

Chapter 2

The Personal Development Foundation

2.1 Chapter Overview

The professionally developed psychologist must be personally developed in order to sustain long-term growth and stability. This personal development foundation includes the dedication to explore the self and a commitment to address areas that require attention. The importance of taking care of yourself before helping patients cannot be understated. This chapter includes areas that are personality focused as well as areas of skill development. For example, introversion, extraversion, locus of control, motivation, positive thinking, and emotional intelligence are all areas to consider in personality. Skills related to personal development included in this chapter are embracing change, setting goals, managing time, communication, conflict management, stress, and coping strategies. Although the focus of this publication is on professional development, solidifying personal development areas is vital to professional success.

2.2 Foundations of Development

Before delving too deeply into personal or professional development, we must first dissect the common denominator of both: “development.” Inherent to the term “development” is growth, maturation, and evolution. Oftentimes in professional development, the impetus is on the surface. As in a majority of fields, the focus on results represents this surface and as long as the results are satisfactory or favorable, there is “proof” of success. However, what is underneath the surface of these results may be underdeveloped or even toxic. Essentially, development starts from the underneath (personal) and works its way to the surface (professional). A good example to solidify this point is with body image. Individuals engage in healthy behaviors for a variety of reasons. Some may exercise to look appealing to their

significant other. Others may exercise based on their view of what society thinks their appearance should be. Some may enjoy exercise and complete it as a coping skill for stress with no consideration of body image. Regardless of the reason, the external appearance serves as the surface, and the internal benefits serve as the underneath.

In your continued reading of this text, you will find numerous surface areas such as the creation of a curriculum vitae, the art of networking, and the many opportunities for the early career professional. However, these professional development areas are a by-product of solid personal development. Despite their importance, personal development is the seminal focus. The difference between personal and professional development will be further elaborated in the next section. Although we fully understand that this text may serve as a reference for the reader trying to solidify professional development areas, we do recommend the initial focus of your efforts to be on personal development so the professionally developed areas have the potential to increase in quantity and quality. In this section, we outline models of learning and memory as well as intelligence. The rationale for focusing on this first is that the field of psychology constantly evolves and practitioners and researchers must be able to adapt. Examining our personal learning styles can improve the ease of learning and increase memory.

2.2.1 Learning and Intelligence

In its most basic form, learning can be completed implicitly or explicitly. Implicit learning is where learning is more passive and occurs without a conscious awareness. For example, walking or running are activities that were products of implicit learning. As adults, we probably don't remember our parents or caregivers giving us step-by-step directions (no pun intended) on how to walk or run. More than likely, they had us stand up, they held our hands for support, and then pulled a little so we had to move our legs to stay on our feet. We did not know that we were learning how to walk or support ourselves standing up. Today, it would be quite difficult to remember and outline how we learned to walk. In contrast, explicit learning is a more active process where learning occurs with conscious awareness. For example, following the directions to put together a table or studying a textbook for an examination are examples of explicit learning. This type of learning is active, goal-driven, and conscious. Although the two learning styles contrast, there are applications where the two work simultaneously. Despite the general ire that graduate students have toward group presentations, it does serve as a form of implicit and explicit learning. Mastery of the content and ability to present the information is the primary focus (explicit); however, learning to work in groups, disagreeing professionally, and compromising are learned without conscious awareness (implicit). Both of these types of learning are linked to overall intelligence.

Intelligence has long been understood and conceptualized through an intelligence quotient (IQ) score. The IQ score results more from explicit learning as the

information tested is often consciously studied. For example, to increase vocabulary and working memory, the individual may consciously study words and sentence structures as well as ways to increase their memory. However, there is an implicit aspect to IQ scores as well. For example, an individual may enjoy playing chess, which can improve their ability to manipulate visual patterns. This could help increase their score on perceptual reasoning subtests.

Standardized intelligence testing has been a great success story in psychology. Intelligence batteries such as the Wechsler scales, Stanford-Binet intelligence scales, and the Kaufman intelligence tests provide the IQ of an individual; the IQ serves a variety of psychological functions. Examples of the utility of intelligence testing include endorsing or refuting a diagnosis of intellectual disability and assessing specific capacities within IQ (processing speed, working memory, perceptual reasoning). Furthermore, in the forensic realm, intellectual assessment can serve as a consideration to rule out intellectual functioning as a mitigating factor in the commission of a crime.

Despite the importance of IQ, it is a very limited understanding of intelligence in terms of personal and professional development. Essentially, the IQ score provides a “level” of where the individual falls in relation to diverse populations. Although this is important, the IQ is limited to primarily linguistic, logical, and spatial skills and does not account for other forms of intelligence. In 1983, Howard Gardner developed the theory of multiple intelligences given the limited applicability of an IQ score. In this theory, Gardner (1983) identified the following eight intelligences:

1. Linguistic intelligence: ability to perceive and generate written or spoken language
2. Logical-mathematical intelligence: ability to solve problems using logic, abstract, and numerical methods
3. Musical intelligence: ability to create, understand, and communicate meanings from sound
4. Spatial intelligence: ability to perceive, modify, or create visual and/or spatial images
5. Bodily kinesthetic intelligence: ability to use the body to solve problems
6. Naturalistic intelligence: ability to distinguish components of the natural environment
7. Interpersonal intelligence: ability to recognize and appreciate the feelings, thoughts, and intentions of other people
8. Intrapersonal intelligence: an individual’s ability to understand their emotions, cognitions, behaviors, strengths, and vulnerabilities of themselves

The framework of multiple intelligence is not intended to be exhaustive or that the labels are definitive; the aim is to support a pluralistic view of intelligence as opposed to simply an IQ score (Chen & Gardner, 2005). Upon review of the intelligences, each of them has personal and professional development implications. Being able to effectively communicate with social support and colleagues (linguistic) is imperative in the development of a positive social support system and an

appropriate working alliance. The ability to solve problems (logical-mathematical) is an intelligence that manifests itself in time management, coping skills, and workplace tasks, an essential intelligence with personal and professional implications. Understanding the meaning in sound (musical) may be confusing to some as a form of intelligence. However, creating, singing, listening to, or moving to music serves as a catalyst in physical rehabilitation, emotional support services, and for communication for those who struggle to express themselves. Therefore, this intelligence does have personal and professional benefits as well. Being able to modify or transform objects or images (spatial) is important for personal and professional project management. For example, the ability to follow pictorial directions for do-it-yourself projects or pictorial results of a psychological assessment report is a form of spatial intelligence. Physical activity (bodily kinesthetic) is important as coping skills are oftentimes physical. For example, completing yoga or playing tennis requires this form of intelligence. The ability to exhibit mindfulness and noticing changes in the environment is naturalistic intelligence. Mindfulness in an individual's personal and professional life is important to bring the individual back to stasis. The ability to recognize thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in the self (intrapersonal) and of others (interpersonal) is an important social intelligence. Given that people are social creatures, the personal and professional applications of these intelligences are endless.

2.2.2 Memory

The goal of learning is to solidify information into memory for retrieval. Historically, the basic architecture of memory stemmed from the multi-store model. In this model, sensory stores held information very briefly, the short-term store had very limited capacity, and the long-term store was able to store information over long periods of time (Atkinson & Shiffrin, 1968). Essentially, as the individual receives information (sensory), if they are attentive, the information is then transferred to the short-term store. If this information is rehearsed, it is then transferred to the long-term store. If not, it is displaced from the short-term store. Despite the importance of this model, memory has been seen as much more complex and the conceptualization has changed over time.

Stemming from the multi-store model, Baddeley and Hitch (1974) replaced the concept of short-term store with working memory. Working memory includes the following four components: central executive, phonological loop, visuospatial sketchpad, and an episodic buffer (Baddeley, 2001). The central executive is the most important and flexible component of the system. It closely resembles attention, has a limited capacity, and is activated when the individual is faced with any cognitively demanding task such as reading, problem solving, or multitasking. The central executive drives the working memory system and allocates data to the phonological loop and the visuospatial sketchpad. The phonological loop holds information in speech-based form; verbal rehearsal (repetition) is of great importance to

retain speech-based information. The visuospatial sketchpad is responsible for the manipulation and temporary storage of spatial motion and visual patterns. Rehearsal is important in the visuospatial sketchpad, and it is used in many daily situations that individuals encounter. For example, this component is used when finding a route when driving or playing a game of checkers. Lastly, the episodic buffer serves as a storage for the integrated information from the phonological loop, visuospatial sketchpad, and long-term memory. The integrated nature of the episodic buffer provides a bridge for the phonological loop and visuospatial sketchpad since they are two separate stores in the working memory system.

Learning, intelligence, and memory are all important foundational elements of personal and professional development. Exploration of the components of each can help identify effective learning and study habits, improve multiple areas of intelligence, and solidify learned information into memory. For example, personally effective studying/learning habits can improve the quality and quantity of information learned. Reviewing the multiple forms of intelligence can facilitate exploration of lesser known intelligences and review of solidified intelligences. Lastly, when explicitly learning, utilizing the phonological loop and visuospatial sketchpad simultaneously may help solidify information better for future retrieval.

2.3 Personal vs. Professional Development

Personal and professional development are often used interchangeably; however, there is a significant difference between the two. The relationship between the two is not causal; therefore, it is equally important to develop both simultaneously. Despite this equal importance, the focus of this publication is on professional development; however, this chapter will serve as an overview of numerous areas an individual can personally develop. Personal development encompasses the acquisition of the skills that you need for life in general; these skills are present in all areas of life, including the workplace. Examples of personal development skills include time management, goal setting, leadership skills, and conflict management. Professional development includes the skills required to understand your career, complete tasks in your career, as well as how to improve your performance in your career. Examples of professional development in psychology includes the ability to complete a treatment plan, complete a psychological assessment, complete a therapy note, as well as provide supervision to staff. The common denominator of the two is skill development; on the personal development side, the focus is on life in general, whereas on the professional development side, the focus is on skills for the career in psychology. The overlap of the two exists as personal development skills are necessary to complete professional development tasks. For example, time management is a personal development skill, and the psychologist needs good time management skills in order to complete individual psychotherapy sessions, including documentation, during the work day. In this chapter, we will focus primarily on personal

development and then expand these personal development components into professional development.

2.4 The Exploration of Self

We have all heard the common statement in psychology, “You can’t help others unless you help yourself first.” Despite its redundancy, this statement is very true; if you are neglecting yourself, it is bound to impact your personal and professional well-being. In order to excel personally and professionally, the individual must engage in exploring a variety of areas within themselves. This exploration can take place in many forms. We will dissect the self from the lens of multicultural psychology as well as outline the benefit of psychotherapy in the self-exploration process.

Multicultural psychology is concerned with cognition, affect, and behaviors in settings where people with different backgrounds interact (Mio, Barker, and Tumambing, 2012). This area of psychology will be reviewed briefly in this chapter as the topic is covered in greater depth in Chap. 5 as well as the overview, state of the discipline, and future directions of multicultural psychology in Chap. 13. To develop personally, the individual must identify and understand the complexities of their own diversity, components of their group culture including individualism or collectivism, as well as their worldview based on societal interactions. The diversity variables of an individual include race, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, religion, culture, disability, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation. The broad definition of culture is the values, belief systems, and practices of a group of people that is passed down from one generation to the next (Mio et al., 2012); this includes demographic area, socioeconomic status, and how we choose to affiliate ourselves within our group and with other groups (Pedersen, 1999). Lastly, our worldview is shaped by how we view our relationship to our environment in its totality which includes other people, nature, and things (Sue, 1978).

The exploration of the abovementioned components is paramount to be able to develop personally and professionally. The individual diversity variables are important to understand the “basic” self. By this, we mean that exploring the experiences you have while possessing each trait and also reviewing what it actually means to you to identify with that trait. Sometimes individuals may resent some of their possessed variables. For example, a homosexual male may resent his sexual orientation as not all people or religions accept this sexual orientation. In another example, a female may resent her gender if she seeks employment in a traditionally male-dominated profession and experiences discrimination. Understanding and exploring the meaning of our “basic” self helps fuel the personal development process.

Culture is a multifaceted construct. As previously mentioned, culture is the passing down of values, beliefs, and practices from one generation to the next. Exploration of your culture helps the individual better understand how their belief system impacts their personal development. For example, in terms of culture, a person may be quite involved in cultural traditions or they may be far removed. Both

are neither correct nor incorrect, but the key exploration in this is how the person feels based on their level of adherence to their culture. For example, Native Americans oftentimes participate in a sweat lodge ritual in order to cleanse toxins from the body, renew spiritual practices, as well as purify the mind and soul. In this example, the Native American can decide to not engage in completing the sweat lodge at all, complete sparingly, or complete as per cultural expectations. Regardless, the Native American will have to explore their rationale for the level of adherence as well as how this will be viewed in their culture.

Lastly, your individual worldview is the examination of your relationship to your environment. The environment includes interpersonal relationships and nature. These relationships impact how we think, feel, and behave. Since our environments are forever changing, we adapt by having many roles. For example, in the workplace your role is based on your job title and duties. In the home, you may have multiple roles such as significant other, parent, sibling, and/or child. There are obviously many other examples. The key point we are trying to make is that depending on our environment, your thoughts, feelings, roles, and behaviors will be different. To further complicate, perceptions and interactions of different cultural groups in these changing environments are often based on past learning experiences (Sue et al., 1996). It is the combination of these complexities that further validate the need to examine and explore the self.

The underlying theme in the exploration of self is insight. When considering diversity, culture, and worldview, insight into each of these as well as their interactions will increase your overall understanding of self. In order to truly gain insight into the self, an open mind is required as well as diligence in the exploration of family history, cultural history, current involvement in family and culture, as well as individual responses to situational stressors. Although this exploration may be achieved individually, engagement in psychotherapy may be indicated to facilitate this exploration.

2.5 The Psychologist's Treatment Plan

In the clinical psychology realm, interventions are guided by a living, breathing document called the treatment plan. The treatment plan continues to evolve as our patients experience change or struggles that threaten homeostasis. Treatment plans generally consist of the following areas: medical, mental health, substance use, family support, social support, legal issues, employment, and education. All areas mentioned minus employment and education are areas within personal development. Again, some personal development skills, such as time management and leadership skills, are also used in the employment and education world but are not specific to these areas. In order to personally develop, psychologists must address each of these areas.

Physical and mental health are both important parts of overall stability. Both have a prevention and intervention component to them. Preventatively, attending

regularly scheduled medical appointments, following an appropriate diet, and completing regular exercise are preventive actions that can minimize medical issues. Should there be a medical diagnosis, adhering to medical recommendations would be the appropriate intervention. In terms of mental health stability, successfully managing known triggers (stress, anger, etc.) for maladaptive mood fluctuations and self-care activities may be ways to minimize mental instability (prevention). On the intervention side, active coping skills after exposure to a trigger and ongoing psychotherapy can help maintain or restore mood stability. Despite some of this being known, even as psychologists, we can become complacent and essentially not practice what we preach.

Social and family support are an integral part of personal development. Despite being driven and determined, we all need some kind of support. We will experience having a bad day. We will experience times where we need the opinion of a close friend. Sometimes individual coping skills are not enough. All these considerations require us to have a solid foundation of support. Support plays a dual role by providing positive feelings associated to being included in a group as well as self-care/coping with the activities that are completed with our support system. We fully understand that some family relationships may not always be positive; family members may not approve of your career choice, choice of intimate partner, etc. Therefore, evaluating these relationships is important so you can establish boundaries with difficult members. For example, if your parent does not support your career choice in psychology and continues to let you know that you should have chosen a different career, you may choose to establish a boundary of not discussing your career choice anymore with that parent. In personal and professional development, positive support is essential.

We will try to put forth an effort to not be insulting by bringing up the obvious; habitual substance use and legal issues are detrimental to personal and professional development. In terms of substance use, we understand the use of alcohol is legal and socially acceptable. If consuming alcohol, remember to be mindful of your usage. This includes understanding the contents of one standard alcoholic beverage to monitor appropriate intake. A standard alcoholic beverage can be 12 ounces of beer (approximately 5% alcohol), 5 ounces of wine (approximately 12% alcohol), or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof spirits (40% alcohol) (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, [n.d.](#)). Furthermore, medical conditions, certain medications prescribed, and plans for driving must always be considered before the consumption of any alcohol. For the purposes of this publication and given changing legislation, we will not delve into the complexities of the medical or recreational use of marijuana. However, we will comment on the use of prescriptions (which could be marijuana); taking medications as prescribed is always indicated; otherwise, this is abuse of the medication. If the substance is illegal, use is not recommended. Lastly, engaging in illegal activities is also detrimental to personal and professional growth.

As our lives evolve, so does our personal treatment plan. All of the abovementioned areas are equally important. However, there are circumstances where some treatment plan areas take precedence over others. For example, a person with diabetes may enjoy yoga classes; appropriate management of insulin and diet (medical)

would obviously take precedent over a scheduled yoga class (mental health/social support). However, if the person is managing their diabetes, then the yoga class can be completed. With all this being said, the personal treatment plan is holistic; all of the treatment plan areas are interconnected to create the stable “whole.” We recommend continued exploration and growth in all areas in order to personally develop.

2.6 Personality Centered

The previous areas of this chapter served as the foundation for fundamental personal development. Having the commitment to explore yourself through the multicultural lens, consider your learning style, and stabilizing and/or maintaining all areas of the psychologist’s treatment plan is indicative of having this infrastructure. The remainder of this chapter will focus on specific traits and skills under the personal development umbrella. In this specific section, we review the specific traits which include introversion and extroversion, locus of control, positive thinking, emotional intelligence, and motivation. Since we are counting on the reader being an early career professional in psychology, we will assume the topics have been learned and this serves as an overview and advocacy to consider each in the personal development process.

2.6.1 *Introversion and Extraversion*

Despite this section being a play on words (personality centered) of the well-renowned person-centered psychotherapy approach by Carl Rogers, this subsection will focus on a small part of the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)*. This inventory was designed to provide a practical use of Carl Jung’s archetypes and is used to assess a variety of applications including the management of conflict, career transition, leadership characteristics, team development, and stress management and essential components of personal and professional development. Despite this inventory having a variety of personality types, the focus here will be on extraversion and introversion.

The common denominator between extraversion and introversion is comfort. The introvert obtains their comfort from their internal reactions (thoughts, memories, ideas, etc.) and often prefers doing activities alone or with select individuals in their comfort zone. Despite their comfort being internal, the introvert should not be seen as a recluse or as an overly shy person. On the other hand, the extravert obtains comfort through involvement in events and social interaction. Extraverts tend to be more outgoing and enjoy the positive interactions between themselves and the group. Despite the polarity, people spend time in both extraversion and introversion.

In terms of comfort, it is important to determine which of the two seem more effortless and natural. This would be your general type of comfort. This is not to say

that you would not find enjoyment or comfort in situations more favorable to the other pole, you will just naturally gravitate to the characteristics of your dominant pole. Identifying your comfort zone is important so you can review how you generally react to situations and increase your understanding of the other pole. Furthermore, engaging in this exploration will allow you to understand the strengths and weaknesses of each and to tailor your actions based on the situation. For example, if you identify as an introvert, conferences or other networking opportunities may be a struggle for you; therefore, increasing exposure in social events may increase your comfort level in traditional social situations. However, this exposure can also lead to anxiety and fear. If you identify as an extravert, working independently in a private practice may be a struggle as you do not have the social interaction that is necessary for your comfort. In these cases, the extravert may want to engage in social activities outside of work as a form of self-care.

2.6.2 Locus of Control

Mood is impacted by the experiences that we encounter, and our reactions to these experiences often stem from our perceived control over the event. Locus of control is outcome-based and refers to the degree to which we believe that we have control over these outcomes or experiences. Locus of control can be further broken down into two components: internal and external. A person exhibits an internal locus of control when they believe they have control of the events in their life, whereas a person exhibits an external locus of control when they believe they have no control over the events that happen and external causes are to blame. A person exhibiting an internal locus of control is generally more likely to take responsibility for their actions and tends to work hard to achieve their goals. A person exhibiting an external locus of control generally blames external entities for their current circumstances, identify luck as the reason for success, and feel helpless or powerless in difficult situations. For example, if a person recently obtained a job and they attributed this success to their education, hard work, and having a good interview, they believe that they controlled the outcome and, therefore, exhibit an internal locus of control. In the same example, if the person believed that they received the job due to nobody else wanting the job or employer desperation, as opposed to their own skill set, they would be exhibiting an external locus of control as they did not believe that they controlled the outcome.

Similar to introversion and extraversion, locus of control is on a continuum; most people lie somewhere between the two poles. People do not only exhibit an internal or external locus of control in all facets of life. Furthermore, the two extremes should not be seen as “good” or “bad.” Although it is a benefit to have an internal locus of control, there are instances where having this orientation can be a detriment. For example, if a person with a strong internal locus of control does not acquire a job they are applying for, they may experience anger/agitation and confusion as they did not achieve the desired outcome. This individual may not have the

capacity to understand that there may be others more qualified for the position or there were other factors that prevented them from obtaining the position. It is a difficult situation when the person has dedicated their efforts to this craft and does not achieve their desired goal. In this case, the person with the external locus of control may ultimately cope more effectively as they may be better able to identify alternatives to not achieving their desired outcome.

It is generally supported that having an internal locus of control leads to better long-term outcomes. We recommend that an individual's focus be on variables that they can control and relinquish focus on the variables that cannot be controlled. Since you cannot control the actions of others, focus on those actions is essentially a useless endeavor. It is essential to focus on the things that can be controlled. For example, when given a deadline to complete your psychotherapy notes by your employer, you could focus on the things that you can control which would be creating a plan to complete the notes on time, or you could focus on how unrealistic the deadline is and spend valuable time complaining about the task. We fully understand that there may be other obstacles involved, and the deadline may actually be unrealistic, but for the purpose of this topic, we are only focusing on control.

2.6.3 Positive Thinking

Every person will experience positive events as well as challenging or unpleasant events. Similar to locus of control, your view on the event is what allows you to persevere. Positive thinking refers to approaching these challenging or unpleasant events in a more positive way. Essentially, it is the belief that the best will happen as opposed to the worst. However, this does not include avoiding unpleasant circumstances simply to remain positive. Positive thinking generally depends on the self-talk an individual has. This self-talk can be positive or negative. Positive self-talk (and thoughts) generally leads to a more optimistic outlook, whereas negative self-talk (and thoughts) tends to lead to a more pessimistic outlook. The optimist generally sees events as a positive experience and is more flexible when plans change. The pessimist tends to make events worse than they really are, only see events as "good" or "bad," and often blames themselves when things do not go according to plans.

Even though we all exhibit negative thinking in some way, we can turn this pessimism into positive thoughts. One way to increase positive thoughts is to surround yourself with positive people, essentially, the "nurture" in the nature vs. nurture debate. Generally speaking, positive people do positive things and by creating a supportive environment, you are fostering positive thinking. Another way to increase positive thoughts is to commit to an overall healthy lifestyle (psychologist's treatment plan). This includes regular exercise, appropriate sleep, self-care activities, and following a healthy diet. For some of these components, it may be best to consult with your general practitioner to determine a regimen based on your age, abilities, and goals. Having a healthy lifestyle not only impacts longevity of life but also

can reduce stress and elevate mood. Lastly, to increase positive thinking, the active process of identifying situations where you normally think negatively is necessary. By this, we mean to review the activating events or triggers in your life that tend to shape an automatic negative thought. Activating events can vary. For example, driving may be the activating event that propels negative thoughts about other drivers, the time it takes to get to work, or thinking that you will hit every red light. In this instance, daily negative thoughts would be rampant as driving is oftentimes required and can be replaced by a distracting activity such as listening to music. Being able to manage activating events that are unable to be avoided and minimizing exposure to unnecessary activating events will help increase positive self-talk.

2.6.4 Emotional Intelligence

In their seminal article on emotional intelligence, Salovey and Mayer (1990) define emotional intelligence as having the accurate assessment and expression of emotion in ourselves and others, effectively regulating emotion in ourselves and others, and using these emotions to plan, motivate, and achieve in your life. Despite the onus of intelligence traditionally being measured by the intelligence quotient (IQ), when it comes to reaching personal and career goals, mood stability, and success in relationships, emotional intelligence is just as important (also review multiple intelligence). Although the focus here is on emotional intelligence, both forms of intelligence exist concurrently and are most efficacious when both are increased and function best when interacting.

The coexistence of emotional intelligence and intellectual intelligence is imperative for long-term personal and professional success. For example, if a psychologist is competent in assessment techniques, therapeutic interventions, and the content and process of psychotherapy (intellectual) but struggles assessing a patient's emotion and regulating their own emotion (emotional), the psychologist will have a very difficult time eliciting the information needed and to be able to understand the human condition in another person. On the other hand, if a psychologist does have the emotional intelligence but lacks appropriate knowledge of assessment techniques and therapeutic interventions, the psychologist is unable to practice effectively. Elevating both forms of intelligence concurrently and exploring the interactions between the two increases clinical and workplace competency, work performance, physical and mental health, and social relationships.

2.6.5 Motivation

Self-determination theory (SDT) is perhaps the most well-established, empirically supported, and highly recognized theories of motivation. Although psychologists are quite familiar with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (stems from SDT),

motivation is much more complex. In this subsection, we will review some key components of SDT as it relates to personal and professional development. Fortunately and unfortunately, the depth of this theory coupled with the wide applicability of the theory is appropriate for its own book publication; therefore, the theory cannot be covered in its entirety. For more information on this theory, please review the works of the initial developers, Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan at the University of Rochester.

A key component of SDT is perceived locus of causality (PLOC). PLOC is the extent to which an individual perceives their actions as being caused by internal or external reasons. PLOC is often confused with the aforementioned locus of control. However, PLOC is behavior-focused, whereas locus of control is outcome-focused. Essentially, PLOC is concerned with the extent to which an individual believes their actions are determined by external sources or from the self and locus of control is concerned with outcomes resulting from within the person or from outside the person. Contrary to the common understanding of motivation being intrinsic, extrinsic, or lacking motivation altogether (amotivation), motivation can be conceptualized as being on a continuum, similar to introversion and extraversion and locus of control. Beyond amotivation, extrinsic motivation is broken down into four components: external, introjected, identification, and integration. On the opposite end of the continuum from amotivation is full intrinsic motivation. External, the most controlled form of motivation, is where the individual behaves in a certain way solely to avoid a punishment or to obtain some reward. Introjection represents a partial internalization but still favors the extrinsic side. In introjection, the individual exhibits self-regulation; however, it has not become integrated with their motivation, cognition, or emotion. In identification, the individual has recognized and accepted a specific behavior's value. For example, if a person identifies adhering to an appropriate diet to improve their health, their behavior of eating more appropriately is more autonomous; however, it is still extrinsically motivated by the desire to improve their health as opposed to for enjoyment. Lastly, integration is considered as self-determined extrinsic motivation. Integration not only involves the identification of the importance of behaviors but also to integrate them with other aspects of the self.

For behavior, SDT asserts that when an individual has a more internal PLOC, greater effort will be exerted and the individual will experience a greater satisfaction performing the behavior than when the individual has a more external PLOC (Ryan, 2002). For the individual that has a more internal PLOC, based on the idea that greater effort will be exerted, it can be reasonably concluded that the individual will have increased performance as well. By understanding some of these key components of motivation, you will be able to better understand the role that it plays in your personal and professional development. For example, if an individual spends time with their parent because they feel forced (external), the individual is doing so to avoid a punishment, such as an argument. In the workplace, an employee may complete a task from their employer simply to avoid the punishment of being written up or to be considered for the employee of the month (external). In both of these cases, the PLOC is external. Although there are a variety of considerations or situations that impact the decisions, processes, and motivations to complete, having a

firm grasp of these components of SDT can promote personal and professional development.

2.7 Skill Development

The previous sections of this chapter have primarily been centered on internal processes and cognitive examination from a micro perspective. The remainder of this chapter will include general personal development topics but from a “big picture” or macro perspective. Although these following topics have internal components to them (cognitive exploration), the following topics are more external and skill-based. In this subsection, the topic of change, goal setting, time management, communication, conflict management, stress management, and coping strategies will be reviewed. Similar to the previous sections of this chapter, the material presented has personal and professional development implications. As a reminder, personal development can serve as a catalyst for professional development.

2.7.1 *Accepting and Embracing Change*

Navigating change is perhaps one of the more difficult struggles that individuals encounter. The feelings of anxiety and fear inevitably arise as the individual may wonder why the change was enacted, focus on who wants the change, and, if they are qualified to enact the change, ponder when the change will begin, process what the change even is, and wonder how it could possibly be completed. Despite these thoughts and feelings, a change can still be thrust onto the psychologist with the expectation of adherence and/or completion. The psychologist will inevitably have to learn a new documenting procedure, train a newly hired psychologist, learn a new way of billing patient sessions, and give an impromptu presentation based on their expertise. Although accepting and embracing change is easier said than done, we are hoping that a review of some common psychological theories, concepts, and interventions can serve as a vehicle for providing comfort toward change.

The stages of change model, also known as the transtheoretical model, has long been utilized to facilitate change. Developed by Prochaska and DiClemente (1983), the stages of change model is a theory of behavioral change stating that an intentional behavioral change is a process that occurs in stages as opposed to a single event. In order to move through the stages, motivation is required (Miller & Rollnick, 2013). The stages of change model has the following stages: precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance. When applying this model to behavioral change, (a) precontemplation is where the individual does not identify as having a problem and is not considering change; (b) contemplation is where the individual recognizes problems associated with not completing the behavior and is considering change; however, they remain ambivalent; (c) preparation is where the

individual plans to change in the near future; (d) action is where the individual is making the change; and (e) maintenance is where the individual is working toward preventing a relapse.

Given the importance of motivation in change, perceived locus of causality from self-determination theory (previous section) is important to consider. Also, aspects of motivational interviewing can be utilized. Although motivational interviewing is a style employed by the psychologist, the focus of the intervention can be used for personal use. Motivational interviewing is goal-oriented and focuses on the language of change while strengthening personal motivation and commitment to a specific goal by exploring reasons for change (Miller & Rollnick, 2013). Essentially, when setting an appropriate goal (see Sect. 2.7.2), utilizing change talk (statements desiring change, capability of changing, reasons for change, and needing to change), and committing to the change, the likelihood of following through increases.

2.7.2 Goal Setting and Time Management

Setting of goals and managing time are critical to the personal and professional development process. Personal and professional goals directly mimic the clinical behavioral plan. Goals should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely (SMART goals). For example, making a goal of losing weight is not specific, measurable, or timely. To tailor this goal, it may need to be split into smaller goals (diet, exercise) to reach the long-term goal of losing weight. For example, an appropriate goal would be to complete 30 min on a treadmill walking at 4 miles/h 5 days/week until a certain date. Time management is present in the measurable and timely aspects of goal setting. For time management, if the goal is able to be measured, an appropriate time for completion can be assigned. For example, if you know that on average it takes you 25 min to arrive at work, you may allot 35–40 min to account for those days for unexpected traffic or collisions. By setting goals in this manner (and subsequent time management), the individual is better able to have a direction, meet personal or imposed deadlines, manage distractions, and avoid wasting time.

2.7.3 Communication and Conflict Management

Communication is the act of transferring information from one place to another and exists in the following mediums: verbal, nonverbal, written, and visually. Oftentimes, poor communication skills lead to interpersonal conflict, stress, and confusion. Verbal communication is completed by using voice, whereas nonverbal communication is through appearance and body language (posture, eye contact, physical proximity, and boundaries). In any instance where there is face-to-face contact, there is verbal and nonverbal communication being expressed. Written and visual communication are somewhat similar; however, written communication is typically

in books, emails, and magazines (words), whereas visual communication is a graph, chart, or map (pictorial). Communication has personal and professional implications; therefore, mastery of communication skills is essential to daily living and in the workplace.

Written and visual communication is imperative in our work as psychologists. Documentation as a clinical psychotherapy note or a psychological assessment report has written communication and sometimes visual communication. Depending on who our client is (actual client, courts, primary medical doctor, etc.), we need to tailor our written and visual communication so it can be understood by the recipient. For example, if a probation officer requests a clinical update on their probationer (our patient), as a psychologist, we would need to complete the form or complete a report that is understandable to the probation officer. Our clinical jargon is understood in the behavioral sciences, but outside of our field, this writing may increase confusion and may actually be a detriment to the probationer. In terms of daily life (personal), we receive and write emails to friends and family, receive written communication via the mail, follow pictorial directions, and read directions. The improvement and monitoring of our written and visual communication can minimize unnecessary conflict in these areas of communication.

Verbal and nonverbal communication oftentimes receive a majority of the focus. This is somewhat understandable as these two components exist in any face-to-face human interaction. Although there is no absolute rubric for appropriate nonverbal communication skills, there are many considerations and generally accepted nonverbal ways to communicate. However, continue to be mindful of the cultural aspect of communication. For example, with eye contact, it is generally accepted to maintain eye contact to show that you are listening; however, in some cultures, occasional eye contact or minimal eye contact is appropriate. Other nonverbal considerations include posture, facial expression, appearance, and space (boundaries). For posture, sitting straight up can show that you are paying attention and you are interested. If you appear to be slouching, it can show disinterest and boredom. Your facial expressions convey the way you are feeling. With this being said, smiling can go a long way! Smiling shows you are in a good mood and creates an atmosphere of openness and warmth. The clothes you wear, the style of your hair, your ethnicity, and your race, among others, all account for your appearance. Some items of appearance can be changed (hair, clothes), while some cannot be changed (race and ethnicity). Again, there is no real rubric for appearance. When you are going to the beach with your friends, you will dress differently than you do in the office on Monday. For appearance, we would simply like to mention that it is important to be congruent to your situation. Lastly, proximity between you and the individual you are communicating with changes with each individual. In these instances, it is important to know your own comfort levels when it comes to physical closeness and pick up on cues from the individual you are conversing with. This will allow you to know your comfort zones and to minimize the chance of offending the other individual's space. Despite how uncomfortable it may feel, solicit feedback from friends and colleagues on how they experience your nonverbal communication. Obviously, the feedback should be used as a way to evaluate your nonverbal patterns and to

tailor these skills to have the most effective communication personally and professionally.

There are three basic types of verbal communication: passive, aggressive, and assertive. In passive communication, desires, needs, and feelings are often repressed completely or only expressed partially or indirectly. The volume of speech is often soft and the nonverbal components (posture, eye contact) tend to be poor. In aggressive communication, the desire, needs, and feelings are directly stated by the communicator to the recipient; the tone is typically loud and tends to include threats, profanity, absolute language, or sarcasm. Lastly, in assertive communication, the individual is able to state their desires, needs, and feelings without violating the recipient in any way. The foundational assumptions of assertive communication include both parties acknowledging they have differences, and each are responsible for expressing themselves appropriately and respectfully to each other.

Despite strong communication skills, as humans, we are bound to experience interpersonal verbal conflict. Although conflict is viewed as a negative, upsetting, or troubling experience, it can serve as a vehicle for increasing insight, improving group cohesion, and increasing confidence in your ability to problem solve and resolve conflicts effectively. However, conflict can be quite damaging. If conflict is not managed effectively, consequences include mood instability, emotional reactivity, individual or mutual disdain, maladaptive coping, or the escalation to physical aggression or violence. Bell (2002) identified the following six causes of conflict in the workplace: conflicting needs/resources, conflicting styles, conflicting perceptions, conflicting goals, conflicting pressures, and conflicting roles. Although these identified causes of conflict are based on the workplace, we will elaborate from the lens of personal development. In any intimate relationship, there will be conflict as two individuals' "worlds" come together and coexist. In the relationship, resources such as vehicles, money, and other possessions are shared (conflicting needs/resources). If one of the individuals in the relationship believe they do not have the same access to the possessions, conflict is likely to occur at some point. Every individual approaches people and problems differently. In the relationship, if one individual desires structured planning and the other individual likes planning activities at the last minute (conflicting styles), the probability of conflict increases. Individuals have different perceptions (conflicting perceptions) just the same as they have different styles. Every event that occurs has different perceptions. In the relationship, if one individual did not call the other at their normally "scheduled" time, the other individual may view the event as disrespectful where the individual who did not call was simply busy at work or they lost charge in their cell phone. Every individual has their own goals and every relationship has relationship goals (conflicting goals). To complete these goals, each individual in the relationship may be responsible for different things; despite the importance and necessity of each goal, this may still cause conflict. Conflicting pressures is where two or more individuals are responsible for separate actions with the same deadline. For example, one individual in the relationship is expecting their partner to purchase items at the grocery store on the way home from work so they can make dinner; however, the partner was asked to stay at work later. This pressure can lead to confrontation. Conflicting roles is where one of

the individuals is asked to complete a duty or activity that is out of their comfort zone. For example, if one of the individuals in the relationship is ill for a few days, the other individual may complete the necessary tasks that the ill individual typically completes and may experience distress or anger.

Conflict should be viewed similarly to anger. Although we generally do not like to experience it, it is natural to encounter conflict whether it is from another person or from ourselves. Like anger, conflict is something that is manageable. Despite its manageability, when conflict emerges, both parties can become entrenched and inflexible in their positions, and communication (verbal and nonverbal) can become aggressive and/or defensive. Given the individual complexities of each parties' want coupled with being entrenched in their positions, conflict management can be difficult. Before engaging in active conflict management, we recommend that ground rules such as respecting each other, not talking out of turn, and scheduling a mutually agreed-upon time to solely discuss the conflict at hand be established. Otherwise, given the potential strength of entrenchment and reactivity, the discussion may not be very efficacious. When this is established, active conflict management has an increased probability of achieving a mutually agreed-upon result and plan.

Fisher and Ury (1981) identified the following four principles for effective negotiation: separate the people from the problem, focus on interests as opposed to the problem, identify a variety of options before settling on an agreement, and insist that the agreement is based on objective criteria. Given that people tend to be personally invested in the issue and side with their own view, challenges to those views may be viewed as a personal attack. Separating the people from the problem includes understanding the "other side" (perceptions of the issue), acknowledging the role of emotions in the conflict, utilizing active listening skills and assertive communication, and showing an understanding (but not necessarily agreement) of the other individuals' view. Given that positions in a conflict are quite opposite, focusing on the position essentially means that one person "wins" and the other person "loses." This is obviously ineffective as individuals in a relationship (friendship, intimate relationship, colleague, coworker) should not feel triumphant or defeated at the hands of the individual that they are in the relationship with. With this being said, focusing on the interests of each party can increase the likelihood of finding a solution that satisfies both parties' interests. To do this, exploration and identification of interests that make up the position must occur; there are usually numerous underlying interests that surface. Again, effective communication and listening skills allow this exploration to occur. Once underlying interests have been established, options for resolution can be generated. Focusing on shared interests decreases the likelihood of the result falling in the win-lose dichotomy. When the interests differ, each individual should propose something appealing that they are satisfied with and that the other individual would most likely agree with. Lastly, when interests are in direct opposition, objective criteria should be used, essentially, supporting the interests with data. For example, if two individuals in an intimate relationship are in conflict on whether or not to sell their vehicle, the conflict is stemming from one wanting to sell the vehicle to make the most money now and the other wants to keep the car and pay maintenance on the vehicle. The couple could consider a cost-benefit

analysis that includes consideration of selling now for X dollars and comparing to gas prices, typical costs of maintenance per year, future sale of vehicle, and a new car payment to determine the action based on the conflict.

2.7.4 Stress Management and Coping Strategies

Stress is a highly subjective term. The subjective nature of stress has plagued research efforts as it is difficult to measure and definitions often vary. In its simplest form, as coined by Hans Selye in 1936, stress is the bodily response to any demand for change. These bodily responses can take on different forms (physical, cognitive, emotional, behavioral). Eventually, stress was identified as the response to a stressor (catalyst). Despite the negative connotation that stress has, it can be helpful. For example, positive stress (eustress) can improve performance, increase motivation, and focus our efforts on a task. Examples of good stress include giving birth to a child, marriage, retirement, or starting a new job. On the other hand, negative stress (distress) causes mood instability, decreases performance, is perceived as outside our coping abilities, and can lead to medical issues (physical and mental). Examples of negative stress include abuse or neglect, death of a family member, legal issues, or injury.

Stress management is complicated as the individual could experience acute stress, episodic acute stress, or chronic stress. Acute stress encompasses recent pressures as well as anticipated pressures in the near future. This type of stress is often seen as the daily “trials and tribulations.” The unexpected work deadline, an argument with a significant other, and mediocre performance evaluation are all examples of acute stress. When the individual experiences acute stress regularly, it is said to be episodic. Individuals who experience this form of stress oftentimes do it to themselves through poor time management, goal setting, or organization. For example, they may take on the task that more than likely cannot be completed by the deadline or set up appointments that leave little room for error such as traffic patterns. Lastly, chronic stress is devastating and debilitating. This type of stress is long-lasting; examples include not making enough money or family instability.

The management of stress begins by monitoring your stress level and utilizing a variety of coping strategies. Similar to anger, stress should be viewed as being managed as opposed to eliminated. There are many variables that are outside of our control that can trigger us. After being committed to the process, the individual is better able to monitor their stress level by identifying triggers to stress and mood instability. Through historical exploration of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors during stressful situations, the individual can establish the triggers that they struggle with in order to identify and implement effective coping strategies.

Coping strategies are cognitive and behavioral actions that help us handle a threatening or triggering situation. They can generally be separated into two strategies: problem-focused or emotion-focused. In the former, the focus is on the stressor (argument with significant other), whereas in the latter, the focus is on the emotions

stemming from the stressor (anger and anxiety from the argument). Regardless of the stressor or strategy utilized, we recommend that everyone has a variety of coping strategies. The importance of this variety is that locations, timing, duration, and intensity of the stressor changes and some coping strategies are not appropriate for every situation. For example, if the individual is in an argument with their significant other and their coping strategy is sitting on the couch and reading a book, it may not be as effective as the trigger (significant other) is still present and reading a book during the argument may appear insincere. Although reading is an excellent coping strategy, however, it may not be appropriate in this situation.

2.8 Chapter Conclusion

Despite the quantity of considerations in this chapter, the goal was not to overwhelm. Our goal was to motivate the exploration of these personal development considerations to solidify the foundation for professional development. Focusing on perfection of each consideration as well as variables that cannot be controlled is a useless endeavor. However, the exploration of each variable and identification of where you stand in relation to each variable is important to frame your personal and professional efforts. Beyond exploration and identification, we recommend the acceptance of the strengths and struggles that you find as well as having a commitment to address the areas where you struggle. Personal and professional development is a lifelong journey; some achievements will occur quicker than others. The key is to remain motivated, be persistent, and strive to reach the personal and professional goals that you have set out to achieve while remaining humble. Now that these personal development considerations have been addressed, we can take a look at how these considerations relate to appearance, communication, networking, and interviewing for career positions.

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