The lost self consists of the parts of the self that are hidden both from the self and from others. These facets of the self were once part of the self, but have become repressed and prohibited as a result of repeated societal messages. The denied self consists of traits that individuals possess, but refuse to acknowledge. Although others are aware of these traits, the individual refuses to acknowledge them because they have a negative impact on the individual's self-image. The hidden self consists of the parts of the self that are hidden from others and that are kept secret. These parts are known to the individual, but are not known to others. The hidden self is consciously repressed in order to make the self acceptable to the world, but it is also preserved because it makes the individual feel whole.

The void created by these missing parts is filled by the construction of a false self that is in accordance with what society dictates. This public persona is adopted because it assists people in getting the love and approval they need in private, work-related, and social relationships. This adopted persona helps people to channel their energy into approved directions and preserves the illusion of wholeness. The parts of the original nature that were nurtured and preserved, namely the false self and the denied self, combine to form the social self (Hendrix, 1992). It is the social self that constitutes the façade individuals present to the outside world. It is only in the context of a loving relationship that individuals have the opportunity to discover and to connect with the missing self. In this way, they are able to restore their original wholeness.

The socialisation process also affects the way in which individuals relate to others in the workplace. Figure 2.4 below is a graphic representation of the socialisation and

nurturing processes. It also depicts the wounding that may occur at each stage and the adaptations to this wounding.
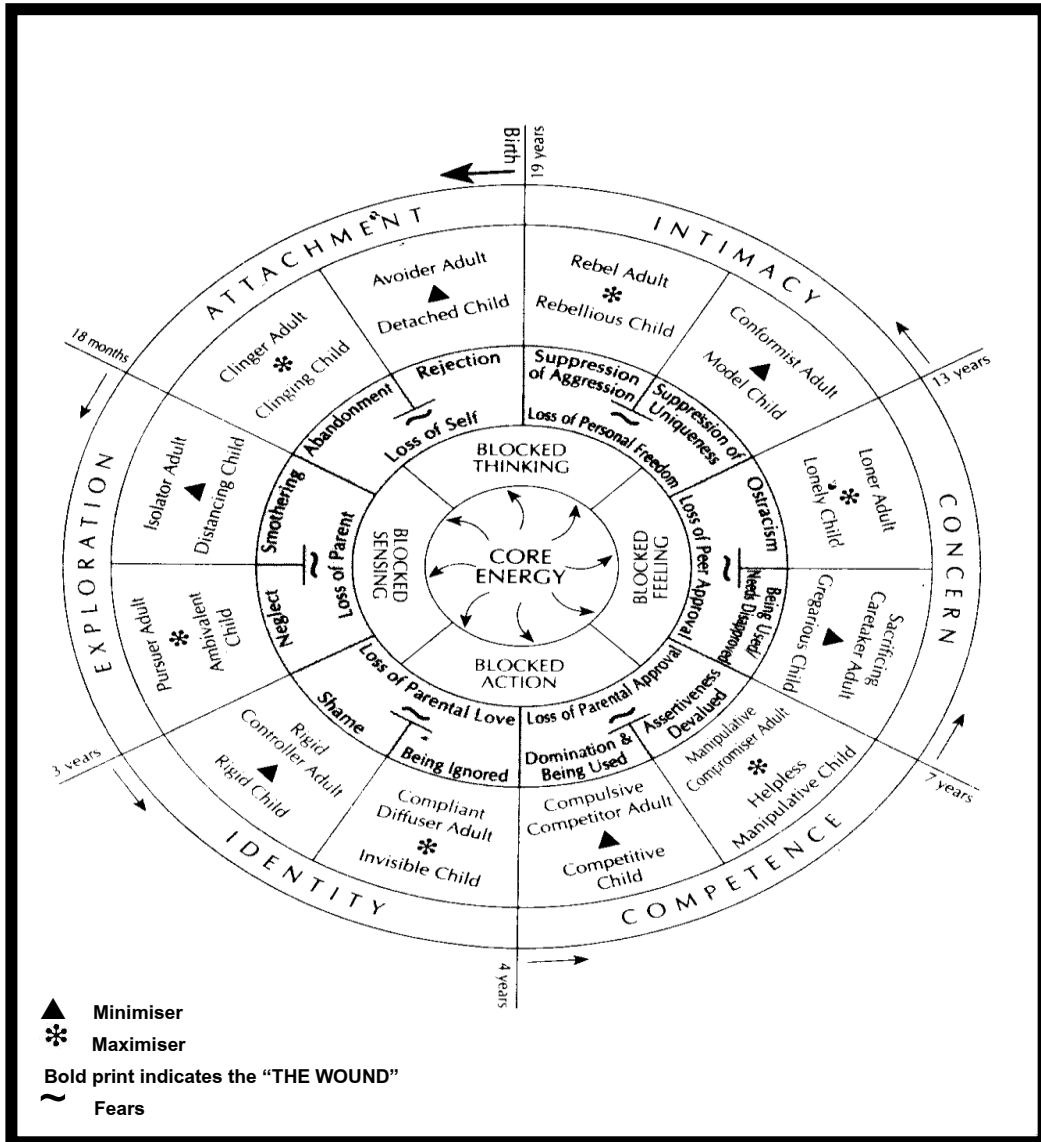
Figure 2.4. Effects of nurturing deficits and social repression (Hendrix, 1992, p. 169)

The above discussion concerning the wounding that occurs during the psychosocial journey and the socialisation process provides the context for understanding the nature of the power struggle that inevitably arises in relationships. A more detailed explanation of the power struggle is given in the next section.

The Power Struggle

The 'chemistry' or romantic phase of love eventually ends. The length of this phase varies and depends on the individuals involved. Couples who are serious about their relationships eventually start making commitments, which often heralds the end of the romantic stage (Hendrix, 1992). Lovers begin searching for the gratification of their needs, but this does not necessarily include the attraction they feel for each other. These needs are both conscious and subconscious as well as extremely influential in creating expectations and developing difficulties within relationships.

The greatest need in a relationship involves filling the void left by the wounding inflicted during childhood when the well-meaning caretakers prevented the development of the whole self. The tragedy is that each individual subconsciously enters into the relationship with the purpose of fulfilling their own needs. However, each of the partners also has an agenda of their own, which marks the beginning of the power struggle. It is possible that the same unmet needs that give rise to power struggles within a marital relationship may also play a role in the conflict and power struggles that arise in organisations.

During the romantic phase, an individual is only aware of their partner's positive traits. However, when a couple moves into the power struggle phase, each member of the couple suddenly becomes aware of the negative traits of the other person. These traits were always present, but were previously ignored. The shocking realisation of this oversight, combined with the realisation that they are experiencing the same wounding as they experienced during childhood, causes individuals to project the missing parental traits onto their partners in an attempt to complete their unfinished childhood issues (Hendrix, 1992). Individuals try to provoke the needed response/s from their partners through this

projection. At the most basic level, this provocation involves criticising the partner for everything that is disliked about the self.

Individuals can also acquire some of the negative traits of their caretakers, such as the use of alcohol to avoid an argumentative situation or the tendency to become violent in an argument. These tendencies are referred to as "introjections" Hendrix, (1992, p. 144) and are embedded in the subconscious as a result of childhood experiences. These tendencies often epitomise what was most disliked about the parents. These tendencies are referred to as the "disowned self" (Hendrix, 1992, p. 159).

Imago theory identifies three major sources of conflict within the power struggle stage, namely stirring up each other's childhood wounds, re-injuring of each other's childhood wounds, and projecting one partner's own negative behaviour onto the other (Hendrix, 1992). These exchanges manifest subconsciously and elicit feelings of confusion, anger, depression, and anxiety. Simon (2003) states that positive intentions and a desire for connection underlie negative projections. Partners begin to blame each other for their unhappiness. The individuals in a relationship thus also cannot understand that they have changed in that they do not behave as they used to during the romantic stage of their relationship. Individuals then resort to damaging strategies to entice their partners to respond in the desired manner, including withholding affection and becoming emotionally distant.

Hendrix (1992) states that the primitive brain is responsible for the belief that being unkind to one's partner will cause them to become more loving. This instinct is an 'imprint' created during infancy – for example, babies cry to attract attention. The louder a baby screams, the faster it will receive attention. This imprint is stored in our adult memories and is used as a method of attracting attention. Parents meet their infant's needs based on their own intuition. The infant's only communication is to cry and scream until its

needs are met. Subconsciously, individuals expect their partners to fulfil the same role as their parents and to meet their needs without actually having to articulate such needs. However, the reality is that both of the partners in a relationship have their own needs to fulfil and expect the other to fulfil these needs. This leads to a cycle of frustration.

Once couples realise that they are locked in a power struggle, they often find it difficult to determine when the phase started or how it will end. The stages within the power struggle are predictable and follow a pattern. This pattern is similar to the pattern of emotions experienced when dealing with death. The first stage involves shock (Hendrix, 1993, p. 104). The partners realise that their relationship may be doomed because of each person's nature. The individuals feel that they will be forced to continue to endure pain and loneliness. The second stage is denial (Hendrix, 1993, p. 104). This stage occurs because the disappointment is so great that the truth is simply obscured. Denial is eventually replaced by anger and a feeling of betrayal. An individual might also experience resentment towards their partner for hiding their true self.

Surviving these stages leads to the third stage, namely preservation, which is similar to bargaining in the grief process (Hendrix, 1993, p. 105). The relationship subsides into a pattern of 'give and take' or compromise. Couples are ready to offer their partners rewards in return for meeting their needs during this stage. The final stage in the power struggle process involves despair (Hendrix, 1993, p. 105). Couples resign themselves to the fact that their relationship is a failure and resort to a number of methods to cope with or to end the relationship during this stage.

The romantic stage and the power struggle stage are both characterised by an attempt to regain the original state of 'wholeness' which we experienced when we were born. The euphoria of the romantic stage involves the conscious perception that 'wholeness' has been attained. The surfacing of unconscious needs during the power

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struggle stage destroys the euphoria of the romantic stage. Each individual is left feeling that their partner is purposefully withholding the attributes they displayed during the romantic stage. Couples remain in the clutches of the power struggle stage and continue to experience a relationship of disappointments and shattered dreams until they can become conscious and develop a new relationship. This new relationship is known as the conscious marriage (Hendrix, 1992).

The same scenario described above could be relevant in an organisation where conflict between employees could similarly be resolved by means of creating a better understanding of interpersonal psychodynamics. The application of Imago principles is ideally suited to creating the awareness needed to transform work-related relationships positively. The intentional dialogue is the primary Imago tool for assisting couples and therefore also co-workers (if Imago theory is applied to organisations) to shift from an unconscious to a more conscious mode of relating. The concept of the intentional dialogue is discussed in the next section.

The Imago Dialogue

The Imago dialogue process is a tool that helps couples to communicate in a non-reactive manner. Hendrix (1992) refers to the Imago dialogue as "deliberate conscious communication" (p. 190). Partners clarify, confirm, and develop appreciation, acceptance, and respect for each other's inner worlds during this process (Hendrix, 1992). The Imago dialogue consists of mirroring, validation, and empathy (Hendrix, 1992, p. 283).

Mirroring. The receiving partner is required to reflect the content of the sending party's message. The receiver does not attempt to defend, analyse, criticise, or interpret the message being sent. The receiver reassures the sender that the message has been heard by mirroring the sender's message (Hendrix, 1992).

Validation. Validation is the process whereby the receiver affirms that they grasp the meaning of the message sent and that they understand its importance from the point of view of the sender (Hendrix, 1992).

Empathy. The receiver shows empathy by being able to identify the sender's feelings and emotions. The receiver must also communicate an understanding of the presence of these emotions (Hendrix, 1992).

Research suggests that training in Imago relationship theory and skills results in a significant improvement in interpersonal relationship dynamics (Guagenti-Tax, 2003; Hannah et al., 1996; Luquet & Hannah, 1996; Weigle, 2006). It is hypothesised that employees' exposure to Imago theory and tools will also result in a better understanding of the intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics present within an organisation. This understanding will result in a shift in consciousness and will improve work relationships in organisations. An explanation of what it means to be conscious in relationships follows.

Becoming Conscious

The knowledge gained from Imago training allows individuals to begin the process of self-discovery (Hendrix, 1992). Individuals gain insight into their cosmic origins and the psychological and social factors that have modified and shaped them. In order to integrate these insights, individuals must place themselves in new situations. They should also learn and exercise new behaviours. Individuals can change their past, habituated behaviours and beliefs over time and through repetition.

The old brain is the origin of these habituated behaviours, but the old and new brains play completely different roles within a relationship. The old brain reacts instinctively and attempts to protect the body to ensure wellbeing. The old brain also uses projections, introjections, and transferences as defences. While these defences are used and maintained, individuals remain unable to see the real person in others. It is important that

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people learn to honour diversity so that differences do not result in conflicts or personal judgements.

The new brain contains the reasons for the choices individuals make. It is these choices that will eventually determine the success or failure of relationships. The new brain is rational and suppresses the urge to attack by offering a less provocative approach and by avoiding confrontation. The new brain also seeks to defuse conflict by applying a non-defensive response to arguments. This part of the brain is responsible for "relationship skills" (Hendrix, 1992, p. 40). When individuals learn to use these new brain skills to overcome the fight or flight response of the old brain, it becomes possible to acquire lasting, fulfilling relationships.

People have an unconscious longing for connection. Thus, healing can happen in most relationships. Greater healing occurs when individuals relate consciously to one another. Through a merger of the old brain's instincts and the new brain's logic, individuals can realise the goals of the unconscious, namely to avoid danger and to feel safe.

The Imago dialogue discussed above is a powerful tool that helps people to reconnect. In order to help people stay engaged during conflict, a process is required to help manage the human tendency to react unconsciously to protect the self (Simon, 1993). If people are able to stay engaged and to honour their differences, a more complete vision of what is possible emerges that is more than the sum of the individual visions. According to Simon (1993), the Imago dialogue is useful in organisations in order to

- deepen connections between employees by visiting one another's worlds;
- build a safe container to hold differences between employees until a greater vision emerges; and

- strengthen group cohesion in order to lead to more powerful and effective collective action.

Figure 2.5 below details the characteristics of a conscious marriage (Hendrix, 1992). Many of these characteristics can also be applied to other relationships, for example, organisational relationships.

1. You realize that your love relationship has a hidden purpose – the healing of childhood wounds. Instead of focusing entirely on surface needs and desires, you learn to recognize the unresolved childhood issues that underlie them. When you look at marriage with this X-ray vision, your daily interactions take on more meaning. Puzzling aspects of your relationship begin to make sense to you, and you have a greater sense of control.

2. You create a more accurate image of your partner. At the very moment of attraction, you begin fusing your lover with your primary caretakers. Later you project your negative traits onto your partner, further obscuring your partner's essential reality. As you move towards a conscious marriage you gradually let go of these illusions and begin to perceive more of your partner's truth. You regard your partner not as your saviour but as another wounded human being, struggling to be healed.

3. You take responsibility for communicating your needs and desires to your partner. In an unconscious marriage you cling to the childhood belief that your partner automatically intuits your needs. In a conscious marriage, you accept the fact that, in order to understand each other, you have to develop clear channels of communications.

4. You become more intentional in your interactions. In an unconscious marriage, you tend to react without thinking. You allow the primitive response of your old brain to control your behaviour. In a conscious marriage, you train yourself to behave in a more constructive manner.

5. You learn to value your partner's needs and wishes, as highly as you value your own. In an unconscious marriage, you assume that your partner's role in life is to take care of your needs magically. In a conscious marriage, you let go of this narcissistic view and divert more and more of your energy to meeting your partner's needs.

6. You embrace the dark side of your personality. In a conscious marriage, you openly acknowledge the fact that you, like everyone else, have negative traits. As you accept responsibility for this dark side of your nature, you lessen your tendency to project your negative traits onto your mate, which creates a less hostile environment.

7. You learn new techniques to satisfy your basic needs and desires. During the power struggle, you cajole, harangue, and blame in an attempt to coerce your partner to meet your needs. When you move beyond this stage, you realize that your partner can indeed be a resource for you – once you abandon your self-defeating tactics.

8. You search within yourself for the strengths and abilities you are lacking. One reason you were attracted to your partner is that your partner possessed strengths and abilities that you lacked. Therefore, being with your partner gave you an illusionary sense of wholeness. In a conscious marriage, you learn that the only way you can truly recapture a sense of oneness is to develop the hidden traits within yourself.

9. You become more aware of your drive to be loving and whole and united with the universe. As part of your God-given nature, you have the ability to love unconditionally and to experience unity with the world around you. Social conditioning and imperfect parenting made you lose touch with these qualities. In a conscious marriage, you begin to rediscover your original nature.

10. You accept the difficulty of creating a good marriage. In an unconscious marriage, you believe that the way to have a good marriage is to pick the right partner. In a conscious marriage, you realize that you have to be the right partner. As you gain a more realistic view of love relationships, you realize that a good marriage requires commitment, discipline, and the courage to grow and change; marriage is hard work.

Figure 2.5. Ten characteristics of a conscious marriage (Hendrix, 1992, pp. 245-247)

The Fear of Change

It is difficult to change because old ways of behaving or old behaviour patterns have existed for a long time. It is easy to continue to behave in familiar ways, even though such behaviour might cause a lot of pain and discomfort. Hendrix (1993) uses the term "stretching" (p. 339) to refer to practising new behaviour. In order to change, individuals need to stretch and to wander into territory that feels unfamiliar to them. They need to give up their automated behaviours. They thus need to behave in ways that feel unnatural. If individuals keep on doing what they have been doing, they will continue to receive the same results. They must do something different in order to receive a different result. When people try to act in a different manner, it is normal for the brain to sound an alarm. Old ways are familiar, and people thus tend to try to maintain these familiar ways.

Conclusion

The key concepts of Imago set out above describe the dynamics that influence a couple's relationship. The question of whether these concepts can also be applied to other relationship contexts and to the organisational context, in particular, is central to this research project. Many people spend more time at work than at home, and therefore work relationships are important to investigate. Furthermore, an individual remains the same person regardless of the context. It is therefore logical to assume that childhood experiences of wounding have an impact on both home and work relationships. Erikson's work on development theory, as discussed by Meyer (1997), is also applicable to aid an understanding of how one's development may affect other areas of one's life.

The applicability of various Imago concepts to the organisational context has been highlighted throughout this chapter. When individuals start a new job, they experience excitement and enthusiasm. They also hold the belief that their experience of these emotions will last. However, like romantic attraction in a love relationship, these initial

feelings do not last. The initial excitement phase is followed by the development of the power struggle phase. The more time individuals spend in an organisational context with their colleagues, the more likely they are to realise that they have different opinions and views regarding various aspects of the organisation.

When individuals feel threatened, they use the defences that were developed earlier in their lives. Thus, individuals react in accordance with their reptilian brain's perception of danger. The efforts to fix the problems encountered form part of the distorted attempt to reclaim that which was lost. Unhappy employees often resign and move to other companies because they fail to realise that conflict that is properly understood and managed can provide growth opportunities. When they change jobs because of conflict, they retain their intrapersonal issues and conflicts, even though they have changed the context of their work.

Individuals in organisations can shift unconscious relating into the realm of conscious relating by learning Imago concepts and tools. Conscious relating is the same goal that couples aim to obtain in Imago therapy. The result of using such theory is to attain individual growth. Imago theory and understanding the concept of conscious relating thus allows individuals to gain a better understanding of their own intrapersonal and interpersonal psychodynamics.

Members of an organisation can relate less reactively and more consciously to one another if they apply these concepts. Individuals will thus develop a better understanding of themselves, where they have come from, and why they function and react in the way/s that they do. This intrapersonal growth can lead to greater work satisfaction, less conflict, more happiness, and more positive emotions experienced in the workplace. In the light of the comment that individuals remain the same regardless of the context, it stands to reason

that an individual's shift in consciousness in the workplace will also have a positive effect

on his or her relationships outside of the workplace.

Chapter 3: A Model of Psychodynamic Conflict and Adaptation in Organisations

Introduction

As a practitioner working in organisational settings, I became aware of the influence of intrapersonal processes on interpersonal relationships in these settings. These interpersonal processes are often characterised by frustration and conflict between individuals. Furthermore, individuals are usually unaware of the role that their life experiences play in the formation of their intrapersonal world and the impact of their intrapersonal reality on their current interpersonal relationship dynamics. According to Lowman (2002),

> The literature on human emotion and conflict dynamics in organizational
> settings is extensive and growing, and any practitioner who works in these
> settings would be well advised to become familiar with the material and how
> the dynamic processes manifest themselves inside of, and between,
> individuals and groups (p. 122).

Lowman (2002) proposes a model that illustrates the structure and process of psychodynamic conflict and adaptation in organisations. In this chapter, the model is adapted to reflect Imago concepts that are central to this research project and that were taught during the workshops presented to the participants. The model illustrates the roles played by intrapersonal and interpersonal factors in conflict and adaptation in the organisational context. The revised model is displayed in Figure 3.1 below.

Compromise
Formations
and
Adaptive
Behaviour

Mental health
The African
perspective
The Fortological
perspective

Defensive
Operations

Unconscious
Reptilian
Brain
Reactive

Conscious
Rational
Brain
Think before
acting

Conflicted Response
Zone

Change

Homeostasis

Emotion

Anxiety

Shame

Guilt

Sadness

Anger

HISTORY AND RELATIONSHIPS

Conflict

Minimiser
Constrict
energy

Maximiser
Explode
energy

Conflict free response

International dialogue

Psychological
structures

Lost self

Denied Self

Disowned

Hidden Self

Projections

Projective
Identifications

Stimuli

Internal

Nurturing
developmental
stages

External

Socialisation
process

Challenges and
trauma of daily
living

Figure 3.1. Adaptation of Lowman's model (adapted from Lowman, 2002, p. 123)

The Adapted Model

The model adapted from Lowman (2002, p. 123) demonstrates how adult behaviour is determined by various forms of internal and external stimuli received during the developmental history and relationships of an individual. Individuals adapt and form various psychological structures during the developmental process (Lowman, 2002). These conscious and unconscious processes are always accompanied by certain emotions that may cause conflict during interactions with others (for example, conflict in interactions between employees in the workplace). In turn, these processes and the resulting conflict can affect an employee's mental health if these factors are not properly managed. Furthermore, an employee's workplace functioning could be negatively affected by such conflict. Therefore, the company may also be adversely affected because mental health problems and ineffective workplace functioning in employees may result in financial costs to the company in the form of medical and mental healthcare.

It is assumed that most individuals desire (on an unconscious level) conflict-free living and work spaces (Lowman, 2002). Thus, in order to achieve this desire, it is important to understand how the stimuli received during the developmental years can influence a person's adult life. An explanation of the process model as applied to the understanding of the impact of the developmental years is given in the following section.

Stimuli

During the developmental years, parents and other significant childhood caretakers are the primary sources of internal and external stimuli. According to Hendrix (1993), there is a tendency to associate childhood psychological and emotional damage with serious trauma such as exposure to physical abuse, verbal abuse, and alcohol abuse. These serious and abusive occurrences are less prevalent during a child's developmental years, but have a profound effect on the 'wholeness' of the affected individuals (Hendrix, 1993).

Most of the wounding that individuals endure is less severe than the examples given above. Examples of less severe wounding include emotionally absent caretakers, over-protectiveness, criticism and the setting of high expectations.

However, most children are dependent on their caretakers and have never-ending needs that most parents, no matter how perfect or devoted they may be, will fall short of fulfilling at some point. Thus, these unfulfilled needs create a 'wounded' state referred to as "childhood wounding" (Hendrix, 1993, p. 19). Internal and external challenges and demands are processed within the individual by psychological structures that arise as a function of both normal and traumatic development (Lowman, 2002).

Internal States

Nurturing events that occur during the developmental stages are the main sources of internal stimuli (Hendrix, 1992, p. 58). In Imago theory, the developmental stages are known as attachment, exploration, identity, competence, concern, and intimacy (Hendrix, 1992, p. 58). These span the years from birth to approximately the end of adolescence. Therefore, internal stimuli in adults result from the unmet childhood needs that arise because of inadequate nurturing experienced during the developmental stages (Hendrix, 1992). These unmet needs influence the type of adult a child will become and have a profound influence on adult interpersonal relationships (Hendrix, 2002).

According to Bergh and Theron (2006), "childhood experiences, whether real or mere fantasy, operate actively in the unconscious, influencing overt behaviour" (p. 23). An individual's behaviour can be understood through the uncovering of these unconscious experiences. Koortzen and Cilliers (1996, cited in Bergh & Theron, 2006) also highlight the role that unconscious processes play in influencing conscious behaviour. The understanding of unconscious processes helps us to understand overt behaviour.

External States

  Socialisation. Interactions with the outside world (including interactions with caregivers, friends, families, peers, educators, and churches) are the main sources of external stimuli. The socialisation that ensues from this contact moulds a child's personality as he or she learns to make certain adaptations in order to conform to societal demands (Hendrix, 1992). These adaptations require certain modifications to the original self and thus result in wounding (Hendrix, 1992). This wounding has an impact on relationships within organisations.

  Barone et al. (1997, cited in Snyder & Lopez, 2005) state that "the adaptiveness or maladaptiveness of a behavior rests not in the nature of the behavior itself – but in the effectiveness of that behavior in the context of the person's goals and situational norms, expectations, and demands" (p. 19). Individuals within organisations are expected to adapt to organisational needs and demands, irrespective of their own personal needs and personality traits. The way in which individuals respond to these organisational demands depends on their personal childhood socialisation experiences. According to Lowman (2002),

   Individuals become or are conflicted when their wishes of self-expression and
   curiosity clash with their fear of others intruding on them, trying to control
   them, or being empathetically misaligned with them by not understanding
   who they are or what they need. (p. 124)

  Lowman (2002) links these early childhood experiences and interactions with parents and significant others to the way in which the adult individual relates to subordinates, peers, and supervisors within an organisation. In organisations, it often happens that individuals are reprimanded for their overt behaviour without the authorities taking the origin of such behaviour into consideration.

Challenges and trauma of daily living. Daily life experiences in the home, in society, at work, and in the world at large present the individual with adjustment problems. Home circumstances, such as marital problems, difficulties with children, and financial pressures, can influence an individual's functioning in the workplace and could cause them to develop psychological problems. Non-work-related roles, such as marriage, partnering, parenting, religious affiliations, and leisure and social roles, can influence people's work roles. Similarly, work roles can also have a reciprocal influence on these non-work-related roles (Bergh & Theron, 2006). Work and personal adjustment dysfunctions can stem from changes in both the work situation and personal life circumstances. These dysfunctions may manifest as fears, anxieties, and even psychological illnesses (Nevid, Rathus, & Greene, 2000).

People frequently begin therapy in an attempt to seek help for anxiety disorders, depression, or stress-related conditions. Luquet (1996) defines therapy as "a healing process that consists of the treatment of emotional, developmental and characterological disorders that often have their roots in childhood and are activated by precipitating life situations or events" (p. vii). The inter-relationships between anxieties, fears, and depression – whether as personality traits or states of mind – may be factors influencing work-related problems and can impair work performance (Bergh & Theron, 2006).

Societal events can also impact on individuals' levels of aggression, anger, and anxiety. South Africans experience high levels of violent crimes such as murder, rape, armed robbery, hijacking, and physical violence (Parker, 2012). Continuous exposure to high levels of violence can result in people continuously assessing their safety situation (Parker, 2012). In turn, this continuous assessment heightens levels of stress and tension and can cause individuals to respond with aggressive or withdrawal behaviours at work and in the home. I regularly counsel clients suffering from emotional and stress-related

issues that are related to violent crimes, but the cause of their current stress is often unresolved childhood trauma. Government policies, economic conditions, social tension, discrimination, racial issues, and international events all contribute to the challenges of daily life.

Psychological Structures

The psychological structures described below emerge as a function of both normal and traumatic development (Hendrix, 1992). These adaptations are the outcome of an individual's efforts to survive amongst other people and are the result of internal and external processes as well as responses to daily trauma and challenges. Such adaptations shape people into social beings and form part of the survival directive. According to Hendrix (1992), biological survival skills appear to be instinctive, while social survival is a learned action.

According to Bach (1994, cited in Lowman, 2002), each person has internalised images (in the form of memories and learned predispositions) regarding their interactions with historically important people in their lives. This matrix of important internalised others and the network of current relationships are both mediated by internal psychological structures. These structures and images influence interpersonal relationships. Thus, the struggle to be accepted socially results in the suppression of certain aspects of the self. Hendrix (1992, p. 158) refers to these aspects of the self as the lost self, the denied self, the hidden self, and the disowned self. Projections and projective identifications are additional psychological structures used by individuals to achieve social acceptance (Hendrix, 1992).

The Lost Self

Hendrix (2002) refers to the repressed and prohibited parts of the self as the lost self and states the following:

So strong is their prohibition, so completely have we taken to heart the

messages that have been drummed into us, so uncomfortable or painful has it

been to be ourselves, that we lose awareness of certain aspects of who we are.

(p. 158)

These parts of the self are lost during the socialisation process and include the areas

of thinking, feeling, acting, and sensing. In my practical experience as a psychologist, I

have seen countless people who present with difficulties relating to the lost self. These

difficulties include an inability to speak in meetings or in front of other people, a desire to

see one's boss showing emotion, and an inability to conform to accepted rules (manifesting

in a tendency to break company rules and regulations). Some people also seem to struggle

with aggressive behaviour.

One of my clients experienced severe anxiety whenever her boss summoned her to

his office. During my sessions with this client, it emerged that whenever she was

summoned to her mother's room during childhood, she knew it was because she had done

something wrong and that she would then get a severe hiding. Hendrix (1992) states that

"we no longer need the messages to come from the outside, they have been carved on the

neurons of our brains and it is in us" (p. 144). Personalities are thus moulded during the

socialisation process, which causes different constrictions in the flow of energy.

An example of how the lost part of the self can present itself is by examining a

situation where four different candidates apply for a promotion for a specific position. All

four of these candidates are suitably qualified according to their academic qualifications.

During an exercise that is part of the assessment process, one of the candidates experiences

difficulty in thinking 'out of the box' and requires specific guidelines to enable him or her

to work through a crisis. This inability to think creatively indicates that this candidate has a

repressed thinking part. The second candidate, who is equally as qualified as the first, is

accused of a stringent and autocratic management style as he or she does not value external inputs. Their lack of emotional understanding also makes them very disliked by their peers and subordinates. This lack of understanding indicates that the lost part of the self of this candidate may consist of expressing feelings.

The third candidate may be unable to implement effective change because he or she does not trust his or her own senses or instincts, but he or she instead needs distinct market guidelines to achieve results. They could find themselves unable to meet business requirements because of their repressed sensing part. The final candidate easily 'sells' his or her skills and manages to 'talk' himself or herself into a position where high expectations are placed on his or her ability. However, this candidate cannot match the expectations and thus would rely on his or her co-workers to help him or her complete his or her tasks if he or she were awarded the position. The candidate's lack of taking action indicates that the lost part of the self of this candidate might be in the area of acting. He or she would thus fail to complete his or her tasks without the help of others.

The Denied Self

The denied self refers to a split part of the self that is accessible to other people, but that an individual is unaware of (Hendrix, 1992). Individuals tend to deny certain traits because these traits are negative and are believed to be too painful to acknowledge. The denied self contains the behaviours an individual views negatively in others, but that they do not acknowledge in the self. These adaptations are made as a result of the childhood environment and have survival value because they assist individuals in becoming acceptable within society. For example, a person who is described as aggressive by people in an organisation may see themselves as simply being assertive.

The Disowned Self

The disowned self refers to the characteristics that are admired in others, but that are not recognised in the self. Hendrix (1992) states that

chances are that the people you are drawn to and admire possess qualities that you long for or that were dismissed and disdained in your home. If you get close to such people, you feel good about yourself, more complete, through the association. (p. 162)

For example, an individual might admire the openness and confidence with which other people express their views during a business meeting. Such individuals may wish that they could do the same. However, they do not realise that they actually do possess the same qualities, but they have just not exercised them.

The Hidden Self

Hendrix (1992) refers to the hidden self as the "secret life" (p. 157). This self contains the things an individual does that they believe are known only to the self and that they believe are hidden from others. These hidden parts are kept secret because they are often associated with guilt or shame. The hidden self is the part of the self that is consciously hidden in order to be accepted in the world (Hendrix, 1992). For example, accessing online pornography, having affairs at work, or stealing from the workplace are things which employees would want to keep hidden as they are embarrassed and feel guilty for doing these things.

Projections and Projective Identifications

Negative aspects of the self that are disliked and denied in the self are often assigned to or projected onto other people (Hendrix, 1992, p. 286). The individual will then respond to the other person as if that person actually possesses the particular trait. For example, an individual who struggles with aggression might perceive other people as being

aggressive. The individual will blame the people around them for their own aggressiveness. Even though the other individuals are actually aggressive, the aggression will not manifest to the extent indicated by the projector. A person accused of being aggressive might respond with aggression and thereby confirm the validity of the projection. This dynamic is called projective identification (Hendrix, 1992, p. 286). Projection is an unconscious process and it occurs outside of awareness. Many instances of conflict in organisations are the result of projection. Projections can be directed at subordinates, peers, and superiors in organisational contexts, but they can also occur in all other relationships.

In my role as a consultant to organisations, I have found that it is of paramount importance to consider the role of all of these psychological structures when encountering conflict. It is particularly important to bear in mind the unconscious nature of these interpersonal processes. With Imago training, individuals can begin to focus on the unresolved issues that they project. This process could give them an indication of their own developmental areas that need attention.

Conflicted Response

A state of conflict can exist within an individual, between two individuals, between an individual and a group, or between two groups. Conflict can have different triggers and meanings which are determined by the emotions emulating from opinions, attitudes, and morals in the individuals or groups concerned. Furthermore, conflict implies a state of unresolved differences. The actions of individuals who are involved in conflict situations will usually impact on other individuals or groups.

Robbins, Odendaal, and Roodt (2003) indicate that "probably the most overlooked variable in the study of social conflict is different value systems" (p. 222). Conflict is most often blamed on the characteristics of the individuals involved in a dispute. People with

particular personality traits or styles (for example, people with very uncertain, dependent, aggressive, domineering, and/or manipulative personality styles) might contribute to conflict more often than other people who have less conflict-prone personality styles. According to Lowman (2002), aggressive processes and energies often occur unconsciously in individuals or groups. Lowman (2002) states that "compromise solutions are easy to recognize when conflicts are overt. However, when the conflicts are unconscious and covert, the compromises can be harder to detect and manage" (p. 125).

In the following quotation, Hendrix (1992) reiterates that the old brain exists subliminally and that it has no reference to a timeframe:

Your old brain cannot tell the difference between the stimulus it received thirty years ago when your mother didn't come when you cried and the one it received today when your partner called from work an hour late, cancelling your date for the evening. In both cases the feelings, and the response, are the same. (p. 41)

Individuals respond to perceived danger or peril in the form of a fight, flight, freeze, or submission response, regardless of the provocation. An individual's specific response to a stimulus can be attributed to the makeup of their genome and depends on the specific ways they interacted with their caretakers during their childhood frustrations. According to Hendrix (1992), individuals react to danger by making use of one of two responses, namely maximising or minimising. Individuals either constrict their energy levels by withdrawing from others (minimisers), or they explode their energy by attacking (maximisers) (Hendrix, 1992, p. 112). Minimisers follow the freeze or submission instinct, while maximisers show aggression and make use of the fight or flight instinct. The degree of the reaction is determined by the period during childhood in which the wounding

occurred. The earlier the dominant wounding occurred in an individual's life, the greater the exaggeration or diminishment of their reaction will be (Hendrix, 1992).

Imago relationship therapy refers to the conflict occurring between individuals in a relationship as the power struggle (Hendrix, 1993). Imago relationship therapy views this conflict as "growth trying to happen" (Hendrix, 1992, p. 229). According to Hendrix (1993), "we're not trying to find something we never had, we're trying to get something back, to recapture what was lost" (p. 39). Individuals are essentially trying to regain a previously known state of safety that is related to the safety they experienced as infants in the womb. Conflicts do not always occur on an interpersonal level, but encompasses a portion of our daily life where issues relating to politics, driving, children, school, corruption, work and healthcare all have a bearing on the amount of conflict we deal with. Senge (2007), states the following:

Fighting back, as is evident in the vocal protests of millions of people around the world opposed to the 'Washington consensus' view of globalization, combines a longing for an earlier social or moral order with anger at having lost control of our future. (p. xii)

Emotion

When dealing with conflict in organisations, emphasis is often placed on overt issues without taking the underlying emotions into consideration. Negative emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt can have an impact on how people react to learning. Thus, when a person experiences these different emotions, they are effectively experiencing a physiological reaction that can play a major role in their attempts to dissolve interpersonal conflict. This physiological reaction is caused by the interpretation of stimuli in the working environment.

Gray (1994, cited in Lowman, 2002) states that "emotions chiefly experienced by people as negative such as shame, sadness, anxiety, anger, guilt, helplessness and hopelessness are usually present in conflict. Even the anticipation of being in conflict can elicit very strong emotional states" (p. 125). When employees feel unsafe or threatened, they will utilise their adaptations developed earlier in life. Levenson (1994, cited in Snyder & Lopez, 2005) states the following:

> Emotions are short lived psychological-physiological phenomena that represent efficient modes of adaptation.... Psychologically, emotions alter attention, shift certain behaviors upwards in response hierarchies, and activate relevant associative networks in memory. Physiologically, emotions rapidly organize the response of different biological systems ... to produce a bodily milieu that is optimal for effective response. (p. 149)

When examining the overall performance of individuals within a company, it is important to note that one person's negative emotions can influence a whole department within the company. There is evidence to suggest that an employee's emotional state can positively or negatively impact on all aspects of their functioning, including decision making, resourcefulness, co-operation, negotiations, and management (Belak, 2004). Employees bring all of themselves to work, including their frustrations, moods, and emotions. When working with organisations, consultants often focus on the verbalised frustrations of employees and fail to take the underlying emotions into consideration. According to Kilburg (2000, cited in Lowman, 2002), "consultants must realize as they work in and with conflict that their clients' thoughts and feelings might be compromised and contaminated, often at an unconscious level, and at times on a conscious level" (p. 125).

Various triggers have the potential to influence an individual's attitude towards emotion. For example, when an employee realises during a meeting that a manager is looking at them with a frown on their face and when they interpret the frown as negative, it can instantly change the employee's emotional state. Bergh and Theron (2006) state that "emotional or affective arousal are different for different people, and will have differential motivational value and will influence work performance differently, for each individual" (p. 474). Therefore, people's emotions can vary in different situations. It is relatively easy to observe the mood changes experienced by people in work situations. For example, simply asking colleagues how they are often provides a clear indication of their emotional state.

Lowman (2002, cited in Bergh & Theron, 2006) established a "psychopathology of work" (p. 444) in which he explores the interaction between psychological or emotional disturbances and work dysfunctions. Work dysfunctions are an impairment or "non-coping" (Lowman, 2002, cited in Bergh & Theron, 2006, p. 444) with regard to work performance, which is caused by the individual's emotional states or the interaction between the individual and their environment at work.

Experiences during childhood often produce the emotional responses displayed in adulthood and in the working environment. For example, if someone is very sensitive to criticism and has low self-esteem, one can assume that there was a critical, domineering childhood caretaker in their lives during childhood. According to the attachment theory and research studies such as those of Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall (1979), Bowlby (1988) Hazan and Shaver (1994), and Sperling and Berman (1994), all cited in Bergh and Theron (2006),

> Different experiences of 'bonding' behaviors in childhood relate to different
>
> ways of child and adult attachment or interpersonal behaviors, which include

emotional expression, for example feelings of insecurity versus security, acceptance versus rejection, emotional sensitivity versus emotional assertiveness, and negative affectivity versus positive emotional expressions. (p. 474)

Imago theory discusses early childhood wounding and emphasises that the earlier the trauma is experienced, the more pronounced the effect of such wounding is on future responses and adaptations. Hendrix (1992) refers to this as the "snowball" effect (p. 60). Hendrix (1992) states that "ineffective response patterns – the feeble, unsophisticated, inchoate defences of a desperate infant – are laid down, imprinted, and carried through life in a desperate attempt to deflect further pain" (p. 117). According to Hendrix (1992), adults do not even register that these defences are destructive. Furthermore, adults fail to realise that they inevitably distance themselves from others by using such defences (Hendrix, 1992). Individuals who experience wounding at a much later stage in their lives will adapt better in interpersonal relationships and will experience less intense emotions. Bergh and Theron (2006) state the following:

In a work context, too, the secure-attachment type of individual can be expected to have healthy relationships, being in touch with his or her own and other employees' emotions, and succeeding in expressing emotions in a healthy and acceptable manner. (p. 474)

Individual employees are sometimes exposed to negative occurrences in the workplace. These employees then seek advice from private therapists at their own cost to enable them to understand and to work through the processing of certain emotions that manifest and influence them in the workplace. These emotions could easily have been dealt with in the work context if such assistance was available as an in-house service. Lowman

(2002) states that "coping through actively processing and expressing emotion can confer psychological and physical health advantages" (p. 153).

Emotions are human expressions and are often triggered by suppressed unconscious material. Emotions are thus used to communicate an individual's inner feelings and attributes. People's emotions can influence those around them and can contaminate relationships, whether personal or work-related. Byang-Hall (1980, cited in Bergh & Theron, 2006) states the following in connection with emotions:

> Many people's emotional problems are actually relationship problems, communicating not only about themselves but also about their communication and relationship with others and the world at large. In this sense the 'sick' individual may be a symptom bearer of one or more of his or her social systems. (p. 204)

Defensive Operations

Unconscious defence mechanisms. Hendrix (1993) postulates that people develop coping mechanisms to cope with the shortcomings they developed because of the inadequacies they experienced during childhood. Although these inadequacies were most likely outside of the child's control, they continue to influence the adult's life. These coping mechanisms are an individual's way of defending the self and become involuntary character defences that are used regardless of the particular situation or individual because of constant application. As long as these defence mechanisms remain unconscious, individuals will continue to be frustrated by their reactions to people and situations.

According to Kilburg (2000, cited in Lowman, 2002), some defences are "primitive, in which threatening people, events, feelings, and thoughts are denied, split, or projected" (p. 125). The implementation of these defences adversely influences the desired results in the working environment. Kilburg (2002), as cited in Lowman (2002), suggests

that "consultants must work diligently to ensure that they themselves and their clients engage higher-order defences such as problem solving, humour, and altruism in order to direct their efforts to cope with various situations in positive directions" (p. 125). The use of these unconscious defences reflects an individual's character rather than an individual's essence or personality.

Hendrix (1993) states that "our character structure refers to the sum total of adaptation to the fear of, or the experience of being emotionally frustrated or hurt" (p. 249). People respond to perceived threats by deploying a specific behavioural pattern which constitutes a character defence (Hendrix, 1993). This unique personality includes a person's essence, vulnerability, and essential humanity (Hendrix, 1993). Personality and defence mechanisms develop to protect individuals from wounding. These mechanisms are automatically activated during times when there is a possibility of being re-wounded.

Imago training is believed to lead to a better understanding of the utilisation of these defences. Such training also helps individuals to understand that these defences served a purpose during childhood when they were a means of fulfilling unmet needs. However, these defences are no longer effective in adulthood. When adults make use of these defences, the result is frequently an undesired counter reaction. When therapists work with clients in an organisational context, they should realise that emotions such as anger and aggression could be triggered because of events and memories stemming from the person's past experiences. Memories, beliefs, values, and attitudes are stored in the subconscious mind. Thus, a current event might cause a person to overreact because of the link that their subconscious mind makes with similar memories from their past.

Knowledge of Imago skills help people to realise that their current adaptive responses (even though these adaptations may have worked for them in the past) might not provide the results they would like to achieve. They should realise that old patterns can be

changed, that their adaptations can change, and that new behaviours can be learnt to bring

about better results. According to Resnick and Kauch (1995) as well as Robins and Novaco

(1992), both cited in Robins (2002),

> Efforts by consultants to reduce the frequency and intensity of an executive's
>
> anger or an employee's aggression **…** need to be accompanied by recognition
>
> and respect that anger has evolved as an adaptive information processing
>
> mechanism that might very well be serving important interpersonal functions
>
> within the present system. As such, any reduction of its frequency and
>
> intensity might require either a compensatory reduction of the need for its
>
> functions, or finding alternative methods of adapting or satisfying those
>
> functions. (p. 17)

Changing Reactivity

 People often react unconsciously to stimuli because of instinct and certain

emotions. Our minds develop a greater awareness of ourselves and why we function in the

ways we do when we become more conscious. We also realise that we can influence our

own behaviour and destiny. The purpose of teaching Imago principles in organisations is

thus to bring about a shift in the consciousness of the employees. When people experience

a shift in consciousness, they will become more aware of their own intrapersonal

psychodynamics as well as their interpersonal psychodynamics. Thus, people who are

trained in Imago principles are likely to have a better understanding of others and are also

likely to be able to control their reactivity towards others more effectively.

According to Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1988, cited in Snyder &

Lopez, 2005),

> Consciousness gives us a measure of control, freeing us from complete
>
> subservience to the dictates of genes and culture by representing them in

awareness, thereby introducing the alternative of rejecting rather than enacting them. Consciousness thus serves as a 'clutch' between programmed instruction and adaptive behaviours. (p. 91)

People behave in ways that they have become accustomed to over time. Therefore, unless they are taught new skills, they cannot grow and execute new behaviours. According to Hendrix (1993), "when becoming more conscious, we would foster maximum psychological and spiritual growth and cooperate with our fundamental drive of the unconscious mind: to be safe, to be healed, and to be whole" (p. 115). Thus, if we understand our defensive operations, we can maximise intrapersonal psychological growth.

In order to function better in relationships, individuals must gain a greater awareness of intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics. Many people remain unfocused and unconscious in their relationships because they remain fixated on their own unresolved childhood issues. A desire to heal the self is the first step to endeavouring to become more conscious. According to Hendrix (1993), an individual's healing process begins when they are able to show genuine concern for others.

Unconscious attempts at resolving conflict usually address the symptoms that manifest in the present without establishing an understanding of the underlying causes. If one becomes more conscious, then it is possible to understand the limits or depths of habituated behaviour. Hendrix (1992) states that "consciousness can be painful. It means that we have to become aware of what we don't want to be aware of, and we have to give up our automated selves and behave in ways that seem unnatural for us" (p. 240). In addition, Hendrix (1992) states that becoming conscious requires individuals to listen to the criticism of other people because it provides information regarding what has been lost from the self.

According to Hendrix (1992), individuals need to realise that, in order to become conscious, the partners in a conscious relationship do the following:

- recognise that the purpose of their relationship is to heal their childhood wounds;

- educate each other about their childhood wounds;

- accept each other's absolute separateness, each other's unique way of perceiving reality, and the sacredness of each other's inner worlds;

- consider themselves equals;

- keep all the energy that belongs in the relationship within its bounds;

- communicate their needs and desires to each other in constructive ways;

- accept all of each other's feelings (especially anger because they realise that anger is an expression of pain and that pain is usually rooted in childhood);

- learn to own their own negative traits (their denied selves) instead of projecting them onto and provoking them in their partner;

- develop their own lost strengths and abilities instead of relying on their partners to make up for what is missing or lost in themselves;

- develop their own contra-sexual energy and encourage the development of their partner's contra-sexual energy; and

- realise that they are whole, balanced, and in touch with their sense of oneness with the world. (p. 245)

Individuals do not have to remain victims of their past, instead they can make a conscious decision to grow, to heal, and to regulate their own behaviour. Bergh and Theron (2006) state the following:

The person who performs work best is focused on the present and is aware of

the past without being a victim of his or her history, but is also future

directed. Such a person is cooperative, and shows that he or she is able to

transcend opposites (understand differences) and to experience his or her role

in the organization realistically. (p. 439)

Compromise Formations and Adaptive Behaviour

Exposing people in organisations to Imago concepts helps them to gain insight into the psychological and social factors that have influenced their development. Imago concepts create insight and understanding as well as a framework that provides the individual with an array of tools that can be utilised in conflict situations. However, Hendrix (1992) states that "while insight is valuable, it does not necessarily bring about change. It indicates how much work still needs to be done" (p. 251). In order for change to occur, insight must be converted into action.

Conflict occurs because people act in their adaptive states when they feel threatened or unsafe. In order to function optimally in relationships, individuals need to be encouraged to stretch themselves by behaving in ways that initially feel unnatural (Hendrix, 1992). Over time, these unnatural ways of functioning enable individuals to change their level of adaptation and to reveal more of their true essence in relationships. It is thus important to believe that old behaviour patterns can be changed.

The cornerstone of Imago application in the business context is firstly to make an individual understand their role within the broader corporate environment. Secondly, it is to help them identify the developmental areas which need behavioural modification. The most important factor in Imago therapy application is the understanding that change has to come from within. It is also important to understand that resistance to change could influence not only one's personal optimisation within the structures, but it could also

negatively affect components that have any form of interaction with such an individual. According to Snyder and Lopez (2005), "the truth is that believing that you can accomplish what you want to accomplish is one of the most important ingredients – perhaps the most important ingredient in the recipe" (p. 277). According to Bandura (1977, cited in Snyder & Lopez, 2005), the basic premise of self-efficacy theory is that

> people's beliefs in their capabilities to produce desired effects by their own actions are the most important determinants of the behaviours people choose to engage in and how much they persevere in their efforts in the face of obstacles and challenges. (p. 277)

Seeing and understanding the developmental area that lies within oneself is the single most important achievement in Imago theory. We tend to utilise all of our adaptations and defences to make the world and environment around us manageable. We even use all means possible to make others conform to our requirements to make our workspace safer for us to enable us to pursue our goals. All our inherent experiences are thus utilised when we decide to step out of this perceived safety cocoon and to face life's true realities that place us in a position to maximise our input and to create an environment which will benefit both ourselves and the organisation.

Snyder and Lopez (2005) state that we have the ability to self-regulate in the process of formulating our goals, which makes us conform our behaviour to achieve our set targets. We can utilise past knowledge and experiences to build confidence and to form beliefs relating to future events and targets (Snyder & Lopez, 2005). We feel more confident when dealing with the challenges of life when we are in control of our own behaviour, our feelings, and our emotions, which makes it easy to contribute to better interpersonal relationships. Working environments that support individuals and that help individuals to feel secure at work, while providing a collective respect for all types of

personalities and cultures in addition to the above requirements, are beneficial to organisational relationships. Individuals in such organisations are able to maximise their potential. Thereby, they not only benefit themselves, but also the organisation.

Mental Health

According to Imago relationship therapy, each individual's purpose stems from an association or relationship. The individual is, in turn, also responsible for the relationships in which they function (Hendrix, 1992). Each person begins their life by being uniquely connected to the self through physical, social, and celestial perspectives (Hendrix, 1992). This unique connection becomes fragmented after birth as an inevitable result of the caregivers' parenting. Individuals thus become adults with flawed characters and personalities and carry various issues and emotional scars as a result of severing this initial connection (Hendrix, 1992). Human nature inevitably results in individuals seeking to restore this initial wholeness by searching for connections to enable healing. Imago therapy provides the tools to understand the interpersonal psychodynamics that are revealed by stress, conflict, and emotional ills arising from the search for connection.

Although people experience emotional upheavals on a regular basis, they rarely talk about their emotional problems or their traumatic experiences. Kelly (2001, cited in Snyder & Lopez, 2005) states that "not being able or willing to tell anyone about significant emotional upheaval disconnects people from their social worlds" (p. 577). People work and interact with many people in the workplace on a daily basis, but the depth of these relationships differs. While some individuals are just colleagues, other individuals become friends. In contrast, some individuals are just associates and are not connected with others on an emotional level at all. People spend many hours at work and sometimes experience the need to talk to others about their emotional problems. In addition, people often require support on an emotional level within the workplace. Holahan, Moos, Holahan, and

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Brennan (1996, cited in Snyder & Lopez, 2005) state that "it appears that supportive interactions are key to maintaining mental health and that benefits arise not from the number of friends one has but from the quality of [the] friendships" (p. 577).

In my practice as a psychologist working with trauma cases, I have come to realise the importance of allowing my clients to talk about their traumatic experiences. These discussions often result in clients linking their present traumatic experiences to past traumatic experiences. Snyder and Lopez (2005) state that "clients must confront their anxieties and problems by creating a story to explain and understand past and current life concerns" (p. 576). Snyder and Lopez (2005) further emphasise that individuals feel more in control of their lives when they manage to process the problems and issues that affect them.

Snyder and Lopez (2005, p. 579) discuss the importance of interpersonal communication in creating good mental health. Individuals form richer connections with others during communication as it affords them the opportunity to relate their traumatic experiences to others. Ventilating these emotions can also be achieved by writing about traumatic experiences. It is thus important to encourage individuals to focus on or to talk about their negative emotions as this will help them to process the emotions which could negatively influence their mental health. In addition, Holahan et al. (1996, cited in Snyder & Lopez, 2005) state that "social support has been associated with mental and physical health, with speedier recovery from illness, and with the likelihood of remaining healthy when stressors occur" (p. 579).

Many employees in the workplace are in need of psychological services. However, financial restraints and medical aid limitations place constraints on the quality and quantity of the psychological services that are rendered. Short-term Imago training provides a conscious basis to work from that can result in long-term healing. Imago training also

provides individuals with the opportunity to share their stories and to make mental links regarding their past experiences. However, it is not always appropriate to discuss childhood trauma in the organisational context. Therefore, employees can be encouraged to continue with self-development after initially being exposed to Imago training. Imago training creates a shift in consciousness and brings about an ever-present consciousness of Imago concepts when dealing with or interacting with people.

When clients leave my office, I often tell them that their understanding of the Imago concepts will help them to see people differently although they are likely to continue to experience the same conflicts. According to Hendrix (1992), marriage and the years spent together by a couple can, in essence, be regarded as therapy. If this statement is applied to the organisational context, it suggests that exposure to organisational conflicts and the conflicts of daily living are, in essence, therapy. Thus, the better people understand intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics, the greater their ability will be to live harmoniously with others.

The emotions of employees are not always adequately addressed and when they experience conflict with others, it affects them holistically and also has an impact on the organisation as a whole. According to the African perspective discussed below, problems people experience in their lives, whether originating from families or other sources, influence people's mental health (Phillips in Azibo, 1996, as cited in Bergh & Theron, 2006). It is therefore important that consultants understand and manage mental health during organisational interventions.

An African Perspective

The Nguzu Saba principles (Karenga, 1989) (or the seven principles of African heritage) constitute an Afrocentric paradigm for understanding and managing mental

health. This paradigm proposes several principles for living harmoniously and authentically. The following are the seven principles (Bergh & Theron, 2006):

- Unity (*umoja*) – refers to solidarity and harmony between persons and groups.

- Self-determination (*kujichagulia*) – stresses internal influences and self-knowledge rather than external influences.

- Collective responsibility (*ujima*) – denotes connectedness with other people in terms of, for example, family, meaningful work, and a common destiny.

- Co-operative economics (*ujamaa*) – means that people share in wealth and thus exclude individual favouritism.

- Purpose (*nia*) – encompasses an individual's goal directedness, but goal directedness that is also strongly connected to other people's objectives, even if it means delaying gratification.

- Creativity (*kuumba*) – stresses the ability to use intelligence, imagination, and ingenuity to improve existing things and the quality of life.

- Faith (*imani*) – denotes empowerment by past, present and future events and it means to live in the now, but also to leave something of value behind. (p. 416)

These principles are crucial in relation to understanding an individual's specific perspective, particularly in terms of their interactions with others and their spiritual values (Bergh & Theron, 2006). These principles promote an understanding of each individual's behaviour and provide a way in which people can appraise and manage their mental health. This perspective provides a holistic view of mental health encompassing both physical wellness and psychological wellness involving the person's body, mind, and spirit (Bergh

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& Theron, 2006). Illness is not only personal, but also has an influence on the family and the wider community (Bergh & Theron, 2006). Cultural interpretations of illness also play a role within this perspective. Although illness may have personal or external causes, it is also associated with family issues, transgressions against other groups, or transgressions against the spirit and ancestral world.

The Fortological Perspective

Rothmann (2002) provides a fortological perspective regarding psychological health. This perspective relates to the origins of psychological health and strength and has two distinguishing characteristics – benefit finding and agency (Rothmann, 2002). According to Rothmann (2002), the fortological perspective suggests that stressful events can also benefit the individual. Such benefits include personal growth, a new perspective on life, and the creation of strengthened bonds and support from other people (Rothmann, 2002). The concept of agency refers to the fact that the individual recognises and understands that it is possible to produce results based on the actions taken.

Change and Homeostasis

All human beings possess the potential to change. Furthermore, the decision to overcome a state that includes shortcomings is always possible. The potential to redirect consciousness comes with the understanding that it is possible to control the ability to make the change. However, most people experience internal resistance to this change. Such resistance is natural, but it can be overcome by understanding that the path of change is also natural. Acceptance that fears need to be overcome negates resistance to the change that must be undergone, and thus the required state is achieved so that the true potential of what is possible, both intrapersonally and interpersonally, can be realised. Goldstein (1988, as cited in Antonacopoulou & Gabriel, 2001) states that, "instead of interpreting resistance

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as something negative, resistance may more accurately be seen as an attempt to recover meaning or to preserve what was valuable in the past" (p. 446).

Individuals often feel threatened when they hear that they have to change because they cannot see the benefits of such change. Imago concepts can help individuals to understand that, although they might experience intense emotions during the change process, the benefits of change will outweigh the negatives. Hendrix (1992) states that "resistance is natural; changing our character defences and habituated behavior can be frightening. It is important to remember that your habituated patterns are not you, they are your defences" (p. 254). Hendrix (1992) also refers to character as an individual's adaptation to life. When individuals feel unsafe in relationships, they present their characters that are then judged by others. The character, however, does not reflect the true self. When an individual functions in habituated ways, such behaviour prevents them from reclaiming and growing into their full potential (Hendrix, 1992). It is important that people acknowledge that they are wounded and incomplete individuals who need to grow in order to function on a higher level.

According to Hendrix (1992), "the primary step to healing is to acknowledge that we all have weaknesses and failings" (p. 255). In order to prevent people from being protrusive in the way that they project their undesirable qualities, they have to admit to having these denied traits, and they have to accept them. The term 'taking ownership' is used to indicate acceptance of these traits and is a necessary step towards accepting change that initiates healing and opens the path to becoming complete (Hendrix, 1992). It is important for individuals to understand themselves before they can submit themselves to the desire to change. Human beings are different from other animals because they have the ability to overcome the old brain's instincts by using rationality that stems from the advanced forebrain that has been developed through evolution (Hendrix, 1992). Human

beings are therefore able to override certain instincts and then react rationally in terms of their behaviour. They thus switch to a conscious intentionality regarding the changes that need to be made (Hendrix, 1992).

Hendrix (1992) furthermore states that "[c]hanging demands clear intention, sustained attention, and the conscientious day-by-day practice of new skills and unfamiliar, uncomfortable behavior" (p. 254). All people are capable of understanding their shortcomings, but the need for change stems from identifying the character defences that are carried within. Once a person realises the need for change, this realisation should be accompanied by an acceptance of internal resistance because such resistance arises from changing the character traits that have become comfortable from being built up over a long period of time (Hendrix, 1992). Such traits that develop over a period of time and that define the self cannot be summarily dismissed. Hendrix (1992) also states that "change must be gradual and timely – with its own timetable. Too much, too fast is destructive. The behaviors and patterns you are trying to change took a lifetime to accumulate; you can't change them overnight" (p. 254). Hendrix (1992) further states that

in order for change to occur, insight must be translated into action. In order to integrate our insights, we have to put ourselves in new situations and learn and practice new behaviours, which, over time and through repetition, actually change our past behavior and beliefs. (p. 252)

Employees in organisations need to acknowledge and to work on their own developmental areas that stem from their childhood wounding. It is important that people are encouraged to recognise the ways in which their past experiences influence their current relationships. People should be further encouraged to acknowledge and to work through the emotions associated with their childhood trauma. This process should be done in a safe and supportive environment. Hendrix (2002) asserts that

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establishing a supportive environment in which healing can take place is an

important task for a single person in the process of change. This support

system can be composed of family members, friends, co-workers, current

romantic partners, a twelve step support group, a psychotherapy group, or a

private therapist. Each of these contexts involves a different degree of risk –

of shame, exposure, ridicule, fear. (p. 258).

Conflict-Free Response Zone

Individuals spend many hours at work and have a certain purpose in an

organisation. Employees should work in harmony as a unit to ensure the prosperity of a

company. Many of the employees functioning within the structures of a company have to

go through a selection process to be chosen for a particular position. They are normally

chosen because they are qualified to fulfil a specific position. Therefore, it is also

important that employees are carefully selected according to their aptitudes, interests, and

personalities. They should also feel comfortable that their knowledge, skills, and abilities

are being optimally utilised. However, there are many situations where employees,

regardless of their placement and positions in an organisation, work under extreme stress.

In these situations, both intrapersonal and interpersonal issues can prevent individuals from

performing at their best.

Lowman (2002) states that in a

conflict-free zone people, groups, and organisations often perform at their

best because their knowledge, skills and abilities can be truly focused on the

task and challenges that they face, and not be spread out in efforts to cope

with the sometimes extraordinary complexity that conflict produces. (p. 126)

The workplace is therefore not simply a place where people apply their trades.

Instead, it should also be a place where individuals are provided with the opportunity to grow and to self-actualise. More time can be spent on growth and self-actualisation if employees can learn to resolve conflict situations in more simple ways. Maddi (1996, cited in Bergh & Theron, 2006) states that "the self-actualizing tendency is acquired and a psychological need to become what one's potential allows one to become and explains humans' continuous need to grow, achieve more and explain further" (p. 364). Further evidence of this self-actualising tendency is found in the need for organisations to teach their employees skills to enable them to handle conflict in order to create an environment that is conducive to learning. Organisations should aim to develop the natural instincts of their employees to enable their employees to achieve continuous growth, to enable them to reach their true potential, and to be happy at work.

The creation of a workplace that is totally devoid of conflict may not always be possible in organisations. However, if one examines the applicability of Imago concepts and the interpretation of the use of conflict situations in the workplace, then conflict should not be a negative issue if it is understood properly. The possibility of learning and growing from conflict situations within the workplace may deem conflict a normal situation for progression and for understanding growth opportunities. Hendrix (1992) explains that "conflict is growth trying to happen" (p. 229). Imago concepts and understanding the applications of these concepts present growth opportunities to each employee faced with conflict. If employees understand Imago theory, they can then create tolerance and opportunities with regard to comprehending and tolerating differences of opinion as well as using interpersonal interactions more effectively. Bergh and Theron (2006) state that

> psychologically, self actualization manifests in developing and maintaining
> the self toward greater self-dependence, autonomy, efficiency, creativity and
> positive psychological health and in the individual's feelings congruent and

comfortable in his or her environment, fitting in and not being alienated and

feeling at ease. (p. 365)

Employees prefer to work in an environment where they can use their knowledge to

enable them to self-actualise. Rogers (1978, cited in Bergh & Theron, 2006) describes "a

good life not as homeostatic, but as purposefully directed and always striving" (p. 365).

Avioli and Sosik (1999) as well as Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin, and Swartz (1997),

both cited in Harter, Schmidt, and Keyes (2003), state that

employees want more than a stable job with pension and benefits. Surveys of

recent and upcoming generations of employees clearly show a majority of

employees desire greater meaning and personal development from their work

and suggest many workers see their work as a calling- enjoyable, fulfilling,

and socially useful. (p. 207)

Conflict within an organisation can only be dissolved and the organisation can only

be transformed into a functional unit when the interests and wellbeing of all its employees

remain high on its agenda. Hendrix (1992) makes use of the Greek term *agape* – used by

the ancient Greeks in relation to their enemies. The Greeks viewed their enemies as

sub-human and non-persons, and thus they justified the murder and rape of their enemies.

During these times, the Greeks decided to end tribal conflict by offering an act of kinship

to the enemy (Hendrix, 1992). This act of kinship involved expressing love for another as

well as guaranteeing protection and safe passage. Hendrix (1992) states that "the Greek

generals, as philosophically oriented as they were warlike, developed the idea that they

could prevent war if they reconceived the enemy as human – as 'like-us'" (p. 296). The

term *agape* within the organisational context involves striving to develop a conflict-free

zone of functioning where each individual feels safe and able to participate fully in

achieving the aims and targets of the organisation.

Although Snyder and Lopez (2005) refer to romantic relationships specifically, their concepts regarding good communication within relationships can be meaningfully applied to the organisational environment. According to Snyder and Lopez (2005), "good communication in a relationship must constantly be nurtured and is built on the premise that one can express feelings often and fully" (p. 424). Relationships constantly change as people spend more time together and as they grow older. Snyder and Lopez (2005) also refer to the minding model which relates to a well-minded relationship where each partner recognises that changes can occur over any period of time and thus could affect their relationship.

Thus, one can create a safe interpersonal space if one consciously intends to understand change. This space will promote free expression and disclosure because people need to be heard. If people do not communicate, they cannot dissolve their issues. Snyder and Lopez (2005) state that "in minding theory, accurate and frequent communication is important, but the emphasis is on actively seeking the other's self-expression or information, rather than pursuing self-expression" (p. 424).

The Intentional Dialogue

According to Hendrix (1992), the intentional dialogue is a powerful process that encompasses the type of communication that develops connections between people. Hendrix (1992) further states that "it is the process of transiently suspending your own consciousness and allowing the reality of another person's mind to enter yours without evaluation" (p. 283). It is therefore recommended that these tools be applied in an organisational context to derive the same results as achieved when Imago theory is applied to couples. The application of these concepts, specifically during interpersonal differences, could deepen connections between participants by allowing them to relate to the inner

worlds of the other participants and by allowing them to experience deeper levels of empathy.

When people are engaged in intentional dialogue, the space between them becomes equal. The sharer (the individual describing their emotions) feels safe to make use of the space to share their point of view about a situation without the fear of being evaluated, criticised, analysed or interpreted. As a result of the process of sharing, the issues usually dissolve. The focus of such communication is not on the truth or falsity of the sharer's statements because it is accepted that the sharer's statements are true for them. Hendrix (1992) states that the "intentional dialogue, therefore is simply conscious communication, that is, communication that clarifies, confirms, and develops appreciation, respect for, and acceptance of the inner worlds of others" (p. 283).

Conclusion

With the many complex variables at play relating to interpersonal relationships within a corporate structure, consultants often tend to focus on groups and not on individual variables. With this research, I intend to show the critical value of understanding human development as a lifelong phenomenon. I also intend to understand the influence it has on the success or failure of many individuals' functioning within an organisation. I believe individual variables set the tone of the values of an organisation. Hence, I have adapted Lowman's (2002) model to represent the analysis of the workshop and sessions presented to the employees of the Lonmin Mine. The results of this analysis are discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Research Design

Introduction

During my Imago therapy training, I was struck by the relevance of the Imago concepts regarding the origin of conflict in love relationships. It occurred to me that these concepts could be applied to the conflict situations I observed in some of the organisations I worked with (for example, corporate environments and government structures). Later, while working as a consultant for smaller organisations, I was again struck by the relevance of the Imago concepts and their applicability to the conflict I observed. Imago concepts are usually only seen as applicable to interpersonal dynamics in couples, but I began to realise that they also appeared to apply to organisational environments. The conflicts I identified in the organisations I worked with were detrimental to both the development of the individuals involved and the organisations themselves.

Human development can be regarded as a continuous and progressive process that covers the entire lifespan. It consists of specific stages during which cognitive, physical, moral, and psychosocial competencies are acquired. These competencies enable individuals to function and to deal with the challenges they encounter at each stage of life. Psychosocial competencies also play a key role in the ability to experience success and job satisfaction with regard to work and other career tasks. Most interventions that address shortcomings in organisations focus on how the individual or group can improve these shortcomings and how they can implement solutions (such as the use of assertiveness, more efficient conflict handling, and more effective anger management). However, little attention is given to the origins of these personal shortcomings.

The Imago model emphasises the role of unconscious processes that stem from childhood wounding and the need for a greater conscious understanding of these processes

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to achieve personal wellbeing. This model is relevant to the workplace as individuals bring their early childhood wounding and the behavioural adaptations associated with this wounding into the workplace. These unconscious adaptations influence the nature of the relationships amongst individuals in an organisation. In turn, these relationships have a significant influence on the stability and success of the organisation. The development of a greater consciousness of the internal processes influencing workplace relationships (achieved by applying Imago concepts to the workplace) may also contribute to personal and corporate wellbeing in an organisation.

Problem Statement

This study investigates the applicability of Imago concepts to the organisational environment. Imago relationship therapy and its application to couples counselling is well established and can therefore be easily adapted to suit different contexts. As in the case of couples and romantic relationships, there is generally a limited understanding of the interpersonal dynamics and the psychodynamics that underpin relationship transactions within organisations. Individuals often present with symptoms of anger, depression, anxiety, panic disorders, and irrational cognitions without understanding the causes of these symptoms. These individuals are also exposed to high levels of stressors and experience low levels of life satisfaction.

The overt behaviours which are perceived and interpreted as problems mask the covert processes that give rise to these problem behaviours. Thus, unconscious needs often drive behaviour and result in conflict or maladaptive behaviour. Sometimes complaints and criticism in the workplace can be related to issues arising from an individual's developmental stages. It is these stages which are linked to such frustrations being expressed in their interpersonal working relationships.

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Employed people spend most of their daily lives in the working environment. Thus, many people struggle with unresolved issues and interpersonal conflicts that require some form of therapeutic intervention. Individual psychotherapy is quite expensive. Therefore, there is a need for short-term intervention programmes that can be conducted with groups in organisational settings to address these issues. This need gave impetus to the decision to develop such a programme with the intention of enhancing the understanding of intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics in the workplace through exposing employees to Imago theory and concepts.

The research question that is considered by means of a mixed methods approach focuses on whether the participants experienced a change in self-definition by being exposed to the programme. The contention is that the participants' definitions of themselves prior to the intervention could be regarded as reductionist. A reductionist perspective means that the individuals demonstrate limited insight into the determinants of their interpersonal relational dynamics. It also means that some employees experienced themselves as relatively isolated from their colleagues.

In general, it was hoped that the participants' self-descriptions would become more differentiated after they were exposed to the programme as they would be able to demonstrate greater insight into the intrapersonal and interpersonal determinants of their behaviour. It was also expected that they would experience themselves as less isolated from their colleagues.

The focus of the research question can therefore be summarised as an investigation of the extent to which the participants' self-definitions shifted from a reductionist and isolated formulation to a differentiated description of the self in context after short-term exposure to Imago relationship training.

Aim of the Research

Imago theory focuses on facilitating change and transformation in relationships. Imago theory also seeks to restore interpersonal connections. It is thus a systematic approach to resolving conflicts of both an intrapersonal and interpersonal nature. In conflict situations, individuals often do not understand what the underlying factors are that contribute to their behaviour. The purpose of Imago training in an organisational context is to shift unconscious relating into the realm of conscious relating. In Figure 4.1 below, Esterhuyse (2010, p. 36) displays the four stages of learning which are discussed.
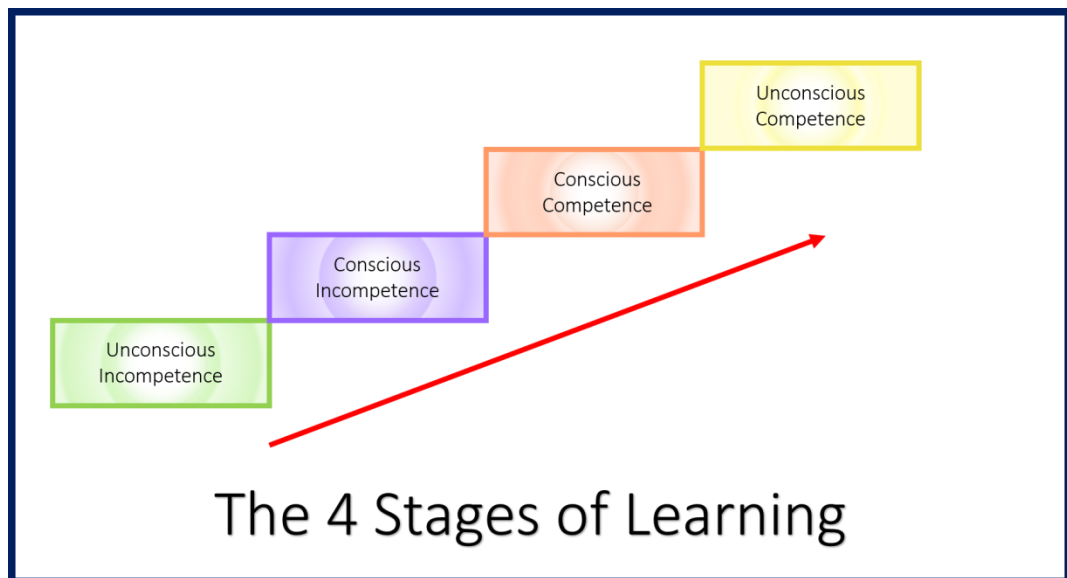
Figure 4.1. The four stages of learning (Esterhuyse, 2010, p. 36)

The four stages of learning identified above are the following:

- Unconscious incompetence

    Esterhuyse (2010) states the following:

    It is when you do not know, that you do not know! You might even

    feel like something is missing or being broken in your life, but you

have no idea how to fix it or what it is. This is the stage of ignorance

or simply not knowing (p. 36)

- Conscious incompetence

Conscious incompetence, according to Esterhuyse (2010), is "when you

know for sure that there is a problem. You even tried to fix it, but the new

techniques you are trying seem unfamiliar, and you are not yet successful in

applying them" (p. 36).

- Conscious competence

Esterhuyse (2010) states that this stage is "like a quantum leap towards

success for you.... You will learn at your own time and pace, everything will

make complete sense when you are at the conscious competence stage"

(p. 36).

- Unconscious competence

Unconscious competence, according to Esterhuyse (2010), is the

stage of absolute excellence! If you have mastered a skill correctly,

you will do it excellently in the exact way you mastered it. These

skills are automatically implemented in your, life. Once you reach this

stage with a particular skill, your subconscious mind has taken over

responsibility for those behaviours. (p. 37)

If individuals master Imago tools and teachings properly, they can begin to adapt

their unfamiliar behavioural efforts of relating to others into behaviour that feels more

familiar to them. Thus, if individuals in organisations can be exposed to and encouraged to

use Imago concepts, they may contribute to a more healthy and positive organisational

climate. **Thus, the aim of this study is to obtain quantitative and qualitative data**

regarding the effects of the Imago theory programme that was presented to the group

of managers from an organisational environment. The intention of the study is thus to determine whether the managers experienced a shift in their consciousness after being exposed to the programme. **Another aim is also to determine whether such a shift in consciousness**

- **affected the total emotional wellbeing of the individuals;**
- **increased their overall satisfaction with life; and**
- **had a positive effect on their relationships with their subordinates in particular.**

It was envisaged that after participants were exposed to the programme, they would be more aware of the impact of their unresolved childhood issues with regard to their interactions with other people. It was hoped that the subjects would become more conscious of their behaviour and that they would display intentional behaviour by creating a better understanding of the underlying dynamics of their unconscious and reactive behaviour. Such changes should be reflected in the quantitative data obtained from the four self-report questionnaires administered to each participant after each module to measure the following:

- life satisfaction;
- anger as an emotional state;
- anger as an personality trait;
- anger reduction;
- the degree of the problems one partner experiences in a marital relationship and at work; and
- how individuals believe they generally react to personal problems in their daily lives when interacting with other people.

It was further envisaged that these insights would bring about a change in the participants' self-definition. It was hoped that this change would also reflect a movement from a reductionist view to a more differentiated view of the self in the organisational context. The changes in the way in which the subjects related to their subordinates were also assessed. It was expected and hypothesised that after the participants were exposed to the Imago workshops, they would

- experience a significant improvement in their perceived problem solving abilities (measured by the Problem-Solving Inventory test [PSI]);

- experience significantly higher levels of life satisfaction as a result of developing a better understanding of interpersonal psychodynamics (measured by the Satisfaction With Life Scale [SWLS]);

- perceive situations as significantly less anger-provoking;

- be less inclined to respond with anger (measured by the Trait Anger Scale [TAS] and the State Anger Scale [SAS]);

- experience a change in their consciousness, not only in their working environment, but also in their marital relationships (measured by the Impact of Marital Satisfaction test [IMS]);

- experience a change with regard to the most extreme and intense aspect/s of their interpersonal behaviour towards less intensity and a lower frequency of occurrence of the behaviour/s; and

- experience a change in the least intense aspect of their behaviour towards a greater intensity and a greater frequency of occurrence (measured by the Impact Message Inventory-Circumplex test [IMI-C]).

It was also expected that the subordinates would perceive their managers to be more flexible in their working styles after their managers had been exposed to the Imago training.

Target Population

The total target population of the study consisted of 23 senior heads of departments and 23 subordinates from the Lonmin Platinum Mine. However, a total of 22 senior heads of departments and 22 subordinates participated in this study. These departmental heads represented departments such as Evaluation, Ventilation, Communication, Technical Services, Survey, Reporting, Engineering, Drafting, Geology, Training and Development, Rock Engineering, and Technical Expert Specialists. A key criterion used for the study was that the subordinates selected to take part in the study had to have been working for their specific head of department for more than one year. They were not informed about the intervention. Table 4.1 below represents the senior employees who participated in the study, while Table 4.2 below represents the subordinates who participated in the study.

Table 4.1

Table representing the senior employee participants

	Candidate	Department	Position	Age	Marital Status	Gender
1	Candidate 1	Valuation	Evaluation Manager	51	Yes	Male
2	Candidate 2	Ventilation	Ventilation Manager	56	Yes	Male
3	Candidate 3	Transport & Communication	Communications Co-ordinator	52	Yes	Female
4	Candidate 4	Technical Services	Manager Technical Services (MTS)	44	Yes	Male
5	Candidate 5	Technical Services	Survey Manager	62	Yes	Male

(Table 4.1 continues on next page.)

	Candidate	Department	Position	Age	Marital Status	Gender
6	Candidate 6	Technical Services	Consultant	55	Yes	Male
7	Candidate 7	Technical Services	Manager Planning	43	Yes	Male
8	Candidate 8	Centre of Excellence	Manager Valuation	42	Yes	Female
9	Candidate 9	Technical Services	Drafting Co-ordinator	35	Yes	Female
10	Candidate 10	Technical Services	Geology Manager	49	Yes	Male
11	Candidate 11	Technical Services	Geology Manager	42	Yes	Male
12	Candidate 12	Technical Services	Technical Services Manager	39	Yes	Male
13	Candidate 13	Survey	Survey Manager	55	Yes	Male
14	Candidate 14	Technical Services	Ventilation Manager	47	Yes	Male
15	Candidate 15	Technical Services	MTS Manager	42	Yes	Male
16	Candidate 16	Geology	Rock Engineering Manager	55	Yes	Male
17	Candidate 17	Geology	Manager Geology	54	Yes	Male
18	Candidate 18	Technical Services	Manager Technical Services	49	Yes	Male
19	Candidate 19	Valuation	Valuation Manager	51	Yes	Male
20	Candidate 20	Survey	Survey Manager	56	Yes	Male
21	Candidate 21	Technical services	Drafting Co-ordinator	40	No	Male
22	Candidate 22	Geology	Senior Geologists	39	Yes	Female

Table 4.2

Table representing the subordinate participants

	Candidate	Department	Position	Age	Marital Status	Gender
1	Candidate 1	Valuation	Valuator	41	Yes	Male
2	Candidate 2	Ventilation	Ventilation Officer	44	Yes	Male
3	Candidate 3	Tech Services	Liaison officer	42	No – divorced	Female
4	Candidate 4	Ventilation	Ventilation Officer	55	Yes	Male
5	Candidate 5	Survey	Senior Surveyor	39	Yes	Male
6	Candidate 6	Tech Services	Surveyor	45	No – divorced	Male
7	Candidate 7	Tech Services	Surpac Mine – Designers Schedule	55	Yes	Male
8	Candidate 8	Draughting	Shaft Planner	60	No	Male
9	Candidate 9	Tech Services	Draughtsperson	47	Yes	Female
11	Candidate 11	Reporting	System Administrator	44	Yes	Female
12	Candidate 12	Technical Services	Technical Reporting Co-ordinator	39	Yes	Female
13	Candidate 13	Survey	Sectional Survey	46	No	Male
14	Candidate 14	Ventilation	Section Ventilation Officer	48	Yes	Male
15	Candidate 15	Ventilation	Vent Officer	44	Yes	Male
16	Candidate 16	Tech Services	Strata Control	32	Yes	Male
17	Candidate 17	Technical Services	Planner	33	Yes	Male
18	Candidate 18	Evaluation	Senior Evaluator	29	Yes	Male
19	Candidate 19	Valuation	Senior Evaluator	33	Yes	Male
20	Candidate 20	Survey	Survey Opencast	38	Yes	Male
21	Candidate 21	Systems	System Administrator	31	Yes	Male
22	Candidate 22	Valuation	Valuator	38	No	Male

Method

Figure 4.2 below provides an explanation of how the research was conducted. This figure also provides some details regarding the participants. Twenty-two senior managers participated in the study. The youngest senior manager was 35 years old, and the eldest was 62 years old. The mean age of the senior participants is 48 years old. Nineteen of the participants were male, and three were female. Pre-tests were conducted prior to the seven-module training. The same tests were used in the post-tests with exception of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

Twenty-two subordinates participated in the study. The youngest subordinate participant was 29 years old, and the eldest was 60 years old. The mean age of the subordinate participants is 42 years old. Eighteen of these subordinates were male, and four were female. The subordinates were asked to evaluate their seniors on the Impact Message Inventory-Circumplex (IMI-C) before the senior managers attended the training. They were once again asked to evaluate their managers after the senior managers had attended the training sessions. The subordinates were not aware of the training, nor were they informed about the training intervention.

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                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                        │   Mining Company    │
                        └─────────────────────┘
                          ↙                 ↘
        ┌─────────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────────┐
        │  22 Senior Managers │      │   22 Subordinates   │
        └─────────────────────┘      └─────────────────────┘

        Mean age: 48.09               Mean age: 42.18
        Males = 19                    Males = 18
        Females = 3                   Females = 4

                  ↓                             ↓
        ┌─────────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────────┐
        │      Pre-Test       │      │      Pre-Test       │
        └─────────────────────┘      └─────────────────────┘

        PSI                           IMI-C (Sub)
        SWLS
        SAS
        TAS
        IMS
        IMI-C (Self)
        Myers-Briggs Type Indicator
        (MBTI)

                  ↓
        ┌─────────────────────┐
        │ 7 Modules Intervention│
        └─────────────────────┘

                  ↓                             ↓
        ┌─────────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────────┐
        │      Post-Test      │      │      Post-Test      │
        └─────────────────────┘      └─────────────────────┘

        Quantitative and Qualitative results    IMI-C (Sub)
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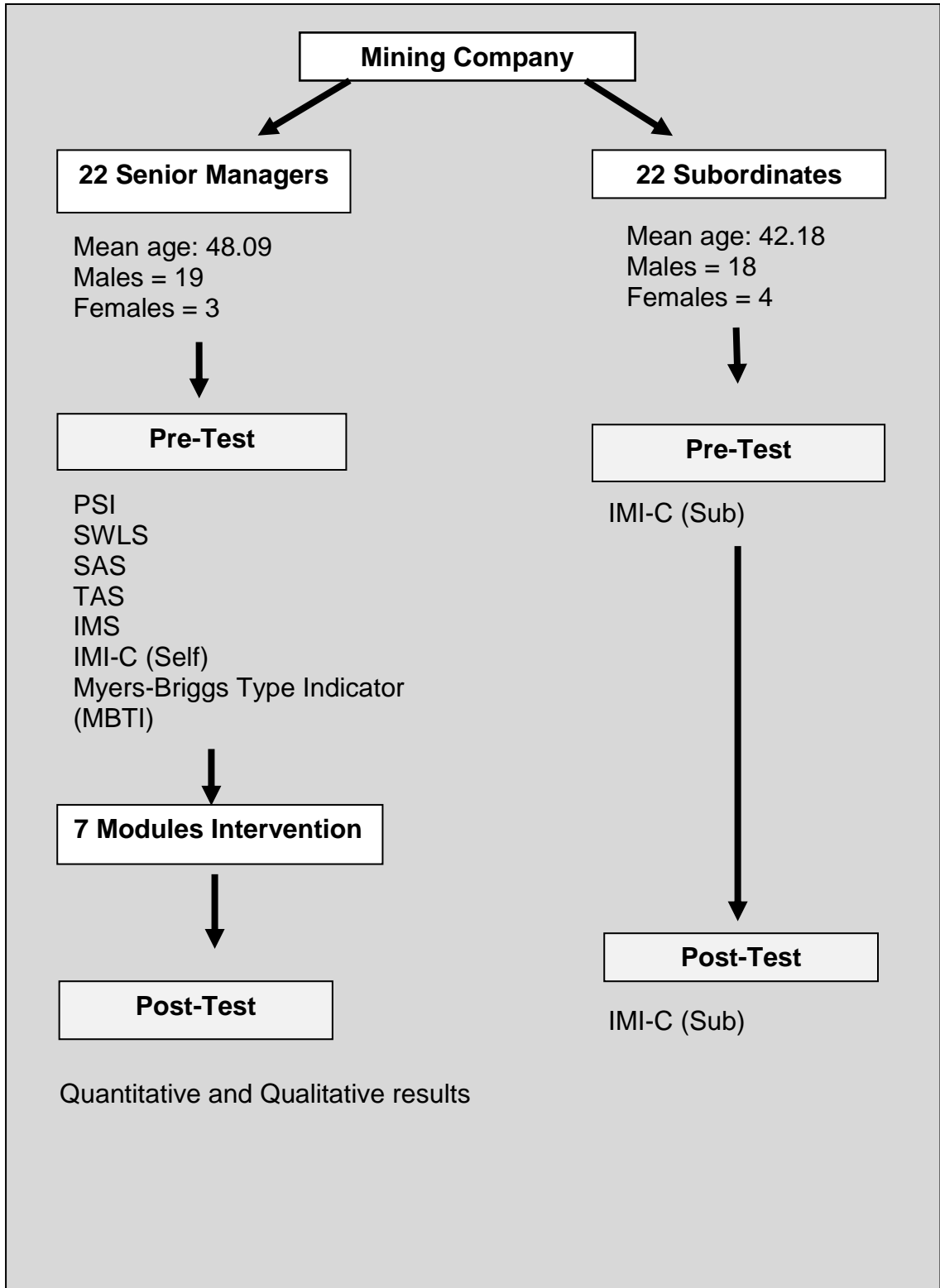
Figure 4.2. Figure representing a flow chart of the research process

Apparatus

Each of the senior manager participants received an individual training manual. After each module was completed, the participants were given some written exercises and were then requested to give their opinions on the content of the specific module that was presented. The participants' opinions were used to obtain qualitative data and to establish whether there was a shift in their consciousness. A computer, projector, and white board were used in all of the presentations. The participants were encouraged to participate during the presentations.

Procedure

The researcher also acted as a certified workshop presenter of the Imago modules and NOT as a psychotherapist or counsellor. The content and purpose of the planned research were shared with the management of the Lonmin Platinum Mine to obtain their commitment and consent. The human resources manager was assisted in producing a written communication (See Appendix B) to gain the commitment of the management of the mine and to assure them that no employee would be negatively impacted on during the course of the research.

Regarding ethical considerations, Mouton (2001) highlights the following aspects, which were adhered to at all times during the study:

With regard to objectivity and integrity, researchers should always adhere to indicating any limitations that will affect the validity of their findings. Degrees of expertise must be stated accurately and results interpreted in such a manner so as not to compromise the study. Data or observations must not, under any circumstances, be falsified or changed. Any source that is referred to or consulted must be appropriately acknowledged. Plagiarism is considered as one of the most

serious matters in terms of ethical principles, hence the importance of addressing this early in the research process. (pp. 239-245)

Furthermore, the research participants in this study were given the right to informed consent. Each participant provided written consent before the training was conducted. The aims and objectives of the study were also communicated in full to the participants prior to their participation. Also, see the section on 'Ethical Considerations' later in the chapter.

The company provided conference facilities as a venue for the intervention. It was arranged for the researcher to visit the mine once a week for seven consecutive weeks to present the Imago relationship training modules.

Certain pre-tests were conducted prior to the actual training to determine the participants' level of knowledge of the specific modules presented at the time. The seven-module training then followed the pre-tests. The post-tests were then conducted to determine if there was an increase in the participants' knowledge of a specific module after the module had been presented and to assess whether there was a change in their consciousness regarding relationship dynamics. After each module, a semi-structured questionnaire was given to each of the participants to obtain qualitative data. Questions such as the following were asked:

- What was the most important learning point for you?
- In what way can you utilise the knowledge gained?
- In what way can you utilise the knowledge gained in your working environment?
- Has your perception towards other people changed?
- If your perception towards other people has changed, in what way has it changed?

All of the 22 departmental heads attended the scheduled training sessions. In addition to the departmental heads, one subordinate of each of the departmental heads was selected to participate in the study. The subordinate had to have been working with the specific senior manager for a minimum of one year. The subordinates were then asked to evaluate their seniors before the seven training modules took place. They were again requested to evaluate their seniors one month after the managers had completed the seven modules. This double comparison was used to establish whether the subordinates observed any changes in the behaviour of their seniors. The subordinates were not informed of the purpose of the evaluation, nor did they know that their seniors had been exposed to the training.

Content of the Modules

Module 1: Introduction (2 hours)

Hendrix (1992, p. 35) states that we can only understand the dynamics or complexities of relationships if we understand ourselves and what kind of creatures we are. Our conscious awareness is only a small part of ourselves. Thus, we need to examine our instinctual nature (or our unconscious) to understand our drives and motivations. Thus, this module examined the unconscious and our connections with others. It was important for the participants to realise that we are born to have connections with other human beings. This module examined people's essential connectedness with the greater universe and the body's sensitivity to energetic fields. The participants were taught that when we feel connected to others and the planet, we feel safe. They were also taught that when this connection is distorted, we feel unsafe. Central to the module was the fact that conflicts are distorted attempts to reclaim connections or to regain that which is lost.

Module 2: The Brain (2 hours)

This lecture covered the old brain and its tendency to cause us to react because of the information it has stored over many years from the time of childhood. The module focused on instinctual drives and how the brain distinguishes between safety and danger. The participants were taught that when people are provoked, they respond by fighting, fleeing, freezing, or submitting. They were also taught that when people feel safe, they play, nurture, work, eat, or sleep. The module explored the brain stem and the limbic system, collectively referred to as the old brain, as being responsible for survival and as containing many years of information. The module investigated the fact that a smile or a frown provides information to the old brain to regard the world as safe or dangerous during interactions with others. The participants were informed that people link new, incoming information with old, stored information. They were also taught that primitive instincts protect or destroy people.

Module 3: The Intentional Dialogue (2 hours)

One of the most effective forms of communication between people in any relationship is the intentional dialogue. During this module, the participants were taught a very powerful and effective way to communicate. Hendrix (1992, p. 283) refers to the intentional dialogue as conscious communication that clarifies, confirms, and develops an appreciation of, respect for, and acceptance of the inner worlds of other people. The intentional dialogue consists of three processes, namely mirroring, validation, and empathy (Hendrix, 1992, p. 283). These processes were taught during the module.

Module 4: The Mirror and the Wall (2 hours)

This module provided insight into the problems and frustrations people experience in their relationships. Core questions such as the following were asked:

- What is the cause of these frustrations?

- What is it that you really want?

- What can you do on your path towards resolving that dilemma?

The module discussed frustrations and how the roots of our frustrations are linked to childhood. This module usually creates a lot of insight and tends to mean a lot to the participants. A discussion on criticism followed the discussion on frustrations. The participants were taught to realise that if we inflict pain on another person, we attempt to get that person to relieve our pain, or we get them to give us attention. Hendrix (1992) states that criticisms are desires expressed through negative energy. Thus, the participants were taught a highly effective and easily learnt alternative to criticism in this module, namely the intentional dialogue.

Module 5: The Psychological Journey (2 hours)

The developmental stages of childhood were dealt with in this module in detail. The individuals were taught to determine points where their progress was hindered during their childhoods. If the individuals were able to acknowledge their wounded inner child, they were then able to understand why they use defensive strategies in interpersonal relationships. During this module, the participants realised why they are compatible with certain people and why they are incompatible with others. The kinds of relationships they are likely to have and the reasons for why they may experience frustration in their relationships (in contrast to the happiness they hope) for were explored. If the individuals were able to understand their wounds and if they were able to realise the impact of their wounding on their behaviour, they were then able to begin changing their behaviour in interpersonal relationships consciously.

Module 6: The Birth of the Social Self (2 hours)

This module focused on the social self. The social self refers to the way parents educate their children to fit into and to survive in society during interactions with other

people. Hendrix (1992) states that "socialization molds our personalities so that we repress certain essential aspects of ourselves and develop a false veneer that we hope will be accepted and loved" (p. 138). Certain aspects of the self are suppressed and other aspects may be overdeveloped. During the socialisation process, the lost self, which represents the repressed and prohibited parts of a person, develops. The disowned self represents the traits and functions people view positively in others, but that they are unable to recognise in themselves. The denied self refers to the traits and functions people view negatively in others, but that they are unable to recognise in themselves. The socialisation process, the lost self, the disowned self, and the denied self were examined during the module.

Module 7: Owning Projections (2 hours)

This module taught the participants how to let go of past projections and helped them to identify the character structures and defences that they developed in order to cope in life. The participants were assigned to groups of two to do a practical exercise. They then had to complete certain sentence stems. After the exercise, a discussion took place. The exercise and discussion usually reveal that the participants project their own negative denied traits onto the other person and that they respond to that person as if the denied trait belongs to that other person.

<div align="center">

Ethical Considerations

</div>

I acted in accordance with the American Psychological Association's ethical principles at all times. I work in private practice along with three other psychologists and one psychiatrist. I am also involved in many community projects. Furthermore, I have excellent relationships with several companies and the community. Thus, I strive to uphold ethical practices at all times. The purpose and benefits of the research project were thoroughly communicated to all the heads of departments who participated in this study.

They were verbally assured that all of the information obtained would be dealt with confidentially and that no names would be mentioned in the writing of the report.

I made a commitment to the participants that the results of this research would be used to their benefit and for the purposes of this study only. I also assured them that no individual results would be discussed with other employees or managers. A hard copy of the results will be given to the company at the end of the study. The participants were also requested to keep all information shared by the other participants confidential. An anonymity pledge was read to the participants and a consent form was signed by each of them.

Measurement Instruments

The following measurement instruments are examined with regard to various factors: the Problem-Solving Inventory (PSI), the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS), the State-Trait Anger Scale (STAS), the Index of Marital Satisfaction (IMS), the Impact Message Inventory-Circumplex (IMI-C), and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). The main structure of this section follows a similar layout to that of Fischer and Corcoran's (1994) discussion of various measurement instruments as the layout makes the discussion easy to follow and clearly delineates the advantages of each instrument.

Problem-Solving Inventory (PSI)

The Problem-Solving Inventory (PSI) is used as a measurement instrument in the study because of its various attributes described in detail below. A general description of the instrument is also provided.

Description. The PSI consists of 35 questions in the form of a six-point Likert scale designed "to measure how individuals believe they generally react to personal problems in their daily lives" (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 442). The personal problems are, for example, issues such as interactions with friends,

career choices, divorce, and depression (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 442). The PSI does not measure actual problem solving skills, but rather evaluates the respondents' awareness of their own problem solving abilities or problem solving style (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 442).

According to Heppner (1982), as cited in Fischer and Corcoran (1994, p. 442), the PSI has three subscales, namely problem solving confidence, approach-avoidance style, and personal control. The total score obtained is also relevant as it is regarded as "a single, general index of problem-solving perception" (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 442). According to Heppner (1982), as cited in Fischer and Corcoran (1994), the PSI is "one of the few standardized measures that addresses this central concern of helping professionals with clients' coping and problem-solving skills" (p. 442).

Reliability. The PSI is regarded as having good internal consistency with alphas "ranging from .72 to .85 on the subscales and .90 for the total measure" (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 442). The PSI has "two-week test-retest correlations for both the subscales and total measure that range from .83 to .89" (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 442), and thus the PSI has "excellent stability" (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 442).

Validity. According to Heppner (1982), as cited in Fischer and Corcoran (1994), the PSI has good validity in numerous areas, including concurrent and construct validity. Concurrent validity of the PSI "was established by significant correlations between the PSI and scores on a self-rating scale of one's problem-solving skill" (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 442). Construct validity was established by using studies to identify that the PSI correlates with other similar measurement instruments (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). Both the Rotter's Internal-External Scale and

the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator personality measures were used for these correlation studies (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 443).

The PSI is useful to use in distinguishing between various groups and/or people with high and low scores of psychological disturbance and is thus used to determine "known-groups validity" (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 443). According to Heppner (1982), as cited in Fischer and Corcoran (1994), the PSI is "not affected by social desirability response set" (p. 443), but it is sensitive to clinical changes.

Scoring. The practitioner or the respondent can score the PSI manually or with the use of a computer (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 442). Specific items marked with an asterisk are reverse-scored, and then the items of each factor are added together (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 442). The total score is then obtained by adding the scores of the three factors together (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). There are also filler items which are not scored, while lower scores represent greater perceived problem solving abilities (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 442).

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS)

The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) is used in the study because it has several benefits as a measurement instrument. These benefits are described below in terms of its reliability, validity, and method of scoring. A general description is also provided.

Description. The SWLS is a short, seven-point Likert scale instrument consisting of five items that require the respondent's cognitive judgement of their own quality of life and their general life satisfaction (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 501). It is a one-dimensional instrument in that it does not apply any external standards and because it is the respondent's own judgement of their quality of life that is measured (Diener et al., 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994,

p. 501). As satisfaction with life is central to mental wellbeing, the SWLS can be used with and applied to a wide range of clients (Diener et al., 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 501). The SWLS is therefore useful in this study.

Reliability. The SWLS has very good internal consistency with an alpha of .87 (Diener et al., 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 501). It also appears to be quite stable with a test-retest reliability correlation of .82 for a two-month period (Diener et al., 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 501).

Validity. The concurrent validity of the SWLS was tested by researchers using two samples of college students (Diener et al., 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 501). The scores for each sample "correlated with nine measures of subjective well-being" (Diener et al., 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 501). However, the SWLS was not correlated with instruments measuring affect intensity (Diener et al., 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 501). Correlations have also been found with self-esteem, clinical symptoms, neuroticism, and emotionality as well as life satisfaction ratings identified by the elderly (Diener et al., 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 501).

Scoring. Each item of the SWLS consists of a seven-point scale with statements ranging from "'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'" (Diener et al., 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 501). The scores for each item are then added together to obtain a total score ranging from 5 to 35 (Diener et al., 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). Higher scores tend to reflect a higher level of satisfaction with one's life (Diener et al., 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994).

State-Trait Anger Scale (SAS and TAS, or STAS)

The State-Trait Anger Scale (STAS) is applied to the study because of its numerous attributes as explored below in terms of validity, reliability, and scoring.

Description. The STAS has two formats, namely a long format consisting of 15 questions and a short format consisting of ten questions – both are presented in a four-point Likert scale format (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). The STAS assesses anger as an emotional state that "varies in intensity" (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 629) as well as anger as a personality trait which is relatively stable (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 629). According to Spielberger and London (1983), as cited in Fischer and Corcoran (1994), state anger is "an emotional condition consisting of subjective feelings of tension, annoyance, irritation, or rage" (p. 629).

Trait anger is regarded as the frequency with which a respondent feels state anger over a period of time (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). A respondent who scores high in trait anger is likely to perceive situations as anger-provoking and to produce higher state anger scores (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 629).

Reliability. Spielberger and London (1983), as cited in Fischer and Corcoran (1994), identify the STAS as having "very good reliability" (p. 629). They base the internal consistency results below on Cronbach's alpha (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). According to Spielberger and London (1983), as cited in Fischer and Corcoran (1994), "[t]he internal consistency of the original 15-item trait-anger measure was .87 for a sample of 146 college students" (p. 629). In addition, the measurements of trait anger were found to have internal consistency of .87 for male navy recruits and .84 for female navy recruits (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). The original state anger measurements were also high in internal consistency with "correlations of .94 for male and female navy recruits" (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 629).

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The anger temperament subscales also showed high levels of internal consistency for both the male and female college and navy respondents with "internal consistency coefficients ranging from .84 to .89" (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 629). The internal consistency coefficients for the angry reaction subscale ranged from .70 to .75 for the same group of male and female respondents (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 630). The same sample was used to establish levels of internal consistency for the ten-item format, and "good to excellent" correlations were reported (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 630). The STAS can therefore be regarded as having excellent reliability.

Validity. Significant correlations with other measures (in particular with three measures of hostility and measures of neuroticism, psychoticism, and anxiety) support the concurrent validity of the STAS (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 630). According to Spielberger and London (1983), as cited in Fischer and Corcoran (1994), "[s]cores were not associated with state-trait curiosity or extraversion" (p. 630).

Scoring. Both trait and state anger items are rated on a four-point scale (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). There are two subscales for trait anger, namely anger temperament and anger reaction – both of which use the descriptive ratings "'almost never' (1) to 'almost always' (4)" (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 629). The scores of each trait anger item are added together to obtain the overall score for trait anger (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). A high score therefore indicates a high level of trait anger (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994).

According to Spielberger and London (1983), as cited in Fischer and Corcoran (1994), the rating of state anger items is based on the intensity of the feelings experienced by the respondent ranging from "'not at all' (1) to 'very much so' (4)" (p. 629). As with trait anger, the item scores are added together to obtain the overall score for state anger (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). A high score would therefore indicate a high level of state anger (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). The total scores for the ten-item version for both trait anger and state anger can range from 10 to 40, and the total scores for the 15-item version can range from 15 to 60 (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994).

Index of Marital Satisfaction (IMS)

The Index of Marital Satisfaction (IMS) is described below as a measurement instrument with regard to its general description as well as its reliability, validity, and scoring methods.

Description. The IMS consists of 25 questions in a five-point Likert scale format, and it measures "the degree, severity, or magnitude of a problem one spouse or partner has in the marital relationship" (Hudson, 1992, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 116). The IMS also measures the extent to which "one partner perceives problems in the relationship" (Hudson, 1992, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 116). This instrument is not a measure of marital adjustment because a good level of adjustment can be attained despite the presence of discord or dissatisfaction within a marriage (Hudson, 1992, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 116). The IMS can be used as a clinical instrument to indicate if a respondent has a clinically significant problem (Hudson, 1992, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). According to Hudson (1992), as cited in Fischer and Corcoran (1994), it employs a cut-off score of 30 (±5) with "scores below this point

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indicate[ing an] absence of a clinically significant problem" (p. 116), while scores above

30 indicate that the respondent may have a clinically significant problem.

Reliability. According to Hudson (1992), as cited in Fischer and Corcoran (1994),

the IMS has been found to have "excellent internal consistency" (p. 116) with an alpha

score of .96 and excellent short-term stability with a two-hour test-retest correlation of .96.

It also has a "(low) Standard Error of Measurement" with a score of 4.00 (Hudson, 1992,

as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 116). The IMS can therefore be regarded as an

extremely reliable instrument.

Validity. A significant correlation has been found between the Locke-Wallace

Marital Adjustment Test and the IMS, which indicates that the IMS has a high level of

concurrent validity (Hudson, 1992, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). The IMS also

discriminates between known groups – specifically between couples with marital problems

and couples known to be without problems (Hudson, 1992, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran,

1994). Appropriate correlations were found with other measures (such as sexual

satisfaction and marital problems), and thus the IMS was found to have good construct

validity (Hudson, 1992, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994).

Scoring. According to Hudson (1992), as cited in Fischer and Corcoran (1994), the

items listed at the bottom of the scale are firstly reverse-scored and then added together.

This total is then added to the sum of the other items' scores, after which the number of

completed items is subtracted (Hudson, 1992, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). This

figure is then multiplied by 100 and divided by the number of completed items (which has

also been multiplied by six) to obtain the final total (Hudson, 1992, as cited in Fischer &

Corcoran, 1994). Scores can range from 0 to 100, and higher scores indicate evidence of

marital dissatisfaction (Hudson, 1992, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994).

Impact Message Inventory-Circumplex (IMI-C)

The Impact Message Inventory-Circumplex (IMI-C) is explored below. It is used in the study because of its numerous applications and properties that are examined in terms of its reliability, validity, and scoring methods.

Description. The original IMI consisted of 90 items (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 41), but this was reduced to 56 items when the Impact Message Inventory-Circumplex (IMI-C) was developed in 1993 by Kiesler and Schmidt (2006) to streamline the test. There are two underlying dimensions, namely control (on the ordinate) and affiliation (on the abscissa), which are arranged on two intersecting axes giving rise to eight categories of interpersonal behaviour (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006). In counter-clockwise order beginning at the top, these eight categories are dominant (D), hostile-dominant (HD), hostile (H), hostile-submissive (HS), submissive (S), friendly-submissive (FS), friendly (F), and friendly-dominant (FD) (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006).

The IMI is defined as a "*self-report transactional inventory* designed to measure distinctive internal reactions, referred to as impact messages, that interactants experience to the full range of interpersonal behaviors indexed along the circumference of the interpersonal circle" (Kiesler, 1983 & Leary, 1957, cited in Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 1). Kiesler and Schmidt (1996) state that the inventory

> was constructed on the assumption that the interpersonal or evoking behavior
>
> of one person (A) can be validly characterized and measured by assessing the
>
> covert responses or "impact messages" of another person (B) who has
>
> interacted with or observed A. (p. 1)

Person B is asked to describe their inner reactions and engagements that emerge when they interact with person A, and thus Person B reveals the "interpersonal behavior of person A" (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 1). The IMI-C "assesses one person's (the target

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individual's) interpersonal behavior as experienced through the emotional and other

reactions

pulled from other individuals with whom he or she interacts" (Kiesler, Schmidt, &

Wagner, 1997, as cited in Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 1). The IMI can be used to describe

the interpersonal behaviour of normal and maladjusted individuals by measuring the

interpersonal consequences of their behaviour as they interact with other people (Kiesler &

Schmidt, 2006).

A key concept in the IMI is that of the "impact message" (Kiesler & Schmidt,

2006, p. 1). According to Kiesler and Schmidt (2006), it is based on the idea that

relationships are influenced primarily through non-verbal messages by which one person in

an interaction "invokes a claim" (p. 2) on the other person (the decoder or receiver) in the

interaction to accept the sender's (or encoder's) "particular self-presentation" (p. 2).

Kiesler and Schmidt (2006) state that "[t]he underlying theory is that our interpersonal

behaviour serves the function of establishing distinctive kinds of relationships with others

– relationships that are comfortable, anxiety-free, and serve to confirm our conceptions of

who we are as individuals" (p. 2). We try to establish comfortable relationships by

attempting "in automatic and minimally aware ways, [to] maneuver [manoeuvre] persons

who are interacting with us to adopt relationship positions that are 'complementary' and

reinforcing of the positions we are proffering" (Kiesler& Schmidt, 2006, p. 2).

The "evoking message" (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 2) from the sender (or

encoder) imposes a condition or command on the receiver (or decoder) that causes the

decoder to behave as the encoder signals without either person in the interaction being too

aware of the command element within their transactions (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006). The

impact message therefore refers to the "receiving end of this process and refers to the

covert emotional and other 'pulls' evoked in the decoder as the direct result of the

encoder's evoking message" (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 2).

According to Kiesler and Schmidt (2006), impact experiences include "direct

feelings, action tendencies, perceived evoking messages, and metaphors or fantasies, all of

which symbolize interactant B's thematic covert engagements experienced in the presence

of person A" (p. 2). These covert reactions become available and reportable when attention

is focused on them, which takes place when the respondent completes the items of the IMI

(Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006). In summary, impact messages are therefore all internal

emotional events that person B "experiences as predominantly produced or evoked by a

target individual (person A) during their routine or other transactions" (Kiesler & Schmidt,

2006, p. 2). Figure 4.3 below depicts this transactional cycle and highlights how

"interpersonal transactions may reinforce consistent, stable interaction patterns through

confirmation of an individual's 'self-system'" (Sullivan, 1953, as cited in Kiesler &
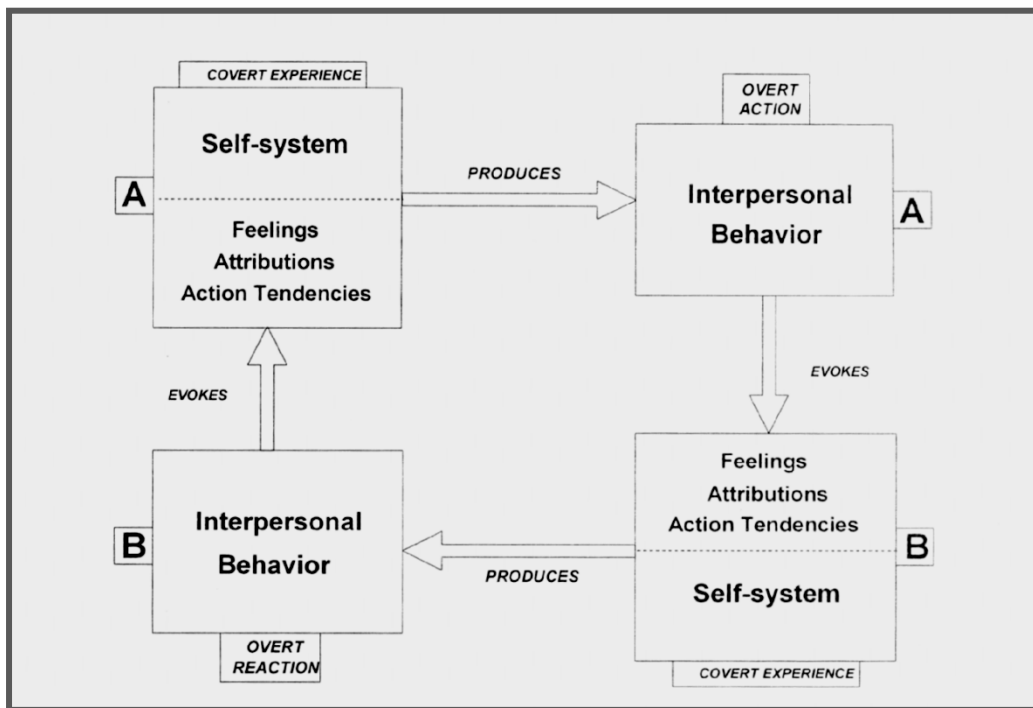
Schmidt, 2006, p. 53).

Figure 4.3. The interpersonal transaction cycle (adapted from Kiesler, 1986, in Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 53)

If one begins in the upper left-hand corner moving clockwise, the encoder's (or person A's) interaction with person B (the decoder) can be followed. The role of "covert cognitions and emotions" (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 53) in instigating overt behaviours by both people is clearly illustrated in the figure. Person B's overt responses may "confirm or challenge the relationship definition advanced by person A, depending on whether it is congruent with B's own preferred pattern of interpersonal behavior" (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 53). Unfortunately, complementary reactions from person B and other people in interactions with person A, "in confirming the individual's rigid relationship bid, actually confirm and reinforce the maladaptive behavior" (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 54) of person A.

According to Kiesler and Schmidt (2006), the four classes of impact messages or experiences measured by the IMI are "direct feelings, action tendencies, perceived evoking

messages, and metaphors or fantasies" (p. 2). The shorter version of the IMI, the IMI-C,

assesses only the first three items and excludes fantasies (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p.

3).The 56-item IMI-C was selected for this research project as the assessment of fantasies

was not regarded as within the parameters of the study. The applicability of the IMI-C to a

variety of human transactions has been demonstrated, including (amongst others)

transactions involving individual, marital, and group psychotherapy as well as

patient-physician medical consultations, interviews, and laboratory dyadic situations

(Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006).

Reliability. The circumplex structure and the internal consistency, as well as the

reliability of the IMI-C, have received much attention, for example, in the study by

Schmidt, Wagner, and Kiesler (1999b), as cited in Kiesler and Schmidt (2006). The

internal consistency reliability coefficients were calculated for the IMI-C on "16 different

samples embedded within ten different IMI-C studies" (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 23). In

summary of the IMI-C's reliability, the "median alpha coefficients obtained for each of the

octant scales ranged from .69 to .85" (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 25), which shows that

the IMI-C scales have strong internal consistency reliabilities (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006).

Validity. Schmidt et al. (1999b), as cited in Kiesler and Schmidt (2006), state that

the results "concluded that, overall, the IMI-C demonstrated adequate structural properties

(*structural validity*)" (p. 23). According to Kiesler and Schmidt (2006), Schmidt et al.

(1999b) used "three analytic strategies ... to evaluate the circumplexity of the IMI-C scales:

principal-components analysis (PCA) with post hoc inferential testing, multidimensional

scaling analysis (MDS), and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)" (p. 22).

Strong, Hills, and Kilmartin et al. (1988), as cited in Kiesler and Schmidt (2006),

trained confederates to perform one of eight different specified, scripted roles conforming

to specific types of octant behaviours. Significant relationships were found between the

overt behaviour of the confederates and the perceptions of their behaviour as rated on the IMI-C (Strong et al., 1988, as cited in Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006). The literature regarding the IMI abounds with such examples of various types of validity of the IMI-C. Both the examples above demonstrate the structural validity of the IMI-C.

Administration and scoring of the IMI-C: The IMI-C octant scales. According to Kiesler and Schmidt (2006), the "IMI-C materials consist of two forms of a reusable question booklet [one for men and one for women], as well as separate answer sheets, scoring sheets, and summary profile sheets" (p. 10). The booklets contain all the instructions, which can be changed to fit a particular situation or study, needed by the respondents to fill out the answer sheets (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006).

There are three separate categories, namely impact or direct feelings, action tendencies, and perceived evoking messages (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006), as mentioned above. For each of these three groups, the respondent is required to judge the accuracy with which the item describes their internal experience in reaction to the target person by using a four-point Likert scale (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006). There are seven items for each of the eight scales in the IMI-C (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006). After the respondents have completed the test, the scores for each of the seven items per octant are added together and are then divided by seven (the number of items in each of the eight scales) to obtain an average score for each scale (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006). This average score is then expressed "in the language of the original 4-point scale item" (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 11). The higher the octant scale score, the stronger the respondent (person B) rated the impact of the interpersonal behaviour of the interactant (person A) (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006).

Each octant scale score is recorded on the IMI-C Profile Summary Sheet and lines are drawn to connect the eight scores together (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006). In this way, a

visual summary of the interpersonal impact pattern is obtained for each respondent and can be used to interpret the interactant's impact on the respondent (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006).

IMI-C axis scores can also be calculated using the mathematical formulae provided. These scores measure the two major dimensions – control (dominance-submission) and affiliation (friendliness-hostility) – and provide a general description of the particular respondent's record of interpersonal impacts (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 12). The scores can also be plotted on the IMI-C Summary Profile Sheet and can indicate the quadrant(s) applicable to the respondent as well as the extent of the impact recorded (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 12). In addition, hemisphere and quadrant scores can also be calculated using the formulae provided should a more detailed analysis of the particular responses be required (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006). The possible hemisphere and quadrant scores are shown in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3

Table representing the possible hemisphere and quadrant scores

Hemisphere Scores	Quadrant Scores
Dominant	Friendly-dominant
Submissive	Hostile-dominant
Friendly	Hostile-submissive
Hostile	Friendly-submissive

Figure 4.4 below is an illustration of the axes and quadrants of the 56-item IMI-C model (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 51). The eight categories shown below are dominant (D), hostile-dominant (HD), hostile (H), hostile-submissive (HS), submissive (S), friendly-submissive (FS), friendly (F), and friendly-dominant (FD).
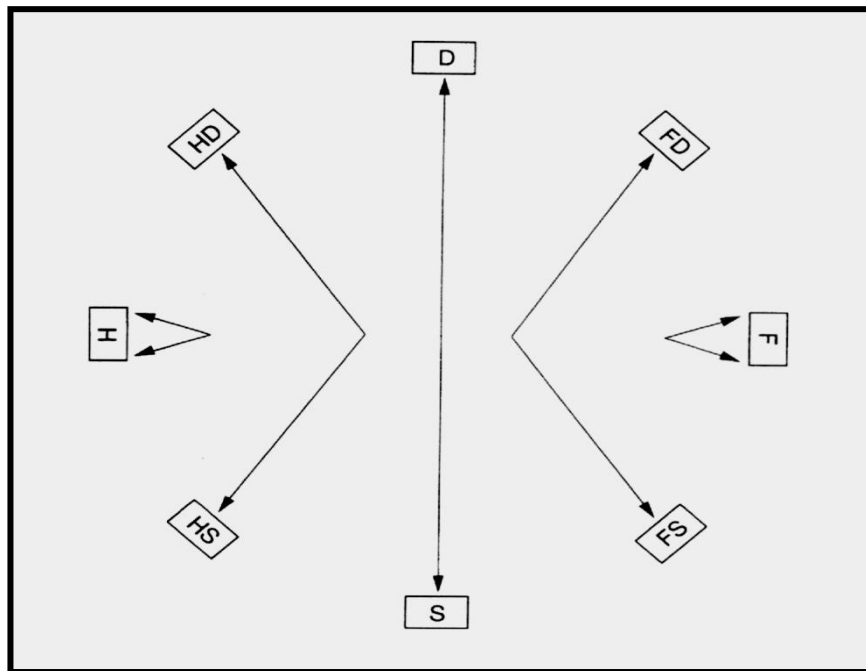
Figure 4.4. Complementary octants of the interpersonal circle (Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 51)

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is used in the study because of its application to personality analysis as explored below.

Description. The MBTI is widely used around the world as a personality assessment (Schaubhut, Herk, & Thompson, 2009). It is a structure consisting of four pairs of opposite preferences called dichotomies (Schaubhut et al., 2009). These preferences are based on the work of Carl Jung. The following is a list of the dichotomies in the MBTI (Schaubhut et al., 2009, p. 4):

- Extraversion (E) or Introversion (I) – where an individual focuses their attention and gets their energy.

- Sensing (S) or Intuition (N) – how an individual takes in information.

- Thinking (T) or Feeling (F) – how an individual makes decisions.

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- Judging (J) or Perceiving (P) – how an individual deals with the outer world.

The MBTI is commonly used to provide self-insight for personal development and for making career decisions. However, it is not a predictor of job success. The MBTI is the most widely used instrument for understanding human differences and can be used for the following (Briggs Myers, 1993):

- self-development;

- career development and exploration;

- relationship counselling;

- academic counselling;

- organisation development;

- team building;

- problem solving;

- management and leadership training;

- education and curriculum development; and

- diversity and multicultural training. (p. 1)

Reliability. In order to demonstrate internal consistency, several sample comparisons were conducted in 2008 and 2009 by Schaubhut et al. (2009). Good to high levels of reliability were found for the reliability of the following group samples: people with different employment statuses (full time, part time, retired, and student status), people with different ethnic backgrounds (nine different ethnic groups), different age groups of people (from younger than 20 years to older than 60 years), and people from various international samples (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and Australia) (Schaubhut et al., 2009).

Test-retest reliability assessments were conducted between 2004 and 2008 by Schaubhut et al. (2009). The sample used consisted of both men and women with a mean age of 37 years old (Schaubhut et al., 2009). According to Schaubhut et al. (2009), regular test-retest correlations of the four dichotomies over a period of time ranging from less than a week to more than four years indicated a good reliability for each dichotomy with correlations from .57 to .81. In comparisons of the reliability of the MBTI with other well-known personality instruments, both the internal consistency and test-retest reliability of the MBTI were found to be "as good as or superior to those reported for the other personality assessments" (Schaubhut et al., 2009, p. 5).

Validity. To establish construct validity, the MBTI was correlated with six other assessment instruments to demonstrate convergent and divergent validity (Schaubhut et al., 2009). The correlations shared the expected relationships with the other instruments (Schaubhut et al., 2009). A best-fit or verified type analysis indicated a high rate of agreement between participants' placement into a type and whether they regarded it as a best fit (Schaubhut et al., 2009). Factor analysis research supports the four-factor structure of the MBTI and also shows that the items actually measure what they intend to measure (Schaubhut et al., 2009, p. 9).

Scoring. After a person has completed the assessment, the four dichotomies are confirmed by selecting one preference from each dichotomy, resulting in 16 possible personality types (Schaubhut et al., 2009). However, it should be noted that an individual will only belong to one of the 16 types.

<div align="center">

Data Analysis

</div>

Quantitative Analysis

The data were analysed using SPSS Statistics (SPSS Incorporated, 2009). Quantitative analysis was conducted using the non-parametric Wilcoxon Signed-Rank

Test. (Pallant, 2010). The statistical significance of the differences between the pre-test and post-test scores for each measurement instrument was investigated in a non-parametric fashion because of a relatively small sample size.

Qualitative Analysis

Design elements in qualitative research are usually established during the course of the study. Each person is affected differently by the content of the modules and will respond differently based on their own understanding of what was presented. It was important in this study to obtain qualitative data because I wanted to determine whether the Imago concepts that were taught would bring about a change in the participants' understanding of intrapersonal and interpersonal psychodynamics.

I have often worked with referrals from the mining industry, specifically referrals from Lonmin Platinum Mine. During consultations with the employees from the mining industry, one can obtain a good understanding of the enormous pressures to which employees in the mining sector are exposed. Constant changes occur in the mining industry, both politically (in the form of changing government policy) and economically (in the form of demands and strikes). These and other factors add to the constant demand on the employees for more production to keep abreast with market and economic changes.

Many mine employees eventually succumb to the pressures of the constant threat of strikes, volatile market places, and the risk of retrenchments. Extremely high targets and expectations are placed on entire departments. These factors influence every individual from the most senior employee to the most junior employee in such a department. Anxiety and depression are some of the factors that employees have to deal with on a personal basis while trying to keep their lives in order. These factors cause intrapersonal and interpersonal conflict, which then affects individuals and whole departments. It is no exaggeration to state that the mining industry in South Africa is at a crossroads, with viability and

sustainability levels constantly under threat. Downscaling and cost cutting in all departments is the norm, and the pressures of these changes have a devastating effect on morale of the employees in the industry.

Although quantitative results were obtained through psychometric evaluation, it was important to obtain qualitative data as it provided an opportunity for free and anonymous expression of the inner worlds and experiences of the employees. According to Mouton and Marais (1996, p. 70), "One of the major distinguishing characteristics of qualitative research is the fact that the researcher attempts to understand people in terms of their own definition of the world".

In this study, individuals were asked to complete a questionnaire (Appendix C) before each module and to give their opinions by answering certain pre-determined questions. Each module was then presented. The individuals were then asked to complete the same questionnaires after each presentation. The participants were also asked to write down any other things they felt that they had learnt throughout t the module or that they identified as pertinent regarding the module that was presented. This process was followed for each of the modules. Comparisons of the two sets of information were drawn from the results of these questionnaires to determine if the modules affected the participants' opinions.

Verbal data were also recorded in order to present usable information with which to identify themes within the data and to supplement the qualitative research. The written and verbal responses of the participants were analysed, and, because of the prominent repetitiveness of some of these responses, similar content was then clustered together to establish themes. The themes that were extracted from the responses and written material were organised into three levels of thematic networks, namely basic themes, organising themes, and global themes – a structure suggested by Attridge-Stirling (2001). A thematic

network for each source was created and then integrated to form one thematic network. Each of the themes in the integrated thematic network are discussed to facilitate an understanding of the analysis and to reflect on how each of the themes emerged from the data.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the research design through the investigation of the problem statement, the aim of the research, and the method used to conduct the research. The target population was identified and described. The content of the modules presented was outlined in order to give a broad overview of the intervention. Ethical considerations and procedures were noted to ensure that ethical action was upheld at all times. The various measurement instruments used, namely the PSI, SWLS, STAS, IMS, IMI-C, and MBTI, were described in terms of their basic function/s and their reliability, validity, and scoring methods. A description of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis approaches was also given. The following chapter contains an analysis of the quantitative results[2] obtained through the use of the measurement instruments mentioned above.

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[2] The raw data for all the tests and questionnaires are available from the researcher, if required.

Chapter 5: Quantitative Results

Introduction

In this chapter, the quantitative results of the study are presented and discussed. The data was analysed using SPSS Version 17 (SPSS Inc., 2009). The demographics of the sample are depicted, and the results for all the subscales are reported in the form of mean scores. The pre-test scores are identified by '*b*' (before), while the post-test scores are indicated by '*a*' (after). The results are followed by non-parametric hypothesis testing to test the hypotheses of the study as formulated in Chapter 4. The statistical significance of the differences between the pre-test and post-test scores is investigated by means of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test. Pallant (2010) refers to the effective size of the difference between scores with 0.1 referring to a small effect, 0.3 referring to a medium effect, and 0.5 referring to a large effect.

Problem-Solving Inventory (PSI)

Heppner (1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994) states that the PSI measures how respondents "generally react to personal problems in their daily lives" (p. 442). Table 5.1 below indicates the PSI mean scores. Heppner (1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994) also states the following:

> The term 'problems' refers to personal problems such as getting along with friends, feeling depressed, choosing a career or deciding whether to get divorced. Although the PSI does not measure actual problem-solving skills, it does measure the evaluative awareness of one's problem solving abilities or style. The PSI comprises three subscales based on factor analysis: problem solving confidence ..., approach-avoidance style ..., and personal control. In

addition, the total score is viewed as a single, general index of

problem-solving perception. (p. 442)

Table 5.1

Table representing the PSI mean scores

PSI Subscales	Result	
	Before	After
PSI_Approach_Avoidance	42.8182	39.0000
PSI_Personal_Control	12.3636	12.2273
PSI_Confidence	22.3636	19.9545
PSI_TOTAL	77.5455	71.1818

The PSI's three factor scores are added together to obtain a total score (Heppner,

1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 442). The items 9, 22, and 29 are only filter

items and are therefore not scored (Heppner, 1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994).

Lower scores on this scale reflect greater perceived problem solving abilities (Heppner,

1982, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 442). Figure 5.1 below graphically depicts

the PSI's mean scores.
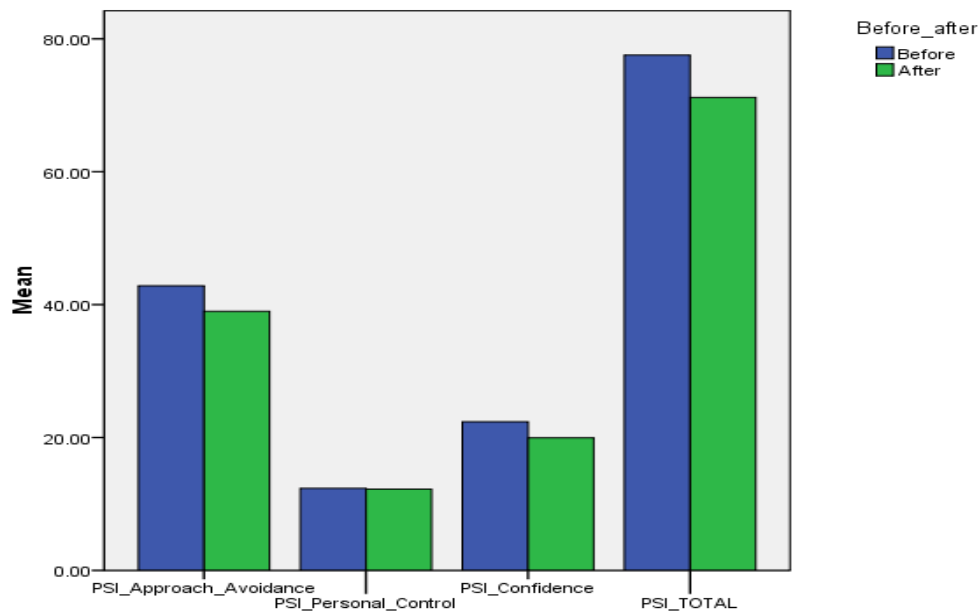
Figure 5.1. Graphic depiction of the PSI mean scores

The results show that the mean scores for both the PSI pre-test and post-test are located towards the lower end of the total possible scale, which indicates that the respondents experienced their problem solving ability to be rather effective. If one compares the pre-test and post-test scores by means of inspection, it appears that all of the scores are somewhat lower in the post-test than in the pre-test with the exception of personal control where the two sets of scores were very similar. These results suggest that there was an improvement in the participants' perceived problem solving ability when comparing pre-test results to post-test results with regard to most of the subscales.

The significance of these differences was investigated by means of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test. The results of this test are reported below. If the results are found to be significant, the hypothesis that the participants experienced improved perceived problem solving ability after being exposed to the Imago intentional dialogue would be confirmed. However, if the effect sizes are not significant, the hypothesis will not be confirmed, but a tendency towards improvement may still be detected. The series of figures (Figure 5.2 to

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Figure 5.5) below represents the finding of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test. Table 5.2

below the series of figures represents the total raw scores of the PSI.
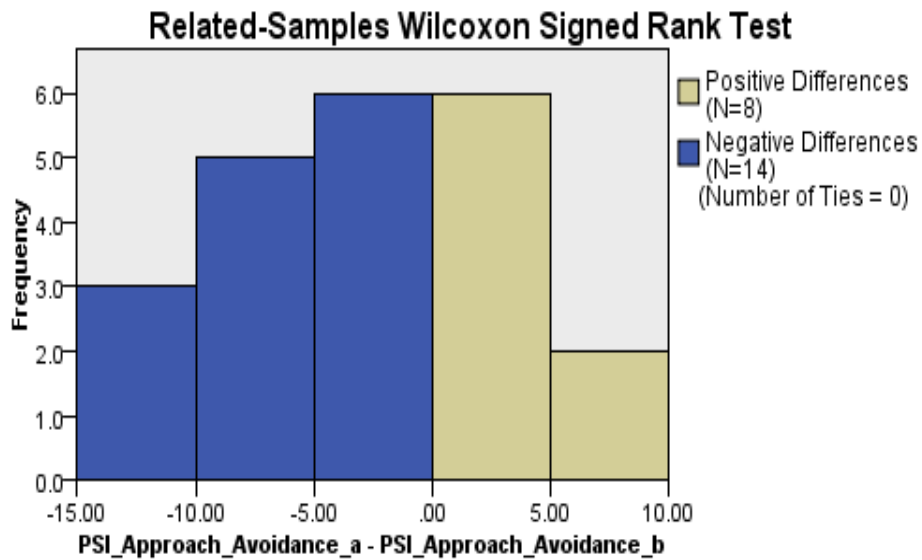
Total N	22
Test Statistic	74.000
Standard Error	30.714
Standardized Test Statistic	-1.709
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	.087

Figure 5.2. Results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test representing the PSI approach

avoidance before and after the intervention

Related-Samples Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test

Positive Differences (N=10)
Negative Differences (N=9)
(Number of Ties = 3)

x-axis: PSI_Personal_Control_a - PSI_Personal_Control_b
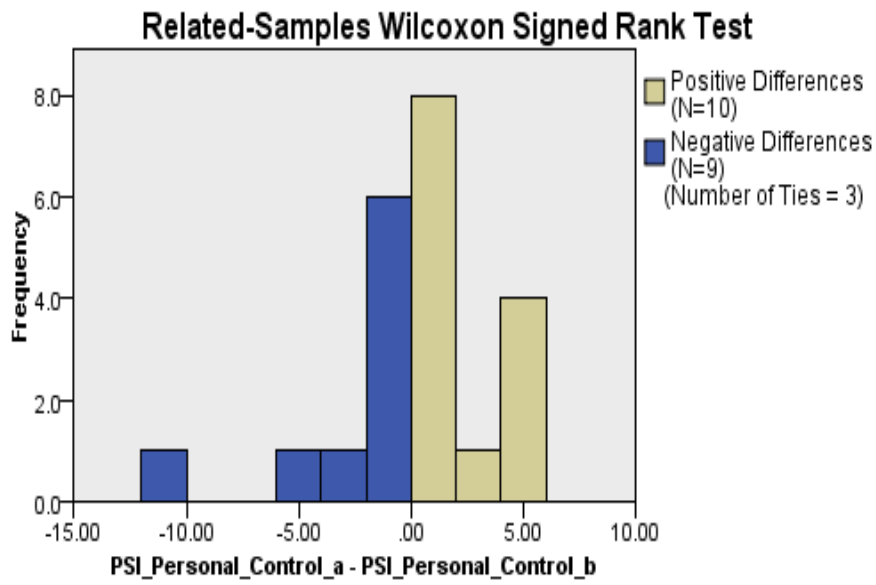
Total N	22
Test Statistic	100.000
Standard Error	24.528
Standardized Test Statistic	.204
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	.838

Figure 5.3. Results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test representing the PSI personal

control before and after the intervention

Related-Samples Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test

Positive Differences (N=7)
Negative Differences (N=11)
(Number of Ties = 4)
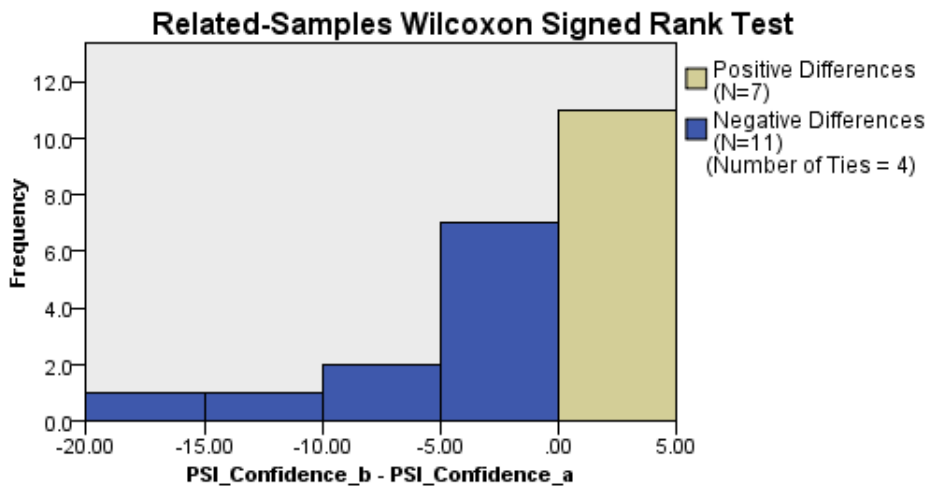
Total N	22
Test Statistic	60.500
Standard Error	22.500
Standardized Test Statistic	-1.111
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	.267

Figure 5.4. Results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test representing the PSI

confidence before and after the intervention

Related-Samples Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test
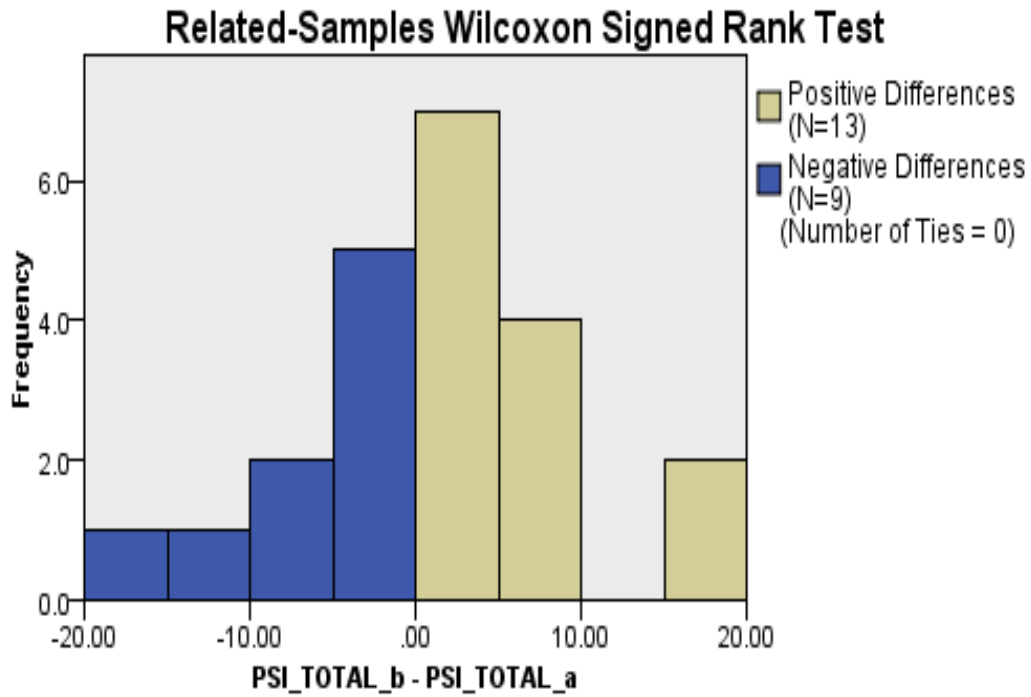
Total N	22
Test Statistic	145.500
Standard Error	30.767
Standardized Test Statistic	.618
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	.537

Figure 5.5. Results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test representing the PSI total before and after the intervention

Table 5.2

PSI total score

Scale	Measurement	
	Significance	Effect Size
Approach Avoidance	0.087	0.36
Personal Control	0.838	0.04
PSI Confidence	0.267	0.24
PSI Total	0.537	0.13

The mean scores of the PSI suggest that there was a slight improvement in the participants' problem solving ability as measured from the pre-test to the post-test. However, none of the differences between the pre-test and post-test scores were statistically significant as all of the values were > 0.05. However, it is possible that these differences, which are not statistically significant, may be practically significant because of the small sample size used. The table above suggests that the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the participants' approach-avoidance style is of a medium effect size, while that of problem solving confidence is of a small effect size. The difference with regard to personal control, however, is negligible.

It was envisaged that the Imago training would assist the participants to resolve problems and to prevent unnecessary conflicts. It was hypothesised that the training would increase the participants' ability to prevent and to resolve conflicts because the content of the training modules clarifies how conflicts arise. It also provides reasons for conflict. Specifically, the explanation of the turtle and the hailstorm analogy created an understanding of why some participants approach problems, while others avoid problems. Imago training further provides insight into why people react in the way/s that they do and

thus helps us to understand that we can control our levels of reactivity when interacting with others.

With this new insight, it was envisaged that the participants would develop more confidence in their ability to resolve problems. However, the results are not statistically significant and do not confirm the hypothesis that the participants experienced a significant improvement in their perceived problem solving abilities by being exposed to Imago training. However, it should be noted that the shift in the participants' behaviour was in the desired direction.

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS)

Table 5.3 below represents the mean scores for the SWLS for both the pre-test and post-test. Diener et al. (1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994) state that

The 5-item SWLS, as part of a body of research on subjective well-being, refers to the cognitive-judgemental aspects of general life satisfaction. Thus, in contrast to measures that apply some external standard, the SWLS reveals the individual's own judgement of his or her quality of life. This instrument is very short and unidimensional. Because satisfaction with life is often a key component of mental well-being, the SWLS may have clinical utility with a wide range of clients, including adolescents undergoing identity crises or adults experiencing midlife crisis. (p. 501)

Table 5.3

Table representing the mean group scores in both the pre-test and post-test

Mean Group Scores	Prior	Post
Mean	25.04	25.86

The item scores are added together to obtain a total score for the SWLS (Diener et al., 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). This total score can range from 5 to 35 (Diener et al., 1985, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). Figure 5.6 below shows a graphic depiction of the SWLS mean scores.

Figure 5.6. Graphic depiction of the SWLS mean scores

Interpretation of Results

When one compares the pre-test and post-test results of the SWLS by means of inspection, it appears that there is a slight increase in the scores from one test to the other. This result indicates that the respondents experienced marginally more satisfaction with life after they had been exposed to the intervention. The results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test are reported in Figure 5.7 below.

Related-Samples Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test
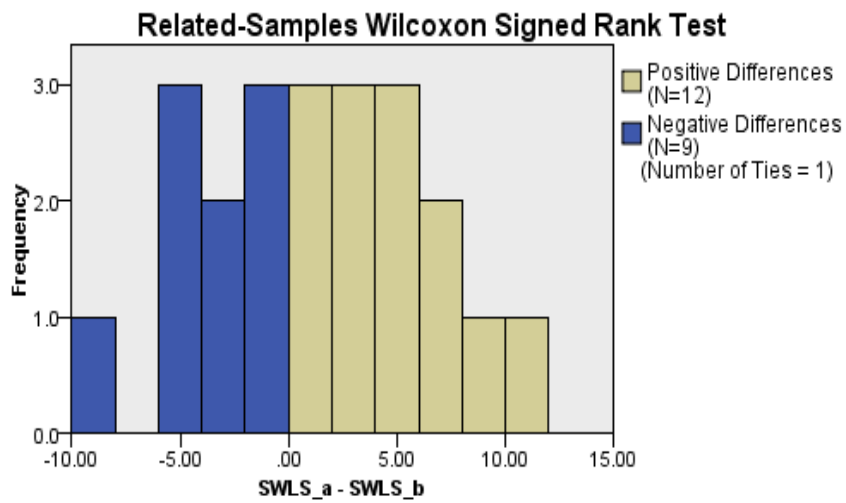
Total N	22
Test Statistic	136.500
Standard Error	28.688
Standardized Test Statistic	.732
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	.464

Figure 5.7. Results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test representing the SWLS

total scores before and after the intervention

The results show that the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores is not

statistically significant (p = 0.464). Furthermore, the effect size is small (0.16). These

results do not confirm the stated hypothesis, although a slight tendency in the desired

direction is indicated. Table 5.4 below represents the significance and effect size of the

SWLS.

Table 5.4

SWLS significance and effect size

Scale	Significance	Effect Size
SWLS	0.464	0.16

Dissatisfaction with life is often caused by interpersonal problems which result in stress or depression. Most of these interpersonal issues have an effect on the overall satisfaction with life experienced by an individual. It was envisaged that the Imago training would assist the participants to develop a better understanding of interpersonal psychodynamics. It was also envisioned that they would therefore understand the overt behaviours of others. It was hoped that they would understand that we are often hurt by those we love the most because we do not realise that they often do not actually intend to hurt us.

It was therefore predicted that the Imago training would contribute to the participants' understanding of conflict and their understanding of the effect of such conflict on their emotional wellbeing. It was hoped that this understanding would result in an improvement of their overall satisfaction with life. However, the results are not statistically significant and thus do not confirm the hypothesis. Thus, it can be said that the change observed in the participants was still in the desired direction.

State-Trait Anger Scale (STAS or SAS and TAS)

The state anger mean scores are represented in Table 5.5 below. Spielberger and London (1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994) state the following with regard to the STAS:

The 30 items that make up this instrument assess anger both as an emotional state that varies in intensity, and as a relatively stable personality trait. State

anger is defined as an emotional condition consisting of subjective feelings of tension, annoyance, irritation, or rage. Trait anger is defined in terms of how frequently a respondent feels state anger over time. A person high in trait anger would tend to perceive more situations as anger provoking and respond with higher state-anger scores. In this framework, anger differs from hostility, which connotes as set of attitudes that mediate aggressive behavior. The instruments were developed with rigorous psychometric procedures, including the development of long and short forms which were highly correlated. (p. 629).

Table 5.5

SAS mean scores (state anger)

Mean Group Scores	Prior	Post
Mean	21.00	16.27

For both state and trait anger, the scores can range from 10 to 40 (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). The total scores for the 15-item version can range from 15 to 60 (Spielberger & London, 1983, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). Figure 5.8 below shows a graphic depiction of the SAS (state anger) pre-test and post-test scores.
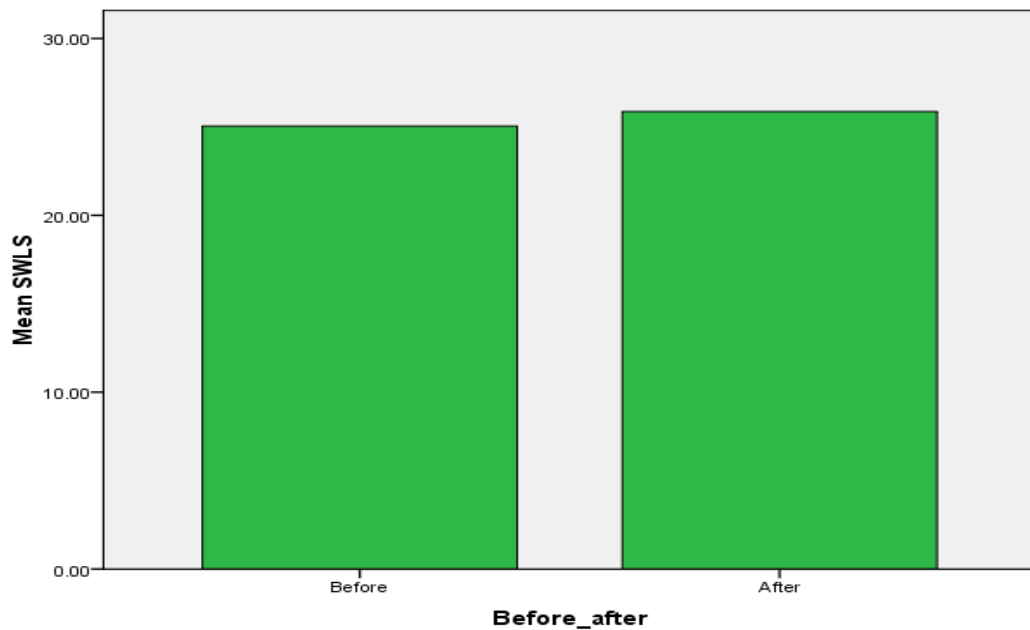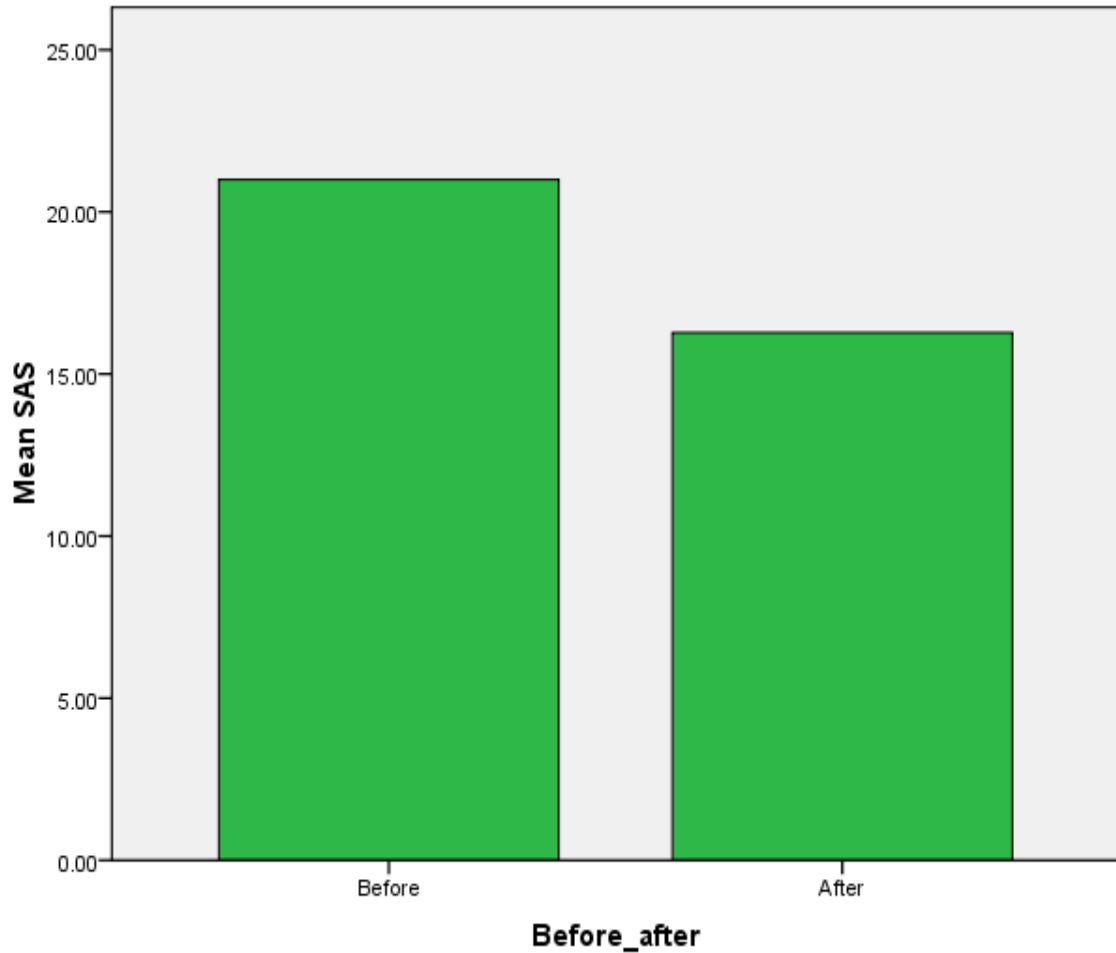
Figure 5.8. Graphic depiction of the SAS pre-test and post-test scores

The results show that the SAS mean scores decreased from the pre-test to the post-test, which indicates that there was a change in the emotional condition of the respondents. This emotional condition consists of subjective feelings of tension, annoyance, irritation, and/or rage (Spielberger & London, 1993, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 629). The decrease in the mean scores suggests that the respondents reported fewer of these anger-provoking emotions during the post-test. Figure 5.9 below represents the SAS total scores with regard to the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test before the

intervention took place and then after the intervention took place. Table 5.6, which follows

this figure, represents the SAS pre-test and post-test scores.
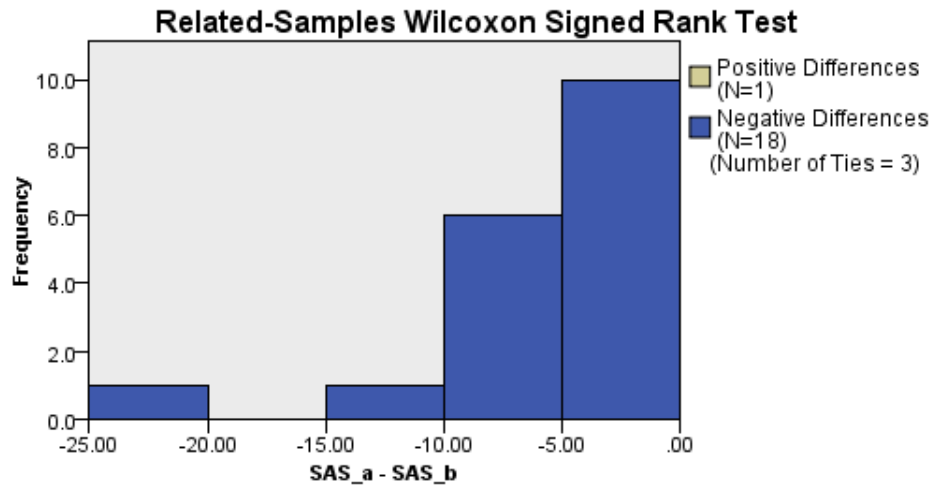
Figure 5.9. Results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test representing the SAS total before and

after the intervention

Table 5.6

SAS pre-test and post-test scores

	Scale	Significance	Effect Size
SAS		0.000	0.81

The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test results reported above suggest that the difference between the pre-test and the post-test results is significant ($p = 0.000$) with a large effect size of 0.81. The decrease in the SAS scores from the pre-test to the post-test is thus both statistically and practically significant. This dual significance confirms the hypothesis that the emotional conditions (consisting of subjective feelings of tension, annoyance, irritation, or rage) of the participants improved after the participants were exposed to the Imago training.

The participants reported often experiencing severe tension, annoyance, or rage during interpersonal contact without understanding the underlying causes of these emotions. It was envisaged that the participants would develop an understanding of intrapersonal and interpersonal psychodynamics by being taught Imago concepts. Therefore, this understanding would further cause a reduction in the negative emotions experienced by the participants. Table 5.7 below represents the pre-test and post-test scores for the TAS. Figure 5.10, which follows the table, represents the TAS pre-test and post-test anger reaction and anger temperament scores.

Table 5.7

TAS pre-test and post-test scores (trait anger scores)

Mean Group Scores	Pre-test	Post-test
Temperament	6.50	5.90
Reaction	9.82	8.95
Total	29.59	26.54
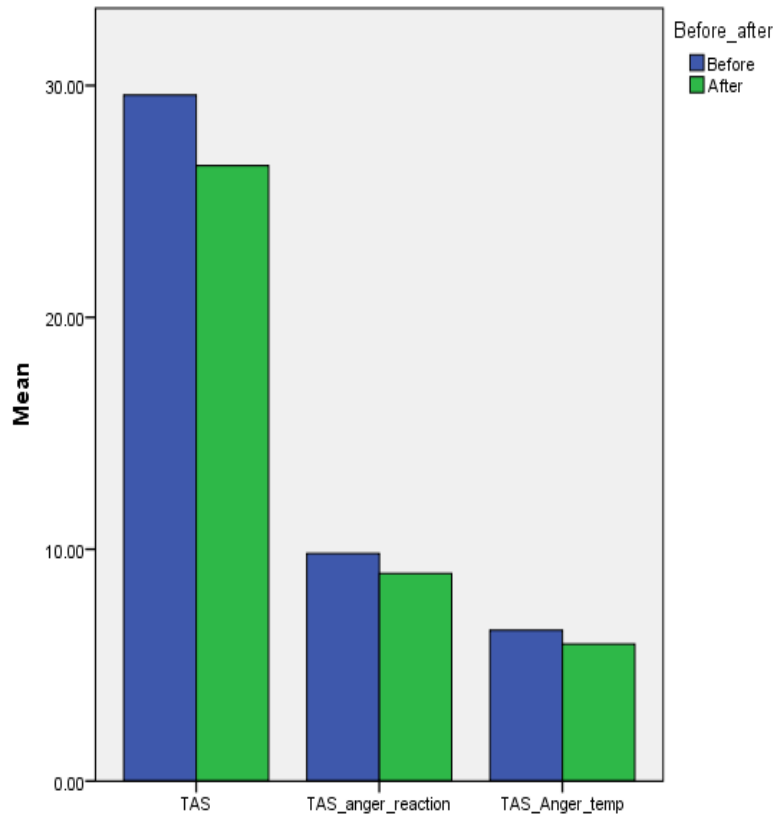
Figure 5.10. TAS pre-test and post-test anger reaction and anger temperament scores

If one compares the pre-test and post-test scores of the TAS by means of inspection, it appears that all of the scores are visibly lower in the post-test. A person who scores high in trait anger tends to perceive more situations as anger-provoking and tends to respond with higher state anger scores (Spielberger & London, 1993, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994, p. 629). These results suggest that there was a change in the anger component in the temperament of the participants. The figures below (Figure 5.11 to Figure 5.13) represent the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test results. Table 5.8, shown below the figures, represents the TAS overall scale scores.

Related-Samples Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test
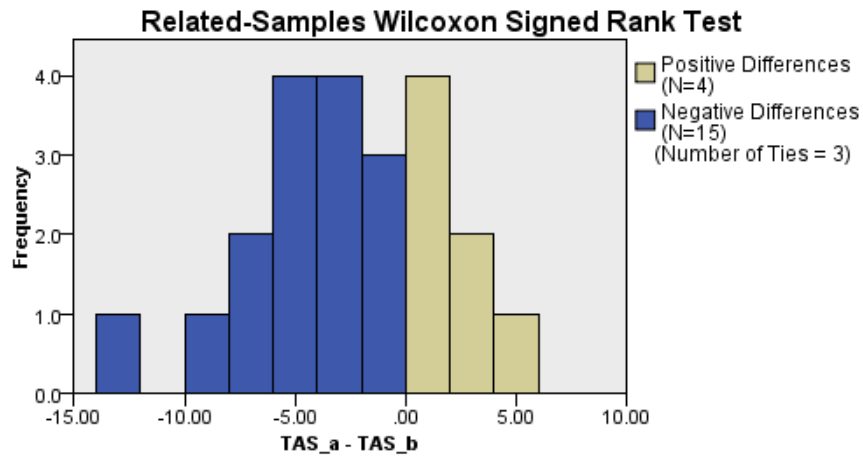
Total N	22
Test Statistic	24.500
Standard Error	24.812
Standardized Test Statistic	-2.841
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	.004

Figure 5.11. Results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test representing the difference in the

total TAS score
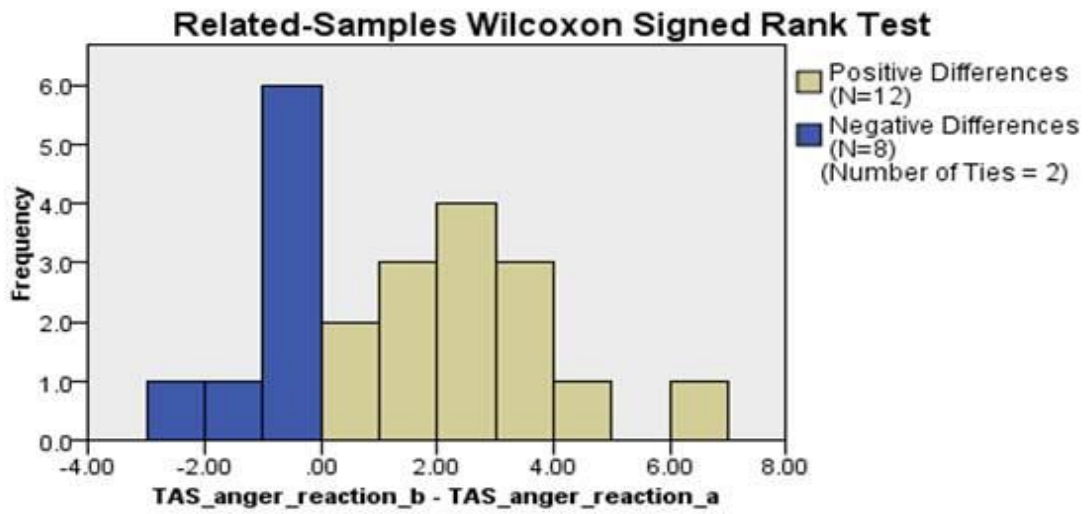
Total N	22
Test Statistic	151.500
Standard Error	26.434
Standardized Test Statistic	1.759
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	.079

Figure 5.12. Results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test representing the TAS total anger

reaction pre-test and post-test scores

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Related-Samples Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test

Positive Differences (N=3)
Negative Differences (N=9)
(Number of Ties = 10)
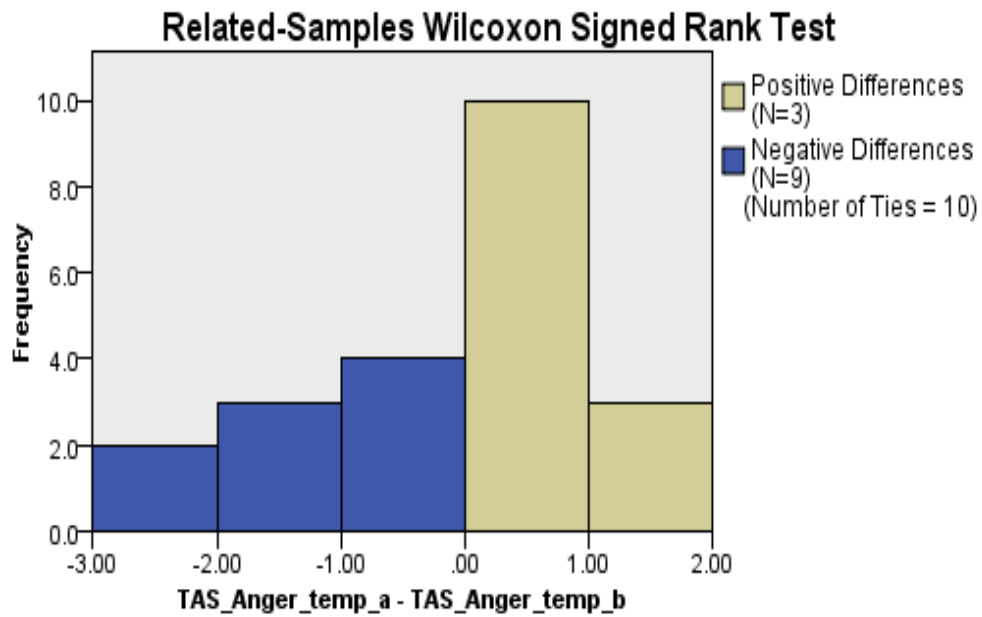
Total N	22
Test Statistic	12.000
Standard Error	12.445
Standardized Test Statistic	-2.170
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	.030

Figure 5.13. Results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test representing the participants'

anger temperament before and after the intervention

Table 5.8

TAS overall scale scores

Scale	Significance	Effect Size
TAS	0.004	0.61
TAS Anger Temperament	0.03	0.58
TAS Anger Reaction	0.079	0.38

The results suggest that the differences between the pre-test and post-test scores are statistically significant with regard to the overall TAS scale ($p = 0.004$) as well as with regard to the temperament scale ($p = 0.03$). Effect sizes for these differences are large. However, the difference with regard to the anger reaction scale is not significant at a 5% level of significance ($p = 0.079$) and a medium effect size (0.38).

It appears as though the intervention had a significant impact on the participants' SAS and TAS scores. It was envisaged that the participants' reactivity in conflict situations would decrease once they developed a better understanding of intrapersonal and interpersonal psychodynamics. Imago training brings about a change in a person's consciousness and causes them to understand that when others manage to upset them or 'push their buttons', they should actually be curious about the interaction. This curiosity should arise from the discovery that these conflict interactions contribute to growth. Instead of reacting to being provoked, one should be grateful for the interaction.

The results shown above confirm the hypothesis that the emotional condition of the participants changed after they had been trained in Imago concepts. The results also confirm the hypothesis that the participants experienced situations as less anger-provoking after being exposed to Imago training. Although the results for anger reaction are not statistically significant, the shift was in the hypothesised direction.

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Index of Marital Satisfaction (IMS)

Hudson (1992, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994) states the following with regard to the IMS:

> The IMS is a 25-item instrument designed to measure the degree, severity, or magnitude of a problem one spouse or partner has in the marital relationship. It does not characterize the relationship as a unitary entity but measures the extent to which one partner perceives problems in the relationship. The IMS does not measure marital adjustment since a couple may have arrived at a good adjustment despite having a high degree of discord or dissatisfaction. (p. 116)

Furthermore, the IMS has a cut off score of 30 with scores above 30 indicating that the respondents have a clinically significant problem and scores below 30 indicating no such problem (Hudson, 1992, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). The scores for the IMS can range from 0 to 100 (Hudson, 1992, as cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). Table 5.9 below shows the IMS mean scores. Figure 5.14, which follows the table, shows the pre-test and post-test scores for the IMS.

Table 5.9

IMS mean group scores

Score	Pre-test	Post-test
Group Mean Score	23.36	21.18
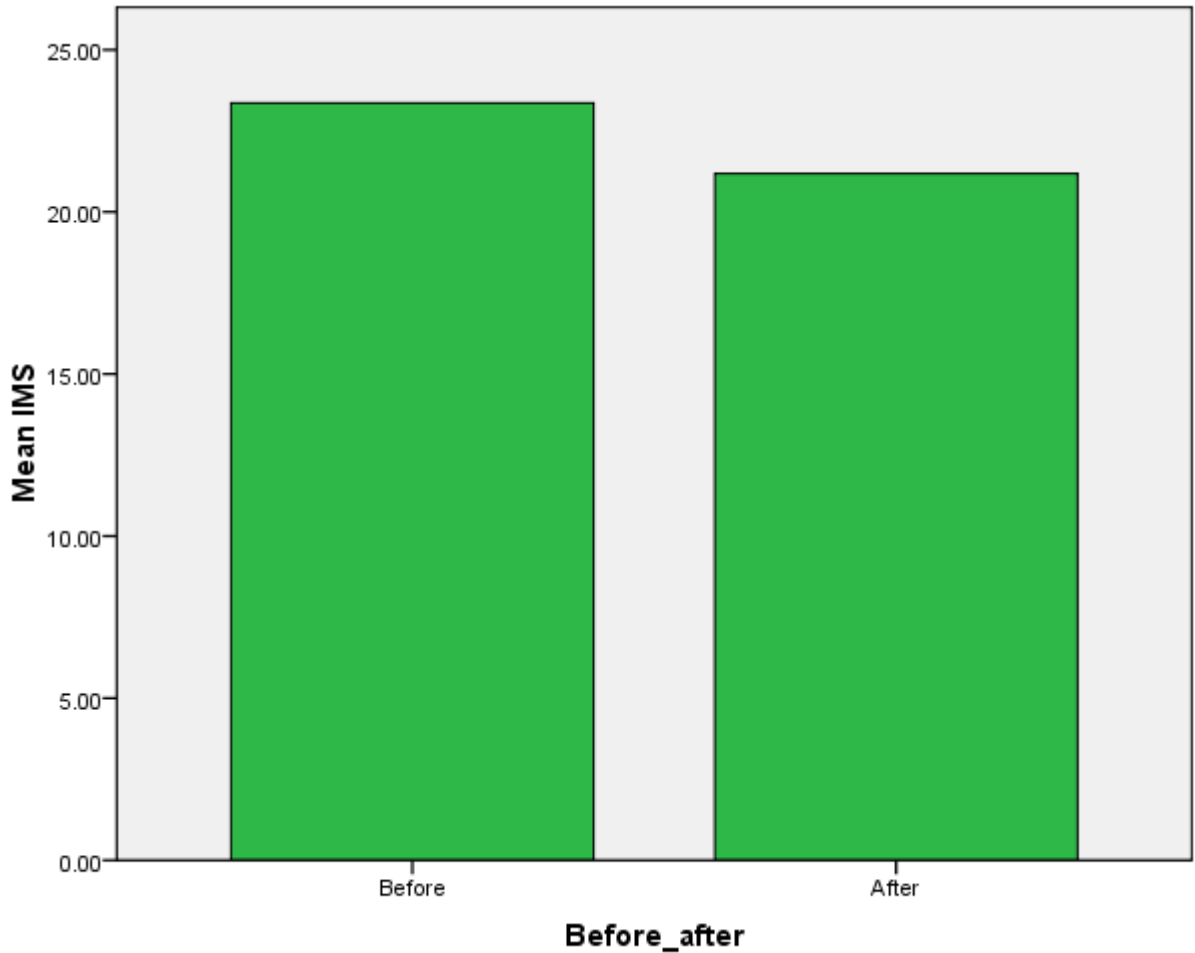
Figure 5.14. IMS pre-test and post-test scores

If one compares the pre-test and post-test scores of the IMS by means of inspection,
it appears that the scores are slightly lower in the post-test than in the pre-test. Higher
scores on this scale indicate more evidence of marital dissatisfaction (Hudson, 1992, as
cited in Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). Hence, the lower post-test scores suggest that the
respondents experienced more marital satisfaction after the intervention had taken place.
However, the difference between the scores is too small to be statistically significant,
which is demonstrated by the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test results shown in Figure 5.15
below ($p = 0.695$). Table 5.10, which follows the figure, represents the IMS test scores.
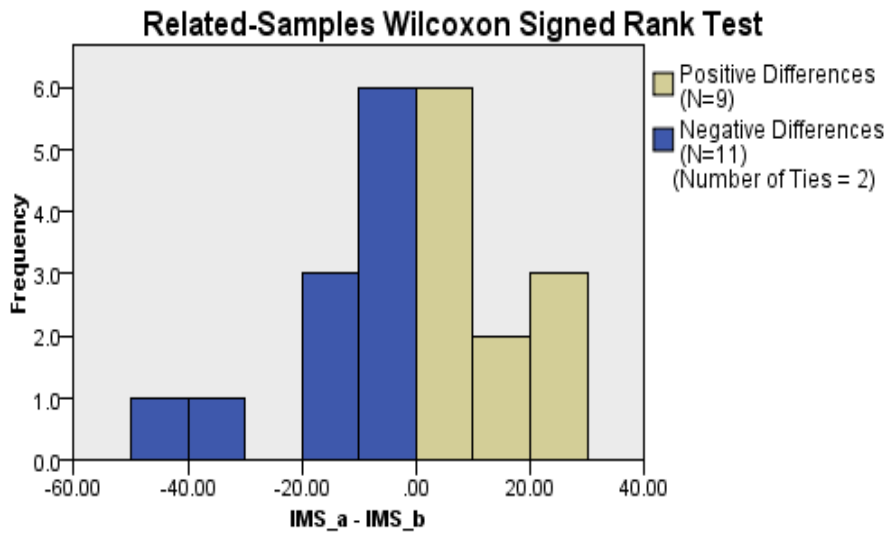
Figure 5.15. Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test results representing the IMS pre-test and post-test

scores

Table 5.10

IMS scores

Scale	Significance	Effect Size
IMS	0.695	0.08

The results, which are statistically insignificant, are confirmed by a small effect size. Therefore, the results did not confirm the hypothesis that Imago training would change the participants' consciousness not only in their working environment, but also in their marital relationships. Many people who are unhappy at home or in their marital relationships bring stress to work. Thus, irrespective of the source of stress, it will have an effect on an employee's overall performance. Many people will never enrol for marital enrichment programmes, nor will they see a professional regarding their problems. Hendrix (1992) states that a happy relationship is not about picking the right partner but that it is about becoming the right partner.

It was therefore envisaged that the changes in the consciousness of a person within the working environment would also filter through to their marital relationship. When a person realises their role in interpersonal relationships, they can start to change their destructive patterns consciously. However, this hypothesis has not been confirmed. Although the shift that took place in the participants is not statistically significant, the shift occurred in the desired direction.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

Figure 5.16 below shows the preference analysis for the total MBTI group score. The following is a list of the dichotomies scored in the MBTI (Schaubhut et al., 2009, p. 4):

- Extraversion (E) or Introversion (I) – where an individual focuses their attention and gets their energy.
- Sensing (S) or Intuition (N) – how an individual takes in information.
- Thinking (T) or Feeling (F) – how an individual makes decisions.
- Judging (J) or Perceiving (P) – how an individual deals with the outer world.
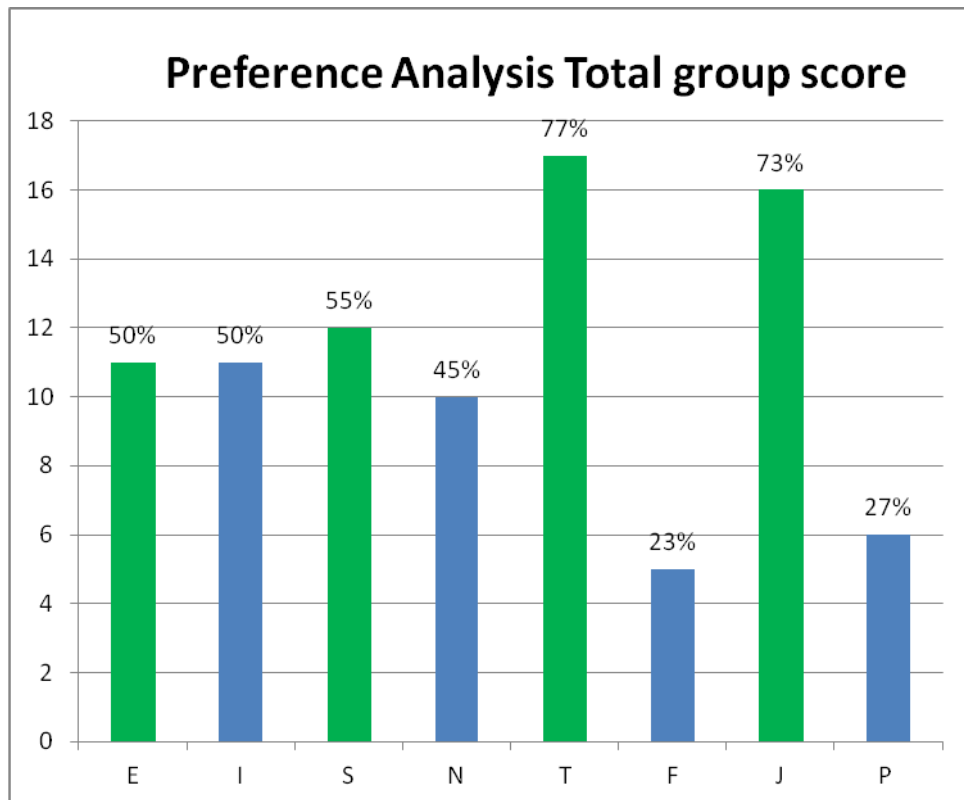
Figure 5.16. Preference analysis total group score

The MBTI was only administered during the pre-test. No post-test was done. In this context, a post-test using the MBTI was not necessary as the MBTI was only used to examine which personality types were affected the most by the Imago training. The strongest personality characteristics amongst the sample of managers were thinking (77%), followed by judging (73%), and then sensing (55%). The personality characteristics found to be least dominant in the sample of managers were feeling (23%) and perceiving (27%). An equal amount of extraverts (50%) and introverts (50%) were found in the sample. In addition, a small difference was found in the amount of sensing (55%) and intuitive (45%) types in the sample with the sensing type being slightly more dominant than the intuitive type.

Briggs Myers (1993) states that extraverts prefer variety and action in what they do. Thus, they are often impatient when they have to take part in long, slow jobs (Briggs Myers, 1993). Extraverts are also interested in the various activities linked to their work as well as the methods other people use to do work (Briggs Myers, 1993). According to Briggs Myers (1993), extraverts may act very quickly, often without thinking. Extraverts also tend to develop their ideas by discussing their thoughts with others (Briggs Myers, 1993). They like having people around them to interact with and learn new tasks and skills by talking about things and doing things (Briggs Myers, 1993).

Introverts have the opposite characteristics to extraverts because, according to Briggs Myers (1993), introverts prefer quiet spaces to allow them to concentrate. They also generally do not mind working on a single project for a long period of time without interruption (Briggs Myers, 1993). Introverts are interested in the facts and ideas behind their work (Briggs Myers, 1993). Thus, introverts prefer to think things over carefully before they act, but sometimes they do not take action at all (Briggs Myers, 1993). Introverts develop and create their ideas through reflection and thinking carefully about things (Briggs Myers, 1993). They also like working alone and do not deal well with interruptions (Briggs Myers, 1993). Introverts tend to learn new tasks and skills by reading things and reflecting on things (Briggs Myers, 1993).

Briggs Myers (1993) state that sensing types prefer to use experience and standard ways to solve problems. Sensing types also seem to enjoy applying the things they have learnt and tend to distrust and/or ignore inspiration (Briggs Myers, 1993). They prefer to present the details found in their work before the more general information and seldom make factual errors (Briggs Myers, 1993). Sensing types also prefer to deal with things in a practical manner (Briggs Myers, 1993). Furthermore, they like to carry out 'fine tuning' and to do things in a step-by-step manner (Briggs Myers, 1993).

Briggs Myers (1993) states that intuitive types like to solve new and complex problems. They also enjoy the process of learning new skills, whereas using these skills is less important to them (Briggs Myers, 1993). Intuitive types tend to follow inspiration instead of only relying on what they have learnt (Briggs Myers, 1993). They may ignore and/or overlook factual information and instead carry out work in an innovative way (Briggs Myers, 1993). Intuitive types also like to give a general overview of their work before they describe the more particular details (Briggs Myers, 1993). Furthermore, they prefer change and use bursts of energy to carry out tasks (Briggs Myers, 1993).

Briggs Myers (1993) states that thinking types use logical analysis to draw conclusions. This personality type also requires mutual respect and fairness in the workplace; however, they may also hurt other people's feelings without being aware of their actions (Briggs Myers, 1993). They make impersonal decisions, and their opinions remain firm once they have made up their minds (Briggs Myers, 1993). Thinking types can also easily give criticism when it is necessary (Briggs Myers, 1993). They usually examine the principles involved in situations and also usually feel rewarded when they complete a job well (Briggs Myers, 1993).

Briggs Myers (1993) postulates that feeling types use values to draw conclusions. Feeling types also prefer harmony and support in the workplace and enjoy pleasing other people, even with regard to unimportant or minor things (Briggs Myers, 1993). Their decisions are often influenced by their likes and dislikes as well as other people's preferences (Briggs Myers, 1993). They tend to be sympathetic towards others and dislike having to communicate unpleasant things (Briggs Myers, 1993). Briggs Myers (1993) explains that feeling types examine the underlying values and factors of situations and also feel rewarded when they are able to meet people's needs.

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Briggs Myers (1993) states that judging types function best when they have the opportunity to plan their actions and to follow these plans. They prefer to settle and to finish things before moving on to new things (Briggs Myers, 1993). These types may not notice when it is necessary to do new things as they are quite preoccupied with finishing the activities they begin (Briggs Myers, 1993). Once these individuals reach a decision regarding a situation or person, they feel satisfied and fulfilled because they are able to establish closure by being able to make rapid decisions (Briggs Myers, 1993). Judging types need structure and schedules to support them, while their focus is usually on completing projects (Briggs Myers, 1993).

Briggs Myers (1993) indicates that perceiving types like having flexibility in their work and that they also prefer to keep things available for last minute changes. Hence, they also tend to delay any unpleasant or disagreeable tasks (Briggs Myers, 1993). Perceiving types are generally curious, and so they welcome different perspectives (Briggs Myers, 1993). They may delay making decisions while they search for additional options, but they also adapt well to changing situations (Briggs Myers, 1993).These people feel restricted if they do not have variety and many options in their lives (Briggs Myers, 1993). Perceiving types also like to focus on the process of work instead of the outcome (Briggs Myers, 1993).

When taking these personality characteristics into consideration, one would expect intuitive and perceiving types to be affected the most by the Imago presentation because of their openness to change and their flexibility. It is thus interesting to note that the managers perceived as more flexible by their subordinates (regarding their interpersonal work styles in the post-test) were in fact judging types. It is possible that the Imago content appealed to these managers because the content was presented and could be applied in a structured way.

In addition, if one takes the qualitative responses into consideration, it could be said that the Imago presentation had a positive effect on most of the managers, despite many of them not being open to change and flexibility (as shown in their personality characteristics identified by the MBTI). This evidence also shows the potentially positive impact of Imago theory when it is presented to companies in relation to creating a shift in consciousness and improving work relationships between colleagues. These results also confirm the hypothesis that the subordinates would perceive their managers as more flexible in their working styles after their managers had been exposed to Imago training.

Impact Message Inventory (IMI)

The IMI is a "*self-report transactional inventory* designed to measure distinctive internal reactions, referred to as impact messages, that interactants experience to the full range of interpersonal behaviors indexed along the circumference of the interpersonal circle" (Kiesler, 1983 & Leary, 1957, cited in Kiesler & Schmidt, 2006, p. 1). Kiesler and Schmidt (2006) state the following:

> In short, analysis of both peak [highest] and nadir [lowest] scores for a patient permits a direct test of the prediction that in successful psychotherapy, the most extreme and intense aspect (peak) of a patient's interpersonal behavior should change toward less intensity or frequency of occurrence, while the least intense aspect (nadir) should change toward greater intensity or frequency of occurrence. (pp. 13-14)

Analysis of the peak and nadir scores of both the subordinates and managers revealed the results represented in Table 5.11 below. The results are also represented in Figure 5.17 which follows the table.

Table 5.11

Peak and nadir scores of both the managers and subordinates

Results Summary	
Highest score decreased and lowest score increased	17
Highest score decreased	8
Lowest score increased	10
No significant change in highest or lowest score	9
Sample size (N)	44
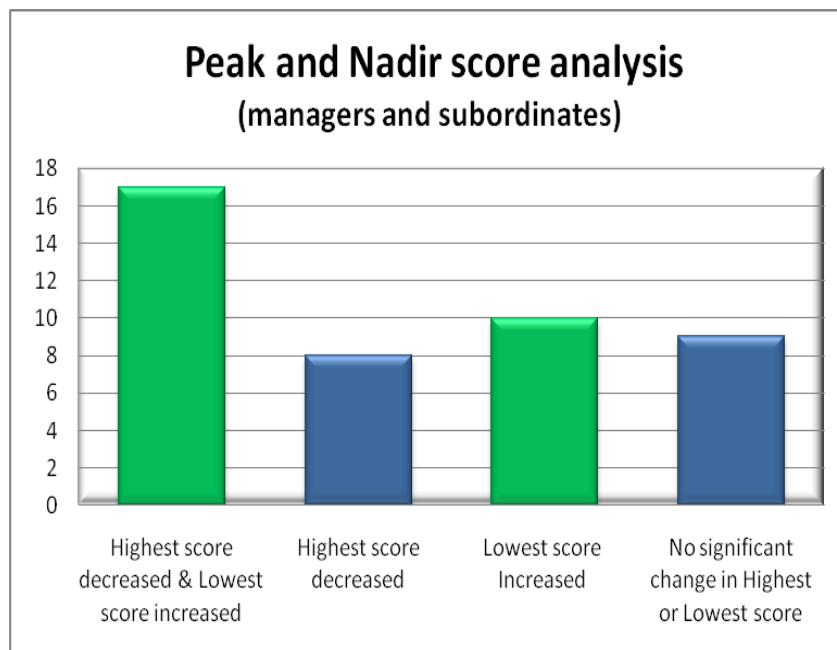
Figure 5.17. Graphic depiction of the peak and nadir score analysis

The largest part of the study sample (32%), including both the managers and subordinates, experienced a significant change in their peak and nadir scores in that the peak scores decreased and the nadir scores increased. These results prove that the Imago

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programme presented to the managers increased the flexibility displayed in their interpersonal behaviours. The results also show that their interpersonal working relationships improved to the desired extent.

Twenty five percent of the sample only experienced a significant change in their nadir scores, whereas 20% of the sample only experienced a significant change in their peak scores. These results show that there was an increase in flexibility in the manager's interpersonal behaviour to some extent. These changes, although not drastic, can still be seen as significant with regard to the positive impact of the Imago training on the participants. The remaining 23% of the sample, however, did not experience any significant changes in their peak or nadir scores. The peak and nadir score analyses for the self-reports of both the managers and the subordinates are represented in Figure 5.18 and Figure 5.19 below.
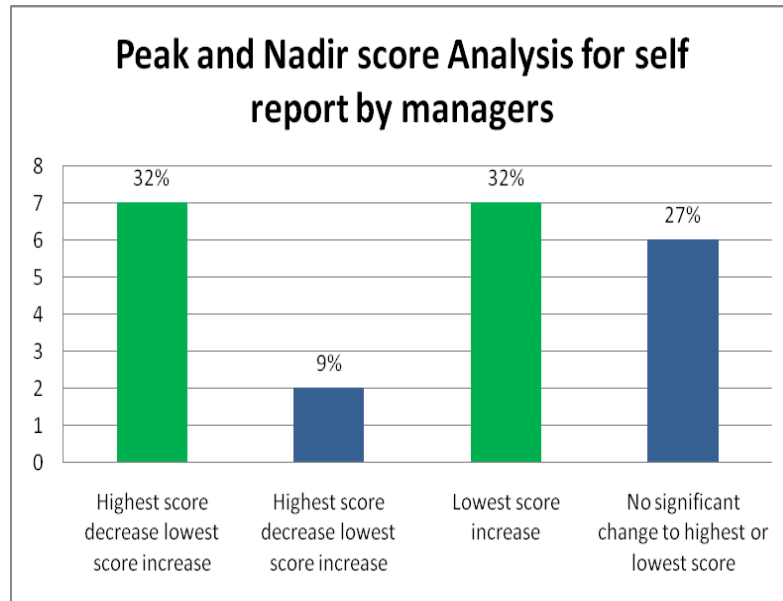
Figure 5.18. Peak and nadir score analysis for the self-reports of the managers
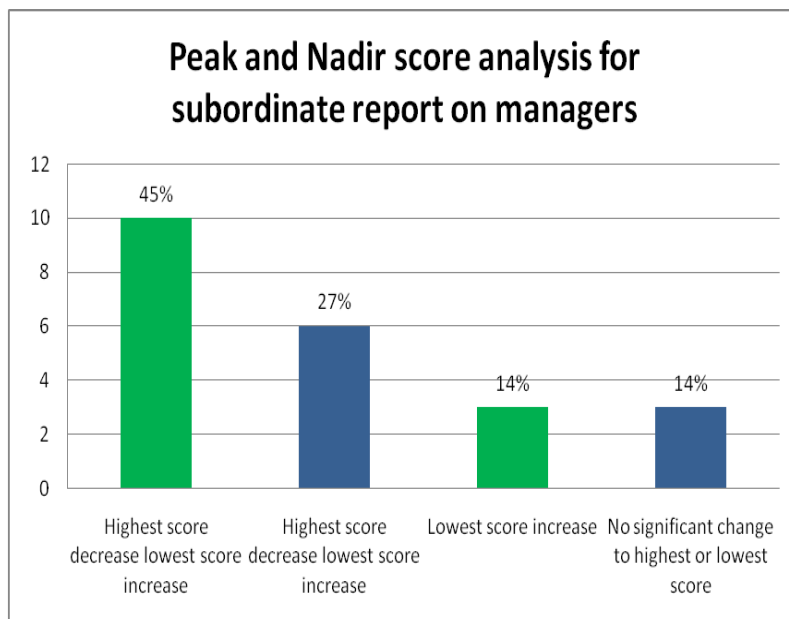
Figure 5.19. Peak and nadir score analysis for the subordinates' self-reports

The analysis of the separate IMI results of the seniors and subordinates indicates that the subordinates experienced a greater change in their perceptions of the flexibility of their managers' interpersonal behaviours than the managers reported for themselves. In the

manager sample group, 32% experienced a significant change in their peak and nadir

scores. These results indicate that the Imago training increased the flexibility of their

interpersonal behaviours to the desired extent. Only 9% of managers experienced a

significant change in their peak scores, whereas 32% experienced a change in their nadir

scores. Twenty seven percent of the managers did not experience any significant changes

in their peak or nadir scores. When analysing the 27% of the sample that did not report any

significant changes, it was found that most of the members of this sample were identified

as sensing and judging type personalities on the MBTI.

Myers and Briggs (1993) state that "sensing type personalities prefer standard ways

of doing things, distrust their inspirations and prefer a continuation of what is" (p. 25).

Also, as reported above, judging type personalities like to follow plans, which means they

might not notice when new activities need to be done (Briggs Myers, 1993). These

personality types also require structure and schedules to feel stable (Briggs Myers, 1993).

Both sensing and judging types display possible resistance when faced with new ways of

doing things (Briggs Myers, 1993). They also show resistance when they are presented

with new ideas and concepts (Briggs Myers, 1993). Thus, it is understandable that the

managers identified as sensing and judging types by the MBTI did not report any

significant changes.

When analysing the IMI results of the sample of subordinates, it was found that

45% of the subordinates experienced a significant change in their perception of their

managers' flexibility in their interpersonal behaviours. This result indicates that a shift in

the managers' consciousness took place after they had completed the Imago training.

Twenty seven percent of the subordinates only experienced a change in their managers'

dominant octant score, whereas 14% only experienced a change in their managers' nadir

score. These results indicate that the subordinates perceived their managers' flexibility to

have increased to a certain extent. Only 14% of the sample of subordinates did not experience any significant changes in their managers' nadir scores.

Analysis of the MBTI profile for the unaffected managers indicates that these managers all had one personality characteristic in common, namely that they were all sensing type personalities. Sensing type personalities prefer to use experience and standard ways to solve problems (Briggs Myers, 1993). They may also distrust and/or ignore their inspirations (Briggs Myers, 1993). These personality types also prefer a continuation of what they are used to (Briggs Myers, 1993). The abovementioned factors offer possible explanations as to why these managers did not respond to the training as expected. The Imago training might have challenged their way of thinking as well as their current and preferred ways of doing things. Hence, they would have preferred to use their usual ways of dealing with conflict instead of applying the new ways that they had learnt during the presentations.

Further analysis of the individual IMI-C octant scores for both the managers and the subordinates revealed certain tendencies (represented in Table 5.12 and Table 5.13 below) that emerged after the managers had completed the Imago training. Note that a positive difference indicates that the scores decreased from the pre-test to the post-test, whereas a negative difference indicates that the scores increased from the pre-test to the post-test.

Table 5.12

IMI-C octant scores for the managers

Octant	Type of Measurement	Before_After		
		Before	After	Total
Submissive_self	Mean	1.733766	1.616883	1.675325
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.3451608	.2836194	.3177454
Dominant_self	Mean	1.753247	1.629870	1.691558
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.3215059	.3461831	.3360102
Friendly_dominant_self	Mean	2.305195	2.253247	2.279221
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.4480721	.4272811	.4334764
Friendly_self	Mean	3.188312	3.292208	3.240260
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.4547265	.5016538	.4760747
Friendly_submissive_self	Mean	2.558442	2.448052	2.503247
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.4450551	.3366082	.3939368
Hostile_dominant_self	Mean	1.227273	1.149351	1.188312
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.3168697	.1734421	.2555000
Hostile_self	Mean	1.363636	1.370130	1.366883
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.3811070	.3626356	.3676497
Hostile_submissive_self	Mean	1.435065	1.259740	1.347403
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.3540060	.2668477	.3222455

Table 5.13

IMI-C octant scores (pre-test and post-test results for the subordinates)

Octant	Type of Measurement	Before_After		
		Before	After	Total
Submissive_Sub	Mean	1.863636	1.662338	1.762987
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.5225289	.4998454	.5154870
Dominant_Sub	Mean	1.974026	1.876623	1.925325
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.5587651	.4954515	.5242018
Friendly_dominant_Sub	Mean	2.298701	2.227273	2.262987
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.5962453	.5792980	.5820795
Friendly_Sub	Mean	3.103896	2.980519	3.042208
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.7152128	.6049608	.6576046
Friendly_submissive_Sub	Mean	2.487013	2.194805	2.340909
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.5210050	.3956652	.4804838
Hostile_dominant_Sub	Mean	1.551948	1.376623	1.464286
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.5314144	.3134356	.4401805
Hostile_Sub	Mean	1.590909	1.441558	1.516234
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.5650932	.3606201	.4745201
Hostile_submissive_Sub	Mean	1.409091	1.285714	1.347403
	N	22	22	44
	Std. Deviation	.4502358	.3766767	.4149528

Conclusion

In this chapter, the quantitative results of the study were presented. These results reflected the magnitude of the effects of the intervention. Post-tests were conducted three months after the intervention, and, as can be seen, some encouraging results were obtained. Although some of the hypotheses were not confirmed, the tendency of all the post-test

results was towards improvement in the desired direction. Results further attested to more flexibility regarding interpersonal behaviour and interpersonal working relationships. The intention of this study was to bring about a shift in consciousness in the participants after they had been exposed to the training. The results reflect this desired shift, even though the sample size used was small. The qualitative analysis results will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6: Qualitative Results

Introduction

The managers were requested to give their opinions of the modules after each module had been presented to them to obtain qualitative data. The feedback was then analysed after the seven modules were completed. Two of the participants presented responses that necessitated urgent follow-up consultation. One participant presented with severe suicidal tendencies because of a pending divorce and was admitted to a psychiatric unit after consultation. The other participant was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. This participant enrolled for therapy and was placed on medication with the help of a psychiatrist. Four other employees enrolled for individual therapy, while two employees enrolled for marital therapy. The participants' responses to each of the seven modules are discussed in this chapter.

The focus of the research was to create an awareness of intrapersonal and interpersonal psychodynamics by exposing the participants to the programme. It was believed that this awareness would, in turn, effect a change in the individuals' interpersonal relationships. The assumption is therefore that, in order to create change, individuals need to learn about the psychology behind relationships. Hendrix (1993) refers to this as "psychological drama" (p. xix). This study is based on the assumption that it is possible to change unconscious relating into conscious relating by teaching Imago principles to employees. People who are conscious during their interactions with others understand the following:

- why they are compatible with certain people;
- why they are incompatible with some people;
- why people tend to provoke others unintentionally;

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- why people frequently experience conflict in interpersonal relationships;

- what projections and projective identifications are;

- what individual differences and conflicts involve;

- what communication problems are and how to fix them;

- the role of the brain during provocation; and

- the influence of childhood development on relationships.

The participants' responses were reviewed and various themes were identified. These themes were organised into three levels of thematic networks, namely basic themes, organising themes, and global themes (Attride-Stirling, 2001). A thematic network was created for each source. These thematic networks were then integrated to form an overall thematic network. The identified themes are discussed below with the aim of facilitating an understanding of the analysis of the participants' responses. The discussion also shows how each of the themes emerged from the data. The themes further provide a qualitative correlation with and alternative confirmation of the effects of the workshops.

Module 1: Introduction

Module 1 consisted of a general introduction to and an explanation of Imago concepts. The module focused on explaining why relationships are frequently characterised by frustration instead of happiness. The module also explained the formation of the *imago* during childhood as well as the continued impact of the *imago* on interpersonal relationships. The reasons why relationships go through different stages (including the conflict or power struggle stage) were also discussed. Table 6.1 below details the thematic network for the introduction module.

Table 6.1

Thematic network of Module 1

Title of module	Basic themes	Organising themes	Global theme
Module 1: Introduction	Irrelevancy	Resistance	From insight to integration
	Confrontational		
	Perception that one's character is going to be analysed		
	Scepticism		
	Fear of being vulnerable		
	Understanding differences	Becoming conscious	
	Understanding the importance of change		
	Paradigm shift		

Basic Theme: Irrelevancy

The workshop, *Imago Principles in the Workplace*, was a new experience for many of the participants. Some of the participants initially felt that the workshop would be a waste of their time, especially since they were given very little information regarding the topic. A number of the participants who worked in departments involving little interpersonal contact (such as finance, accounting, and production departments) found it difficult to understand why they needed to attend the workshop. The following is the opinion of one such participant explaining their experience of the workshop:

When I was informed that I had to attend this workshop on relationships and
conflict management, I honestly could not see the relevancy due to the fact
that I don't often work with other people and that I've attended several
similar workshops on relationship building.

Some of the employees were familiar with Imago concepts and knew that Imago
therapy was mainly developed for couples in love relationships. These employees felt that
the concepts would not be relevant to the organisational context. However, Imago concepts
relating to interpersonal relationship dynamics are relevant to all relationships because
individuals maintain the same identity regardless of the context.

During the course of the module, the employees learnt that frustrations can be
triggered in any kind of relationship and that these frustrations are the result of infantile
responses from the old brain. The participants were also taught that responses to
frustrations are based on fundamental drives which are essential to survival. These
frustrations are therefore relevant in all interpersonal situations. The participants generally
concluded that Imago concepts are relevant to the organisational context because these
concepts can help individuals to create a more accurate image of their co-workers and can
assist employees in reducing their levels of reactivity.

Basic Theme: Confrontational

One of the respondents felt uneasy because he had to attend a workshop presented
by a psychologist. This participant was a senior manager in the company and did not want
to be forced to share any information about his personal or private life with his colleagues.
During the course of the first module, the participants realised that they would not be
expected to share personal information with the group. If the participants did choose to
share information with the group, they did so of their own accord. All of the information
that was shared was kept confidential and was presented in written form. The participants'

identities were kept confidential at all times. The participants felt more comfortable once they realised that they would not be asked to share personal information about their developmental years. The group members were taught Imago principles to assist them in developing insight into their own intrapersonal dynamics and to make them realise that they all carry negative compromises as a result of their formative years.

The participants were also taught about the importance of sharing their stories – whether in verbal or in written form. I have worked with clients in private practice for more than 13 years, and therefore I am well aware of the benefits of allowing individuals to 'vent' their emotions by sharing their life stories. The participants realised the value of sharing their stories. They also realised that sharing is necessary for personal growth. Sharing allows individuals to understand themselves more effectively in interpersonal relationships. Once the participants realised the value of sharing their stories, they were given the option of either enrolling for individual therapy (if they felt this was necessary), or simply writing down their life stories in their own time.

Basic Theme: Perception That One's Character Will be Analysed

One of the participants said, "I always think that when I'm in the presence of a psychologist that they analyse me." This perception, which is common amongst individuals who have never consulted a psychologist, indicates the misunderstanding of the role of psychologists within an organisation. Some of the participants held the perception that psychologists only work with 'crazy' people. This perception indicates that these individuals were not aware of the varying fields of expertise in psychology. Other participants felt that the presence of a psychologist is generally related to mental health problems. Therefore, they were afraid that their personal and private information would become public if they spoke to a psychologist.

During the course of this phase of the intervention, a discussion took place regarding the participants' characters. The participants were encouraged to understand that their characters reflect only their adaptations to life and not their essence. The participants then came to realise that their characters manifest when they feel unsafe or threatened. It is interesting to note that most employees judge their co-workers' characters on a daily basis. A discussion took place regarding the difference between one's character and personality. One participant commented on this issue and said, "We [as co-workers] should realise that the hard exterior often protects a soft interior." This comment shows that Imago skills assist individuals in becoming more conscious and intentional in their judgement of others.

Basic Theme: Scepticism

Several of the workshop participants were initially sceptical of attending the workshop. They were notified that they would be attending a workshop relating to the applications of Imago principles in the workplace. Very few of the participants had any understanding of what the workshop would entail. One participant conducted a Google search and found no information relating to Imago principles applied to companies. In addition, the participants all had a heavy workload and were therefore reluctant to attend any courses that would take them away from their work.

One participant said, "My perception of the course I am attending before we started and what is actually presented is in stark contrast to each other." Several of the older participants were sceptical of attending any further training as they were close to retirement age. Prior to attending the workshop, other participants considered the topic to be irrelevant to their specific field, for example, engineering. However, many of the participants commented on the applicability of the concepts after the module had been presented.

Basic Theme: Fear of Being Vulnerable

The fear of vulnerability was a key factor in creating resistance to the attendance of the workshop. This fear was based on factors such as the unclear topic of the workshop, the fact that the workshop was being presented by a psychologist, and the idea that the workshop would contain a lot of 'psychological stuff' (see comment below). It is understandable that these fears might have elicited feelings of vulnerability. One of the participants made the following comment: "I was fearful to attend a workshop regarding any form of psychological stuff, because I could never manage to talk about emotions without experiencing it. It makes me feel vulnerable and I don't like that." In relation to the discussion of emotions, the participants indicated that they were afraid of being 'put on the spot'. They were also afraid of being asked to speak about their emotions because they felt that they would be judged and analysed by others.

Many people prefer to remain silent when the topic of their developmental areas is mentioned. Often people are aware of their developmental areas, but find it difficult to acknowledge them in front of others. One participant stated, "Acknowledging my own developmental areas, and the reasons for having that make a person feel vulnerable and exposed." The participants spoke about the fact that they often lacked the courage to face this 'negative' side of themselves. They stated that were also ashamed of it and feared that others would lose respect for them or even find them repulsive.

However, individuals need to be able to admit to being imperfect. The process of admitting and acknowledging one's imperfections or developmental areas gives one an indication of the areas that one needs to focus on in order to grow. People also need to be able to see the strength involved in being able to share their secrets and in opening up to others in order to understand themselves in interpersonal situations. The participants, although hesitant to explore negative aspects of themselves, started to lower their defences

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after the presentation. They also began to discuss topics of an emotional nature more freely. It should be noted that this shift occurred without the facilitator having to request the participants to engage in such conversations.

Organising Theme: Resistance

The goal of the initial phase of the workshop was to accept the fears, reservations, and resistance of the participants. Moreover, the aim of the workshop was to create an understanding of the process to allay these issues. My hope was to enable each individual to participate in the process and to embrace Imago principles through this process. The participants indicated that they had very busy lives and were often resentful at having to attend additional training sessions. Although it is necessary to inform participants of the content and relevance of the training sessions, it is often difficult to communicate these factors prior to the commencement of the programme. Thus, the participants' initial resentment of having to participate in such a workshop is understandable. One of the participants remarked on this process and the value thereof in the following comment:

> When I was informed that I had to attend the seven module workshop, I thought it would be just another workshop similar to so many that we have to attend. I have on occasion resisted and complained because of a busy work schedule, and often felt it's a waste of time and money. Little did I know just how drastic this information would change my way of thinking – how it would change the way I experience the world and its inhabitants around me, interact with different personalities, and understand those around me in a more sympathetic and empathetic manner.

An Imago concept that was discussed during this module was the need for change. Resistance is an expected reaction when individuals are asked to change what has become familiar to them (Hendrix, 1992). The participants were informed of the necessity of

change and the reasons for having to change the parts of themselves that they did not consider to be faulty. These factors were explained to the participants to minimise their resistance to the process.

The employees wanted to know how they would benefit from this process and why they should change things that appeared to be functioning. It is natural for people to want to embrace the familiar as change causes overwhelming uncertainty (Hendrix, 1992) as can be seen in the reactions of the participants. The participants believed that their character defences helped them to cope. Therefore, the participants perceived having to change these character defences and habituated behaviours as extremely threatening. Through learning and applying the Imago concepts, the participants understood that, in order to change, they had to try out new and unfamiliar behaviour that could cause certain emotions and anxiety. One of the participants stated that the mere idea of changing the behaviours he had used for over forty years evoked anxiety for him, even though these behaviours had caused much conflict in his life.

The participants enquired about the purpose of the training. It was then explained that the purpose of Imago training in an organisational context is to make participants more conscious of the dynamics at play in intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships. Therefore, the purpose of the training was not to do regression work or any other form of therapy. Once this purpose had been clarified, the participants displayed less resistance to the process. Some of the participants initially had doubts regarding the expectations of the course. However, the assurance that all personal information would be kept confidential overcame the participants' reservations and their resistance to participation in the workshop. The participants also welcomed the fact that all communications relating to their underlying issues would be done in writing and that such communications would remain anonymous. The fact that complete confidentiality was affirmed enabled the

participants to address their issues and to create new insights by applying the Imago concepts.

Basic Theme: Understanding Differences

The participants stated that the workshops had helped them to gain an understanding of the differences in interpersonal behaviour. They felt more confident that they would be able to deal with cultural and interpersonal differences in the workplace. They also felt confident that they would be able to show more empathy towards others. Prior to the workshops, the participants felt that their opinions were correct in contrast to their co-workers' opinions which they felt to be incorrect. These participants were therefore not easily influenced by the opinions of others.

After a discussion of relevant Imago principles, the participants realised that their views and opinions are generally a result of their personal dispositions and life experiences in any given situation. They realised that they had formed a unique *imago* during their developmental years and that this *imago* had then become the frame of reference they used to evaluate the world and others. Therefore, every person's story or response reflects their inner reality and whatever their opinion is, it is true for them. The participants realised that their actions and decisions are therefore based on their *imago*.

The participants were also encouraged to be aware of the effect of their actions on others. One of the participants stated that he realised that he would have to change his management style because it was based exclusively on how he wanted things done and because he did not acknowledge any input from others. This participant stated, "My way was the only way because it produced the results I wanted. I now have an understanding of why I am disliked by my subordinates. An optimal working environment is so much more than just production."

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After being exposed to the Imago content, the participants realised that their actions and reactions are attempts to elicit a required, unconscious result. When people understand their differences, it helps them to interpret conflict situations differently and, in turn, changes their way of relating to others. The participants learnt about new relational dynamics that helped them to understand differences in a new way.

Basic Theme: Understanding the Importance of Change

The participants made comments regarding the fact that diverse individuals are expected to work together effectively in the mining industry. Often, when specific skills are required, it is not an easy task or necessarily suitable to recruit only individuals with certain personality traits. Irrespective of different personality traits, everyone needs to accept change to maintain a positive mindset towards their functioning within a work structure. The key to success in dealing with a number of diverse individuals is assisting managers in understanding the importance of intrapersonal change.

Some of the participants spoke about the initial levels of positive drive which they experienced when they began to work for the company. They stated that this positive drive had changed over time and had slowly become negative. The participants said that they became despondent over time because of being exposed to negative influences and occurrences in the workplace. As a result of the workshops, the participants realised that their social behaviour patterns had become rigid to the point where it was difficult for them to initiate change. However, the participants had to realise that change is necessary for people to conform to organisational needs and demands as well as to deal with the clash of different personalities and organisations (such as unions) that play a major role in the functioning of the workplace.

One of the participants conveyed the belief that change does not happen overnight. The same individual stated that he would need to practise the new behaviours in order to

bring about change. Such an insight does not simply result in change. Although individuals know that they need to change, they often resist change because it involves them being susceptible to a feeling of losing control. After attending the workshops, the participants stated that they were more open to change because they understood that habitual behaviour does not allow them to grow.

The participants also commented that they did not always take note of the various psychological factors at play during their daily work interactions with others. The participants stated that Imago theory and principles had thus helped them to understand that everyone has developmental areas (or self-completion issues). They also realised the need to work on themselves in order to overcome personal prejudices and to become more fully functioning adults. Once the participants were able to understand the importance of change, they were also able to embrace the concept of change.

Basic Theme: Paradigm Shift

The purpose of teaching Imago skills is to change individual standards, perceptions, values, and daily practices. Thus, the ultimate aim of teaching Imago skills in an organisational context is to change the values of a working community. During the course of the workshop, the participants realised that they do not have to be negative about the past or to criticise their childhood caretakers. However, they also learnt that they are able to learn from the past. The participants were taught that they need to connect with their inner selves. Furthermore, they learnt that they need to undertake a proper self-diagnosis and that they need to take action to change themselves.

The mining industry has always been prone to volatility, and therefore, with the diverse nature of the industry (with regard to positions, cultures, and expertise), a paradigm shift was of utmost importance to accommodate all these varied issues to enable the company to progress regardless of these differences. The participants commented on the

Imago concepts learnt during the course of the workshop. If the participants were able to understand these concepts correctly, they were then able to shift their vision regarding their individual functioning.

One participant stated that the workshop had helped him to realise that his traditional ways of doing things did not yield the desired results. He also stated that he had realised the need to do things differently in order to achieve different outcomes. The participants spoke about their views regarding a specific statement. They realised that their views only represent their personal objective realities and that these views are a direct result of their upbringing. They were taught that a new reality can emerge when the necessary patience, commitment, and motivation to change are applied. The participants stated that Imago theory had helped them to create alternative ways of thinking about their defensiveness during interactions. It also created a self-renewing attitude. One of the participants reflected on the workshop as follows:

> What an eye opener ... it is nice to know we are not paying sole attention to
> the present issues regarding management and attitudes, but that we are
> looking at the issues relating to the reasons we became the individuals we are,
> hence the managers we are, and that it is in my power to change and heal
> myself.

Organising Theme: Becoming Conscious

If the participants were able to develop a conscious understanding of the intrapersonal and interpersonal psychodynamics at play during their interactions with others, they were then able to improve the way they related to and worked with others. They were also able to contribute towards a positive work culture within the organisation. Thus, if all the employees at all the levels of an organisation could understand these

concepts, they could contribute to a better understanding of and an improved ability to manage individual differences.

The participants realised that their interactions with others add broader dimensions to their singular outlooks. They also realised that these interactions bring about opportunities not only to interact, but also to be part of a combined solution to problematic issues. This process of broadening their perspectives allowed the participants to develop new thought patterns and thus created more opportunities for growth. These growth opportunities developed as the participants realised that they still have personal control with regard to the outcome of an interaction even though they accommodate the broader input of others. Through a similar process, individuals can then interact in a conscious way to make their colleagues feel safe and accepted. Individuals can also be consciously encouraged to grow and to reclaim more of their full potential as a result of feeling safe and accepted.

One participant stated that he had learnt much about himself during his interactions with others and by receiving feedback from others. Another participant realised the negative effect of his childhood issues (particularly his unfinished business with his foster parents) on his interactions with others. Imago theory suggests that individuals often project their own developmental issues onto others and blame other people for doing things that they deny in themselves, as can be seen in the above individual.

Global Theme: From Insight to Integration

The participants realised that their experiences have shaped them. They realised that this shaping is just their default position and that they still require further growth. Throughout life, each individual receives various messages that either contribute to their wholeness or that can result in the repression of certain aspects of the self (Hendrix, 1992). One participant stated that he had realised his upbringing had formed numerous

adaptations in his life and that these adaptations had infused with his personality. Imago concepts helped him to understand that these adaptations have prevented him from becoming the person he is destined to be. The Imago concepts assisted the participants in understanding themselves intrapersonally and in the context of interpersonal relationships.

Another participant explained his belief that it is important to acknowledge the developmental areas that require work and to embrace the necessary changes that need to be made in order to reach one's full potential. Another participant stated that his awareness of relationship dynamics had increased tremendously by learning about Imago concepts. This participant further stated that the Imago concepts had helped him in the work context as well as in family, marriage, and psychological contexts.

The participants were taught that they need to take responsibility for the quality of their lives. They were taught that their lives, however imperfect they may be, are continuously forged through the influences of personal sentiments, beliefs, and outlooks. One of the senior managers stated that he had come to realise that his individual views and perceptions influenced the views and perceptions of those around him. The Imago concepts help individuals to become more conscious of and to broaden their awareness of interpersonal psychodynamics, as illustrated by the participants' feedback. The participants stated that learning about Imago principles had enabled them to have an increased appreciation of interactive moments by helping them to realise the growth opportunities in these situations.

Module 2: The Brain

This module focused on the anatomy of the brain. In this module, the brain was viewed as a filing system that also contains instinctual drives. The participants were taught that people's actions are often a response to perceived danger. They were also taught that

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trauma and multiple traumas influence behaviour. The participants were taught that people

respond to the brain's perception of danger with fight, flight, freeze, or submit responses.

The brain stem and the limbic system, which are jointly referred to as the old brain,

were discussed as being responsible for survival and as acting as a storehouse for years of

information. The participants were introduced to the cerebral cortex (the new brain) and

were taught that there is constant communication between the old brain and the new brain.

One of the important points presented in the module was that the brain has no concept of

time. Therefore, many things that happen in the past may remain influential in the present.

Table 6.2 below outlines the thematic network for Module 2.

Table 6.2

Table illustrating the thematic network for Module 2

Title of module	Basic themes	Organising themes	Global themes
Module 2: The Brain	Triggers of the old brain	Safety first	Expressing full 'aliveness'
	Instinctual drives		
	Impact of trauma	Job satisfaction	
	Different reactions		

Basic Theme: Triggers of the Old Brain

The participants were taught that the old brain consists of the brain stem and the

limbic system. They were also taught that the old brain plays a major role in everyday

behaviour. The module also covered the fact that the old brain cannot distinguish between

past stimuli and stimuli that occur in the present. The participants spoke about the fact that

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they had all experienced at least one traumatic event at some point in their lives. The specific details of such a traumatic event and the emotions elicited by the event are recorded by the brain. The participants were taught that the brain can be selective in retrieving or suppressing certain parts of the memory of such an event. Therefore, traumatic experiences from the distant past might resurface as a result of a specific trigger. However, this resurfacing may not necessarily take the form of a vivid recollection of the incident.

For example, one participant spoke about his own recollections of trauma and stated that these recollections had sometimes taken the form of an emotion without an accompanying recollection of the details of the event. Another participant voluntarily shared the fact that he had grown up with a strict, critical father who had often raised his voice. This participant indicated that he had resigned six times in his working career because he constantly worked for very vocal people and was unable to cope with this interaction style. As a result of the workshop, this participant realised that he had been using the flight response in his adult life because it was the response he had used as a child. According to Imago principles, people in love relationships often change partners but retain the problems they experience (Hendrix, 1992). In this case, the participant changed his working environment, but kept the underlying problem. It is evident that the authoritarian voices of his managers triggered the underlying emotional anger stemming from his childhood.

Some of the participants shared their experiences regarding minor incidents that had triggered disproportionate outbursts of anger. As a result of this module, the participants were able to understand their reactions to problem situations. They also realised that their behaviour often has an unconscious trigger. An employee who had attended anger management courses on two occasions in the past said, "I realise why these

courses never worked for me, and never stopped my outbursts because they focused on the symptom, and never addressed the causes."

As a result of this module, the participants realised that their unresolved trauma can present itself in many ways and can cause conflict with their co-workers. A part of this learning process involved the realisation that what the participants might perceive as an intentional attack from a colleague is, in reality, only an innocent comment that triggers a deep-seated personal issue.

Basic Theme: Instinctual Drives

One of the most basic human instincts involves the distinction between safety and danger. When humans are presented with a perceived threat, Hendrix (1992) states that they respond with fight, flight, freeze, or submit responses which are designed to ensure safety and to override the rational mind. These responses are triggered by any situation that is perceived as life threatening. During the module, the participants reflected on occasions when their rational minds had disengaged and then caused them to react based on instinct. They admitted that instinctual reactions had even occurred during simple confrontations in meetings or discussions. They acknowledged that they had perceived others to be the 'enemy' during these times.

When individuals enter this survival mode, they become incapable of making rational choices and of taking long-term consequences into account. Two participants testified to their own irrational behaviour that arose in response to extreme trauma. These participants had both survived an armed robbery in their homes. Their immediate reaction after the incidents was to place their homes on the market with the intention of immigrating to a country perceived to be safer than South Africa. During such incidents, the fight reaction can manifest as an anger outburst or as argumentative behaviour. In contrast, a flight reaction can manifest in a person walking away from a conflict situation

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or can result in depression and even substance abuse. One of the respondents stated the following with regard to survival modes and instinctual drives:

The Turtle and Hailstorm, an interesting analogy, I am not yet certain which one I typify, as I believe myself to be calm and calculated, but I can also lose it when my buttons get pushed. I am continuously trying to evade conflict, but in cases where it follows me I will turn and meet it head on.

The participants stated that they had found this module extremely valuable and interesting. The module resulted in a long discussion regarding real-life situations. It was discussed that some individuals might perceive certain situations or comments as dangerous, while other individuals might perceive them as safe. These different perceptions result in very different responses and attitudes in different people. The participants were taught that individuals are able to be more sensitive to their co-workers' emotions when they are more aware of how certain actions can influence their co-workers. It was also taught that once people become more sensitive to others, they will hopefully be able to understand their colleagues' experiences of trauma in a more effective way.

Organising Theme: Safety First

Some of the participants stated that they were unaware of the fact that their instinctual responses are triggered by underlying issues. After exposure to Imago theory, the participants realised that they constantly observed their environment to see whether it was safe or dangerous, and they thus attempted to determine an appropriate response. The training further helped the participants to understand that innovation happens in an environment of safety. Human beings consciously and unconsciously strive to be safe. However, the participants learnt that when these attempts are thwarted, emotions such as fear or anger that result in the flight or fight responses respectively can emerge. The participants stated that their need for safety in the working environment was just as

important as their need for safety in other spheres of their lives because they spend most of their day in the working environment. By being trained in Imago concepts, the participants stated that they had developed a better understanding of their psychological health and safety needs, including being able to

- grow;

- have a purpose in life;

- set goals;

- feel worthy;

- feel safe; and

- feel as though they contribute to and have positive relationships with others.

The participants indicated that they cannot work at an optimal level when they are stressed. Thus, they would rather feel safe and confident. Many of the participants indicated that their working environment had often made them feel unsafe on an emotional level. They further stated that they had experienced a large number of stress symptoms and constantly found themselves in a 'fight or flight' mode. Sixty-seven percent of the participants in this study stated that they had used medication for stress, anxiety, insomnia, or depression. Three participants described their working environment as one characterised by extreme provocation, stress, and humiliation to the extent where they were only able to survive as a result of ultimate adaptations. Several participants commented on their frequent use of vulgar language.

One participant had just returned to work after spending two weeks in a psychiatric unit because of stress. He was very vocal in his agreement with the aim of the Imago principles to promote an emotionally safe environment. He also stated, "Imagine working for a company where there is no criticism, no form of abuse, and where every person's

motto would be not to hurt another human being." Another participant, who worked as a pastor at a local church in his spare time, said that it is not in our nature to live in fight and flight modes continuously and that human beings unconsciously yearn to be safe in all encounters with other human beings.

Basic Theme: Impact of Trauma

In addition to the trauma people experience during childhood, they are also constantly exposed to trauma during their adult lives. Many of the respondents discussed the physical, emotional, and cognitive symptoms they had experienced as a result of stress and trauma in their lives. These symptoms occurred on a physical level (such as eating and sleep disturbances, and low energy), on an emotional level (for example, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, irritability, and withdrawal from others), and on a cognitive level (memory lapses, difficulty making decisions, and a decreased ability to concentrate). The participants discussed the fact that they feel as though they live in a violent society where individuals are regularly exposed to traumatic events (such as violent strikes and other traumatic events such as retrenchments, hi-jackings, murders, and rapes). Such events had caused the deaths of some of their colleagues. Despite being exposed to these traumatic events, they were expected to return to work and to function optimally.

The participants stated that they had experienced feelings of vulnerability and a lack of safety as a result of the volatility and unpredictability of the environment in which they function – whether they are directly or indirectly exposed to the factors mentioned above. The participants were able to identify with many of the symptoms of exposure to trauma. Although individuals rarely experience long-term emotional damage as a result of exposure to a single traumatic incident, some of the participants reported experiencing depression, anxiety, and other trauma-related symptoms.

The participants' exposure to any of the abovementioned situations also has the potential to trigger past traumas. The traumatic symptoms experienced by the participants can have a gradual, but ultimately detrimental influence on them. These traumatic symptoms experienced by the participants could, in turn, result in incalculable costs to the company. One participant stated that he had come to believe through the workshops that an awareness of the impact of trauma and treatment options should become a priority if companies expect individuals to perform optimally. One of the aims of teaching Imago relationship concepts is to provide tools to individuals to help them to realise the value of working through their unresolved trauma. By working through their trauma, employees will be able to cope more effectively in both intrapersonal and interpersonal spheres.

Basic Theme: Different Reactions

Stress and trauma create chemical changes in the brain, irrespective of a person's age. How individuals will react to incidents in the future will depend on the impact of their previous traumatic experiences. The participants discussed the effects of their past psychological trauma. Many believed their reactions to have been excessive. They also felt that no one understood exactly what they were 'going through' at the time. The participants referred to the impact of these crises as often understated and, in some cases, totally overlooked. Such feelings can result in serious consequences for each individual. The participants thus discussed their individual experiences. It became apparent to them that each person's reaction differs after experiencing a traumatic experience. It also became evident that the time it takes each person to return to a normal state of mind after such an experience varies.

It is difficult for consultants to assess the impact of trauma on individuals when working with a group. Therefore, it is better to equip individuals to assess themselves by making them aware of trauma symptoms. After the participants had taken part in the Imago

sessions, they stated that they felt better equipped to deal with individual crises. They mentioned that they had been taught self-care skills by attending the workshop. These skills enabled them to accept the fact that their reactions to crises are normal human behaviours. They were also able to accept that they did not need to see themselves as victims any longer because they felt empowered with the ability to grow and to recover from these experiences by learning about Imago concepts. The participants understood their own reactions more clearly, and it became easier for them to accept their responses as normal behaviour. They learnt that they did not have to feel as though they had behaved strangely or abnormally in traumatic situations.

Organising Theme: Job Satisfaction

Many participants commented on the number of hours they generally spend at work. Some participants gave evidence of negative mood states (such as depression, anxiety, anger, hostility, and guilt) arising from excessive working hours. The importance of a positive state of mind was acknowledged. It was thus concluded that positivity encourages elevated moods, enthusiasm, cheerfulness, confidence, and positive energy in the workplace. The participants stated that they are affected positively when they experience a pleasant working atmosphere which promotes increased productivity levels and job satisfaction.

The participants identified issues directly affecting the workplace, for example, retrenchments, company restructuring, and other trauma. These factors negatively impact on positive attitudes. It is thus apparent that an individual's state of mind has a direct effect on their levels of productivity. The positive or negative influence of an employee's work situation can play a major role in suppressing their general state of mind. A person's current state of mind thus gives an indication of how they function at home and in life in general.

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Global Theme: Expressing Full 'Aliveness'

The training helped the participants to understand that all people seek purpose and sense in their lives. According to Hendrix (1992), all human beings have an inherent instinct "to feel and express our aliveness" (p. 272) for self-preservation and life preservation. People have a need to live life in addition to staying alive. The participants were able to realise that they did not want to carry the baggage of their distorted upbringings. The participants stated that they often felt that something was missing, but they could not identify what it was. They expressed feelings of emptiness and stated that they had often compensated for this emptiness with alcohol abuse, drug abuse, misuse of prescription medication, excessive spending, and gambling.

Although the participants attempted to compensate for feelings of emptiness through negative activities, these compensations were not necessary as the participants are involved in numerous interpersonal relationships that present opportunities for growth. Thus, they have the ability to adapt and to change, and thereby they can create the lives they want to live. The participants indicated that they no longer needed to be victims of their pasts. They understood that they miss many of life's opportunities when they use habituated behaviours, when they allow themselves to be scrutinised by others, or when they try to avoid criticism.

The participants commented on what 'becoming conscious' means to them. According to the participants, becoming conscious means that they can accept themselves and others. In addition, they indicated that it means that they are all collectively responsible for the working environment they create. If people co-create a safe working environment in which people can work without their adaptations, then more of their needs in living a full life would be met.

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Module 3: The Intentional Dialogue

This module taught the participants a very powerful way to communicate with one another and to dissolve interpersonal differences. Imago theory, according to Hendrix (1992), refers to the intentional dialogue as conscious communication that clarifies, confirms, and develops an appreciation of the inner worlds of other people. The dialogue consists of three processes, namely mirroring, validation, and empathy (Hendrix, 1992, p. 283). Table 6.3 below shows the thematic network of Module 3.

Table 6.3

Table illustrating the thematic network of Module 3

Title of module	Basic themes	Organising themes	Global themes
Module 3: The Intentional Dialogue	Evaluate, analyse, criticise, interpret	Interpersonal growth	Authentic happiness
	Different realities		
	Insecurities, anxieties	Contextual awareness	
	Need to be heard		
	Consciously connecting	Self-awareness	
	Time consuming		

Basic Theme: Evaluate, Analyse, Criticise, and Interpret

The participants stated that they continuously communicate with others. This communication takes place through many different mediums, including the internet, mobile phones, faxes, social networking sites (such as Twitter), and interpersonal communication. The participants were asked about which communication medium/s they

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preferred. They indicated that they preferred interpersonal communication even though it can be viewed as threatening. However, they also indicated that they sometimes struggled to convey their messages even when using interpersonal communication. The participants indicated that their messages usually became distorted because the content of their messages was evaluated, analysed, criticised, and interpreted in isolation, resulting in unintentional conflict.

They further indicated that they constantly felt a need to defend their point of view when communicating with others. The participants believed that one person in the communication dyad usually feels as though they are not heard and thus walk away feeling angry, disappointed, and severely frustrated. The participants felt that extroverts or people with strong personalities often dominate a conversation and do not allow introverts an equal opportunity to state their opinions. The participants identified the following frustrations experienced during conversations:

- People have a tendency to offer advice during a discussion even though none is sought.

- People easily state that one should not feel a certain way when certain emotions are expressed even though these people may have no inkling as to the cause of the emotion.

- Some people merely express their opinion and offer their advice, but they do not realise this is not always relevant. They thus frustrate others who attempt to express their feelings.

Basic Theme: Different Realities

The participants were also taught that they each have their own way of perceiving the world, their own particular upbringing, and their own value system which emerge when they are involved in a conversation. People generally need to express their own reality and

their own point of view within a conversation. Every person's reality is therefore their own truth, and thus people need others to listen to others' realities. The participants responded well to the concept of the intentional dialogue and stated that it had taught them how to speak about their realities in a safe way. It also enabled them to gain a deeper understanding of and insight into the inner worlds of other people.

The participants realised that if they allowed others to speak in safety, they could enable a new perspective, increase their insight into problems, and enhance their connection with others. The participants stated that they realised that they could give credit to the reality of others by listening to others. One participant stated, "I don't care if my colleague does something about my problem; I just want him to listen to me and hear me through." When a person has the opportunity to state their case, the energy or charge around an issue changes and often causes the issue to dissipate. The participants realised that each person's reality carries equal weight. It was concluded, however, that people in senior positions often tend to use their status to enforce their own viewpoints.

One of the participants stated that it was useful to learn that a listener is only required to listen and that they do not have to agree or disagree with the speaker. The mirroring process helps the speaker to feel that they have been heard because the listener reflects what the speaker is saying. The participants stated that the validation and empathy aspects of the intentional dialogue resonated with them because it had helped them to feel that the listener respects and appreciates their point of view during a conversation. One participant made the following statement:

> I work with many complaints on a daily basis ... I honestly think this tool can make a huge difference in potential conflict situations. I normally respond with my own view. I realise that people need to be heard and they need to be contained in their anger.

Organising Theme: Interpersonal Growth

People often deteriorate on an emotional level because they are afraid of talking about the problems that could cause them to retaliate when they are hurt by others. One participant said, "I now understand that retaliation causes a counter retaliation. Today I have learned another method to get my needs met, by applying the dialogue I experience a definite change in my thoughts, emotions and attitudes towards the listener." Therefore, the dialogue process can help people to enhance their closeness and connections with others. If the intentional dialogue is conducted correctly, both parties are able to leave the dialogue feeling enriched.

Relationships can only grow if they are nurtured and if all the parties involved spend time talking to one another by using the intentional dialogue. The participants were taught that they should invite others to speak about and share their views because it is during self-expression that people are able to learn about one another. Communication with other people creates mutual growth opportunities as every person represents their own uniqueness, their own worldview, and their own personal qualities during communication. The participants were taught that people are able to broaden their awareness and to develop compassion for others when they enter another person's space.

Basic Theme: Insecurities and Anxieties

When people feel insecure and unsafe in interpersonal situations, they tend to use certain defensive traits which prevent their normal selves from being presented. As a result of this module, the participants realised and understood that if their environment enabled them to share their feelings and thoughts safely, they would be able to lower their defences. They also realised that they would be able to share more of their true selves and essence. The intentional dialogue allowed the participants to feel safe when they shared information. Therefore, the process reduced their reactivity. The participants learnt that

they would be able to dissolve conflict with their colleagues without it resulting in an

argument if they could validate their colleagues' reality and empathise with their

colleagues' feelings instead of acting in a negative way.

One participant mentioned that he always felt anxious when he had to discuss

issues with his boss because his boss never listened to him and always overreacted. This

participant stated the following:

> If I know in advance that I can make an appointment with him and that he
>
> will definitely listen, and not interrupt me when I talk, I will go and see him
>
> any time. I often avoid discussing important issues because I'm scared of his
>
> reaction.

Most of the participants indicated concerns regarding the impression they make on

others. They also worried that others would evaluate and analyse them. The participants

also reported that they often felt as though they would say the wrong thing when they were

anxious. Thus, their feelings of self-worth are often determined or influenced by others.

The participants stated that they also usually withdrew from threatening situations. Most of

the participants stated that they still found it threatening to speak in the presence of other

people, despite the fact that they had senior positions.

Basic Theme: The Need to be Heard

Most people do not know how to listen to others. However, issues cannot be

resolved if people cannot engage in conversation. People can dissolve their issues if they

work together. One participant stated that it was important to know that the receiver does

not have to agree or disagree with the statements made by the speaker. The intentional

dialogue is about listening, hearing, and holding the other person in authentic conversation.

Another participant commented, "It's wonderful to know I can talk and finish saying what

I would like to say, what I planned to talk about, and what I ended up saying was in vast contrast to one another."

Organising Theme: Contextual Awareness

Communication can be regarded as one of the most important factors to use within an organisation to ensure optimal functioning. The participants were made aware that communication has far too many variables (such as perceptions, desires, and knowledge) for each participant to derive the same meaning from a particular communication. They were also taught that communication can be intentional or unintentional, depending on how people process the information. The participants understood that a better understanding of the intention of a particular communication should be explored so that everyone can understand its context. Hendrix (1992) states that the intentional dialogue sets the platform for creating contextual awareness by preventing the interpreter stance. It thus enables the effective conclusion of the interaction by creating a common understanding between the parties.

Basic Theme: Consciously Connecting

During the intentional dialogue, the receiver suspends their judgements and allows the sender to share their world (Hendrix, 1992). As a result of this module, the participants realised that interpersonal presence contributes to forming a special connection. The participants' original perceptions were discarded and a state of association was formed where listening to other people projects a true understanding of the state of their internal reality. One participant stated that he felt that emotions and responses were shared on the "same wavelength" by using empathy and thoughtful consideration. The participants' own agendas and assessments were overlooked, and they were brought to a state of true connection. One of the participants described the experience in the following manner: "It feels like a deeper level of listening, a different type of presence, like I listened with my

heart, and although it was just a demonstration I felt like I wanted the conversation to carry on."

Basic Theme: Time Consuming

Some of the participants raised concerns regarding the amount of time spent on conducting the dialogue effectively. However, they did acknowledge that the intentional dialogue is a valuable tool. Learning about the intentional dialogue led to a discussion regarding its positive and negative attributes. The participants stated that more time was usually spent on union negotiations and strikes caused by unresolved issues than the time they had spent on learning how to communicate effectively. They realised that unhappy people are not optimally productive because they spend a lot of their energy discussing their issues with their colleagues.

Unresolved issues continue to grow and may surface in a variety of ways. The participants realised that using the intentional dialogue effectively can result in the resolution of issues in a much shorter period of time than usual, which would thus benefit the company. The participants indicated that they needed to make time for dialogue by scheduling appointments and placing items to be discussed on an agenda. If the person requesting the dialogue could plan ahead, it would compel them to focus solely on the issues on the agenda.

Organising Theme: Self-Awareness

It is important for individuals to be aware of their reactions during interactions with others and to examine themselves emotionally to enable them to understand themselves better. The participants understood that each individual possesses unique responses and mindsets that originate from their childhood upbringing and that are influenced by many different life experiences. This understanding developed from a process of self-examination.

During the training, a number of examples of how differing opinions could be explained were given when the participants were asked to reflect on the training by applying such self-examination.

The participants' self-awareness created a greater understanding of how their thoughts and actions are related to their personalities. They also understood their strengths. However, most importantly, they could accept their developmental areas relating to their beliefs, motivations, and emotions. The Imago concepts presented tools to the participants to enable them to develop self-awareness and to change their thought patterns and behaviour. The Imago concepts thus affected the participants' interpretation of what happens in interpersonal space. The participants became aware of the importance of the application of the theory as it enabled them to manoeuvre themselves much more effectively within their working relationships.

Global Theme: Authentic Happiness

The participants commented on the value of the intentional dialogue and on the aspects of interpersonal safety that form part of the dialogue, namely being really present and the value of listening. These concepts resulted in a conversation concerning how simple it is to make another person happy. The participants also discussed the true meaning of happiness. Furthermore, the conversation focused on what makes people content with their lives. Some of the participants felt that material things (such as big cars, houses, and expensive holidays) are valuable to many people. One participant stated, "Material possessions have more meaning if one lives in harmony with others. When I am in conflict with others, specifically my wife, material things tends to lose value. Happiness for me is living in harmony with others." The participants felt the need to be heard and felt that they could only live in harmony with others if they could talk to others and resolve their underlying issues (as indicated by the above comment).

Another participant stated that he had never realised that listening attentively to another person could be so beneficial for both parties. The participants were taught that individuals often feel incompetent in relationships because they feel that they do not know how to resolve their issues. The module also explored the fact that if the intentional dialogue is used correctly, it can assist people in dealing with their interpersonal differences and can also increase their self-esteem.

Another participant stated that being validated made him feel happy and optimistic about future conversations. Thus, it is clear that individuals feel valued during communication when their point of view is validated. The participants indicated that they felt the need to work on themselves. They also felt the need to respect others genuinely. During the workshop, the participants learnt that their interpersonal connections should be non-judgemental and genuine. The participants were able to learn that showing empathy during the dialogue process gives an indication of their true inner state. They also learnt that it shows that they care about the other person's reality. Genuine interest encourages the sender to be more authentic and to reflect problems effectively. Thus, individuals will find it easier to express their inner thoughts when the interpersonal communication space is safe. This deep connection allows individuals to grow continually and will eventually result in authentic happiness.

Module 4: The Mirror and the Wall

This module included a presentation concerning frustrations and the way in which these frustrations are linked to childhood issues. The presentation was followed by a discussion relating to criticism. According to Hendrix (1992), we unconsciously inflict pain on other people in an attempt to make them relieve our pain. Therefore, criticism is a desire expressed through negative energy (Hendrix, 1992). As part of this module, the

participants were taught a highly effective and easily learnt alternative to criticism. Table 6.4 below shows the thematic network for Module 4.

Table 6.4

Table showing the thematic network for Module 4

Title of module	Basic themes	Organising themes	Global themes
Module 4: The Mirror and the Wall	Frustrations	Growing up	Waking up is hard to do
	90/10 principle		
	Global desire	Behavioural adaptation	
	Declaration of change		

Basic Theme: Frustrations

Several of the participants stated that this module was the highlight of the course. After the module was presented, the participants discussed their interactions with one another. They acknowledged that feeling accepted and being able to exchange their views with one another without fearing rejection or criticism are very desirable. The participants expressed the need to feel safe in interpersonal relations.

The participants stated that they felt frustrated when other people intruded on and polluted their psychosocial space. The participants stated that they experienced these frustrations on a daily basis prior to the training and that these frustrations had a negative effect on their levels of productivity. A further discussion touched on the need to work in an environment where there are definite guidelines, accepted rules and regulations, and set standards and procedures. They acknowledged that such an environment would not suit everyone, but they believed that it would lead to fewer frustrations and that it would motivate them to work towards a common goal.

Frustrations generally cause people to become agitated, irritated, and aggressive. Frustrations also increase the possibility of interpersonal conflict. The participants stated that they often took their work frustrations home with them, which thereby negatively affected their marital partners and children. Organisational rules and regulations cannot be adjusted to accommodate the variety of different personalities functioning within a work environment. Therefore, all working environments will inevitably cause some level of frustration. The participants had to understand interpersonal frustrations in order to alter their perceptions when interacting with others.

Basic Theme: 90/10 Principle

The frustrations people experience can provide valuable insight into their individual intra-psychological functioning. Hendrix (1992) states that people often blame others for their frustrations and do not realise that their frustrations are actually 90% to do with themselves and only 10% to do with the people around them. One participant stated, "What an amazing discovery to know that other people unintentionally push our buttons, which causes us to feel frustrated." Another participant stated the following:

It made me feel angry at first when the facilitator told me that 90% of my frustration has got to do with me and 10% with the other person. A different picture is starting to form for me now. People easily frustrate me and I always shied away from close contact and reserved my space. Twelve years in a hostel as a kid have left some scars on me, I can now see the barriers I have built around me, and I realise that it is more my issue than that of others.

The participants made several comments about the 90/10 principle. They indicated that they had found the concept hard to understand at first. However, they also indicated that they could see it had influenced many of their own issues, and therefore it meant that they had to work on themselves. All the participants were able to link their current

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frustrations to childhood causes. They were also able to reflect candidly on their personal

shortcomings in relationships and on how these shortcomings influenced their personal and

work relationships. The participants' newfound insight and their concurrent need to change

were a direct result of the module presented.

Organising Theme: Growing up

As a result of this module, the participants were able to realise and to understand

the reasons behind their painful memories and the causes of their frustrations. They were

also able to understand that future situations involving problematic interpersonal contact

could be regarded as growth opportunities. One participant made the following comment:

"We normally pay for services rendered ... therefore we should actually pay people we are

interacting with because they contribute to our growth."

Prior to attending the module, the participants understood interactions and

confrontations in terms of people being right and being wrong. As a result of this module,

they were able to understand that interactions are not about labelling people as being right

or wrong. The participants came to understand that interactions are based on the fact that

each person has their own perception of reality that is valid or true for that person. They

were taught that their own perceptions of reality are limited. They were also taught that

interactions with other people expose them to different realities. The participants thus

realised that other people help them to grow.

The module taught the participants to see their colleagues as their allies and not as

their enemies. Therefore, they were able to realise that conflict situations are indeed

growth opportunities. The participants also realised that people continuously search for

things to help them become more complete versions of what they are individually. One

participant commented on a biblical verse from Jeremiah where God says, "Go and

become fully you." This participant commented that the particular verse had made much more sense to him after listening to the presentation.

The participants stated that they had benefitted greatly from having more control and power over their emotions and behaviour. They reported that their reactions were normally full of emotion. They also realised that if they could consciously change their reactions, it would also lead to a change in their emotions. Another realisation was that they have the potential to create and change their own realities. The participants discovered that if they could influence a larger number of individuals within their organisation to change their levels of reactivity consciously, the collective consciousness and future of the organisation would also be positively influenced. One participant stated, "I always regret the many hours I spend at work, away from my family, but never realised that those hours away from them could be utilised for self-discovery, exploration, and growth."

The participants further realised that healing is not restricted to close love relationships, but that growth opportunities are present in all interpersonal encounters. Another participant made the following remark: "I've just realised it's never too late to teach an old dog new tricks." When the participants were able to relate to one another with a higher degree of consciousness, they were also able to develop a constant awareness of their frustrations and the underlying emotions associated with these frustrations. They could then use this awareness to explore their internal roadmap to the origin of their frustrations. Once the participants were able to understand the cause and effect phenomena, they could consciously start to change their behaviour and reactivity.

Basic Theme: Global Desire

The participants were requested to record some of the frustrations they experienced in their working environment as a result of interpersonal relationships. They were also asked to record their greatest need in interpersonal relationships – referred to as their

global desire (Hendrix, 1992). They were then asked to keep these records confidential. The participants were later informed that their global desire represented an unmet need from their childhood. The participants responded to this information with the following comments: "I have just realised that I have the same frustrations and needs in my marital relationship"; "I understand for the first time why I don't like to be around loud people"; "I understand now why I don't like my boss"; "I understand why it is important for me to screen and select the people that I work with"; and "Now I know why on several occasions although I felt so guilty, I still had affairs with my secretaries".

Basic Theme: Declaration of Change

At this point in the workshop process, the participants realised that change is necessary if people want to improve themselves. They also realised that they have the authority to change their behaviour when interacting with others. They further realised that there will always be people who unintentionally 'push their buttons' and cause them to feel frustrated. However, the participants were taught that these frustrations should be viewed as opportunities for them to identify and to understand their unresolved issues. The participants had to realise that the perceived transgressor is not the enemy. They became aware of the interpersonal psychodynamic factors that are triggered in relationships to achieve relationship satisfaction as well as the fact that these interactions with others are necessary for their own growth.

One participant suggested that attitude change should be initiated in small, manageable steps by accessing introspection and by responding with empathy towards others. The participants realised the need to acknowledge their own emotions during interpersonal situations and the need to take responsibility for their responses. They discovered that their relationships with others would not improve without a conscious decision to change. The participants realised that the intensity of their frustrations often

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outweighs their ability to focus on the underlying causes. It is this intensity which then usually results in an inappropriate response during interactions with others.

Some interactions are emotionally charged, which makes it difficult for people to apply their higher cognitive abilities. Emotionally charged situations make it difficult for people to adapt their behaviour and thus result in feelings of guilt. The participants realised that they had to learn to allow themselves to engage with and to respond to others on a conscious level during interactions to benefit both parties.

Organising Theme: Behavioural Adaptation

After the Imago presentation, the participants realised that their repetitive action/s could be refocused on something that creates or builds something new. In other words, their old, familiar behaviour could be adapted to form new behaviour if they could commit themselves to change. The participants stated that they continuously had to adapt to what the company expected of them, which put strain on their interpersonal relationships because of the frequently changing mining environment. One participant stated, "So, in the process of trying to keep up with what is expected of me, if I allow myself to be positive, I will grow, and evolve, which will help me cope and become more efficient."

The participants understood that the implementation of adaptive behaviour can be achieved to refocus energy into positive and constructive action by developing self-awareness and by understanding possible uncooperative or disruptive conduct. The application of Imago theory creates the perfect platform for individuals to categorise their own behaviour and to understand the changes that are necessary for adaptation, as displayed above.

Global Theme: Waking Up is Hard to Do

The participants realised that it is difficult to change old or habituated behaviour which has been used over a long period of time because this behaviour is familiar to them.

They admitted that they were locked in daily routines, which means that attempting new behaviour could be frightening and could also feel unnatural. Some of the participants experienced chastisement or criticism on a regular basis. Therefore, they were used to experiencing pain in interpersonal contact. The participants indicated that they very seldom received positive affirmations and thus sometimes responded negatively when they were complimented or praised.

One participant stated that if he had had access to this information years ago, it would have made a considerable difference to his personal and professional life. Many of the participants indicated that the information learnt during this module was insightful. However, they also realised that, although the information was insightful, insight alone is not enough to change their behaviour. Instead, the participants found that they needed to make a conscious decision to do things differently and to try out new behaviour, even if it felt unfamiliar.

Module 5: The Psychological Journey

During this module, the developmental stages from birth to the age of 19 years old were discussed. The module provided details concerning the important aspects of each developmental stage and the adverse consequences that can occur if a child's needs are not met during these stages. These consequences include specific manifestations of difficulties in adulthood. This module helped the participants to understand why they could interact more easily with certain individuals than with others. It also helped them to understand why they experienced frustration in relationships instead of the desired hope and joy. Table 6.5 below shows the thematic network for Module 5.

Table 6.5

Table showing the thematic network for Module 5

Title of module	Basic themes	Organising themes	Global themes
Module 5: The Psychological Journey	Attachment	Developmental years	Individual differences
	Self-knowledge		
	Scarring	Intrinsic motivation	
	Degree of scarring		

Basic Theme: Attachment

During this module, the participants were taught that the basis of most human behaviour is formed during the developmental years. They were also taught that the attachment stage is the most influential developmental period. The participants stated that they had not realised the importance of the early developmental years prior to being taught this module. They learnt that early experiences of fear and anxiety can influence all personal development. The participants were also taught that wounding at this crucial stage could potentially lead to severe pathology in interpersonal relationships. The module also explained that individuals who develop serious pathology (such as borderline personality disorder and other personality disorders) frequently work in organisational settings, but they are seldom or never formally diagnosed or treated.

After the module was presented, a long discussion ensued during which some of the manifestations of attachment wounding were discussed. The participants indicated that they could identify some of the symptoms in their co-workers. People who suffer from personality disorders can often display behaviour that leads to them undergoing disciplinary procedures in the workplace. A participant reported that one of his family members had lost their job because of untreated bipolar disorder symptoms. He explained

that a psychologist was only consulted once the person's employment had been terminated. The person's condition was then diagnosed and treated.

After the module was presented, the participants discussed the various types of disciplinary actions their colleagues had encountered. Some of the colleagues seemed to be suffering from personality disorders. The participants also discussed the fact that the outcome of such cases would have been very different if these individuals could have undergone psychological assessment. The participants commented on how easily others are pre-judged in the interpersonal context. They realised that opinions are thus formed by creating perceptions relating to the behaviour of others. They discussed the relevancy of Imago training in organisational contexts, specifically in relation to this module. Imago training provides specific information about the needs that should be met at each developmental stage. Thus, the training also provided information on the consequences of unmet childhood needs and their relation to adult behaviour.

Basic Theme: Self-Knowledge

Some participants commented on the value of this module in relation to their own developmental years, including the physical and psychological needs they encountered at each stage. This information was specifically significant to the participants because they realised their reactions are a direct result of the unmet needs emerging from their childhoods. These needs, reactions, and the resulting defences can be traced back to specific developmental stages. The participants found it helpful to know that their reactions are often distorted attempts to undo the damage that was caused during their childhood years. They then interpreted their reactions as unconscious searches for healing.

The participants reported that they had frequently judged others in the past. The Imago training helped them to focus consciously on their interactions with others, to include more empathy in their interactions, and to realise that their colleagues are also

products of their childhoods. Therefore, the behaviour of their colleagues could also be interpreted as an attempt to undo the emotional hurt they encountered during their own childhoods.

The Imago training created a better understanding of interpersonal relationships, as seen in and confirmed by the participants' responses. The participants also stated that they no longer saw such interpersonal relations and communication as a meaningless flow of information. They were also able to ask themselves what they really wanted from their interactions with others. Furthermore, they were able to question themselves concerning their reasons for becoming upset, experiencing frustration, or displaying anger. This module helped the participants to understand that other people are able to contribute to one's wholeness through interpersonal relationships.

Organising Theme: Developmental Years

In addition to genetic predisposition, childhood experiences condition individuals to behave in a certain way. The participants were taught about the importance of recognising the influence of past occurrences on their current behaviour. This module also explained why a 'one-size-fits-all' management style does not meet the needs of all individuals and that every individual's uniqueness should be taken into consideration. The content also covered the fact that people spend a lifetime using certain behaviours that cannot be changed overnight. The participants were taught that unwanted, undesired behaviour can be unlearnt if they want to achieve a different result. The participants also realised that although people may hurt each other as a result of undesired behaviour, such injury is rarely intentional. The participants were thus instructed to see their own and other people's behaviour as learned responses to certain stimuli.

When individuals start a new job, they journey through the same kinds of developmental stages which they do during childhood. They experience attachment to

others, explore new boundaries, search for their own identity in the organisation, find a

level of competence, develop concern for others, and eventually develop close, more

intimate relationships with others. When an individual struggles with wounding at a

specific developmental stage, they may also struggle with that same underlying unmet

need during their interpersonal adult relationships (Hendrix, 1992). The need to set

measurable goals to change behaviour and reactions was discussed. The module also

discussed the fact that individuals therefore need to educate themselves regarding

- their own developmental areas;

- the way in which they function in their social environment;

- the effect their behaviour has on other people; and

- the effect other people's behaviour has on them.

Basic Theme: Scarring/Wounding

Although some of the participants gave written evidence of personal wounding,

most of them realised that their wounding had been relatively mild. They also realised they

are privileged and that they need to be grateful for what they have. One participant stated,

"I will never look at my parents with the same eyes again, because I may not understand

what they had to go through during their own upbringing, influencing them being the

people they are today." Another participant said, "Although my parents often dealt with me

in a manner that I totally disapproved of, I now realize that their intentions were

honourable and well meaning. Although I disapproved of their methods, I understand their

motives."

The participants felt that they should acknowledge the importance of moods and

emotions in interpersonal relationships and behaviour. A discussion ensued regarding the

advantages of helping people to control and to change their behaviour instead of focusing

on people's problems. The participants stated that they felt they should be instigators of

this change by controlling their own behaviour and setting goals for a better organisational environment.

Basic Theme: Degree of Scarring

One participant stated that people generally believe that children are very adaptable and are often too young to remember things that happen to them. However, the participants realised that their views, opinions, and judgements, which had become part of their defences as a result of repetition, are the result of cognitive processes that were formed during childhood. However, the participants also learnt that these things could be changed. It was discussed that each person is different regarding their background, upbringing, emotions, and the issues that affect them. Understanding these differences thus brings us closer to understanding human behaviour. The participants were able to realise these inner truths through a process of introspection. One of the participants wrote a particularly touching story:

> For me it was a story of family detachment, 11 years in an orphanage, no emotional connection. I was allowed to see some of my family members once a year, I could never understand why my sister was allowed to stay with my parents, and I was sent away. Whenever I was allowed to visit them I showed a lot of anger towards my sister. I once shot at my sister with a pellet gun and therefore earned the nickname 'Sniper', a name that still follows me today. I still prefer to be on my own. The great thing is that with realisation comes an understanding that I needed to heal and this in turn may make a less complicated person of me, and only I can do it.

Colleagues and co-workers often carry different degrees of hurt with them. Thus, this module taught the participants to examine the behaviour and reactions of others

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consciously. The module also taught the participants to realise that some people are only mildly hurt, while others carry deeply embedded scars.

Organising Theme: Intrinsic Motivation

Most employees expect their work to carry some form of reward – be it in the form of recognition, promotion, or higher salaries. Imago theory teaches a better understanding of behavioural changes. It also teaches that we can find rewards within ourselves instead of always searching for external gratification. If people can learn to strive to become the best they can be by becoming more proficient, they thereby increase their own perception of their value and can also thus create intrinsic gratification and motivation. For example, a student only requires a 50% pass mark, but they decide to study extra material to achieve far beyond what is required in an effort to reach perfection. Such a student is intrinsically motivated. This motivation leads to personal fulfilment because the person becomes an expert in their chosen field.

The participants came to understand that if they only seek extrinsic rewards in lieu of hard work, severe negative consequences could result in their interpersonal relationships. Imago theory taught the participants to strive for fulfilment within themselves by helping them to understand that they can control their growth.

Global Theme: Individual Differences

The participants indicated that they found great value in understanding the fact that their relationships with their childhood caretakers and their childhood environment determined the development of their adaptations. The participants were taught that their upbringing and overall emotional states affected their functioning on various levels. They came to understand that their responses are unconsciously triggered and that they respond in ways that seem natural to them. The participants indicated that the training helped them to understand why people react differently in the same situations as well as why some

individuals regard a situation as threatening, while others perceive the same situation to be non-threatening.

If the participants were able to broaden their psychological knowledge about themselves, as well as their awareness of the impact of their developmental years, they were then able to think differently and to perceive the responses of others differently. If the participants were able to develop an ability to see the inner child in others, their own negative reactivity would then have decreased and their ability to show increased empathy towards others would have improved.

The participants were unaware of the fact that their behaviour and reactions are based on the defences they use when they feel threatened. Once the participants realised this fact, it brought about a discussion on how people often feel threatened in interpersonal situations. These reactions occur as a result of learned behaviour dating back to the early developmental years. The participants indicated that they found it valuable to understand that individuals learn different adaptations during different developmental stages. They also found it valuable to understand that a specific unmet need arising during a particular developmental stage has an impact on the next developmental stage. Adaptations learnt during childhood become part of the psychological makeup of the adult self and determine individual differences during provocation and interaction. This section seemed to have had a major impact on the participants' thought processes regarding interpersonal differences. One of the participants stated the following:

> It is good news to realise that I can do something about my situations, I don't
> have to carry all those issues with me. I feel guilty when I think about how
> often I blamed others for my own shortcomings. I'm looking forward to the
> new challenges that I am going to face in future relationships.

Module 6: The Birth of the Social Self

Imago theory states that parents provide nurturing during the developmental years and are responsible for teaching children how to interact with the outside world (Hendrix, 1992). This module included a presentation and a discussion that focused on the way in which individuals are tailored to fit into society. It also covered the ways in which individuals conform to society's norms in order to be accepted and loved in their interactions with others – known as the socialisation process (Hendrix, 1992). The module explored the fact that certain parts of an individual's aliveness are suppressed, while others are encouraged during this tailoring process. The module emphasised the participants' repressed and prohibited parts of the self as well as the traits they view as positive or negative in others, but are unable to recognise in themselves. Table 6.6 below details the thematic network for this module.

Table 6.6

Table showing the thematic network for Module 6

Title of module	Basic themes	Organising themes	Global themes
Module 6: The Birth of the Social Self	Socialisation	Change in cognition	Organisational wellbeing
	Character	Attitude	

Basic Theme: Socialisation

The participants learnt about the theory of the social self. This theory allowed them to understand its applications in their relationships with their friends, partners, and work colleagues. They understood that it is not only their childhood caretakers that influenced the people they have become. The participants realised that other significant role players, such as teachers, brothers, sisters, friends, and other family members, also had a significant

role to play in their development. The participants discussed the influences they were exposed to during childhood and the impact of these influences on the formation of their personalities and characters. The participants discovered that their personality traits are often traits that they shy away from and find unsettling in others.

One participant stated that the discussion had helped him to realise why he could not cope after his recent promotion. The position he was promoted to required many subordinates to report to him, whereas his previous position allowed him to work on his own. He stated that people had always regarded him as unapproachable throughout his life. He had also always believed that it was safer to withdraw from others to protect himself. As a result of these beliefs, he had requested a demotion back to his previous position.

During Imago training, he became aware of his fear of rejection and the impact of all the negative messages he had received as a child. He wrote the following on his evaluation form: "I understand that I need to work on myself, I realise I'm not a bad person, but I am also not a whole person." This participant later stated that he should not have requested a demotion, but should have instead viewed the promotion as an opportunity for growth. The participants became aware of the fact that they would remain unable to learn new behaviour unless they consciously placed themselves in new situations (even if such situations are uncomfortable). Furthermore, they would be unable to change their automated behaviours.

Organising Theme: Change in Cognition

The participants realised that they need to learn more about what makes people feel emotionally safe and what causes them to function in adaptive modes. An understanding of the Imago concepts can bring about a shift in cognition and can result in a better understanding of interpersonal psychodynamics. This module helped the participants to

realise that if they tried to understand the behaviour and intentions of a specific action, they would not always have to look for solutions to problems.

The module examined the fact that it is difficult to work in harmony with other people and to accommodate the values, beliefs, and personalities of all co-workers. The participants realised that it becomes much easier to understand interpersonal issues once they make the cognitive decision to accommodate their co-workers, to take steps to grow, and to understand themselves. They realised that a positive attitude can change the quality of their daily lives. In addition, they were taught that if they attempted to understand the underlying psychodynamics at play during interpersonal differences, it could be life changing. The participants were also informed that new relationships could be created and life at work could become more meaningful. However, it was also added that these changes would only be possible if they made the cognitive decision to understand interpersonal dynamics and to do things differently.

Basic Theme: Character

The Imago training helped the participants to realise that they are social beings. They realised that they therefore have to conform to certain societal and organisational rules and regulations. Hendrix (1992) states that human beings need to be "tailored" (p. 139) to fit into their environment. This tailoring happens by certain behaviours being encouraged and other behaviours being prohibited by the people around us. The participants learnt that this tailoring process often damages an individual's original self. They also learnt that individuals lose their true selves through this process. According to Hendrix (1992), once individuals lose their true selves, they present adaptations that are designed to help them function in society as a result of this tailoring process.

The participants realised that individuals in an organisational context often evaluate and judge the people they work with without realising that they are evaluating their

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co-workers' adaptations and not their co-workers' true selves. It was also discussed and understood that people present others with their characters or adaptations in situations in which they feel threatened. One participant stated the following:

I realized how often I meet someone, immediately forming an opinion, on whether or not I like this person. Yet when I get to know this person better, I form a totally different opinion. I am quick to judge but now realize I cannot always trust my judgement on first impressions.

One of the participants observed that people rarely see other people as they are. Another participant commented that employees tend to change over time following their initial employment. In other words, employees initially present their characters, but these defences may dissipate if the person feels safe in an interpersonal space. This altered behaviour gives others the impression that the person has changed. However, if the space later becomes polluted, the person's defences may resurface. The participants discovered that such defences often manifest as feelings of seriousness, stress, anger, and depression.

The participants indicated that this module was beneficial to them as it had helped them to realise that they should not judge others too quickly. They remarked that they often judged and formed opinions of others too quickly and that they were then usually forced to revise these opinions once they got to know the people better. It could be concluded that if the working environment represents an emotionally safe space, people would be able to function more optimally. They would also be able to display more of their full potential.

Organising Theme: Attitude

After being exposed to Imago theory, the participants were asked to express one factor that they thought would be central to creating a positive growth environment. It was agreed on that the need to create a constructive atmosphere was an important factor. They also stated that each member's attitude towards applying the skills they had learnt would

be essential for success. It was further agreed on that people entering an interpersonal space should have a positive frame of mind for an intervention to be effective because positive vitality would help maintain the momentum of positive change. It was acknowledged that negative influences could pollute this interpersonal space. One of the participants stated, "We need to think positive, feel positive and then we will do positive things."

It was explained that an understanding of the Imago principles would develop a better understanding of the changes needed to improve interpersonal contact. In essence, Hendrix (1992) states that the purpose of Imago theory is to bring about a "shift in consciousness" (p. 232) and a willingness to transform relationships. The benefits of a positive attitude and environment were noted by the participants. They identified the necessity to improve their levels of self-esteem, efficiency, co-operation, and interaction in the workplace. It was also established that a negative attitude and a polluted work environment would cause lower levels of co-operation, diminished efficiency, increased levels of pressure, and hostile relationships.

The participants were asked to assess the changes they needed to make in order for them to contribute towards a tranquil and positive workspace. The participants generally agreed that a polluted workspace seemed to be attributed to others' bad attitudes and not to one's own negative input. The participants were asked why they perceived others as having a bad attitude and what had caused this perception. The discussion that followed dealt with the fact that people have their own agendas and want things to 'go their way'. One participant stated, "It is so difficult to adapt and adhere to everybody's needs and desires, I have to adapt most of my day to stay out of trouble." The participants realised that they each hold the potential to change their working environment into a more conducive environment by cultivating their own affirmative attitude.

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Global Theme: Organisational Wellbeing

The effectiveness of an organisation depends on the intrapersonal health and wellness of its employees. The participants stated that they realised employees need to be well on an emotional level to function optimally. They realised that all employees enter a company with certain developmental areas, unmet needs, and unlimited potential. The participants also realised that all individuals have the capacity or potential to grow if they receive the correct stimulation. Organisations often focus on enhancing positive attributes or addressing negative attributes without creating insight into the origins of these attributes. The participants understood how behaviour was learnt. They also learnt that it is possible for certain traits to be unlearnt. Furthermore, they learnt that the emotional wellness of individual employees impacts on the social wellbeing of all the employees and on the overall wellbeing of an organisation.

Module 7: Owning Projections

During this module, the participants could choose a colleague to work with, and groups were then formed for a practical exercise. Each participant was expected to complete certain sentence stems while speaking to their colleague. They were each allowed half an hour for the exercise, after which a discussion took place. The purpose of the discussion was to help the participants to realise that many of their responses, both negative and positive, concerned traits within themselves that they projected onto the colleague with whom they were working. Each participant responded to their colleague as if the traits belonged to their colleague without realising that the traits actually belonged to them. After the discussion, the participants commented on how frequently they had unconsciously projected issues onto their colleagues. Table 6.7 below details the thematic network of the module.

Table 6.7

Table showing the thematic network of Module 7

Title of module	Basic themes	Organising themes	Global themes
Module 7: Owning Projections	Differences	Communication	Psychological wellbeing
	Holding projections		
	Projective identification	Interpersonal space	
	Ignorance		

Basic Theme: Differences

Arguments are often the result of a misunderstanding of people's intentions. Hendrix (1992) states that people find it difficult to accept their partners' differences without making value judgements about these differences. These differences are the result of different interpretations of events. One participant stated, "I realise now why a colleague of mine that really underachieves, always breaks me down and make jokes about me being incompetent." The participants discussed the fact that two people can disagree or form totally different opinions based on the same information.

One participant commented that it was a revelation to him that his perceptions of others and situations are based on his inner self. The participants further realised how much training they still needed to be able to understand the dynamics of interpersonal relationships fully. The module proposed cultivating an awareness of one's own projections to create this understanding. An awareness of how each person perceives others would allows individuals to develop an understanding of their own intrapersonal psychodynamics. This shift in awareness in the participants presented the opportunity to help them to identify the growth opportunities available in all of their interactions with others.

Basic Theme: Holding Projections

The participants realised how important it is to become self-aware and to understand the real motivation behind their projections and the projections of others. They expressed a need to understand what they were projecting, why they were projecting it, and how often they were projecting these issues. The participants realised that they should not get angry when people project their issues onto others. They also realised that they should instead mirror these projections. This conscious way of interacting with others could help the participants to curb their levels of reactivity. The participants viewed mirroring as a valuable tool because they realised that it creates opportunities for growth for both parties in a conversation.

Organising Theme: Communication

The workforces of most South African companies consist of employees with diverse cultures, backgrounds, upbringings, and beliefs. These differences make communication an important issue. This module helped the participants to accept, understand, and acknowledge that it is not always easy to communicate with co-workers because of these numerous differences. The participants realised that people use communication to interact with others, but that interacting with others also involves more than a simple exchange of information. They came to realise that underlying emotions play an important role during interactions.

The participants admitted that they often unconsciously used others to carry some of their denied issues by projecting these denied issues onto others during communication. The intrapersonal and interpersonal psychodynamics that are at play during the communication process should not be underestimated as other people can unconsciously trigger certain emotions within the self. The participants learnt that they need to avoid getting upset when other people trigger certain reactions. They learnt that they should

instead take a stance of curiosity based on the realisation that a developmental area has been triggered.

One participant stated that he had tended to avoid others prior to being exposed to Imago training. He stated that the training had helped him to realise the important role other people play in the personal growth process. In general, the participants indicated that the workshops had helped them to realise that others contributed to their growth by making them aware of their fears, feelings, personal histories, and projections. The participants learnt that interactions with others highlight what they need to change in themselves because all parties in an interaction are equally responsible for creating a respectful, healing, and self-motivating environment. The participants were made aware of the fact that other people need them and that thus they need to take responsibility for the role they play when communicating with others.

Basic Theme: Projective Identification

The participants stated that the module had helped them to realise that they often projected their own denied traits that they felt were unacceptable and shameful onto some of their subordinates or co-workers. They identified the need to free themselves of these traits and the associated emotions during interactions. The participants also became aware of the fact that these projections could have a potentially devastating impact on others. The continual projection of negative traits onto other people creates the possibility for these people to start identifying with the projections. One of the participants stated that he could relate to this assumption as he had experienced feeling incompetent when a senior manager continuously branded him as incompetent.

The participants stated that they were aware of the importance of becoming conscious of their projections. They also stated that they had become aware of the need to be curious about their emotions and the beliefs hidden behind their projections.

Furthermore, the participants realised the importance of understanding the impact of their projections on their colleagues, the way in which their colleagues identify with these projections, and the need to change this destructive pattern. Hendrix (1992) refers to this dynamic as projective identification.

Basic Theme: Ignorance

The participants discussed their reasons for attending the course. The main reason identified was to improve their knowledge and competency relating to their functioning within the organisation. One participant stated that he had never missed an opportunity to attend courses because he felt that he would lose out or be left behind if he did not attend. He was fearful of being placed in a situation where he would have to admit to being ignorant of what was discussed. Another participant stated that the more courses he attends, the more he realises how much there is to learn and how little he really knows. The participants discussed their prior lack of knowledge of the Imago principles and the extent to which the Imago principles had created a new understanding of interpersonal relationships. Another participant stated that he had depended on courses to advance his knowledge and that the need for self-study and further reading was something he regarded as an absolute necessity.

Organising Theme: Interpersonal Space

The concepts of interpersonal space and how each individual defines their space were discussed throughout the different modules. The participants' understanding of these concepts varied in relation to the type of relationships they had with people entering the interpersonal space. They acknowledged that Imago concepts encouraged individuals to create a non-polluted space to support the dialogue process as a powerful tool contributing to the creation of a safe interpersonal environment. They also stated that it was easier to apply their knowledge in collaboration with others that had also been exposed to the Imago

concepts. The participants also understood that a conscious mind shift was pertinent, created personal growth opportunities, and resulted in a purified interpersonal environment where interactions could be encouraged with trust and respect.

Global Theme: Psychological Wellbeing

The participants made the following comment regarding psychological wellbeing at work: "While we are at work, and interacting with others, we should use this golden opportunity to discover who we really are." The participants realised that all interpersonal connections provide a platform for growth. Organisations should thus provide employees with training concerning intrapersonal and interpersonal psychodynamic issues. The participants understood that if employees could be exposed to these opportunities, they would start to see people and their environment differently. The participants felt that employees could then make a conscious effort to invest their energy more productively and to take charge of their own development. A participant commented on the fact that the implementation of these changes would eventually contribute to the overall psychological wellbeing of employees in general.

The participants were asked to present their concluding opinions on the module which had been presented. The participants agreed that companies should provide an environment where employees can feel safe to express their emotions. The participants also agreed that the Imago training had provided them with the necessary intellectual stimulation and knowledge to enable them to create an emotionally safe working environment as both leaders and managers. They also developed a better understanding of the events taking place on an interpersonal level in a social context. Furthermore, the participants developed an understanding of how the environment influences individuals on an intrapersonal level and vice versa. They commented on the fact that the prevalence of

mental health problems like stress, depression, and anxiety could be reduced if employees were allowed to express themselves without fear.

Conclusion

The experiences shared by the participants contributed very positively to the aim of the research, namely to create an awareness of the intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics that influence change in individuals' interpersonal relationships and in organisations. A healthy and constructive repertoire of issues relating to work and personal matters was covered and occasionally discussed. The workshop created an environment in which the participants were able to express themselves freely without fear, which thus created a new awareness. Some of the participants participated actively, while others participated by listening. However, everyone had an equal opportunity to state their views anonymously in writing.

A shift in consciousness took place in the participants as a result of their ability to implement the Imago concepts in an organisational context. This new consciousness contributed to creating an environment that was safe enough for the participants to apply introspection and to understand their own *imago*. Many of the participants felt safe enough to share these discoveries with others in the group, although this was not expected of them. The participants' responses to the Imago training were in line with the responses described by existing Imago literature. As the purposes of this study are to avoid theoretical reductionism and to create an awareness of the numerous applications and benefits of Imago theory with regard to the organisational context, my hope is that this study will spark greater interest in and develop an awareness of the application of Imago techniques and theory as applied to the organisational context.

Chapter 7: Summary and Integration

Introduction

Luquet and Hannah (1998) state that "Imago relationship therapy is a relational paradigm approach designed to increase couples communication, correct developmental arrests, heal wounds from childhood and promote differentiation of a partner while restoring connection between them" (p. 13). In this study, I explored the effect of these Imago concepts within the organisational context to establish whether the childhood wounding that affects couples in their relationships also has an effect on other interpersonal relationships such as the relationships between senior managers and their subordinates.

Furthermore, I wanted to explore whether Imago concepts presented in an organisational context could create a shift in the participants' consciousness, both intrapersonally and in their interpersonal relationships. This shift in consciousness encompassed individuals developing a better understanding of themselves in the context of their social and workplace interactions. These aims are relevant to the study as individuals will consciously be more empathic and less conflict-based in their interactions with others within the working environment (characterised by constant interaction) if they are able to understand the effects of their childhoods on their lives in general.

These aims are further relevant as every person's childhood creates their reality and how they perceive what is right or wrong. Throughout our childhood, we are exposed to a host of influences, including cultural, familial, social, and environmental factors. These factors, together with the influence of our childhood caretakers, play a key role in our personality development. In Imago theory, two fundamental processes are woven together with the influences mentioned above, namely the socialisation process and the

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developmental stages (Hendrix, 1992). The socialisation process refers to the knowledge, social skills, and values we acquire as well as the role models we admire, and how we integrate ourselves into our communities (Hendrix, 1992). This process also includes self-imposed and externally imposed guidelines (Hendrix, 1992). It also accommodates behavioural traits that we expect from ourselves and others. Each developmental stage presents us with its own particular needs that result in behavioural adaptations if these needs remain unmet.

The same principle of socialisation applies to organisational structures. People bring their embedded socialisation and behavioural adaptations to the organisation. However, the organisation also exercises a socialising influence on its employees. This socialising influence requires an understanding of and conformance to its formal and informal power structures as well as its particular behavioural requirements. Thus, our subconscious behavioural adaptations can play an influential role in the quality of our work relationships and work performance.

Imago theory states that our psychological wellbeing is influenced by the quality of our interactions with others (Hendrix, 1992). Therefore, psychological wellbeing is also greatly influenced by our work colleagues. The daily conflicts that arise between people in a workplace are a product of both intrapersonal and interpersonal issues. When dealing with conflict, organisations often mainly emphasise the overt problems and tend to overlook the influence of underlying issues between people. The understanding that these conflicts are triggered by both intrapersonal and interpersonal issues empowers people to strive towards dissolving the conflict by recognising these underlying issues. Intrapersonal and interpersonal issues can be disruptive, and therefore it is important for individuals to understand their own behavioural adaptations with regard to conflict. It is also important that such issues are addressed as part of the conflict resolution process.

By creating an understanding of the role of intrapersonal and interpersonal factors in conflict situations, employees are empowered to understand the need for change and, in certain instances, the need for healing. Improved conflict management also gives rise to better productivity levels and increased levels of work satisfaction. As consultants, we have a role to play in establishing a shift in consciousness in employees. We also have the responsibility to help individuals to understand interpersonal psychodynamics. Employees often make incorrect assumptions about others and then react on those assumptions without thinking. However, the demands of the workplace require employees to work together. Thus, the need to teach them interpersonal skills arises.

The research question focused on whether participants would undergo a change in their self-definition by being exposed to the training. The aim of the research was thus to collect data on the effects of the Imago training presented to a group of managers at the Lonmin Platinum Mine. This data was obtained through both qualitative and quantitative research. Both the qualitative data and the quantitative data confirm that there was a shift in the participants' consciousness as envisaged.

Summary and Integration

It was envisaged that the participants' definition of themselves would change from a reductionist view to a more differentiated view of the self in the organisational context. The study aimed to identify whether the subjects would relate differently to their subordinates after being exposed to the Imago training. Thus, quantitative data was obtained from several psychometric evaluations, whereas qualitative results were obtained from both verbal and written responses. The target population consisted of 23 senior heads of departments and 23 subordinates from the Lonmin Platinum Mine. However, only 22 senior managers and 22 subordinates participated in the study.

Pre-tests were administered. The intervention, consisting of seven modules, was then conducted over a period of seven weeks. Thereafter, the same tests that were used in the pre-test were also used in the post-test. The data were analysed using SPSS Version 17 (SPSS Inc., 2009). The pre-test and post-test scores for each measurement instrument were investigated by means of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test. The results of the research study show that there was a shift in the participants' consciousness. The findings discussed below were established with regard to the quantitative results.

Quantitative Results

There was an improvement in the perceived problem solving abilities of the participants. The participants thus understood themselves intrapersonally by undergoing the Imago training. They also understood that intrapersonal factors could have an effect on their interpersonal behaviour. These realisations resulted in the participants developing more confidence in their ability to resolve interpersonal problems. The intentional dialogue taught the participants to listen to the inner realities of others. It also taught them that problems often dissolve during the containment process. The participants' perceptions of their problem solving abilities increased through this process and the Imago training.

Although the difference between the SWLS pre-test and post-test was not statistically significant, the participants did experience marginally higher levels of satisfaction with their lives. The tendency of this change was, therefore, in the right direction. A reason for the marginal improvement could be that the participants only began to understand the reasons for interpersonal differences. Another reason for this marginal improvement may be that they also began to realise that every person carries certain unmet needs within them. By understanding these unmet needs, the participants developed an understanding of the interpersonal psychodynamics at play during their interactions with

others. Therefore, this understanding resulted in an improvement in their levels of satisfaction with their lives.

It was further predicted that the participants' emotional condition (consisting of subjective feelings of tension, annoyance, irritation, or rage) would improve after they had been exposed to the Imago training. The results revealed that a change did take place in the anger component of the participants' temperament. As the decrease in the anger scores from the STAS pre-test to the post-test was significant, the participants' reactivity regarding conflict situations decreased. The participants realised that other people often react from within their own frame of reference. Hence, people react in ways that often unintentionally hurt others. However, these unintentional reactions can often re-wound individuals in the same way that they were wounded during childhood.

It was further envisaged that the participants would experience increased levels of marital satisfaction after they had been exposed to the training because Imago concepts are applicable to all interpersonal situations. The respondents did experience more marital satisfaction after the intervention had taken place, which is seen in the post-test results. However, the difference between the IMS pre-test and post-test results was too small to be of statistical significance. The reason for this may be the small sample size used.

It was also found that the managers who responded more positively towards their subordinates after the intervention were the judging personality types identified by the MBTI. However, it was initially expected that the intuitive and perceiving types would be the most affected by the training because of their openness to change and their ability to be flexible. It is possible that the people with judging personality types responded more positively to the intervention because the information was presented and could be applied in a structured way, which people with judging type personalities prefer.

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Analysis of the separate IMI results of the managers and their subordinates indicated that the subordinates experienced a greater change in the flexibility of their managers' interpersonal behaviours than the levels of change that the managers reported for themselves. The discussion below details the qualitative responses.

Qualitative Responses

Basic, organising, and global themes were identified during and after the seven-module intervention which was presented to the participants. The focus of Module 1 was on providing an overall explanation of the Imago concepts and exploring why relationships are characterised by frustrations instead of happiness. The purpose of this module was to create insight that would gradually be integrated into the participants' lives. The global theme that was extracted for Module 1 from the participants' responses was "from insight into integration" (p. 177). Results shown that the Imago training assisted the participants in understanding themselves intrapersonally and in the context of interpersonal relationships.

Module 2 contained information on the functioning of the brain. This module included information regarding our instinctual drives, how we interpret information, and how we respond to it. The participants were encouraged to realise that they have the ability to adapt and change their behaviour to live their lives without adaptations eventually. The global theme that was extracted for Module 2 from the participants' responses was "expressing full aliveness" (p. 186). This global theme indicated that the participants realised that they have the ability to change their habituated behaviour and that they can co-create a safe working environment in which people's needs of living a full life are met.

Module 3 focused on teaching the participants the intentional dialogue. This kind of communication is a powerful tool which helps people to communicate effectively. People often feel frustrated and incompetent because they do not know how to communicate.

When people can communicate effectively, they experience deeper connection with others and eventually experience authentic happiness. The global theme that was extracted for Module 3 from the participants' responses was "authentic happiness" (p. 195). This global theme indicated that the participants realised that they can only live in harmony with others if they make time to talk to and to listen to others. The intentional dialogue was regarded as a valuable practical tool to use in this regard.

During Module 4, the emphasis was on teaching the participants about the origins of our frustrations and how we unconsciously inflict pain on others in an attempt to relieve our own pain. It is difficult to change old and habituated behaviour, but we need to make a conscious decision to do things differently. The global theme extracted for Module 4 from the participants' responses was "waking up is hard to do" (p. 202). The participants realised that new information was insightful, but they also acknowledged that it is difficult to change old habituated behaviour because such behaviour has been used over a long period of time.

Module 5 contained information regarding our developmental years. The early years of development, which are called the attachment stage, are crucial. Wounding during this time can course severe pathology. The participants were taught that we are all brought up differently. They came to understand that our developmental years can be very influential in determining individual differences. The global theme extracted for Module 5 from the participants' responses was "individual differences" (p. 209). The participants indicated that the training helped them to understand the influence of their upbringing on who they have become, to understand why people react differently in the same situation, and to understand how responses are triggered unconsciously.

In Module 6, emphasis was placed on the impact of the socialisation process and how they were taught to fit into society. The participants learnt that certain traits are

suppressed, while others are encouraged during this time. Individuals thus need to understand these processes in other people, particularly the people they work with, because the emotional wellness of individuals impacts on the overall wellness of the organisation. The global theme for Module 6 that was extracted from the participants' responses was "organisational wellbeing" (p. 215). The participants indicated that they realised employees need to be well on an emotional level to function optimally and that all employees have unmet needs but unlimited potential as well.

In Module 7, we dealt with projections. The participants were taught the real motivation behind our projections. Once the individuals understood themselves intrapersonally, they were then able to understand themselves better interpersonally. The global theme extracted for Module 7 from participants' responses was "psychological wellbeing" (p. 220). The participants realised that all interpersonal connections provide a platform for growth and that organisations should provide employees with training opportunities concerning intrapersonal and interpersonal psychodynamic issues.

One of the greatest successes of the intervention was the positive attitude that the participants developed throughout their participation in the training. The development of a positive attitude was especially relevant as an aim of the intervention was to enable the participants to develop a better understanding of each individual's intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics to influence their interpersonal relationships within the organisation positively.

After an initial inquisitive, yet uncommitted start from the participants, the intervention created an environment where healthy debate, the exchange of ideas, and even the sharing of experiences showed that the participants could express themselves without fear. The participants who were initially uncommitted to the process were encouraged to listen and to participate anonymously by means of writing their experiences on paper

instead of directly involving themselves in the discussions. This process encouraged the whole group to participant actively in the training. The apparent shift in consciousness indicated that the group not only understood the Imago concepts, but that they also willingly applied the knowledge to enable them to see how such a shift positively affected their functioning within the organisational context.

The intention of the intervention was to bring about a shift in consciousness in the participants. Both the quantitative and qualitative results indicate that this objective was achieved. The participants indicated the development of a better understanding regarding intrapersonal and interpersonal psychodynamics. They also reported more flexibility regarding interpersonal work relationship issues.

Limitations

A number of limitations were identified in the study and are discussed below. A small sample size that did not fully represent the population of employees was used. Thus, the generalisability of the results should be approached with caution. As a complete and comprehensive assessment of each of the participants was not conducted, the changes reported by the participants only encompassed the individuals and subordinates' subjective views. A 360-degree approach to assessing the amount and nature of the changes would have provided confirmation of the fact that significant changes had indeed taken place because a wider pool of people would have been used.

Another limitation of the study was that I was not able to assess the long-term sustainability of the changes demonstrated by the participants because of business factors such as retrenchments, restructurings, and resignations. Furthermore, not being able to conduct a longitudinal study was also a limitation. Only broad concepts of Imago relationship theory could be presented because of the limited time available. For example, the concept of wounding could only be addressed in a general sense. The specific

applications of these concepts regarding each individual's personal circumstances could also not be addressed. I could also not take other variables that collectively defined the individuals into consideration (these variables related to biological, genetic, cultural, aptitude, interest, and personality factors). Possible threats to the reliability and validity of the results are the following: observed pathology in some of the participants, stress at work and before or during testing sessions, suicidal ideation, and divorce proceedings amongst other factors.

The intervention focused on interpersonal psychodynamics and thus could have profound implications for some people in the organisation. The individuals who were exposed to the training might have consciously decided to improve themselves both on an intrapersonal and interpersonal level because of the shift in their consciousness. However, the individuals who were not exposed to the training did not develop these insights and may have therefore reacted with consternation to the changes observed in their colleagues. Thus, unintended conflict could have been created because of the unequal distribution of the employees who were trained. The possibility of such conflict could be prevented if the majority of the employees of an organisation could be exposed to the training. Thus, the study was limited by the number of individuals it could reach.

As the training took place at the participants' workplace during their working hours, they were generally stressed when they arrived for the sessions because of work commitments and responsibilities. Thus, facilitating the transition from the working environment to the training sessions reduced the time available for the actual content of the training sessions. At times, I observed that work-related stress also interfered with some of the participants' ability to be present and to engage with the training content and activities. During the analysis of the qualitative responses, elements of psychopathology emerged. In particular, narcissistic tendencies, signs of depression, and elements of bipolar disorder

were identified. A recommendation for future research would be to include instruments that measure these potential disorders.

Strengths of the Study

Although many of the quantitative results were statistically insignificant and although several hypotheses were also not confirmed, the most significant strength of the study was that all the results confirmed a shift in the participants' consciousness in the desired direction. Therefore, it can be concluded with a substantial degree of confidence that the design of the training, its content, and its delivery resulted in significant levels of change in the participants as a group. The use of the two types of measurement, namely qualitative and quantitative measurement, widened the scope of the aspects that could be assessed. Both methods provided confirmation of the effectiveness of the programme.

A result that was better than expected was obtained from the qualitative assessment. Furthermore, individual and voluntary feedback on intrapersonal issues led to the identification of two participants with suicidal ideation. These participants, as well as a few others, approached me for personal and couples counselling. Thus, the programme was beneficial to these participants in a personal context as well as in an organisational context because the participants were able to access professional assistance. Given the nature of the content of the programme, similar outcomes with regard to treatable pathology may be anticipated whenever the programme is presented to other similar groups of people. These factors are further strengths of the study.

Lowman (2002) identifies two types of "characteristics of people that affect both work adjustment and how individuals seek to fit into groups and organizations" (p. 6). These characteristics are called trait-rooted variables and character variables (Lowman, 2002). Trait-rooted variables are of a biological or genetic nature, are the fundamental building blocks of an individual's personality, and are more difficult to modify than

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character variables (Lowman, 2002). Character variables have a greater culture-based component and are a product of the interaction between an individual and the environment. Lowman (2002) further states that "character may with effective interventions or policies – change or be changed, at least in its behavioural expressions" (p. 6). Trait-related variables may not be as accessible to an Imago intervention as character-based variables because of their biological and genetic nature. However, this programme has demonstrated its effectiveness in creating a shift in consciousness with respect to adaptations (trait-based) and character-based variables. The interpersonal dynamics model is thus suitable to apply to any organisational setting.

Recommendations for Future Research

The research was conducted during the participants' working hours. They were thus given a certain amount of time off during their busy work schedules to attend the programme once a week. Most of the participants arrived at the training sessions in a stressful state. It is therefore recommended that future training be presented away from the company's premises to create a more relaxed atmosphere. Furthermore, training away from the working environment in a relaxed atmosphere will also be more conducive to allowing the participants to access relevant memories.

In an ideal situation, all of the employees of a company would undergo training to allow them to connect from the same conscious paradigm. However, company-wide training is not always possible. Hence, it is recommended that the focus of the training be on a particular group within a department of a company. Members of this group should interact with one another on a daily basis. By using a particular group of employees, it would allow one to measure the amount of real change within the department. These circumstances would also enable the researcher to determine the benefits of the training for the company and not only for the individuals attending the course.

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Many people come from dysfunctional families, and therefore, without intending to measure pathology, the researcher could identify pathology in some of the participants. The presence of pathology could have a major impact on these individuals' interpersonal relationships and hence should not be ignored. It is therefore recommended that a psychometric measurement (or test) be included in future training to identify individuals with pathology (for example, people with bipolar disorders, suicidal ideation, psychopathic tendency, and major depression). It is also recommended that counsellors consult with such participants individually. Many of these cases go unnoticed, which often has devastating consequences for both the company and the individuals involved.

The purpose of therapy is to help people to work through their traumas so that their overall mental health can improve. It is difficult for some people, such as introverts, to discuss their trauma and experiences because people in an organisational context are not expected to speak about their experiences in front of their colleagues because of a fear of victimisation and personal exposure. Although many individuals cannot afford individual therapy, they also do not realise the value of processing their thoughts through writing as a form of therapy. New neurological pathways are formed when trauma is processed in this manner. Therefore, more emphasis should be placed on recommending different ways to process underlying trauma.

People who are unhappily married bring their unhappiness to work. It is therefore important to inform individuals of the availability of other in-depth Imago training programmes such as the couple's workshop and Imago singles training programmes. Other training, such as life coaching and various options for individual therapy, could also be recommended to help individuals to obtain intrapersonal and interpersonal growth. It should, however, be recommended that a weekend couple's workshop be attended by the participants of an organisational intervention so that both people in a marital relationship

can experience a shift in consciousness. This process would reduce the possibility of only one person in a marital relationship growing intrapersonally. If only one person in a marriage relationship grows, it may aggravate interpersonal issues in the couple's relationship.

Conclusion

By presenting the Imago theory programme, I intended to create a shift in the participants' consciousness by creating an awareness of intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics with the aim of influencing change relating to how individuals interact with one another in the organisational context. The purpose of the intervention was to make the participants aware of the internal (nurturing) and external (socialisation) influences in their lives that result in the formation of certain psychological structures. These structures take the form of the lost, denied, disowned, and hidden selves as well as projections and projective identifications (Hendrix, 1992). The application of Imago principles brought about a much greater awareness and understanding of the participants' own intrapersonal dynamics. It also brought about a realisation that everyone has developmental areas in the form of unmet needs.

The participants realised that they restrict or explode their energy during conflict situations. Such conflicts are thus accompanied by certain emotions such as anxiety, shame, guilt, sadness, and/or anger. By understanding these interpersonal psychodynamics, the participants could then shift their unconscious relating into the realm of conscious relating to result in them being able to think things through carefully before reacting impulsively. The results proved that the participants would be less inclined to respond with anger during conflict after they had been exposed to the Imago intervention.

I am convinced that the intervention not only served its intended purpose, which was highlighted by the measurable shift in consciousness displayed by the participants, but

that it also emphasised the underlying pathology affecting many of the participants. It thus emphasised the need for further intervention. Several participants spoke about their need to enrol for individual therapy after the intervention because of their realisation that everyone carries baggage that needs to be 'unpacked'.

The concept of childhood wounding was regarded as a given. Therefore, some participants felt safe enough to speak about certain life experiences. The safe environment created for the participants enabled them to express their views and experiences without a fear of incrimination. As the course progressed, many of the participants commented on the need for "more of this kind of training". Each participant understood that there was an individual shift in awareness that became necessary for them to function optimally and to contribute meaningfully to their organisation. Once they understood this need for change, they were very eager to make the necessary changes. However, the need for further individual intervention regarding certain participants was highlighted. Based on the study as a whole, the benefit of the training to the individuals and to the company can thus be seen as the improvement of the individuals' mental health and the promotion of working in a conflict-free environment.

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Appendix A: Consent From Mine Managers

Appendix A - Consent from mine managers

MEMORANDUM

LONMIN

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To:	A Agathagelou		
FROM:	Technical Services	OUR TEL NO.	
DATE:	2008	OUR REF:	
SUBJECT:	Training program – Senior staff members – Technical Services		

I hereby confirm that we accepted the training program for individual Senior staff members in Technical Services done by Amanda Agathagelou in 2008.

Regards

Fransie de Jager

Communication Coordinator

Technical Services

0832327042

Appendix B: Consent Form

<u>Participant Consent Form:</u>

I _____ have been clearly informed regarding the nature and objectives of the study, including my participation in it. I hereby give consent to participate in this training which will be conducted by Amanda Agathagelou, an Industrial Psychologist in private practise and a Doctoral student under the supervision of Professor Ricky Snyders at the University of South Africa.

I understand that my participation in this study will cause no harm to myself, that my privacy will be protected, and that I have the right to withdraw or refuse to answer any questions at any stage of the study, without any negative impact on me.

Signed   Date

_____

        _____

Appendix C: Questionnaire

Name and Surname: _____

- What was the most important learning point for you?
- In what way can you utilize the knowledge gained?
- In what way can you utilize the knowledge gained in your working environment?
- Has your perception towards other people changed?
- If your perception towards other people has changed, in what way has it changed?