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Behavior Change in University Students through Participation in a Workshop for Eliminating Self-Defeating Behavior

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BEHAVIOR CHANGE IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN
A WORKSHOP FOR ELIMINATING SELF-DEFEATING BEHAVIOR

by

Margaret Eileen Feringa

A Project Report
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment
of the
Specialist in Education Degree

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Margaret E. Feringa

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

With the current emphasis on the importance of higher education and the ever increasing enrollments in colleges and universities, there is a need in educational settings for an efficient and effective method for dealing with the psychological problems of normals. The Self-defeating Behavior Workshop model is an attempt to service the needs of students who demonstrate no severe pathology and who are not under psychiatric treatment.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine if university students participating in a treatment called Self-defeating Behavior Workshops decreased their self-defeating behaviors and changed their self-defeating perceptions.

The Workshop Model

The Self-defeating Behavior (SDB) Workshop is a teaching model designed to allow the participants to understand the exact process involved in bringing about change in behavior patterns.

The workshop is based on the theory for eliminating self-defeating behavior (Cudney, 1970) and the theory of workshop design (Lowe and Cudney, 1970). Cudney defined self-defeating behavior as

"...those behaviors that, when practiced, work in some way against the owner [p. 7] ." To change a self-defeating behavior a person must

1. Clearly define the self-defeating behavior to be eliminated,
2. Understand and accept that he is the only perpetrator of this behavior
3. Identify and fully admit to himself the price being paid for using the behavior
4. Identify and take responsibility for the precise outer and inner choices that put the behavior into gear
5. Identify and face up to the techniques one uses to carry out the self-defeating behavior inner choice, and
6. Identify and face the mythical fear avoided by keeping the SDB [pp. 7-10] .

Examples of self-defeating behaviors are feeling inferior, maintaining a negative self-concept, fearing failure, etc. A list of behaviors the SDB Workshop is designed to help people eliminate appears in Appendix A.

The workshop design (Lowe and Cudney, 1970) is primarily a teaching method which involves some individual treatment and some small group interaction. In contrast to group psychotherapy, the workshop is an educational model. In an initial interview each participant is assisted in identifying one specific behavior he will work to eliminate. The workshop itself consists of ten contact hours per client. The first six sessions are teaching sessions which focus on a cognitive, didactic presentation of certain concepts necessary to the change process. Teaching is done by the use of handouts, short lectures, discussion and assignment of homework. Five to ten minutes of each teaching hour are spent in lecture. Visual aids--charts or blackboard diagrams--are used, as are mimeo-

graphed handouts explaining the concepts taught. Discussion before each lecture focuses on participants' successes and failures in applying concepts previously taught. Discussions after the lecture focus on understanding of the new concept. At the end of each session homework is given to insure active involvement by the participants between sessions.

In the individual session the participant is helped to bring to awareness the feeling or belief that he has about himself that precipitates the self-defeating behavior.

The remaining sessions involve small group interaction in which the whole change process is again reviewed. The groups meet twice for one and one-half hours each. Participants isolate the specific spot in their progress to date and work with the group and the leader to reach each succeeding stage. Throughout the entire workshop, the leaders focus on helping each participant understand exactly what is involved in the change process.

Most previous models for behavior change do not allow the participant to learn the process of behavior change. In fact, in most models the process is known only by the counselor or therapist, and the participant focuses only on content. This model tested is unique in that it purposely teaches the process of behavior change in order that the participants may apply the same process to other behaviors on their own once they leave the workshop.

As reported by Bednar and Lawlis (1971), populations studied in most of the reported research on group therapy are basically

psychiatric. Some studies are specifically directed to treatment of schizophrenics and delinquents. As seen in the research reported in Chapter III, some group work has also been done with under-achieving students. Apparently no procedure has been developed specifically for the psychological treatment of normals. There is an urgent need for a treatment that involves a relatively large number of people in a relatively short period of time. The SDB Workshop is an attempt to do this.

Hypotheses for this study were based in part on the positive results reported in the research cited in Chapter II.

Research Hypotheses

For this study three general research hypotheses were proposed:

1) pre to post differences will be reported by participants in their selected self-defeating behaviors, 2) there will be changes in selected personality characteristics of participants upon completion of the workshop, and 3) participants' perceptions of themselves and their world will change upon completion of the SDB Workshop.

CHAPTER II

* RELATED LITERATURE

Literature related to the present study is limited to the effectiveness of group psychotherapy in promoting behavior change. Because the Self-defeating Behavior (SDB) Workshop is unique, there are no parallel models available for comparison. Consequently, it was necessary to investigate the most similar kind of treatment, which is group psychotherapy. Bednar and Lawlis (1971) reported that although a wide variety of research designs have been used in investigating group psychotherapy, few of the studies have been replicated. Nevertheless, they indicated that similar findings of positive results reported in a large number of independent studies point encouragingly to the effectiveness of group work in promoting behavior change.

The following studies indicated positive results following group psychotherapy with teenage delinquents, underachieving high school girls and underachieving college freshmen. These studies were selected for review because they were most similar in population and design to the present study.

Group Psychotherapy with Teenage Delinquents

Persons' (1966) study compared 41 pairs of delinquent teenage boys in a state reformatory who were matched on a number of back-

ground variables. One from each pair was randomly assigned to a therapy or control group, the other to the remaining group. The therapy groups met twice weekly for one and one-half hour group treatment for a 20-week period. They met in small groups of seven with a psychologist or a social worker as therapist.

A major objective of the treatment was to encourage in each boy the development of warm interpersonal relationships with the therapists and the other boys. The treatment included exploring the boys' past behavior and attempting to teach them and have them experience less self-defeating ways of living. In the early sessions the therapists were supportive and accepting. They later used interpretation, negative reinforcement of inappropriate behavior and approval of appropriate behavior. They also attempted to teach the boys the difference between acceptable and non-acceptable behavior. Role playing was used by both the therapists and subjects. During the fourteenth and fifteenth sessions the therapist introduced extreme amounts of anxiety and stress concerning anti-social behavior. The last three weeks focus was on the difficulties of returning to the community. In addition to the group therapy, each boy received at least one hour a week of individual therapy.

Post therapy test results for the therapy group were significantly lower on the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), the Delinquency Scale (DS) and the Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale. The therapy group also showed a significantly greater decrease in scores than did the control group on the

same tests. In addition, the boys in the therapy group showed improved academic functioning during the therapy period when compared with the boys in the control group.

Group Psychotherapy with Underachieving High School Girls

Thoma (1964) reported on group therapy conducted in a high school setting. Forty-three underachieving girl students having a minimum IQ score of 115 were invited to participate in the program.

In a pre-therapy interview each girl met with the therapist in an effort to discover the nature of her goal. At that time each girl was told how participation in the group might help her to understand obstacles in the way of achieving her goal. Special emphasis was placed on assuring that confidentiality would be maintained, especially regarding school staff and parents.

Treatment consisted of 30 one hour weekly sessions. After the initial interview, there was no further introduction. Topics of discussion were brought up by the participants. They included relationships with teachers, with parents, with peers and with the opposite sex. Emphasis was on free interaction and expression of feelings. The aim was to clarify each girl's goal, to help her understand the reasons for her choice, and to help her find more appropriate compensations for inferiority feelings. Emphasis was on the present. At times the therapist took roles suggested by the topic of discussion, e.g., teacher, older sister, etc. Active

participation by the therapist plus therapist empathy helped the girls understand the possibility of interacting with authority figures without danger.

Results of the study as evaluated by teachers, group members, and each girl herself indicated improved attitudes in three areas: 1) feelings of worth replaced anger, 2) awareness of cause and effect in conflict with authority figures was accompanied by increased tolerance for differences, and 3) understanding of sibling and peer relationships resulted in increased cooperation with others.

For 86% of the subjects, improvement in grade point averages over the last year was significant at the .01 level.

Group Psychotherapy with Underachieving College Students

In a study of underachieving college students, Teahan (1966) found that following group psychotherapy increases in grade point averages of college sophomores were significant at the .01 level.

First semester sophomores with a history of successful high school performance and with College Qualifying Test (CQT) scores that placed them in the upper quartile of the freshman class were invited to participate. In an initial interview it was emphasized that focus would be on personal-emotional problems and not on academic grades. The underlying assumption was that some personality functions were interfering with students' achievement. The group experience was to allow students to explore their feelings

with other students having the same difficulties.

Interested students were asked to complete the MMPI and two Parental Attitude Scales (one for each parent) measuring student perception of parents in terms of possessiveness, domination, and rejection or ignoring of the student.

Subjects were divided into three groups: a two-semester group of 12 males and 7 females, a one-semester group of 18 males and 3 females, and a control pool of 34 students. Students from the pool were matched to the experimental group on the basis of sex, CQT scores and grade point average at the end of the freshman year.

The two-semester group met in weekly group psychotherapy sessions for a period of eight months. The one-semester group was seen for from one to twelve sessions the first semester. (Students fell into this group because they had no interest in continuing therapy.) The control pool received no group experience.

The therapy sessions involved focusing attention on the personal and emotional problems of the participants with emphasis on their relationships with one or both parents.

The therapy groups showed significant increases in grade point average at the end of the sophomore year. Improvement for the one-semester group was significant at the .05 level; improvement for the two-semester group was significant at the .01 level. The control group did not show a significant improvement.

Teahan reported that the groups may have differed initially on some personality variables as measured by the MMPI. Indications were that the students chosen for the therapy groups may have been

less defensive and, therefore, more ready to admit to and to work on their problems.

No significant changes were reported on post MMPI scores.

Summary

In the studies reviewed for this section, samples varied. Persons' (1966) study involved incarcerated teenage boys; Thoma's (1964), high school girls; and Teahan's (1966), university students. The age range approximated that of the present study. Teahan's sample was most similar to that of the workshop in that both involve university students.

Persons and Teahan used pre-post measurement and a matched, no-therapy control group design. Thoma used only the pre-post measurement without a control group. The present study also used the one group pretest-posttest design.

With the exception of the one-semester therapy group in Teahan's study, treatments in the reported research were lengthy. Persons' study involved a 20-week period totaling 60 hours of group psychotherapy plus weekly individual therapy for each boy. Thoma's weekly one-hour therapy sessions extended over a 30-week period. Teahan's two-semester group involved an eight month time span. In contrast, the SDB Workshop can be conducted in 10 hours within a five-week period of time.

Treatments varied also. Thoma and Teahan conducted group psychotherapy sessions which encouraged free expression of feelings and emotions. Persons indicated some teaching was involved in his

study in addition to a rather close interpersonal involvement of therapist with participants. Methods used for teaching and extent of the teaching were not reported in the study. The SDB Workshop is definitely a teaching model. Group interaction is minimal and interpersonal relationship between therapists and participants is largely disregarded. Procedures for the model are described in the theory section.

Positive behavior change in participants following group therapy was indicated in studies by both Persons and Thoma. In addition, participants in all three studies showed improved academic performance after group therapy. Since literature available indicates that "...anxiety can have a restricting effect on attention and intellectual functioning, and that it generally inhibits and restricts complex mental ideation (Bednar and Lawlis, 1971, p. 818)." improved academic functioning could probably be considered a result of self-adjustment or positive behavior change. This gives credence to the hypotheses of the present study that group participation is effective in promoting desirable behavior change.

Because samples, treatments and results vary among studies, there is a need for a systematic approach which produces positive results. The SDB Workshop model offers such an approach through a clear and concise definition of treatment.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

In Chapter III the sample, procedures, testable hypotheses, design and analysis of data are presented.

Sample

Participants in the Self-defeating Behavior (SDB) Workshop were full-time college students in a university of 20,000 students. A general announcement in the school newspaper indicated that the workshops would be conducted. Fourteen of the volunteers, 8 males and 6 females, constituted the workshop sample used for this study. This was not a random sample. That is, it was a sample of those students within the college population who wished to in some way change their behavior. Fourteen were selected according to time available in their class schedules.

Instrumentation

Instruments were administered to students one week prior to treatment and one week following treatment. Instruments used were the Workshop Questionnaire (Appendix B), made up of questions that address themselves to the frequency, intensity, and general response to change of behavior; the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI); and a Semantic Differential (Appendix C),

designed to measure change in the meanings students attach to the following concepts: self, parents, friends, life, people. The concepts were selected on the basis of their relevance to the change process. Following Osgood and Tannenbaum's (1957) recommendation, three adjective pairs were selected for each of the three main dimensions on a Semantic Differential, namely, evaluation, potency, and activity. Selection of the adjective pairs was made on the basis of high factor loading on the dimension in question and their ability to make psychological sense.

It was decided prior to testing to use the five scales of the MMPI which are most appropriate to the kinds of difficulties college students experience.

Treatment

The fourteen students met as a group twice a week for one hour sessions of lecture and discussion for a total of six meetings. Handouts were distributed and homework was assigned to participants at each session. Two counselors conducted the group sessions as a team. Following the six sessions, each participant had a one hour individual session with one of the counselors. After the individual sessions were completed, the students met twice in groups of four or five for one and one-half hour sessions. The entire procedure encompassed five weeks.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were developed around three areas

of inquiry: 1) change of the self-selected behavior, 2) general personality change and 3) perceptual change.

Area I: Self-selected Behavior

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will report a decrease in the frequency of the behavior after completing the workshop.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will report a decrease in the intensity of the behavior after completing the workshop.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will report general improvement in the specified behavior after completing the workshop.

Area II: Personality

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will evidence a greater degree of general adjustment upon completion of the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will evidence less depression upon completion of the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will evidence less excessive worry upon completion of the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will evidence less social introversion upon completion of the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will report a reduction in manifest anxiety upon completion of the workshop than prior to the experience.

Area III: Perception

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will

evaluate themselves more positively after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will perceive themselves as more potent after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will perceive themselves as more active after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will perceive their parents more positively after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will perceive their parents as more potent after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will perceive their parents as more active after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will perceive friends more positively after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will perceive friends as more potent after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will perceive friends as more active after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will evaluate life more positively after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will evaluate life as more potent after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will evaluate life as more active after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will

evaluate people more positively after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will evaluate people as more potent after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Hypothesis: Students participating in an SDB Workshop will evaluate people as more active after completing the workshop than prior to the experience.

Design

A pre-post test design which is designated by Stanley and Campbell (1963) as $O_1 \times O_2$ was used. In the design, students completed a pretest, were administered a treatment and took a posttest.

Analysis of Data

The sign test (Siegel, 1956) was used to analyze the Workshop Questionnaire data. The Student t test (Ferguson, 1959) was applied to the MMPI and Semantic Differential data.

Following a recent trend in behavioral science research reported by Winer (1962), the study was conducted, results analyzed, and the level reported at which the null hypotheses could be rejected. It is left to the reader to judge the power of the statistics. According to Winer (1962), "use of the .05 and .01 levels of significance is a matter of convention having little scientific or logical basis. When the power of tests is likely to be low under these levels of significance, and when type 1 and type 2 errors are of approximately equal importance,

the .30 and .20 levels of significance may be more appropriate than the .05 and .01 levels [p.13]."

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The outcome of the study covered three areas of investigation:

1) actual change in the specified self-defeating behavior, 2) change in personality characteristics of the participants, and 3) change in perceptions held by the participants regarding self, parents, friends, life and people.

Specified Behavior Change

The first three hypotheses were related to changes made in the self-defeating behavior specified by participants as the target behavior for the workshop. Each of the 14 workshop participants designated one of the following behaviors for change: maintaining an unrealistic self image, maintaining feelings of inferiority, lacking self-confidence, being afraid in groups or being overweight.

The investigation included three categories: 1) the frequency with which participants engaged in the behavior--whether they did it constantly, once a day, once a week, once a month, etc., 2) the intensity with which they experienced the behavior--if they felt compelled or driven by it, if they were bothered a great deal or just somewhat by it, or if they felt the behavior did not interfere with life at all, and 3) the degree to which participants felt they had changed the behavior--from no change at all to dropping the

behavior completely.

Frequency

Responses on the pre and post Workshop Questionnaires showed that of an N of 14, ten participants reported a decrease in frequency of the behavior, two reported no change in frequency, and two reported an increase in frequency of the behavior upon completion of the Self-defeating Behavior (SDB) Workshop. The sign test was significant at the .02 level. Responses of workshop participants regarding frequency of behavior are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency of Behavior as Reported by Participants on Pre and Post Workshop Questionnaires

Time	Constantly	Several Times a Day	Once a Day	Once a Week	Not at All
Pre	6	5	1	2	0
Post	2	1	3	5	3

Note: $p < .02$ Sign Test

Intensity

Of an N of 14, eleven students reported a decrease in intensity of the behavior, three reported no change in intensity, and no one reported an increase in intensity of the behavior upon completion of the workshop. The sign test was significant at the .005 level. Responses of workshop participants regarding intensity of behavior are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Intensity of Behavior as Reported by Participants on Pre and Post Workshop Questionnaires

Time	Compelled	Bothered a Great Deal	Bothered Some	Doesn't Interfere
Pre	3	10	1	0
Post	0	4	6	4

Note: $p < .005$ Sign Test

Degree of Change

Of an N of 14, one reported complete change in the behavior upon completion of the workshop, five reported almost complete change and seven reported noticeable change, while only one reported little change and no one reported no change.

Personality Change

Five hypotheses were related to changes in personality characteristics of participants as indicated in the differences between pre and post Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) scores. The five categories included: 1) general adjustment, 2) depression, 3) excessive worry, 4) social introversion, and 5) anxiety. The Student's t was used for the analysis. Reliability coefficients for only three of the above scales have been calculated (Dahlstrom and Welsh, 1962): K scale (general adjustment) $r = .76$, D scale (depression) $r = .66$, and Pt scale (excessive worry) $r = .90$.

General Adjustment

Differences between pre and post MMPI scores on the K scale indicated that participants improved in general adjustment ($p < .005$) upon completion of the workshop. According to Drake and Oetting (1959) the K scale is considered to be "a subtle indicator of defensiveness" and for college students is thought to be "a relatively good sign of general adjustment [p. 32]." Differences between pre and post MMPI scores are found in Table 3.

Depression

Participants appeared to be less unhappy and depressed ($p < .01$) upon completion of the workshop as seen in pre to post differences in MMPI scores.

Excessive Worry

Students evidenced less excessive worry ($p < .025$)--showed more confidence, and seemed less insecure-- after completing the workshop.

Social Introversion

Pre to post responses on the MMPI indicated that students showed less social introversion ($p < .025$)--were less shy and socially insecure--upon completion of the workshop.

Anxiety

Differences in pre to post MMPI scores also indicated parti-

cipants evidenced less anxiety ($p < .025$) after completing the workshop.

Table 3. Differences Between Participants' Pre and Post MMPI Scores

	Scale	\bar{X} pre	\bar{X} post	t	p
K	adaptiveness	49.36	54.79	3.10	.005
D	depression	68.86	56.36	2.83	.01
Pt	excessive worry	68.14	61.21	2.46	.025
Si	social introversion	61.64	54.29	2.22	.025
A	anxiety	64.21	54.14	2.65	.025

Note: $N=14$ Means are standardized scores

Perception

The last 15 hypotheses were related to changes in participants' perception of self, parents, friends, life and people.

Self

Differences between pre and post responses to a Semantic Differential indicated that participants regarded themselves more positively ($p < .025$) upon completion of the workshop; that is, they tended to see themselves more as good, friendly or honest rather than as bad, unfriendly or dishonest. Pre-post response differences are reported in Table 4.

Pre to post Semantic Differential responses indicated participants may regard themselves as stronger ($p < .10$) upon completion of the workshop. There was some indication in this area that one of

the pairs of adjectives, hard-soft, was frequently misinterpreted by participants and, therefore, tended to cancel out ratings on the other two pairs, shallow-deep and weak-strong.

After completing the workshop, participants also tended to see themselves as more active ($p < .005$). They saw themselves as being more active than passive, more warm than cold and more interesting as opposed to boring.

Table 4. Differences Between Participants' Pre and Post Workshop Semantic Differential Responses to Self

Dimension	\bar{X} pre	\bar{X} post	t	p
Evaluation	6.29	4.79	2.54	.025
Potency	7.79	6.57	1.60	.10
Activity	9	6.29	3.18	.005

Parents

Pre to post Semantic Differential responses indicated no significant change in students' evaluation of parents as positive upon completion of the workshop. Responses are reported in Table 5.

No significant change was noted in students' perception of parents as potent upon completion of the workshop.

There was also no significant change indicated in students' perception of parents as active following the workshop.

Table 5. Differences Between Participants' Pre and Post Workshop Semantic Differential Responses to Parents

Dimension	\bar{X} pre	\bar{X} post	t	p
Evaluation	4.43	5	-1.07	N.S.
Potency	7.93	7.79	.38	N.S.
Activity	8.07	7.57	.59	N.S.

Friends

Upon completion of the workshop, students evaluated friends more positively ($p < .05$) as indicated by responses on a Semantic Differential. Pre to post responses regarding friends are reported in Table 6.

Students seemed to view friends as more potent ($p < .10$) after completing the workshop.

Students appeared to see friends as more active ($p < .05$) upon completion of the workshop.

Table 6. Differences Between Participants' Pre and Post Workshop Semantic Differential Responses to Friends

Dimension	\bar{X} pre	\bar{X} post	t	p
Evaluation	4.57	3.86	2.11	.05
Potency	6.21	6.07	1.42	.10
Activity	7.14	5.64	1.93	.05

Life

Students evaluated life as more positive ($p < .05$) after completing the workshop as seen in the differences between pre and post

responses on a Semantic Differential. See Table 7.

Students appeared to see life as more potent ($p < .10$) following participation in the workshop.

Students also tended to regard life as more active ($p < .10$) upon completion of the workshop.

Table 7. Differences Between Participants' Pre and Post Workshop Semantic Differential Responses to Life

Dimension	\bar{X} pre	\bar{X} post	t	p
Evaluation	8.14	6	2.07	.05
Potency	10	8.43	1.65	.10
Activity	7.5	5.57	1.49	.10

People

Pre to post Semantic Differential changes in response indicated students evaluated people more positively ($p < .01$) upon completion of the workshop. Responses regarding people are reported in Table 8.

After the workshop students saw people as more potent ($p < .005$).

Students also perceived people as more active ($p < .05$) after completing the Self-defeating Behavior Workshop.

Table 8. Differences Between Participants' Pre and Post Workshop Semantic Differential Responses to People

Dimension	\bar{X} pre	\bar{X} post	t	p
Evaluation	8	6.21	2.87	.01
Potency	10.5	8.57	3.09	.005
Activity	8.71	7.43	2.06	.05

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY OF RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study was designed to test whether the Self-defeating Behavior (SDB) Workshop is an efficient model for effecting change in 1) certain behaviors of university students, 2) in personality characteristics of the students, and 3) in certain perceptions held by the students.

Summary of Results

The results of this study of behavior change in university students following participation in SDB Workshops were encouraging. As was noted earlier in Chapter I, there is a need in educational settings for an effective psychological treatment for normals that can be used with a relatively large number of people in a relatively short period of time. The SDB Workshop model appears to be that kind of treatment.

That positive behavior change did occur was evident in results from all three instruments used in the study. Differences in responses on pre to post Workshop Questionnaires indicated that students were able to eliminate or significantly reduce self-selected undesirable behaviors upon completion of the workshop. Although two participants reported an increase in frequency of the behavior, all reported at least some reduction in intensity of the

behavior and all but one reported at least a noticeable degree of change. Positive change was also indicated in the five personality characteristics measured in this study. This was seen in the differences between pre and post Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory results. The greatest probability of change was noted on the K scale, an elevation of which is considered to be a good sign of general adjustment. However, positive significant change was also indicated regarding the other measured characteristics--depression, excessive worry, social introversion and anxiety--all of which reportedly decreased following completion of the SSB Workshop.

Findings on pre to post Semantic Differential responses were somewhat less conclusive, although positive significant change was reported in perception of all concepts except that of parents. It is interesting to note that, contrary to what was hypothesized, on the evaluative dimension for parents, students' perceptions were actually less positive after completing the workshop. This outcome, however, may be a healthy sign in the college setting. It may well be an indication of the students' growing independence, a breaking away from psychological dependence on parents and a coming to terms with themselves as competent and responsible individuals.

The greatest over-all probability of change in perception was noted for the concept "people". This also appears to be important for this particular population. Eleven of the 14 parti-

cipants indicated on the pre Workshop Questionnaire that their selected self-defeating behavior was one that in one way or another involved unsatisfactory relationships with others.

Positive changes in varying degrees were also reported for the remaining three concepts--self, life and friends. As was noted earlier, one of the pairs of adjectives, hard-soft, used to evaluate perceptions regarding potency appeared to be misinterpreted by participants. This had the effect of canceling out the other ratings on this dimension and may explain the somewhat smaller t 's derived for the dimension.

Conclusions

In the sample used for this study, all the participants were volunteers. This would indicate that they were probably motivated to change. Also, since they were university students, it can be reasonably assumed that they were of at least average intelligence. It would appear that the SDB Workshop model, which is a teaching model, is effective in bringing about certain changes for this population even though it was not equally effective for all participants.

It is possible that the treatment needs perfecting to be effective across a broader base, or it may be that the treatment is just not appropriate for everyone.

Another important conclusion is that this model in which the process of change is clearly taught has a broad kind of fallout effect. Results of the study indicate that although participants

focused on one single target behavior throughout the workshop, they experienced a much more global change in behavior, personality characteristics and perceptions.

Also, the results seem at least to a degree to validate the notion that the concepts identified by Cudney (1970) are truly essential to the change process. (These concepts are identified in Chapter I.)

Because this is an educational model, it further appears that didactic input does have an impact on behavior. In relation particularly to traditional teaching methods, it appears that homework, handouts, etc., if focused on the right material are effective tools to use as a means for bringing about behavior change.

Recommendations

It is recommended that a replication of this study of the Self-defeating Behavior Workshop be made. It is also recommended that a long-range follow-up study be made. A follow-up study is needed to determine the staying power of the changes made. It is also needed to evaluate the success of workshop participants in applying the concepts learned to changing or eliminating other behaviors subsequently found by them to be self-defeating.

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APPENDIX A

A LIST OF BEHAVIORS THE
SELF-DEFEATING BEHAVIOR WORKSHOP
IS DESIGNED TO HELP PEOPLE ELIMINATE

A list of behaviors the Self-defeating Behavior Workshop is designed to help people eliminate:

Inferiority feelings	Defensiveness
Negative self-concept	Fear of stating one's opinion
Fear of failure	Negativism
Fear of groups	Fear of expressing deep feelings
Difficulty in decision making	Inability to say no
Underachievement	Authority hang-ups
Racial prejudice	Insomnia
Perfectionism	Disorganization
Dependency	Never on time
Lack of motivation	Waste time
Withdrawal	Poor planning
Excessive overweight	Can't find needed things
Bi-sexuality	Forgetful
Homosexuality	Fear of being oneself
Voyeurism	Always feeling pushed by something
Compulsive behavior	Fear of God
compulsive lying	Unrealistic expectations of self and others
compulsive sexual behavior	Unhappiness created by oneself
compulsive eating	Fear of commitment
etc.	Procrastination
Boredom	Lack of self-confidence
Feelings of hatred	Fear of rejection
Unfulfilled sexual experience	Extreme nervousness
Alcoholism	Etc. Etc. Etc. Etc. Etc.
Excessive worry	
Alienation of others	
Feelings of meaninglessness	
Inability to finish tasks	
Psychosomatic illnesses	
Depressions	
Stuttering	
Feelings of loneliness	
Fear of death	
Fear of the unknown	
Avoidance of responsibility	
Inability to give oneself in a loving relationship	
Fear of hurting others	
Excessive attempts to please others	
Drug abuse	
Excessive day-dreaming	
Inability to concentrate	
Folding up under pressure or when challenged	
Promiscuity	
Temper	

APPENDIX B

PRE AND POST WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRES

Name _____

PRE-WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer each question with no more than two sentences. Where it is appropriate simply make one check, but one check only.

1. What is the specific self-defeating behavior you wish to change in the workshop? Please be very specific.
2. What difficulties do you experience as a result of this behavior? Again be specific.
3. What causes your behavior?
4. What do you do to bring about this behavior?
5. How often do you engage in this behavior? Use the past thirty days as an example.

Once a month	_____
Once a week	_____
Once a day	_____
Several times a day	_____
Constantly	_____

6. With what intensity do you experience the behavior? Again use the past thirty days.

- | | |
|---|-------|
| A. I feel compelled and driven by the behavior | _____ |
| B. I am bothered a great deal by the behavior | _____ |
| C. I am bothered some but not intensely by the behavior | _____ |
| D. The behavior doesn't bother me much or interfere with my life. | _____ |

PRE-WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE

7. How badly do you want to change the behavior?

- A. Changing is the most important thing in my life right now _____
- B. Changing is extremely important to my future happiness _____
- C. Changing is very important, but lots of other things matter more _____
- D. Changing is important, but if I don't, I can get by o.k. _____
- E. Other people are really more concerned about my changing than I am _____

8. How easy do you think it is for you to change the behavior?

- A. I think that with just a little work I can change quite readily _____
- B. It isn't real easy to change, but it isn't real difficult either _____
- C. It is difficult to change _____
- D. It is extremely difficult to change _____
- E. Frankly, I don't really believe I can change _____

Name _____

POST-WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer each question with no more than two sentences.
Where it is appropriate simply make one check, but one check only.

1. What is the specific self-defeating behavior you wished to change in the workshop? Please be very specific.

2. What caused your behavior?

3. What do you do to bring this behavior about?

4. How often do you engage in this behavior? Use the past ten days as an example.

Not at all	_____
Once a week	_____
Once a day	_____
Several times a day	_____
Constantly	_____

5. With what intensity do you experience the behavior? Again use the past 10 days.

A. I feel compelled and driven by the behavior	_____
B. I am bothered a great deal by the behavior	_____
C. I am bothered some but not intensely by the behavior	_____
D. The behavior doesn't bother me much or interfere with my life	_____

6. How easy is it for you to change the behavior?

A. I think with just a little work I can change quite readily	_____
B. It isn't really easy to change, but it isn't real difficult either	_____
C. It is difficult to change	_____
D. It is extremely difficult to change	_____
E. Frankly, I don't really believe I can change	_____

POST-WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE

Page 2

7. Have you changed your behavior?

- A. No _____
- B. Very little _____
- C. Noticeably _____
- D. Almost completely _____
- E. Completely _____

8. Please describe the behavior changes you have made. It will be most helpful if you are quite specific.

9. What difficulties do you continue to experience as a result of this behavior? Again be specific.

10. What in the workshop was most helpful, most meaningful to you? Again, being specific will help.

11. What could you say that would be helpful to individuals who are beginning a workshop?

APPENDIX C

A SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL

SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL INSTRUCTION SHEET

The purpose of this study is to measure the meanings certain things have for you. In taking this test, please make your judgments on the basis of what these things mean to you. On each page you will find a different concept to be judged and beneath it a set of scales. You are to rate the concept on each of these scales in order.

If one end of the scale very closely describes how you feel toward the concept at the top of the page, place your checkmark as follows:

good X : : : : : bad
or
good : : : : X bad

If one end of the scale closely describes how you feel toward the concept, place your check-mark as follows:

good : X : : : bad
or
good : : : X : bad

If one end of the scale only slightly describes how you feel toward the concept, place your check-mark as follows:

good : : X : : bad
or
good : : X : : bad

IMPORTANT:

- 1) Place your check-mark in the middle of spaces, not on the boundaries

this not this

_____ : X : _____ : X _____

- 2) Be sure you check every scale for every concept--do not
omit any.

- 3) Never put more than one check-mark on a single scale.

Do not try to remember how you checked similar items in the test. Make each item a separate and independent judgment. Work at a

SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL INSTRUCTION SHEET (continued)

fairly high speed. It is your first impression, the immediate feelings about the items, that we want. However, please do not be careless, because we want your true impressions.

For this study the concepts measured were:

self

parents

friend

life

people

The same adjective pairs were used for each concept. A sample of a page from the Semantic Differential used in the Self-defeating Behavior Workshop follows.

FRIEND

good_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ bad
friendly_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ unfriendly
honest_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ dishonest
hard_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ soft
shallow_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ deep
weak_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ strong
active_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ passive
hot_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ cold
interesting_____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ boring