

AN INTRODUCTION TO INTERPERSONAL PROCESS RECALL AS A PARTICIPATORY DESIGN METHOD

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PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

Background and principles

How to do it

Why people do it

Overview of its use in person-centred research

BACKGROUND

Developed by Norman Kagan (1980, 1984) from the work of Bloom (1954)

IPR is a **self-reflective** method of learning; a **process of self-discovery**

Seen as a safe, self-reliant way of placing the participant(s) at the heart of their own experience

KAGAN'S MODEL OF THE PERSON

People are responsible for themselves

People naturally move towards self-fulfilment unless blocked by fears

We need other people (for stimulation and avoidance of sensory-deprivation)

We fear other people (because they might hurt or engulf us or we might hurt or engulf them)

We are a social species

We make sense of the social intentions, moods and feelings of others

We are altruistic and concerned for the well-being of others

(Peter Clarke, 1996, after Kagan)

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

'The individual knows best about the meaning of their own experience.

Each individual is a unique authority about her/himself.'

(Kagan)

THE IPR METHOD

An interaction of two or more people is video or audio recorded

The recording is played, by the recaller/s, to a colleague who takes on the role of inquirer

The recaller has control of the tape playback, pausing it whenever they choose for their own comment

The inquirer may offer prompts, but **the learning is the recaller's and the inquirer has no interest other than to facilitate the recaller's self-learning**

(Allen, 1998)

THE RECALLER'S ROLE

This is an opportunity to think about the original experience more fully than there was time to do then

- **There might not have been time to say everything**
- **There might have been things you chose not to say**
- **You might have experienced vague feelings and couldn't find the words in the moment to express them**
- **You might have had impressions about the other person and guesses about their impressions of you**
- **Images may have sprung to mind; you may have been aware of bodily reactions, or ideas and feelings that remained unspoken**

The purpose is to recall and explore

THE INQUIRER'S ROLE

offers structure and support **without controlling the level of exploration or influencing recall**

acts as witness **but does not lead, interpret, evaluate or assume superior knowledge**

prompts with open-ended 'What?' questions, **not 'Why?' questions**

needs to be assertive in helping recaller/s to stay in the past tense, **attending to what was going on 'back then', not now**

Facilitates the recaller to move away from 'What ifs?' or hypothetical opinions, **bringing him/her back to the recording**

INQUIRER CRIB SHEET

Kagan encouraged students (of helping professions) to create a set of prompts to aid recall centring around specific themes such as:

- **Self-exploration**
- **View of the other**
- **Own behaviour**
- **Values and assumptions**
- **Hopes and intentions**
- **Anything else**

Examples of inquiry leads:

- **What were you thinking/feeling?**
- **What pictures, memories or words were going through your mind?**
- **Was there anything you wanted to say but didn't?**
- **Do you recall how your body felt? (eg any changes? Where?)**

WHY DO IT?

‘at any moment in time we are having **a multitude of thoughts, feelings, sensations, of which we are not normally aware, nor have time to process, but which subtly affect the way we behave, react and interact.**’

‘when these are brought into our awareness, they can provide us with useful information about our interactions, our mode of behaving in certain situations, about the way we perceive others and the way others perceive us’

(Allen, 2004)

RATIONALE FOR USE

To develop self-awareness in regard to thoughts, feelings, sensations, images (etc.) originating within an interaction

To see yourself as others were seeing you during the interaction

To become more aware of own and others' communicative styles (behaviour)

To draw attention to the communication process itself as something that can be both viewed and facilitated

(IPR Associates, IPR in a Nutshell)

PROCESS DEBRIEF

It is beneficial to debrief after an IPR session in order to maximise learning

There are a variety of questions designed to facilitate honest self reflection in regard to the initial interaction including potential fears and unacknowledged and/or unspoken responses

This may include pre-agreed research questions

IPR IN PERSON-CENTRED RESEARCHRESEARCH

'Covert dimension of process' (McLeod 2009:455-459):

- **'things not said'** (Regan and Hill 1992)
- **'client deference' /communication on several levels** (Rennie 1994; 1998)
- **Comprehensive Process Analysis** (Elliott 1984)

Relational Depth (Mearns & Cooper 2005)

- **'to explore the difference between material that belonged to the presentational level and elements that reflected underlying issues of particular existential significance to the person'** (Amanda)
(p.61-2: 'social presentation' vs 'existential picture')

SAFETY AND OTHER BENEFITS

Looking/listening to a tape gives some distance

As a past interaction, the outcome is already known

The inquirer offers structure and support without controlling the level of exploration

Finding words for difficult feelings and experiences tends to reduce their fearsomeness

Time to slow down and reflect on the events and experiences

Opportunities to rehearse saying difficult or frightening things

A witness to the externalised thoughts

Resets power relations towards greater equality in mutual or group recall

(Peter Clarke, 1996, after Kagan)

SOME DIFFICULTIES

Way of working can be unfamiliar so there may be a tendency to slip into more usual roles

May affect the nature of the original interaction

Unpacking an hour's session fully would take far longer than an hour!

(Peter Clarke, 1996, after Kagan)

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