

**How Words and Speech Influence
Covert and Overt Behaviour:
A Functional Self-Discrimination
Measure of Verbal Behaviour**

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Certification of Originality

This is to certify that this thesis is an original piece of work. The only material that is not all my own work is in part the conceptual thinking and methods discussed in Chapter 3: Study 1: Development and Application of the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure of 'Self', which was jointly conceived with my Principal Supervisor; and, Appendix Two: FSDI Interviewer Capability Evaluation Method which is a direct adaptation of the Moyers, T.B., Manuel, J.K., & Ernst, D. (2014), *Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity Coding Manual*. Unpublished.

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Abstract

“How do words and speech influence covert and overt behaviour?” This question was distilled more precisely to a focus on how personal utterances function to predict wellbeing. From the philosophical orientation of functional contextualism, an empirical analysis of language using Relational Frame Theory (RFT) was undertaken in order to understand the functional relation between the term’s being used by the speaker as they recalled the antecedent and consequent events related to their current and historically situated acts. This, in part, involved identifying the values that were controlling the speaker’s observation and discrimination of what was important to them. This required developing a method, the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure & Interview (FSDM-FSDI), for classifying functional ways that the interviewees took perspective on experience and talked about themselves. Applying this method showed that: speaking of ‘values’ and their means of implementation significantly predicted long-term wellbeing; if a speaker uttered both value oriented self-rules and perspective taking statements, the combined effect was a stronger relationship with wellbeing; the way a person viewed themselves was significantly and positively related to their view of others; and, specific ratios of different categories of utterances equated to high levels of psychological flexibility. The FSDM-FSDI method developed and applied in this thesis represents a new approach to analysing natural language, which allows for the prediction and potential influence of the future behaviour and wellbeing of the speaker. This work, I believe, is a *functional assessment* of verbal behaviour, which is new in the field of Contextual Behavioural Science (CBS), and has important implications for those working and researching in the fields of psychological wellbeing and behaviour change. This enquiry coincidentally led to a consideration of the social implications of this work and the development of prosocial and moral behaviour more broadly.

Acknowledgements

Thank you God, Merle (Styles) my beautiful wife, Paul (Atkins) my friend, mentor and PhD supervisor, and Geoff (Mortimore) my friend, coach and PhD panel member! I have a debt of gratitude to you, the towering intellects that have come before us, and to the others who have shared the journey with me. You know who you are. Words are too limited a medium to aptly reflect my debt toward you, so I leave it to your recollections and suggest that whatever they may be they will forever be a fragment of what there is to acknowledge. Thank you!

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Chapter One

Introduction

Chapter One Contents

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Philosophical Orientation

I had one question at the outset to do this thesis, “How do words and speech influence covert and overt behaviour?” This question focused more precisely on how personal utterances function to predict wellbeing. My philosophical orientation was behavioural. I did not postulate hypothetical inner causes of overt behaviour. Rather, I assumed the position of a functional contextualist and undertook an empirical analysis of language in order to understand the functional relation between the terms being used by the speaker as they recalled the antecedent and consequent events related to their current and historically situated acts. This in part involved identifying the values that were controlling the speaker’s observation and discrimination of what was important to them. I was anticipating that if certain kinds of utterances were made, wellbeing could be predicted.

At the outset I feel compelled to draw a distinction between the pre-analytic assumptions I adopted, having taken a contextualist orientation, with those one might assume from other philosophical traditions. This is important, as some of the approaches in this thesis may seem unnecessarily complex or unfamiliar to readers anchored in the dominant psychological worldview. I am coming from a Contextual Behavioural perspective (Gifford & Hayes 1999; Hayes et al. 2012a; Hayes et al. 1988), which, while having a venerable history, is not the dominant worldview in psychology. Adopting this perspective has allowed for the functional analysis of language using a recent contextual behavioural approach, Relational Frame Theory (Hayes et al. 2001a). Below I briefly discuss and contrast the Contextual Behavioural perspective with two Elemental Realist perspectives – Modern Positivism and Postmodern Constructivism, as I have adapted methods from these traditions to contextualist purposes in order to validate my findings.

Elemental Realism

If I were to adopt an Elemental Realist worldview my assumptions would be based on the ‘root metaphor’ (Pepper 1942) of the world as a ‘machine’ with isolable parts that work together to cause behaviour. My truth criterion would be ‘correspondence’, and the purpose of my scientific endeavour would be to attain closer correspondence

between my predictions as a scientist and actual events unfolding in the world. From this perspective, theoretical propositions would be true to the degree that they successfully predicted what was actually observed in the world. Two such scientific traditions built upon elemental realist assumptions are Modern Positivism and Postmodern Constructivism. These theories postulate causal links between hypothetical mental constructs and emphasise causal relations between these hypotheticals and what is 'real'. They differ in that the 'hypotheticals' in modern positivism are conceived as general laws that can be stated in propositional and quantitative terms. Whereas in Postmodern Constructivism those 'hypotheticals' are conceived as subjectively constructed beliefs and paradigms that reflect known reality. Both these scientific traditions are directed towards obtaining greater correspondence between what is hypothesised, the 'parts', and what is 'real'. I briefly discuss both these traditions below before discussing Functional Contextualism.

Modern Positivism

A Modern Positivist worldview is based on the assumption that psychological and social reality is governed by general laws that can be stated in propositional and quantitative terms (Feldman 1997; Hjørland & Hjørland 2005; Radford 1992). Positivism holds that the laws governing human behaviour are objectively knowable, and employing the natural science method would lead to the discovery of these laws. Applying this view means, in part, that humans are perceived as similar to other animals whose behaviour is motivated by individual and group survival, as described in evolutionary biology and sociology (Fishman 1999). Attempts to explain, predict and control human behaviour are in terms of personal mechanist type processes, which are governed by deterministic, general laws of nature. Traditional behaviourism is a good example of the natural science approach to the study of social behaviour (Skinner 1953, 1974).

The philosophical basis for the natural sciences holds that in order for a statement to be 'true' it must be objective, open to verification, or at least falsification, by particular sense-experiences (Feldman 1997; Hjørland & Hjørland 2005; Radford 1992). That is, statements are viewed as facts that represent observable, quantifiable

phenomena. In Positivism, statements of individual or cultural value are viewed as subjective and are not considered part of a legitimate process of acquiring knowledge with the scientific method. Positivism explicates how scientific theories are deductively used to generate predictions of events that are subsequently tested through empirical observation. The results of theory testing involve the creation of discrete, atomic statements of fact. These are phrased in terms of a general summary with a de-emphasis on the particulars of context and actor's intentions and experience. Ultimately, the search for 'truth' is guided by the data and the sense experience that empirical observation provides.

In this thesis I have, in part, adapted positivist methods for contextualist purposes. I employed a methodology for 'content analysis' in which small 'syntactical units' in interview transcripts were quantitatively coded as to their presence and strength, and the resulting quantitative data was then treated in traditional positivist ways. An analysis of the relations between the frequency of coded utterances and observed measures of psychological wellbeing over time was taken to see which utterances predicted wellbeing. This facilitated the development of a functional assessment of natural language.

Postmodern Constructivism

Postmodern Constructivism is a worldview based on the assumption that reality is not objectively knowable (Adler 1997; Barkin 2003; Price & Reus-Smit 1998; Raskin 2002). Rather, reality is constructed by individuals and groups and manifests as particular beliefs about historical, cultural and social contexts. The nature of reality is relative, depending on the observer's point of view. A constructivist asserts the incompleteness, limitations and relativity of knowledge as illustrated in the concepts of the heuristic circle, web of belief, language as intrinsic to experienced reality, and scientific knowledge as paradigm-driven (Gee 2014b; Gergen et al. 2004; Heracleous 2004; Oswick et al. 2004; Raskin 2002; Thorne 2014; Trent & Cho 2014). The application of a constructivist view reinforces the idea that social progress is contingent on historical and situated conditions, values and decisions.

Two philosophical underpinnings of post modernism are Hermeneutics and Social Constructivism (Heracleous 2004; Raskin 2002; Spencer et al. 2014; Thorne 2014; Trent & Cho 2014). Hermeneutics holds what is knowable is an individual's holistic experience of engaged, intentional, practical activity. Social constructivism holds what is knowable is a particular group's experienced social reality, which is created through the communal interchange of the group's members. A social scientist taking a grounded approach to understanding an individual's or group's functioning would do so interactively with the research subject/s and construct theory through a thematic analysis of individual and group processes (Bryant 2014). These disciplines hold that 'language' and 'experience' cannot be separated; that holistic experience, combined perceptions, beliefs, intentions, and values are not separable from 'facts'. Human behaviour is viewed and understood in a way that is similar to how we interpret written texts. Thus, understanding the meaning of language is intimately tied to the interests and purposes of language users and the particular Wittgensteinian language game in which they are engaged (Heracleous 2004; Thorne 2014; Trent & Cho 2014). In this way statements symbolise a subjectively experienced reality rather than an objectively observed world.

The methods employed by the postmodern social scientist are thus qualitative, involving words, not numbers. Making sense of human behaviour is from the researcher's and research subject's conscious experience of life, with its mixture of thoughts, feelings, sensations, images, intentions, and intuitions. In this thesis I have also, in part, adapted constructivist methods to contextualist purposes. I have employed a thematic analysis of interview transcripts in order to capture the complex meaning and function of classes of verbal responses to historical and situated events in the lives of the interviewees. Again, these classes of verbal behaviour were related to quantitative measures of psychological wellbeing. This further facilitated the development of a functional assessment of natural language.

Functional Contextualism

While I had adapted quantitative and qualitative methods that befit Elemental Realist traditions, I have adopted the worldview of a Functional Contextualist (Hayes 1993;

Hayes et al. 1988) and a set of assumptions based on the root metaphor of, 'the ongoing act of the whole organism in context' (Pepper 1942). To understand the act, the context in which it is performed needs to be understood, which includes the historical and current influences upon the organism. From this standpoint, the world is understood as an undifferentiated process, and the divisions and dichotomies that we impose upon the flow of experience are purely functional; we divide up the world in ways that help us achieve our goals (Atkins 2012). My truth criterion, as a contextualist, was not the correspondence between subjective or objective models that predict or reflect what is 'real', but 'effective action' (Gifford & Hayes 1999) – asking "Does this way of viewing the world helps me to achieve my goals?"

In particular, I adopted a recent functional contextualist approach that has evolved out of the human sciences, Relational Frame Theory (Hayes et al. 2001a), which is a behaviour analytic approach to language that aims to better understand the link between human language and behaviour. Specifically, the stated goal of Functional Contextualism is "to predict-and-influence, with precision, scope, and depth, whole organisms interacting in and with a context considered historically and situationally" (Hayes et al. 2012a, p.4). The goal of prediction and influence provides a specific kind of utility, the truth criterion of "successful working". Prediction and influence are accomplished when analysis identifies the contextual features that permit the prediction of a behaviour of interest, and demonstrates that the manipulation of related contextual features affects the probability of that behaviour occurring (Gifford & Hayes 1999; Hayes & Long 2013).

The adoption of "successful working" as a truth criterion provided a way of understanding 'purpose' and distinctions between 'verbal' and 'non-verbal time' (Gifford & Hayes 1999; Hayes & Long 2013). All action occurs in an extended present, a history of consequences in similar situations, and the satisfaction of the goal being striven for. For non-verbal organisms, purpose involves the past as an activated history of events in which certain consequences have occurred, and the future in the present as the behaviour being performed "purposefully" with regard to the said consequence. For verbal organisms this issue becomes more complex as their interactions with the past and future in the present become symbolic. Verbal

repertoires introduce the “remembered” past and “predicted” future. We construct a ‘before’ and ‘after’ and futures that may have never been experienced. For verbal organisms what is at stake is the *activity* of ‘deriving’ futures, not the hypothetical symbolic events in themselves.

Being able to ‘verbally derive’ the future based on symbolic representations of the past as it is recalled in the present describes the pragmatic approach I adopted when analysing verbal behaviour in this thesis. Verbally derived futures and temporally related events were not considered inner mental causes of overt behaviour. Rather, verbal behaviour, from an RFT perspective, was understood to be the behaviour of deriving relations between symbolic representations of events and desired change, and then acting affirmatively with regard to those derived relations. Thus, behaving purposefully in a verbal sense was considered rule-governed behaviour. The unit of analysis, the ‘act-in-context’ was the ‘verbal-act-in-context’. To develop an empirical formulation of the verbal-act-in-context I needed to discern the contextual relations between the terms being used by the speaker as they described the antecedent and consequent events related to historically situated acts (Gifford & Hayes 1999); what values were controlling the speakers observation, discrimination and selection amongst environmental events (Leigland 2005; Skinner 1974); and, the potential function of classes of statements uttered by the speaker (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001b). This involved the design and application of the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure & Interview (FSDM-FSDI), a measure of the speaker’s perspective-taking and derived future consequences of rule-following. My aim was to test, when a speaker verbally constructed their future, to what extent their articulation of what would be important to them predicted long-term wellbeing.

In the next chapter I discuss in more detail the Contextual Behavioural Science (CBS) (Hayes et al. 2012a) perspective on the function of language, Relational Frame Theory (Hayes et al. 2001a) that informed the research undertaken in this thesis. In subsequent chapters I discuss three studies that involved the design and application the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure & Interview (FSDM-FSDI), which is a new method for the analysis of natural language. In the concluding chapters I discuss the

implications of this method based on the results from the three studies. This work, I believe, is a *functional assessment* of verbal behaviour and new in the field of CBS.

Chapter Two

Self-Discrimination and Rule-Governed Behaviour

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Contextual Behavioural Science

As briefly discussed in the Introduction, the *Contextual Behavioural Science* (CBS) perspective on the function of language provides some insight into how we may be able to regulate our own behaviour and work together in ways that enhance our wellbeing. Work in this field has shown that personal, and social, flexibility and responsiveness is enhanced if we develop perspective-taking skills, learn to pragmatically and strategically evaluate what is important, and take value-directed responses to prevailing circumstances (Hayes et al. 2001a; Hayes et al. 1999). This is inherently verbal behaviour and is contingent on effective dialogical exchanges within the privacy of our own minds and between individuals. Further, it is contingent on our values functioning intrinsically to regulate behaviour and reinforcing the consequences of our actions (Deci & Ryan 2008; Ryan & Deci 2006). If we can understand this behaviour, we can understand how language works for and against us. Understanding how language works may provide an insight into what it takes to cultivate moral behaviour and the good life. This is the focus of this thesis.

As a prelude to discussing the three studies I have conducted in the following chapters, below I discuss key theoretical accounts of the 'self' and how language functions from a recent contextual behavioural approach, Relational Frame Theory (RFT), that has informed this work. Specifically, I discuss: an RFT account of the 'self'; the function of language; rule-governed behaviour; motivation; how self-rules function; and, forms of pragmatic verbal analysis. To begin the discussion of an RFT account of the 'self' it is helpful to consider these words of Helen Keller as an example.

The most important day I remember in all my life is the one on which my teacher, Anne Mansfield Sullivan, came to me. I am filled with wonder when I consider the immeasurable contrasts between the two lives which it connects. It was the third of March, 1887, three months before I was seven years old.

Have you ever been at sea in a dense fog, when it seemed as if a tangible white darkness shut you in, and the great ship, tense and anxious, groped her way toward the shore with plummet and sounding-line, and you waited with beating

heart for something to happen? I was like that ship before my education began, only I was without compass or sounding-line, and had no way of knowing how near the harbour was. "Light! give me light!" was the wordless cry of my soul, and the light of love shone on me in that very hour.

We walked down the path to the well-house, attracted by the fragrance of the honeysuckle with which it was covered. Someone was drawing water and my teacher placed my hand under the spout. As the cool stream gushed over one hand she spelled into the other the word water, first slowly, then rapidly. I stood still, my whole attention fixed upon the motions of her fingers. Suddenly I felt a misty consciousness as of something forgotten – a thrill of returning thought; and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me. I knew then that "w-a-t-e-r" meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free! There were barriers still, it is true, but barriers that could in time be swept away. I left the well-house eager to learn. Everything had a name, and each name gave birth to a new thought. As we returned to the house every object which I touched seemed to quiver with life. That was because I saw everything with the strange, new sight that had come to me.

Helen Keller

This quote of Helen Keller (2012) draws a distinction between the 'self' that has the use of the language and the language itself. Her words point metaphorically to a 'self' that was transformed the moment she engaged in verbal behaviour. The transformation was from that of a ship without compass and sounding-line, from a wordless and dark inner world in which her soul cried for light, to one of light and love in which everything that was touched quivered with life. This quivering new world occurred with the thrill of returning thought revealed through the mystery of language. Language gave a strange, new sight that not only revealed the world, it also revealed the 'self.' The living word gave her awareness, hope, joy, and freedom. It is the distinction between the 'self' that has the use of language and the way language

enables us to identify with the world and ourselves verbally that is of interest in this discussion.

The ‘Self’ Defined from a CBS Perspective

The distinction between the ‘self’ that has the use of language and language itself (apparent in Helen Keller’s experience) can be understood from a contextual behavioural perspective. The contextual behavioural approach to understanding language and cognition, RFT, defines the self in terms of three behavioural processes – the *conceptualised self* which is identified with the content or object of verbal relations; the *knowing self* which is identified with the ongoing process of verbal relations; and the *perspective-taking self* which is identified with the deictic context of verbal relations (Hayes 1995; Hayes et al. 2001a; McHugh & Stewart 2012). By this definition, the ‘self’ that has the use of language is the *perspective-taking self*. Language, when in use, is known as *verbal behaviour* and pertains to the *conceptualised self* and the *knowing self*.

The verbal behaviours associated with both the conceptualised self and knowing self amount to what we ‘know’ (the two lower circles in Figure 1). The conceptualised self and knowing self constitute responses relevant to evaluation, problem solving and rule-governed behaviour. The perspective-taking self, or self-as-context of one’s internal verbal behaviour (the top circle in Figure 1), is the observer of this behaviour that takes perspective from the position ‘I-HERE-NOW.’ As one develops the sense of self-as-context, the dynamics of the verbal behaviour pertaining to the other two selves can be discriminated. From this transcendent perspective a broader and more flexible repertoire can be brought to bear on any event. These three selves are illustrated in Figure 1 and explained in more detail below. It should be noted that, from this perspective, these selves do not exist as entities or things; they are processes – specifically processes of relating one event to another.

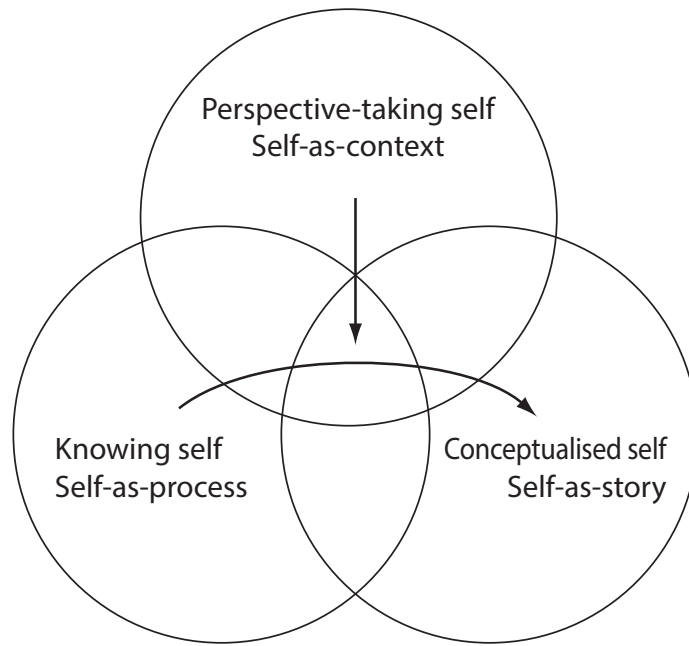


Figure 1. The three 'self' processes

The Conceptualised Self: Self-as-Story

Each of us engage in evaluating our ongoing unified stream of behaviour in terms of a panoply of categorical concepts. These categorical concepts constitute the *conceptualised self* or *self-as-story*. I use the term 'story' because the content or object of our verbal relations essentially becomes a story about our experience and 'who' we are. We evaluate, interpret, predict, explain, rationalise, and continue to interact with our own and others' behaviour. As soon as we can interact with ourselves and the world verbally in terms of I-YOU, HERE-THERE, and NOW-THEN we begin to form a "conceptualised self" (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a). For example, the "mystery of language" enabled Helen Keller to evaluate herself "I (not YOU) – HERE and NOW" based on once being "without compass and sounding-line" in a "wordless and dark inner world" in which her "soul cried for light" THERE and THEN, and later as a 'self' that had an "awakened soul, had light, hope, joy, and freedom" in a world that "quivered with life" that also happened THERE and THEN. Constructing a conceptualised self means verbally make sense of ourselves by referring to our history and tendencies and forming a coherent sense of identity. A coherent sense of identity serves important social functions. Various self categorisations allow for the

prediction of our behaviour; and, in this way, the self becomes important to us as it becomes important to others (Skinner 1974, p.30). In short, self-as-story refers to the descriptive and evaluative verbal constructs HERE and NOW about 'who' we are when talking about I, ME or MY behaviours, qualities and personal characteristics, derived from our history located THERE and THEN. In this way, constructing a sense of self involves evaluative verbal responding to personal history in terms of the relations I and YOU, HERE and THERE, and NOW and THEN.

The Knowing Self: Self-as-Process

Where the conceptualised self pertains to the categorical concepts and evaluations of 'who' we are, the *knowing self* relates to the ongoing process of verbally evaluating our stream of behaviour in current and historically situated contexts. Being able to describe and categorise our own behaviour HERE and NOW, for example, in terms of emotional feeling states, allows us to interact socially in highly individualised ways in changing circumstances. For example, Helen Keller tells us she is "filled with wonder" HERE and NOW as she recounts her story of the most important day she can remember in her life. Such emotional talk is a way we discuss HERE and NOW our personal history THERE and THEN. Being sensitive when we relate allows us to cut across many differences and provides a common ground for us to be human. In this way, our private worlds are intensely social and publically useful. It is how we, as a verbal community, speak with consistency about the conditions that influence our behaviour. The social construction of our private world allows us to function as social beings with regard to events that are supposedly private. Without this kind of self-knowledge, self-directed behaviour would be limited, as it would not be possible to construct a story about our current situation and future goals in quite the same way. For example, on the 3rd of March, 1887, there were moments when Helen Keller's whole attention was fixed upon the motion of her teacher's finger spelling "w-a-t-e-r" on the palm of her hand. In those, and following moments, she is gaining "vision" as she comes in contact with a world "quivering with life" revealed through the "mystery of language." She experiences being "set free." Equally, she could have experienced those same moments without gaining "vision" only to remain "tense and anxious, groping her way forward." Making such diverse inner experiences public,

influences how we are understood by others and the future direction important relationships might take. While our knowing self is key to empathy, self-control, self-knowledge, personal integration, social sensitivity, and so on, the knowing self also feeds the conceptualised self (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a). Hence the arrow from the Knowing self to Conceptualised self in Figure 1. In this way, the fluid, present based, verbal knowledge that the self as verbal process provides, can become content for the ossified, rigid, explanatory nature of the conceptualised self as current and historically situated present moment insights become the source of new stories, reasons, and causal constructions about 'who' we are. For example, identified preferences for solitude on an ongoing basis can consolidate into "being an introvert".

The Perspective-taking Self: Self-as-Context

Perspective taking involves identifying with the verbally constructed private and phenomenal world events from the perspective of I-HERE-NOW. Whenever we talk to someone else it will be from the perspective of I, located HERE and NOW, about events located THERE and THEN. Hence the downward arrow from the *Perspective-taking self* in Figure 1. For example, if I ask Helen Keller what she did on 3rd March 1887, she will report from her point of view as 'I', the speaker, located HERE and NOW, about the events "walking down the path to the well-house" having "my teacher place my hand under the spout" and realising "that 'w-a-t-e-r' meant the wonderful cool something that flowed over my hand" located THERE and THEN. If asked many questions, the only thing that will be consistent will not be the content of her answer, but the perspective "I, HERE and NOW" from which her answers occur (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a; Foody et al. 2012). The perspective-taking self is the context from which we become conscious of the objects of your experience. Like consciousness, perspective is not thing-like. Taking perspective on things means becoming conscious of the limits of those things. You cannot be conscious of the limits of your own consciousness, it is not thing like, it is no-thing and everything (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a). This sense of perspective is the locus from which things occur to you and it does not change. You, as the context of your experience, have been everywhere you have ever been. Wherever you go, there you are looking out at the world. This sense of a point-of-view or perspective is critical when working

on adaptive change as it is the one stable, unchangeable, immutable fact about who we are that is experienced directly. Self-as-perspective is not a belief, hope or idea, it is the conscious experience of an ongoing perspective on life itself.

The Nonverbal Self

Having discriminated the three verbal selves there is a question about verbal versus nonverbal knowing. Our nonverbal self is the biological locus of our behavioural activities; and, knowing nonverbally can be thought of as contacting direct experience as a behavioural stream (Hayes 1997). Verbal knowing augments nonverbal knowing. As seen in Helen Keller's experience, the nature of the self is expanded when verbal relating becomes part of her behavioural repertoire. She explains, "I saw everything with the strange, new sight (language) that had come to me". As we become verbal our behavioural and experiential stream as a biological organism becomes the object of our attention and our sense of self-as-process, -story and -context emerges. From a behavioural point of view, this kind of self-awareness is responding to ones' own responding. Skinner (1974, p.30-31) used the example of seeing. Most nonhuman animals see, but humans also see or know that they see.

Central to both verbal and nonverbal knowing is our experience as the locus of both biological and verbal behaviour. To function effectively as a species we need to increasingly organise our statements about ourselves as whole organisms interacting with our historical and current environments in order to predict and influence our social enterprises with precision, scope, and depth (Hayes et al. 2012a). Further, in order to have the ability to report events verbally, it is necessary to develop a sense of perspective or point of view (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a).

What is Language?

With an understanding of the three behavioural processes of the 'self' I now consider the question, "What is language?" For all animals the influence-behaviour distinction can be thought of in terms of stimulus and response (Skinner 1953, 1974). However, uniquely for humans, along with environmental stimuli, verbal behaviour also

functions as a stimulus for both covert and overt behaviour (Hayes et al. 2001a; Wilson & DuFrene 2008). Central to language functioning as a stimulus is the behaviour of *relational framing*.

Relational Framing

The term relational frame specifies a particular pattern of responding to historically established contextual cues, or stimuli, and the response is to frame these cues relationally. Functionally, relational responding takes the forms of mutual entailment, combinatorial entailment, and transformation of stimulus functions (Hayes 1989; Hayes et al. 2001a; Torneke 2010), which I explain below. These forms of relational responding are acquired when learning to use language. Humans acquire the ability to relate arbitrary cues to events, for example words to objects. Initially we might speak the word “water”, then we are taught the object to word relation “What is that?” – the wonderful cool something that flows over your hand = “w-a-t-e-r.” In this way we learn two way relations, that is, *mutual entailment*. Many mutually entailed relations are learned: if A is above B, B is below A; if A causes B, B is caused by A; and so forth. As we learn that relations are entailed in two directions we also learn that relations combine. That is, if A is bigger than B and B is bigger than C, then A is bigger than C. Combining relations in this way is referred to as *combinatorial entailment*. Finally, this process involves the transformation of the effect of the word or the event, which is known as *transformation of stimulus functions*. For example, if I say (picking up a Y shaped stick) “this is a divining stick for finding water!” the stimulus functions of the stick have been transformed. It now means something to you.

Rule-Governed Behaviour

Our capacity for relational framing makes rule-formulation and rule-governed behaviour possible. Simply, rule-governed behaviour is, “behaviour controlled by antecedent verbal stimuli” (Hayes et al. 2001c, p.17). More precisely, a verbal rule can be understood as a description of a verbal contingency which consists of a response, an outcome, and a discriminative stimulus in the presence of which the response will produce that outcome (Hayes 1989; Hayes et al. 2001a).

Our capacity for relational framing allows for the construction of verbal rules.

Constructing a verbal rule is the action of organising verbal stimuli into arbitrarily applicable relational networks so that stimulus functions transfer throughout these networks. Take the verbal rule, “When the sun rises, go to the well and fetch water.”

The desired outcome is fresh water in the morning. The desired response is for the listener to actually go to the well and get the water. The discriminative stimuli are specified by the speaker in the first instance. The speaker of this rule specifies a contingency, that is, events are “specified” and organised into a relational network as follows in Table 1:

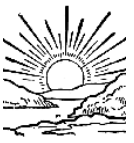
Verbal rule						
sunrise	then	go to	well	then	fetch	water
r	r	r	r	r	r	r
	(temporal)	 f		(temporal & coordination)	 f	
Entailed environmental objects and events that assume verbal functions						

Table 1. Contextual relations and functions of a verbal rule

The letters ‘r’ and ‘f’ refer to the contextual *relations* (C_{rel}) and behavioural *functions* (C_{func}) involved. The relations established between the words and symbols in the rule, and the environmental objects and events, take the form of mutual entailment (the middle row of ‘r’). The environmental events and objects (sunrise, well), and motor behaviours (go to, fetch) constitute the relata that are framed relationally (temporal, coordination). The stipulated behavioural responses take the form of ‘going’ and ‘fetching.’ In this way the specified environmental objects and events participate in the rule by virtue of relations established by the rule. The environmental objects and events now have verbal functions in terms of the rule. Overall, the verbal rule constitutes a set of discriminative stimuli that define a pattern of responding that, if followed, should deliver the desired outcome, fresh water in the morning.

Just as a picture frame can hold many pictures, a relational frame can include different 'relata'. Classes of relational responding include, coordination, opposition, distinction, comparison, hierarchical, temporal, spatial, conditionality, causality, and deictic. Contextual cues, or stimuli, that can be framed relationally include virtually any environmental, behavioural or verbal event. Relational frames define an overall pattern of responding where as the current context provides the specific formal features that occur in specific parts of the pattern (Hayes et al. 2001a). Consider the statement, "when you see _____, you will receive _____." Different relata might complete the overall pattern as, "when you see the sun rise, you will receive a cool drink" alternately, "when you see your best friend, you will receive a hug." In this way, highly elaborated forms of relational framing involve deriving relations among relations, for example, paragraphs, chapters, analogies, metaphors, stories, trilogies, symphonies and mathematical formula. Our capacity for relational framing enables complex behaviours such as analysis, problem solving, strategic thinking, persuasion, rhetoric, and other social processes that underpin social behaviour.

Understanding a Rule

Once a verbal rule is specified by a speaker, for it to be understood, the listener has to respond to the verbal stimuli firstly by organising events into a relational network. If this occurs the speaker is speaking with meaning and the listener is listening with understanding (Hayes & Hayes 1989). For a verbal rule to be specified and understood in this way both the speaker and listener require training of a similar kind. Mature speakers and listeners must learn to produce and respond to the same speech products in terms of the arbitrary applicable relations they specify, which are sustained by the linguistic community (Hayes & Hayes 1989). Behaving verbally is a social activity.

In this way, our capacity for relational framing allows for the specification of highly elaborate rules designed to establish complex forms of behaviour over time. In their most complete form, rules detail antecedent conditions appropriate for the desired behaviour sequence such as time, place and circumstance; features of the response

classes involved such as topography, rate and duration; and, desired consequences such as type, quality, and scheduling of events (Hayes 1989). Depending on the audience, the amount of detail varies. Examples of rules range from verbal instructions from books, websites and blogs promising self-awareness, fulfilment, and weight loss to road maps, cookbooks, and owner's manuals for personal appliances. Weather reports, navigation assistance, help with homework, and directions in a strange place are all examples of verbal rules. In each case verbal rules are a partial statement of contingencies that, once understood, require the rule-follower(s) to gather the remaining aspects from the environment and past history.

Relationship Between Verbal and Motor Behaviours

Understanding a rule is not the same as following it. Once a verbal rule is specified and understood, the verbal functions of the previously nonverbal environment make it possible to move from rule-understanding to rule-following (Hayes et al. 1989). The behaviour required to mediate the consequences specified in the rule can occur in an entirely different context to that in which the rule was specified because aspects of the new context now function as verbal stimuli with effects established by the rule.

This still does not fully explain rule-following, however. When the sun rises, you may make contact with the altered functions of the sunrise and well and still not get out of bed to go and fetch the water. You, for example, may point toward the well when asked "Where are you meant to go to get the water?" and still not get up and go. This is a matter of "motivation" which is discussed below. To get up and walk to the well is a coordination of behaviour with a different stimulus function than that established by virtue of the well's participation in a relational frame with the word *well* as specified in the rule. To take the bucket in your hand requires the coordination of motor behaviour moment by moment as you lower it into the water in the well (reaching down, scooping water, lifting, moving the bucket out of the well, placing it over the shoulder, balancing, walking). These functions involve the verbal functions of the well and water but primarily as a matter of coordinating the nonverbal functions of reaching down, scooping, and so on.

All rule-governed behaviour makes contact with two types of contingencies: those established by the rule and past history with rules; and, the natural contingencies involving coordination of the nonverbal functions required to carry out the rule. In the case of natural contingencies, the consequences of the action are determined completely by the topography of the action itself in the given situation. For example, the amount of water in the bucket is 100% determined by the form of the action of reaching down and scooping. The water cannot react to why the bucket is there, only how it is there. The natural consequence of water in the bucket is determined by the precise manner in which the bucket dips into and scoops the water.

If the required nonverbal functions for effective rule-following are not already established, a rule may be understood and still not lead to effective behaviour (Hayes & Hayes 1989). A child might understand that bicycles are for riding. The behaviour of riding may be observed and understood verbally in that the child may be able to match the word *riding* to the observed actions of cycling and visa versa. Nonetheless, the child still may not be able to actually ride a bike. If asked, “please ride to the well and get some water?” effective action may be impossible even though the verbal rule is understood. This is because the nonverbal functions of bike riding have not been established.

Further, if a rule is understood and the nonverbal functions required for rule following are established there still remains the matter of actualising those nonverbal functions in coordination with the verbal functions specified in the rule. This is a question of motivation, a topic to which I now turn.

Motivation

Motivation involves three distinct types of rule-governed behaviours organised by the contingencies that specify action with regard to the rule, they are pliance, tracking and augmenting (Hayes 1989; Hayes et al. 2001a; Torneke 2010).

Pliance

Pliance, which comes from the word *compliance*, is the most fundamental unit of rule-governed behaviour and is the clearest instance in which behaviour controlled by a rule can be said to be rule-governed. It is “rule-governed behaviour under the apparent control of socially mediated consequences for a correspondence between the rule and the specified behaviour” (Hayes et al. 1989, p.203). A rule functioning this way is said to be functioning as a *ply* (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001c).

If a person is ordered, “When the sun rises go to the well and fetch water,” and does so in order to gain the approval of the speaker of the rule or avoid the consequences for non-compliance, the rule is functioning as a *ply*. With pliance, the consequences are socially mediated as only the social/verbal community can discern the presence of the rule and check for behaviour that corresponds with it. The fact of social mediation is background, the foreground issue is that the socially mediated consequences are for rule-following *per se* (Hayes et al. 1989). In this way, the consequences are explicitly designed to organise responding into the class: rule-following. What might be termed obedience.

Tracking

Tracking, which suggests following a path, is rule-governed behaviour under the control of an apparent correspondence between the specified rule and the topography of the traversed environment. A rule functioning this way is termed a *track* (Hayes 1989). Take our water-fetching example, “When the sun rises go to the well and fetch water.” If the listener’s behaviour is brought under control of the rule because of the correspondence between it and how to actually get the water, then it is tracking. In this way the natural contingencies for water fetching are contacted because of the nonverbal properties of the behaviour involved – the form, frequency, or situational sensitivity of the relevant behaviour produces the consequence(s) specified or implied in the rule (Hayes et al. 2001a).

For our early morning riser, tracking would have her fetch water to quench a thirst, rather than simply gain approval for compliance with the rule. In this way, tracking is

sensitive to a number of variables affecting the correspondence between the rule, the natural contingencies contacted and the importance of that correspondence. For example, it is influenced by the listener's history of contacting natural consequences of following other rule-givers, the correspondence between the specified rule and other rules and events in the listener's history, the importance of the consequences for following the rule, and so on (Hayes et al. 2001a).

Unlike pliance, with tracking, the verbal community does not mediate compliance. Tracking would be as likely to occur if the rule were written in a book. This distinction between tracks and plys is not a formal one though. The consequences for tracking can be socially-mediated at times as the natural environment includes social variables. For example, our thirsty early morning riser might get lost on the way to the well and receive directions from a satiated co-traveller. In this way, with tracking, the social consequences are due to the form of the behaviour, not the social detection of a correspondence between the rule and the behaviour.

Augmenting

Augmenting, which suggests a changed or heightened state of affairs, is rule-governed behaviour under the control of apparent changes in the degree to which events function as consequences (Hayes et al. 2001a). A rule functioning in this way is termed an *augmental*. There are two types of augmentals. *Motivative augmentals* are verbal stimulus functions that *alter* the apparent capacity of events to function as reinforcers or punishers (Hayes et al. 1989). *Formative augmentals* are verbal stimulus functions that *establish* apparent reinforcing or punishing stimulus functions of events. Augmenting is a subtle and important form of rule-following that is mixed with pliance or tracking. Each of these forms of rule-governed behaviour can be augmented because they each involve implied or specified consequences.

Motivative augmenting is behaviour under the control of temporarily altered functions of previously established reinforcers or punishers due to their participation in relational networks (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001c). For example, the statement "Wouldn't a refreshing drink of cool water from the well be good right now?" may

function as a motivative augmental. If this statement motivates you to drink fresh water from the well then it is probably functioning as a verbal establishing stimulus, not a verbal discriminative stimulus, since the well of fresh water was available irrespective of the rule being present. Motivative augmentals work by presenting sensory or perceptual functions of the specified consequence. The words “refreshing drink” and “cool water” come to have sensory functions via transformation of stimulus functions. In other words, they bring to the fore the presence of an existing reinforcer. “In everyday language, you would say a formative augmental makes something new important, and a motivative augmental makes something that is already important even more important in the moment.” (Torneke 2010, p.123).

Formative augmenting is behaviour under the control of newly established reinforcers or punishers due to their participation in relational networks. For example, the statement “Refreshing cool water from the well is worth money in the market place” may function as a formative augmental. If fresh water now functions for the first time as a reinforcer in the context of the market place, then the statement is a formative augmental. Once the value of fresh water is contacted in this way, rules that include “refreshing cool water” will now function as an augmental. The previous motivative augmental “Wouldn’t a refreshing drink of cool water from the well be good right now?” may become the functional equivalent of “Refreshing cool water from the well would be good right now as it will earn me money” as money is an existing reinforcer. Thus, formative augmentals can verbally establish new events as reinforcers even if those events have never previously been contacted.

At this stage, I would like to stress that pliance, tracking and augmenting are units of verbal regulation or rule-following that are based on rule understanding. To be motivated to follow a rule first requires that the rule be understood, and further, for the rule to be enacted requires that the nonverbal functions for rule following be established. So, once these conditions are in place under what conditions do rules function effectively or not? Particularly “self-rules” which are rules that have been self-authored and pertain to one’s own behaviour?

Self-Rules that Don't Function Well

Having considered the formation of verbal rules and how rules function to govern behaviour, we are now in a position to consider the function of the rules in use personally and collectively. Function in this discussion is understood to be a workability issue. If life is not vital it potentially means the self-rules being employed to govern behaviour are not functioning well; they are not regulating personal behaviour in a way that results in a vital life. The question is, what distinguishes verbal self-rules that allow apt functions to be augmented or diminished, for valued outcomes to be detected, and for lengthy behavioural sequences to be performed with regard to those valued consequences?

Context Outside the Skin

There are two contexts in which behaviour takes place. Firstly, there is the phenomenal world outside our skin in which motor behaviours function in the service of manipulating the physical environment. This context is actual, causal and controllable. If you desire a fresh drink of water from the well it is obtainable either directly from the well or from the market place for a price. The specified consequences of following such a rule will be determined precisely by topography of the actions taken. The amount of water scooped from the well or the amount of cash you are prepared to pay in the market place will literally and causally determine the consequence – a drink of water. These events are controllable. If you don't like the water you don't have to drink it, you can ask for your money back. Highly elaborated rules function in the phenomenal world in the same way. A plan to build a dam so everyone in the town has fresh water on tap would specify in great detail the antecedent conditions for the project to begin, detail sequences of behavioural responses required for all involved in the management and construction process and the desired consequences at each stage of the project for it to be deemed a success.

In the context of the phenomenal world our observational behaviour (an aspect of perspective-taking) functions to seek out and select among discriminative stimuli (Skinner 1974). Such discernment serves an important mediating function in further specifying and sequencing the responses required to carry out lengthy behavioural

sequences (Hayes et al. 2001e). Verbal behaviour in this context serves the function of manipulating the social environment such that coordinated effort delivers the specified consequences. Rules that govern complex and integrated sequences of motor behaviours in such a way make it possible for dams to be built and for people to have fresh water on tap. These rules function literally and causally in that events are controlled and desired consequences are brought about.

Context Inside the Skin

The second context in which behaviour takes place is inside our skin, our inner world, where events cannot be controlled in the same actual and causal way. Events inside the skin consist of thoughts, feelings and emotions. Unlike the unwanted glass of water in the market place you can't give an unwanted thought or emotion back and ask for a refund. Unwanted feeling states such as the bodies stress response cannot be avoided. Yet, in order to deal with such unwanted experience a person may abstract a self-rule in an attempt to control or avoid that experience based upon how events occur in the external world. Where in fact engaging in efforts to control and avoid unwanted internal experience such as bodily stress has been shown to exacerbate trauma (Poppen 1989). Engaging in such reactive effort to control and avoid unwanted thoughts and emotion has been shown to often perversely lead to an increase in what is being avoided (Hayes et al. 2012b).

How are such ineffective self-rules constructed? As we become fluent in relational framing we begin to construct a sense of 'self'. We frame thoughts, emotions, memories and other experiences of ourselves as "literal" descriptions of who we are. This behaviour pertains to the object or content of verbal relations (self-as-story). For example, "*I* am not good enough, (look at my body, role, history, feelings!), what can I do to be good enough?" or "*We* are not good enough, what can we do?" The verbal community provides conditions for us to discriminate our ongoing behaviours in terms of such "literal" descriptions. Rationalistic traditions, cultural norms and codes of conduct are socially constructed sets of specifications by which we discriminate the apparent functionality of our ongoing behaviour. We discern "By this norm I really am not good enough, they are all laughing at me!" or "By this code we

really are not good enough, we are being outcast!” According to RFT, being attached to such verbal constructs is technically understood as behaving *fused* with self-as-story and behaving with a lack of *acceptance* toward self-as-process (Luciano et al. 2011; Luciano et al. 2012). It has been shown that fusion with verbal content and avoidance of experiential process leads to patterns of problematic behaviour regulation as behaviour becomes governed according to the “literal” descriptions of who we are (Wilson et al. 2001). These patterns of destructive behaviour can be understood in terms of pliance, tracking and augmenting.

Ineffective Pliance

Identifying literally with the statement, “I really am not good enough, they are all laughing at me!” may lead you to specify the rule “*I* ought to comply with what they think so they are happy with me.” Following this rule, or a functionally equivalent one, as a core life-rule may lead you to put your life in others’ hands. Behaving to “please others” in this way may become problematic as the explicit or assumed consequences sought from others might not be what is personally good for you in the long run. You may find yourself seeking to be “doing the right thing” through the eyes of others, needing others’ approval, behaving to get it and often not obtaining it, which then becomes a reoccurring pattern (Hayes et al. 1999, 2012b; Luciano et al. 2011). Similarly, the rule “By this code *we* really are not good enough, we are being outcast!” may lead a community to decide, “We ought to obey so we stay out of trouble.” The likely result of following functionally equivalent rules will be a restricted life and poor contact with potentially reinforcing consequences for tracking a valued lifestyle (Hayes et al. 1999, 2012b; Torneke 2010). Further, behaving to please and conform is perpetuated and extended when augmented by abstract, verbal consequences. For example, when feeling good is dependent on others’ approval and feeling good is established as a necessary state to do other things in life (Luciano et al. 2011; Luciano et al. 2012).

Ineffective Tracking

Tracking becomes problematic when applied in contexts where tracking cannot work and when the rule itself is inaccurate (Hayes et al. 1999, 2012b). As suggested

metaphorically, you can't give an unwanted thought or emotion back as you can with an unwanted glass of water in the market place. Unwanted thoughts, feelings and emotions cannot be controlled or avoided in the same literal and causal way that unwanted events in the phenomenal world can be risk managed. Consider the rule "If things do not work as specified, replace them." This track may be useful when trying to scoop water with a bucket containing a hole. However, following this track with private events will not work. Imagine specifying certain thoughts and feelings as obstacles to achieving desired outcomes. For example, believing being fully informed and having no anxiety are necessary requirements for giving a public talk or being interviewed. You might decide, "I will not be able to make this presentation unless I have all the facts and can relax." Trying to follow this rule by attempting to have no holes in your thinking and replacing anxiety with calm will likely be futile. Ironically, continuing to follow this rule will possibly/often result in pretending you know when you don't, feeling a "fraud" and becoming more anxious, which in turn will reinforce the rule "I really do need to figure out how to know everything and deal with anxiety in order to present with confidence", which is contrary to what is effective in the long run.

Tracking will also lead to problems when the rule is inaccurate (Luciano et al. 2011; Luciano et al. 2012). Consider the rule, "In order to know everything, deal with anxiety and be prepared for presentations I will continue reading all relevant material until I feel confident." Following this rule will be reinforced by the short-term consequence of feeling less anxious when doing a lot of reading and the implied consequence specified relationally in the rule; that reading to know everything and feeling confident is literally and causally necessary to deal with anxiety and be calm in presentations. Rules directing behaviour in the service of "Being well read and confident" are functioning to maintain an apparent coherent relational network, which is about "being right". Such rules function in opposition to long-term self-efficacy as contact with contingencies oriented toward positive reinforcement as part of a meaningful life are blocked. As with pliance, augmenting plays a critical role in the maintenance of such ineffective patterns of tracking by perpetuating the mistaken belief (rule) that the behaviour is in the service of valued ends.

Ineffective Augmenting

When ineffective pliance and tracking are augmented in pursuit of abstract verbal consequences the resulting perpetuation and extension of ineffective behaviour is known as destructive experiential avoidance (Hayes et al. 1999, 2012b; Torneke 2010). Experiential avoidance is a type of rule-following in which you behave to either avoid discomforting unwanted private events or retain pleasant ones. The resulting pattern of behaviour is destructive because, despite the short-term reduction of discomfort and increased sense that you are doing the right thing, over the long-term the unwanted private events increase and strengthen and life becomes more restricted and problematic. This context serves an establishing operation for more ineffective self-rules to emerge (Cipani & Schock 2011; Laraway et al. 2003). Just as feeling thirsty establishes water-seeking behaviour, an increased sense that life is restricted and problematic establishes avoidance behaviour. This becomes a reinforcing loop, as rules that further specify contingencies for avoidance will automatically lead to an increase in restricted behaviour regulation and a failure to contact important psychological events.

Following a generalised ply that is functionally equivalent to “I ought to comply with what they think so they are happy with me, so I belong,” as a core life-rule, results in an inflexible repertoire of behaviour: a repertoire where you keep seeking acknowledgement from others, a consequence only ‘they’ can mediate, that is highly uncontrollable and unpredictable in order to feel good about yourself. This repertoire becomes particularly problematic when feeling good is established as necessary in order to achieve other life goals, such as, “being a good citizen.” Thoughts and feelings associated with “I want to be a good citizen” are framed in coordination with feeling good, and “feeling good” is framed in coordination with what you value in life (Hayes 1989; Hayes et al. 2001a; Luciano et al. 2011; Torneke 2010). This relational network is then defended as if a ‘good life’ depended on it. Maintaining a coherent sense of self in these terms becomes a verbal trap of destructive self-regulation where feeling good is literally and causally necessary for living a valued life, and feeling good depends on others’ behaviours.

A similar pattern of destructive self-regulation occurs when ineffective tracking is augmented. For example, when you ruminate and worry. Consider again the track “I really do need to figure out how to know everything and deal with anxiety in order to present with confidence.” Behaviours associated with “being well informed” and “giving presentations” are functionally augmented in the service of avoiding anxiety and feeling confident as a valued life goal. Circular thinking about avoiding yesterday’s bad experiences tomorrow become a preoccupation. Ongoing deliberate effort to avoid unwanted thoughts and feelings by “thinking things over” is maintained by rules such as “Feeling calm and being well informed is necessary in order to live a valued life,” “When I think things over I feel better” therefore “It is important I continue to think things over.” This destructive pattern of experiential avoidance is ultimately ineffective as the short-term sense of relief gives way to long-term increases of unwanted private experience and a restricted life. The preoccupation with “solving life” in another time and place results in poor contact with direct contingencies for tracking what is important for valued living here and now. This paradoxical effect is a central process in many personal and social problems (Hayes et al. 2012b; Luciano et al. 2011; Luciano et al. 2012).

Ineffective tracking may also happen at the group level as ineffective rules become generalised as group norms. This is apparent when a community is unable to interrupt default responses in challenging situations. By degree, in challenging situations the absence of flexibility in responding or perspective taking gives rise to a tendency for inflexible rule-governed behaviour. In effect, inflexible rule-governed behaviour means shared notions (rules) about how things ought to be or ought not to be can get in the way of effective learning and action. Groups continue to do things that do not work believing (following rules) that they should (Fantino & Stolarz-Fantino 2013). They argue for certain positions based on underlying philosophies, rationalistic traditions and beliefs (the rules) even though they do not take them in the direction intended (Bennett & Howlett 1992; Colebatch 2002; Dolowitz & Marsh 2000). They struggle with the resulting aversive experience and yet continue to justify and use the same strategies that yield this limiting and ineffective experience (Fantino & Stolarz-Fantino 2013; Hayes et al. 2001a; Thacher & Rein 2004). By this analysis, I suggest that entrenched and intractable social, environmental and

economic problems are maintained as governments, organisations and communities adhere literally and rigidly to what is believed.

Patterns of destructive experiential avoidance are maintained for two reasons.

Firstly, individuals and groups do not relate hierarchically to their verbal inner experience (self-as-story, self-as-process). That is, they do not understand they are the context of their experience (self-as-context) and that their experience is a part of them. A lack of perspective on the content of experience leads to the treatment of the content as a 'literal' readout on reality (Luciano et al. 2011; Luciano et al. 2012).

What is thought is held as the 'truth'. Secondly, a lack of contact with personal and collective values as a reinforcer for valued behaviour leads to derived rules in response to an (un)satisfactory evaluation of life (Hayes et al. 2013). Patterns of problematic self-regulation are sustained because people cannot readily identify that their self-rules are being constructed and are not 'the truth'. Nor can they take perspective on the temporal short- long-term effect of actions being taken. Without the fluency in perspective taking needed to be able to choose directions controlled by abstract consequences (i.e., values), people tend to automatically avoid unwanted experience and perpetuate behaviour fused with self-rules that trap them in suffering. Fluency in deictic framing is required to engage positively reinforced behaviours as part of a meaningful life.

What Makes Self-Rules Functional?

With an understanding of relational framing and the function of self-rules, we are in a position to consider what makes self-rules functional. We will consider processes for individual and social change and why change would be successful based on the transformation of stimulus functions involved. This will be considered in terms of: *perspective-taking*, which has been shown to change the context of inner experience and transform avoidance behaviours (Hayes et al. 2001a; Hayes et al. 1999, 2012b; Luciano et al. 2011); *value directed rule-following* which has been shown to transform action as satisfactory and necessary for valued living (Hayes et al. 2001a; Hayes et al. 1999, 2012b); and, *pragmatic verbal analysis* which has been shown to be an effective

approach to acting on the world verbally by specifying lengthy behavioural sequences (Hayes et al. 2001a).

Perspective-Taking

Developing the personal ability to take perspective on experience allows you to distinguish yourself and your experience along two important dimensions. First, perspective-taking involves discriminating your 'self' as distinct from the content of experience; second, it involves identifying your 'self' as the container of experience.

Discriminating your 'self' from the content of experience involves discriminating between your 'self' as the locus of experience HERE and NOW as distinct from the content of experience THERE and THEN. Rather than believing as a matter of fact, "I really do need to figure out how to know everything and deal with anxiety in order to present with confidence", you identify this statement as a thought and let go of your struggle to "know everything" in order to "deal with anxiety". Discriminating the 'self' as a consistent locus I-HERE-NOW provides the basis for *perspective-taking* (self-as-context). With this distinction you are able to discriminate the difference between yourself, your inner experience and your actions, both present and historically based. Exercises that develop this distinction involve contacting moments in time in order to realise the consequences of behaviours and to discriminate private events as different from yourself and your behaviours (Hayes et al. 2001a; Hayes et al. 2012b; Torneke 2010). This is the state of having shifted relations from "I + my thoughts and emotions – HERE & NOW" to "I – HERE & NOW *while* my thoughts and emotions are – THERE & THEN"

Identifying your 'self' as the container of experience involves deriving an explicit relation of INCLUSION between yourself and all your thoughts, feelings and emotions; an experience of the 'self' as the consistent locus *and* container of all private events. On the way to giving your presentation you might notice, "There's that thought again, 'I'm not informed, this is not worth the angst (noticing the butterflies)'" as part of your experience and choosing "I'll take them (thoughts & feelings) along for the ride". Exercises that develop this distinction involve deriving "I am more than all my

thoughts,” “without me, no thoughts,” “I am always here no matter what my thoughts, feelings, memories are” (Hayes et al. 2001a; Hayes et al. 2012b; Luciano et al. 2011; Torneke 2010). This is the state of having shifted relations to “I – HERE and all my thoughts, emotions and sensations – THERE *and also* PART of ME”.

Value Directed Rule-Following

Knowing yourself as the context of experience and being able to take perspective provides a different context for decision-making. Thoughts and emotions located THERE and THEN can then be viewed (taken perspective on) with no necessary “truth value” beyond their utility. (Hayes et al. 2001a; Hayes et al. 2012b; Luciano et al. 2011; Torneke 2010). This perspective allows you to choose in accordance with self-rules that specify what is important in life. You freely choose as you take ‘those’ thoughts and feelings along for the ride, “Here is my presentation, as this is important in the long run”. Experiencing what is important becomes the context for effective augmenting, as valued actions become transformed as satisfactory, even when aversive functions are present in the form of pain or discomfort. In this way, the control and avoidance function that occurs when fused with self-as-story will be altered, and behaviour change will occur as alternative sources of stimulus control are present and connected with what is important in life. Such a predisposition is termed *psychological flexibility* and is defined as a mindful orientation, in which people “contact the present moment as a conscious human being, fully and without needless defence – as it is and not as what it says it is – and persisting with or changing behaviour in the service of chosen values” (Hayes et al. 2012b, p.96). This is the process of shifting to “I – HERE with all my thoughts, emotions and sensations (+ve or -ve) – THERE and a PART of ME *and choosing* to *ACT* in a direction that is valued.”

The distinction between personal “choice” rather than “decision-making” is important. For individuals and groups to have vitality it is important they experience autonomy rather than being forced by others or by circumstances (Deci & Ryan 2002b). Autonomy involves making choices in the *presence of reasons* for and against a particular action, rather than *based on* those reasons (Hayes et al. 2012b). It is being

able to say, “I will love you just the same”, while having thoughts and feelings that discourage you from doing so. Decisions originating in the problem-solving mode of mind are derived from ‘factual’ information, which forms the truth criterion for logic and reasoning. Decisions made in this mode can gain or lose resolve as reasons apparently change. Freely chosen values, on the other hand, have been shown to play out in a healthier sense as they are contacted directly in the present moment and translate into *committed action* (Hayes et al. 2013). Freely chosen values, while personal, can also be socially established and social in their focus. The important distinction is they are not socially forced. It is not about independence, it is about the psychological quality of ownership of actions.

Choosing and living a vital life is established through multiple exemplars that set conditions for effective augmenting with long-term tracking. This requires establishing patterns of rule-following in which private experiences are no longer something to fight against if aversive, or cling to if appetitive, but simply become a part of the process to effective long-term tracking with abstract reinforcing consequences (Hayes et al. 1999; Torneke 2010).

Pragmatic Verbal Analysis

Effective long-term tracking, from an RFT perspective, involves taking ourselves as the object of our attention, and from this vantage point verbally analysing our own behaviour over extended periods. This process of verbal analysis of our own behaviour is one form of *pragmatic verbal analysis* which Hayes et al describe as “acting upon the [nonarbitrary] world verbally, and having the world serve verbal functions as a result” (2001a, p.90). *Analysis* because the process involves evaluating the likely success or failure of a behavioural effort; *verbal* because the objects of analysis are symbolic/verbal representations of those contextually situated behaviours participating in highly complex relational networks; and, *pragmatic* because the exercise is in the service of achieving practical and valued ends.

The value of analysing one’s own behaviour and developing such self-knowledge is considerable. Self-awareness and self-monitoring will permit greater self-control as

we engage in analytic activities related to our ongoing behavioural streams. Responding to our own responses in an evaluative sense enhances our capacity to predict the success or failure of our behavioural efforts. As we have discussed, from a contextual behavioural perspective, the most important adaptive function of pragmatic verbal analysis is the construction of verbal rules that allow for lengthy behavioural sequences to be performed with regard to possible valued consequences (Hayes et al. 2001a). We will consider two forms of *pragmatic verbal analysis* that implicate us: *strategic analysis* and *valuative analysis*.

A *strategic analysis* is undertaken when we know a solution or purpose but there is an absence of effective action to achieve that solution or purpose. Having discriminated the desired end state, the problem is achieving that end state. To solve the problem involves placing the desired goal or purpose in a relational network that specifies the current situation and delineates possible steps that, if undertaken, will likely lead us to achieve the verbally constructed goal or purpose. This activity is inherently metaphorical and requires that we relate entire sets of verbally derived stimulus relations to one another based on the properties and dimensions of the events in the network and their transformation. This activity often proceeds in a linear, step-like fashion and includes common sense steps such as: define problem; gather information; compare possible solutions; select plan; carry out plan; test outcomes; change plan. Each of these steps comprise domains in which verbal activity occurs, each with reference to the verbally constructed outcome being sought. If there is one known solution, a convergent approach is likely to be employed. If there are a number of possible solutions available, divergent approaches tend to be used. In any instance the prescribed steps are defined by successful working criteria.

In contrast to a strategic analysis, a *valuative analysis* is undertaken in the absence of a goal or purpose and involves using relational frames to contrast, and select from, possible outcomes. We often face major life decisions to do with, for example, our career, marriage, or spiritual orientation and grapple with questions like “What do I want my life to be about?” or “What’s really important to me?” The problem is more about deciding and choosing possible consequences rather than a means of reaching

the selected consequences. Valiative analyses are at the core or “values clarification” and functions to provide an overall direction in the absence of one. Looking at pros and cons is an iterative verbal process that amplifies the behavioural effects of a verbally constructed future. For example, considering possible career options you might ask, “On my 89th birthday, what would I like people to say about my life’s work?” Such metaphors function to bring nonverbal effects of the situation as verbally constructed into the verbal network and serve to clarify the choice.

Motivation for the Studies Undertaken in this Thesis

Colloquial questions such as “What do I want my life to mean?” and “How do I get there?” provided the motivation for the studies undertaken in this thesis. Is it possible to analyse language for statements that allow us to predict and influence the success or failure of our behavioural efforts in pursuit of a vital life? As discussed, the *Contextual Behavioural Science* (CBS) perspective on ‘self’ and the function of language provides some insight into how we may be able to regulate our own behaviour to enhance our wellbeing (Hayes et al. 2001a; Hayes et al. 1999). With this understanding I undertook three studies in order to evaluate how language functions to predict wellbeing. I consider the methods employed for this work to be a *functional assessment* of the verbal responses made by a speaker in an interview when invited to discuss such questions. The claim that this work *is* in fact a functional assessment is new work in the field of CBS. Such an approach may well be considered a topographical assessment of language rather than functional, a question I now address.

The distinction between topographical and functional in an analysis of verbal behaviour is critical. When conducting a topographical assessment of verbal material the assessment normally involves the identification of classes of verbal behaviour in the transcribed or textual material (Gee 2014b; Saldana 2013). Attempts at an assessment of the controlling variables is part of the interpretation process, which involves the identification of the variables and their apparent function with respect to the verbal material itself (Leigland 1996). In a topographical approach the classes of verbal behaviour are defined in terms of their effects upon the *reader/researcher*. The

general process has much in common with the practices of contemporary applied interpretive qualitative research such as hermeneutic perspectives, which lend themselves to the *description* and *prediction* of behaviour (Heracleous 2004; Thorne 2014). The methods developed and applied in this thesis were derived from the contextual behavioural epistemology outlined in this chapter, which I believe, allows for the functional assessment language and related variables with respect to the future behaviour of the speaker. The classes of verbal behaviour and their function are defined in terms of their effect on the *speaker*, which allows for both the *prediction* and potential *influence* of the behaviour of the speaker in the service of valued ends. In the remainder of this section I make a case that this work is in fact a *functional assessment* and new in the field of CBS, and pose some broad research questions.

Basic Question and Method

The basic questions I set out to address in the development of the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM) and Interview (FSDI) (discussed in detail in the following chapters) from the standpoint of CBS, were: Can the relevant contingencies be analysed? Is the analysis effective – does it lead to the prediction and influence of the behaviour of the individual? Can the analysis be applied to and address human problems?

As discussed above, verbal behaviour is under the control of variables in three contexts: our external context, which comprises direct environmental contingencies; our social context, which mediates verbal contingencies; and, our inner psychological context that delimits degrees of literality of verbal content. A functional assessment of the variables controlling overt behaviour that is rule-governed requires that the controlling variables in one or several of these contexts be identified in order to predict and influence behaviour.

To develop a method for the functional assessment of verbal behaviour as defined in RFT, I employed approaches from both descriptive and functional contextualism. This comprises both the FSDI and FSDM. The FSDI is an interview technique designed to

elicit code-able transcript using the FSDM and if desirable, probe to influence behaviour change. The FSDM is a coding scheme designed to code language for a set of operant verbal responses that allow for the prediction of wellbeing and identification of variables that will potentially influence change. Together these methods allow for the prediction and influence of behaviour applicable to improving the human condition.

What establishes the FSDI and FSDM as a functional assessment rather than a topographical analysis of verbal behaviour? A functional assessment requires that we identify external variables in the manipulable context controlling behaviour that will allow both the prediction and influence of behaviour (Hayes et al. 2001c; Hayes & Brownstein 1986). A manipulable variable is considered 'external' if it is outside of the behaviour in question. Outside the behaviour does not necessarily mean outside the skin, though this is often the case. Thus we are dealing with contexts outside and inside the skin. These different contexts require different methods of analysis.

An analysis of variables outside of the skin involves environmental and socially mediated contingencies that are contacted directly by the person. This is the realm of traditional functional analysis where normal operant contexts provide conditional discriminations that are experienced directly (Skinner 1974). When dealing with our inner context we find an internal analogue of external contingencies. First, we respond to the contingencies we have experienced directly in our own history and the meaning we attach to those events as they are reconstructed verbally (Hayes et al. 2001a). For example, when one thinks of the loss of a loved one, the stimulus functions of that event will become present to some extent. While this is a symbolic construct of events situated in verbal time, the process of reconstruction in an interview situation allows for the identification of verbal operant response forms. One implication of such a view is that the "meaning" of the terms used to describe such events are not entirely a property of the terms themselves, but rather are associated with the conditions under which the terms are characteristically emitted in the behavior of the speaker. While these sets of discriminations may be controlled by different kinds of observed contingencies in the interview situation, they are presumably also controlled by the observation and framing of the cognitively

reconstructed events in the interviewee's history. Patterns of such framing are assumed to be characteristic of the interviewee when in the presence of similar environmental contingencies. Identifying characteristic framing or operant response forms involves recognising statements that look like self-rules and confirming speculations about the history and function of the related historically situated stimuli as they are made available in the current context (Leigland 1989). Second, our inner context is the psychological arena from which we take insight on the events that constitute our psychological content. Evaluating this environment as a controlling context requires an assessment of the speaker's deictic framing of inner experience (Hayes 1984). This involves identifying statements that indicate the speaker is taking perspective on inner experience. When statements are framed in such a way, the stimulus functions of the related verbal events alter to function figuratively rather than literally (Wilson et al. 2001). Self-rules uttered in this psychologically flexible context are more freely chosen and acted on for their utility. This is contrasted with verbal behaviour that fails to track direct contingencies as it is under the control of an inner psychological context functioning literally and causally.

To perform a functional assessment that would assist in the prediction and influence of behaviour – both overt behaviour and covert verbal behaviour – I have endeavoured to track manipulable events within these contexts. The process involved taking a descriptive contextual analysis of reconstructed events in order to identify verbal operants, which reflected the speaker's typical framing of directly experienced events (Leigland 1987). Further, it involved assessing if such operant responding was applicable to future events. To do this, over the course of an interview with a given subject, a kind of baseline of operant responses was identified, which became evident as recognisably consistent patterns of verbal behaviour across the session (Leigland 1989, 1996). From these patterns several classes of operants as self-rules were identified that function to either control or avoid unwanted experience, move toward wanted experience, derive a sense of esteem, or take perspective on experience. A positive correlation was observed between the frequency of these utterances and wellbeing measures taken 6 and 12 months later. These correlations have provided an excellent starting point (not a good ending point) for an experimental analyses of the contexts that lend themselves to the

prediction and influence of behaviour. As these verbal events have been shown to produce the same consequence they are considered to be members of the same operant class, they are functioning the same way. My focus on the contexts that strengthen and weaken relations between thoughts, emotions, and actions are key to the clinical procedures in CBS, such as the emphasis on acceptance or defusion as contexts that foster response flexibility, and their instigation and modelling in the therapeutic relationship in ACT (Hayes et al. 2012a). Adopting a functional analytic approach (combined with descriptive contextualism and quantitative methods) has led me to a measure of the future consequences of rule-following. I see this as a *functional assessment* (not a functional analysis) given the predictability of these operant responses.

To develop this approach to a full *functional analysis*, my intention is to manipulate contingencies controlling the observation of the speaker, i.e. perspective-taking (self-as-context). The focus in the interview would be on helping interviewees to relate differently to events within their psychological context. This would be achieved through instructions or questions that serve as supplementary stimulation for the available verbal behaviour of the interviewee to be brought “to strength.” Such instructions or questions to the interviewee (delivered prior to and during the interview) would be designed to probe different functional verbal classes “within” the interviewee’s verbal repertoire. This is a matter of directing the interviewee’s attention and facilitating insight related to particular incidents of interest where change is desired. This would be achieved by setting topics, asking questions that probe for contextual relations and functions, cultivating perspective-taking (a mindful disposition), and eliciting value oriented self-rules. Essentially this would be manipulating the inner context so verbal events no longer function literally to direct behaviour in habitual and unhealthy ways. Instead a context would be developed in which verbal events function figuratively and are chosen to direct behaviour based on their utility in bringing about valued living.

Aim

The aim was to identify a baseline of operant responses (code-able statements) as recognisably consistent patterns of verbal behaviour across an interview session and correlate these discriminative verbal responses with a set of wellbeing measures taken 6 and 12 months after interview. This would make it possible to search for relations between the behavioural discriminations under observation (verbal operants & behaviour consistent with wellbeing) and therefore predict, and possibly influence, valued living.

Questions

Specific questions for each of the three studies undertaken in this thesis are posed in the following chapters. Broadly the questions relate to:

FSDM/FSDI methodology which:

1. Focused on specified functional units of verbal behaviour i.e. code-able statements.
2. Made controlling relations visible with respect to verbal behaviour when a “stimulus dimension” was recalled i.e. specific interview topic, recalled history and probes of that historical context.
3. Refined the discriminative repertoire (code-able statements, interview topics and probes) with respect to the functional assessments of verbal behaviour undertaken.

Analysis involved:

1. Discrimination of classes of verbal responses, which might be identified as “verbal operants”, i.e. code-able statements.
2. Mapping such responses onto a set of wellbeing measures.

Overview of Thesis

The structure of the thesis is as follows. The first study is discussed in Chapter 3, which was designed to examine the relationship between different types of self-

discrimination statements and wellbeing. This involved developing the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM), a coding scheme for self-discrimination behaviours applied to language. The FSDM was applied to a set of interview transcripts and the frequency of codes was then related with a set of self report wellbeing measures to test if how we speak predicts wellbeing. The second study is discussed in Chapter 4, in which the FSDM was expanded to include codes for other-discrimination statements in order to evaluate if the way we view ourselves is correlated with the way we view others. To do this, the expanded coding scheme was applied to the set of interview transcripts and a comparison of the relationship between self- and other-discrimination statements was made. In Chapter 5, I discuss the third study, which involved the design and application of the Functional Self-Discrimination Interview (FSDI) technique. The FSDI was developed as an approach to interviewing in order to yield code-able transcript for the FSDM. Chapter 6 is a discussion of the implications of this research and the potential uses of the FSDI and FSDM. In the concluding chapter I discuss an approach to developing prosocial and moral behaviour based on a consideration of how values function to predict wellbeing. Three Annexes include: Functional Self-Discrimination Interviewing Protocol; Coded Functional Self-Discrimination Interview Transcripts; and, FSDI Interviewer Capability Evaluation Method.

Chapter Three

Study 1: Development and Application of the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure of ‘Self’

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Overview

Broadly, the aim of this study was to develop a coding scheme for natural language, the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM), that could predict wellbeing. This involved examining the relationship between different types of self-discrimination statements (detailed below) and a set of subjective wellbeing measures. In previous research a colleague and I had shown that the number of literal self-conceptualisation statements a person made decreased and the number of perspective-taking statements a person made increased in frequency following a mindfulness course (Atkins & Styles in press). These findings were consistent with how ACT interventions work to help people respond more flexibly to their inner experience (Hayes et al. 2012b). Based on this research I aimed to further test these previous findings; that the number of statements uttered by a person indicating they knew themselves as the context of their experience [SX], less the number of rigid statements about their own identity [SS], would correlate positively with a set of wellbeing measures. I took a grounded approach and after several rounds of analysis I found that the number of statements uttered by a person indicating they knew themselves as the context of their experience [SX], plus the number of value oriented self-rule statements [VOR] they uttered, correlated positively with the measures of wellbeing. The final results lead me to formulate a measure of Psychological Flexibility [FLEX].

The measures of wellbeing were along two dimensions – hedonic and eudemonic. Hedonic wellbeing was measured by the Positive & Negative Affect Scale (PANAS) (Watson et al. 1988) and symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress by the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS: Antony et al. 1998). The PANAS measured the presence of positive and negative mood and emotional states experienced by the individual over a period of 3 months prior to taking the measure. Positive Affect (PA) reflected the extent to which people felt enthusiastic, active and alert. A high PA state reflected high energy, full concentration, and pleasurable engagement. In contrast Negative Affect (NA) reflected a general dimension of subjective distress and unpleasant engagement that subsumed a variety of aversive mood states including anger, disgust, guilt, fear, and nervousness. Low NA reflected a state of calmness and serenity. In general, research on PA & NA indicate that the two

mood states relate to self-reported stress, poor coping, health complaints, and frequency of unpleasant events (Watson et al. 1988). Similarly, levels of depression, anxiety and stress (measures by the DASS) have been shown to relate to physical arousal, psychological tension, panic attacks, fear, agitation, tension, irritability, and a tendency to overreact to stressful events in clinical and nonclinical groups (Antony et al. 1998).

Eudemonic forms of wellbeing were evaluated in terms of Psychological Wellbeing (Ryff & Keyes 1995) and Satisfaction With Life (Diener et al. 1985). Psychological Wellbeing has been conceived as a multidimensional model that includes six distinct components of positive psychological functioning (Ryff & Keyes 1995). These components, derived from multiple theoretical frameworks, have been combined as a valid measure of wellness. These six dimensions include: positive evaluations of oneself and one's past life (Self-Acceptance); a sense of continued growth and development as a person (Personal Growth); the belief that one's life is purposeful and meaningful (Purpose in Life); the possession of quality relations with others (Positive Relations With Others); the capacity to manage effectively one's life and surrounding world (Environmental Mastery); and, a sense of self-determination (Autonomy). The other measure, Satisfaction With Life, is understood to be the cognitive, judgmental process, of assessing the quality of one's life according to personally chosen criteria (Diener et al. 1985). This involves comparing one's present circumstance and state of affairs with a set of standards that have been personally chosen, not externally imposed.

Through a process of coding and correlating the frequency of various categories of self-discrimination statements with this set of wellbeing measures I sought to validate my approach to coding natural language as a functional assessment of verbal operant behaviour that allowed for the prediction of wellbeing along these dimensions. This work is the topic of this chapter.

Purpose

Taking a grounded approach, I aimed to evolve and refine the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM) based previous findings (Atkins & Styles in press); beginning with the assumptions that:

- The number of SX statements uttered by a person less the number SS statements would correlate positively with wellbeing measures and that this measure is a valid measure of Psychological Flexibility $FLEX = SX - SS$.

Method

To test if coded measures of self-discrimination predicted wellbeing, I coded a set of transcribed interviews and correlated code frequencies with the set of subjective measures taken at the time of interview then six and twelve months later. I completed three rounds of coding during which code definitions were clarified and expanded, and calculations of Psychological Flexibility [FLEX] were refined. I present this work below in three broad sections. First, in this section I discuss information about the interviews, subjective measures and analytical software. Second, in the Coding Procedure section, I provide the definition and description of each 'Self' code, with explanations of how each code evolved over the three rounds of coding. Then finally in the Results section, I provide the results from the various rounds of coding.

Interviews

The thirty-four interviews used to validate the coding scheme in this study were a subset of a larger database of over 100 interviews conducted as part of study done by Paul Atkins, ANU, with Michael Cavanagh and colleagues, University of Sydney. Their study was designed to evaluate developing leadership in health services and law firms: improving well-being, engagement, and staff retention. Participants were all professionals or para-professionals and all had received between 2 and 9 years of tertiary education. Those from the law firm were all practicing lawyers ranging in seniority from senior associate to senior partners. Participants from the hospitals

were doctors, nurses and administrative managers. The legal sample was mostly men and the hospital sample was mostly women (Table 3.1 below).

	Years of Tertiary Study			Age	
	Men	Women	% Men	M (SD)	M (SD)
Legal Firm	11	8	58%	6.4 (1.9)	43 (8.6)
Hospital Network	3	12	20%	4.8 (1.9)	45 (6.7)

Table 3.1: Demographic characteristics of the sample ($n=34$).

The interviews were focused on the recollection of a critical incident by interviewees. The interviews were semi-structured, conducted over the phone for 35-60 minutes and based upon Kegan's subject-object interview procedure (Lahey et al. 1988). At the beginning of the interview, participants were read six key phrases sequentially, each describing an affective experience: 1) delight, 2) anxious or stressed, 3) angry, 4) torn (in conflict about something), 5) strong stand or conviction and 6) important to me. After participants had noted experiences consistent with those affective states that had occurred in the past few weeks or months, they were asked to pick one and then tell their story. Participants were told the interviewer's primary purpose was to understand the participants experience from their own point of view ("to see the world through your eyes"). Participants were told that they could choose which stories to discuss and how much detail to present.

The interviews were semi-structured in order to gather rich data about individuals' lived experience. The role of the interviewers was to listen reflectively and ask open questions such as "What is the hardest/most challenging part of this for you?" "How would you decide if you had been successful?" and "What did that situation tell you about yourself?" Although the subject-object interview was originally designed to measure stages of adult development (Kegan 1994; Kegan et al. 1982), it is similar to a typical functional interview in that it explores the perceived antecedents and personal consequences of various responses to situations (Ramnero & Torneke 2008). The interviews were all transcribed for coding.

Subjective Measures

In addition to subject-object interviews, the set of self-report measures discussed above were administered at three time points, at the same time as the interviews, then six and twelve months later.

Hedonic affect was measured using two scales. The first was the Positive and Negative Affect scale (Watson et al. 1988) with participants asked to rate the frequency of 10 different emotions over the past three months: Happy, Angry, Joyful, Depressed/Blue, Enjoyment/Fun, Anxious, Pleased, Frustrated, Enthusiastic, Unhappy. The second measure of affect was the 21-item version of the Depression, Anxiety, Stress scale (Antony et al. 1998).

Eudemonic forms of wellbeing were measured using two scales: the Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff & Keyes 1995) consisting of six subscales: Autonomy, Positive Relations, Self-Acceptance, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in Life, Personal Growth. Although subscales for Autonomy, Positive Relations and Self-Acceptance were initially measured with nine-items drawn from the original corpus of twenty, the results in this study are based entirely upon the version of the measure reported by Ryff and Keyes (1995) with three-items per subscale. Participants were also given the five-item Satisfaction with Life scale (Diener et al. 1985).

In addition, the International Personality Item Pool measures (Goldberg et al. 2006) for: Openness, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Extroversion and Conscientiousness were also administered at the time of interview.

The subjective measures were correlated with the frequency of self-discrimination and self-rule codes. Then a series of regression analyses were conducted to assess how well measures of self-discrimination and self-rules compared with the International Personality Item Pool measures to predict hedonic (affective) and eudemonic (meaning and satisfaction in life) wellbeing.

Analytical Software

The software QDA Miner published by Provalis Research was used to code the interviews and SPSS was used for the statistical analysis.

Coding Procedure

Each sentence was coded for any occurrence of a particular form of self-discrimination. In some cases sentences were coded with multiple codes but each code appeared only once for a given sentence. The sentence (rather than individual words or phrases) was chosen as the unit of analysis to facilitate comparisons of coding from different raters and to avoid repetition within sentences. Coding categories were based upon the contextual-behavioural theory of self-discrimination presented above in Chapter 2: focusing on self-as-story, self-as-process and self-as-context.

Coding evolved throughout three rounds of this study. However, it was difficult to determine how to present these changes. I wished to present the coding in one section prior to the results, but these results influenced how the coding developed. Rather than confuse the reader by presenting conflicting versions of the coding, I have presented all the coding in one section. I provide definitions, descriptions and examples of each code beginning with the Self-as-Process category, followed by Self-as-Story, Self-Rules and Self-as-Context. Where relevant I discuss how various passages were coded and the evolving rationale behind the coding process. Following the coding, in the Results section, I present and discuss a series of correlation and regression analyses that analysed the relationship between code frequency and the wellbeing measures taken. These results are presented under the appropriate headings (Round 1, Round 2 or Round 3).

'Self' Codes

Self-as-Process

Self-as-Process statements were descriptions of unfolding experience in both current and historical contexts and were classified into three types of statement: Self-as-Process Hedge, Self-as-Process Now and Self-as-Process Then. Each of these is discussed below.

[SP-hedge] Self-as-Process Hedge

Definition

[SP-hedge] = Self-as-Process Hedge referred to self-discrimination phrases such as "I think" or "I feel" that apparently functioned to denote the speaker as knower. If the identified statement sounded more rigid if the self-discrimination bit of the sentence (e.g. "I think") was removed, this statement would be coded SP-hedge.

Description

Self-as-Process Hedge statements drew attention to a 'self' as a fallible speaker or a speaker with a particular perspective (subjectivity). Examples include "I think", "I feel" and possibly "I mean". Without the self-discrimination, the statement would have been decontextualised as coming from a knower and taken as more rigid and factual. SP-hedge often reflected what Pennebaker (2011) called Hedge phrases.

Examples of SP-hedge

Statement

"I think with my business hat ..."

"I'm thinking, probably wrong decision."

"I think [name] being hurt would be the worst thing."

"In one sense I suppose by keeping him..."

"I suppose the responsibility frankly, that to a certain extent I had interfered and I don't think – this is a complex situation."

"That's probably right and I appreciate, it's obviously, I don't think like most decisions in life I don't think there's 100% right answer."

[SP-now] Self-as-Process Now

Definition

[SP-now] = Self-as-Process Now referred to any description of the current experience of the self. These statements reflected the ongoing private experience within the physical and mental worlds of the speaker.

Description

The standard form of a Self-as-Process Now statement was a description of a current private experience (thought, feeling, image or sensation). SP-now statements apparently functioned to inform the listener of current experience, e.g., "I don't know" "I'm not comfortable". These statements were not about drawing attention to the subjectivity of experience but were about reporting the actual content of experience. Bits were a functional equivalent of "MY <private experience> HERE and NOW."

Examples of SP-now

Statement
<i>"I'm trying to think of what the main thing is."</i>
<i>"I don't know what's going on with him."</i>
<i>"One wonders why do I think that."</i>
<i>"Um, I don't know, maybe I do, I don't know."</i>
<i>"Yeah so I know it's interesting."</i>
<i>"Oh that's an interesting question you mean do we have all the correct inputs."</i>
<i>"I'm not sure I know how to answer the question."</i>
<i>"I've got the three examples there."</i>
<i>"It's hard to, it's hard to remember."</i>
<i>"Possibly that one."</i>

"I'm trying to think of the others."

"No, I'm responding here."

"It's difficult to see in every individual transaction that you're involved in a morally, it's something hard to describe."

[SP-then] Self-as-Process Then

Definition

[SP-then] = Self-as-Process Then statements were descriptions of past and possible future behaviours and inner experiences that were examples of conceptualised personal history rather than rigid descriptions of the self.

Description

Flexibility apparently arose from either a) the speaker holding Self-as-Process Then statements somewhat more tentatively as a provisional interpretation rather than the literal truth, or b) the speaker not identifying the 'self' with the qualities, characteristics or experiences being described. In other words, these statements were less about the speaker defining "who I am" in terms of qualities and characteristics, but more about describing, "what I have experienced or might experience in the future". Self-as-Process Then statements apparently functioned to describe a person's experiences rather than their ongoing stable or developing identity. These statements did not involve identity fusion as described below for SS, although people could be fused with their stories about what had happened or will happen. In practice, SP-then statements referred to all aspects of the conceptualised self *not* included in SS, VOR and COR discussed in the following section. Bits were a functional equivalent of "I/MY experience – THERE and THEN."

Examples of SP-then

Below I provide a number of examples of SP-then statements and an explanation for the code. These statements all contained a personal pronoun, which made them a self-statement. As they were not referring to self-ascribed qualities and

characteristics but rather behaviours or experiences they were classified as Self-as-Process Then.

Example	Explanation for code
<i>"We remain friends throughout that whole period with all of our mutual friends."</i>	"Being friends" is a description of a behaviour not a quality or characteristic of the 'self'.
<i>"So, I'm not saying that, from time to time, things don't piss me off, they do."</i>	Being "pissed off" is a contextually sensitive response to "things" not a stable quality or attribute of the 'self'.
<i>"Yes, when things don't change [at work] that frustrates me, and that makes me angry to the extent I have to console myself, do I really care?"</i>	In this statement frustration, anger and self-consolation are emotional experiences or responses to a work situation, not qualities or characteristics ascribed to the 'self' therefore SP-then.
<i>"Look, I would just have the discussion."</i>	This statement is a description of likely future behaviour without any self-evaluation.
<i>"I had a good time in Kathmandu in 1997"</i>	This is non-rigid despite the evaluation, as the evaluation is of the event not the person. It is an episodic memory and does not entail abstraction of qualities and characteristics of the person.
<i>"We've done a couple of things, and we're getting a bit more confidence."</i>	In this statement "we have done a couple of things" is coded SP-then, and "we're getting a bit more confidence" is coded SS (see below) as the characteristic "confidence" is ascribed to the 'self'. Therefore the statement

	was double coded SP-then and SS.
<i>"I would not have been able to do that before."</i>	This statement is a description of past behaviour without any secondary attribution to the self.

How the definition of SP-now evolved

Originally there was only one SP code, which remains as the current SP-now code that captures experience in the current context. After coding several interviews it became apparent a second, then a third, SP code was required. SP-hedge, was created to capture statements such as "I think" etc. SP-then was created to capture experience in historical contexts. This was in part to capture the significance of such statements if relevant.

SP-hedge statements function as space fillers

Statements such as "I think" or "I mean" were at times uttered unconsciously and functioned in part to create space for thinking. While such statements denoted the speaker as knower they were more habitual and routine and were in part functionally equivalent to saying 'um' or silence or clearing the throat. Still, as these statements did denote the speaker as knower, they were coded SP-hedge. The following are examples of this type of SP-hedge statement that also functioned as a space filler.

Statement
<i>"I mean it's quite [pause] because it's different from the [pause] um [pause] ..."</i>
<i>"I mean just [pause] [sighs] maybe it doesn't ahh ... well just insofar as if you um [pause] what was I going to say?"</i>
<i>"I mean it would just be... I guess again... what's the word?"</i>
<i>"... because I mean, it's not um, no I think so, I think it is [laughter]."</i>

How the definition of SP-then evolved

Before settling on the classification of SP-then to capture experience in historical contexts these statements were coded Self-as-Story Flexible. In my original coding all SP statements were limited to descriptions of experience in the present moment. This view was based on an understanding of self-as-process adopted by some members of the CBS community (Foody et al. 2012). However, as coding and analysis proceeded I came to the view that equating self-as-process with present-moment experiencing was mistaking form (i.e. present-tense) for function. SP-then statements were descriptions of a person's ongoing, present based experience *relative to* a historically situated context present or otherwise. They functioned to describe the self in a context and the contingencies of their behaviour in that context. This was in contrast to self-as-story statements that functioned to describe aspects of the self as explained below.

Self-as-Story

The second category of coded statements was the Self-as-Story category, which includes three codes: Self-as-Story (Positive, Negative & Neutral). Each of these is discussed below.

[SS] Self-as-Story (Positive, Negative & Neutral)

Self-as-Story was divided into three categories, positive, negative and neutral. These codes discriminated between, and captured positive, negative and neutral self-discrimination statements. These discriminations were made to see if each type of statement predicted wellbeing differently. As will be seen in the results section below, both positive and negative SS statements tended to be negatively correlated with wellbeing. All SS code definitions, description and examples follow.

SS-pos Definition

[SS-pos] = Self-as-Story Positive statements involved abstracted conceptualisations of the self that were framed in the positive. Self-as-Story referred to instances in which

the speaker expressed abstracted story in a way that was relatively inflexible. SS referred to literal (i.e. held as the truth) descriptions regarding who or how the person was; either enduring qualities or characteristics, or evaluations of those qualities and characteristics. SS-pos referred to instances in which those qualities or characteristics were framed in the positive.

SS-neg Definition

[SS-neg] = Self-as-Story Negative statements involved abstracted conceptualisations of the self that were framed in the negative. Self-as-Story referred to instances where the speaker expressed abstracted story in a way that was relatively inflexible. SS referred to literal (i.e. held as the truth) descriptions regarding who or how the person was; either enduring qualities or characteristics, or evaluations of those qualities and characteristics. SS-neg referred to instances in which those qualities or characteristics were framed in the negative.

SS-neut Definition

[SS-neut] = Self-as-Story Neutral statements involved abstracted conceptualisations of the self that were framed in neutral terms. Self-as-Story referred to instances in which the speaker expressed abstracted story in a way that is relatively inflexible. SS referred to literal (i.e. held as the truth) descriptions regarding who or how the speaker was; either enduring qualities or characteristics, or evaluations of those qualities and characteristics. SS-neut referred to instances where those qualities or characteristics were framed in neutral terms.

Description

SS statements frequently implied that self ascribed qualities and characteristics were the cause of current behaviour. Furthermore, the speaker was usually strongly identified with the quality or characteristic; the "I" was seen as being "the same as" the quality or the characteristic. In the RFT literature, this quality of identification with an abstracted term is called "fusion" (McHugh & Stewart 2012). According to Fletcher et al. (2010), "Fusion refers to the domination of verbal events over other

sources of behavioural regulation due to difficulty in separating the verbal constructions that shape the perception of any private event, whether sensory, cognitive, or emotive, from the event itself. Defusion refers to processes that undermine that domination primarily by becoming aware of the process of thinking itself and being able to become aware of thoughts, emotions, and memories as passing events rather than 'things' that are literally true or false" (p. 56). A statement was coded as SS if the speaker appeared to suggest that their story about themselves was literally true and (often) causal of their behaviour and experience. Statements were further qualified as -pos, -neg or -neut to delineate positive, negative or neutral framing of the self. Bits were a functional equivalent of "I + verbal products HERE and NOW are literal and causal representations of who I am recently, now or in the future."

Examples of SS

The following statements are examples of positive, negative and neutral SS categorised in terms of different attributes and behaviours that had been ascribed to the self. Each statement has been marked SS-pos, SS-neg or SS-neut to delineate between the types of statement.

'I am' statements

The first category of SS statements were simple statements involving the use of the phrase "I am..." or variations thereof. For example:

Statement
<i>"I am quite decisive." [SS-pos]</i>
<i>"I am not someone who looks backward." [SS-pos]</i>
<i>"I'm tidy minded." [SS-pos]</i>
<i>"I am fair, its my job." [SS-pos]</i>
<i>"I am reasonably understanding and moderately imaginative." [SS-pos]</i>
<i>"I am not as effective as I thought." [SS-neg]</i>
<i>"I am predisposed to being emotional." [SS-neg]</i>

"I am a disappointment, I don't match up." [SS-neg]

"I am a bit of a push over." [SS-neut]

"I am not a 9 to 5er" [SS-neut]

"I'm so anal, it's just disgusting" [SS-neut]

Almost all statements identified as SS could relatively easily be recast as "I am...".

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"From a personal and emotional level being inclusive is how I like to be." [SS-pos]</i>	This statement can be recast as, "I am inclusive".
<i>"I get concerned as a friend that I should be 100% worrying about people as a friend and then I think, 'Oh maybe there's a bit of me that's also worrying about the practice' and that in some ways I'm a less good friend for doing that." [SS-neg]</i>	This statements is not so obviously an equivalent to "I am...". While it is lengthy it can be recast as, "I am a less good friend for worrying about the practice rather than my friend". Note, this statement would be double coded SX1 as the participant is objectifying two thoughts, "then I think..."

Self-evaluations in terms of standards and values

A second category of Self-as-Story were statements about personally held values or preferences. These were where a respondent defined their identity at least in part by the standards and values that they held. These were Self-as-Story as participants appeared to be somewhat fused with their conceptualisation of their own values and preferences. The following were typical examples:

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"I guess it's a feeling within myself of trying to achieve a certain level of perfection or competence and I do sort</i>	Here "perfection" being achieved is in a frame of equivalence with the 'self' trying to achieve it. Functionally this is

<i>of have that."</i> [SS-pos]	"I am achieving perfection".
<i>"I'm not a disciplinarian."</i> [SS-pos]	The quality of being a "disciplinarian" is in a frame of equivalence with the 'self'.
<i>"I needed to love myself when I was irresponsible because, I had been brought up being significantly responsible."</i> [SS-pos]	This is a borderline interpretation. This has been interpreted as "I am someone with sense of responsibility".
<i>I compare myself to the academic strengths of another"</i> [SS-neut]	The standard "academic strengths" is not cast as being positive or negative, therefore this statement is coded SS-neut.

Self-evaluations in terms of character

A third category of Self-as-Story was when the person evaluated themselves in terms of character or a personality trait. These statements were treated as Self-as-Story because they were held as literally true. That is, the 'self' was equivalent to the characteristic or trait.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"I am much more mindful."</i> [SS-pos]	The interviewee is defining the 'self' as being "mindful".
<i>"You know I always look on the bright side, its better being positive about stuff."</i> [SS-pos]	In this statement the participant describes themselves and their behaviour as "positive", "looking on the bright side".
<i>"You know I'm sure there's a selfishness at the heart of it."</i> [SS-neg]	The quality of "selfishness" is ascribed to the self, "I am selfish at the heart of it."
<i>"I was hopeless at it before, because now I try and solve the problem, but</i>	This statement is about an enduring trait "hopeless" that is getting better.

<i>I'm better than I was." [SS-neg]</i>	Functionally this is equivalent to "I am (or at least was) hopeless".
<i>"You know, I'm back at home again thinking about trying to please everyone." [SS-neg]</i>	This statement infers a general characteristic of "pleasing". It is equivalent to "I am a pleaser."
<i>"Its not in my personality to be tough and ballsy" [SS-neut]</i>	This statement is neutral in that the characteristic not being "tough and ballsy" does not have either positive or negative connotations.

Self-evaluations in terms of emotional feeling states

A fourth category of Self-as-Story was where the person categorised themselves in terms of the quality of their emotions and feelings in different contexts. Again, these statements were SS because the emotion and/or feeling state was held as literally true and equivalent to the 'self'. For example:

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"My brother committed suicide and my nephew tried to commit suicide and so that probably is something I'm personally much more anxious about, if someone is unwell in that way I'm probably sensitised to it and that's true actually." [SS-neg]</i>	In this statement the interviewee ascribes the state of "anxiety" to the self as a fixed trait that emerges when in the presence of someone being unwell. It is equivalent to "I am sensitised to and anxious when someone is unwell."
<i>"So I think the worst thing is actually, frankly you do get stuck and also you get disappointed in yourself that you're enjoying the getting cross with someone rather than doing anything, so that's not very good." [SS-neg]</i>	This statement is equivalent to "I am disappointed in myself when I'm cross with someone". The emotion of disappointment is ascribed to the 'self'.
<i>"In social situations, I always get</i>	The quality of being "anxious" is

<i>anxious" [SS-neg]</i>	ascribed to the 'self.'
<i>Its a self esteem thing, I don't like conflict" [SS-neut]</i>	Not liking "conflict" is an emotional quality that is a "self esteem thing". It is not framed as a positive or negative quality therefore SS-neut.

Self-evaluations in terms of generalised qualities of behaviour

A fifth category of Self-as-Story was where the person evaluated themselves in terms of their own behaviour independent of a specific context. These statements described apparently enduring characteristics in terms of personal behaviour. Below are examples of such statements where the participant treated the evaluation of their behaviour as if it was a literal truth about who they were (i.e. the way they behaved defined them as either literally good or bad in some way):

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"Oh, [I have] a very happy, harmonious, balanced, freedom of choice way of living." [SS-pos]</i>	This statement is equivalent to, "I am a happy, harmonious, balanced, free person."
<i>"You have to have a healthy ego if you want to succeed." [SS-pos]</i>	This statement is about how the interviewee behaves in relation to others. Functionally it is equivalent to, "I have a healthy ego."
<i>"I'm just one of these people that will just pretty much get on with whoever, whenever, wherever." [SS-pos]</i>	This is also a statement about how an interviewee behaves in relation to others, "I am someone who gets on with people."
<i>I've always been a naturally quiet, shy person" [SS-neut]</i>	While this statement is about behaving quietly or in a shy way. The speaker says they've 'always' been that way, thus SS.

Self-evaluations in relation to social norms

A sixth category of Self-as-Story was when the person defined themselves in relation to prevailing social norms in some way. These statements were classified Self-as-Story as socially prescribed expectations defined in a literal way who and how the person had to be.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"And all of a sudden you're supposed to be kicking the arses of all those on the other side of the line and that just makes me very uncomfortable." [SS-neg]</i>	The interviewee defines themselves as an "arse kicker". This is equivalent to "I have to be an arse kicker and that makes me uncomfortable."
<i>"I have not been reliable, it's hard to explain what that means, but I wouldn't want to let them down." [SS-pos]</i>	The quality of reliability is socially defined. This statement is equivalent to "I have to be reliable and not let them down."
<i>"I am not religious" [SS-neut]</i>	Being "religious" is socially defined therefore the statement is SS.

Statements that derive meaning from the previous statement

On occasions, a sentence inherited meaning from a previous statement. As a rule these statements were only coded SS when meaning was derived from the respondent's previous statement, not the interviewer's. Although I tried to avoid making inferences wherever possible, the following statements were uninterpretable without considering previous sentences. These statements were interpreted as SS if the meaning was clear. If the meaning was ambiguous, the statement was not coded.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"It could be true [laughs]." [SS-neg]</i>	Functionally the statement is equivalent to "It could be true, I lack integrity" as it refers to the previous

	statement <i>"Some of my colleagues accused me of lacking integrity and being unfair."</i>
<i>"I can't see a middle ground between the two."</i> [SS-neg]	This statement is equivalent to "I am mean to my clients and less so with my staff - there is no middle ground". The previous statement it inherited meaning from was <i>"In this business you have to tough, even a bit mean, with clients, but you can't afford to treat staff that way."</i>
<i>"When I sort of put all that into the melting pot it just gives me a perspective on who I am I suppose."</i> [SS-neut]	The previous SS statement describes a personal characteristic, <i>"I'm the sort of person who always asks questions about myself"</i> which is <i>"all in the melting pot"</i> , and therefore this statement is SS.

How the definition of SS evolved

In this section I discuss some finer distinctions associated with the SS code and the reasoning behind these distinctions. Note that these passages also contain references to Self-Rule codes (VOR, COR), which are defined and discussed below.

Discerning primary and secondary attributes

The SS code was applied to statements that were descriptions of enduring qualities or characteristics ascribed literally to the self, or evaluations of those qualities and characteristics. Further, this code delineated between primary and secondary attributes. Hayes, Barnes-Holmes, Roche and Bryan draw a distinction between primary and secondary attributes assigned to an object or person in a frame of coordination (2001a, p220-221). When referring to a plastic cup, it can be said the cup IS plastic (primary attribute) and also that it IS bad (secondary attribute).

Secondary attributes are evaluative and when self-referential, the verbally produced rigidity is considered to cause psychopathological problems. This apparently is not the case when coordinating the self with primary attributes or direct behavioural contingencies.

Taking this argument, when considering the statement "I would have the discussion", the behaviour of 'discussing' is a primary behavioural attribute and therefore not considered verbally rigid. If two people were observed having a discussion and the observer was to report "they are having a discussion" then left the room they would still be having a discussion. If the observer said "they are having a 'good' or 'bad' discussion" and left the room the evaluation of "good" or "bad" would walk out the door and remain a rigid and literal part of the person's appraisal in line with some arbitrary standard of their own derivation. While this example is about the behavioural contingency "discussion", it provides an important distinction when considering the application of the SS codes. Based on this distinction SS was assigned to statements where the speaker ascribed secondary attributes in a frame of coordination with the 'self' (distinct from direct contingencies). Below are some coded interview passages where this distinction applied.

"Um look, I just have the, I would have the discussion [SP-then]. I would have the discussion about why I don't think that is correct [SP-then]. Experience has taught me, I usually know what the correct thing to do is [SS-pos – this is functionally equivalent to 'I know what is correct']. I don't think I would ever become heated in a discussion, I would probably use terms like 'I'm not sure I agree' rather than 'I don't agree' or 'I accept that but' that sort of stuff [SS-pos & COR. SS as this statement is functionally "I am not heated when in discussion". Note, if the speaker had described a 'particular discussion' rather than the general occurrence of 'discussion' the statement would have been coded SP-then, as it would have been about a direct contingency. COR is applied as the statement is equivalent to 'if I use the right terms then I will avoid becoming heated']".

Some more examples

"Um, I guess [SP-hedge] it's a feeling within yourself of trying to achieve a certain level of perfection or competence and sort of moving on from that [SS-pos]" The "perfection" being achieved is a verbally derived secondary attribute that is in a frame of equivalence with the self trying to achieve it. Therefore this bit is SS.

"I am a good author [SS-pos] because Robert said so [SP-then]." The secondary attribute "good" is ascribed to the 'self' who has the primary attribute "author" therefore coded SS. "Robert said so" is the reporting of experience so coded SP-then.

"I have to deliver a good service [SP-then; the secondary attribute "good" is ascribed to the direct contingency, the behaviour of delivering the service, not the self] so in many ways I am actually driven to do exactly that [SS-neg; the quality of "being driven" is a secondary attribute ascribed to the 'self', therefore coded SS]."

Distinguishing between primary and secondary attributes in this way stabilised the relationship of the SS code to wellbeing. As expected, overall the SS code was negatively correlated with measures of wellbeing. These results are discussed below in the Results Section.

Temporal considerations

While other codes such as Self-Rules, defined below, were framed temporally, SS was not defined by temporal framing. Rather, a frame of equivalence or coordination between the 'self' and a secondary attribute defined SS. For example, someone might say, "I have always been a coward and always will be". This would be considered a rigid self-conceptualisation because the secondary characteristic of being a "coward" is ascribed in a literal and rigid way to the 'self'. The fact that the past and future are referenced indicates that the speaker sees this as an enduring characteristic. But this temporal framing does not of itself define the statement as SS. If the statement were "I have always been bald and always will be", it would be coded SP-then as 'baldness' is a primary attribute.

Ch3: STUDY 1: FUNCTIONAL SELF-DISCRIMINATION MEASURE OF 'SELF'

The following are examples of statements with temporal framing that were also coded SS or SP. Notice that in each case the 'self' is in a frame of equivalence with a primary or secondary attribute, which qualified the statement as SS or SP.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"I suspect if you were to come out the other side of that breakdown, I think the circumstances that probably led you to having it would no longer concern you; so it's like a wash away."</i>	The self is in a frame of coordination with the behaviours of "coming out the other side" and "concern". "Coming out the other side" describes a direct contingency like walking and is a primary attribute of the 'self'. "Concern" is a transitory emotion related to the "circumstances", not an enduring quality of the 'self'. This bit is coded SP-then.
<i>"[I would] Let go, leave it behind but I probably wouldn't forget it being the character I am."</i>	The 'self' is in frame of coordination with "leaving it behind", "forgetting" and a certain "character". Both "leaving it" and "forgetting" are primary behavioural attributes therefore SP-then. Being a "character" is a secondary attribute therefore double coded SS-pos.
<i>"I'm not sure that it is (important to me being a lawyer)."</i>	This statement inherits meaning from the previous statement. The 'self' is framed as being "a lawyer", a primary attribute, the quality of which is evaluated against an arbitrary standard "importance". This secondary evaluation is not rigidly applied to the 'self' therefore coded SP-then.

<i>"I suppose it does, I never thought of it like that; maybe I do enjoy being a lawyer."</i>	Again the 'self' is in a frame of coordination with the primary attribute "lawyer" and a secondary attribute, the arbitrary standard "enjoyment", which is not a rigid evaluation of the 'self', therefore SP-then.
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Self-Rules

Not all rigid statements were SS. As discussed SS statements were self-referential and could generally be recast as "I am..." A third category of rigid statements were self-rules that took the form "If... then I will...". These "If... then I will..." statements fell into the categories of Control Oriented Self-Rule [COR] and Value Oriented Self-Rule [VOR], each of which are discussed below.

[COR] Control Oriented Self-Rule

Definition

[COR] = Control Oriented Self-Rule statements were self-rules specified by the speaker that reflected attempts to control or avoid unwanted experience. Control Oriented Self-Rule statements often appeared to reflect pliance, where a history of reinforcement was mediated by social approval for following the rule per se, although it was not possible to determine whether any given statement was an example of pliance or tracking from topography alone.

Description

Control Oriented Self-Rule statements were expressed as literally held truths about how the speaker should or should not behave in relation to others in order to control and avoid unwanted experience. Technically, Control Oriented Self-Rule statements were descriptions of 'if-then' verbal contingencies usually specifying a person's response and/or desired outcome to a given experience or context. COR statements differed from VOR statements (see below) in that they appeared to function primarily

to control and/or avoid unwanted experience. That is, they described previously reinforced tactics for moving 'away' from aversive experiences. Patterns of such self-rules in use could possibly be categorised into a functional class of behavioural response – control and avoidance.

Examples of COR

The following statements are examples of COR. Each statement specified or implied the situation in which the speaker would enact the rule and the expected consequence. Such COR statements could be recast in the form "If... then I will..." Additionally, the expected consequence being sort was the control and/or avoidance of unwanted aversive experience. Statements are listed with explanations for the application of the code that include a recast of the statement in "If...then..." form.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"You shouldn't make a pragmatic decision if it's going to come back to bite you."</i>	<i>"If I don't make a pragmatic decision then I will avoid being bitten."</i> Being "bitten" is being avoided.
<i>"If there are genuine grievances they should be discussed but not in an angry environment."</i>	<i>"If I discuss a genuine grievance (in a certain way) then I will avoid an angry environment."</i>
<i>"Coming in as a partner I need to be assertive and make sure I'm projecting what other people perceive as a partner."</i>	<i>"If I am assertive and project what others expect then I will be in control, I will be perceived as a partner."</i> This rule appears to be a strategy for avoiding the shame of not behaving in accordance with others expectations.
<i>"I need to be respected because if others don't take me seriously, they're not going to give me their work."</i>	<i>"If I am respected and get them to take me seriously then I will avoid not receiving work from them."</i> This rule also appears to function to avoid not being taken seriously by others.

<i>"I have to be creative to follow the 'rules' and avoid getting into trouble."</i>	<i>"If I am creative when following the rules then I will avoid getting into trouble."</i>
<i>"If I don't like it, I'm just going to get out."</i>	<i>"If I experience what I don't like then I will get out in order to avoid what I don't like."</i>
<i>"To manage the situation you have to know what their issues are."</i>	<i>"If I know their issues then I will manage situations and keep control."</i> This statement on its own is ambiguous; it could be a rule about gaining the appetitive consequence of cooperation. Surrounding statements made it clear this rule was about avoiding a loss of control, thus COR.
<i>"I remember when my son was about 14 or 15 I went to a talk from a lesson consultant, amazing person, and I took away this one thing, it was about, you know, stop fighting all the battles with them because it's really not important."</i>	<i>"If I pick my battles then I will avoid fighting all the time."</i> Again this statement derived meaning from surrounding statements that made it clear the rule was about avoiding conflict rather than gaining the appetitive of cooperation, thus COR.

How the definition of COR evolved

COR an example of pliance

Often COR statements were ply's. Consider the statement *"I mean I might say I don't understand the reason for the regulation, or I think it's unfair or that sort of thing and have some kind of discussion [SP-then], but if I was told, no this is the guideline and you're to follow it, then I would [COR]."* This was considered Self-as-Process in the sense that the interviewee was describing what he would do but there was also quite a rigid way of responding. This statement was double coded SP-then and COR *"If I am told to follow the rule then I would follow the rule"*. This is a ply where the

consequences for following the rule were socially mediated which implied it was about avoiding getting into trouble for not following the rule.

Discerning specific personal self-rules from general beliefs

Some self-rule statements were expressed as if to implicate the 'royal we' rather than the speaker specifically. For example the statement, "*You really have to pull the thing apart (to win), does that make sense?*" The learning from this transcript was how to deal with statements of the form "You have to do X..." that actually meant "I have to do X ..." This statement was a rigid self-rule that could be read as "I have had the experience that *if I do X then I will be effective*". Based on this reasoning the use of the term "you have to" was classified as a rigid response that must follow from a context. Functionally this statement could be read "*If I pull things apart then I will be in control and win*". Surrounding statements made it clear the speaker's aim was to avoid losing. This same logic also applied to Value Oriented Self-Rules (VOR) discussed next where the prescribed consequence was appetitive rather than aversive.

[VOR] Value Oriented Self-Rule

Definition

[VOR] = Value Oriented Self-Rule statements were self-rules specified by the speaker that were and will apparently govern their behaviour in flexible and value directed ways.

Description

Value Oriented Self-Rule statements were expressed as literally held truths about how the speaker should or should not behave in relation to others in order to move 'towards' appetitive experiences. Technically, Value Oriented Self-Rule statements were descriptions of 'if-then' verbal contingencies usually specifying a person's response and/or desired outcome to a given experience or context. VOR statements differed from COR statements (see above) in that they appeared to primarily function to direct acceptance behaviour and/or valued directed action. Patterns of such self-

rules in use could be categorised into a functional class of behavioural response – value directed.

Examples of VOR

The following statements are examples of VOR. Like COR statements, each VOR statement specified or implied the situation in which the speaker would enact the rule and the expected consequence. VOR statements could be recast in the form “If... then I will...” where the expected consequence being sought was the realisation of valued ends. VOR statements could specify either or both the qualities of personal behaviour and valued social consequences. Statements are listed with explanations for the application of the code and include a recast of the statement in “If...then...” form.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"You want to demonstrate [at work] you can make the call around what's important."</i>	<i>"If I make the call then I will demonstrate what's important (valued)."</i>
<i>"Challenges are so important, just to keep interested, to keep motivated and to keep learning."</i>	<i>"If I take challenges then I will be interested, motivated and learning (values)."</i>
<i>"I need to be using at least some of my skills to feel I'm making a valuable and sort of specific non-generic contribution."</i>	<i>"If I use my skills then I will make a valued contribution."</i>
<i>"I balance what the right principled thing to do is then go for that."</i>	<i>"If I balance what is right and principled (values) then I will be doing the right thing." This statement indicates that what is valued establishes the motivation to act, which is intrinsic to the behaviour, and the consequence is the functional act</i>

	of "doing the right thing".
<i>"You've just got to make a decision about what's important and stick with it."</i>	<i>"If I make decisions about what's important (valued) and stick with it then things are going to work." Again in this statement choosing values as a quality of behaviour assumes functional consequences.</i>
<i>"This business is about making a stand for what is right, and I do it more now as I get older."</i>	<i>"If I make a stand for what is right (valued) then I will be doing good business."</i>
<i>"I have methodologies and principles that guide me."</i>	<i>"If I use methodologies and principles then I will be guided well."</i>

How the definition of VOR evolved

Here I discuss the distinction between VOR statements and SS and SP statements. I also distinguish values as establishing the motivation for pragmatic action. In each instance the presence or absence of criteria that qualify a statement as VOR is discussed.

Distinguishing VOR and SP statements

Considering the statement, *"So we talk a lot about that in our meetings but I also put the onus and responsibility on the nursing staff to be responsible and accountable for their actions and to follow policies and know them to the letter and to follow the standards and the standards are available in every theatre [VOR]."* The rule regarding the speaker's behaviour was that she must "put onus and responsibility" on others. This was in the service of a well-justified, valued outcome and so might reasonably be said to be values directed rather than avoidant even though it was very rigid. Additionally, unless the rule specifically referred to how the speaker must behave, it was not coded as a rule. This example has an element of self-rule in that she must "put the onus and responsibility" on others even though most of the statement was about how others must behave.

Alternately the statement, *"And I think I do fit in easily and I adapt and so forth to the way things work, but I think probably if I was to challenge the rules, um, it would be more interesting [SP-then]."* This was considered more general process than rule. Rules were limited to statements that had an evaluative 'should' or 'will' component to them. This did not have that so it was coded SP-then. Self-rules pertained to the ownership of behaviour and prescribed something that should or should not be done. Rules also had an if-then structure despite the consequence being implicit and fairly obvious. As this statement did not pertain to a specific action by the speaker, it was coded SP-then.

Statements double coded VOR and SS

Statements could be rigid self-evaluations while being value oriented self-rules. Consider the statement *"What I always do is try and find solutions to these problems and come up with some constructive ideas [SS-pos], and when we are asked to meet with the head of HR over at the [hospital name] we will get the solutions on the table [VOR]."* This statement was double coded SS-pos *"I am solutions oriented"* and VOR *"If I/we have to meet about problems then I/we will get constructive solutions and (valued) ideas on the table"*.

Values function as motivators for pragmatic action

VOR statements indicated the speaker had identified with a value that established the motivation to discriminate opportunities to act on that value. The value altered the function of environmental events such that they had meaning and were chosen as a stimulus for action, which then yielded pragmatic consequences. Consider the statement *"If you make pragmatic decisions, you can't come unstuck [VOR]."* At face value this statement is ambiguous. It could be read as either COR – *"If I make pragmatic decisions then I avoid coming unstuck"*, or VOR – *"If I make pragmatic decisions then things will work (that are consistent with what is valued) and not come unstuck"*. It was coded VOR given it was about workability, what was pragmatic. In this rule the overarching values associated with, and including, being pragmatic, would apparently function to direct the attention of the speaker to seek

out opportunities to act pragmatically. If they had not identified with their values, opportunities to act on them would likely not be apparent to them. This distinction led to the introduction of new codes for Augmentals in Study 3 – see Chapter 5.

Self-as-Perspective

The fourth major category of coded statements was Self-as-Perspective [SX] statements. Technically, Self-as-Perspective is not observable in text. SX refers to a point-of-view from which experience arises, rather than the content of the experience. Anything that we can describe is, by definition, not Self-as-Perspective but the content observed by that perspective. However, for the purposes of this measure, this label referred to points which could reasonably infer awareness of a self that was able to witness experience, an observing self.

Self-as-Perspective statements gave a sense of noticing content with varying degrees of defusion (Blackledge 2007). Perspectives were identified either in a willing and accepting manner or rigidly, as if literally true or not. For this reason, when a statement was coded SX it was double coded SP, SS, COR or VOR to indicate whether the content was being perceived flexibly or rigidly. For example, “I notice the stream of my emotions passing through” would be double coded SX + SP-now as it describes a flexible perspective on current emotional experience. Whereas, “I appreciate the two points-of-view and believe only mine is ethical” would be double coded SX + SS because it implies a rigid perspective on who is ethical.

Based on empirical work with interventions to enhance perspective taking (Luciano et al. 2011), two forms of self-as-perspective were distinguished – labelled SX1 (self-as-perspective) and SX2 (self-as-perspective & context).

[SX1] Self-as-Perspective 1**Definition**

[SX1] = Self-as-Perspective 1 statements represent instances in which the person clearly differentiated themselves from their private mental experience (thoughts, feelings and sensations). While the nature of self may have been left unspecified, it was clear that thoughts, feelings and sensations were not the same as the self.

Description

SX1 statements indicated the person making the statement recognised that they were not the same thing as their private mental experiences. This process of recognising private experiences as passing mental events rather than literal truths is called 'defusion' (Hayes et al. 2012b). While the content of experience can be viewed with varying degrees of defusion (Blackledge 2007) all SX1 bits indicated a relation of distinction between "I - HERE and NOW" observing my thoughts, emotions and sensations " THERE and THEN."

Examples of SX1**Objectifying personal inner experience**

One type of SX1 statement was where the speaker indicated they were objectifying and taking a perspective on their own thoughts, feelings and emotions. For example:

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"I got into this state and to change my situation, I actually focus on something else here."</i>	"I focus on something else (there & then)", I flexibly shift my attention. Double coded SP-then.
<i>"There's an awareness that comes when I step back to see what's going on."</i>	Stepping back, increasing awareness and seeing "what's going on (there & then)". Double coded SP-then.
<i>"Maybe I've just got the wrong view of myself, the wrong perception of</i>	"I view myself (there & then)" and I hold that view flexibly as it may be

myself."

wrong. Double coded SP-then.

Distinguishing two different personal perspectives

SX1 statements also indicated that the speaker had distinguished two different personal perspectives and was contrasting them in some way. For example:

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"That ultimately our responsibility is to keep everything afloat um and you shouldn't you know, if you become completely sort of fixated with the pain this is causing you kind of perhaps are losing another perspective which is kind of you know the longer term prosperity and success of the business."</i>	The interviewee is objectifying "the pain this is causing" (having to lay people off) as a perspective along with the perspective "the longer term prosperity of the business." This is flexible as there seems to be defusion from the pain and the allocation of attention to the "longer term prosperity". This statement is double coded SP-then.
<i>"They also have a much broader, kind of, perspective on things than I do."</i>	The interviewee is distinguishing the perspective "they also had" from their own. This statement is double coded OX1 (see next chapter).
<i>"You know, they weren't able to see that yet and I think, well I understand why they can't see that."</i>	The interviewee is discriminating what "they can't see" from what they are "able to think". This statement is double coded OX1 (see next chapter).

Rigid perspective taking

At times the content of perspective was held literally and rigidly. The speaker objectified the content of experience while treating it as literally 'true' in some way. Either the speaker identified the self as equivalent to a secondary attribute or they treated their view as a literal truth. For example:

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"I mean in some ways it's probably something that you shouldn't get too much perspective on because it's a shocking thing and it is a terrible thing and it's partly my job to persuade everyone we'll get through it."</i>	This statement is coded SX1 because perspective is taken on the "shocking and terrible aspects of history (there & then)" that the interviewee feels responsible for as a steward of the business. This statement was double coded as a rigid belief "it's literally a terrible and shocking thing" (see next chapter).
<i>"I think I'm a fairly level headed person and I don't see that my views would be anything out of the hat box."</i>	"My views (there & then)" thus SX1. This statement was double coded SS "I'm a fairly level headed person".

Rigid versus flexible perspective taking

The following SX1 statements were ambiguous. For each statement the content of experience could be considered rigid or flexible. An explanation for the coding is provided.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"I think it's more to do with my own experience of managing my own internal dialog I guess."</i>	This statement is ambiguous. Internal dialog (there & then) is being managed therefore SX1. Managing internal experience could be considered a control and avoidance strategy, which would make this statement rigid perspective taking and double coded SS "I am (literally) a manager of my internal experience". As the statement also contains two SP bits 'I think' and 'I guess' denoting the speaker as

	knower, this suggests the content being managed may be held more tentatively and flexibly therefore coded SP-then.
<i>"I can stand there and state my point, the way I see it, and it's the debate that comes with that."</i>	"I see my point (there & then)" thus SX1. The reference to debate indicates that the speaker's "point" is held as a literal truth and therefore double coded a rigid belief (see next chapter). But as debating is a primary behavioural attribute, either you are debating or you're not, and there is no secondary attribute or evaluation of the 'self' it is double coded SP-then.
<i>"I need to sort of let the emotion drain out of me and step back and look at it from an intellectual point of view."</i>	"I step back and look and 'it', the content of experience (there & then)", thus SX1. In one sense the content seems to be held flexibly, "I sort of let the emotion drain out". This assumes the "emotion" part of "it" is being looked at. On the other hand "it" is being "looked at from an intellectual point of view" which implies engaging with the content literally. As there is no equivalent to "I am..." the statement would not be coded SS, therefore suggesting flexible perspective taking and coded SP-then.

Self-as-Perspective with Other-as-Perspective

SX1 statements were at times contrasted with the perspective of another (see next chapter). For example:

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"I went through a period where he was there, and I was delighted and thrilled he was there, but I had to keep looking at my own thoughts in terms of, if he did something for the children, I had to be really clear within myself that he was doing it because he loved them and because he was wanting to be helpful."</i>	"I look at my own thoughts (there & then)" therefore SX1. Having objectified his thoughts they are contrasted with the motives of his ex-wife's new husband. This is flexible because responses to the content of experience are about the speaker's personal values for loving his children and respecting his ex-wife's new husband. This statement is double coded SP-then.
<i>"I need to check what I think because perception is such a difficult thing, to check that what I think I see or hear is what they think as well."</i>	The speaker's personal "perception" is held flexibly (there & then) while they check the other's perspective, "what they think". This statement is also coded SP-then and OX (see next chapter).
<i>"I've really had to try to listen to the other side of the story, even though I think this way, I've really had to focus on what it is that these two people are telling me that are on the panel."</i>	This statement is coded SX1 as the interviewee is suspending their own perspective long enough to hear the perspective of the other. This statement is double coded OX as the speaker is taking the other's perspective into consideration (see next chapter).

[SX2] Self-as-Perspective 2

Definition

[SX2] = Self-as-Perspective 2 statements represented instances where a person not only differentiated themselves from private mental experience (thoughts, emotions and sensations) but identified the 'self' as the conscious arena within which experience occurred. The content of experience was placed within a hierarchical relation to the 'self'. The hierarchical relation was one of inclusion, e.g. "I am the arena within which my thoughts and feelings occur".

Description

Research using Relational Frame Theory (Luciano et al. 2011) identifies a second form of Self-as-Perspective in which the person not only notices that they are not the same thing as private mental experience, but that they are the "container" for experience. Whereas SX1 defined what I am not (my thoughts, feelings and sensations), SX2 defined what I am (an observer/container of my experience). For SX2 to apply, the content of experience was held with flexibility. SX2 statements illustrated ways in which the 'self' as perspective-taker is offered the "observer" of the experience. SX2 bits indicated a relation of distinction + hierarchy with the experience: "I - HERE and NOW am/was observing my thoughts and emotions THERE and THEN but also WITHIN/ INSIDE the arena of my awareness or being."

Examples of SX2

The SX2 code was not applied to any statement throughout this study. Given the definition of the code, it was quite likely that only someone who had had direct experience of themselves as the context of their experience would utter such statements. The assumption was that those interviewed in this study had not had this experience, the type of experience I would expect from someone proficient in mindfulness. For example, the statements below are from the third study (see Chapter 5), which involved interviewing a number of people who were trained in and were practicing mindfulness.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"(there's a part of me) I've called my observer, I've got this part of me that can watch what's going on and literally talk to me in the quietest, steadiest way no matter what is going on."</i>	In this statement the interviewer identifies the 'observer' part of them, thus coded SX2.
<i>"I would start fanaticising what I should do, what I should've done and so on and so on... So this time I'm more like a watcher or viewer. So it's a wave, it's emotion, it's just body, and it's a reaction. So it didn't stick to me. - Yeah. And watching, and saying, wow that's interesting, and that was a really interesting experience."</i>	The SX2 code in this utterance applies to the statement 'I'm more like a watcher or viewer' indicating the speaker knows himself as a perspective-taker.

How the definition of SX evolved

SX2 candidate statements

Initially the following statements were all considered SX2 as the mind, brain or subconscious were offered as containers of the content of experience that is being observed in some way. After consideration of what this particular code is aiming to capture, these statements were re-coded to SX1 or SP-then. Either the statements indicated the speaker was taking perspective of the content of their experience there & then in their brain or mind; or, the statement was a description of experience in another context. This was supported by the fact that these statements negatively correlated with wellbeing where as SX1 positively correlated with wellbeing. It was decided that SX2 would apply to statements where the speaker referred to himself or herself as the perspective-taker rather than the content of the perspective that was situated in the body somewhere. As such, in this batch of interviews there were no SX2 statements. What follows are examples of statements that were originally considered SX2 but were recoded SX1 or SP-then.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"So that just what's popped into my mind."</i>	While the mind is offered as the container of the thought (there & then) that "popped" in, the speaker is not identified as the perspective-taker, therefore it was coded SP-then.
<i>"It will trigger something in my brain and I'm thinking, 'Why is this person rude, what's made them react to me in that way?'"</i>	While the brain is offered as the container doing the thinking (there & then) about the rude person, the 'self' is not identified as the perspective-taker therefore it is coded SP-then.
<i>"In times to come we'll look back on it, as the brain does, the difficult times fade, your memory sort of glosses over the difficulties that you experienced and you kind of reinterpret memories and experience in ways that reinforce other sort of narratives in your life."</i>	While the brain is identified as the part of the body that 'looks back' on the memories (there & then), there is no indication the speaker is identifying the 'self' as perspective-taker. As the content of experience is objectified as there & then the statement is coded SX1.
<i>"The way my mind tends to work though, is to work out what the four walls of the problem are and work out what's the worst part."</i>	While the mind is identified as the container of the problem (there & then), the 'self' as perspective taker is not identified. The statement is coded SX1 as the "parts of the problem" are objectified as there & then.
<i>"In the cold light of day this is middle of the night rubbish, it's when my subconscious just grabs something and just runs away with it, and I just stop and look at it as a glass half full person and say, 'well that's bloody fantastic</i>	While the subconscious is offered as the container that "grabs something (there & then) and runs away with it", the 'self' as perspective-taker is not identified. Therefore the statement is coded SX1.

*because that makes it really easy to
change careers [laughing].”*

<i>“But my subconscious in my brain says, 'No don't worry too much about that if this went really, really, really wrong and it was found out that you'd been negligent by not supervising your staff enough then maybe they'll complain to the Law Institute, and then maybe it would be unsatisfactory conduct, and then maybe you'll get struck off and then you won't have an income.”</i>	While the brain and subconscious are offered as containers of the ruminative thought process (there & then), the 'self' as perspective-taker is not identified. It does, however, indicate defusion with the bit “don't worry about that” and therefore is coded SP- then.
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Distinguishing SX1 and SX2

As indicted above, distinguishing between SX1 and SX2 in natural language was not easy throughout the different stages of this study. Often instances of SX2 coding were based upon the usage of the terms “my brain” and “my mind” on the assumption that in these cases the brain or mind was seen as a container for experience. Consider the sentence *“It will trigger something in my brain and I'm thinking, 'Why is this person rude?’”* From one perspective, the brain is seen as the container within which thoughts are triggered, so this could be SX2. On the other hand, even children with very little perspective-taking ability would agree that the brain is where thoughts are ‘contained’ in some way. Based on this distinction I decided it was not appropriate to confound awareness with terms such as brain or mind. I decided such statements would be coded SX1 where they reflected a frame of distinction between self and thoughts, but they did not explicitly or implicitly assert the self as an observer of experience. In other cases, the statements were coded SP-then as they were a description of ongoing experience.

I decided SX2 was applicable to statements that indicated the ‘self’ as being the arena of awareness that had no particular boundary except that it ought include the place from which the perspective is taken and the outer limits of awareness. Within an

expansive arena of awareness, via a relation of hierarchy, all manner of other relations can be derived and spoken about depending on the content. It is the set of deictic relations that were of importance when coding SX2 along with the relation of hierarchy with content. The important thing being captured with SX1 was times when a person distinguished the self from the content of experience. I felt the subtle and advanced form of identifying with the 'self' as perspective-taker that related hierarchically with the content of experience had not been reflected in the verbal accounts of the participants in this study. Moving forward from this point, the aim was to capture SX2 statements reflecting, "I am an observer of myself as the container of experience" in addition to "I am not my thoughts". This distinction was captured by SX2 statements in Study 3 discussed in Chapter 5.

Rigid SX

As coding preceded, a form of rigid perspective taking became apparent. This category of perspective taking was typically associated with analogical reasoning and critical thinking. These bits indicated that more than one argument or rational view could be taken on a particular issue. This kind of perspective taking was particularly evident in contexts where debate and negotiation were professional or behavioural norms. This was paradoxical as the assumption was that with increased perspective taking there would be less fusion with content. When this became apparent I decided to double code SX statements with one of the other codes to indicate whether the content of perspective was being held rigidly or flexibly. See the section 'The relationship between codes' below for the results. This was in concert with the definition of the self-rule codes COR and VOR and the personal belief codes, COB and VOB (discussed in Chapter 4), that further qualified the nature of content. Also, the OX code (discussed in Chapter 4) was introduced and applied to statements in which the speaker took the other's perspective and at times compared it with their own and judged only one as correct.

Retrospective perspective taking not SX

Consider the statement *"Only when I am in the moment and I am getting annoyed or I have got writers block and there is the anxious you that shows up and I think I've gotta*

knock this off 'cause I've got to be up at the Courts; why I'm not at the Courts?' [SP-then]." While this statement could be considered SX1, it was coded SP-then. This is retrospective perspective not perspective taking at the time. It is easy to say something like 'with hindsight, I should have seen it this way', but that is not self-as-perspective.

Here is another example of this same point: *"Um what would be the effect if it all fell through tomorrow [SP-then]? Probably not much; still wake up, might not have a job but it's the very worst-case scenario. Still living, breathing, walking, talking [SP-then]. I've got family and so it's um, a bit of perspective [SP-then – While the interviewee says "I've got a family and so it's a bit of perspective", it seems to be retrospective perspective which was not perspective taking in the moment]. You probably lose a bit of perspective when you're in the office about how important things are [SX1 – 'I see (here & now) I lose perspective on important things (there & then)]. Thankfully, I seem to have the ability to forget about it when I leave, most times [SS-pos – 'I have the ability to forget']."*

Self and other perspectives

Early in the project as others' perspectives were referred to in the interviews, it raised the question, 'does a statement referring to taking the perspective of another qualify as SX?' At the time it was decided not. Only a perspective on one's own content of experience was to be coded SX because this code referred to instances when a person objectified their own thoughts, feeling and emotions, not another's. To capture statements about another's experience and perspective, a full set of 'other' codes was introduced. This work is discussed in Chapter Four: Development and Application of the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure of 'Other'.

Statements Not Coded

NUL sentences

All sentences that did not contain a self-discrimination statement or where the self-reference was unclear, were coded 'NUL' so that the number of individual codes per

total sentences in each interview could be calculated accurately. The following are examples of NUL statements.

Statement

<i>"Last financial year was the beginning of a restructuring for the whole organisation."</i>

<i>"The whole GFC thing has had an enormous impact on recruiting and business generally, which has slowed down considerably."</i>

<i>"This firm has been in existence for nearly eight years now."</i>
--

Inheriting meaning from the interviewer's question

Statements such as 'yep' that inherited meaning from a question or statement made by the interviewer were also coded NUL given that the meaning was derived from the interviewing context rather than the interviewee's historical context. This was distinct from statements that derived meaning from the previous statement made by the interviewee as discussed above in the SS section. To illustrate, the single word "yep" below could have been coded as SS given the question, but was coded NUL. The last sentence was SP-then because it was reporting out an experience:

SO WHAT I'M HEARING IS THAT THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH WHEN YOU ARE BEING DRIVEN BY YOUR OWN LIGHTS...

Yep [NUL].

...SO TO SPEAK, YOU CAN ACTUALLY LOSE TRACK OF OTHER PEOPLE IN THAT PROCESS AND JUST GET A BIT TUNNEL VISIONED ON IT...

Yeah, I mean people can come in and talk to me and I face my screen I go yep, yep, yep, Okay... [SP-then].

Results

In the analyses that follows, I explore whether the frequencies of various coded statements predict wellbeing. Results from a pilot study and three rounds of coding

are provided. The pilot study was designed to establish agreement on the coding schemes. In the following three rounds I refined and added codes. Table 3.2 lists the codes that were applied and the number of interviews (n) for each of the rounds of coding presented in this chapter.

Codes Applied	Pilot Study	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
n	15	20	20	34
SP	✓	✓	✓	
SP-hedge & -now				✓
SP-then	✓	✓	✓	✓
SS	✓	✓	✓	
SS-pos, -neg & -neut				✓
COR				✓
VOR				✓
SX1	✓	✓	✓	✓
SX2	✓	✓	✓	✓
FLEX (SX-SS)	✓	✓	✓	
FLEX 1 (SX+VOR)				✓

Table 3.2: Codes applied and n for each round of coding.

The major change in codes applied at Round 3 occurred as a result of taking a grounded approach to distinguishing the type of statements that may be influencing the wellbeing of the speaker. At the conclusion of Round 2, I recognised the type of statements that subsequently attracted the codes for Control Oriented Self-Rules [COR] and Value Oriented Self-Rules [VOR] in Round 3 of coding. At the same time I dropped the calculation of FLEX I had used to that point and introduced the calculation for FLEX 1.

Pilot Study

Pilot Study Method

The Pilot Study was designed to establish agreement on the coding scheme and determine if coded measures of self-discrimination predicted wellbeing. This involved coding an initial set of interviews ($n = 15$) for occurrences of SP, SS, and SX

statements then correlating the frequency of these statements with the subjective wellbeing measures. The assumption was that if someone was able to take perspective on their experience [SX], they would be less fused with the content of their experience, which would equate to a decrease in rigid self-conceptualisation [SS]. That is a measure of FLEX would equal SX-SS and measures of FLEX would correlate positively with measures of wellbeing. This is based on the idea that flexibility is a combination of mindfulness or perspective taking and defusion from cognitive verbal content (Hayes et al. 2012b).

Pilot Study Results

Reliability

No inter-rater reliability measures were taken while coding the initial set of interviews, $n = 15$. Inter-rater reliability measures were taken during subsequent rounds of the study. These reliability measures are discussed at Round One and Three below.

Analyses

In my initial set of coded interviews, $n = 15$, notable associations became apparent between code frequencies, calculations of FLEX and measures of Satisfaction with Life and Psychological Well Being.

There was a strong correlation between FLEX and Satisfaction with Life, $r = .63$, $p = .01$, which indicated 40% of the variance in Satisfaction with Life could be explained by FLEX. While it is impossible to infer causation from a correlation, I assume if people are more able to objectify experience and identify with it as transitory rather than literal truth, they would also more likely be satisfied with life. Thus, it seemed more likely that flexible self-discrimination would cause satisfaction with life than the other way around. It was hard to imagine how satisfaction with life would cause more flexible self-discrimination. This was supported by a negative, strong, and statistically significant correlation between Satisfaction with Life and SS, $r = -.61$, $p = .02$, indicating that 37% of the variance in Satisfaction with Life may be explained by

SS. This suggested that the more rigidly one identifies with symbolic content, the less satisfied with life they will be.

There was a moderate positive, but non-significant, correlation between FLEX and Psychological Wellbeing, $r = .36, p = .19$. Although this was nonsignificant, with this small sample the effect size was such that it warranted further investigation. People may be more likely to experience psychological wellbeing if they are able to defuse from psychological content and identify with it as passing experience. This tentative finding was supported by a moderate non-significant negative correlation between Psychological Wellbeing and SS, $r = -.35, p = .20$.

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the predictors of Satisfaction with Life and Psychological Wellbeing each with seven predictors entered together into the model: Age, FLEX, Openness, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Extroversion and Conscientiousness. The model did not significantly predict Psychological Well-being ($F = 1.5, p = .31$) but the predictors accounted for 57% of the variance in well-being. Similarly, the model did not significantly predict Satisfaction with Life ($F = 3.5, p = .07$) but accounted for 23% of the variance in Satisfaction with Life. FLEX emerged as the only predictor of Satisfaction with Life ($\beta = .96, p = .05$) and the only predictor of Psychological Wellbeing ($\beta = .96, p = .05$).

Discussion (Pilot Study Coding)

Because the sample size was so small for this exploratory phase, many of the correlations between self-discrimination codes and other measures were non-significant. Across all measures taken FLEX was moderately and positively correlated with Psychological Well Being, Satisfaction with Life and Positive & Negative Affect. FLEX also showed a moderate negative correlation with Stress and Anxiety. This trend was mirrored by a moderate negative correlation between SS and the measures of Psychological Well Being, Satisfaction with Life and Positive & Negative Affect. SS showed a moderate positive correlation with Stress and Anxiety. While these correlations were nonsignificant and the number of interviews was small ($n = 15$)

these results supported the emerging validity of the coding scheme and suggested that further coding would be worthwhile.

The International Personality Item Pool measures: Openness, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Extroversion and Conscientiousness were all negatively correlated with FLEX. Except for Neuroticism, which was not expected. The assumption was that these measures would positively correlate with FLEX. More investigation would explain this.

SX1 was positively correlated with Psychological Wellbeing and Positive & Negative Affect. SX1 was negatively correlated with Neuroticism and Stress. This trend again supported the idea that being able to objectify inner behaviour (thoughts and feelings) is important for wellbeing.

The results for SP-then were contrary to expectations given that this code tended to be negatively correlated with measures of wellbeing and positively correlated with measures of Stress, Anxiety and Depression. The assumption was that if someone were holding inner experience flexibly, these relations would be reversed.

Round One

Round One Method

Following the Pilot Study considerable thought was given to further refining the definition of the codes and their application to text. The aim was to ensure as far as possible a sound theoretical underpinning based on RFT.

At this point in the study considerable thought was given to the definition and application of SS. As outlined above in the section on how SS evolved, I decided that SS would be applied to self-discrimination statements describing *both* primary and secondary attributes of the speaker. In the pilot study I had applied SS to self-discrimination statements describing *only* secondary attributes. I retained my initial assumptions that if someone was able to take perspective on their experience [SX],

they would be less fused with the content of their experience, which would equate to a decrease in rigid self-conceptualisation [SS]. I continued to calculate a measure of FLEX as equal to SX-SS and assumed measures of FLEX would correlate positively with measures of wellbeing.

To further test these assumptions the original 15 interviews, plus an additional five interviews (total $n = 20$), were recoded/coded with the revised coding scheme that included the adjusted interpretation of SS.

Round One Results

Reliability

Two coders independently coded four interviews and the inter-rater reliability was calculated using QDA Miner. Inter-rater reliability (Krippendorff's alpha) was calculated using the following specifications: the double coded segments had to overlap by at least 70% and common absences were counted as agreements. As each interview was coded, disagreements were discussed. After the first interview was double coded, inter-rater reliability was barely adequate with a Mean Overall Kappa of 0.45. At the fourth double coded interview prior to any discussion on disagreements, inter-rater reliability was adequate with a Mean Overall Kappa of 0.65 (Table 3.3). After discussion about disagreements in each of the double coded interviews, agreements were reached and differences were reconciled for each code. In each case inter-rater reliability was then excellent. The nature of the discussions and resulting agreements are outlined above in the sections explaining how each code evolved. Fleiss (1981) recommended kappa of 0.4 to 0.75 be considered fair to good, while kappa > 0.75 be considered excellent.

Krippendorff's Kappa	Pre Discussion	Post Discussion
Self-as-Process Now [SP-now]	.82	1
Self-as-Process [SP-then]	.57	.92
Self-as-Story [SS]	.62	.97
Self-as-Perspective 1 [SX1]	.52	1
Self-as-Perspective 2 [SX2]	0	0
Mean Overall Kappa	.65	.97

NB. The SX2 code did not occur in this interview.

Table 3.3: Inter-Rater Reliability Round One Results for the fourth double coded interview.

Analyses

The revised coding scheme resulted in FLEX becoming less predictive of wellbeing. In particular, Satisfaction with Life was nonsignificant ($r = .23$, $p = .32$) compared with the correlations in the pilot study ($r = .63$, $p = .01$).

To compare these results with those of the Pilot Study, multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the predictors of Satisfaction with Life and Psychological Wellbeing. For each measure seven predictors were simultaneously entered into the model: Age, FLEX, Openness, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Extroversion and Conscientiousness. These analyses confirmed that the revised coding of FLEX was substantially less predictive of wellbeing, controlling for personality and age. In the Pilot Study these predictors accounted for 23% of the variance in Satisfaction with Life and 57% of the variance in Psychological Wellbeing. In Round One they accounted for 3% of the variance in Satisfaction with Life and 58% of the variance in Psychological Wellbeing. Standardised coefficients for FLEX indicated that FLEX no longer significantly predicted either Satisfaction with Life ($\beta = 1.63$, $p = .13$) or Psychological Wellbeing ($\beta = .38$, $p = .08$).

Discussion (Round One Coding)

Coding SS for both primary and secondary attributes of the self appeared to reduce its capacity to predict wellbeing. I decided to assign SS to statements where the speaker ascribed *only* a secondary attribute in a frame of coordination to the 'self', as was done in the pilot study, and not to statements about *both* primary personal or behavioural attributes.

Round Two

Round Two Method

Round Two of coding involved recoding the set of interviews, $n = 20$, with a particular focus on applying the revised SS code capturing self-discrimination statements ascribing secondary attributes to the self. I continued with my initial assumptions that if someone were able to take perspective on their experience [SX], they would be less fused with the content of their experience, which would equate to a decrease in rigid self-conceptualisation [SS]. That is, a measure of FLEX would equal SX-SS and that measures of FLEX would correlate positively with measures of wellbeing.

Round Two Results

Analyses

While remaining nonsignificant, the relationships between FLEX and Satisfaction with Life and Psychological Well Being strengthened. The initial correlation between FLEX and Satisfaction with Life in the pilot study was strong and significant, $r = .63$, $p = .01$. At Round One the strength was reduced and significance of this relationship was lost, $r = .23$, $p = .32$. At Round Two, after recoding, the relationship was moderately strong and marginally significant, $r = .43$, $p = .06$. Further, the relationship between Satisfaction with Life and SS was initially strong, negative and statistically significant, $r = -.61$, $p = .02$. At Round One the relationship was weak, negative and nonsignificant, $r = -.20$, $p = .39$. At Round Two the relationship was moderately strong, negative and significant $p < .10$ ($r = -.38$, $p = .09$).

Also, there was initially a moderate correlation between FLEX and Psychological Well Being, $r = .36$, $p = .19$. At Round One this relation became weaker and nonsignificant, $r = .23$, $p = .34$. After recoding at Round Two strength and level of significance in the relationship returned, $r = .32$, $p = .17$.

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine how well the measures predicted Satisfaction with Life and Psychological Wellbeing. For each measure seven predictors were simultaneously entered into the model: Age, FLEX, Openness, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Extroversion and Conscientiousness. Initially these predictors accounted for 23% of the variance in Satisfaction with Life. At Round One they accounted for less than 3% of the variance. After recoding at Round Two these predictors accounted for 25% of the variance in Satisfaction with Life. While overall these variables did not significantly predict Satisfaction with Life, $F = 1.85$, $p = .17$, the Standardised Coefficient of FLEX, $\beta = 2.78$, $p = .02$, again indicated that FLEX significantly predicted Satisfaction with Life. For Psychological Wellbeing, initially and at Round One, these predictors accounted for 58% of the variance. At Round Two they accounted for 62% of the variance. In Round Two, these variables now significantly predicted Psychological Wellbeing, $F = 5.17$, $p = .01$. The Standard Coefficient for FLEX, $\beta = .44$, $p = 0.04$, indicated that FLEX was a significant predictor of Psychological Wellbeing on its own. As a predictor FLEX was positively associated with both Satisfaction with Life and Psychological Wellbeing.

Discussion (Round Two Coding)

At Round Two of coding the moderate to strong correlations between FLEX and the other measures of wellbeing that were lost at Round One returned. The revised definition of SS was supported. SS was to be applied to statements where the speaker ascribed secondary attributes in a frame of coordination with the 'self' and not to statements about primary personal or behavioural attributes.

During coding I wondered if positive self-discrimination statements might be more positively related to wellbeing than negative self-discrimination statements. This

hypothesis was tested in Round Three of coding with the introduction of additional codes that distinguished positive and negative self-identity statements.

Further, a question about personal beliefs and self-rules arose. I recognised that such statements did not really fall into the category of SP-then, which led to a number of distinctions about personal beliefs and self-rules. Many of these statements were future oriented and specified: what the speaker held as literal 'truths' about how the world is; the speaker's strategies for controlling or avoiding unwanted experience; or, their strategies for behaving in a way that will take them in a valued direction. While it was clear these statements were not SS they were not SP-then either. At this point I introduced codes for Control Oriented Self-Rules [COR] and Value Oriented Self-Rules [VOR] to capture such statements. To capture Personal Belief statements I decided to introduce codes for Control Oriented Personal Beliefs [COB] and Value Oriented Personal Beliefs [VOB] along with a suite of 'Other' codes in Round Four of coding, the results of which are discussed in Chapter 4: Development and Application of the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure of 'Other'.

Questions about the nature of SX versus OX

It was at this point I drew a distinction between statements coded SX versus OX as a number of statements coded SX were in fact statements about another's perspective. I acknowledged that such statements were not really SX. These were statements in which the speaker drew a distinction between another's perspective and their own. Some statements were a rigid classification of one view being correct, usually their own, and the other's view being incorrect. Other statements were more flexible in that the speaker distinguished two points of view, their own and another's, without any rigid classification about the apparent correctness of either. This observation led to the definition and future application in Round Four of the OX code, which is defined and discussed in Chapter 4: Development and Application of the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure of 'Other'. At this point I decided to double code any statement that attracted an SX with one of the other codes such as SS or SP to indicate whether the perspective being taken was rigid or flexible.

Questions about SP

At the conclusion of Round Two of coding and analysis some further distinctions about the SP code were drawn. In addition to being applied to statements about current experience I decided to apply this code to statements that contained personal pronouns such as 'I think' as well as linguistic conventions that appeared to be habitual and served to create space for thinking. Based on this distinction the SP code was expanded to include SP-hedge with SP-now and SP-then as defined above.

While the majority of the correlations and regression analyses' in Round Two were nonsignificant and the number of interviews was small ($n = 20$), overall the results supported the validity of the coding scheme and provided enough evidence to continue applying the codes with refinements. The work that followed is discussed below in the Round Three Results and in Chapter 4 where Round Four Results are discussed.

Round Three

Round Three Method

Employing the updated coding scheme and revised thinking about the method for applying the codes, the 20 interviews coded in Round Two were recoded and an additional 14 interviews were coded ($n = 34$). The assumptions at Round Two were retained. That if someone were able to take perspective on their experience [SX], they would be less fused with the content of their experience, which would equate in some way to less rigid forms of self-conceptualisation involving SS, COR and VOR. In this Round I aimed to test if the measure of FLEX (SX less rigid forms of self-conceptualisation, SS & COR) was more accurate than other calculations. To test the measure of FLEX, two different calculations were made and correlated with the measures of wellbeing. I also aimed to test how the measures of SS-pos, SS-neg, COR & VOR, were related with wellbeing. The results are provided below.

Round Three Results

Reliability

At Round Three of coding two coders independently coded four interviews and the inter-rater reliability was calculated using QDA Miner. Inter-rater reliability (Krippendorff's alpha) was calculated using the following specifications: the double coded segments had to overlap by at least 70% and common absences were counted as agreements. As each interview was coded disagreements were discussed. After the first interview was double coded, inter-rater reliability was excellent with a Mean Overall Kappa of 0.85. At the third and fourth double coded interview prior to any discussion on disagreements, inter-rater reliability was excellent with a Mean Overall Kappa of 0.91 (Table 3.4). After discussion about disagreements in each of the double coded interviews, agreements were reached and differences were reconciled for each code. In each case inter-rater reliability was then excellent. The nature of the discussions and resulting agreements are outlined above in the sections explaining how each code evolved. Fleiss (1981) recommended kappa of 0.4 to 0.75 be considered fair to good, while kappa > 0.75 be considered excellent.

Krippendorff's Kappa	Pre Discussion
Self-as-Process Hedge [SP-hedge]	.97
Self-as-Process Now [SP-now]	.97
Self-as-Process Then [SP-then]	.90
Self-as-Story Positive [SS-pos]	.89
Self-as-Story Negative [SS-neg]	1
Self-as-Story Neutral [SS-neut]	0
Control Oriented Self-rule [COR]	.79
Value Oriented Self-rule [VOR]	.93
Self-as-Perspective 1 [SX1]	.84
Self-as-Perspective 2 [SX2]	0
Mean Overall Kappa	.91

Table 3.4: Inter-Rater Reliability Round Three Results for the fourth double coded interview.

Analyses

At this point in the project my approach to measuring self-discrimination [FLEX] was reconsidered as follows:

- $FLEX1 = SX + VOR$
- $FLEX2 = SX + VOR + SS-pos - COR - SS-neg$

These comparisons were conducted in order to derive from the data which of these calculations most accurately reflected the behaviour of healthy self-discrimination. Self-discrimination was understood to be the ongoing verbal process of constructing (in words) oneself and perspectives of others in response to contextual cues. Comparisons involved seeing which of the FLEX measures correlated most with the subjective measures taken. The self-discrimination measure that most significantly correlated with wellbeing was FLEX 1 (Table 3.5).

	FLEX 1	FLEX 2
Age	.44*	.48*
Psychological Well Being	.42*	.33
Satisfaction with Life	.40*	.30
Positive & Negative Affect	.41*	.27
Depression-Anxiety-Stress	-.48**	-.16

Note 1: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Note 2: $n = 34$

Table 3.5: Round three correlations between elements of wellbeing and the different calculations of self-discrimination FLEX.

As displayed in Table 3.5, the method of calculating FLEX 1 was significantly correlated with Age, Psychological Well Being, Satisfaction with Life, Positive & Negative Affect and Depression-Anxiety-Stress. Of these, Age, Psychological Well Being, Satisfaction with Life and Positive & Negative Affect were positively correlated with FLEX 1 while Depression-Anxiety-Stress was negatively correlated. The strength and significance of the relationship between FLEX 1 and these measures of wellbeing is discussed below.

The four relationships of interest were between the measure of FLEX 1, the sum of SX and VOR, and measures of Psychological Well Being, Satisfaction with Life, Positive & Negative Affect and Depression-Anxiety-Stress. An analysis of these four relationships showed Psychological Well Being, $r = .42, p = .01$, Satisfaction with Life, $r = .40, p = .02$, and Positive & Negative Affect, $r = .41, p = .02$, were moderately, positively, and significantly related to FLEX 1. Total Depression-Anxiety-Stress, $r = -.48, p < .01$, showed a moderate, negative, and statistically significant relationship with FLEX 1. The strength and significance of these relationships indicate that being able to objectify and take perspective on experience, as well as construct coherent and functional value oriented self-rules that direct future behaviours, is related to mental health and effective functioning in the world. It was also apparent that with age people tend to objectify inner experience and construct value oriented self-rules.

To further test the validity of the results discussed above a number of time sequence correlations were conducted. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, a set of subjective wellbeing measures were taken at three time points, at the same time as the coded interviews (T1) then six (T2) and twelve months (T3) later. All correlation and regression analyses up to this point were a study of the relationship between code frequencies and subjective measures taken at T1. In the following analyses the relationship between code frequencies at T1 and the subjective measures taken at T2 and T3 were studied (Table 3.6).

Ch3: STUDY 1: FUNCTIONAL SELF-DISCRIMINATION MEASURE OF 'SELF'

	SP-then	SS-pos	SS-neg	SS-neut	SS-tot	VOR	COR	SX	FLEX 1
Psychological Well Being t1	-.08	-.10	-.33	.00	-.21	.28	-.20	.26	.42*
Psychological Well Being t2	-.34	-.12	-.25	.02	-.18	.39*	-.18	.08	.40*
Psychological Well Being t3	-.26	-.03	-.08	.13	-.04	.45*	-.07	.10	.47**
Satisfaction with Life t1	-.12	.00	-.17	.17	-.05	.29	-.06	.22	.40*
Satisfaction with Life t2	-.18	.01	-.17	.06	-.05	.38*	-.13	.20	.46**
Satisfaction with Life t3	-.17	.04	-.08	.08	.01	.41*	-.10	.09	.43*
Positive & Negative Affect t1	-.10	-.04	-.25	.08	-.12	.33	.10	.18	.41*
Positive & Negative Affect t2	-.33	.06	-.11	.15	.02	.35*	-.02	.23	.46**
Positive & Negative Affect t3	-.24	.06	-.16	.09	-.01	.33	.12	.11	.38*
Depression-Anxiety-Stress t1	.19	.21	.18	.02	.24	-.43*	-.08	-.14	-.48**
Depression-Anxiety-Stress t2	.29	.11	.08	-.07	.11	-.48*	-.11	-.07	-.48**
Depression-Anxiety-Stress t3	.17	.13	.16	-.10	.15	-.26	.01	.04	-.21

Note 1: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Note 2: $n = 34$

Table 3.6: Time series correlations between elements of self-reported wellbeing at the three time points and the measures of self-discrimination at time 1 taken at Round Three of coding. Green shading indicates a positive correlation, while red indicates a negative correlation.

In this analysis FLEX 1 measures taken at T1 showed a moderately strong and statistically significant relationship at T2 and T3 with Psychological Well Being (T2 $r = .40, p = .02$; T3 $r = .47, p = .01$), Satisfaction with Life (T2 $r = .46, p = .01$; T3 $r = .43, p = .02$) and Positive & Negative Affect (T2 $r = .46, p = .01$; T3 $r = .38, p = .04$). This measure of FLEX also showed a moderate statistically significant negative correlation with measures of Depressions-Anxiety-Stress at T2 six months later (T2 $r = -.48, p < .01$). While correlation does not infer causation, these results clearly show if someone is able to take perspective on experience and utter coherent value oriented self-rules they are more likely to experience wellbeing six to twelve months later.

The importance of Value Oriented Self-Rules is reinforced in this analysis as measures of VOR taken at T1 showed a moderately strong and statistically significant relationship with Psychological Well Being (T2 $r = .39, p = .03$; T3 $r = .45, p = .01$), Satisfaction with Life (T2 $r = .38, p = .04$; T3 $r = .41, p = .02$), and Positive & Negative Affect (T2 $r = .35, p = .05$) six and/or twelve months later. VOR also showed a strong statistically significant negative correlation with measures of Depressions-Anxiety-Stress (T2 $r = -.48, p < .01$) six months later. It is interesting to note that while SX on its own was not significantly related to the measures of wellbeing, when combined with VOR in the calculation of FLEX the overall strength and significance of the correlations increased. This shows that it is VOR that is driving the relationship.

Discussion (Round Three Coding)

FLEX = SX + VOR

It became apparent through Round Three that the most accurate measure of self-discrimination was FLEX = SX+VOR (FLEX 1). These results suggested at a practical level that identifying Perspective Taking statements [SX] and Value Oriented Self-rules [VOR] will quite likely relate to levels of wellbeing at the time of measurement and in the future. The results suggest it is possible that increasing the frequency of SX & VOR statements could improve the wellbeing and social functioning of people. This has practical implications for therapists, coaches and researchers working in the field of psychological wellbeing and behaviour change.

How rigid self-discrimination codes performed

Of interest were the results associated with the SS and COR codes. When factored into the calculation of FLEX, the correlations with the other subjective measures was not as strong. The initial assumption was that subtracting rigid self-discrimination statements from counts of perspective taking statements would provide a measure of psychological flexibility. This assumption was to prove inaccurate. Despite the inaccuracy of this approach to measuring FLEX, rigid self-discrimination statements, positive or negative, were by themselves negatively related with wellbeing. The results consistently showed the codes for SS and COR to be negatively correlated overall with the measures of wellbeing. Table 3.6 is colour coded to show this trend with red indicating a negative correlation and green a positive correlation. These results support the idea that fusion with the verbal content of experience and behaving to control and avoid unwanted experience is detrimental to healthy psychological functioning (Hayes et al. 2012b).

A question about SP-then

Questions remain about the SP-then code. It was expected that this code would correlate positively with measures of psychological wellbeing, however, this was not the case in any of the rounds of coding. This result invites further investigation to understand the nature of this result.

What about 'Other' codes

In Round Three statements about personal beliefs, how others should behave or the world should work, and others' perspective were apparent. This invited a question about the implications of introducing 'Other' codes into the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM). To test the function of 'Other' statements the coding scheme was expanded in Round Four of coding to include Personal Belief and Other-as-Context, -Story and -Process codes. The results of this work are discussed in the Chapter 4: Development and Application of the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure of 'Other'.

Chapter Four

Study 2: Development and Application of the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure of ‘Other’

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Relationship Between Self and Other

At the conclusion of Round Three of coding in Study 1, which focused on the predictability of self-discrimination statements for wellbeing, I wondered about the function of interviewee statements about others. Interviewees made statements about personal beliefs, how others should behave or the world should work, and others' perspectives. This invited a question about the implication of introducing 'Other' codes into the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM), which is the topic of this chapter. Before presenting the Methods and Results of this study, below I discuss an RFT account of the 'other' that informed the design of the 'other' codes.

From an RFT perspective, developing a sense of self in relation to another is commensurate with developing perspective taking skills (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a; Hayes et al. 2001d). There are three perspective-taking frames essential to this process, the deictic frames: I and YOU; HERE and THERE; and NOW and THEN. With a sufficiently well developed repertoire of discriminating these differences, we are able to abstract a personal perspective on the world, others and ourselves. We learn to do this by responding appropriately to, and asking questions such as: "What are you doing now?" "What did I do then?" "What will you do there?"

Each time we ask or answer one or more of this type of question the situation will likely be different. The only constant will be the relational properties of I versus YOU, HERE versus THERE, and NOW versus THEN. These properties are distinguished as we learn to talk about our perspective in relation to other perspectives. We learn I is always from my perspective HERE, not from Your perspective THERE. We come to discriminate the locus of our experience as being from I-HERE-NOW distinct from YOU-THERE-THEN. For example, if I were to ask, "Do you understand what I'm talking about?" locates the author (I) HERE and NOW, asking the reader (YOU) THERE and THEN (where and whenever you are reading this manuscript), for a response (hopefully an affirmative). In this way, the relational frames of HERE and THERE, and NOW and THEN establish a constant division between the speaker and the spoken about. The speaker is always HERE and NOW, and the spoken about is always THERE and THEN.

Responding in accordance with the three deictic frames underpins our ability to evaluate, compare, contrast, and judge all events from a constant perspective. We spend most waking hours responding HERE and NOW to events THERE and THEN as good, bad, demanding, unpleasant, and so on. This behaviour is so pervasive we often fail to discriminate that an evaluation is taking place. How often, for example, do we evaluate (HERE and NOW) an individual (YOU) as, say, "not very smart", and then discriminate the evaluation as an evaluation (just a thought)? Not often! In most cases the evaluation is taken literally as a reflection of the person being evaluated and we conclude the person "really" is not very smart. We miss that we are making a personal judgement based on our personal history of preferences and dislikes.

As our verbal behaviour develops, the 'other' as verbally constructed serves relational (C_{rel}) and contextual (C_{func}) functions for us as speakers, along with other contextual features of the communication, such as the purpose of the interaction. In extended interactions the verbal construction of the other is further elaborated and functions to regulate our behaviour as the speaker. For example, my PhD supervisor has asked, "who will read your thesis?" The answer to this questions serves as a relational context for me as I (HERE and NOW) write these very words. If I (HERE and NOW) am to assume that YOU (THERE and THEN) as the reader will be well versed in RFT, this verbally constructed relationship (C_{rel}) between you and me functions (C_{func}) to have me use terminology such as ' C_{rel} ' and ' C_{func} ' as they should be embraced readily. If I am to assume others will read these words, such a verbally constructed relation (C_{rel}) between others and me will function (C_{func}) to have me introduce such terminology slowly and systematically. These very sentences are examples of my verbal construction of you as the listener, and show the kind of impact such conceptualisations have on my verbal behaviour as speaker.

As discussed in Chapter 2, with an elaborated relational repertoire and the formation of perspective-taking skills three types of self emerge: 1) Self-as-Content of verbal relations; 2) Self-as-Process of verbal relations; and, 3) Self-as-Context of verbal relations (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a). Such perspective-taking can establish three types of verbal other: 1) Other-as-Content of verbal relations; 2) Other-as-Process of verbal relations; and, 3) Other-as-Context of verbal relations. Stated another way,

verbal relating can lead to a conceptualised other, a knowing other, and a transcendent or conscious other.

The conceptualised other is the normal verbal construction of the listener. My example above about you being RFT literate as the reader of this thesis is an instance of the conceptualised other. "My thesis examiners will be x, y and z" is a verbal construction of your stable content: your views, history, actions, preferences, and so on. This conceptualisation has served as a C_{rel} for my behaviour to a significant degree. I've taken a deep dive into using technical terms.

The knowing other is more fluid because it is based on a moment-to-moment construction of reactions of the other. Over the five years I have been doing this PhD I have learned to "read" my PhD supervisor. While we have come to share our reactions to each other openly as friends, he has an "I'm putting on my PhD supervisor hat now" set of expressions and gestures. My response is in part controlled by these moment-to-moment verbal constructions of my PhD supervisor. "Okay, I had better listen to this..." A sense of the Other-as-Process is necessary for ongoing modulation of the speaker's behaviour.

A sense of the transcendent other is relatively uncommon, occurring most often in contemplative, intimate, or therapeutic relations. This occurs when the speaker and the listener connect as purely conscious beings and experience a sense of oneness. The experience of both the self and other are inputted 'HERE and NOW to be a single event. When a speaker's behaviour is regulated by their 'knowing' of the other versus a 'conceptualisation' of the other, it is fluid and modulated rather than 'scripted'. When behaviour is regulated by a connection with the 'transcendent' other versus the other forms of verbal regulation, it is open and defused from the literal importance of content.

De-synchrony between people may be in part due to the way we verbally construct the other. For example, I may not have been able to develop a close friendship with my PhD supervisor if I had 'read' his "I'm putting on my PhD supervisor hat now" as "he thinks I'm stupid", "he is someone who can judge me". Rather, I have developed a

deep sense of gratitude, as my 'reading' has been that "he genuinely cares for our shared learning".

From an RFT perspective, perspective-taking is critical to the verbal construction of not only the self, but also the other. Verbal relations function to modify the behaviour of the listener. We modulate our responses to fit the listener as verbally known to us. This is a critical aspect of effective verbal communication and social functioning in many contexts.

With this appreciation of how self-other relations are constructed verbally and function to regulate behaviour I decided to introduce 'Other' codes into the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM), recode the interviews from Study 1, then evaluate the relationship between 'self' and 'other' discrimination statements made by the speaker. This work is discussed below.

Purpose

To test the function of 'Other' statements the coding scheme was expanded to include Other-as-Story [OS], Other-as-Process [OP], Other-as-Context [OX], and Personal Belief [COB & VOB] codes. Based on the views outlined above from the RFT literature on the relationship between self and other (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a), and the results from Study 1, the assumption was that if a person discriminates themselves in a certain way they would likely discriminate others in the same way. Thus, it was expected that the types of self-discrimination statements uttered by a person would correlate positively with their twin other-discrimination statements uttered. Further, I decided to compare the calculation of psychological flexibility [SELF FLEX] taken in Study 1 with a measure of Social Flexibility [SOC FLEX] as follows:

- $SELF\ FLEX = SX + VOR$
- $SOC\ FLEX = SX + OX + VOR$

The difference between these two calculations is the addition of OX to the equation. The assumption was that if a person were able to take perspective on both self and other, and act consistently with their values it would predict wellbeing. Several propositions were tested in this study:

- Self- & Other-as-Story Positive statements [SS-pos, OS-pos] would correlate positively with wellbeing
- Self- & Other-as-Story Negative statements [SS-neg, OS-neg] would correlate negatively with wellbeing
- Self-as-Story statements [SS-pos, SS-neg] would correlate with Other-as-Story statements [OS-pos, OS-neg]
- Self-Rules statements [VOR, COR] would correlate with Personal Belief statements [VOB, COB]
- Self-as-Perspective statements [SX1, SX2] would correlate with Other-as-Perspective statements [OX1, OX2]
- Measures of psychological flexibility [SELF FLEX] and social flexibility [SOC FLEX] will be positively correlated with wellbeing

In the Method section below I provide definitions and examples of each of the 'other' codes introduced to the coding scheme. The Results section follows with analyses of the relations between the various self and other codes. I conclude with the Discussion section where I consider the implications of the findings in this study.

Method

All 34 interviews from Study 1 were recoded in a fourth round of coding for other-discrimination statements. Through this process the 'Other' code definitions were clarified and calculations of Social Flexibility [SOC FLEX] were refined. This work is presented below.

'Other' Codes

For each 'self-discrimination' code a twin 'other-discrimination' code was designed to mirror as much as possible the 'self-discrimination' code. As discussed above, from an RFT perspective, the distinction between I and YOU is mutually entailed such that we can view others in the same ways as we view ourselves (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a).

Other-as-Process

[OP-now] Other-as-Process Now

Definition

[OP-now] = Other-as-Process Now referred to any description of the current, private experience of the other. Such statements were, by necessity, only ever inferences about the other's ongoing experience within their physical and mental worlds.

Description

The standard form of an Other-as-Process Now statement was a description of their *current* private experience (thoughts, feelings, images or sensations). Bits were a functional equivalent of "YOUR <private experience> THERE and NOW."

Comment on OP-now

Interestingly, no statements from these interviews were coded OP-now. It may be that the approach to interviewing did not pull for this kind of statement as participants were asked to reflect on critical incidents rather than the current experience of the person they were speaking about.

[OP-then] Other-as-Process Then

Definition

[OP-then] = Other-as-Process Then statements were descriptions of past and possible future behaviours and (inferred) inner experiences of the other. OP-then statements

were examples of a conceptualised other that was more narrative in nature and less rigid appraisals of what was influencing behaviour.

Description

Flexibility apparently arose from either a) the speaker holding Other-as-Process Then statements somewhat as a provisional interpretation rather than a literal truth, or b) the speaker not identifying the other with the qualities, characteristics or experiences being described. In other words, these statements were less about defining "who YOU are" in terms of qualities and characteristics, and more about describing, "what YOU have experienced or might experience in the future". Other-as-Process Then statements functioned to describe a person's experiences rather than their ongoing stable or developing identity. Bits were a functional equivalent of "YOU/YOUR experience – THERE and THEN." In practice, OP-then statements referred to all aspects of the conceptualised other *not* included in the 'other' codes.

Examples of OP-then

Below I provide a number of examples of OP-then statements. These statements all contained a pronoun, which made them an other-statement. As they were not referring to other-ascribed qualities and characteristics but rather behaviours or experiences they were classified as Other-as-Process.

Statement

"He doesn't really want to talk about it so I think the hardest part is not being sure he's okay."

"I feel like we've got a few more people trying to work out what to do so that's a tricky one."

"It might be that he's just not getting enough sleep."

"In fact some people are pushing their own barrow and some people aren't."

"I mean, they're going to send out information to say, 'That it was correct'."

"She's ended up with \$5 charges on her phone bill, for every text she sends and opens."

"They just talk to her, as a person, so they wouldn't categorise her as a 94-year-old woman."

"I feel there's a role there to be played in regards to how people perceive us, perceive us as a profession."

Other-as-Story

The Other-as-Story category included three codes: Other-as-Story (Positive, Negative & Neutral). Each of these is discussed below.

[OS] Other-as-Story (Positive, Negative & Neutral)

Like SS, Other-as-Story was divided into three categories: positive, negative and neutral. These codes discriminated between, and captured positive, negative and neutral other-discrimination statements. I made this discrimination to see if each type of statement predicted wellbeing differently.

OS-pos Definition

[OS-pos] = Other-as-Story Positive statements involved abstracted conceptualisations of another that were framed in the positive. Other-as-Story referred to instances where the abstracted story about the other was expressed in a way that is relatively inflexible. OS referred to literal (i.e. held as the truth) descriptions regarding who or how the other is or could be, either enduring qualities or characteristics, or evaluations of those qualities and characteristics. OS-pos referred to instances where those qualities or characteristics were framed in the positive.

OS-neg Definition

[OS-neg] = Other-as-Story Negative statements involved abstracted conceptualisations of another that were framed in the negative. Other-as-Story referred to instances where that abstracted story about the other was expressed in a way that was relatively inflexible. OS referred to literal (i.e. held as the truth) descriptions regarding who or how the other is or could be, either enduring qualities

or characteristics, or evaluations of those qualities and characteristics. OS-neg referred to instances where those qualities or characteristics were framed in the negative.

OS-neut Definition

[OS-neut] = Other-as-Story Neutral statements involved abstracted conceptualisations of another that were framed in neutral terms. Other-as-Story referred to instances where that abstracted story about the other was expressed in a way that is relatively inflexible. OS referred to literal (i.e. held as the truth) descriptions regarding who or how the other is or could be, either enduring qualities or characteristics, or evaluations of those qualities and characteristics. OS-neut referred to instances where those qualities or characteristics were framed in neutral terms.

Description

I coded as OS any statement that implied that particular qualities and characteristics were the cause of the other's behaviour. The other was seen as being "the same as" or identified with the quality or the characteristic. A statement was coded as OS if the speaker appeared to suggest that their story about the other was literally true and causal of the other's behaviour and experience. The other may have been a single individual or a whole class, category or group of people such as 'old people', 'engineers' or 'families'. Statements were further qualified as -pos, -neg or -neut to delineate positive, negative or neutral framing of the other. Bits were a functional equivalent of "My verbal construct of YOU + your thoughts and emotions HERE and NOW are literal and causal representations of YOU and your behaviour recently, now or in the future."

Examples of OS

The following statements are examples of positive, negative and neutral OS that have been categorised in terms of different attributes and behaviours that have been

ascribed to the other. Each statement has been marked OS-pos, OS-neg or OS-neut to delineate between the different types of statement.

'He/she is' statements

The first category of OS statements is simple statements involving the use of the phrase "He/she is..." or variations thereof. For example:

Statement
<i>"He is incredibly successful." [OS-pos]</i>
<i>"She is a really strong woman, really, really strong." [OS-pos]</i>
<i>"He's fundamentally actually not a bad guy." [OS-pos]</i>
<i>"Kate is quite directed." [OS-pos]</i>
<i>"He's a bit more a together person." [OS-pos]</i>
<i>"This fellow, our other guest, he's a fascinating guy." [OS-pos]</i>
<i>"She's a really positive and outwardly focused person." [OS-pos]</i>
<i>"He's really intelligent but he's really lazy." [OS-neg]</i>
<i>"That client is difficult, pig headed basically." [OS-neg]</i>
<i>"He's a sort of reserved, unconfident type person." [OS-neg]</i>
<i>"They're so anal they can't help themselves." [OS-neg]</i>
<i>"She is renowned for being obstructive." [OS-neg]</i>
<i>"She is really negative." [OS-neg]</i>
<i>"She's very academic and she's very knowledgeable." [OS-neut]</i>
<i>"They're just plain wrong." [OS-neut]</i>

Other-evaluations in terms of standards and values

A second category of OS were statements about personally held values or preferences. This was applied when the respondent defined the other's identity at least in part by a set of standards and values. These were coded OS as the participants appeared to be somewhat fused with their conceptualisation of the other in terms of particular values and preferences. The following are typical example:

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"He's been incredibly successful." [OS-pos]</i>	Here the standard of success is being ascribed to "Him".
<i>"He, himself wouldn't lower his standards, that's why he's a wonderful person." [OS-pos]</i>	Again, "He" is identified as 'having standards' as well as having the quality "wonderful".
<i>"She was just a really lovely person and she ticked all of our boxes." [OS-pos]</i>	Being able to "tick all the boxes" is indicative of a set of standards being ascribed to "Her".
<i>"He lives alone, quite a sort of reserved, unconfident type person, but an extremely good lawyer." [OS-pos]</i>	Along with the characteristics "reserved" and "unconfident", "He" is described as being "an extremely good lawyer" by some standard.
<i>"So they have strong values and yeah, pretty much, a lot of those I think." [OS-pos]</i>	"They" have "values" therefore OS.
<i>"I don't actually think he was a very good leader to be honest." [OS-neg]</i>	To qualify someone as a "very good leader" is in accord with a standard.
<i>"She has a set of rules that she says she works by and another set of rules she actually lives by, I suppose that's the biggest injustice." [OS-neg]</i>	Here the person being described is seen as having double standards.

Other-evaluations in terms of character

A third category of OS was where the person evaluated others in terms of a character or personality trait. These statements were treated as OS because they were held as literally true. That is, the 'other' was equivalent to the characteristic or trait.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"He's a very nice sensitive person." [OS-pos]</i>	In this statement the other is described as having the characteristic "sensitive".

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<i>"He's a really human person... the most relaxed, calmest, Zen person I've ever come across, and really wise."</i> [OS-pos]	A number of character or personality traits are ascribed to the other – relaxed, calm, zen and wise.
<i>"We've got a female partner here who runs huge matters, she's a real go getter, she brings in millions, she is just fantastic at running big project teams and she's pretty tough and pretty ballsy."</i> [OS-pos]	In this statement the other is seen as having the characteristics "tough" and "ballsy".
<i>"My manager is something of a worrier, which to be frank, the better lawyers actually are worriers because it's how you don't miss things."</i> [OS-pos]	Here the characteristic of being a "worrier" is attributed to the other.
<i>"He took on the persona of that case and that problem and basically you know it destroyed his life."</i> [OS-neg]	In this statement, while the specific characteristic isn't named, the other is seen as having a "persona".
<i>"Well, the matter finished and we got rid of the client who was just a monster."</i> [OS-neg]	In this instance the client is described as a "monster".
<i>"One of our staff, our staff partner, she's one of those analytical non-people people, which is perfect for a staff partner because they don't really care what they say, they don't get angsty about stuff and she's completely the opposite personality to me, opposite, opposite."</i> [OS-neut]	In this statement the other is seen as having the personality trait of a "analytical non-people" person. It is classified 'neutral' as the trait is not cast as being necessarily positive or negative.

Other-evaluations in terms of emotional feeling states

A fourth category of OS was applied when the person categorised others in terms of the quality of their emotions and feelings in different contexts. Again, these statements were OS because the emotion and/or feeling state was held as literally true and equivalent to the 'other'. For example:

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"Yeah, she's less inhibited by the people... always sensible and completely emotionless." [OS-pos]</i>	In this instance the other is seen as being "emotionless".
<i>"This partner has just childish mood swings, just doesn't seem to be able to control it." [OS-neg]</i>	The other is described as having "childish mood swings".
<i>"He just struck me as an unhappy guy, he was working too hard and he needed to take some time out and re-evaluate what was important to him." [OS-neg]</i>	In this statement the other is described as a "unhappy guy".
<i>"They are just devoid of any empathy and frankly devoid of any courage or decency and it made me pretty bloody cross." [OS-neg]</i>	Being "devoid of empathy" is a characteristic ascribed to the other.
<i>"I'm working with somebody at the moment who, and I use this term lightly, who is a passive aggressive person." [OS-neg]</i>	The other, in this statement, "is a passive aggressive".
<i>"So he's a person who's more emotionally independent than the others are, yeah." [OS-neut]</i>	The other is seen as "emotionally independent".

Other-evaluations in terms of generalised qualities of behaviour

A fifth category of OS was where the person evaluated the others behaviour as either good or bad independent of a specific context. These statements described apparently enduring characteristics in terms of another's behaviour. These were examples of OS where the participant treated the evaluation as if it was literally true (i.e. they or the way they behave is either literally good or bad in some way).

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"You know the people that are trying to do what I'm trying to do are all driven and are all working hard and focused on doing what needs to be done." [OS-pos]</i>	This statement is equivalent to "They are all driven", a quality of behaviour.
<i>"I've got a very supportive husband." [OS-pos]</i>	"Very supportive" is the behaviour attributed to her husband.
<i>"It might be that his wife's a bit demanding, which she's entitled to be." [OS-neg]</i>	"Demanding" is the behaviour ascribed to "his wife".
<i>"This person is someone I'd consider verging on incompetence, highly aggressive." [OS-neg]</i>	"Incompetent" and "aggressive" are behaviours ascribed to "this person".
<i>"She is like Asian, very chop chop this particular nurse and she will be performance managed." [OS-neg]</i>	Here the Asian is attributed with behaving "chop chop" therefore OS.

Other-evaluations in relation to social norms

A sixth category of OS was when the person defined others in relation to prevailing social norms in some way. These statements were OS because they described in a literal way who and how others should be in socially or culturally defined contexts.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"We are that culture of camaraderie and consultation." [OS-pos]</i>	In this statement the collective other "we" is seen as having the cultural characteristics of "camaraderie" and "consultation".
<i>"He's from the military and he was all command and obey type style." [OS-neg]</i>	Here the characteristic of a "military command and obey type" is ascribed to the other.
<i>"Law firms historically have been quite, um, aggressive, um, quite masculine." [OS-neg]</i>	In this case the other is a collective of "law firms" that have the quality of being "aggressive" and "masculine".
<i>"Everyone's buying into thought forms, which are just popular paradigms." [OS-neut]</i>	In this statement "everyone" is seen as taking on the characteristic "thought forms" associated with "popular paradigms".

Statements about the collective other

A seventh category of OS was applied when the person defined the other in terms of the collective and assigned to them a particular quality or characteristic. These statements were OS in that the collective other was seen to literally have certain qualities.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"Across the partnership you have lots of partners who are very understated who don't push their own barrow." [OS-pos]</i>	The collective "partnership" is seen to be "understated".
<i>"I accept them as they are, in the sense of, their perfection." [OS-pos]</i>	"They", the collective other, have the quality of "perfection".
<i>"They're very much about helping people." [OS-pos]</i>	"They", the collective other, characteristically are seen as "helping

	people".
<i>"They've got fantastic friendship groups, they're very non prejudicial about any kind of race religion and like that, they're sort of world citizens."</i> [OS-pos]	In this statement "they" are seen to have the qualities of non-prejudicial world citizens.
<i>"The partners in the group who are difficult at the best of times make life hell."</i> [OS-neg]	The collective "partners" are seen to have the character of being "difficult".
<i>"Oh yeah, lots of partners and people in the firm spend a lot of time getting very self-righteous about all sorts of stuff."</i> [OS-neg]	In this statement the quality of being "self-righteous" is ascribed to "lots of partners and people".
<i>"When you're Joe Bloggs citizen you're just like any other schmuck."</i> [OS-neg]	The group "Joe Bloggs citizen" is seen to have the characteristic of being a "schmuck".
<i>"No matter what anyone tells you the law firm is a seriously hierarchical beast and I suspect any professional organisation is and they all talk about we're friendly and it's open door this and flat structure, that's all crap."</i> [OS-neg]	The entity "law firm" is described as having the quality of a "seriously hierarchical beast".
<i>"There are some inbuilt prejudices in the firm toward a traditional corporate banking view."</i> [OS-neut]	Here the other is the "firm" that literally has "inbuilt prejudices".

Personal Beliefs

Not all rigid statements about others were OS. As discussed, OS statements were other-referential and could generally be recast as "They are..." A third category of

rigid statement about others or how they should behave were personal beliefs. These statements fell into the categories of Control Oriented Personal Beliefs [COB] and Value Oriented Personal Beliefs [VOR], each of which are discussed below.

[COB] Control Oriented Personal-Belief

Definition

[COB] = Control Oriented Personal-Belief statements were expressions of literal 'truths' held by the speaker describing the way the world worked or asserting how other people should behave in order to control or avoid unwanted experience.

Description

I coded as Control Oriented Personal-Belief any statement that contained rigid and literal assertions about how the world worked and how people should or shouldn't behave inside or outside their skin in order to control and avoid unwanted experience. They specified what 'is' and 'isn't' working and held these specifications as firm opinions, convictions or facts describing what was working badly and was to be controlled and avoided. They were distinct from OS statements in that they were less tightly tied to the personal characteristics of people but rather were about how people should or shouldn't enact particular responses based on the specification of consequences to be avoided. COB statements often reflected social norms or standards of behaviour expected to function to control or avoid unwanted outcomes. COB statements apparently governed the way the speaker was 'seeing' how the world worked and the way others should or shouldn't behave such that "it is, as a matter-of-fact, like this".

Examples of COB

The following statements were examples of COB. Although they may not have referred directly to the 'other' they implicated some aspect of the behaviour of others or how the world should or shouldn't work. Unlike OS statements, which specified qualities or characteristics of the other, COB statements were matter-of-fact projections of what will or will not happen or common rules about how others should

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or shouldn't behave in hypothetical scenarios. COB statements often specified specific antecedents and consequences for future action required particularly to control and avoid unwanted experience.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"Poor leadership leads to demoralising your employees in a very significant way at all levels."</i>	This is a belief about the consequences of "poor leadership".
<i>"Lawyers are in the business of trust, and if they form a view that you've got something wrong and they can't trust, that can ultimately lead to termination of relationships."</i>	This belief states an apparent consequence of "lack of trust" as a general rule.
<i>"I'm sure anyone in any very senior leadership role, they're all human they're going to have lingering doubts about what they're doing."</i>	This belief describes the experience of any leader – "they have doubts".
<i>"Every time you accommodate a bath toy type partner by paying them more money or giving them something they wouldn't otherwise get you upset all the other partners... and ultimately over time that does undermine people's confidence."</i>	This is a general rule about what happens if a certain type of person, a "bath toy type", is accommodated.
<i>"You get promoted for being good at effectively being an anxious, aggressive, obsessive, Type A."</i>	This belief describes what type of person you have to be to get a promotion.
<i>"There's a certain amount of rules that need to be stuck to (to stay out of trouble)."</i>	This belief is offered as a general norm that people should follow to avoid becoming "stuck".
<i>"Like all things in life the grass isn't</i>	This 'saying' is offered as a belief held

<i>necessarily as green as you thought it was on the other side."</i>	by the speaker.
<i>"In these types of environments for a lot of people, it's the norm to put work first at the cost of things of higher priority."</i>	This statement describes the costs of a workplace norm that is held as a truth by the speaker.
<i>"The opposite of encouragement and positivity tends to drive people internal, suspicious, sceptical, cynical, uncooperative."</i>	This statement is a general belief about the negative effect of no encouragement and positivity in the workplace.

[VOB] Value Oriented Personal-Belief

Definition

[VOB] = Value Oriented Personal-Belief statements were expressions of beliefs held as literal 'truths' by the speaker describing the way the world worked or asserting how other people should behaviour, either internal or external, in order to achieve valued ends.

Description

I coded as Value Oriented Personal-Belief those statements that were literal assertions made by the speaker about how the world worked and how people should or shouldn't behave inside or outside the skin in order to achieve valued ends. They specified what 'is' and 'isn't' working and were held as firm opinions, convictions or facts describing what was working well and was valued. They were distinct from OS statements in that they were less tightly tied to the personal characteristics of people but rather were about how people should or shouldn't enact particular responses based on the specification of valued consequences. VOB statements often reflected social norms or standards of behaviour expected to function to achieve a valued outcomes. VOB statements apparently governed the way the speaker was 'seeing' how the world worked and the way others should or shouldn't behave such that "it is, as a matter-of-fact, like this".

Examples of VOB

The following statements are examples of VOB. Although they may not refer directly to the 'other' they implicate some aspect of the behaviour of others or how the world should or shouldn't work. Also, unlike OS statements, which specify qualities or characteristics of the other, VOB statements were matter-of-fact projections of what will or will not happen or common rules about how others should or shouldn't behave in hypothetical scenarios that were stated in a matter-of-fact way. VOB statements often specified specific antecedents and consequences for future action required particularly to achieve valued ends.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"As long as we do it with integrity and as well as we can and when we've made a mistake we admit that, that's fine."</i>	This belief describes the consequences of a general rule, it will be "fine" if people act with "integrity and admit mistakes".
<i>"A life without achievement as I see it, is a waste."</i>	This statement is a belief about what constitutes a life not wasted.
<i>"The most important thing about maintaining boundaries is, to have an accurate perception."</i>	This belief describes the value of maintaining boundaries in a social setting.
<i>"I believe in equality."</i>	"Equality" is valued.
<i>"I believe its the nature of the world... everyone needs to sort of fall into a role."</i>	This is stated as a belief in the value of having a "role".
<i>"There's a whole lot of, it's a bigger picture, and you just have to focus on that bigger picture."</i>	This is a belief about the value of staying focused on the "bigger picture".
<i>"Two minds are better than one."</i>	This is a common belief about the value of people working together.
<i>"It is in the core of each of us to look at things in a constructive, positive, good</i>	This is a belief about how good people are in general.

natured way."

How the definition of COB & VOB evolved

Distinguishing COB, VOB and SS

Both COB and VOB statements could generally be recast as "I believe..." or "It is..." Originally such statements were thought to be examples of rigid self-discrimination and were coded SS. However, prediction of wellbeing improved when these statements were separated out (see Results section in Chapter 3). This made sense when I considered that having reliable and valid beliefs about the world could potentially enhance a person's capability to predict and influence their social world. Conversely, invalid and unreliable beliefs would not function well. This suggested that such statements could sometimes be helpful, that valid beliefs about the world may allow people to better predict and influence events in their world. As discussed in the Results section below personal belief statements only slightly correlated with wellbeing. This was in contrast with value oriented self-rules that related significantly and positively with wellbeing.

What separated Personal Belief statements from other beliefs (e.g. grass is green) was the fact that Personal Belief statements expressed something about how people should behave in general terms, i.e. they seemed to function more as general rules. To illustrate this distinction below I provide a number of statements and the underpinning reasoning for the application of the Personal Belief code.

"Most people respond more positively towards encouragement and positivity in others and optimism [VOB]." This statement is describing a current belief, but not in a way that is attached to personal identity. If the interviewee had said, "I am the sort of person who believes...", that would have been about the 'self' and coded SS. Rather, this statement described a general belief about how people behave in a certain context as a matter-of-fact.

"For a positive work environment it's much better for everybody if you can come up with a solution that works for everyone, and get people in [VOB]. If you just come down

on someone then they're not going to be happy, then it's very hard to get success from that situation if you've got people that are feeling they are losing, if you like, to get a good working relationship happening [COB]." These two statements were coded as Personal Beliefs as they were peripheral, context sensitive beliefs, not guiding characteristics of who the interviewee was or specific rules about how they should behave in a particular situation. The two statements were general guides about how people should behave in social situations in order to get a positive result or avoid feeling they were losing.

"So you don't always have to win [VOB]." This was coded VOB as it is belief that may function as a general rule about how to behave across contexts. The sentence that followed reads, *"Sometimes you don't have to win for it to be successful [SP-then]."* While this statement is also a generalised rule it appears to have been learned by consequence and is based on the memory of specific instances. It is more a memory of instances given the previous sentence so coded SP-then.

"I've always had that philosophy and you know [VOB], I was fortunate that I had good role models, growing up, with parents who were, you know, very much of that view point, and then when I started work here, had a partner who was my master solicitor, who was very much into solutions rather than getting agitated by the problem [SP-then]." In this statement the interviewee refers to what appears to be a constant, relatively unchanging cognition or belief "I've always had that philosophy...". This bit was coded VOB even though the philosophy was only implied and seemed to have something to do with role modelling and being solutions focused.

Personal Belief statements may not function well

While having reliable and valid beliefs about the world may enhance a person's capacity to predict and influence their social world, the converse may also be the case. Invalid and unreliable beliefs may not function well. Personal Belief statements may reflect the limitation of always viewing the world in one way or restrict sensitivity to prevailing contingencies and flexibility of response. For example, it is

expected the COB bit of the statement below would not function to predict and influence successful social interactions.

"Well I suppose [SP-hedge], if the situation is such that it puts you into that scenario; you're in a position where you can't cope and you do you know you have a breakdown [SP-then], you know a breakdown in a way is a way of coping anyway [COB]; it brings you out the other side." This sentence was multi-coded SP-hedge – "I suppose"; SP-then – "situation such as that..."; COB – "a breakdown is a way of coping". This COB statement would not likely predict successful social functioning.

Self-rules that are not Personal Belief statements

As discussed, Personal Belief statements were often a type of generalised rule about the social world that had implications for how the person and/or those around them should behave. These were distinct from the more specific self-rules that detailed more precisely how the speaker would behave, the situation in which the rule should be enacted and the expected consequence. Self-rule statements implicated the speaker more directly than Personal Belief statements, which tended to implicate the general populous.

Other-as-Perspective

[OX1] Other-as-Perspective 1

Definition

[OX1] = Other-as-Perspective 1 statements referred to instances where the speaker discriminated another's thoughts/feelings as distinct from their own and were apparently seeing the other's 'perspective'.

Description

This code differed from the Self-as-Perspective code inasmuch as the person was talking about the other having a different perspective to his or her own. Other-as-

Perspective 1 statements referred to instances where the speaker discriminated the other's thoughts and feelings from their thoughts and feelings and was able to consider both perspectives as legitimate points-of-view. While the speaker's perspective may not have been explicitly stated, OX1 statements implied the speaker was objectifying the content of their own experience and was thus able to distinguish their experience from the experience of the other. The objectified perspective of the other was at times held either flexibly as passing experience or literally in a frame of comparison to their own perspective as in the act of constructing an argument. While the content of the other's experience was viewed with varying degrees of defusion, all OX1 bits indicated a relation of distinction between "I - HERE and NOW distinct from YOUR thoughts, emotions and sensations THERE and THEN."

Examples of OX1

Flexible OX1

The following statements are examples of when the perspective of another was held flexibly. The other's perspective was recognised and not framed in a literal way as being right or wrong by some arbitrarily applied standard. The other's perspective was only identified as distinct from the speakers in some way.

Statement
<i>"I suspect them thinking that you've approached things from a different way or that you've at least thought about it from different angles might give them more confidence."</i>
<i>"I can see all the other reasons for why they might be doing it."</i>
<i>"It's a really great thing to look outside yourself and go, here's this person who's where I was and going through all the same stuff, and I can help them out."</i>
<i>"My job in a sense is to put myself in the position of people across all of the partners and to come up with a decision which is fair to all the partners."</i>
<i>"I sometimes put myself in, try to imagine myself in those people's shoes."</i>
<i>"I can see all the other reasons for why they might be doing it."</i>
<i>"I just focus on hearing their perspectives and what they bring to a way of</i>

looking at the particular situation."

"I have to try and work out what it is that's their perspective."

Rigid OX 1

The following examples are literal statements about another's perspective. They were in a frame of comparison with an arbitrary standard and held literally by the speaker.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"There are very different perspectives, it puts me into, well I wouldn't say conflict, but I disagree with the approach that some other people take."</i>	Disagreement with the other's approach implies the speaker thinks their perspective is correct.
<i>"Whether it be my adolescent son, who I yell at him for not doing stuff, and he yells back, I have to listen to what he is saying first, to understand, because if you don't he will not give in and we can't move forward."</i>	The interviewee is saying they have to listen and understand their son's view before he will give in. This implies that the speaker's view is the right one.
<i>"I can make sense of that from their point of view, they are two particularly narrow people, highly intelligent but particularly narrow."</i>	The interviewee is apparently "able to make sense of their point of view", and adds they are "particularly narrow", which implies the speaker sees their own view as correct.
<i>"The situation that's arisen is that the client has taken what I think is an unreasonably broad view of what's included."</i>	The speaker is implying the other's understanding of their perspective is not correct.
<i>"It's getting them to see that there's a mismatch there and acknowledging</i>	The speaker is saying there is a mismatch of perspectives and implying

<i>that."</i>	that their perspective is correct.
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Another's perspective of oneself

The following examples are where the speaker was taking a view of themselves through the eyes of another. The other's perspective was a perspective of the speaker that in some cases was held as being true, in other cases the speaker was describing being misunderstood.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"I know other people's perception of me is the total opposite."</i>	Here the speaker sees the others' perspective of them as being inaccurate.
<i>"Then suddenly that can affect your credibility in the eyes of your other partners which is obviously important."</i>	In this statement the others' perspective of the speaker is not framed as being true or false but is seen as affecting the speaker's credibility.
<i>"People have formed a view that I can't be trusted and they're not going to put me in front of their clients, not going to let me do things, and not going to get me involved."</i>	The speaker is seeing themselves through the eyes of the other as potentially being untrustworthy and assuming what impact that might have on being invited to work with the other.
<i>"They obviously feel as though I've broken that trust, and that hurts that I don't have the support of my colleagues that I had previously."</i>	Again, in this statement the speaker perceives the others' loss of trust in them.
<i>"People that I work with have that particular perception of me."</i>	Even though the specific perception of the other is not stated the speaker is seeing a perspective of themselves through the eyes of the other.

<i>"It's nice to have built up a relationship with a client where they feel comfortable in seeking your opinion."</i>	Here the speaker is seeing the perspective of themselves through the eyes of the client.
<i>"I think it's just that they trust me and they recognise my ability to assist them."</i>	The speaker sees the other trusts them.
<i>"I probably haven't done a very good job of communicating what I'm about because they really have such a divergent view of who I am from who I perceive I am."</i>	Here the speaker perceives a discrepancy between the others' view of them and their own view of themselves, they indicate feeling misunderstood.

Perspective of the collective 'other'

The following examples are where the speaker was taking a view of the collective other. The other could be a group, and instituted entity or the 'royal we'.

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>"It's about using their experience as best you can from a teamwork perspective, and an efficiency perspective."</i>	In this statement the "team" is seen to have a perspective.
<i>"From the firm's perspective it was a good thing to do."</i>	The other in this statement is the "firm" that has a perspective.
<i>"From a family perspective they just accepted that it was important."</i>	The other in this statement is the "family" that has a perspective.
<i>"From the firm's perspective that should be the most efficient way of getting a good product done."</i>	Again, the "firm" is identified as the other with a perspective.
<i>"It's a commonly held view I suppose."</i>	This is an example of the "royal we" being the other who holds a common view.

<i>"When I speak to other stakeholders around this project, for the purpose of the assignment, they have different perspective."</i>	In this statement "stakeholders" are identified as the group who hold a perspective.
<i>"From a whole of organisation perspective, there was no damage done, from a personal perspective, that was something that I ordinarily would have jumped at."</i>	The "organisation" is the identified other with a perspective in this statement.

How the definition OX1 evolved

As mentioned, the OX code was defined and applied to statements where the speaker was taking a perspective on another's point-of-view. These statements fell broadly into two categories – flexible and rigid. While this distinction could have been reflected in discrete codes or combinations of codes to capture flexible or rigid OX statements, as this work was exploratory I decided to apply only one code [OX1]. As can be seen in the Results section below the OX1 code tended to correlate positively with wellbeing.

[OX2] Other-as-Perspective 2

Definition

[OX2] = Other-as-Perspective 2 statements referred to instances where a person discriminated the other as separate from their thoughts/feelings or as a container for their thoughts and feelings.

Description

Other-as-Perspective 2 code referred to instances where the person discriminated the other as separate from their thoughts/feelings and/or as a container for their thoughts and feelings. So, for example, to say "HE is more than his emotions, he is much bigger than that" or "SHE is always able to step back and notice what is

happening” would be examples of OX2. While Other-as-Perspective 2 statements discriminate the other as both context and the content of their experience, these statements may or may not describe the other as mindful of, defused from, or accepting of that experience. Because it would be impossible to distinguish if the other is observing, witnessing and/or identifying with themselves as the arena of their experience, there is no distinction made for OX2 that parallels the distinctions made in the SX2 code. OX2 bits indicate a relation of distinction and/or hierarchy and would be a functional equivalent of “YOU – HERE and NOW while your private experiences are THERE and THEN and/or WITHIN/ INSIDE the arena of your awareness or being.”

Comment on OX2

Like the SX2 code, the OX2 code was not applied to any statements throughout the study. Given the definition of the code it was quite likely that such statements would only be uttered by someone who had had direct experience of themselves as the context of their experience, and thus able to identify with another as that. The assumption was that those interviewed in this study had not had this experience, the type of experience one would expect from someone who was a practitioner of mindfulness.

Results

In the analyses that follows, the relationship between code frequencies, measures of Psychological Flexibility [SELF FLEX], Social Flexibility [SOC FLEX] and the wellbeing measures are analysed. The aim was to test if coded measures of self- and other-discrimination predicted wellbeing and to test the relations between self and other codes. Table 4.2 lists which codes were applied and the number of interviews (*n*) for the final Round 3 of coding discussed in the previous chapter (which included only ‘Self’ codes) and Round 4 of coding discussed in this chapter (which included ‘Other’ codes).

Codes Applied	Round 3	Round 4
<i>n</i>	34	34
SP -hedge -now & -then	✓	✓
SS -pos, -neg & -neut	✓	✓
COR	✓	✓
VOR	✓	✓
SX1	✓	✓
SX2	✓	✓
OP -now & -then		✓
OS -pos, -neg & -neut		✓
COB		✓
VOB		✓
OX1		✓
OX2		✓
SELF FLEX (SX+VOR)	✓	✓
SOC FLEX (SX+OX+VOR)		✓

Table 4.2: Codes applied and *n* for each round of coding.

Round Four Method

Coding was at the sentence level and each sentence was coded for any occurrence of a particular form of self- and other-discrimination. In some cases sentences were coded with multiple overlapping codes but each code appeared only once for a given sentence. A measure for each code was calculated as a percentage of total number of sentences. In addition to calculating the frequency of each self- and other-discrimination code, a measure of psychological flexibility [SELF FLEX] and social flexibility [SOC FLEX] was derived. These measures were calculated:

- SELF FLEX=SX+VOR
- SOC FLEX=SX+OX+VOR

Employing the expanded coding scheme that distinguished various forms of positive and negative statements and a full set of 'Other' codes, the interviews coded in Round Three (see Chapter 3) were recoded (*n* = 34). The aim was to: confirm the measures of Psychological Flexibility [SELF FLEX] and Social Flexibility [SOC FLEX]; test if positive statements [SS-pos, OS-pos, VOB] were positively related to wellbeing and

negative statements [SS-neg, OS-neg, COB] were negatively related to wellbeing; and, if equivalent 'Self' and 'Other' statements were positively related, e.g. SS-pos was positively related to OS-pos, SX was positively related to OX, etc. The results are provided below.

Round Four Results

In round 4 of coding I carried forward the coded self-statements from Round Three of coding (see Chapter 3) with minor adjustments and the results remained consistent or improved slightly. The minor adjustments primarily involved some recoding of VOR and SX. A small number of VOR codes were changed to VOB and the SX2 codes were reduced to zero as these codes reflected SS or SP-then rather than SX as originally thought. These changes were made along with the application of the 'Other' codes. Both methods of calculating psychological [SELF FLEX] and social flexibility [SOC FLEX] were then used. Both the SELF FLEX and SOC FLEX measures correlated with the subjective measures and predicted wellbeing as follows (Table 4.4):

	SELF FLEX	SOC FLEX
Age	.44*	.41*
Psychological Well Being	.42*	.42*
Satisfaction with Life	.40*	.40*
Positive & Negative Affect	.41*	.34*
Depression-Anxiety-Stress	-.48**	-.39*

Note 1: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Note 2: $n = 34$

Table 4.4: Final Correlations between elements of wellbeing and the calculations of SELF FLEX and SOC FLEX.

As can be seen, the measures of both SELF FLEX and SOC FLEX were significant correlated with Age, Psychological Well Being, Satisfaction with Life, Positive & Negative Affect and Depression-Anxiety-Stress. Of these Age, Psychological Well Being, Satisfaction with Life and Positive & Negative Affect were positively correlated

while Depression-Anxiety-Stress was negatively correlated. Of the two calculations, SELF FLEX tended to be more strongly related to the various measures of wellbeing.

As in Round Three (see Chapter 3), to further test the validity of the results discussed above a number of time sequence correlations were analysed. These were the relationships between SELF FLEX and SOC FLEX and the subjective wellbeing measures at each of the three time point. These included wellbeing measures taken at the same time as the coded interviews (T1) then six (T2) and twelve months (T3) later. In the following analyses the relationship between code frequencies at T1 and the wellbeing measures taken at T2 and T3 were also analysed (Table 4.5).

Ch4: STUDY 2: FUNCTIONAL SELF-DISCRIMINATION MEASURE OF 'OTHER'

	SS-pos	SS-neg	SS-neut	SS-tot	VOR	COR	SX	OS-pos	OS-neg	OS-neut	OS-tot	VOB	COB	OX	SELF FLEX	SOC FLEX
Psychological Well Being total t1	-.10	-.33	.00	-.21	.28	-.20	.26	.13	.07	.08	.13	-.07	-.25	.27	.42*	.42*
Psychological Well Being total t2	-.12	-.25	.02	-.18	.39*	-.18	.08	.06	-.10	-.07	-.01	-.24	-.14	.16	.40*	.36*
Psychological Well Being total t3	-.03	-.08	.13	-.04	.45*	-.07	.10	.05	.03	-.04	.04	-.16	-.09	.16	.47**	.42*
Satisfaction with Life mean t1	.00	-.17	.17	-.05	.29	-.06	.22	.03	.05	.10	.05	-.25	-.11	.27	.40*	.40*
Satisfaction with Life mean t2	.01	-.17	.06	-.05	.38*	-.13	.20	.09	-.10	.08	.03	-.14	-.14	.20	.46**	.42*
Satisfaction with Life mean t3	.04	-.08	.08	.01	.41*	-.10	.09	.18	-.11	-.09	.06	-.15	-.17	.20	.43*	.41*
Positive & Negative Affect t1	-.04	-.25	.08	-.12	.33	.10	.18	-.09	-.05	.05	-.08	-.15	-.19	.09	.41*	.34
Positive & Negative Affect t2	.06	-.11	.15	.02	.35*	-.02	.23	-.06	.06	-.05	-.02	-.02	.01	.10	.46**	.38*
Positive & Negative Affect t3	.06	-.16	.09	-.01	.33	.12	.11	-.08	-.19	-.09	-.15	-.06	-.12	.21	.38*	.37*
Depression-Anxiety-Stress total t1	.21	.18	.02	.24	-.43*	-.08	-.14	.01	.08	.11	.06	.09	.12	-.07	-.48**	-.39*
Depression-Anxiety-Stress total t2	.11	.08	-.07	.11	-.48**	-.11	-.07	-.02	.14	.28	.08	.10	.01	-.10	-.48**	-.40*
Depression-Anxiety-Stress total t3	.13	.16	-.10	.15	-.26	.01	.04	-.07	.12	.31	.04	.23	.10	.01	-.21	-.16

Note 1: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Note 2: $n = 34$

Table 4.5: Time series correlations between elements of self-reported wellbeing at the three time points and the measures of self-discrimination as coded in Round Four of coding. Green shading indicates a positive correlation, while red indicates a negative correlation.

In this analysis the SELF FLEX and SOC FLEX measures taken at T1 showed a moderately strong and statistically significant relationship at T2 and T3 with Psychological Well Being (SELF FLEX: T2 $r = .40, p = .02$; T3 $r = .47, p < .01$. SOC FLEX: T2 $r = .42, p = .04$; T3 $r = .41, p = .02$), Satisfaction with Life (SELF FLEX: T2 $r = .46, p < .01$; T3 $r = .43, p = .02$. SOC FLEX: T2 $r = .42, p = .02$; T3 $r = .41, p = .02$) and Positive & Negative Affect (SELF FLEX: T2 $r = .46, p = .01$; T3 $r = .04, p = .05$. SOC FLEX: T2 $r = .38, p = .03$; T3 $r = .37, p = .04$). These two measures of SELF FLEX and SOC FLEX also showed moderate or strong statistically significant negative correlations with measures of Depressions-Anxiety-Stress at T2 six months later (SELF FLEX: T2 $r = -.48, p = .01$; SOC FLEX: T2 $r = -.40, p = .03$). While one should not infer causation from a correlation, these results indicate that if someone is able to flexibly take perspective on their own and another's behaviour and utter coherent value oriented self-rules, they are more likely to experience wellbeing six to twelve months later.

The importance of Value Oriented Self-Rules was again reinforced in this analysis. It was interesting to note that while SX and OX on their own were not significantly related to the measures of wellbeing, when combined with VOR in the calculation of SELF FLEX and SOC FLEX, the overall strength and significance of these measures of psychological and social flexibility was greater than that of VOR on its own.

As well as comparing the different types of self-discrimination statements and the constructs of SELF FLEX and SOC FLEX with the measures of wellbeing, an analysis of the relationship between the different types of 'Self' and 'Other' statements was undertaken (Table 4.6).

	SS-pos	SS-neg	SS-neut	SS-tot	VOR	COR	SX	OS-pos	OS-neg	OS-neut	OS-tot	VOB	COB	OX
SS-pos	1.00													
SS-neg	.20	1.00												
SS-neut	.33	.46**	1.00											
SS-tot	.90**	.59**	.55*	1.00										
VOR	-.17	-.24	-.25	-.25	1.00									
COR	-.10	.00	.16	-.06	.29	1.00								
SX	.16	-.08	.15	.11	-.19	-.19	1.00							
OS-pos	.38*	.09	-.10	.32	-.01	-.36*	-.12	1.00						
OS-neg	.27	.39*	.02	.37*	.02	-.33	-.01	.53**	1.00					
OS-neut	.20	-.26	-.22	.03	.24	.11	.09	.01	.00	1.00				
OS-tot	.39*	.22	-.08	.39*	.02	-.38*	-.07	.91**	.83**	.10	1.00			
VOB	.16	.09	-.08	.16	.00	-.24	.31	.18	.31	.01	.27	1.00		
COB	.06	.53*	.17	.27	.03	-.11	.24	-.02	.43*	.00	.19	.43*	1.00	
OX	-.01	-.12	.10	-.04	.33	.25	.35*	-.18	.07	.10	-.07	.07	.19	1.00

Note 1: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Note 2: $n = 34$

Table 4.6: Correlations between 'Self' and 'Other' statements.

Several relationships were of interest: SX was moderately, significantly and positively related with OX ($r = .35, p = .04$); SS-pos was moderately and positively related to OS-pos ($r = .38, p = .03$); SS-neg was moderately and positively related to OS-neg ($r = .39, p = .02$); SS-tot was moderately and positively correlated with OS-tot ($r = .39, p = .02$); COB was positively correlated with VOB ($r = .43, p = .01$), OS-neg ($r = -.43, p = .01$) and SS-neg ($r = .53, p < .01$). These relationships support the idea that the way a person views himself or herself will be reflected in the way they view others.

Discussion (Round Four Coding)

Examination of effect sizes revealed general trends. To highlight these trends, in Table 4.5 positive correlations are coloured green and negative correlations are coloured red.

SELF FLEX & SOC FLEX and wellbeing

It was assumed that measures of SELF FLEX and SOC FLEX would positively correlate with wellbeing. As can be seen in Tables 4.4 & 4.5 both measures were positively and significantly correlated with the subjective measures of wellbeing. The overall strength and significance of these relationships further confirmed that being able to objectify and take perspective on the experience of oneself and others, as well as construct coherent and functional value oriented self-rules that direct future behaviours, is related to mental health and reduced psychological distress.

SS-pos & SS-neg and wellbeing

It was assumed that positive self-discrimination statements [SS-pos] would correlate positively with wellbeing, and negative self-discrimination statements [SS-neg] would negatively correlate with wellbeing. As can be seen in Table 4.5, both types of statement tended to be negatively correlated with wellbeing, with SS-neg having stronger correlations, however, none of these associations were statistically significant. While these results suggest there is no association between any form of rigid self-evaluation positive or negative, there might be significance where $r = .10$ which means there is a 90% chance that this association exists. This is particularly so for negative self-evaluations.

OS-pos & OS-neg and wellbeing

It was assumed that positive views of others [OS-pos] would positively correlate with wellbeing, and negative views of others [OS-neg] would negatively correlate with wellbeing. As can be seen in Table 4.5 there was no association between them.

The results for both types of SS and OS statements were in contrast with the SX and OX statements. The results suggest being able to flexibly take perspective on one's own experience [SX] and another's experience [OX], without any rigid self or other conceptualisation, is healthier. However, as the correlations between SX and OX statements and well-being measures were also small and nonsignificant.

COB, VOB & COR and wellbeing

It was assumed that the two types of personal belief statements COB and VOB would function the same way as the two self-rule statements COR and VOR. Particularly, that Value Oriented Personal Beliefs, VOB, would positively correlate with wellbeing, mimicking results between VOR and wellbeing. This was not the case. As can be seen in Table 4.5, both types of Personal Belief statements about how the world should or shouldn't work, along with Control Oriented Self-Rules, COR, tended to be negatively correlated with wellbeing, although most of the effects were non-significant. Again, this suggests literal and rigid evaluations of any type about how the world works along with self-rules about how to avoid unwanted experience are unhelpful given the nonsignificant results.

SS & SX versus OS & OX

It was assumed that the way a person viewed himself or herself would be reflected in the way they viewed others. This proposition was confirmed. As can be seen in Table 4.6, if a person could take perspective on their own experience they were more able to take the perspective of another; if they had a positive or negative self-view they had an equivalent positive or negative view of others; and, if the person tended to respond to their world literally, they did it both positively and negatively and tended to hold a negative view of themselves and others.

General Discussion

Self view versus view of others

The major finding from this study is that a person's self-view is correlated significantly with their view of others. This is particularly apparent in two ways. Firstly, this relationship is reflected in the way a person 'labels' themselves and others in either positive or negative terms. Secondly, it is reflected in a person's capacity for perspective taking on their own experience and the experience of others. This is the first time, to my knowledge, that evidence has been drawn from coding natural language that shows the way a person treats himself or herself is reflected in how they treat others. While it is not clear which comes first it has major

implications. For example, changing how a person self-talks may change their relations to others.

Coding of the utterance

All my coding across the four rounds of this study was at the sentence level. The sentence was chosen as the unit of analysis primarily to facilitate comparisons of coding from different raters and to avoid repetition within sentences. It became apparent during discussion between raters, particularly when there were disagreements, that it may be more accurate and reliable to code forms of self- & other-discrimination at the level of an utterance rather than a sentence. An utterance is a complete thought (Miller et al. 2008). It ends either when one thought is completed or a new thought begins with the same speaker, or by an utterance from the other speaker. The approach to coding I employed was at the sentence level which allowed for the capture of several ideas within the sentence by the application of different codes. But where an idea spanned more than one sentence, employing the sentence as the unit of analysis led to disagreements between the raters and potentially less accurate measures of self- and other-discrimination. For example, on occasions we noted a speaker gave voice to a self-rule and took two sentences to do it. Taking the sentence as the unit of analysis meant the application of 2 self-rule codes, one code per sentence. If the unit of analysis was an utterance rather than a sentence the self-rule code would have been applied only once to the 2-sentence utterance. I decided that this approach would be taken in the next study discussed in Chapter 5.

Interviewing technique

An important observation in this study was the approach to interviewing. The interviewers employed the subject-object interview technique originally designed to measure stages of adult development (Kegan 1994; Kegan et al. 1982). This approach is similar to a typical functional interview in that it explores the perceived antecedents and personal consequences of different responses to situations (Ramnero & Torneke 2008). While this produced rich self-reflective material it led to various questions: What works in the interview? What questions yield rich and

accurate data for the different codes? What are the topographical cues that lead to different types of questions in the interview? These questions informed the design of the next study in this thesis which focused on developing and applying the Functional Self-Discrimination Interview (FSDI) as a method for capturing rich data for coding with the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM).

A full discussion of the interviewing method (FSDI), results gained from the application of the FSDM, insights taken from a thematic analysis of the interviews, and the function of values follow in the next chapter, Chapter 5.

Chapter Five

Functional Self-Discrimination Interviewing Technique

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Overview

While the approach to interviewing used in the previous two studies worked well it led to various questions: What worked in the interview? Which questions yielded rich and accurate data for the different codes? What topographical cues led to different types of questions from the interviewer? This chapter focuses on the development and application of the Functional Self-Discrimination Interview (FSDI) as a method for capturing rich data for coding with the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM).

I first review what a functional assessment is, drawing on the literature in this field to show how I have approached the design of the FSDI. I then provide a qualitative analysis of a series of interviews where I employed the FSDI. In that section I discuss the relationship between interviewer questions and the resulting interviewee responses suited to coding with the FSDM. This is followed by quantitative analysis of the interviews using the FSDM where I discuss the relationship between code frequencies and measures of wellbeing. I also provide an independent analysis of my interviewer capabilities from a Motivational Interviewing perspective (Moyers et al. 2014; Moyers et al. 2010). The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the results of the study. In the following chapters I present a more complete discussion of the implications of the three studies undertaken in this thesis.

Functional Assessment

The FSDI and the FSDM were designed as a functional assessment (Baer et al. 1968; Chance 1998; Cipani & Schock 2011; Hayes & Brownstein 1986; Nelson & Hayes 1979; Ramnero & Torneke 2008; Vilaradaga et al. 2009) of an interviewee's cognitive and behavioural responses to different types of historically situated events, past, present or future. This approach was predicated on the assumption that reflecting on and recounting a critical incident is the behaviour of verbal operant responding (Hayes et al. 2001d; Leigland 1996, 2005; Shahan 2013). If a question was asked about an event in the person's history, the interviewee's response, while guided by the question to some degree, would in the main be a response to the historically situated event. Their response would be in the form of conditioned operant

responses. If the event under question was experienced as aversive, it would have been framed as aversive in recall. Conversely, if the event was appetitive, speaking of the occasion would involve framing the event in positive terms.

There are several key elements of verbal operant responding from an RFT perspective that influenced the design and implementation of the interview technique described in this chapter. These is a distinction between verbal contextual relations (C_{rel}) and verbal contextual functions (C_{func}); the three-term contingencies of a self-rule – antecedent, behaviour and consequence; how augmentals function in a self-rule; and, the generalisation of self-rules as a behavioural repertoire. I discuss each of these below prior to discussing the interviewing techniques that also informed the FSDI design.

Let's first consider a simple example of the difference between C_{rel} and C_{func} . Torneke (2010, p.87) uses the example of "Larry is better than Peter at playing tennis". In this example, 'better than' is the C_{rel} specifying a relation between stimuli Larry and Peter, while 'at playing tennis' (C_{func}) narrows the many possible functions of the relation down to the particular meaning of 'playing tennis'. Without the C_{func} , it would not be clear to the listener in which way Larry was better than Peter. Neither C_{rel} nor C_{func} should be thought of as particular phrases within a sentence however. Rather they are cues for the overall functions of the sentence. That is, they modify the 'appropriate' response associated with the C_{rel} .

To further illustrate the distinction between verbal contextual relations (C_{rel}) and verbal contextual function (C_{func}) let us consider the value oriented self-rule [VOR], "If I (with the desire to learn and make a difference) study each day this summer, then I will complete my PhD, will likely be a little wiser, and more able to make a difference." A C_{rel} is the context in which a history of a particular kind of relational responding is brought to bear on the current situation (Hayes et al. 2001d, p30). In this case, the particular relational responses being brought to bear include conditional frames (if-then), temporal (I-will) and other frames such as hierarchy (I with attributes of wisdom and more able to make a difference). The verbal network is complete in this instance in the sense that it describes a context in which a particular

behaviour will result in a particular consequence. A C_{func} is understood to be a contextual cue that indicates which particular psychological functions associated with an event are modified in accordance with the underlying derived relations (Hayes et al. 2001d, p31). In this instance the psychological function of “daily study” and “completing a PhD” are augmented by virtue of the values I hold of “wanting to learn and make a difference”. These events now matter to me. In this way, just as the “if-then” relational response I brought to bear on the events “daily study” and “complete PhD” is controlled by the context, the specific psychological functions that are transformed – the importance of the events – are also under contextual control (Hayes et al. 2001d, p32).

Technically, this VOR can be deconstructed in terms of a three-term contingency (Cipani & Schock 2011; Hayes et al. 1989; Ramnero & Torneke 2008) specifying antecedent [A], behaviour [B], and consequence [C]. “If I (with the desire to learn and make a difference) [A] study each day this summer [B], *then* I will complete my PhD, will likely be a little wiser, and more able to make a difference [C].” A, B & C are the contextual events within the rule. As the rule provides a proper relational context (a C_{rel}) and fulfilment of a relational response, i.e. the transformation of the stimulus functions of the related events in the network (C_{func}), the rule is complete.

In a VOR, the C_{func} is defined in part by the values in the verbal context that determine which functions are transformed. In the VOR above “learning and making a difference” are the values that function to alter the degree to which daily study and completing the PhD matter as a consequence. This is known as augmenting. Augmenting is rule-governed behaviour due to the relational networks that alter the degree to which events function as consequences (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001d, p109; Leigland 2005). As well as constructing VORs I have learned to construct rules for avoiding unwanted experiences. Often when I sit in front of my computer to write, I want to avoid the anxiety of feeling I don't have anything useful to say. A situation I could actively avoid by following a control oriented self-rule [COR] such as, “if I read more *then* I will know enough to be able to write something coherent tomorrow”. In this COR “feeling I don't have anything useful to say” functions as an augmental as it alters the degree to which reading matters as a strategy for achieving desired

consequences. Although, by following such a self-rule I may experience the short-term relief of anxiety, I will also suffer a longer-term consequence – the writing will still be there to be done tomorrow and I still may not have anything useful to say.

Such self-rules are forms of verbal operants conditioned through a history of learning by consequence that generalise as verbal behavioural repertoires (DeLeon et al. 2013; Hayes et al. 2001b; Hayes et al. 2001d; Neuringer & Jensen 2013). I was able to construct the above rules as I have learned that *if* I apply myself *then* in the past I have typically achieved what I set out to achieve. In my history I have learned to verbally track my own behaviour by constructing “if-then” self-rules, which have allowed me to successfully plan to obtain specified consequences through my actions or potentially avoid unwanted consequences. It was these kinds of verbal operants that I was interested in having interviewees utter (if they were available in their repertoire) in order to do a functional assessment of their verbal behaviour. Further, in addition to classes of self-rules, I sought to have interviewees utter characteristic statements about themselves that functioned to derive a sense of esteem, positive or negative. For example “I mustn’t be very smart” or “I am a good writer”; or to take perspective on verbal experience, for example “There’s that not very useful thought again...”

In the FSDI, when probing for verbal operants such as self-rules, questions were asked to have interviewees articulate the three-term contingencies of self-rules and to what extent that class of responding had been generalised. For example, how often they followed the same self-rule in different contexts or how typically they attributed the same self-categorisations to themselves. The assumption was that when the interviewee turns their attention to the topography of a historically situated event, their routine relational response would be taken to that event, which would be an instance of a generalised operant. The frequencies of patterns of such statements were of interest as a functional assessment of future wellbeing. To confirm that the interviewee’s relational responses were routine, much of my input as the interviewer was in the form of open questions and complex reflections of the interviewee’s statements (Miller & Rollnick 2013; Moyers et al. 2014). Details of the particular

interview techniques employed in the FSDI are outlined next; my approach to questioning is presented in the Coding and Qualitative Analysis section below.

Interviewing Techniques

In addition to considering specific types of questioning, an approach to interviewing known as Motivational Interviewing (MI: Miller & Rollnick 2013) also informed the FSDI design. Originally developed for use in clinical settings, MI is increasingly being adapted into contexts where collaborative conversation styles are employed to promote a person's motivation for behaviour change (Burke et al. 2003; Lundahl et al. 2010; Rubak et al. 2005). While MI has increasingly been adopted as an empirically validated counseling style, it lacks a coherent theoretical framework for understanding its processes and efficacy, a deficiency/weakness which a number of scholars have attempted to address (Bricker & Tollison 2011; Markland et al. 2005). For the purposes of this study MI techniques were employed primarily for their utility even though RFT may provide a theoretical framework for understanding and explaining its efficacy. I also employed MI as it provided a method for independently validating the interviewing techniques that I employed when conducting the FSDI (Moyers et al. 2014; Moyers et al. 2010).

MI focuses on eliciting client 'change talk' (Miller & Rollnick 2013; Moyers et al. 2014). It is a collaborative conversation style that has been designed to strengthen a person's own motivation and commitment to change by focusing on addressing ambivalence about change and reinforcing the value for desired change (Hettema et al. 2005; Lundahl et al. 2010; Rubak et al. 2005). MI focuses on invoking that which is intrinsically valued by the person, not installing what is missing. Four key processes underlie the MI approach: partnership, acceptance (a combination of empathy, autonomy support, and affirmation), compassion, and evocation of client 'change talk'. To successfully engage these processes a competent interviewer practices five key communication skills throughout an interview: asking open questions, affirming, reflecting, summarising, and providing information and advice with permission. I adapted a subset of these processes and communication skills to the FSDI design.

While the FSDI was not designed as an intervention to facilitate behaviour change, it has that potential. The MI approach to evoking client change talk is, in my opinion, essentially an approach to having clients formulate VORs specific to a desired behaviour change (Miller & Rollnick 2013, p164-165). When conducting the FSDI, I employed only those MI capabilities designed to cultivate partnership and not those targeting change. This served two purposes. Firstly, it allowed a set of relevant interviewer behaviours to be empirically evaluated (Moyers et al. 2014; Moyers et al. 2010). Second, it provided a segue to future research on interviewing *for* behaviour change based on a combination of the FSDI and MI. I discuss the implications of this integrated approach in Chapter 6.

The three interviewer behaviours I adapted to the FSDI that were empirically evaluated were: *Listening* (questions & reflection), *Collaboration & Engagement* and *Empathy* (Moyers et al. 2014; Moyers et al. 2010). The quality of *Listening* in an interview was identified as a combination of *questions* and *reflection*. Questions were open and probed for the speaker's typical verbal operant responses to the incidents being discussed, examples of which are offered below in the Coding and Qualitative Analysis section. Reflections involved summarising and repeating back to the interviewee something about what they had just said. These reflections were categorised as Simple or Complex depending on whether they were a literal repeat of what the interviewee had said or they assumed something that was "between the lines" and thus captured deeper meaning. Both open questions and reflections served to elicit the verbal operants "within" the interviewee's verbal repertoire. Clarity was obtained as a baseline of operant responses was identified, which became evident as recognisably consistent patterns of verbal behaviour across the interview (Leigland 1989, 1996). Questions and reflections also helped qualify how effectively the interviewee was able to take perspective on verbal behaviour as verbal behaviour, that is, their capacity for deictically framing the content of their psychological experience.

Collaboration & engagement, and *empathy* were considered important qualities for a successful FSDI in order to have the interviewee speak openly about their experience. Collaboration & engagement was evaluated to be occurring if the conversation

appeared to be taking place between two equal partners. Empathy was evaluated as the extent to which I, as the interviewer, understood or made an effort to grasp the interviewee's perspective and feelings: literally, how much I attempted to "try on" what the interviewee felt or thought. Care was taken not to confuse empathy with warmth, acceptance or genuineness; these qualities were considered independent of empathy, which was specifically about taking the speaker's view. Reflective listening was an important part of this characteristic, as it showed that I understood the interviewee's perspective as I conveyed that understanding back to the interviewee without judgement.

The independent evaluation of Listening (questions & reflection), Collaboration & Engagement, and Empathy provided feedback that could be used to improve the FSDI interviewing method. Employing this evaluative approach was intended to be used: 1) as an interviewing integrity measure by MI standards to check the FSDI interviews were not a manipulation for change; and, 2) as a means of providing independent structured, formal feedback about ways to improve interview technique. Full criteria for evaluating these capabilities are presented in Appendix 3: FSDI Interviewer Capability Evaluation. The coding and rating method is discussed in the Quantitative Analysis section below.

Several other interview methods were evaluated for adaptation to the FSDI but none were as applicable as the MI approach. These included: Subject-Object interviewing designed to investigate cognitive complexity (Kegan 1994; Kegan et al. 1982; Lahey et al. 1988); interviewing as qualitative research designed to capture retrospective, contemporary and prospective views of an interviewee's history (Seidman 2013); and, experience-based, body-anchored qualitative research interviewing designed to capture the first-person perspective (Stelter 2010). Each of these approaches reinforced the importance of the MI processes and skills outlined above.

Research Questions

Aim of the FSDI Study

The aim of this study was to design and conduct a series of at least 30 Functional Self-Discrimination Interviews (FSDI) and analyse which aspects of the interview yielded transcript/data suited to analysis using the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM). The specific research questions being tested were as follows:

- For the interviewer: Which questions yield rich and accurate data for analysis with the FSDM; What does the interviewee say that appears to lead to different types of questions in the interview?
- For the interviewer: Are the capabilities of Listening (questions & reflection), Collaboration & Engagement, and Empathy effective processes for conducting an FSDI?
- For the interviewee and to further validate the FSDM: To what extent do different forms of self-discrimination and rule-following influence wellbeing and the ability to behave effectively in important situations as indicated by statements made by the interviewee in the interview?

Method

To assess what constitutes an effective FSDI and further validate the FSDM as a functional assessment of self-discrimination predicting wellbeing, I conducted a set of interviews then coded the interview transcripts using the FSDM. I then correlated code frequencies with a set of subjective measures as was done in the previous two studies discussed in Chapters 3 & 4. I also conducted a subjective analysis of the type of interview questions that yield statements suited to an analysis using the FSDM. Further, to evaluate my capabilities as an interviewer I had an independent MI qualified coder code a random subset of the interview transcripts for proficiency in Listening, Collaboration & Engagement, and Empathy. I present this work below in four sections. First, in this section I discuss information about the interviews, subjective measures and analytical software. In the Coding and Qualitative Analysis section I provide a subjective and thematic analysis of the FSDI interview technique

with examples and explanations of questions asked and the resulting interviewee responses. In the Quantitative Analysis section I provide the results from the FSDM and MI capability analyses. I conclude the chapter with a brief Discussion section.

Interviews

Ten volunteers were interviewed either three or four times, depending on their availability, resulting in a total of 37 interview transcripts. Participants were university academics also undertaking PhD studies or professionals working at a university, in the public sector or privately. All had achieved a tertiary qualification. There were an equal number of five males and females. Seven of the ten participants had been formally trained in mindfulness (Table 5.1 below).

			Age	Mindfulness
	Men	Women	M (SD)	training
Academics	1	3	40.8 (5.4)	4
Professionals	4	2	46.5 (11.8)	3

Table 5.1: Demographic characteristics of the interviewees ($n=10$).

The 37 interviews were recorded and transcribed. Each interview was approximately 60 minutes in duration and for each interviewee, interviews were conducted 3-5 days apart. The interviews were in two parts taking approximately 45 minutes for the FSDI, followed by 15 minutes of shared reflection on the interview itself.

The FSDI part of the interview involved inviting the interviewee to speak openly about a pattern of incidents that had been positively or negatively emotionally charged and may have left them feeling conflicted, confused or surprised about their response. The series of three or four interviews were designed to give interviewees an opportunity to talk about a range of both positive and negative incidents. Specific topics included foci on when the interviewee: felt most alive; felt a sense of conviction; felt conflicted; experienced a major failure; or, made their toughest decision. Questions probed for related events that made up the context in which the

incident occurred; the meaning behind their chosen response; the consequences of taking a particular response; and, how the interviewee evaluated themselves and the situation both retrospectively and prospectively. Refer to the Appendix 1: Functional Self-Discrimination Interview Protocol for details of the interview structure.

Following the formal FSDI part of each interview, both interviewee and I, as the interviewer, together reflected on the experience of being interviewed. Participants were asked if and when they felt listened too, understood and which questions and responses from me during the interview were the most effective. After the FSDI and reflection was over I took a memo to capture the key points from the reflection.

The resulting interviews were transcribed and analysed for both interviewee and interviewer performance. The interviewee statements were analysed for self-discrimination statements as had been done in the previous two studies using the FSDM with the inclusion of two additional codes (discussed below) that captured stated values or aversive emotions. My interview questions and statements were analysed to see which types tended to produce more code-able transcript using the FSDM. To evaluate the quality of my Listening, Collaboration & Engagement, and Empathy as an interviewer, a subset of the interview transcripts were independently coded using the Motivational Interviewing Integrity Measure (Moyers et al. 2014; Moyers et al. 2010). Denise Ernst, one of the authors of the Motivational Interviewing Integrity Measure, conducted this evaluation.

Subjective Measures

In addition to conducting the FSDI interviews, sets of subjective measures were taken as was done in the previous studies. Within one week prior to the interviews commencing, a measure of psychological flexibility, Acceptance and Action Questionnaire – II (Bond et al. 2011), was administered. This was used as a means to further validated the FSDM, in particular the FLEX measure, as a measure of psychological flexibility. To test if the FSDM predicted wellbeing, the same set of hedonic and eudemonic wellbeing measures administered in the previous two studies were administered six months after the interviews. Hedonic wellbeing was

measured using the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (Watson et al. 1988) and psychological distress symptoms were measured using the Depression, Anxiety, Stress scale (Antony et al. 1998). Eudemonic forms of wellbeing were measured using two scales, the Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff & Keyes 1995) and the Satisfaction with Life scale (Diener et al. 1985). Details of these measures are discussed in Chapter 3.

The subjective measures were correlated with the frequency of FSDM codes. Then a series of regression analyses were conducted to assess how well measures of self-discrimination predicted hedonic (affective) and eudemonic (meaning and satisfaction in life) wellbeing.

Analytical Software

I coded the interview transcripts using the software NVivo published by QSR International. SPSS was used for the correlation and regression analyses of code frequencies with the set of subjective measures taken.

Coding and Qualitative Analysis

Rather than code each sentence for occurrences of self-discrimination as in the previous studies discussed in Chapters 3 & 4, in this study interviewee *utterances* were coded. An utterance was considered a sentence or series of sentences expressing a complete thought (Miller & Rollnick 2013). As in the previous studies, multiple FSDM codes were applied to an utterance but each code appeared only once for a given utterance. In this study the FSDM coding categories included those defined in the previous studies, excluding the SP, OP and personal belief codes, as they showed no significant correlations with the wellbeing measures. Further, the FSDM scheme was extended to include two additional codes that captured statements of values [AUG-val] and statements of aversive emotion [AUG-con], both described below.

In addition to the FSDM codes, a set of codes was defined for different classes of interviewer questions. These codes were intended to capture which types of questions function to orient the interviewee toward different aspects of their historical contexts and elicit different types of self-rules and self- other-discrimination statements. I provide definitions, descriptions and examples of the interviewer question codes and two additional FSDM codes below. In the Thematic Analysis of Interviews section that follows I discuss how various passages were coded and the rationale behind the coding process. In the Quantitative Results section, I present and discuss a series of correlation and regression analyses that looked at the relationship between code frequencies and the subjective measures, as well as an independent analysis of my interviewer capabilities. For reference, extended excerpts of coded interview transcript from which the bits below are taken are provided in the Appendix 2: Coded Functional Self-Discrimination Interview Transcripts.

FSDM Augmental Codes

Two new codes were introduced to the FSDM scheme, the AUG-val and AUG-con codes. These were included to code statements appearing to function as one of two types of augmentals – values [AUG-val] and aversive emotions [AUG-con]. This was to test for possible different effects between the utterance of a value distinct for a value oriented self-rule [VOR] employed to express that value; and, the utterance of an aversive emotion distinct for a control oriented self-rule [COR] employed to avoid that emotion. Definitions with explanations and examples are provided below and in the Thematic Analysis of Interviews section that follows.

[AUG-val] Augmental Value

Definition

[AUG-val] = Augmental Value statements were expressions of personal values that would apparently reinforce the appetitive quality of an action and/or consequence of that action.

Description

Augmental Value statements were expressions of personally held values of the speaker. At times these utterances were statements of values in their own right, for example “caring”. At other times they were uttered as part of a value oriented self-rule [VOR] in which case the value apparently functioned to reinforce the importance of the stated action and/or desired outcome achieved through taking that action, for example “I care for my family so I will spend more time with them”. In this way a value is a verbal establishing reinforcer not a verbal discriminative stimulus (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001d, p110).

Examples of AUG-val

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>“Well, yeah, I like learning [AUG-val].”</i>	This was an isolated statement of the value “learning” that was not functioning to directly reinforce an event within a self-rule.
<i>“I realised I can do unconditional love [AUG-val]. I didn’t realise I could do it. I couldn’t – I didn’t think I could do it before I got him (spouse) [VOR]... What do you love [AUG-val]? You love [AUG-val] the package, and the package gets old, and the package loses its hair, and the package gets wrinkles [VOR].”</i>	In this statement the value “love” was uttered three times and apparently functioned to reinforce the behaviours of this person’s acts of loving their spouse “the package”.

[AUG-con] Augmental Control**Definition**

[AUG-con] = Augmental Control statements were expressions of the aversive emotions experienced by the speaker that would apparently reinforce efforts to avoid or control the unwanted aversive emotion.

Description

Augmental Control statements were expressions of aversive emotions held by the speaker. At times these utterances were statements of the aversive emotion in their own right, for example “ashamed”. At other times they were uttered as part of a control oriented self-rule [COR] in which case the aversive emotion functioned to reinforce the apparent utility of taking an action that may control or avoid that unwanted emotion, for example “I’m ashamed so I won’t show my face”. Like a personal value, an aversive emotion is a verbal establishing reinforcer not a verbal discriminative stimulus.

Examples of AUG-con

Statement	Explanation for code
<i>“I get into that self-conscious mode it kind of collapses to where I’m just a self-conscious creature [AUG-con].”</i>	This was an isolated utterance of an aversive emotion “self-conscious”.
<i>“I don’t want to feel that it’s just doing things because that’s what people do [AUG-con]. Like, social events, like weddings and things like this, I always have an approach of avoidance, because I sort of feel I don’t want it to be about what people expect [COR].”</i>	In this utterance the aversive feeling of “just doing things because that’s what people do” functions to reinforce the avoidance behaviour of not socialising.

FSDI Codes of Interviewer Statements

Eliciting code-able statements involved asking specific types of questions. These questions probed primarily for the contextual relations [C_{rel}] and contextual function [C_{func}] of self-rules and forms of self- and other-conceptualisations. Definitions of the different types of questions with explanations and examples are provided below and in the Thematic Analysis of Interviews section that follows. Other examples are provided in Appendix 1: Functional Self-Discrimination Interview Protocol.

[RuleCrel-probe] Self-Rule Contextual Relations Probe**Definition**

[RuleCrel-probe] = Self-Rule Contextual Relations Probes were questions that probe for the three term contingencies of a self-rule: Antecedent-Behaviour-Consequence; and, the relations between those three events [C_{rel}].

Description

Self-Rule Contextual Relations Probes were questions that probe for the events that constitute the three term contingencies (ABC) of a self-rule and the relations between those events. The antecedent event (A) was a statement about a situation that elicited the behavioural response. The behavioural event (B) was a description of that response, which could be a covert emotional or verbal response or an overt verbal or behavioural response. The consequential event (C) was a description of the outcome of having taken that behaviour. The relations between the events were the particular relational framing applied to the events. This was typically “if-then” framing that apparently allowed the speaker to successfully obtain the specified consequence/s of their stated actions or potentially avoid unwanted consequences. For example, “*If I spend more time with my family then they will know how much I care*”, “*If I don't show my face then I will avoid being embarrassed*”.

Examples of RuleCrel-probes

Probe	Explanation for code
<i>Q: So I'm curious – if you're in a really tough situation where you've got to act with confidence, what kind of process do you go through [RuleCrel-probe]?</i>	This question probed for the behavioural processes that the interviewee employed, the behavioural events (B) in a self-rule.
<i>Q: Yep. So when you're unsticking yourself, what are you unsticking yourself from [RuleCrel-probe]?</i>	This question probed for the context or antecedent (A) of a self rule.

[RuleCfunc-probe] Self-Rule Contextual Function Probe**Definition**

[RuleCfunc-probe] = Self-Rule Contextual Function Probes were questions that probe for the psychological functions [C_{func}] (purpose/meaning) of a self-rule that did, or apparently will, govern the speaker's behaviour – control or value oriented.

Description

Self-Rule Contextual Function Probes were questions that probe for the purpose and meaning of the events that constituted the three term contingencies of a self-rule. Often these were statements of augmentals [AUG-val, AUG-con] that functioned to reinforce the value or apparent utility of an action or consequence. For example, "If I spend time with my family then they will know *how much I care*", "If I don't show my face then I will *avoid being embarrassed*".

Examples of RuleCfunc-probes

Probe	Explanation for code
<i>Q: Like, you're doing it because you're doing it for them (parents), or you're doing it for you because it's important to them [RuleCfunc-probe]?</i>	This question probes for the speaker's values, the importance of acting on an intrinsic value 'for them' or out of duty 'to them'.
<i>Q: You've described a moment when you're most alive, but you're also saying there's many of them. So I'm guessing there's something very similar and important about them all that's directing your behaviour [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?</i>	This question probes for both contextual relations and events 'moments when most alive'; and, contextual function the 'importance' of them.

[RuleValid-probe] Self-Rule Validation Probe**Definition**

[RuleValid-probe] = Self-Rule Validity Probes were statements/questions where the interviewee's self-rule formulation was echoed back to them, or elaborated if implicit, to check and get confirmation or further elaboration.

Description

Self-Rule Validity Probes were either simple or complex reflections of the self-rules uttered by the speaker. Oftentimes the reflections were phrased as a question to get confirmation or further elaboration. Thus, allowing the participant to confirm reported subjective findings (internal validity).

Examples of RuleValid-probes

Probe	Explanation for code
<i>Q: So that strategy, okay, 'when in a threatening situation, take the path of least resistance and not push back unnecessarily', has that become a strategy or a principle that's continued to work for you [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe] [RuleValid-probe]?</i>	This question echoed what the interviewee was saying and sought validation of what sounded like a self-rule, 'a strategy or principle'. This question was also coded a contextual relation and function probe as it could have yielded that data.
<i>Q: So overall, given what we've talked about – if there is a principle or self-rule you employ generally, explicitly or implicitly, what would you say [RuleValid-probe]?</i>	This question probed directly for the self-rule of the interviewee without any attempt to echo it back.

[S-probe] Self- or Other-as-Story Probe**Definition**

[S-probe] = Self Probes were questions that probe for conceptualisations and evaluations of the 'self' [SS] or 'other' [OS].

Description

Self Probes were questions that probe for the speaker's abstracted conceptualisations of the 'self' [SS] or 'other' [OS]. These questions sort to have the speaker utter literal (i.e. held as the truth) descriptions regarding who or how they or others are; either enduring qualities or characteristics, or evaluations of those qualities and characteristics.

Examples of S-probes

Probe	Explanation for code
<i>Q: So when it's you that's running the show and not your ego, who are you [S-probe]?</i>	This question probes for 'self' conceptualisation [SS].
<i>Q: So you've got to know others differently [S-probe]?</i>	This question probes for the conceptualisation of the 'other' [OS].

[X-probe] Self- or Other-as-Perspective Probe**Definition**

[X-probe] = Perspective Probes were questions that probe for the speaker's perspective on their behaviour as the 'self' [SX] or that of the 'other' [OX].

Description

Perspective Probes were questions that probe for the speaker's perspective on their own experience where they discriminate the 'self' as being distinct from the content of their experience [SX1]; or, their experience of the 'self' as the perspective-taker

[SX2]. This category of question also probed for the speaker's perspective on the view of another distinct from their own view [OX1] or their view of another as a perspective-taker [OX2].

Examples of X-probes

Probe	Explanation for code
<i>Q: Right, so you're just watching your pattern of responses in this situation [X-probe]?</i>	This question probes of the speaker's perspective on personal inner experience [SX].
<i>"Q: Right. It's just they've got a different worldview [X-probe]?"</i>	This question probes for the speaker's perspective of another's view [OX] distinct from their own view [SX].

Thematic Analysis of Interviews

A thematic analysis was chosen as a way to categorise patterns of question-answer relations. Thematic analyses have variously been used to discern patterns or 'themes' in data as part of any qualitative paradigm, for example in grounded theory (Bryant 2014; Thorne 2014); or, as an analytic paradigm in its own right (Gee 2014a, 2014b; Saldana 2013). In the latter sense, as used in this study, it involved a search across the entire collection of interviews that constituted the body of data to determine the presence and boundaries of any patterns of question-answer relations, particularly with reference to the frequency of classes of self-discrimination statements uttered by the interviewee. These themes are discussed in this section.

The themes of interview excerpts discussed below are presented in an order of increasing levels of psychological flexibility as measured by the FSDM and AAQ-II. A statistical analysis of these measures is offered in the next section. Those least flexible tended to struggle with ambivalence about change and direction, and spoke about employing mindfulness as a control strategy. Those showing higher levels of flexibility spoke more often about their perspective on personal and others'

experience, expressed their values more readily and uttered more value directed self-rules. All interviewee patterns of responding, both control and value oriented, generalised to different contexts. I discuss each of these themes below beginning with ambivalence.

Code Key

In the interview excerpts, both my questions as the interviewer and the interviewee responses, are coded. For ease of reading each coded utterance is also colour coded (Table 5.2), I have done this particularly as coded bits overlap. For example, *where a longer utterance contains a shorter bit attracting a different code, the colour of the longer utterance precedes and follows the colour of the shorter bit.*

Interviewer Probes	
RuleCrel-probe	Self-Rule Contextual Relations probe
RuleCfunc-probe	Self-Rule Contextual Function probe
RuleValid-probe	Self-Rule Validity probe
S-probe	Self or Other-as-Story probe
X-probe	Self or Other-as-Context probe
Self Codes	Definition
VOR	Value Oriented Self-Rule
AUG-val	Augmental Value
COR	Control Oriented Self-Rule
AUG-con	Augmental Control
SS-pos	Self-as-Story Positive statement
SS-neg	Self-as-Story Negative statement
SX1	Self-as-Perspective 1 statement
SX2	Self-as-Perspective 2 statement
Other Codes	Definition
OS-pos	Other-as-Story Positive statement
OS-neg	Other-as-Story Negative statement
OX1	Other-as-Perspective 1 statement
OX2	Other-as-Perspective 2 statement

Table 5.2: Coloured codes for interview probes and responses

Across the interview excerpts most of my questions, or reflections cast as a question, probed for both the contextual function [RuleCfunc-probe] and contextual relations

[RuleCrel-probe] of the interviewee's uttered self-rules. Most questions were either simple or complex reflections of what the interviewee was saying. Contextual function probes pulled for the purpose and meaning of the interviewee's chosen behaviours, why they were doing what they were doing. Contextual relation probes sought to encourage the interviewee to speak about the various events that had taken place in their experience, the antecedents, their responses and resulting or anticipated consequences. When interviewing, as appropriate, I offered self-rule validity probes [RuleValid-probe] in an attempt to reiterate what I understood to be the self-rules the interviewee was employing in discussing the incident. Some rule validity probes are captured in the excerpts below. In some of the excerpts I have also asked questions that probe for 'self' or 'other' conceptualisations [S-probe] and perspective-taking [X-probe]. Two types of question, the contextual function [RuleCfunc-probe], and contextual relation [RuleCrel-probe] probes tended to yield interviewee responses most suited to being coded using the FSDM.

The themes discussed in this section are: ambivalence about change and direction; mindfulness practice as a control strategy; describing mindfulness versus practicing mindfulness; the efficacy of perspective-taking; values and value oriented self-rules; and, generalised responding; each contain lengthy quotes. These quotes are provided to: illustrate which questions yield rich and accurate data for analysis with the FSDM; and, from a thematic perspective, how different classes of self-discrimination and rule-following influence wellbeing and the ability of the speaker to behave effectively in important situations. This section can be read and understood without necessarily reading the entire set of interview quotes. I have provided these so the reader can engage more thoroughly with the interview transcripts should they wish to gain a deeper insight into the actual verbal exchanges that took place. Throughout the section I also make reference to various quantitative analyses discussed in the following section, which show from a statistical perspective the significance to the subjective findings discussed.

Ambivalence about change or direction

Ambivalence is a state of indecision about what is important and what action to take in a given situation (Kegan & Lahey 2009; Miller & Rollnick 2013). As a general trend those rated lower in psychology flexibility expressed more ambivalence over the course of their interviews. For example, the following interviewee, a 37-year-old Vietnamese woman who had recently completed a PhD in economics, expressed her ambivalence while discussing the difficulty she was experiencing trying to decide what type of job to pursue. Here I provide a complex reflection of what the interview had been saying to that point then I probe for the function of her thinking. I was interested in what was important to her, which in a symbolic sense would indicate how the situation might 'work out' should she have a self-rule in her repertoire that would take her in that direction.

Q: So the criteria you're using for a new job are – one criterion is you need a job to survive, but another set of criteria is more to do with what is personally important to you. And I'm guessing, based on what you said, that there are a few things that are important. You mentioned a need to feel competent, and you also said something about research, and that you may not enjoy being in the public service – you might get bored. So I'm more interested in those kinds of things that are personally important [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah, right. Well, yeah, I like learning like you say [AUG-val]. Like, it's a little bit hard, but, maybe it's striving for, but, then you reach your goals [AUG-val] and, but, I don't want to work a lot of overtime at home because that interferes with family [AUG-con]. So for researching, well, I think in research there are a lot of intelligent people and I like to work for good boss – intelligent people because they can exercise your mind and they know [AUG-val], so, you, yeah, you don't have to, yes, no-one wants to look down at their boss and still pretend as well, so, that's one [AUG-con]. Two, I like to work with ideas which is source an idea and model and those things [AUG-val], yeah. What you may call it, I think it do matter if I work in public service for example, like social service for example – dealing with people every time like social service [AUG-val] – Centrelink or something - I could finish the day feeling like wasting

[AUG-con] – I could, but, I’m – at times I’m torn because I don’t know what is better for me [AUG-con]. What is better maybe, by dealing with people I’m affecting the real life and I can see the results of it in people getting benefits or something and that would make me happier [AUG-val] and this idea, it makes me feel good, but, in the end when it gets to reality and bringing good things to life [AUG-val], it could, but, you may not get in touch with the results of your work and you might feel demoralised along the way [AUG-con]. So those things. It's very complex and abstract I thought, I guess.

In the above quote, the interviewee’s ambivalence is apparent in her series of contrasting statements. She talks about wanting work that she values [AUG-val] that may allow her to do any of a number of things such as continue working with theory and ideas as she had done while doing her PhD, do social good and provide for her family. In contrast, she spoke about a number of aversive experiences [AUG-con] she wished to avoid such as working for someone she didn't respect, wasting time and energy, and not seeing the results of her work. Most of her utterances are augmentals [AUG]. She did not frame either her desired values or undesired experience in a self-rule. It wasn’t until later in the interview that she uttered some self-rules, which were a mix of control oriented [COR] and value oriented [VOR] self-rules such as below. Here I offer a rule validity probe [RuleValid-probe] to validate the VOR.

Q: You can’t decide?

A: Yeah, yeah. So I might just do something and stop thinking [COR]...

Q: And just try it? Try it and see if it works [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yes, that’s right. And also you don’t really know what is best in life [laugh], so, you just get something and go with it and try to make it good [AUG-val]. You can’t really know beforehand that going this way is going to, yeah, be your best way, so, yeah, just try [VOR].

Q: I've got this really clear impression and I want to check if this is right - even though you might feel torn about something, in some ways you kind of expect that to show up because you wouldn't know until you tried it – so, you actually will try things and what you'll be looking for will be things like meaningful connection with others and whether there are things like learning in there but the main thing is meaningful connection and making a contribution. Is that right [RuleValid-probe]?

A: Yeah. I think so. Yeah.

Other interviewees showed ambivalence in their responding through extended volleys of contrasting utterances that included either control or value oriented self-rules delineating their intention to act. This was distinct from speakers who uttered a series of fore and against statements with no concluding self-rule about desired action, like the previous interviewee. For example, the following interviewee, a 66-year-old American-Australian female, expressed ambivalence about committing to new relationships. Her ambivalence was in the wake of her husband dying and the end of what she described as a deep, close and meaningful relationship. The values she espoused and sought to act on were related to open and truthful relationships, the type she had had with her deceased husband, and becoming a member of a new community. She also sought to avoid wasting time doing things because others expected it. The interview excerpts below capture the interviewee's ambivalence in the form of control and avoidance, and value directed responses to her new relationships. My probe for the contextual function [RuleCfunc-probe] of her experience directed her attention to these competing commitments.

Q: So what's at stake (when you commit to a new relationship)? What are you afraid of, and what are the things that are driving your decision? Because it sounds like you're avoiding something [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: I don't want it to be – I don't want it to be a waste of time, partly [AUG-con]. But I think there are people that want to go out and drink every night or something like that. And that's fine, that's what they want to do. I am I guess a

bit more serious [SS-pos]. And so I want to feel that it's truthful [AUG-val], I don't want to feel that it's just doing things because that's what people do [AUG-con]. Like, social events, like weddings and things like this, I always have an approach of avoidance, because I sort of feel I don't want it to be about what people expect [COR]. I want it to be – if somebody gives me a present I'd rather it wasn't on my birthday. Do you know what I mean?

Q: Yeah, right. Okay.

A: So part of it is, I suppose, my own selfishness. Do I want to spend time on this? Part of it is worrying about the responsibility [AUG-con]. Like some of the people that I'm friends with are not well. So it's sort of like, I know what that means in terms of for them. Or I imagine I know what that means. And so I don't take it lightly as a commitment [AUG-val]. And yeah, it's whether I have the energy, whether I have the time. Like, this sounds silly, but I don't like having several social things in the same day. I need time [VOR].

It was interesting to note that these two utterances, spoken one after the other, contain both control [COR] and value [VOR] oriented self-rules respectively, which reflects the interviewee's ambivalence. In the first self-rule the interviewee wants to avoid "social events" then in the second self-rule she expresses a desire to act on a sense of "responsibility" toward friends. Both these self-rules contain contrasting value [AUG-val] and control [AUG-con] augmentals, as though acting on the one self-rule will simultaneously achieve a valued consequence while avoiding aversive experience. In the first rule the value of "truthfulness" is sought while "not doing things because that's what people do". In the second rule "worrying" is being avoided while wanting to "commit to the value of friendship". This reflects the competing nature of the interviewee's desired consequences and her resulting ambivalence.

In the following bit the same interviewee uttered a value oriented self-rule that I assume would be more functional than those uttered above. The values of "community", "openness" and "spending time" establish the motivation for action while accepting that it "may not always be easy".

Q: So you've got to know others differently [S-probe]?

A: I think 20 years ago it was more about me, not the effect on anybody else. But that actually isn't true. And I think I've become more conscious of the community I'm in [AUG-val]. And that's part of me wanting to be more open with people in terms of spending time with them [AUG-val], because I feel, well, this is actually – this is important. It may not always be easy and it may not always suit me, but it's still – this is my world, this is what I'm part of and I have a responsibility in a way to be a part of it [VOR].

Another interviewee, a 52-year-old Spanish-Australian female who worked as a graphic designer at an Australian university expressed ambivalence as she contrasted a rare positive experience with her typical negative experience of life. The following bits capture her tendency to be very self-conscious and a rare moment of feeling 'most alive' when successfully doing a presentation of her work to some colleagues. These utterances contain a number of augmentals, both values [AUG-val] and control [AUG-con], which indicate the divergent experience being sort, either feeling empowered or avoidance of social awkwardness.

Q: Good on you (for doing the presentation). So, what was it about that moment – was it when they got it? Or was it about them acknowledging you? What was it about the moment that made you feel most alive [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Well, I got heaps of feedback after the event, saying, "That was awesome." [AUG-val] "I get it now," and... (it) was great. The pat on the head was fabulous [AUG-val]. The fact that I had their attention was... My experience – it was – I felt – I'm not sure what words to put the emotions but it was sum total. I felt quite empowered by that [AUG-val]. Like, I can get things across... It made me feel like someone capable of being extremely effective [AUG-val].

Q: Right. Yep.

A: And it also demonstrated what I could be like in a group. In contrast, to all the **social awkwardness [AUG-con]**... 'cause I was in my element. I was in my world. That's why it didn't – I didn't have to agonise to – I knew what I had to get across and what the sticking points would be and then all I had to worry about is communicating it. So, there was never – **when I get self-conscious it's a very – it's sticky. It's ineffective. It's sticky [AUG-con]. It's – whereas in this scenario, it was the world that I knew. I generally wanted them to get it – to show them something, not because I thought it was absolutely worth knowing. I didn't want them to get bored [AUG-val]. So, there again, it was probably back to looking good. I didn't want them to be bored [AUG-val]** and we were sitting through session after session there was just talk or bullet points and being in the art department I had an opportunity to get out of that - to do something a little bit different. So, the attention was off me but it paid off so – in such a big way [laughs] and it paid off in a personal – yeah. So, now I have this – I don't know what word to put to it – this exemplar – this model example [VOR].

Q: So, I'm curious ... You knew your stuff so in that sense you weren't in the deep end. So that gave you a level of confidence and comfort to actually just present what you knew. But if it hadn't of worked, what would have been the worst bit [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: I'm just extrapolating from other group situations where the self-consciousness kicks in and then it becomes, like, I collapse into that ... when I get into that self-conscious mode it kind of collapses to where I'm just a self-conscious creature [AUG-con].

Ambivalence was apparent for this interviewee as she contrasted “this exemplar – this model example” of a new behaviour where she experienced being acknowledged and empowered with her more typical experience of being a “self-conscious creature”. Again, probing for contextual relations [RuleCrel-probe] and contextual

function [RuleCfunc-probe] directed the attention of the interviewee to her typical frame of the experience, particularly her experience of being self-conscious.

The interviewees that framed ambivalent responses to the incidents we discussed offered the least number of value oriented self-rules [VOR] across the course of their interviews each with a ratio of approx. 3:1 value oriented self-rules [VOR] to every control oriented self-rule [COR]. This was in contrast to an average ratio of 9:1 value oriented self-rules [VOR] to every control oriented self-rule [COR] for those rated higher in psychological flexibility. See the Quantitative Analysis Section below for a statistical analysis.

Mindfulness practice as a control strategy

While interviewing I noticed that the interviewees spoke about their mindfulness practice in different ways. Some spoke about mindfulness being a practice that enhanced their quality of life while others spoke about it more as a technique they employed to deal with life. Seven of the ten participants in the study had been trained in mindfulness and three of those seven taught mindfulness. Interestingly, the three participants *not* trained in mindfulness were amongst those that showed the highest levels of psychological flexibility and functional self-discrimination as measured by the AAQ-II and FSDM, perhaps suggesting that in some instances those wanting relief from aversive experience may seek out mindfulness training for that purpose. Those interviewees that used mindfulness more as a tool, tended to speak about their practice as a way of objectifying unwanted experience in order to control it or gain relief from it.

For example one interviewee, a 45-year-old Russian-Australian who had recently resigned a position as a research academic in the medical sciences to train in mindfulness and become a yoga teacher, spoke about his use of mindfulness to control or avoid unwanted experience as well as move toward wanted experience. In the bits below he discussed feeling 'torn' trying to deal with a difficult relationship with a flat mate in which he was often misunderstood. His efforts to deal with this experience were often expressed in ambivalent terms with a mix of value oriented

self-rules [VOR] and control oriented self-rules [COR]. Again, his responses were elicited when I probed for the contextual relations [RuleCrel-probe] and contextual function [RuleCfunc-probe] of the recalled event.

Q: It sounds like all you're trying to do is help. And that's being misinterpreted as though you're trying to not help, or actually deliberately do something to hurt her or something [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: That's right... If it was a positive frame, I would be happy. But every time is negative, and every time, whatever you try to say, she tries to dip you in shit. That's how it feels [AUG-con]...

Q: So the tearing apart is - if I could just make sure I get this right - is you're continuing to want to be there and do the right thing, while just feeling as though you're being misunderstood, and just wanting to leave [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Ah. It's - well, I see it as a journey; I see it as a journey [AUG-val]. So yes, my automatic response is just to run away, and stay away, not to engage [COR]. On the other hand, I understand it's a journey, and also I see it as a mirror, and I know that I have my patterns, and reactions and so on. So that's where I'm - on one hand, I know it's beneficial to stay in the situation and try to resolve it [AUG-val], or to work on this; that's what I want to do [VOR]... But it's a very unpleasant situation [AUG-con]. So that's how I want to run away and stay away, and just, stuff it. And that's where it's, in a way, internal conflict [AUG-con]. And at the moment it's a compromise, because at the moment the strategy I developed is not to engage. So staying not engaging, it looks a bit rude. It doesn't feel comfortable either [COR].

Q: So how is that working in the short-term and the long-run [RuleCfunc-probe]?

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A: Well, I believe that it should work that - if this situation of conflict is about me, then just staying and waiting and observing and doing mindfulness, that's one accepting this - surrendering to this situation, probably, building a good wish for peaceful resolution [AUG-val], and so on [VOR]...

Q: So that's how you're approaching the situation with your flatmates now?

A: Yes, yes. That's right. So I build my current journey on this intention and motivation for - basically for happiness and reduce of suffering [AUG-pos], that sort of thing. And that is possible, patterns that sit in me, sort of thing, they are causing painful experiences. So me staying with the situation, I see it as this process of dealing with patterns. Successful or not, yeah, if it sticks to me, maybe it didn't work. But it's a journey, so I see it. And I'm trying to stay away from generalising and cliché-ing and putting them in box, me in box [AUG-con]. Trying to not to stick, not to solidify [VOR]...

These value oriented self-rules [VOR] were uttered by the interviewee toward the end of the interview after speaking at some length about trying to deal with unpleasant experience by employing control oriented self-rules [COR] such as those uttered in the bits above. In functional terms this was evident in the numbers of contrasting value versus control oriented augmentals and self-rules uttered by the interviewee across the interview, a ratio of 2:1. My overall impression from this interviewee was that being mindful was more a practice of resignation and endurance rather than willingness and acceptance of experience. This sentiment was captured in his statement "just staying and waiting and observing and doing mindfulness, that's one accepting this - surrendering to this situation".

The following interviewee provides another example. This interviewee was a 31-year-old Australian male who worked as a Sustainability Officer managing projects at an Australian university. He had not trained formally in mindfulness though he had been introduced to the contemplative practices he mentions in the interview bits below. In terms of psychological flexibility he was mid way between the least and most flexible as measured by the FSDM and AAQ-II. While discussing some overseas

adventures, he describes a number of incidents that were highly arousing and evoked emotional responses that he tried to control with his “willpower”, which took its toll. He contrasts this approach with a newer and more mindful approach.

Q: So I’m curious – if you’re in a really tough situation where you’ve got to act with confidence, what kind of process do you go through [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: It's firstly assimilate the fight or flight – the natural – the reaction that hits you when there’s adrenalin and other chemicals hit the brain and manage them. So rather than acting on those impulses straight away, it's like saying, right I can – I understand that they’re there, I can understand that that’s just happened and that’s hit my brain and my natural response is to do this, but, just hold on a second [SX1]. If I’ve got the time to just – if I don’t have to make that split second decision, then, yeah, weigh up the risks and the benefits [AUG-val] of the actions that are forthcoming from here. So first thing to do is get in control [AUG-val] of your natural instincts, get control of them and let reason and logic take over [VOR]...

Q: So, two things; control of natural instincts and responses and then a more objective reasoned response. So I’m interested in both those halves actually. So how do you go about controlling the flight or flight response and the adrenalin that hits the brain [X-probe] [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: I think it's more – the way I do it personally and then I’m learning new techniques for this at the moment through some of the – I don’t think I’ve mentioned, but I’ve been going to a couple of spiritual weekends on meditation and that sort of thing.

Q: Yeah, yeah. You did mention that.

A: So that’s opened up another avenue for how to try and control those instincts and urges [AUG-con], but, the way that I’ve principally done it has just – it’s almost like a mind block where you just go, right, I understand that

this is going on, but, you're just – out of sheer willpower – try and push it away and go no, I've got this – I've got this, I can manage this and try and push it away. It's almost like there's – brain trying to push away those – it's hard to explain because I don't – all I know is that I just – I put my brain into a lockdown mode where I just – I can say right. And certainly it takes – it's not – it's just about – it just feels like if there's a surge, for example, of something, then I'll just try and have a bigger wave that goes over that surge. It's almost like an ocean current where you've got the undercurrent and then you got the waves coming over and that's the best way I can explain it – I don't – I can't really say what's going on physiologically. And even if it's – there's certainly been times where – I think that – the method that I have principally used is probably not optimal because it takes a lot of power to try and, so, if you're wanting to look as though you feel as – or confident or in control of the situation, it almost takes its toll. So as soon as you leave that situation I just felt, oh, I've got the shakes, I've got the – I've had to hold in my breath and, so, certainly there's been a bit of a build-up, but, it's just been trying to hold... [COR].

Q: So, what's your other strategy?

A: I think this other avenue, perhaps, that I'm exploring through some of these spiritual weekends and things is just about intense concentration and focus and being able to calm your mind [AUG-val] and understanding how you can manage your - out of your natural instincts and also your urges, whatever it may be, but, through clarity of thought, through deep breathing, through focus and, I think, practise as well – practising for that. So I've never meditated before whereas I've started putting a little bit of that into there [VOR].

The interview excerpts above are indicative of how some interviewees spoke about their mindfulness practice as a technique for dealing with unwanted experience. This way of speaking was only found amongst those measured lower in psychological flexibility by the FSDM and AAQ-II. This is consistent with findings that have shown decreases in self-efficacy experienced by people when their behaviour is overly

regulated by control oriented self-rules [COR] in comparison to value oriented self-rules [VOR] (Fletcher & Hayes 2005; Wilson et al. 2001). Further, it is consistent with findings that have shown mindfulness enhances a person's capacity for value consistent behaviour when increased awareness of thoughts and feelings is complemented by an *accepting* rather than a *controlling* attitude (Glomb et al. 2011; Hayes et al. 2012b; Shapiro et al. 2006).

Describing mindfulness versus practicing mindfulness

Interviewees recently trained in mindfulness that measured lower in psychological flexibility also tended to 'describe' their mindfulness practice at length. Possibly having recently learned to discriminate themselves in this way engaged them in efforts to track themselves as the locus of experience. For example, the 45-year-old Russian-Australian quoted earlier described himself this way after speaking about himself as "ego". In this bit my questions probed for 'self' conceptualisations [S-probe].

Q: So when it's you that's running the show and not your ego, who are you [S-probe]?

A: Yes, that's a good question. Mmm. Yeah, *I wonder if that's this space, sort of thing, that's the – kind of this freedom, kind of, you're just free with that strong statement, or sort this kind of – so the gap, sort of thing [SS-pos]*, in meditation where everything is possible, sort of thing. *I wonder if that's what it is in that, because, really, that's what I've seen in my life and around, that everything is possible, because we can bring lots of limitations and so on, but really, if we provide this space [AUG-val], suddenly it is true that it's possible [VOR]...*

Q: I mean, how can you describe just being you, and not this thing called ego, – how do you experience being you [S-probe]?

A: Yeah, maybe it is a very good question, and yes, I am ... connected and free. *You're connected with the past and the future, yes, you are this kind of*

transition through, right, but on the other hand, you are free from this. So this moment of freedom and possibility really, that I find is kind of the most me kind of thing. So there is body, but it's a transition as well, and there's me which sees everything of been there, will be there, so it's sort of all kind of connecting everything with everything and yet not to be anything of that, and nothing else sort of – just possibility [laughter], like [SX2] [SS-pos].

Similarly, the 52-year-old Spanish-Australian quoted earlier discussed how her understanding of mindfulness was informed by Buddhist practices. She described experiencing thoughts and emotions as “apparitions” and herself as “emptiness”. These utterances attracted [SX] codes as she objectified inner experience and identified herself as the context of her experience. Again, I probe for ‘self’ conceptualisations [S-probe] as well as the contextual relations [RuleCrel-probe] of the experiences we were discussing.

Q: You're talking about an important distinction and I'm really curious about how you're framing it up. The kind of words you used were ‘everyday truth’; you talked about ‘apparitions’; you said there's all of this stuff's going on inside of you and you're not anchored in that anymore, no one particular tradition or family heritage or something; and you're starting to know yourself as something quite different [S-probe] [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: I guess the - a foundational shift is how I see myself, so where I'm positioned. So this life doesn't revolve around me. Whereas from an experiential perspective it does... ‘Cause I can only see what I see, I can only feel what I feel, I can interpret what's going on around me but it's, you know, but that's not the centre anymore [AUG-val]... Which is good because, you know, your emotions go up and down and blah blah blah, whereas according to the Buddhist tradition, it's in this bigger picture, it's not centred around me or you or anyone, it's centred around this, our shared perspective now is centred around this illusion that we've woven together [AUG-val]... That we're all trying to find happiness [AUG-val]... So now I have to unstick myself and help others [VOR].

Q: Yep. So when you're unsticking yourself, what are you unsticking yourself from [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: From the primary delusion of 'that I count more than you or anybody else' [SX1].

Q: Yeah, the apparitions.

A: But the core of the apparition is that 'I am something special and I'm...', you know [SX1]... Well, I'm only residual karma now [SS-pos]... I can say, I'm emptiness, you're emptiness [SX2], everything's emptiness, but I'd walk out here and still act like I'm hungry and that's because it's my need and it must be satisfied at all costs, you know? ... There's a chasm between the intellectual knowledge of it and the actual experiencing... Yeah, and in Buddhism they talk about the realisation of emptiness, like, having a realisation of emptiness [AUG-val]. Yeah, so that's where I'm heading [VOR].

These kinds of descriptions suggest that being able to explain being mindful is not actually being mindful as these interviewees were amongst the lowest rated in psychological flexibility as measured by the FSDM and AAQ-II.

The efficacy of perspective-taking

In contrast to the interviewees who apparently practiced mindfulness to control or avoid unwanted experience, the interviewees who showed higher levels of psychological flexibility as measured by the FSDM and AAQ-II spoke twice as often about taking perspective on experience, their own as well as others, and did so in a more accepting and practical manner. They spoke about taking perspective on their own and others experience as a natural practice that enhanced the quality of their relationships. For example, the 31-year-old Australian male who worked as a Sustainability Officer quoted above that rated mid way between the least and most psychologically flexible as measured by the FSDM and AAQ-II, reflected on his

approach to perspective taking in contrast with that of his parents, who were outspoken political activists. I begin with a complex reflection of what the interviewee had been saying to this point framed as a question that probed for the contextual relations [RuleCrel-probe] and contextual function [RuleCfunc-probe] of his framing of the events in question.

Q: The thing that I'm wondering about now is how you decide what really matters. It sounds like, because of who your parents were, and the fact that they have quite actively stood for some big ticket items in significant ways, and you were a part of that, there's a sense of obligation for you to do it. So, it sounds like deciding what is most important is based on what's been given to you as the most important. But another part of it actually, is knowing this is the ground I stand on in terms of what's important; in terms of family relationships. And, we look after each other or hold each other accountable for what we should believe in and do and respond to [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Certainly, I mean, I've approached those – I've tried to sort of balance [AUG-val] things out a little bit, 'cause I've got both sides in a way [VOR]... So there has been a certain connectedness in that sense, and an understanding of being able to listen to one side but also - listen to another and still take a stance myself and be heard amongst the crowd [OX1].

Q: Like, you're doing it because you're doing it for them, or you're doing it for you because it's important to them [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: [Laughs] it's hard to draw a line between the sand on that... I've tried to live a little bit more along the mantra that was, all right. I think I try and stand with my own conviction [AUG-val], and first of all listen to someone else's story or position on something, and then evaluate whether – and then if I know or I think that – still with the pretty deep-seated sense of moral obligation [AUG-val], et cetera, that has been instilled within me. If I think, okay, perhaps I can

try and just see it gradually, or just a little bit try and bring them a little bit more towards this point, then I will try and do so [VOR].

Q: Okay.

A: ... So if you say, “Right. Here’s someone that I think has got someone – a pretty opposed view to me. I can respectfully hear them out and hear their arguments, and over time, the more and more discussion we have – and I can respect their arguments [AUG-val], so I don’t just necessarily think, oh, well. That person has different political beliefs to me so they’re not worth talking to ever again [OX1]. That person is off my radar. They’re a terrible human being [laughs] [VOR].”

Q: Right. It’s just they’ve got a different worldview [X-probe]?

A: It’s – they’ve got a different worldview, and try and work with them on that, and try and bring them more along the lines of your conviction [AUG-val] [OX1] [VOR].

This interviewee’s responses show his capacity to relate objectively to his perspective and those of others in the service of valued ends – “respect”, “moral obligation”, “conviction” and “balance”, all coded [AUG-val]. Many of the complete utterances were value oriented self-rules [VOR] that also attracted the perspective-taking code [OX]. This combination of codes correlated most strongly and significantly with measures of psychological flexibility and wellbeing. See the Quantitative Analysis section below.

Another interviewee, a 51-year-old Australian male who had practiced as a lawyer until going into business as a software architect consulting to the Australian government spoke quite explicitly about his “observing-self”. These utterances were coded [SX1] or [SX2]. It was interesting to note the augmenting value for the interviewee of being able to take perspective on his own internal experience, particularly in challenging situations. Being able to take perspective meant that he

was more able to move in valued directions [VOR] while experiencing strong emotions. In this first excerpt, after being probed for self-as-context [X-probe] and/or the contextual relations [RuleCrel-probe] involved in the experience being discussed, the interviewee described the part of himself “my observer”.

Q: Can you talk about how you see or how you know yourself and others [X-probe] [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: I mean, I have this and what I've always called, even a long time before I learnt anything in the psychological area, I've called my observer, I've got this part of me that can watch what's going on and literally talk to me in the quietest, steadiest way no matter what is going on [SX2]. I had an incident [laughs] when I was skydiving when I was in the army and the instructor said, "When you jump out of the plane, you're going to have to count, you have to count up to 5,000."

Q: Mmm hmm.

A: And I said okay, and I jumped out of the plane and I counted to 5,000 and when we hit the ground, the instructor came to me and he says, "You know I have never seen that happen. I've never seen anybody on his first jump, jump out and continue to count to 5,000. How did you do that?" And I knew the answer, I knew how I did that, I left that to my observer. I said to myself the guy who's calm while all this chaos is going on, he is going to do the counting [SX2].

This type of knowing of oneself or self-discrimination was rare across all the interviews coded in this and the previous studies discussed in this thesis. Those who uttered such statements about themselves also uttered more value oriented self-rules and were consistently rated high in psychological wellbeing. In this next excerpt this interviewee further explains how he observes himself in conflictual situations.

A: ... What I knew is that the observer had a job and as - that's what I use in conflict because I'm a big, you know, a lot of my work is about conflict or dealing with conflict and if I didn't have that observer self, you know, I don't know what I'd do [SX2].

Q: Yeah, right.

A: Because I just - you talk to somebody and then their hackles rise and they start having a personal go at you and my observer says can you feel that? Your heart's going like crazy, what are you going to say now? [Laughs] so, yeah [SX2]... Then you watch their reaction and the observer goes yeah, okay [SX2], you seem pretty steady. Or, you're a bit shaky mate [laughs] [VOR]...

The way that being able to take perspective on personal experience enhance self-efficacy was apparent in utterances made by this interviewee. This type of responding is in sharp contrast to the utterances quoted above where interviewees described themselves in abstract terms such as “seeing and connecting everything” “this space... gap sort of thing” or “residual karma”. Further, utterances such as those offered by this interviewee showed the utility of being able to observe and accept experience for what it was rather than employ mindfulness practices to control or avoid unwanted experience as discussed above. Those who discriminated themselves as the ‘perspective-taker’ of their experience in some way also uttered more value oriented self-rules, less control oriented self-rules and were consistently rated higher in psychological wellbeing amongst the participants. See the Quantitative Analysis section below for results.

Values and value oriented self-rules

A feature of the utterances made by those rated higher in psychological flexibility and wellbeing was the frequency of value oriented self-rules. The frequency of these utterances was the single strongest and most significant predictor of wellbeing across all the studies discussed in this thesis (see the Quantitative Analysis section below and in Chapters 3 & 4). In this study I chose to introduce a code to the FSDM that

captured the utterance of values [AUG-val] distinct from the utterance of value oriented self-rules [VOR] as discussed above. I wanted to determine if uttering values alone predicted wellbeing as significantly as when they were uttered in relation to a situation where they had or would practice that value, that is as part of a value oriented self-rule. When values were uttered as part of a self-rule they were understood to determine the extent to which events in the self-rule function as reinforcing consequences (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001d, p109; Leigland 2005). As discussed earlier, there are two categories of events that can be reinforced in a self-rule; a prescribed behaviour and/or consequence. Based on this understanding I assumed that uttering values alone would not predict wellbeing as significantly as when uttered as part of a self-rule. A final analysis of the frequency of these utterances showed this to be the case (see Quantitative Analysis section below). Examples of the clear enunciation of values and value oriented self-rules are captured in the interview excerpts below. The first quote is from an interview with a 34-year-old Australian male completing a PhD in Philosophy at an Australian university. He had trained in mindfulness, practiced formally and informally, and taught mindfulness and philosophy classes. While discussing his experience of teaching philosophy he described himself and others as being set free from self-limiting beliefs and taking the view of the apparent “perfection” of himself and others. His experience of life and “incredible love” are captured in utterances classified as augmentals [AUG-val] and value oriented self-rules [VOR]. In this excerpt most of my probes were complex reflections framed as questions to elicit the contextual relations [RuleCrel-probe] or contextual function [RuleCfunc-probe] of the self-rules he was uttering. I also played back the self-rules as I had heard them [RuleValid-probe] seeking validation.

Q: You’ve described a moment when you’re most alive, but you’re also saying there’s many of them. So I’m guessing there’s something very similar and important about them all that’s directing your behaviour [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah. That’s a lovely question. I suppose [pause] – I suppose for me it comes from my own personal experience of having the sort of insights that my

students have [AUG-val]... I think it's fundamentally around people having insights into their lives that transform them, you know [AUG-val]? That – like, little light bulbs, or pennies, or whatever you [laughs] want to call them, that just – that go bang. And it's transformational. It's that transformation – and what is that transformation? It's fundamentally transformation from living under some sort of sense of constraint or hidden assumption, or sort of burden, or whatever you – in different forms, to just seeing how that can be released in some way. And that to me is a really important thing. That's why I feel – you asked about my purpose. I think that's sort of where it comes from [VOR]...

In this utterance the antecedent reinforcing values were “insight” and “transformation”; the reinforced behaviour and consequences were apparently the behaviour of holding assumptions lightly so as not to live under the constraint of hidden assumptions and the outcome of being released from such burdens. The interview continued.

Q: And it sounds like what you're striving for now is to allow others to create a space in which collectively you reside in it, in perfection, and you can see it [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Absolutely. I mean, that's a lovely way of putting it. I mean, that really is fundamentally what motivates me in these – helping [AUG-val] with these classes, but certainly more broadly as well. It's this – but, yeah. Certainly particularly I found an expression for that through facilitating these (philosophy and mindfulness) classes [VOR].

Q: So, if I were to capture that as a kind of guiding principle – it would be something like, you're guided by a desire to witness the wonder of life itself, within yourself and others. So as a consequence, you're constantly turning your attention back to that. Is that right [RuleValid-probe]?

A: Yeah. Definitely. I think the word freedom is really what resonates with me [AUG-val], is this – the desire to – yes, to experience that for myself, and to help others experience that. I think for me, if there's one word [laughs] to put to it, it's this sense of freedom [AUG-val] [VOR].

Q: Right, yeah. So, freedom to transcend the phenomenal world, but also to be in it really differently [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah. But for me, I – it's interesting. I've never had this conversation, by the way, but the thing that I really enjoy is – I said it before – is the both, how people – how this kind of wisdom helps people at the practical level [AUG-val], but also really has no limit in terms of the depth and subtlety of the things that you might – where it might take you [VOR].

In these value oriented self-rules [VOR] the interviewee's stated values [AUG-val] were "helping", "freedom" and "wisdom"; the reinforced behaviours and consequences included the act of facilitating philosophy classes and the experience of helping others discover freedom. In these self-rules the reinforced behaviours and outcomes were interconnected; the act of facilitating was interconnected with the outcome of having facilitated for others the wisdom that would give them freedom at a practical level.

Research has shown that values function more effectively to bring about wellbeing when they are intrinsic to the behaviour of the individual (Sheldon et al. 2004; Veage et al. 2014; Wilson et al. 2001). This quality of valuing was reflected in many of the value oriented self-rules [VOR] uttered by the interviewees in this study. For example, the following interviewee, a 46-year-old Australian female completing a PhD in clinical psychology at an Australian university spoke about her long search for the purpose of life and personal values. The discovery of her values was tantamount to realising they were *her* values and that they *were* intrinsic. Of all the interviewees in this study she ranked amongst the highest two in psychological flexibility as measured by the FSDM and AAQ-II at time of interview; also, her subjective measures

of wellbeing taken six months post interviews were amongst the most positive across all the interviewees.

Q: (You went to a Buddhist monastery for 12 months, then after that). So just talk about that trajectory. Are you still on it, or has it matured [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah, I guess in a sense I am, because I think that – I think that what changed (is realising), your values are your values, and they don't have to be someone else's, and then being able to look inside and go, oh, okay. So, yeah, courage is one value [AUG-val]. I can just – but I can act on that in different ways. It doesn't have to be about going to a warzone [laughs] [VOR]... Or flexibility [AUG-val]. I can be doing that in my head [SX1]; I don't have to be running around the world. And so it's more of a similar value, refining that [VOR].

Q: And it sounds more intrinsic [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah. Like, for example, the curiosity, yeah. That was a value, but when I was younger, yeah, I was curious, but there was no attention to detail, 'cause there was no mindfulness. Now, I realise that I was curious [AUG-val]; I just didn't know how to embody that value. And now I can be curious by looking inside my head [SX1]; it doesn't have to be – I think that after the year in the monastery, yeah, I moved a lot, but I didn't get the answer. I was still looking for the meaning of life, as in the one, the one meaning [AUG-val] [VOR].

Consistent with the idea that values function most effectively when they are intrinsic to behaviour is the idea that values also function effectively when they are enacted in the service of realising a broader purpose (Chase et al. 2013; McKnight & Kashdan 2009; Wilson et al. 2009). This notion is evident in the following quotes from the same interviewee. While describing her search for personal values and meaning in life she explained eventually finding purpose and unconditional love in her marriage, her son and working with young people helping them live richer and more vital lives.

Here again, many of her utterances were value oriented self-rules [VOR] that contained values [AUG-val] that were intrinsic to the behavioural events in the self-rule. The stated outcomes in these self-rules reflect her broader purpose of loving her family unconditionally for who they are and setting younger people free.

Q: The one meaning. So where are you at with all of that now, because these are kind of really deep pursuits. Who am I? What's the meaning of life? They're really big questions [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah. And, well, I let go of the one meaning of life... And I think, especially since I've got married, not since I met (my husband), but since (my son) was born – they're connection things. And (my son) made the big difference with that. I realised I can do unconditional love [AUG-val]. I didn't realise I could do it. I couldn't – I didn't think I could do it before I got him [VOR]... What do you love [AUG-val]? You love [AUG-val] the package (my husband), and the package gets old, and the package loses its hair, and the package gets wrinkles [VOR] and - I think there's a certain faith. There's a certain leap of faith [AUG-val] that – what I've been learning lately is to have faith in the process, and the process of relationships, of open relationships [AUG-val], having faith in that. I mean, (my son) gave me a hit with that, because I realised I did have unconditional love [AUG-val] [VOR], and I didn't care how many legs he has, or how little sense of humour he has; I'll still love him.

Q: Well, that becomes the meaning of life, doesn't it [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Well, that's true. But yeah, the meaning of life is to help – yeah, is to enjoy and help assist [AUG-val] the younger person. It's a bit like where we started from, is that they've got their life now, and they're making up the world after us. And I get a whole bundle of energy from working with that age group. I love it [VOR]... The endless possibilities [AUG-val] sitting in that room (teaching them mindfulness and values) excites me. It's not – and no longer it's me – will I live in this country or that country? It's now them. What will happen to them? Where can they go [AUG-val] [VOR]?

Across all the interviews in this study, it was primarily my probes for the contextual relations (C_{rel}) and contextual function (C_{func}) of the interviewee's self-rules (COR, VOR) that prompted a baseline frequency of verbal operants that correlated with the measures of psychological flexibility and subjective wellbeing taken. See the Quantitative Analysis section below for a statistical analysis. In all the studies discussed in this thesis I had assumed that a measure of the frequency of verbal operants would be a functional assessment of verbal behaviour that predicted wellbeing (Hayes et al. 2001d; Leigland 1996, 2005; Shahan 2013).

Generalised responding

To predict wellbeing based on the frequency of verbal operants means that the measured operant responses must have generalised to different contexts of the speaker. Such generalisation of rule following to different contexts was apparent in the utterances' of the interviewees. The following interview excerpts provide examples of how control oriented self-rules [COR]; perspective-taking [SX and OX]; and, value oriented self-rules [VOR] had apparently generalised.

Firstly, the generalisation of control oriented self-rules [COR] was evident in the utterances of the 34-year-old Australian male completing his PhD in Philosophy quoted above. In this interview he described a control and avoidance strategy that he learned at a young age in response to being bullied on a school camp. This was in contrast to his experience of being set free from self-limiting beliefs discussed above. The majority of utterances in this passage are descriptions of unwanted experience, coded as aversive augmentals [AUG-con], or control oriented self-rules [COR]. In this first excerpt he describes the original situation that elicited the control and avoidance response with related payoffs and costs.

A: ... I was this small, little impish kid and very sensitive. And off I went to this – in the Kangaroo Valley for six months, and all those **social structures were suddenly gone and I was basically left to fend for myself [AUG-con]**... And so that was my first, yeah, experience of being alone.

Q: Yeah, huge. So how did you deal with it [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: I really struggled to deal with it and I also felt like I didn't belong in a lot of ways as well [AUG-con]. But I dealt with it by, in many ways, just internalising things and just keeping going a little bit into a shell and just keeping – just putting up the barriers. So not saying things that I thought were going to get me into trouble with the other kids, treading a path of least resistance, keeping quiet, keeping a low profile, avoiding getting too much attention, avoiding too much attention [COR].

Q: Okay. So you kept a low profile [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Keep a low profile; follow paths of least resistance in things, you know? And feel crappy a lot of the time, just feel really isolated and helpless [AUG-con] all of the time [COR].

Q: Yeah, right. So I'm wondering then, that strategy, how well did that work? What were the payoffs and costs associated with it [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yes, it's interesting to reflect. It worked - it solved the immediate problem in it minimised the immediate problem. Because any attention – it's like the mob, the one thing, when you're with a mob, that you don't want, is them to notice you [AUG-con]. And so going low profile and the path of least resistance on any sort of social issue or encounter or whatever just worked. And finding other kids that were a bit more of like mind and in some ways less aggressive and just hanging out with them [COR]...

Q: Mmm, what were the payoffs and costs [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: The payoffs and costs. Well, the benefits were that I probably got bullied [AUG-con] less than I would've because I didn't fight back and take the bait in a fight that I could never win [COR].

It was interesting to note that the control and avoidance strategy this interviewee learned as a youngster persisted as a “default” response that had generalised to similar contexts in adult life. In the following excerpts he described how his original response had generalised as a survival strategy. I confirmed the validity of his control oriented self-rule with rule validity probes [RuleValid-probe].

Q: So that strategy, okay, ‘when in a threatening situation, take the path of least resistance and not push back unnecessarily’, has that become a strategy or a principle that’s continued to work for you [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe] [RuleValid-probe]?

A: Mmm, interesting. It has become a bit of a default strategy but I don’t think it works very well.

Q: All right. So that’s interesting. So with that default response, what have you learned about how to behave [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Well, basically just that if you want to survive in a hostile environment [AUG-con] you need to be strategic in the way you manage and position yourself. I’m not saying that’s altogether a – I’m not saying that I learnt how to thrive in a hostile environment [AUG-con], I just learned more about responding in a way that at least means you're not going to get taken out, kind of thing [COR]... this is something that’s had a big impact in my life – is this thing about going under the radar. So to step forward boldly into the spotlight or to not, and that has in many ways massively shaped my subsequent behaviour and choices a lot of times. And a default – it still is today in a lot of ways – is around avoiding conflict [AUG-con] [COR]. I wonder why?

Q: So overall, given what we've talked about – if there is a principle or self-rule you employ generally, explicitly or implicitly, what would you say [RuleValid-probe]?

A: Avoid conflict [AUG-con] at all costs [laughs]. So that you don't hurt others and you don't hurt yourself [COR].

Another interviewee also spoke about a generalised control and avoidance strategy. She was a 46-year-old Australian female who had previously completed a PhD at MIT, USA. She was currently completing an honours degree in art at an Australian university. In this interview she discussed having to self-censor her approach to undergraduate study as a mature student, which she experienced as aversive. The excerpts reflect the costs she experienced as she employed various strategies to avoid unwanted inner experience and upsetting others. Various utterances were coded as augmentals [AUG-con] & [AUG-val], and self-rules [COR] & [VOR] reflecting her ambivalence between avoidance and value directed responses. It was apparent in her recollections how her generalised responding continued to yield undesirable outcomes.

Q: Is there anything that you find yourself persistently complaining about that always has a certain kind of response to it [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Mmhm. I guess, there's one, a long-standing and persistent complaint is – the difficulty I have fitting into my year group – in my studies, doing my – I'm doing my honours this year. And I'm – I have this feeling over the last few years, I'm having to pretend [AUG-con] I'm an undergraduate student in order to fit in with the structure of the way the course is taught and the expectations of the way you study from the teaching staff or other students [COR]. And that's very – definitely a persistent complaint ... I have had that sense of having to subsume my learning for a long period of time [AUG-con], not just the experience I could bring to this current time, but what I needed to be able to do in order to learn myself and not just have a sense of sitting on the sidelines, watching other people learn. Because if I'm starting from here, in

years and experience and understanding of myself, and they're here, I still need to be able to learn as well [AUG-val] [COR]...

Q: So they're quite significant costs, aren't they [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah, I'm – there's now still this sense of frustration and feeling squashed in a box. I keep thinking of myself as being chained to the highchair and given a rattle, you know, for the last couple of years. It's becoming more and more a historical frustration rather than a present one [AUG-con].

As this interviewee continued to discuss her experience, her responses began reflecting a contrast between extrinsic and intrinsic forms of motivation. The following quote captures her dissolving ambivalence as she responds more flexibly to prevailing circumstances and begins giving voice to a commitment to “valuing who I am” and acting in accord with her intrinsic values. The cost of continuing to follow her generalised control oriented self-rule [COR] was evident.

Q: So how do you deal with that?

A: The first couple of years of my degree, I kind of sucked it up and kept it internal [COR]... But this year, I'm starting to push back. It's been more difficult to pretend than just let things ride. And so I'm more likely, if I have to do a presentation, to talk about my research in a less edited way. That sort of ticks the boxes that they have [VOR]... I kind of wore myself out in the first couple of years, complying and it started to break down last year [AUG-con]. And I'm finding myself very reluctant to be seen to be doing things the right way [AUG-val], when – I don't think I'm a stick in the mud and saying, no, it has to be this way or not at all. But I'm less likely to try and pretend [VOR] - no [laughs], just your average undergraduate student and stay really quiet in class and not make a comment or venture an opinion that could suggest that I'm bringing something to the experience of a class that is unusual.

Q: So what's the important stuff that's at stake underneath all that [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: I think it's that sense of knowing and valuing who I am, for me [AUG-val]. In the long run, it doesn't usually matter to me what they think – other people think, now [VOR]. Except that – if I really stuff up my honours assessment ... I've lost a year worth of effort, in which case I'd be cranky. But I can't – I can't accept that complicity anymore [AUG-con]. That sense of just – it's not enough just to withdraw and just comply [VOR]...

Q: So, it sounds like something new is emerging. What are the payoffs that are emerging? I'm hearing a few, I think [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: I think I'm happier now I've accepted that the way I'm working is going to work for me [AUG-val] and that I'm fairly confident going into the subsequent years that I have the capacity to develop my own art practice, separate than the Art School [VOR] ...

These quotes are a testimony that ongoing efforts to avoid or control unwanted experience yield a pattern short-term payoffs and longer term costs. This is consistent with findings that show the aversive effects of such rule-following (Levin et al. 2012).

Another form of generalised responding evident in interviewee responses was the generalisation of perspective-taking. The following interview excerpts were uttered by the 51-year-old Australian male who had practiced as a lawyer until going into business as a software architect quoted above. Here he explained how he observes himself in a variety of situations to positive effect.

Q: ... So (when perspective-taking) if there's a kind of an operating principle for you underneath this about what works; what would that be [RuleCfunc-probe]?

Ch5: FUNCTIONAL SELF-DISCRIMINATION INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUE

A: Well, I mean, it comes down to the **observation of the smaller signals** [AUG-val]... One of the answers that I didn't give you is that when I was giving that speech, my body started to tingle.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: And I observed it, I could feel it and I could, you know, my observer was saying your body is tingling [SX1] [SX2].

Q: Yeah, right.

A: Yeah, so that's - yeah, it's - the generalisation I take from it is that however bad the emotion is, the **witnessing** [AUG-val] of the emotion is a profound experience [SX1] [VOR].

Q: Yep.

A: So, recently I got a phone call from South Africa and my sister told me my dad had been suffering from heart failure and my sister told me that she had bad news... And in the pause between her saying that she had bad news and telling me that no, no, no, dad, wasn't dead, it wasn't to do with that... I experienced the grief of my dad having died and it was extraordinary for me to actually be on the phone and just say oh here comes the grief and just almost measuring it and realising that the sadness I felt about my dad passing was actually more profound than that of my mother, even though I was closer to my mother, and then, of course, that didn't happen, but I was still able to actually [SX1].

Q: Yeah, wow. And so that behaviour is generalised; how is it useful?

A: Well, it's amazingly useful in conflict situations or difficult conversations... It's amazingly useful, because no matter how hard the conversation is, there's this thing that you're going to be **observing** [AUG-val], so you unlock that part

and you say you sit down with me here and let's do this thing and the emotional part of you or the sort of experiential part of you goes in and says I don't think you needed to do that or maybe you went in a bit hard and then you watch their reaction and the observer goes yeah, okay [SX2], you seem pretty steady. Or, you're a bit shaky mate [laughs] [VOR]...

The positive effect of being able to take perspective on experience as described by this interviewee is consistent with findings that have shown the impact of this behaviour on healthy psychological functioning (Levin et al. 2012; Luciano et al. 2011; Wilson et al. 2001).

Along with perspective-taking, the other form of generalised responding apparent in the interviews was the generalisation of value oriented rule following. For example, one interviewee, a 34-year-old Australian male who worked as an Assistant Director in an Australian government department spoke about taking value directed action as a generalised response. He had not trained in mindfulness but showed significant psychological flexibility. This was apparent as he was ranked amongst the top two most psychologically flexible as measured by the FSDM and the AAQ-II. Further, this interviewee's subjective measures of wellbeing taken six months after the interviews were also amongst the most positive across all the interviewees. This suggested the generalisation of his value oriented self-rules [VOR] to future contexts. In the interview excerpts below the values [AUG-val] he espoused were "exploration", "new experience", "freedom", "adventure" and "making a difference" through his career. Across all three interviews this interviewee uttered a total of 83 value statements [AUG-val] and 37 value oriented self-rules [VOR]. This was on average double the amount compared to those rated lowest in psychological flexibility. In contrast he uttered 6 statements of aversive experience [AUG-con] he wished to avoid and 5 control oriented self-rules [COR]. The experience he wanted to avoid [AUG-con] was "boredom" and a sense of "being trapped". The interview excerpts below capture a reiteration of similar value oriented self-rules [VOR] aimed at savouring moments and building a career. Amongst these statements the interviewee utters one control oriented self-rule [COR] about avoiding the experience of feeling trapped and bored. We were discussing a period of time when he was living in England wondering if he

should continue searching for new experiences and career opportunities or return to Australia.

Q: So, did you have any criteria that you were using to evaluate the direction you wanted to take and the quality of experience [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Criteria. What were the – I guess the things that were of interest to me were being able to explore [AUG-val] in your career, being able to explore just living in a different country and all that has to offer, being able to explore [AUG-val] in terms of travel into Europe and those sort of things. I think that was probably the three big ones for me [VOR]...

Q: ... What are you passionate about [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: [Laughs] I've been toying with that question. I think in terms of my criteria for a job, as in it's got to have a broader purpose, in that it contributes to something that makes a positive contribution to society [AUG-val]. Below that, it's got to stimulate me, and it's got to keep me stimulated [AUG-val], so I've got to – so it's got to have certain elements to it that mean that there's still more and more to learn, more challenge [AUG-val] in the job. And then below that, there's a whole – but I'd say those are two biggies [VOR].

Q: ... So there's a few really dominant themes in there. One is about adventure and learning; another one is about – it's contribution [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah. And the counter to that is not wanting to be bored [AUG-con], not wanting to – maybe this is a slight generational thing – not wanting to be stuck in a job at a time in your life when you're trapped by it [AUG-con], because your circumstances don't allow you to do anything other than probably what you're doing [COR].

These utterances were typical of those made by this interviewee in which he kept reiterating his values and how he continued to reflect and act on them in different

situations. The following excerpt captures an apparent mindful disposition. This was interesting to note, as this interviewee had not trained in mindfulness but measured high in psychological flexibility, which suggested a capacity for perspective-taking in complement with a tendency to take value directed action [VOR].

Q: So there's something like, 'right now I'm moving towards something important in the long run' ...You've described getting off a plane, getting a job, as the two main moments, and there's something in both of those that was – well, I'm interested more in what it was in those moments that gave you that sense, “yes, I'm on track and I'm alive” [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Well – okay. Well, on the train on arrival in London, it is [laughs] I've been planning to do this for a long period of time, finally I'm here. And secondly, remember this moment, because you may not have this moment – and it's that similar when I got off in Vietnam: you may not have this moment again. This may be as free as you'll ever be [AUG-val] in your entire life... so enjoy it, remember it, savour it [AUG-val] [laughs] and it's going to go quickly. So there's a bit of reflection and almost anticipating that at some point down the track you're going to reflect on this moment [SX1]. At least you can enjoy that again [VOR].

Q: Right. So something like you've been anticipating it, you showed up and thought, yeah, I'm here. I'm going to be in it [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yep. Yeah, definitely. And with the job, it was more a case of this is going to allow me to enjoy [AUG-val] London in the way that I wanted to enjoy it. It's taken a bit longer than expected, but now I can do the things that I'd intended to do, and maybe it'll lead to something else. And I don't know what that is, so it extends the adventure [AUG-val] [VOR].

The ratio of value oriented self-rule to control oriented self rules uttered by this interviewee was 7:1. Those lower in psychological flexibility uttered close to an equivalent number of value oriented self-rules and control oriented self-rules with an

average ratio of 3:1 across the five lowest in psychological flexibility. The group lowest in psychological flexibility also uttered fewer perspective statements compared to those more flexible. Those rated higher in psychological flexibility uttered up to ten times as many value oriented self-rules than control oriented self-rules with an average ratio of 9:1. They uttered double the number of perspective statements. In sum, these trends supported the proposition that the interview-measure FSDI-FSDM is a functional assessment of verbal operants, as the frequency of coded statements tended to correlate with longer-term measures of wellbeing as discussed throughout this thesis. See the Quantitative Analysis section below for more details.

The experience of generalised responding apparent in these interview excerpts was typical for all the interviewees. When I discussed with the interviewees if they had taken any insights as a result of the interviews, most said that reflecting on the meaning behind patterns of responding tended to provide insight into how both value and control oriented self-rules had generalised across time and different life domains. Reflecting on the importance of different responses reinforced how important the interviewee's strengths and values were to them and in how many ways they were living them. Conversely, reflecting on responses taken in moments where known strategies didn't work or they couldn't formulate an effective strategy, led to similar insights into how such responding had generalised. This type of responding was usually experienced as habitual and persistent and often unproductive in the long-term. Across the interviews, responses to the experiences of major failure or to feeling torn were typically generalised as a type of behaviour that did not work in any of the contexts tried. These responses seemed in part to be brief and immediate responses to similar situations in the form of generalised 'implicit' self-rules (Golijani-Moghaddam et al. 2013; Hughes & Barnes-Holmes 2013; Hughes et al. 2012). Overall, the kind of generalised responding, and related insights, quoted in this section were not surprising and supported the idea that verbal responding and forms of rule-governed behaviour are generalised operants (Hayes et al. 2001b; Ramnero & Torneke 2008). This also reinforced that the interview-measure FSDI-FSDM is a functional assessment of verbal behaviour.

Value of a series of interviews

When debriefing interviewees after the final interview in the series, I asked them if they felt the series of interviews had deepened. That is, subsequent interviews provided the opportunity to explore chosen topics more thoroughly. I also asked if any particular topic stood out for them. All interviewees said the interviews were deep and meaningful for them. The majority said they felt they went deeper, that the conversations built on each other as patterns of responses and self-rules in use were identified as classes' of responses that had been generalised to different contexts. The interviewees said that of all topics – felt most alive; felt a sense of conviction; felt conflicted; experienced a major failure; or, made their toughest decision were meaningful. The interviewees liked having one interview per week and said that if they were any closer they would interfere with one another, that the break of one week allowed for each conversation to feel fresh. Many acknowledged that they rarely if ever had had the same type of opportunity to reflect on personal experience. One of the interviewees wrote to me after her last interview:

I am writing to you because I want to thank you for these sessions. Your listening, being there for me, allowing me to talk and your questioning have helped me navigate through a difficult time of my life. It is hard to put into words. I don't know if it is about validation but I feel a warmth and, although I am not religious, I feel the sessions are like a blessing. I feel freer.

Quantitative Analysis

In this section I present the results from an FSDM analysis of the interviews and an independent evaluation of my performance as the interviewer. The FSDM analysis was conducted to further validate the FSDM coding scheme as a functional assessment of verbal behaviour; the independent analysis of my performance as an interviewer was conducted to test, using a pre-existing interviewer coding scheme (Moyers et al. 2010), that the approach I took was, as far as possible, not an intervention in its own right but rather a neutral conversation that did not pull for change. These results are discussed below.

FSDM Analysis of the FSDI Interview Transcripts

One aim for this study was to further validate the FSDM. I wanted to test again to what extent the different forms of self-discrimination and rule-following predicted wellbeing. I assumed such statements would reflect the ability of the speaker to behave effectively in important situations. As the sample was small ($n=10$) and therefore underpowered, I was not looking for statistical significance, but rather similar patterns between the related variables to those in the previous studies. To test if coded measures of self-discrimination were related to, and potentially predicted wellbeing, I coded the set of transcribed interviews and correlated code frequencies with the set of subjective measures. These included a measure of psychological flexibility taken at the time of interviewing and four measures of wellbeing taken six months later. Coding was at the level of utterance which was a sentence or series of sentences expressing a complete thought (Miller & Rollnick 2013). FSDM measures were then calculated as a percentage of the total number of utterances made by the interviewee in an interview. The interviewee was taken as the unit of analysis as the aim of the project was to identify the important variables that would constitute an effective FSDI for the individual. In other words, the degrees of freedom for all statistical tests was 9 (number of interviewees – one), not 37 (number of interviews), in order to avoid Type I errors. It is worthwhile noting that correlations of .3 are considered moderate while .5 is generally considered a large effect in psychology (Cohen 1992).

The codes applied from the FSDM included all the 'Self' and 'Other' codes as in the previous two studies, less the Self- and Other-as-Process and Personal Belief codes. These codes were excluded, as they did not show any significant relationship with wellbeing in the previous studies and applying these codes considerably increased the time required for coding. Two new codes were added, [AUG-val] and [AUG-con] to capture statements of personal values and aversive emotional experience held by the interviewees.

The correlations between FSDM-codes and wellbeing measures are presented in Table 5.2. Overall, the relationship between the FSDM-codes and wellbeing measures followed the same patterns as in the first two studies. Value oriented self-rules [VOR],

the two perspective-taking codes [SX and OX], and calculations of SELF FLEX [VOR+SX] and SOC FLEX [VOR+SX+OX], were positively related to all the wellbeing measures. Conversely, control oriented self-rules [COR] and the self- and other-as-story codes [SS and OS] tended to be negatively related to wellbeing. Table 5.2 is colour coded to show these trends where red indicates a negative correlation and green a positive correlation. These results support the idea that being able to take perspective on experience and act in a values consistent way is commensurate with healthy psychological functioning (Hayes et al. 2012b).

Measures of Acceptance & Action (AAQ-II), a measure of psychological flexibility (Bond et al. 2011), taken at the time of interview, showed a significant relationship with measures of VOR, SX, OX, and SELF FLEX and SOC FLEX. VOR showed a strong and significant relation, $r = .74, p = .01$; SX showed a strong and significant relation, $r = .70, p = .03$; OX showed a strong and significant relation, $r = .80, p < .01$; SELF FLEX showed a strong and significant relation, $r = .82, p < .01$; and, SOC FLEX showed a strong and significant relation, $r = .85, p < .01$. The other significant relationships were between VOR and the measure of psychological wellbeing (PWB) taken 6 months post interview, which was strong and significant, $r = .66, p = .04$; and between psychological flexibility (AAQ-II) and psychological wellbeing (PWB), which was strong and significant $r = .72, p = .02$. These results further validated the FSDM as a functional assessment of verbal behaviour.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictors of Action and Acceptance (AAQ-II). Three predictors were simultaneously entered into the model: VOR, SX and OX. Together these variables significantly accounted for 68% of the variance in the AAQ-II, $F(3,6) = 7.44, p = .02$. The Standardised Coefficient for VOR, $\beta = 0.44, p = .02$, indicated it was the single significant predicting variable when controlling for the effects of the other variables. This confirmed again that it is VOR that is driving the relationship between the way we speak and psychological flexibility and wellbeing.

I assumed the two new AUG-val and AUG-con codes that were added to distinguish personally held values and aversive inner experience from stated intentions to act on

those values [VOR] of to avoid the unwanted experience [COR], would not correlate as strongly with the wellbeing measures as would the related self-rules – VOR and COR. As can be seen in Table 5.2 this was the case. Generally AUG-val was positively correlated with wellbeing and AUG-con was negatively correlated with wellbeing, although these relationships were all nonsignificant. In line with the thematic analysis above showing a distinct difference between those experiencing ambivalence and those who clearly articulated value oriented self-rules, this relationship between augmentals [AUG-val] and value oriented self-rules [VOR] suggests that knowing what you value without knowing how to act on that value may not be as psychologically healthy or reinforcing.

Note that SS-neg was not included in the correlation analysis as there were only two SS-neg utterances made across all 37 interviews.

Ch5: FUNCTIONAL SELF-DISCRIMINATION INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUE

	SS-pos	AUG-val	VOR	AUG-con	COR	SX	OS-pos	OS-neg	OX	SELF FLEX	SOC FLEX
<i>Measure taken at time of interviews</i>											
Acceptance & Action	.13	.40	.74*	-.18	-.44	.70*	-.23	.11	.80**	.82**	.85**
<i>Measures taken 6 month post interviews</i>											
Psychological Well Being	.23	.41	.66*	.05	-.39	.12	.03	.05	.43	.61	.61
Satisfaction with Life	-.04	.33	.47	.17	-.21	.04	.07	.02	.37	.43	.44
Positive & Negative Affect	.14	.26	.48	-.29	-.60	.12	.12	.03	.40	.46	.47
Depression-Anxiety-Stress	-.35	-.03	-.38	.16	.62	-.63	-.08	.20	-.86	-.48	-.55
Note 1: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$											
Note 2: $n = 10$											

Table 5.2: Correlations between elements of self-reported wellbeing and measures of self-discrimination. Green shading indicates a positive correlation, while red indicates a negative correlation.

The scatterplots below (Figure 5.1 through 5.5) represent the relationship between AAQ-II and coded utterances VOR, SX and OX and the measures of SELF FLEX and SOC FLEX. The plots show that increases in the frequency of the three categories of coded utterances VOR, SX and OX made by interviewees were correlated with increases in Acceptance & Action.

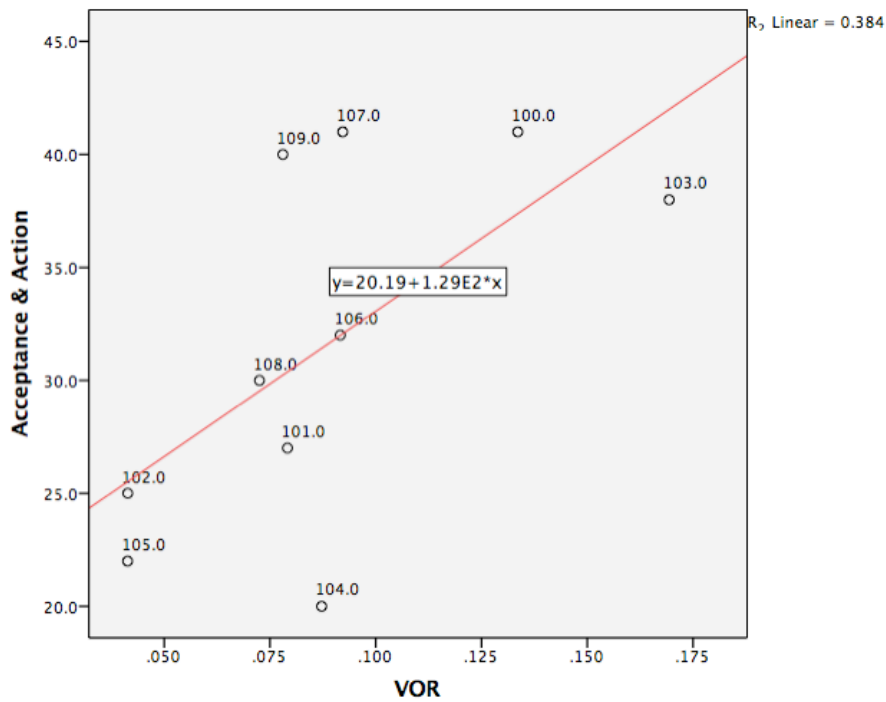


Figure 5.1: The relationship between AAQ-II and VOR.

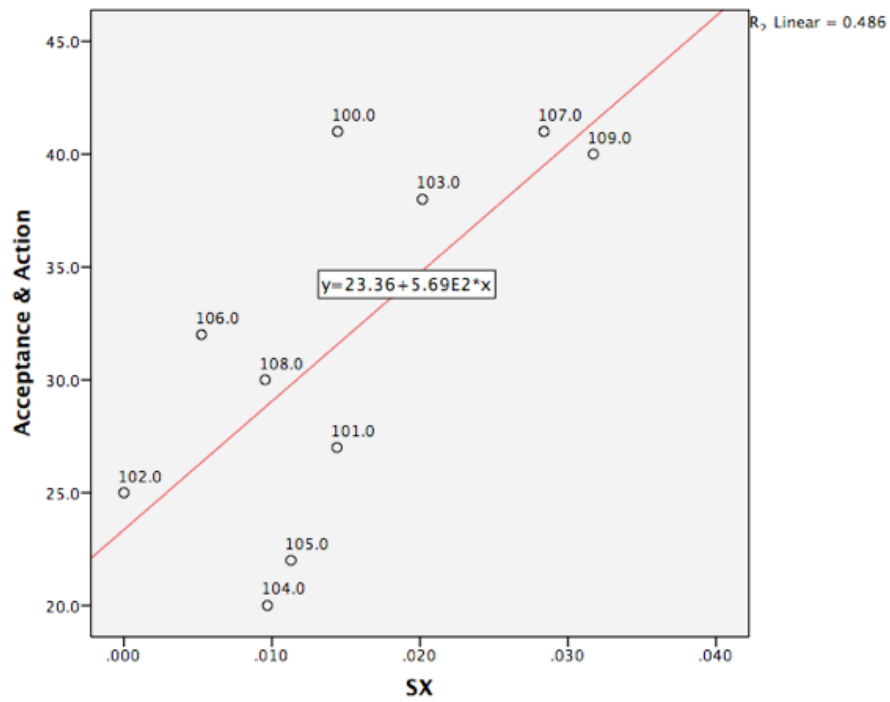


Figure 5.2: The relationship between AAQ-II and SX.

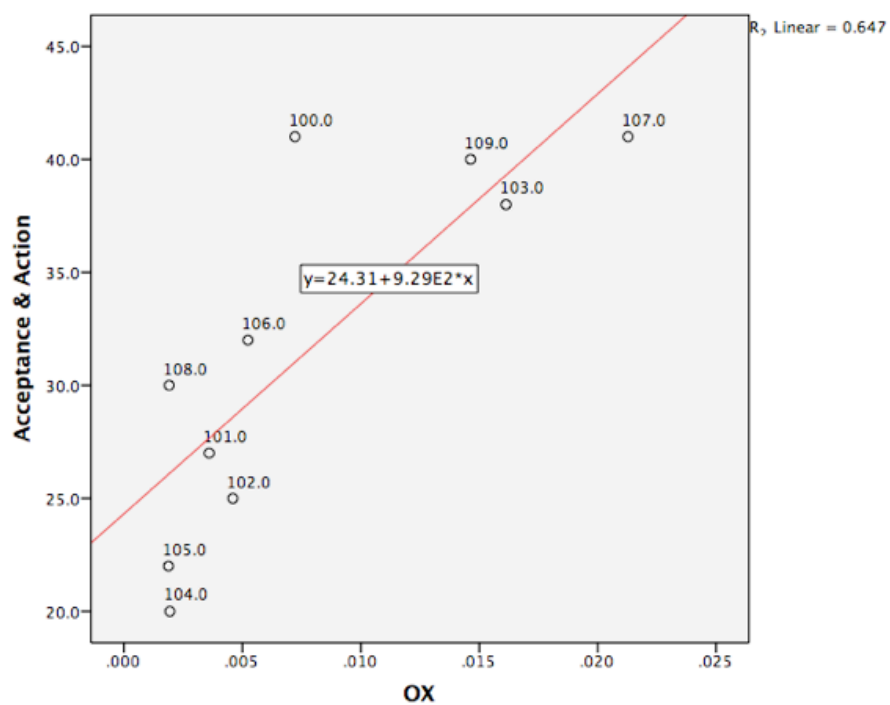


Figure 5.3: The relationship between AAQ-II and OX.

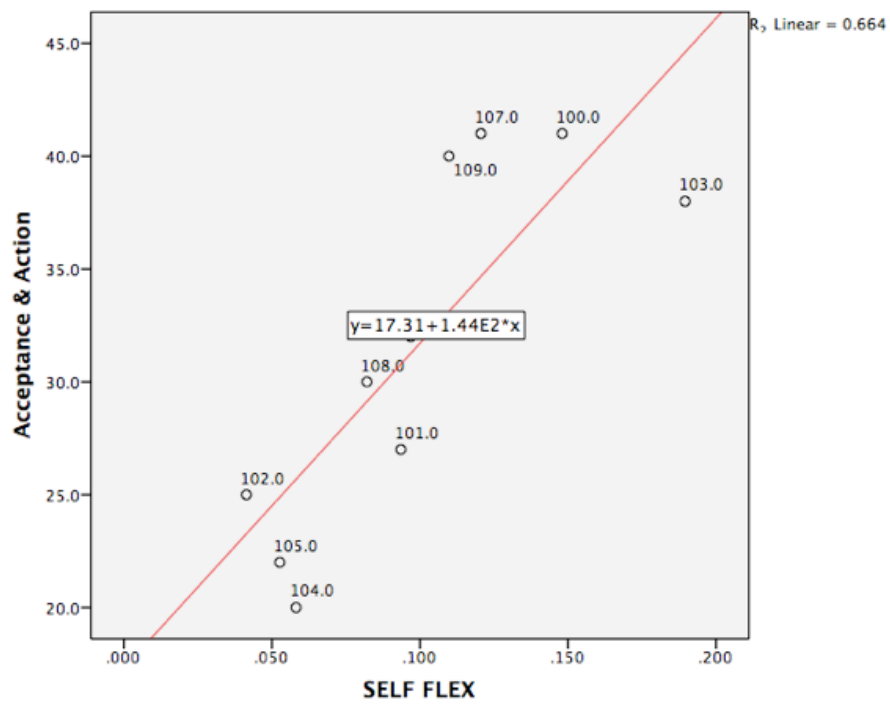


Figure 5.4: The relationship between AAQ-II and SELF FLEX.

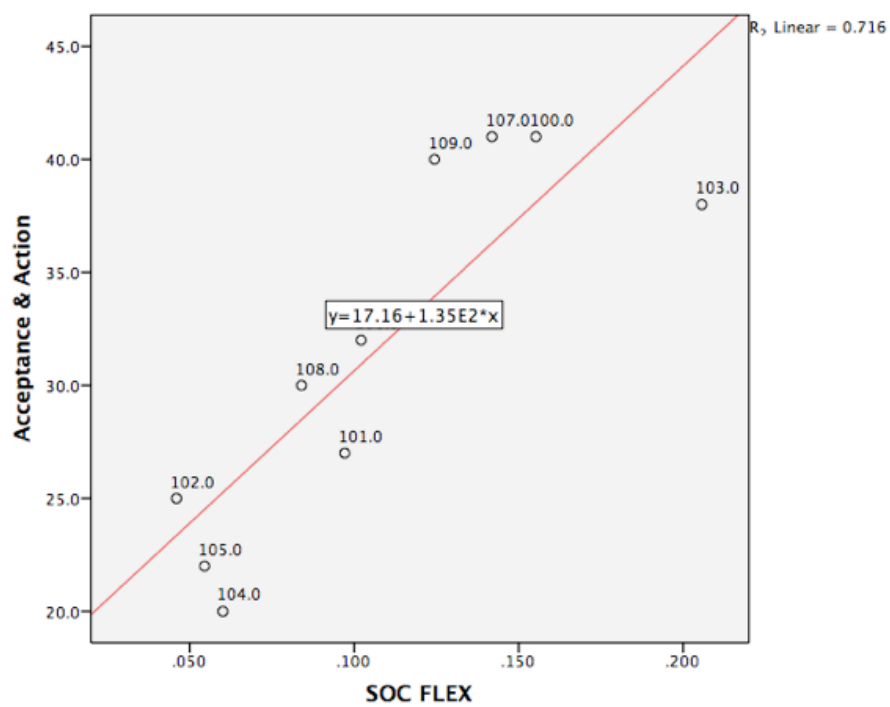


Figure 5.5: The relationship between AAQ-II and SOC FLEX.

Code:Utterance Ratios

The ratio between coded utterances and the total number of utterances made by a person in this study was analysed to test for optimal ratios that might predict psychological wellbeing. This test involved dividing the interviewees into two groups. The five who rated highest in psychological flexibility as measured by the AAQ-II and the five who rated lowest. An average of the different types of utterances was then taken for each group. See Table 5.3 for comparisons. A test of two independent proportions revealed that the group higher in psychological flexibility had a significantly higher proportion of VOR statements than the group lower in psychological flexibility ($z = 6.1, p < .001$), as well as a significantly higher proportion of perspective-taking statements (SX+OX) than the group lower in psychological flexibility ($z = 4.6, p < .001$).

Ratio	Low Psychological Flexibility	High Psychological Flexibility	Z Scores
VOR:COR	3:1	9:1	
VOR:Total Utterances	125:2285	172:1599	6.1**
COR:Total Utterances	57:2285	33:1599	0.8
X (SX+OX):Total Utterances	26:2285	52:1599	4.6**

Note: ** $p < .001$

Table 5.3: Ratios between coded utterances made by interviewees high versus low in psychological flexibility.

These ratios show that the interviewee's highest in psychological flexibility uttered at least one VOR every twelve utterances. This may be an optimal ratio. These same people made nine times as many VOR utterances as COR utterances. That is, they spoke much more about what was important to them and what they were going to do about it. In contrast, those low in psychological flexibility and wellbeing uttered at best three VORs for every COR. These people spoke more about what they were going to do to avoid unwanted experience. This group uttered at least one COR every 59 utterances on average compared with the more flexible group who uttered one COR

every 71 utterances on average. Further, those more psychologically flexible took perspective on experience almost three times as often as those less flexible.

While the number of participants was low ($n= 10$), these results suggest that as a functional assessment the FSDM code frequency:utterance ratios may be a good predictor of psychological flexibility and psychological wellbeing, as those higher in psychological flexibility consistently made more VOR and X (sum of SX and OX) utterances and less COR utterances.

When the frequencies of coded utterances were compared between the various interview topics – felt most alive; felt a sense of conviction; felt conflicted; experienced a major failure; or, made their toughest decision – each topic yielded close to the same number of code-able utterances for each code. The total percentage of code-able utterances for each topic was between 31-39% with VOR being applied to 7-10% of total utterances per interview topic. This suggests that all the topics were suited to the purpose of the FSDI. A chi-square test showed two topics, ‘felt most alive’ and ‘experienced a major failure’, were significantly related to the utterance of augmentals and self-rules (Table 5.4). Bonferroni adjustments were made to control for Type 1 error. The revised critical alpha for 16 comparisons was $0.05/16 = 0.003$. Even with this more stringent alpha, the chi-square test showed significant relationships between these two topics and the utterance of values [AUG-val] and value oriented self-rules [VOR]. The topic of ‘experienced a major failure’ was also significantly related to the utterance of aversive inner experience [AUG-con] and control oriented self-rules [COR].

Ch5: FUNCTIONAL SELF-DISCRIMINATION INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUE

Interview Topic/Foci	SS-pos	SS-neg	AUG-val	VOR	AUG-con	COR	SX1	SX2	OS-pos	OS-neg	OX1	SUM	p-value
Most Alive (9)	15	1	194	85	48	26	13	2	6	5	7	407	.001
Major Failure (7)	11	0	144	63	36	19	9	2	5	4	5	302	<.000
Toughest Decision (7)	6	0	80	35	20	11	5	1	3	2	3	168	.083
Torn (8)	12	0	157	69	39	21	10	2	5	4	6	329	.091
Conviction (5)	8	0	106	46	26	14	7	1	3	3	4	222	.011
SUM	52	2	681	297	168	90	44	8	22	18	26	1428	
p-value	.550	.286	.002	.403	<.000	<.000	.091	.041	.106	.002	.062		.003

Table 5.4: Frequencies of coded utterances compared to the different interview topics.

Relationship Between Codes

As in the previous study there was a positive and significant relationship between Self and Other codes (Table 5.5): SX showed a strong, significant and positive relation with OX ($r = .81, p < .01$); SS-pos showed a strong, significant and positive relation with OS-pos ($r = .75, p = .01$); SS-tot showed a strong, significant and positive relation with OS-tot ($r = .67, p = .03$). The relationship between SS-neg and OS-neg was not apparent as there were only two SS-neg utterances made across all the interviews that were conducted.

	SS-pos	SS-neg	SS-tot	VOR	COR	SX	OS-pos	OS-neg	OS-tot	OX
SS-pos	1.00									
SS-neg	.02	1.00								
SS-tot	.99**	.10	1.00							
VOR	.46	-.052	.41	1.00						
COR	-.43	.32	-.40	-.35	1.00					
SX	.03	-.21	.01	.39	-.22	1.00				
OS-pos	.75*	-.03	.74*	.24	-.13	-.19	1.00			
OS-neg	.38	-.03	.37	.53	.23	.14	.50	1.00		
OS-tot	.68*	-.03	.67*	.42	.03	-.06	.91**	.82**	1.00	
OX	.35	-.45	.32	.56	-.47	.81**	.04	.02	.04	1.00

Note 1: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Note 2: $n = 10$

Table 5.5: Correlations between 'Self' and 'Other' utterances.

Again, as in the previous study, the relationship between coded utterances supports the idea that the way a person discriminates their own behaviour is similar to the way they discriminate others' behaviour.

Evaluation of the FSDI Interviewer Capabilities

Evaluating my performance as an FSDI interviewer involved coding a subset of the interviews for interviewer capability using a method employed in Motivational Interviewing (Moyers et al. 2014; Moyers et al. 2010). A description of the coding and rating method is provided below followed by the results of the evaluation.

Interviewer Coding Method

When conducting the FSDI, in addition to probing for the interviewee self-rules and the code-able utterances, I employed a subset of Motivational Interviewing (MI) capabilities designed to cultivate partnership. I wanted to have an independent rater empirically evaluate a set of relevant interviewer behaviours (Moyers et al. 2014; Moyers et al. 2010). This was to ensure, as far as possible, that my interviewing was neutral and prompted for typical or generalised responses to recalled incidents. Coding my interviewer performance focused on how well or poorly I, as the interviewer, engaged three behaviours: *Listening* (questions & reflection), *Collaboration & Engagement* and *Empathy*, as defined in the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity Manual (Moyers et al. 2014; Moyers et al. 2010). This method provided independent feedback that could be used to improve FSDI interviewing skills. This coding method was intended to be used: 1) as an interviewing integrity measure by MI standards to check the FSDI interviews were *not* a manipulation for change; and, 2) as a means of providing independent structured, formal feedback about ways to improve interview technique.

Interviewer Rating Method

The FSDI interviewer rating method was adapted directly from the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity (MITI) manual (Moyers et al. 2014; Moyers et al. 2010) and involved taking global scores and behaviour counts for the behaviours being evaluated. These rating methods are explained next.

Collaboration & Engagement, and *Empathy* were rated as a *global score* for the entire interaction. This score captured the rater's global impression or overall judgment about my interviewer capability. The rating of *Collaboration & Engagement* captured

the extent to which I behaved as if the FSDI conversation was occurring between two equal partners. The rating of *Empathy* captured the extent to which I understood or made an effort to grasp the interviewee's perspective and feelings: literally, how much I attempted to "try on" what the interviewee felt or thought. These *global scores* captured the rater's global impression or overall judgment about my interviewer capabilities on a five-point Likert scale that characterised the entire interaction. To calculate the global score the global dimensions of Collaboration & Engagement and Empathy were rated. These scores were averaged to give an overall global score where an average of 3.5 is considered 'proficient' and an average of 4 is considered 'competent'.

Listening was considered a combination of *Questions* and *Reflection*. These behaviours were rated as *behaviour counts* which required the coder to tally then calculate percentages and ratios of instances of these particular behaviours. The coder did not judge the quality or overall adequacy of the behaviour, as with global scores, but simply counted instances. According to the MI protocol a 'proficient' rating for these behaviours would be: 50% Open Questions; 40% Complex Reflections; and, 1:1 ratio between Questions and Reflections. A 'competent' rating would be: 70% Open Questions; 50% Complex Reflections; and, 1:2 ratio between Questions and Reflections.

Both the global scores and behaviour counts were assessed within a single review of the recorded interview and involved random 20-minute segments from three of the interviews I conducted. Careful attention was paid to ensuring that the sampling of the recorded segments was random, so that proper inferences about the overall integrity of the FSDI could be drawn.

Interviewer Capability Results

Denise Ernst, one of the authors of the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity Coding Manual (Moyers et al. 2014; Moyers et al. 2010) was engaged to do the evaluation of my interviewing. She rated the capabilities: Collaboration & Engagement, Empathy, and Listening (a combination of Questions and Reflections)

from three 20-minute interview segments randomly chosen from the full set of FSDI interviews. This comprised 1.5% of the total interviews. The results are shown in Table 5.6 below. Denise Ernst said that she considered the three interviewer capabilities she rated to be excellent by MITI standards and that she did not rate my behaviour as an intervention that elicited ‘change talk’ (personal communication). This confirmed that by MI standards the interviews were *not* a manipulation for change but rather provided a neutral interviewing context that elicited the interviewee’s typical verbal operant behaviours. Further, this demonstrated that the behaviours of Collaboration & Engagement, Empathy, and the quality of Listening measured as a combination of Questions and Complex Reflections were important capabilities for conducting a successful FSDI.

Interviewer Capability	Score
Collaboration & engagement	4
Empathy	4.7
Questions:reflection ratio	1:3
Reflections	74%

Table 5.6: MITI rating of my interviewer capabilities.

Personal Reflection on My Interviewer Behaviours

Personal presence while interviewing

My own experience of doing the interviews transitioned from being preoccupied with the interview ‘script’ during early interviews to increasingly attending directly to the interviewee as I gained experience. In the beginning I found I had to actively defuse from thoughts and associated emotions about the structure of the interview and questions I should be asking and intentionally turn my attention to listening. This involved letting go of self-talk, then orienting my attention to what the interviewee was saying. To do this, I would broaden my awareness to take in my experience – sensations, thoughts, what was happening around me – then I would focus on what I was hearing and actively listening to understand.

By the 10th of the 37 interviews I was less distracted by my own cognitions. Attending to the conversation had become more an experience of flow where time passed quickly. I was simply seeking to understand. By the 15th interview the dominant experience was being present and attending to what the interviewee was saying. I found myself wanting to hear and play back what I understood the interviewee's perspective to be. I also found that when I gave myself some personal private contemplative time beforehand I experienced a better quality of presence and listening.

Types of questions and interview topics that worked well

As discussed above, I found three categories of enquiry supported a natural conversational style in the interviews. These three categories of questions sort to understand: the three-term contingencies (ABC) of the interviewee's behaviour [RuleCrel-probe]; the different perspectives they were taking on experience [X-probe]; and, the function or the self-rules they had in use at the time [RuleCfunc-probe]. The utility of these categories was particularly apparent by the fifth interview, at which time I began dropping the SOI (Lahey et al. 1988) approach of questioning for extremes of experience and sense making as these seemed to yield hypotheticals from the interviewees. The series of interview topics – felt most alive; felt a sense of conviction; felt conflicted; experienced a major failure; or, made their toughest decision – integrated well as they oriented the interviewees to a variety of vivid moments in their history that allowed for rich recall. This made it easier to listen and probe for different forms of self-discrimination and self-rules.

From my perspective, the most important interviewer skill was reflective listening. During post interview debriefs when I asked if they felt listened to, every interviewee said 'yes' as I had accurately played back to them what they had been saying and feeling. These playbacks were in the form of simple and complex reflections often framed as a question in order to gain conformation from the interviewee that I had understood them and to further the enquiry into the experience being discussed. As discussed above, complex reflections framed as questions that probed for the contextual relations [RuleCrel-probe] and contextual function [RuleCfunc-probe] of

self-rules were most effective in yielding code-able data. This is consistent with other findings that have shown the importance of reflective listening in fields such as executive coaching, negotiation, facilitation, dialogue, action learning, appreciative enquiry and conflict resolution where perspective and change are being sought. (Coleman et al. 2014; Fitzgerald & Garvey Berger 2002; Gergen et al. 2004; Isaacs 1999; Jentz 2007; Marquardt et al. 2009; Miller & Rollnick 2013; Orem et al. 2007; Schneider & Honeyman 2006; Schwarz 2002; Stober & Grant 2006; Watkins et al. 2011). The FSDI approach potentially expands upon this view by showing that this kind of listening functions to enhance the client's capacity to take perspective and formulate self-rules that elicit value directed action.

Overall there were two behaviours that worked well for me in the interviews – mindful listening and complex reflections framed as questions that came from an attitude of genuine curiosity about a fellow human being.

Discussion

Further validation of the FSDM coding scheme

The findings in this study supported and extended the findings from the previous two studies in which the FSDM was developed and applied to interview transcripts. Together these studies all showed that value oriented self-rules [VOR] significantly predict psychological wellbeing and that the function of VORs is enhanced with perspective-taking skills [SX] and [OX]. These findings indicate that the interview-measure FSDI-FSDM method of evaluating the function of language is a valid functional assessment of verbal behaviour. Further research will confirm this.

The mixed-method approach taken in these studies to evaluate the positive relationship between a person's self-view and their view of others is a new way of showing that the way a person treats themselves is reflected in how they treat others. While it remains unclear which comes first, the treatment of oneself or others, it has major implications. For example, specific approaches to helping people change their self-talk may result in changes to how they relate to others.

Potential value of adding AUG codes

The extension of the coding scheme in this study to include codes for the augmentals [AUG-val] and [AUG-con] may prove to be significant. This study showed that while the interviewees were able to utter what they personally valued and what inner experience was unpleasant for them, these statements were not as significantly related to wellbeing as the self-rules [VOR] and [COR]. This makes sense. It is highly likely that if a person values, say caring, they may experience a sense of anxiety if they do not know how to 'do' caring or do not have time to practice care in the way they feel they would like to or feel obligated to care for others. This reinforces the idea that while it may be helpful for people to clarify their values, it is more important for them to know how to act consistently with their values in important life domains (Wilson et al. 2009). This distinction was apparent in the thematic analysis in the difference between those experiencing ambivalence about how to respond to prevailing situations and those clearly able to articulate value oriented self-rules.

This study points to an RFT consistent method for measuring the function of values and aversive experience as reinforcers for different response forms and consequences. These utterances appear to function differently depending upon whether the speaker is effectively able to engage in forms of pragmatic verbal analysis that include these augmentals as reinforcers (Hayes et al. 2001e). That is, they function differently depending upon whether the speaker is able to construct pragmatic self-rules or not (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a; Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001d). As indicated in the thematic analysis above, without a VOR, an AUG-val may function as an aversive rather than a positive reinforcer.

Code:Utterance ratios may be a valid measure of psychological flexibility

The ratios between coded utterances and the total number of utterances made by a person in this study indicated that there might be optimal ratios that predict psychological wellbeing. While the number of participants in this study was low ($n=10$), and more research is required to confirm this observation, it is an important finding. As discussed above, the more psychologically flexible participants in this

study uttered at least one value oriented self-rule [VOR] every twelve utterances and uttered nine times as many value oriented self-rules [VOR] than control oriented self-rules [COR]. These and other ratios may be optimal in terms of predicting valued living, a finding that is reflected in other research that suggests optimal ratios of positive and negative utterances between people in high performing teams (Kauffman 2006; Losada & Heaphy 2004). With further research this approach to measuring the ratios of FSDM coded utterances may prove to be an indicator of psychological flexibility and predictor of wellbeing.

Interviewer capabilities

The results of the independent evaluation of my Motivational Interviewing (MI) capabilities tested in this study showed that they were appropriate for FSDI interviewing. The particular skills being: *Listening* (questions & reflection), *Collaboration & Engagement* and *Empathy*. Further, these results suggest that extending this set of capabilities to include the other MI capabilities of *Autonomy Support*, *Evocation* and *Direction* may provide a segue to future research on interviewing for behaviour change based on a combination of the FSDI and MI. The potential for this integration is reflected in the views of Bricker and Tollison (2011), who suggest MI and ACT, despite their conceptual and clinical differences, are complementary approaches focused similarly on a commitment to behavior change. They particularly point to the way in which both MI and ACT make use of language and values in therapy to bring about desired behavior change for the client. I discuss the implications of this integrated approach in Chapter 6.

Implications

The aim of this study was to design and conduct a series of Functional Self-Discrimination Interviews (FSDI) and analyse which aspects of the interview yield transcript/data suited to analysis using the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM). The specific research questions being tested were:

- For the interviewer: Which questions yield rich and accurate data for analysis with the FSDM; What does the interviewee say that appears to lead to different types of questions in the interview?
- For the interviewer: Are the capabilities of Listening (questions & reflection), Collaboration & Engagement, and Empathy effective processes for conducting an FSDI?
- For the interviewee and to further validate the FSDM: To what extent do different forms of self-discrimination and rule-following influence wellbeing and the ability to behave effectively in important situations as indicated by statements made by the interviewee in the interview?

The qualitative and quantitative analysis of the interview transcripts presented in this chapter further validated the FSDM and showed how verbal self-discrimination and rule following does influence and predict wellbeing. The thematic analysis and presentation of coded interview questions and responses along with the independent evaluation of my performance as an interviewer show what constitutes effective FSDI interviewing. Of particular import were the interviewer probes for contextual function [RuleCfunc-probe], contextual relations [RuleCrel-probe] and the skill of listening (questions and reflection) as defined in the Motivational Interviewing tradition (Moyers et al. 2014).

The potential for this work is considerable. Understanding the function of language and cognition and how it regulates behaviour has practical applications in numerous contexts. Potential applications range from the one-on-one session work of professional coaches and therapists with their clients to the work of leaders and change agents working in social contexts aiming to coordinate the effort of groups. Underpinning this work is a particular appreciation of the function of value oriented self-rules and the importance of perspective taking. This work invites questions about the functional drivers that underpin moral and prosocial behaviour. These are questions I turn my attention to in the following two chapters.

Chapter Six

Implications of This Research

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Purpose of Thesis

I had one question at the outset to do this thesis, “How do words and speech influence covert and overt behaviour?” This question focused more precisely on how statements about the ‘self’ and values function to predict wellbeing. The three studies in this thesis have explored and articulated the personal implications of such statements. In this chapter I consider: implications and potential uses of the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM); why value oriented self-rules and perspective-taking predicts wellbeing; implications and potential uses of the Functional Self-Discrimination Interview (FSDI); and, the limitations of this work. Then, in Chapter 7, I explore a new question – what are the social implications of this work? Specifically, what are the implications of these findings for prosocial behaviour and moral development?

Implications of the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM)

Is it possible to code for value directed self-rules and perspective taking?

The research conducted and discussed in this thesis suggests that it is possible to code natural language transcripts for forms of self and other discrimination, and self-rules based on Relational Frame Theory (RFT), and use those codes to predict wellbeing six to twelve months later. The results provide evidence that adopting an observing stance toward personal experience, taking perspective on other’s experience and knowing how to act in accord with value oriented self-rules causally contributes to long-term wellbeing. In each study the relationship between these characteristics of psychological flexibility and wellbeing was driven by the function of intrinsically held values (Hayes et al. 2001a; Hayes et al. 2012b).

Across the three studies undertaken in this thesis the measures of SELF FLEX (frequency of utterances of SX+VOR) and SOC FLEX (frequency of utterances of SX+OX+VOR) showed moderate to strong, positive and significant correlations with the various measures of wellbeing taken at three time points – at the time the statements were uttered, then six and twelve months later (see Results, Chapters 3, 4 & 5). While one should not conclude causation from correlations, these results infer

that if people are more able to objectify and take perspective on experience, their own as well as that of other's, and thus identify with it as transitory rather than literally true, as well as construct coherent and functional value oriented self-rules about future behaviours, they would also more likely experience mental health and effective functioning in the world over time. Thus, it seemed more likely that flexible 'self' and 'other' discrimination and cognisance of personal values and how to act on them would cause psychological wellbeing and future effective action than the other way around, particularly as the statements of interest were positively related with future measures of wellbeing. It is hard to imagine how psychological wellbeing would cause more retrospective flexible self/other-discrimination and values coherence. Further, several multiple regression analyses were conducted throughout this thesis to examine the predictors of psychological wellbeing (see Study 1, Results) and psychological flexibility (see Study 3, Results). In each of these regression analyses the measures of SELF FLEX and SOC FLEX emerged respectively as significant predictors of psychological wellbeing and psychological flexibility. These results suggest that predictability of wellbeing is supported. Further investigation will substantiate this claim.

While other research has shown significant relationships between extrinsic personal and social values, and varying levels of experienced wellbeing over extended periods of time (Kasser 2011a; Kasser et al. 2002; Kasser et al. 2014; Schwartz 1999, 2006; Schwartz et al. 2012), none, to my knowledge, has shown how extrinsic values function to reinforce values enactment prior to this work. Explanations about the way values work have, in the main, been in terms of socially mediated contingencies that shape behaviour, such as: social norms and values acting as important guides for work related behaviours and resulting levels of socioeconomic wellbeing (Schwartz 1999, 2006); value and goal conflicts impacting the quality of life by partakers of Corporate Capitalism (Kasser et al. 2007); the prioritising of wealth, status, and image as life goals by consumers of advertising campaigns (Kasser 2011b; Kasser et al. 2014); and, trends in materialistic role modelling impacting levels of material centeredness in youth (Twenge & Kasser 2013). Other research has shown that the positive effects of integrating values into the self is mediated by affiliation and levels of autonomy support in important relations (Deci & Ryan 2002b; Koestner & Losier

2002; Ryan & Deci 2000); and, that congruence between life and work-related values is related to wellbeing and perceived accomplishment at work (Veage et al. 2014). None of this research has shown how values function to allow the person to discriminate opportunities in their environment in which they can act in order to realise that value. Further, these enquiries have not identified how perspective-taking skills enhance valued directed action.

Findings in this thesis revealed an important relationship between values and value oriented self-rules. This research showed the significance of knowing in what contexts the interviewees would *act* on their values rather than just *knowing* what they are, as the predictability of values alone for wellbeing was less significant than when the person was able to describe in what circumstances they would enact their stated values (see Table 5.2). This reinforced the idea that while it may be helpful for people to clarify their values, it may be more important for them to describe the contingencies in which those values would be an intrinsic quality of behaviour in important life domains (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a; Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001d; Hayes et al. 2001e; Wilson et al. 2009).

Bringing an understanding of how values and perspective-taking function as discussed in this thesis to the work of enhancing valued living for people individually and collectively, could potentially yield greater positive change.

What should be targeted for behaviour change?

The fact that both positively and negatively valenced self and other characterisations, and personal beliefs about how others should or should not behave, were not significantly related to wellbeing (see Tables 4.5 & 5.2) has implications for what should be targeted for behaviour change. While ACT and other therapeutic methods target such verbal cognitive constructs for behaviour change (Hayes et al. 2012b; Herbert & Foreman 2011), the studies undertaken in this thesis suggest it may not be as important as helping the person construct value oriented self-rules.

It was apparent across the three studies that coded ‘self’ and ‘other’ conceptualisations and ‘personal beliefs’, were typically held by the speaker as literally ‘true’. From a cognitivist perspective, if a person has a psychosomatic problem, causality is often attributed to such underlying cognitive constructs, which are then targeted for change (Hayes et al. 2013; Herbert & Foreman 2011). It is assumed there is a need to realign such thinking with reality, as it is inaccurate. From an RFT/ACT perspective the same literal verbal constructs are targeted even though the approach differs. From an RFT perspective such behaviour is considered verbal operant responding to cues in the person’s current and historical context. If someone says, “I am hopeless”, it is a response to having behaved a particular way. Assuming the pragmatic ‘truth’ criterion of Contextual Behavioural Science, these verbal responses are considered in terms of their utility; the question is “does this way of seeing things work?” rather than “is this view ‘true’?” (Gifford & Hayes 1999; Hayes et al. 2012a; Hayes et al. 2013). This shift in pre-analytic assumptions has ACT trainers and therapists orient their clients to de-literalising and defusing from such unhelpful self conceptualisations (Hayes et al. 2012b; Wilson et al. 2001).

While this approach has been shown to have utility in realising behaviour change (Hayes et al. 2013), the results reported in this thesis provide some evidence that targeting the development of values oriented self-rules might sometimes be more critical for long-term wellbeing than targeting rigid self conceptualisations in therapy. At least in situations where self conceptualisations are not controlling much of the client’s behaviours, helping clients construct value oriented self-rules specific to enhancing value living in important life domains is more likely to ‘work’ to bring about wellbeing in the long-term.

How much does the way we see others and ourselves matter?

My analysis of the relationship between ‘self’ and ‘other’ discrimination statements in Studies 2 and 3 has shown a positive correlation between a person’s view of themselves and their view of others (see Tables 4.6 & 5.5). This investigation demonstrated the nature of deictic framing such that we cannot have an “I” without a “YOU” and the way the “I” is relationally framed necessarily has implications for the

way the “YOU” is relationally framed (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a; Hayes et al. 2001d). These findings were consistent with cognitivist-based research in that they both illustrate a tendency for people’s self-conceptualisations to reflect how they characterise and behave in relation to others (Deci & Ryan 2002a; Dweck 2011; Kegan 1994; Norcross 2012; Peterson 2011; Stober & Grant 2006).

When comparing the differently valenced ‘self’ and ‘other’ conceptualisations for potential causal relations with wellbeing, no significant relationships were apparent. In Study 2 both positive and negative self-views tended to be negatively correlated with wellbeing (see Table 4.5), while in Study 3 measures of positive self-views showed a slight positive relationship to wellbeing (see Table 5.2). In the same way, views of others showed similarly insignificant trends. In both Studies 2 & 3 positive and negative other-views showed mixed weak relationships to wellbeing, with measures of positive views of others being slightly more positively related to wellbeing. These relationships stand in contrast with the stronger and consistently positive relationship that both forms of self and other perspective-taking statements had with wellbeing (see Tables 4.5 & 5.2). These results show that literal views of oneself or others versus being able to take perspective on oneself and relate empathetically toward the views of others will likely impact future wellbeing, particularly when complemented with value directed rule-following as shown in the measures of personal and social flexibility (see tables 4.5 & 5.2). Perspective-taking will make a difference, literal views will not. This negative effect of ‘literality’ was also apparent in the relationships between value oriented personal-beliefs and control oriented personal-beliefs (Table 4.5), which were also negatively related to long-term wellbeing.

Overall, this thesis has shown that all forms of literality, both positive and negative conceptualisations of others and oneself, and rigid personal beliefs about how others should or should not behave, tended to negatively relate to long-term wellbeing, although these relationships were statistically nonsignificant.

What does this mean for the Coach and Therapist?

A coach or therapist typically desires valued living for their client (Hayes et al. 2012b; Herbert & Foreman 2011; Linley & Joseph 2004; Lopez & Snyder 2009; Stober & Grant 2006). An RFT account of how language functions to bring about wellbeing would orient the therapist and coach to the work of pragmatic verbal analysis with their client. A pragmatic orientation would be to ask the client “what is important now in the long run?” This work would focus on the utility of values and their application as desired qualities of action and outcome in real situations. Along with reinforcing the utility of values; enhancing perspective-taking would involve helping clients adopt an observer stance toward their inner experience and the views of others. While research and applied work in this area continues to affirm the importance of adopting a mindful and observing stance toward experience (Atkins 2013; Brown & Ryan 2003; Brown et al. 2007; Chatzisarantis & Hagger 2007; Hayes 2003; Hayes & Shenk 2006; Kerr et al. 2011; Krasner et al. 2009; Malpass et al. 2011; Ostafin & Kassman 2012; Shapiro et al. 2006) and persistently acting in accord with value oriented self-rules as causally contributing to valued living (Atkins & Parker 2012; Blackledge & Drake 2013; Bond et al. 2006; Bond & Flaxman 2006; Bond et al. 2008; Chase et al. 2013; Flaxman & Bond 2010; Grossmann et al. 2013; Hayes et al. 2006; Hayes et al. 1999, 2012b; Kashdan & Rottenberg 2010; Lally & Gardner 2013; Levin et al. 2012; Neal et al. 2012; Norcross 2012), an appreciation of the way in which values function and potential optimal ratios between utterances of value and other statement types as discussed in this thesis, would significantly enhance the coaches and clinicians capacity to explore and respond to such statements in their role in therapy. Further, this may be useful for training and for translating RFT concepts into a diagnostic tool for coaches and clinicians. Having a formal coding system for these behaviours would enable exploration of the ways in which coaches and clinicians relate and behave in their role in therapy.

How much should we talk about values and perspective?

Results from Study 3 provide evidence that specific ratios of different categories of utterances equate to high levels of psychological flexibility (see Table 5.3), and potentially predict psychological wellbeing (see Table 5.2). In this study, for those

who rated higher in psychological flexibility as measured by the AAQ-II (Bond et al. 2011), the ratio of utterances were: at least one value oriented self-rule for every ten utterances; and, one perspective-taking statement for every 30 utterances. For this group there was also a lower frequency of control oriented self-rules uttered. This finding has significant implications for practitioners and researchers working in the fields of psychological wellbeing and behaviour change. Understanding and measuring the efficacy of frequencies of self-rules and perspective-taking statements uttered by individuals affords a very practical approach to providing interventions that will result in positive change. Further investigation would confirm optimal ratios of such utterances.

What does this mean for the Researcher?

The FSDM coding method developed in this thesis holds great promise as an analytic tool for coding self-discrimination behaviour to predict long-term wellbeing. This is the first time, to my knowledge, that natural language expressions of value oriented self-rules and forms of perspective-taking have been associated with wellbeing in this way. The mixed method approach adopted in the studies discussed in this thesis did not have the problems associated with self-report measures. Common method bias can arise from having a common source or rater, common item characteristics such as demand characteristics and common scale formats, common context effects such as priming, common mood, or common time and location (Podsakoff et al. 2003). The approach adopted in developing the FSDM did not suffer from any of these common-method biases: interviews and self-report measures were rated by different sources, on different scales, at different times and locations. Also, the FSDM was not subject to the problems of changes in interpretation of items that arise in repeated measures testing of constructs such as mindfulness (Belzer et al. 2012).

While developing the FSDM in the first two studies I coded every self-referential sentence for precision. This approach was exceptionally time consuming. Each interview took at least twice as long as the original interview to code and each interview was coded at least six times as the approach was refined making a total of more than 400 hours of coding. In the third study discussed in Chapter 5 coding

focused only on self- and other-as-story and -context statements, augmentals and self-rules, and was coded at the level of utterance, where an utterance was a sentence or series of sentences expressing a complete thought (Miller et al. 2008). Reducing the number of codes and expanding the coding unit reduced coding time to less than 1.5 times the length of the original interview. Now that the coding scheme is more stable and it is clear that only two types of statement predict wellbeing – values oriented self-rules and perspective taking statements – it is conceivable that coding time would be further reduced and this tool could be effectively applied in clinical situations.

Focusing only on the predictive codes and identifying phrases, words and ratios of utterances that are over-represented for each code may pave the way to investigation using automatic coding similar to simple word count systems such as the Linguistic Inquiry Word Count (Pennebaker 2011) and related systems that explore relations between concepts such as Leximancer (<http://info.leximancer.com/>). An automated system such as these may provide clues for utterances that could be tested for functionality. This would allow for the investigation of larger numbers of people.

Why Does the Frequency of Value Oriented Self-Rules and Perspective-Taking Statements Predict Wellbeing?

Having considered the implications and potential uses of the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM) invites the question, “Why does the frequency of value oriented self-rules and perspective-taking statements predict wellbeing?” As discussed above, the principal findings in this thesis show that the language a person uses predicts wellbeing, particularly the utterance of value oriented self-rules. The main point of this thesis was to develop the method and determine whether or not there were relations between frequencies of different utterances and wellbeing. Further research will be necessary to explore the mechanisms whereby value oriented self-rules predict wellbeing. I speculate about possible mechanisms of action below.

Values sensitised people to opportunities for particular actions

One way that value oriented self-rules might act is through controlling the speakers discrimination and selection amongst environmental stimuli such that they discerned more opportunities to act consistently with their values (Leigland 2005; Skinner 1974). Values, when in a person's verbal repertoire, perform a motivative operation and function to augment and reinforce the appetitive quality of an action and/or consequence of that action (Leigland 2005). I assume that the frequency of value oriented self-rules uttered in interviews reflects the frequency of their usage in everyday life. To the extent that such self-rules sensitised people to the availability of reinforcement for particular actions, they act as augmentals and generalise to different contexts to govern the speaker's behaviour in similar ways, which was reflected in the increase of long-term wellbeing (see Tables 3.6, 4.5 & 5.2).

Value oriented rule-following is enhanced with perspective-taking

The results from the three studies have shown that when a speaker uttered both value oriented self-rules and perspective taking statements (SX & OX), together these statement were most predictive of wellbeing, which suggests that this is an important combination (see measures of FLEX, Tables 3.6, 4.5 & 5.2). These findings have shown that as a speaker verbally constructs their future, the extent to which they take perspective on experience and articulate what would be important to them, figuratively versus literally, and act in that direction, long-term wellbeing was predicted. Understanding how perspective-taking and values function together is an important factor, which I speculate on below.

Perspective-taking reflects the ability to deictically frame up experience

From an RFT point of view, perspective-taking reflects the speaker's ability to deictically frame up their inner and outer experience (Hayes 1984). From this vantage point the stimulus functions of the related verbal events tend to function figuratively rather than literally (Wilson et al. 2001). In ACT terms this is known as defusion (Blackledge 2007), a process that is reflected in mindfulness research that has shown awareness enhances autonomous functioning (Brown & Ryan 2003). The results in this thesis suggest that perspective-taking statements reflect these

processes of autonomous functioning and defusion given the strong positive correlations between both SX ($r = .74$) and OX ($r = .80$) statements with measures of Acceptance and Action (AAQ-II), a measure of psychological flexibility (see Table 5.2). In this way the relationship the speaker has with his or her own verbal behaviour appears to be an important determining factor.

Perspective-taking increases the likelihood of noticing what is valued

Perspective-taking also reflects the speaker's ability to interact effectively with their outer world. While perspective taking statements alone were not strong predictors of wellbeing (see Tables 3.6, 4.5 & 5.2), or were not significantly related to either value or control-oriented self-rules (see Tables 4.6 & 5.5), the fact that in Study 3 (see table 5.5) these statements tended to show moderately strong and positive relations with value oriented self-rules (SX: $r = .39$; OX: $r = .56$), and negative relations with control oriented self-rules (SX: $r = -.22$; OX $r = -.47$), suggests that perspective-taking may assist people by increasing the likelihood of their noticing what they value.

Perspective-taking appears to function to enhance the observational behaviour of the speaker and the resulting seeking out and selection amongst discriminative stimuli in their environment (Skinner 1974). Thus, along with being able to take perspective on one's inner experience, the capacity to notice what is valued in the environment is potentially another determining factor.

Perspective-taking helps people emotionally self-regulate

The relationship between perspective-taking and the two types of self-rules suggests that perspective-taking helps people emotionally self-regulate while in the pursuit of valued ends. In Study 3, value oriented self-rules showed a moderately positive relation with perspective-taking statements (SX: $r = .39$; OX: $r = .56$; Table 5.5) and when combined these statements strongly and significantly predicted wellbeing (see measures of FLEX, Tables 3.6, 4.5 & 5.2). In contrast, control oriented self-rules were negatively related to perspective-taking (SX: $r = -.33$; OX: $r = -.47$; Table 5.5) and did not predict wellbeing (see Tables 3.6, 4.5 & 5.2). These results suggest that when value oriented self-rules are uttered within a psychologically flexible context they are more freely chosen by the speaker and acted on for their utility (Hayes et al. 2013;

Wilson et al. 2001). This is in contrast with control oriented self-rules that, when uttered, apparently function to reduce the speaker's ability to track direct contingencies, as such utterances are under the control of an inner psychological context functioning literally and causally.

Perspective-taking potentially mediates value oriented rule-following

This functional contextual account of the function of value oriented self-rules and perspective-taking suggests that: training or coaching in mindfulness and values should increase value oriented rule-following and decrease control oriented rule-following; and, that that change should be mediated by changes in perspective-taking. This is testable and could be the focus of further research.

Implications of the Functional Self-Discrimination Interview (FSDI)

What about interviewing for positive behaviour change?

While developing the FSDM and FSDI it was apparent how often people articulated values and used self-rules ambivalently, which was evidently not helpful, as these statements did not function to predict wellbeing. For example, some interviewees uttered only statements of value without articulating how they had or intended to act on those values. Others uttered contrasting control and value oriented self-rules about why it was potentially important to act in divergent ways in certain contexts. These utterances and self-rules not only appeared to compete with each other but also were often over-generalised to inappropriate contexts. This finding is consistent with other research that has shown an immunity to change for those who are ambivalent and subscribe to competing commitments (Kegan & Lahey 2001, 2009; Miller & Rollnick 2013). In contrast, other interviewees more consistently expressed their values and uttered coherent self-rules that framed up situations in which they had or would act on those values to good effect. These people evidently experienced greater wellbeing in the longer-term. These findings point to the potential for self-discrimination interviewing for behaviour change that is consistent with ACT (Hayes et al. 1999, 2012b) but with a particular emphasis on eliciting the client's values, and orienting them to formulate value oriented self-rules specific to their desired change.

Beyond the therapeutic setting, this is more generally applicable to developmental work where resilience and high performance is the desired outcome.

Adopting FSDI interviewing for behaviour change would also be consistent with Motivational Interviewing, which has shown that commitment language predicts behaviour change (Miller et al. 2008; Miller & Rollnick 2013; Moyers et al. 2014; Moyers et al. 2010). According to MI research the *slope* of commitment speech, which I suggest is the utterance of value oriented self-rules, across the course of an interview provides information above and beyond that obtained from the *mean* level of commitment speech. The strongest prediction of behavioural outcomes came from client speech toward the *end* of the session, when the client's plan for change was the primary topic. I suggest that integrating the MI approach with an appreciation of how value oriented self-rules function to predict wellbeing will significantly enhance the capacity for the interviewer to support the client's realisation of valued living.

As discussed in Chapter 5, the Motivational Interviewing (MI) capabilities of *Listening* (questions & reflection), *Collaboration & Engagement* and *Empathy* were well suited to FSDI where the aim was to elicit code-able transcript of a functional assessment of verbal behaviour using the FSDM. The approach to interviewing utilised in this thesis deliberately did *not* target or elicit change talk because I was interested in establishing baseline levels of the different classes of verbal behaviour. To elicit change, the interviewer would need to employ the other MI capabilities of *Autonomy Support*, *Evocation* and *Direction*. Employing the full set MI capabilities would have the interviewer reinforcing their client's autonomy to choose self-directed change, eliciting or evoking their intrinsically held values, and directing their attention toward a commitment to value directed action. Integrating an RFT account of how language functions to predict long-term wellbeing as researched in this thesis with the MI approach to interviewing would very likely prove to be a more powerful intervention for positive change. Further, integrating both these empirically validated approaches to interviewing would provide MI with the coherent theoretical framework for understanding its processes and efficacy that it currently lacks (Bricker & Tollison 2011; Markland et al. 2005). Further research would validate this

proposition. For more information on the full set of MI capabilities refer to Appendix 3: FSDI Interviewer Capability Evaluation Method.

Limitations of this Research

There were three apparent limitations in the research undertaken in this thesis. In Study 3 the number of participants was small ($n=10$) and seven of those participants were trained in mindfulness, which was not necessarily representative of the general population. Also, there was no inter-rater reliability testing for the application of the 'other' codes in Study 2 or the AUG codes in Study 3. However, despite these limitations, the 'other' codes appeared to be highly predictive of wellbeing in theoretically coherent ways.

In Study 3 the small $n=10$ significantly reduced the power of the results. While this was the case, it was encouraging to have reproduced the same significant relationships and general trends between code frequencies and the subjective measures of wellbeing across the three studies conducted in this thesis (see Tables 3.6, 4.5 & 5.2). The fact that similar results were shown across the three studies supports the validity of the FSDM coding scheme and findings. Additional research would further validate these results.

The fact that seven of the ten participants in Study 3 were trained in mindfulness and were highly educated professionals means the results may not generalise to the broader population. This limitation is likely of little consequence given the similarity of findings across the three studies, which all show similar relationships and trends between the various coded statements and measures of wellbeing. Further, I assumed that the absence of perspective-taking 2 statements [SX2] in Studies 1 & 2 were because the interviewees had not been trained in mindfulness and thus would be less likely to discriminate themselves as the locus of their experience. The fact that SX2 statements were uttered by a number of the participants in Study 3 supported my assumption and further suggests the generalisability of the findings. Further research would address all these limitations.

Implications for social change

The potential for this work extends beyond an application to the one-on-one session work of professional coaches and therapists with their clients to the work of leaders and change agents working in social contexts aiming to coordinate the effort of groups. Applying an understanding of the function of language and cognition and how it regulates behaviour, particularly in terms of value oriented self-rules and perspective taking, has practical implications for those striving to reinforce prosocial and moral behaviour. I discuss these implications in the next chapter.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

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Implications for Social Change

My enquiry in this thesis has provided important insights into how our ‘values’ establish the motivation for us to seek out and strive for what matters in the long run; that to the extent to which we take-perspective on what is important and utter value oriented self-rules, wellbeing is predicted. This enquiry and findings led me to ponder the social implications of this work more broadly, particularly the development of prosocial and moral behaviour. First, I briefly discuss current research and thinking related to prosocial behaviour, virtues and values. Then, I discuss broader implications in terms of the development of moral behaviour in the light of the findings discussed in this thesis.

Virtues, Values and Prosocial Behaviour

Prosociality refers to a constellation of behaviours, values, and attitudes that involves people cooperating and striving together for the wellbeing of others, sacrificing for others, and fostering self-development (Biglan & Embry 2013; Wilson et al. 2013). The benefits for people living and working in prosocial environments, compared with those in antisocial environments, include: fewer behavioural problems (Kasser & Ryan 1993); better health (Biglan & Embry 2013); better performance at school (Wilson et al. 2014); healthier social relations and environments (Deci & Ryan 2008; Grant & Gino 2010); and, more productive organisational and business activities (Brief & Motowidlo 1986). Essentially, prosociality is maintained by a set of norms that reflect social and cultural values that are identified as intrinsically important by community members.

At the cultural level, prosocial communities tend to internalise the higher order and universal virtues of justice, social responsibility, and modes of moral reasoning aimed at realising greater public and social good (Brief & Motowidlo 1986). This perspective is reflected in the field of Positive Psychology where research has focused on cultivating the ‘good life’ through the practical application of six universal virtues: wisdom and knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. These virtues were identified as universally meaningful through an exhaustive study of character strengths and virtues espoused by modern philosophers and the

dominant spiritual and philosophical traditions of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judeo Christianity, and Islam (Peterson & Seligman 2004). Research has shown these virtues and related character strengths to be valued by contemporary cultures from around the world.

A key feature of prosocial communities is a propensity for individuals in groups to self-regulate in order to realise valued ends (Biglan & Hinds 2009; Wilson et al. 2013). They set goals, plan, persist with tasks, manage relationships with each other and their environment, and modulate their behavioural, emotional, and attentional reactivity (Cameron & Spreitzer 2012; Kauffman 2006; Linley et al. 2010; Linley & Joseph 2004; Lopez & Snyder 2009). Studies have shown that individuals and communities that strive to live virtuously tend to realise the 'good life' in fields as it pertains to them, e.g. organisational leadership, team work, health and wellbeing, teaching, learning, innovation, creativity, clinical psychology, executive coaching, mentoring, communication, negotiation, community building, policy and governance.

At the level of the individual, prosocial behaviours reflect the expression of values such as: altruism, helping, caring, empathy, cooperation, volunteering, learning, teaching, supporting, and nurturing, to mention a few. Values research has shown that intrinsically held values, or social values integrated into the self, result in people striving to build community, be affiliated with others, and live more transcendent spiritual life styles (Brown et al. 2007; Kasser 2011b; Kasser et al. 2007; Ryan & Deci 2006; Schwartz 1999, 2006; Twenge & Kasser 2013). Studies have shown that those who are mindful and intrinsically motivated, tend to experience enhanced goal performance and psychological health within applied domains, including: work, relationships, parenting, education, sport, sustainability, health care, and psychotherapy (Deci & Ryan 2008).

This body of research has demonstrated that prosocial communities embody a normative value emphasis that underlies and justifies the functioning of their institutions (Ralston et al. 2011; Schwartz 2006; Schwartz et al. 2012); that nurturing environments minimize biological and psychologically toxic events (Biglan & Hinds 2009); and, values reinforce intrinsically motivated personal strivings that cultivate

healthier social relations and environments (Deci & Ryan 2002b; Ryan & Deci 2000). Overall, this work shows quite unambiguously that when people and communities are values centric, and behave in line with those values, public, social and environmental wellbeing is reinforced (or should that be improved).

While these extensive bodies of research have shown that virtues and values perform an essential function in the realisation of the 'good life', precisely how values function in those contexts is not clear. How then does an understanding of the way language and cognition functions to regulate behaviour supplement or augment this body of research, particularly in terms of the function of value oriented self-rules and perspective taking as studied in this thesis? Cultivating the capacity for perspective taking and values directed action from an RFT perspective involves learning to use the 'language of values' (as discussed in this thesis) as an augmental for personal and collective strivings that results in valued living.

To live the 'language of values' we first learn to behave compliantly with the espoused values from others (pliance); then we learn to track our own behaviour in order to achieve valued ends (tracking); and finally we learn to act in accord with intrinsically held values (augmenting). I now discuss an RFT account of the development of these verbal regulatory processes as they relate to the development of moral and prosocial behaviour in which values congruence is implicit, which I believe supplements and augments the body of research cited above.

Moral Development

Hayes et al. (1998, p254) define moral behaviour as "behaviour governed by and consistent with verbal rules about what is socially and personally good." The research discussed above elucidates what is universally considered socially and personally good. Evidence presented in this thesis provides an account of the type and frequency of uttered verbal contingencies required to evolve valued living. Further, Hayes et al. (1998) argued that the evolution of moral behaviour is controlled by relational and rule-following repertoires arranged into a rough

progression of pliance, tracking, augmenting, social concern for pliance, social concern for tracking, and social concern for augmenting.

Moral pliance is developed through a history of socially mediated consequences for the correspondence between behaviour and rules about what is “right.” This form of rule-following is a very simple social system based on the power of rule-givers and their agents in the verbal community. Moral tracking, which develops after pliance, emphasises the longer-term probabilistic consequences of “right” behaviour. In tracking, the rule places a behavioural event and the consequences that follow into a cause and effect relational network. The ability to follow moral tracks develops over time with the development of increasingly complex verbal repertoires and the ability to follow verbal consequences. Such moral tracks may describe contingencies that cannot be contacted in a lifetime; for example, behaving in certain ways may lead to a reward in the after life. With an increase in verbal understanding and transformation of stimulus functions, a more complex form of rule governance emerges – moral augmentals. These are rules that reinforce the degree to which behavioural events function as desired consequences as a result of their participation in increasingly complex and abstract relational networks. For example, behaving as a “good person” may be based in a long history of relational responding in which the term “good person” has acquired reinforcing functions as a result of its participation in highly abstract and complex relational networks with terms such as “right”, “fair”, “honest” or “free”.

Once moral pliance, tracking and augmenting have been learned, concerns for developing systems that support moral rule-following emerge. A social concern for pliance aspires to establish pliance in another people or in social groups as a whole and may, for example, involve care about obeying the law and respecting authority. A social concern for tracking orients people toward the long-term social consequences for action and probable benefits that are less immediate. This kind of moral activity likely emerges after a social concern for pliance and involves taking the perspective of another and experiencing that reinforcers for others are like those for oneself. For example the track, “do unto others as they would do unto you” encourages an examination of the long-term consequences for the parties involved in following such

a rule. A social concern for augmenting focuses on establishing verbal consequences *in* others or social groups as a whole, as opposed to *on* others. This type of moral behaviour is about increasing the motivation of others to care about and strive for abstract verbal consequences. It emerges last as it involves experiencing consequences based on highly abstract verbal events such as “justice” or “humanity” and the histories that control such responding which tend to reinforce a concern for the behaviour of others in the first place. Barnes-Holmes et al. (2001e) provide a summary of this process of morality development in terms of rule-governance with examples:

Rule-governance

Pliance – I have to do what Mommy tells me.

Tracking – How can I do what gets me reinforcers?

Augmenting – I want to be a good person.

Support for Systems of Rule-Governance

Social concern for pliance – How can we establish law and order?

Social concern for tracking – How can we eliminate self-destructive behaviour in others?

Social concern for augmenting – How can we establish a society that seeks justice?

In brief, an RFT analysis of moral behaviour in terms of rule-governance and perspective taking involves a distinction between six types of moral activity, three of which are about learning to verbally regulate your own behaviour and three of which are about establishing systems that help others learn to regulate their own behaviour. While this approach differs from others epistemologically (Kohlberg 1981; Peterson & Seligman 2004; Rachels & Rachels 2010) the empirical literature (some of which I have reviewed in this thesis) either confirms or supports these views and none is contradictory.

The research in this thesis has reinforced the idea that values function most effectively to bring about desired long-term change when embraced as an intrinsic quality of target behaviours for change (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a; Hayes 1989).

Having self-rules about how to enact values was a better predictor of wellbeing than simply being able to name values. The FSDI-FSDM methods of interviewing and assessing the predictability of verbal behaviour provides leaders and change agents with additional tools that will help them establish systems that will identify and integrate social and cultural values with intrinsically held values. This thesis has highlighted the importance of then linking social values to individual self-rules for action. The need for this work is urgent and the potential for it is enormous.

My Final Thought

Iterative practices of pragmatically analysing our behaviour such as: Scenario Planning (Constanza 2000; Georghiou et al. 2008); Strategic Roadmapping (Phaal et al. 2010); and Group Design (Ostrom 2005; Wilson et al. 2013) are dialogical processes that enhance our capacity for long-term tracking with abstract reinforcing consequences; the realisation of virtuous behaviour and valued living. These types of processes are needed for the evolution of prosociality and cooperation between societal groups (Ostrom 2000; Wilson et al. 2014). This involves social selection of moral behaviour by consequences and the retention of what is selected (Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001a; Barnes-Holmes et al. 2001e; Hayes et al. 1998).

The realisation of virtuous behaviour and valued living will be derived using the same symbolic relations that allow for the development of perspective taking in individuals. Collective perspective taking will allow for the construction of socially meaningful consequences verbally. Here the domain of shared values and a collective sense of a transcendent-self is key. Values that are socially chosen become the qualities of ongoing patterns of social behaviour as intrinsic to the behaviour itself (Deci & Ryan 2008; Hayes et al. 2012b). In this way, values work in the social context is key to the evolution of moral behaviour and prosociality as it is the means by which new selection criteria can be established for behaviour. This requires collective work on deictic framing, which has the potential to transform the psychological context of patterns of antisocial behaviour (Villatte et al. 2012). Values clarification and deictic responding will help to establish consequences that reduce the impact of rigid self-conceptualisation and belief formation and encourage values based behaviour more

broadly than in the service of narrow self-interest. In this way, humankind, being a species of verbal organisms, will be able to take stock of the past, plan, configure value based consequences for the not directly confrontable, and act in what might be considered a prosocial, moral and discerning manner.

While these ideas are speculative, just as an individual's speech patterns appear to systematically predict wellbeing, a group's patterns of speech, its cultural norms, may well predict patterns of mutual reinforcement and development. In this way, civilisation, being founded on such acts, may transform towards our collective values.

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Appendix 1

Functional Self-Discrimination Interviewing Protocol

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Functional Self-Discrimination Interview (FSDI)

The Functional Self-Discrimination Interview (FSDI) was designed to elicit code-able transcript for analysis using the Functional Self-Discrimination Measure (FSDM). Together the FSDI with the FSDM allow for a functional assessment (Baer et al. 1968; Chance 1998; Cipani & Schock 2011; Hayes & Brownstein 1986; Nelson & Hayes 1979; Ramnero & Torneke 2008; Vilardaga et al. 2009) of an interviewee's cognitive and behavioural responses to different types of historically situated events, past, present or future. This approach was predicated on the assumption that reflecting on and recounting a critical incident is the behaviour of verbal operant responding (Hayes et al. 2001; Leigland 1996, 2005; Shahan 2013). If a question were asked about an event in the person's history the interviewee's response, while guided by the question to some degree, would in the main be a response to the historically situated event. Their response would be in the form of conditioned operant responses.

As discussed in Chapter 5, the key elements of verbal operant responding from an RFT perspective that informed the approach taken when conducting a FSDI were: a distinction between verbal contextual relations (C_{rel}) and verbal contextual function (C_{func}); the three-term contingencies of a self-rule – antecedent, behaviour and consequence; how augmentals function in a self-rule; and, the generalisation of self-rules as a behavioural repertoire. To ensure these elements were captured in an interview I designed the FSDI protocol. The FSDI protocol describes the three broad processes of setting up the interview, the specific types of questions and reflections that would be asked during the interview, and the wrap-up and debrief of the interview. Each of these processes is discussed below.

Setting up the Interview

The FSDI interviews went for 30-45 minutes and were organised to find out how the interviewee had and may respond to a variety of different situations in their life; how functional their responses were for them and would likely to be in the future. The interview was designed to have participant's recall one or two positive or negative incidents related to a specific topic then probe for: the context in which the incident

took place and the antecedent events (A); their behavioural responses (B); the consequences of those behaviours (C); what those actions and outcomes meant to the interviewee (self-rule function); and, how they evaluated the longer-term implications of behaving that way (generalised rule-following). This information was then used to evaluate levels and changes in the interviewee's self-discrimination and functional classes of the self-rules they had uttered using with the FSDM. The interview structure is explained below.

I began the interview by reminding the interviewee that the interview was confidential (as indicated in the information sheet), that they were under no obligation to answer any questions if they didn't wish to, or continue with the interview if they wanted to stop. I, as the interviewer, explained that my goal was to try and see the world through their (the interviewee's) eyes and would primarily be reflectively listening to achieve this. When there was agreement, the interview proper began as follows.

Having them describe a critical incident

Content was generated by asking them to recall emotionally charged positive and/or negative incidents related to a specific topic, then exploring occurrences in different life domains; these may have been resolved or unresolved. A different topic was chosen for each interview over the course of three or four interviews. At each interview the interviewee was invited to speak about one of the topics: felt most alive; felt a sense of conviction; felt conflicted; experienced a major failure; or, made their toughest decision. Interviews began:

"If you were to think back over different periods in your life and you had to think about times you ...

- felt MOST ALIVE, where you may have experienced a sense of achievement, intimacy or creativity; or possible a time when you felt a deep sense of loss for some reason which had you feeling INTENSELY VITAL; or

- felt a deep sense of CONVICTION, where you felt very keenly this is what I think should or should not be done about this, times when you became aware you had to take a STRONG STAND; or
- really felt CONFLICTED about something, where someone or some part of you was drawing you in one direction, and someone else or another part of you was feeling another way; times you really felt kind of TORN about something; or
- experienced a MAJOR FAILURE, times when all your approaches to dealing with things no longer applied, moments when you had to REINVENT YOURSELF; or
- had to make the TOUGHEST DECISION you have had to make, times when you had to make LIFE CHANGING CHOICES.

... Are there 2 or 3 things that come to mind? Take a minute to think about it and jot down some notes if need be to remind yourself of what they were.”

Types of Questions and Reflections

The primary objective of the FSDI was to elicit code-able transcript, which involved asking specific types of questions. These questions probed for the contextual function [C_{func}] and contextual relations [C_{rel}] of self-rules [VOR, COR]; and, forms of ‘self’ and ‘other’ conceptualisation [SS, OS, SX, OX]. Definitions of these types of questions are provided below (Table Appx 1.1). For more details see Chapter 5.

Probe	Definition
RuleCrel-probe	Self-Rule Contextual Relations Probes were questions that probed for the three term contingencies of a self-rule: Antecedent-Behaviour-Consequence; and, the relationship between those three events [Crel].
RuleCfunc-probe	Self-Rule Contextual Function Probes were questions that probed for the psychological functions [Cfunc] (purpose/meaning) of a self-rule that did, or apparently will, govern the speaker’s behaviour - control or value oriented.
RuleValid-probe	Self-Rule Validity Probes were statements/questions where

	the interviewee's self-rule formulation was echoed back to them, or elaborated if implicit, to check and get confirmation or further elaboration. Thus, allowing the participant to confirm reported subjective findings (internal validity).
S-probe	Self Probes were questions that probed for conceptualisations and evaluations of the 'self' or 'other'.
X-probe	Perspective Probes were questions that probed for the speaker's perspective on their behaviour as the 'self' or that of the 'other'.

Table Appx 1.1: Definition of FSDI interviewer question types.

Questions that illicit contextual relations (ABC) and function of self-rules

The aim of these questions was to have the interviewee describe important variables in their behaviour and the circumstances that preceded and succeeded those behaviours. Listening was focused on any excesses or deficits in behaviour. Questions were asked to identify the three contingencies of self-rules (ABC); generally questions began with behaviour (B). Broadly ABC questions aimed to find out:

- B What was the person doing?
- A When did the person do it?
- C What happened after the person did it? What events followed doing it?

Once the ABCs of the interviewee's self-rules had been articulated, contextual function questions aimed to find out:

- What was the Function/Purpose? Why was the person doing it?

Probes for behaviour B [RuleCrel-probe]:

- What happened (B)?
- What did you do (B)?
- Did you notice any physical reactions (B/A)?

Probes for antecedents A [RuleCrel-probe]:

- Under what circumstances does that happen (A)?
- What is typically going on when that happens (A)?
- In what situation do you do it (A)?
- When was this (A)?
- Was there anything else earlier that you think may have had an effect on events (A)?
- Who was present (A)?
- What did they say (A)?
- What was the first thing you noticed that made you <worry/ruminate> (A)?

Probes for internal behaviours that could be either B or A [RuleCrel-probe]:

- What happened inside you (B/A)?
- What did you tell yourself (B/A)?
- What did that make you think of (B/A)?
- How did that make you feel (B/A)?
- In what way did you <worry/ruminate/plan/decide> (B/A)?
- How did your thoughts/emotions run then (B/A)?
- What went through your mind/heart/body/spirit right then (B/A)?
- If you had a digital printout of everything that passed through your head of body at that very moment, what would it say (B/A)?

Probes for consequences C [RuleCrel-probe]:

- What were you trying to achieve (C)?
- Did that work (C)?
- Did it turn out the way you wanted it to (C)?
- What would be the consequences of that for you or for others (C)?

Probes for consequences and/or function of self-rules [RuleCfunc-probe]:

- Did you find what <was wrong/right> (C/Cfunc)?
- What is important to you about doing that (C/Cfunc)?

- What might you lose if that was not to happen (C/Cfunc)?
- What is the payoff of that (C/Cfunc)?
- What would be the costs/losses of the event or action (C/Cfunc)?
- What was most at stake for you (C/Cfunc)?
- What if it turned out well/what if it had gone badly (C/Cfunc)?
- How would it have been different for you if <the situation had been reversed> (C/Cfunc)?

Probes for longer-term implications of rule following [RuleCfunc-probe]

Throughout the interviews the aim was to identify patterns of value and control oriented self-rules. For value oriented self-rules [VOR] this meant identifying patterns of behaviours and responses that yielded increased valued living, for example improved quality of life, wellbeing, relationships, and valued ends. For control oriented self-rules [COR] it meant identifying responses that produced short-term payoffs – relief, control, avoidance; and, long-term costs – loss of quality of life, wellbeing, relationships, and valued ends. Eliciting a baseline of responses involved probing for retrospective views focused on the history of the behaviour, present views focused on contemporary experience, and prospective views focused on the meaning of behaviour in the future. Examples of questions that probe for generalised rule-following include:

- How does this work in the long run?
- In relation to being <fully alive/particularly challenged> what are the long-term payoffs and costs of that?
- What do you typically do that solves the problem of being <particularly challenged> that you are known for?
- When <particularly challenged> are there any things you find yourself repeatedly doing that after the event you regret? That in retrospect you might say to yourself something like 'Darn! I did it again!'?
- What do you typically do that gives you a sense of being <fully alive> that you are known for?
- When <fully alive> are there things you typically do that work for you and others involved?

- Is this sort of thing something that happens often or in lots of contexts?

Probes for self-rule validity [RuleValid-probe]

If the interviewee appeared to be speaking about a pattern of operant or respondent behaviour their current formulation was echoed back to check and possibly get further elaboration. This involved asking questions such as:

- I would like to check what I am hearing, it sounds like there is a pattern/history of the same kind of.... "echo back what the interviewee has been saying – if.... then...."
- So it is not this simple of course and there will be lots of exceptions and nuances, but perhaps if we could distil what you have been saying down into a simple 'if..then' type of rule we might say ..."echo back the interviewees words"

Probes for self/other conceptualisations [S-probe] and perspective [X-probe]

In addition to probing for the ABC's of the interviewee's experience, questions were asked that probed for forms of self- and other-conceptualisations [SS, OS] and perspective [SX, OX]. Questions aimed to have the interviewee reflect on their 'self' and 'other' conceptualisations and their relationship with their own and others experience: sensual, emotional and cognitive. Perspective questions also probed for their capacity to see the world through the eyes of another. Examples of questions that probe for 'self' and 'other' conceptualisations, and perspective include:

- How do you know yourself/them?
- Who are you/they?
- If I asked your best friend/spouse/child/colleague to describe you, what would they say?
- How do you relate to your own experience in this <topic of conversation> situation?
- Is there another way you might look at this?
- If I asked for their point of view about <the topic of conversation> what would they say? How is that different from your view?

- How do you evaluate your performance, decide you are doing well or not? Do you have an inner voice or is it through the eyes of others?
- If you were in their shoes what would they be feeling/thinking/assuming?

Transitioning to a new experience

- Is there anything more you would like to say about that experience; anything you feel like you have left out, or hasn't been expressed well?

Debriefing the experience of being interviewed

Following the formal FSDI, I captured the interviewee's experience of the interview in a 15 minute debrief:

- When during the interview did you feel listened to and understood?
- What did you learn? What insights did you take?
- Did you make sense of self-rules in use?
- What do you know that you didn't know when we started the interview/s?
- Which questions and responses from me (the interviewer) were the most useful for gaining an understanding of yourself and your own behaviour?
- Optional - (In the interviewee's language) how well did the interview/I (the interviewer) support you in taking a perspective on your experience and your thoughts, feelings and emotions?

Interviewer journal

For each interview I noted my observations of the interviewee's: tone and body language, authentic expression, when they felt listened to, took insights, and made sense of self-rules. I also noted my own experience of: conducting the interview and what worked well in terms of active listening, mental processes, quality of questions, ability to support and empathise, and quality of engagement. Over the course of the three interviews I noted if there was a change in rapport, did trust improve, was the interviewee able to go deeper, and what significant changes occurred for me as the interviewer? See Chapter 5 for summary of my reflections on these questions.

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Appendix 2

Coded Functional Self-Discrimination Interview

Transcripts

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Coded Interview Excerpts

This appendix is provided as a reference. It contains interview excerpts and value word clouds from each interviewee that took part in the third study discussed in Chapter 5. Each excerpt is coded using the FSDM and FSDI coding schemes and provides the reader with the broader context from which quotes and examples were taken. The value word cloud provides a graphical representation of each interviewee's values. These clouds represent the most frequently uttered words for the interviewee's value statements [AUG-val & VOR] across their interviews. Word clouds provide an indication of the interviewee's values that were and may reinforce valued living. Participant transcripts are sorted in the order of their psychological flexibility as measured by the FSDM and AAQ-II with the least flexible first through to the most flexible last. You will notice those lower in psychological flexibility utter close to an equivalent number of value oriented self-rules and control oriented self-rules with an average ratio of 3:1 across the five lowest in psychological flexibility. This group also utter very few perspective statements. In contrast, those rated higher in psychological flexibility utter up to ten times as many value oriented self-rules than control oriented self-rules with an average ratio of 9:1. They utter double the number of perspective statements. See Table 5.3 for details of ratios.

Across the interview excerpts the questions I ask probed for both the contextual function [RuleCfunc-probe] and contextual relations [RuleCrel-probe] of the interviewee's self-rules in use. Most of these questions were either simple or complex reflections of what the interviewee was saying. Contextual function probes pulled for the purpose and meaning of the interviewee's chosen behaviours, why they were doing what they were doing. Contextual relation probes sought to have the interviewee speak about the various events that had taken place in their experience, the antecedents, their responses and resulting or anticipated consequences. In each excerpt there is generally one or two rule validity probes [RuleValid-probe] that I offered in an attempt to reiterate what I understood to be the self-rules the interviewee had in use. In some of the excerpts I have also asked questions that probe for 'self' or 'other' conceptualisations [S-probe] and perspective-taking [X-probe]. In response to these questions the interviewee's responded with code-able transcript

using the FSDM. See Chapter 5 for a statistical account of the data captured in these interviews.

For ease of reading I first provide the code key with definitions of each code. These definitions have been discussed at length in the body of the thesis and are summarised here for reference. For each set of excerpts I provide a brief introduction of the participant, an overview of the topic of the conversation that was taking place and a note about the particular codes that had been applied.

Code Key

In the interview excerpts below both my questions as the interviewer and the interviewee responses are coded. The definitions of each code are outlined in Table Appx 2.1 below. For ease of reading each coded utterance is also colour coded. I have done this particularly as coded bits overlap. For example, *where a longer utterance contains a shorter bit attracting a different code, the colour of the longer utterance precedes and follows the colour of the shorter bit.*

Interviewer Probes	Definition
RuleCrel-probe	Self-Rule Contextual Relations Probes were questions that probe for the three term contingencies of a self-rule: Antecedent-Behaviour-Consequence; and, the relations between those three events [Crel].
RuleCfunc-probe	Self-Rule Contextual Function Probes were questions that probe for the psychological functions [Cfunc] (purpose/meaning) of a self-rule that did or apparently will govern the speaker's behaviour - control or value oriented.
RuleValid-probe	Self-Rule Validity Probes were statements/questions where the interviewee's self-rule formulation was echoed back to them, or elaborated if implicit, to check and get confirmation or further elaboration. Thus, allowing the participant to confirm reported subjective findings (internal validity).
S-probe	Self Probes were questions that probe for conceptualisations and evaluations of the 'self' or 'other'.
X-probe	Perspective Probes were questions that probe for the speaker's perspective on their behaviour as the 'self' or that of the 'other'.
Self Codes	Definition
VOR	Value Oriented Self-Rule statements are self-rules specified by

APPENDIX 2: CODED FSDI TRANSCRIPTS

	the speaker that were and will apparently govern their behaviour in flexible and value directed ways.
AUG-val	Augmental Value statements are expressions of personal values that would apparently reinforce the appetitive quality of an action and/or consequence of that action.
COR	Control Oriented Self-Rule statements are self-rules specified by the speaker that reflect attempts to control or avoid unwanted experience. Control Oriented Self-Rule statements often appear to reflect pliance, where a history of reinforcement was mediated by social approval for following the rule per se.
AUG-con	Augmental Control statements are expressions of the aversive emotions experienced by the speaker that would apparently reinforce efforts to avoid or control the unwanted aversive emotion.
SS-pos	Self-as-Story Positive statements involve abstracted conceptualisations of the self that are framed in the positive. Self-as-Story refers to instances in which the speaker expresses abstracted story in a way that is relatively inflexible. SS refers to literal (i.e. held as the truth) descriptions regarding who or how the person was; either enduring qualities or characteristics, or evaluations of those qualities and characteristics.
SS-neg	Self-as-Story Negative statements involve abstracted conceptualisations of the self that are framed in the negative. Self-as-Story refers to instances where the speaker expresses abstracted story in a way that is relatively inflexible. SS refers to literal (i.e. held as the truth) descriptions regarding who or how the person was; either enduring qualities or characteristics, or evaluations of those qualities and characteristics.
SX1	Self-as-Perspective 1 statements represent instances in which the person clearly differentiates themselves from their private mental experience (thoughts, feelings and sensations). While the nature of self may be left unspecified, it is clear that thoughts, feelings and sensations were not the same as the self.
SX2	Self-as-Perspective 2 statements represent instances where a person not only differentiates themselves from private mental experience (thoughts, emotions and sensations) but identifies the 'self' as the conscious arena within which experience occurs. The content of experience is placed within a hierarchical relation to the 'self'. The hierarchical relation is one of inclusion, e.g. "I am the arena within which my thoughts and feelings occur".
Other Codes	Definition
OS-pos	Other-as-Story Positive statements involve abstracted conceptualisations of another that are framed in the positive. Other-as-Story refers to instances where the abstracted story

	about the other is expressed in a way that is relatively inflexible. OS refers to literal (i.e. held as the truth) descriptions regarding who or how the other is or could be, either enduring qualities or characteristics, or evaluations of those qualities and characteristics.
OS-neg	Other-as-Story Negative statements involve abstracted conceptualisations of another that are framed in the negative. Other-as-Story refers to instances where that abstracted story about the other is expressed in a way that is relatively inflexible. OS refers to literal (i.e. held as the truth) descriptions regarding who or how the other is or could be, either enduring qualities or characteristics, or evaluations of those qualities and characteristics.
OX1	Other-as-Perspective 1 statements refer to instances where the speaker discriminates another's thoughts/feelings as distinct from their own and are apparently seeing the other's 'perspective'.
OX2	Other-as-Perspective 2 statements refer to instances where a person discriminates the other as separate from their thoughts/feelings or as a container for their thoughts and feelings.

Table Appx 2.1: Code definitions for interview probes and responses

Interviewee FSDI-104**Introductory Notes**

This interviewee was a 45-year-old Russian-Australian who had recently resigned a position as a research academic in the medical sciences to become a yoga teacher. He had trained in mindfulness and was a regular formal and informal practitioner of mindfulness.

Below, I quote excerpts from two interviews with him. The thread through these excerpts concerns the interviewees apparent use of mindfulness to control or avoid unwanted experience as well as move toward wanted experience. In the first interview (Excerpts 1 & 2) he discusses feeling 'torn' trying to deal with a difficult relationship with a flat mate where he was often misunderstood. His efforts to deal with this experience were often expressed in the form of control oriented self-rules [COR]. Toward the end of the first interview he began uttering value oriented self-

rules [VOR] as a response to dealing with his unpleasant experience. In the second interview (Excerpt 3) he discussed a sense of 'conviction' about the qualities he wanted to retain in an awkward relationship. Employing a mindful orientation he describes himself in terms of the context of his experience [SX2], which was contrasted with descriptions of himself as 'ego'.

Values Word Cloud

The interviewee's value word cloud below provides a graphical representation the words they most frequently uttered from their value statements [AUG-val & VOR] across the interviews. This provides an indication of the interviewee's values that were and may reinforce valued living.



Interview Excerpts

Excerpt 1.

Q: It sounds like all you're trying to do is help. And that's being misinterpreted as though you're trying to not help, or actually deliberately do something to hurt her or something [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: That's right. Or take over, or take - or I don't know what. Something, yeah, damage or hurt. So it feels that - So she tries to immediately frame it, that's the automatic kind

of thing, frame it into some negative frame. If it was a positive frame, I would be happy. But every time is negative, and every time, whatever you try to say, she tries to dip you in shit. That's how it feels [AUG-con]. And it's quite unproductive, we're just spending yet another half an hour explaining the whole thing, trying to feel like shit first, stand up, go for a wave come through, and come and to explain it, and then. So that's how this tearing apart, and at the moment...

Q: So the tearing apart is - if I could just make sure I get this right - is you're continuing to want to be there and do the right thing, while just feeling as though you're being misunderstood, and just wanting to leave [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Ah. It's - well, I see it as a journey; I see it as a journey [AUG-val]. So yes, my automatic response is just to run away, and stay away, not to engage [COR]. On the other hand, I understand it's a journey, and also I see it as a mirror, and I know that I have my patterns, and reactions and so on. So that's where I'm - on one hand, I know it's beneficial to stay in the situation and try to resolve it [AUG-val], or to work on this; that's what I want to do [VOR]... But it's a very unpleasant situation [AUG-con]. So that's how I want to run away and stay away, and just, stuff it. And that's where it's, in a way, internal conflict [AUG-con]. And at the moment it's a compromise, because at the moment the strategy I developed is not to engage. So staying not engaging, it looks a bit rude. It doesn't feel comfortable either [COR].

Q: So how is that working in the short-term and the long-run [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Well, I believe that it should work that - if this situation of conflict is about me, then just staying and waiting and observing and doing mindfulness, that's one accepting this - surrendering to this situation, probably, building a good wish for peaceful resolution [AUG-val], and so on [VOR].

Q: So you've developed a new response to it? So originally there'd be this sharp interaction and a sharp response from you, but now you're trying to be more mindful. So tell me about the principles that are guiding your behaviour now [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Well, I'm just watching, I'm not engaging, because I feel it's like a mine land [AUG-con], a little bit. So I'm stepping carefully around. As soon as I see some sort of warning signs, I'm just not engaging. I'm not engaging in deeper conversations [COR].

Excerpt 2.

Q: So the painful thing - I want to understand it a bit more. So the painful thing is being in a situation where you're not being loved for who you are [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: ... It's unpleasant. And this thinking... it's automatic... So again, to diffuse it, take it away out of context, this could be sharp sounds, but only context really, brings it. The very same sounds, the very same noise is produced [SX1].

Q: Right, so you're just watching your pattern of responses in this situation [X-probe]?

A: Yes, and my responses and seeing - that's what I find as my journey; that's what I find as my job to, yes, to look at the positive [AUG-pos], and to look at to my responses and to diffuse them, to deal with them, to learn [AUG-pos] [SX1] [VOR].

Q: Yeah, right. And so when you're watching there's responses and you're thinking about how to deal with them. What criteria are you using, and how are you choosing [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah, good question. Criteria. Well basically I'm applying the mindfulness approach, meditation approach. So in that respect the criteria could be worked or not. So I'm trying to be nonjudgmental [AUG-pos] here. So worked or not. Like this morning I'd been doing body scanning, interesting. And then some memory came up, and because I'd been doing that, I've seen this wave of hot thing come to the body. It was quite unpleasant situation, quite unpleasant memory. And I've been observing how it worked on the body. So I was not engaged with the situation, and it didn't penetrate. So I'd been watching the body [SX1]. And I found that successful. So it worked, the method worked for the purpose, or just in the moment. So the same I

apply with these situations as well [VOR]. That would be my criteria, and well, the other criteria would be...

Q: So when you say it worked how do you know it worked [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: When I've seen this flush, or whatever - heatwave going, and it was very interesting; just [makes swishing noise]. And the memory was painful; the situation was painful, and then previous situations when I had that memory, it would go deep in me. It would stay with me and penetrate. And I would start memorising it, and I would start fantasising what I should do, what I should've done and so on and so on. So I really took it like it's more. So this time I've more like a watcher or viewer [AUG-pos]. So it's a wave, it's emotion, it's just body, and it's a reaction. So it didn't stick to me [SX1].

Q: It just passed through [X-probe]?

A: Yeah. And watching, and saying, wow that's interesting [AUG-pos], and that was a really interesting experience [SX1]. So from the method point of view I would call it successful.

Q: So that's how you're approaching the situation with your flatmates, and all of that. So it's very similar.

A: Yes, yes. That's right. So I build my current journey on this intention and motivation for - basically for happiness and reduce of suffering [AUG-pos], that sort of thing. And that is possible, patterns that sit in me, sort of thing, they are causing painful experiences. So me staying with the situation, I see it as this process of dealing with patterns. Successful or not, yeah, if it sticks to me, maybe it didn't work. But it's a journey, so I see it. And I'm trying to stay away from generalising and cliché-ing and putting them in box, me in box [AUG-con]. Trying to not to stick, not to solidify [VOR].

Excerpt 3.

Q: Okay, that's really good. What's the most important thing in life for you [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: I guess, at the moment, it's to deal with my ego [AUG-con], to – how to put it – maybe to not pacify, but yeah, kind of train myself the way that it's not ego who is determining my life, but me [laughter] [VOR].

Q: [Laughter] yeah. Oh, right. Okay. So how are you going about doing that, making sure that it's you determining your life, not your ego [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah, that's a very good question. Ego wins most of the time, but yet again, yeah, so when I provide this space [AUG-val] again, yeah, then there was glimpses when it's not ego that rules my behaviour or what I do, but really, that's what I want.

Q: So when it's you that's running the show and not your ego, who are you [S-probe]?

A: Yes, that's a good question. Mmm. Yeah, I wonder if that's this space, sort of thing, that's the – kind of this freedom, kind of, you're just free with that strong statement, or sort this kind of – so the gap, sort of thing [SS-pos], in meditation where everything is possible, sort of thing. I wonder if that's what it is in that, because, really, that's what I've seen in my life and around, that everything is possible, because we can bring lots of limitations and so on, but really, if we provide this space [AUG-val], suddenly it is true that it's possible [VOR]. So if we make it fixed, we can do only that, that and that, then it's one story, but when we say everything is possible, so then there are so many possibilities.

Q: I mean, that's a really interesting idea, and maybe even hard to describe, but, how can you describe just being you, and not this thing called ego, – how do you experience being you [S-probe]?

A: Yeah, maybe it is a very good question, and yes, I am ... connected and free. You're connected with the past and the future, yes, you are this kind of transition through,

right, but on the other hand, you are free from this. So this moment of freedom and possibility really, that I find is kind of the most me kind of thing. So there is body, but it's a transition as well, and there's me which sees everything of been there, will be there, so it's sort of all kind of connecting everything with everything and yet not to be anything of that, and nothing else sort of – just possibility [laughter], like [SX2] [SS-pos].

Q: Good story, good metaphor. If that's the experience, how do you choose that on an ongoing basis [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yes. To choose to be in this space, to choose to return to space, to choose not to be hooked with what you think [AUG-val] you are without this body is a soul transition to choose not to hook onto their schedule, but be responsible as well, sort of thing, so it's a constant realisation that it's a choice in a way, and freedom [AUG-val], and everything is possible. That's – and yet again, it's a choice [VOR].

Q: So it's kind of like a process of staying unhooked and free to choose, and it's not like how do you choose it, it's just continuing to choose [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: That's right. And, of course, there is, in a way, all this idea of cause and effect in every step, and there, I believe, comes the values and the attitude, so each day will determine how our actions will manifest. So, and in a way, that's what we do with choice, 'cause there's multiple choices, so then we – there is lots of freedom, everything is possible, so meditation, that's intention [AUG-val]. Attitude will help to make this choice, and in those moments you often you receive, and so I don't know if – it happens with you, but I believe, yes, in those kind of glimpses of spaciousness and connectedness with everything [AUG-val], you see where this action will lead to [VOR].

Q: Yeah.

A: And, yeah, that provides kind of choice again. Yeah. Well at least, sometimes you just feel, oh, it's going somewhere, but I don't want to go. It's balance sort of thing,

and those – quite often, I wonder if we, or at least I do, like, oh, yes, it's going there. You don't want to be there, but that's the way it's going, so – and the choice could be different as well, and with those values, at least they help me to stay in this situation and do the best I can, again, with this attitude to stay with this person for the sake of friendship, for the sake of that, so just be there. It's horrible, yes, keep nose over water, just above the water, it's temporarily, just [VOR].

Q: Yep. I got you. No, that's great. There's – so the whole strong stand thing is just being able to stay present and choose your values, choose to act on your values [RuleValid-probe]?

A: That's right. Yes, yeah. Very good point. You finalised it very well.

Interviewee FSDI-105

Introductory Notes

This interviewee was a 52-year-old Spanish-Australian female who worked as a graphic designer at an Australian university. She had trained in mindfulness and had recently become a practicing Buddhist.

In these excerpts the interviewee spoke about contrasting experiences. In the first (Excerpts 1 & 2) she reflected on her tendency to be very self-conscious and a rare moment when feeling 'most alive' when successfully doing a presentation of her work to some colleagues. These utterances contain a number of augmentals, both values [AUG-val] and control [AUG-con], which indicate the desired experience being sort, either feeling empowered or avoiding social awkwardness. In her second interview (Excerpt 3) while discussing feeling 'torn' about how to deal with a conflictual relationship she began discussing her practice of mindfulness. Her mindfulness was informed by some Buddhist practices in which she was experiencing thoughts and emotions as 'apparitions' and herself as 'emptiness'. These utterances attracted [SX] codes as she objectified inner experience and identified herself as the context of her experience.

Q: So there's several dimensions to it? One is having got it together and communicating it well and also having them kind of getting it, having a bit of a light bulb moment. So could you talk about both those; your experience and their experience [X-probe] [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Okay. My experience – it was – I felt – I'm not sure what words to put the emotions but it was sum total. I felt quite empowered by that [AUG-val].

Q: Yeah. Right.

A: Like, I can get things across... It made me feel like someone capable of being extremely effective [AUG-val].

Q: Right. Yep.

A: And it also demonstrated what I could be like in a group. In contrast, to all the social awkwardness [AUG-con], when the topic was something that I knew...

Q: Yes. Right.

A: - - - 'cause I was in my element. I was in my world. That's why it didn't – I didn't have to agonise to – I knew what I had to get across and what the sticking points would be and then all I had to worry about is communicating it. So, there was never – when I get self-conscious it's a very – it's sticky. It's ineffective. It's sticky [AUG-con]. It's – whereas in this scenario, it was the world that I knew. I generally wanted them to get it – to show them something, not because I thought it was absolutely worth knowing. I didn't want them to get bored [AUG-val]. So, there again, it was probably back to looking good. I didn't want them to be bored [AUG-val] and we were sitting through session after session there was just talk or bullet points and being in the art department I had an opportunity to get out of that - to do something a little bit different. So, the attention was off me but it paid off so – in such a big way [laughs] and it paid off in a personal – yeah. So, now I have this – I don't know what word to put to it – this exemplar – this model example [VOR].

Excerpt 2.

Q: So, I'm curious about two things. What is it about that that has mattered in other contexts? But also potentially the worst part of it? You knew your stuff so in that sense you weren't in the deep end. So that gave you a level of confidence and comfort to actually just present what you knew. But if it hadn't of worked, what would have been the worst bit [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: I'm just extrapolating from other group situations where the self-consciousness kicks in and then it becomes, like, I collapse into that ... when I get into that self-conscious mode it kind of collapses to where I'm just a self-conscious creature [AUG-con].

Q: Yeah. Right.

Excerpt 3.

Q: You're talking about an important distinction and I'm really curious about how you're framing it up. The kind of words you used were 'everyday truth'; you talked about 'apparitions'; you said there's all of this stuff's going on inside of you and you're not anchored in that anymore, no one particular tradition or family heritage or something; and you're starting to know yourself as something quite different [S-probe] [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yes.

Q: So, how are you knowing yourself now? What's the shift [S-probe]?

A: I guess the - a foundational shift is how I see myself, so where I'm positioned. So this life doesn't revolve around me. Whereas from an experiential perspective it does.

Q: Okay.

A: 'Cause I can only see what I see, I can only feel what I feel, I can interpret what's going on around me but it's, you know, but that's not the centre anymore [AUG-val].

Q: Right.

A: Which is good because, you know, your emotions go up and down and blah blah blah, whereas according to the Buddhist tradition, it's in this bigger picture, it's not centred around me or you or anyone, it's centred around this, our shared perspective now is centred around this illusion that we've woven together [AUG-val].

Q: Oh, okay.

A: That we're all trying to find happiness [AUG-val].

Q: Yep.

A: So now I have to unstick myself and help others [VOR].

Q: Yep. So when you're unsticking yourself, what are you unsticking yourself from [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: From the primary delusion of 'that I count more than you or anybody else' [SX1].

Q: Yeah, the apparitions.

A: But the core of the apparition is that 'I am something special and I'm...', you know [SX1].

Q: So it's kind of attaching labels to yourself [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: It's a very ego - yeah, yeah, yeah, whereas they're just descriptions.

Q: Yep, brilliant. So if you were to answer the question now, who are you? What would you say now if you're not all the labels and stuff [S-probe]?

A: Well, I'm only residual karma now [SS-pos]... I can say, I'm emptiness, you're emptiness [SX2], everything's emptiness, but I'd walk out here and still act like I'm hungry and that's because it's my need and it must be satisfied at all costs, you know.

Q: Yep.

A: There's a chasm between the intellectual knowledge of it and the actual experiencing.

Q: Experience of it?

A: Yeah, and in Buddhism they talk about the realisation of emptiness, like, having a realisation of emptiness [AUG-val]. Yeah, so that's where I'm heading [VOR].

Interviewee FSDI-102

Introductory Notes

This interviewee was a 37-year-old Vietnamese female who had recently completed a PhD in economics and was working as a tutor at an Australian university. She had trained in mindfulness and was an informal practitioner.

In this particular interview the interviewee spoke about the experience of being 'torn'. She spoke about the difficulty she was experiencing trying to decide what type of job to get. The excerpts below express her ambivalence between finding work that she valued that may allow her to do any of a number of things such as continue working with theory and ideas as she had done doing her PhD, do social good and provide for her family. In contrast, she spoke about a number of aversive experiences she wished to avoid such as working for someone she didn't respect, wasting time and energy, and not seeing the results of her work. Most of her utterances are augmentals [AUG]. She was not able to frame either her desired or undesired consequences in a self-rule for quite some time in the interview. She finally uttered a value oriented self-rule [VOR] which was validated in the interview [RuleValid-probe].

people and I like to work for good boss – intelligent people because they can exercise your mind and they know [AUG-val], so, you, yeah, you don't have to, yes, **no-one** wants to look down at their boss and still pretend as well, so, that's one [AUG-con]. Two, I like to work with ideas which is source an idea and model and those things [AUG-val], yeah. What you may call it, I think it do matter if I work in public service for example, like social service for example – dealing with people every time like social service [AUG-val] – Centrelink or something - **I could finish the day feeling like wasting** [AUG-con] – I could, but, I'm – at times I'm torn because I don't know what is better for me [AUG-con]. What is better maybe, by dealing with people I'm affecting the real life and I can see the results of it in people getting benefits or something and that would make me happier [AUG-val] and this idea, it makes me feel good, but, in the end when it gets to reality and bringing good things to life [AUG-val], it could, but, you may not get in touch with the results of your work and you might feel demoralised along the way [AUG-con]. So those things. It's very complex and abstract I thought, I guess.

Q: But it sounds like while you might be doing something that you enjoy, like a bit of bookwork or learning, actually the bigger question is, is it going to connect with the real world? Is it really going to matter? Is that what you're saying [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: There is that thing. Not sure if it's bigger, but, there's that thing, yeah.

Q: So say more about what's the torn bit in there?

A: So the torn bit – is it a better thing to connect with people and bring real life change [AUG-val], yes, or is it better to indulge in theory [AUG-val]? Well, will theory bring even better multiplication impact to real life or not [AUG-val], and also which one suits me better or makes me happier [AUG-val] or, yeah, because it's not just me – I also owe it to my children to be happy and knowledgeable [AUG-val], so, **I don't** guide them into the wrong way or something [AUG-con], so, yeah.

Excerpt 2.

Q: Well, I'm wondering what is important to you that would take you forward in a direction. So you're talking about connection with others and making a difference, and you're talking about beauty [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Oh, no, I think connection is more important than beauty to me [AUG-val].

Q: Yeah, okay.

A: So, yeah. Well, because I'm not that creative [SS-neg] and then if I create – try to create some ideas because it's good and not that it's that beautiful, so, what, you know, so, I like useful things [AUG-val] and, yeah.

Q: Okay. Useful things, right.

A: I like kind and useful [AUG-val], yeah. But I also like the learning and in that there's new thing and, so, excitement of always learning new things, so, yeah [AUG-val].

Q: Yeah. So it's a nice – yeah, right.

A: Yeah, so, again, maybe, [laugh] I am easy going – I always find good in everything that makes me so undecided... So, here with job – every job I want to find something good and that's why I can't just decide if I want it [AUG-val].

Q: You can't decide?

A: Yeah, yeah. So I might just do something and stop thinking [COR].

Q: And just try it? Try it and see if it works [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yes, that's right. And also you don't really know what is best in life [laugh], so, you just get something and go with it and try to make it good [AUG-val]. You can't really

know beforehand that going this way is going to, yeah, be your best way, so, yeah, just try [VOR].

Q: I've got this really clear impression and I want to check if this is right - even though you might feel torn about something, in some ways you kind of expect that to show up because you wouldn't know until you tried it – so, you actually will try things and what you'll be looking for will be things like meaningful connection with others and whether there are things like learning in there but the main thing is meaningful connection and making a contribution. Is that right [RuleValid-probe]?

A: Yeah. I think so. Yeah.

Interviewee FSDI-101

Introductory Notes

This interviewee was a 66-year-old American-Australian female who worked as a librarian. She had trained in mindfulness and was a regular practitioner of informal mindfulness.

In this interview the interviewee spoke about her experience of being 'torn' between committing to new relationships or not. Her ambivalence was in the wake of her husband dying and the end of what she described as a deep, close and meaningful relationship. The values she espoused were related to open and truthful relationships, the type she had had with her deceased husband, and becoming a member of a new community. She sought to avoid wasting time doing things because others expected it. The interview excerpts below capture the interviewee's control and avoidance, and value directed responses to her experienced ambivalence about new relationships. She also describes dealing with social anxiety by practicing informal mindfulness and defusing from difficult thoughts and emotions. It was interesting to note that the first two utterances coded as control and value oriented self-rules, [COR] & [VOR] respectively, contain both value and control augmentals, [AUG-val] and [AUG-con]. This reflects the competing nature of the interviewee's desired consequences related to her experiences of ambivalence and anxiety.

somebody gives me a present I'd rather it wasn't on my birthday. Do you know what I mean? That it's...

Q: Yeah, right. Okay.

A: So part of it is, I suppose, my own selfishness. **Do I want to spend time on this? Part of it is worrying about the responsibility [AUG-con].** Like some of the people that I'm friends with are not well. So it's sort of like, I know what that means in terms of for them. Or I imagine I know what that means. And so **I don't take it lightly as a commitment [AUG-val].** And yeah, it's whether I have the energy, whether I have the time. Like, this sounds silly, but I don't like having several social things in the same day. I need time [VOR].

Excerpt 2.

Q: So what do you do when anxiety shows up in the thoughts [X-probe]?

A: I'm trying to do this, that it's a thought rather than - - - it's me [SX1].

Q: Yeah. Is that working? What's happening?

A: Yeah, it does, because it's sort of, I think – well, I won't swear, but what the f is, why am I having this thought? That's where I'm sort of curious, it's where is it coming from? Am I channelling my family [SX1]? I guess I am. I don't know.

Excerpt 3.

Q: So you've got to know others differently [S-probe]?

A: Yeah. I think I'm, yeah, more aware of other people, probably, less focused on – because I think my (deceased husband) was really my focus. And even people I don't know or will never see again, Robert, it's, you know, I suppose I'm much more aware of us as a social – the social connections. I don't mean social in terms of friendliness, I mean the **community [AUG-val].**

Q: Okay. So you've kind of – it kind of took you out of the world that you're used to – and the way you got to know others is – can you explain that more? Because I don't think I understand it properly, what you are saying [S-probe]?

A: I think I'm more aware of how interconnected we are.

Q: Yeah, okay.

A: I think 20 years ago it was more about me, not the effect on anybody else. But that actually isn't true. And I think I've become more conscious of the community I'm in [AUG-val]. And that's part of me wanting to be more open with people in terms of spending time with them [AUG-val], because I feel, well, this is actually – this is important. It may not always be easy and it may not always suit me, but it's still – this is my world, this is what I'm part of and I have a responsibility in a way to be a part of it [VOR].

Interviewee FSDI-108

Introductory Notes

This interviewee was a 34-year-old Australian male completing a PhD in Philosophy at an Australian university. He had trained in mindfulness, practiced formally and informally, and taught mindfulness.

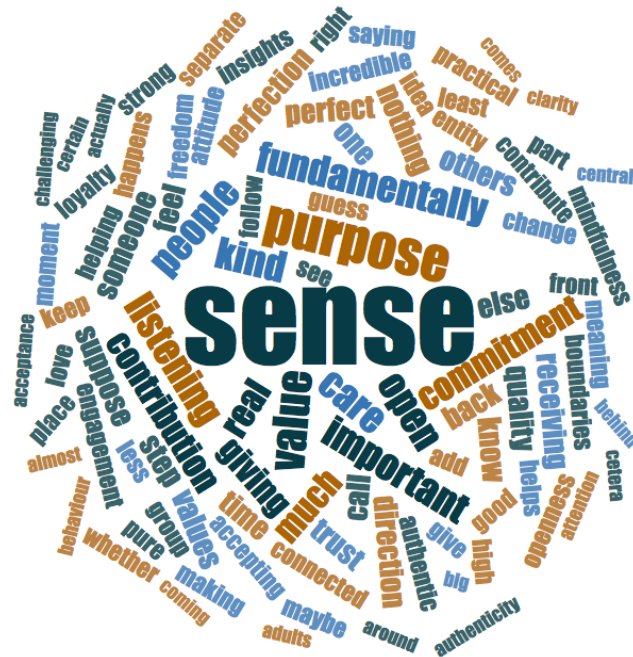
In the first interview (Excerpt 1) the interviewee spoke about feeling 'most alive' in particular moments while teaching philosophy and mindfulness. He described himself and others being set free from self-limiting beliefs and seeing the perfection in the apparent 'imperfection' of himself and others. This view of life and the experience of 'incredible love' are captured in utterances classified as augmentals [AUG-val] and value oriented self-rules [VOR].

The second interview (Excerpts 2, 3 & 4) is contrasted with the first as the interviewee describes a control and avoidance strategy that he learned at a young age in response to being bullied on a school camp where he experienced moments of

‘major failure’. The majority of utterances in this passage are descriptions of unwanted experience, coded as aversive augmentals [AUG-con], or control oriented self-rules [COR]. It was interesting to note that the control and avoidance strategy learned as a youngster persisted as a ‘default’ response to similar contexts in adult life.

Values Word Cloud

The interviewee's value word cloud below provides a graphical representation the words they most frequently uttered from their value statements [AUG-val & VOR] across the interviews. This provides an indication of the interviewee's values that were and may reinforce valued living.



Interview Excerpts

Excerpt 1.

Q: You've described a moment when you're most alive, but you're also saying there's many of them. So I'm guessing there's something very similar and important about them all that's directing your behaviour [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah. That's a lovely question. I suppose [pause] – I suppose for me it comes from my own personal experience of having the sort of insights that my students have

[AUG-val]... I think it's fundamentally around people having insights into their lives that transform them, you know [AUG-val]? That – like, little light bulbs, or pennies, or whatever you [laughs] want to call them, that just – that go bang. And it's transformational. It's that transformation – and what is that transformation? It's fundamentally transformation from living under some sort of sense of constraint or hidden assumption, or sort of burden, or whatever you – in different forms, to just seeing how that can be released in some way. And that to me is a really important thing. That's why I feel – you asked about my purpose. I think that's sort of where it comes from [VOR].

Q: Yeah, right. So I'm just thinking how would I reframe that as a guiding principle? It's something like, 'you just care'. You care that people are free of self-constraint and self-limiting beliefs [RuleValid-probe]?

A: Yeah, yeah, absolutely. Yeah, I think it's fundamentally a care for others, or care for the wellbeing of other people [AUG-val]. I think that's really what really gets me going – what I really resonate with [VOR].

Q: And the moments are when they have this epiphany, and they see – they suddenly experience themselves or their world differently [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Differently. That's it, yeah.

Q: And there's a transformation at a very deep level [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah, absolutely. At a deep level and at a practical level. And that's what I love about it. It's got this sense of depth, but also of practical value. That's what I really like about it [AUG-val].

Q: So, would you be willing to talk about one of your big light bulb moments [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Sure. But let me think. Okay. [Pause] probably one of my biggest – I’ve had quite a few, but one of my biggest was when I was about 18... I read a book called ‘I Am That’, which is by this Indian sage. And it just blew me away, basically. It just blew my mind... It’s got amazing insights... and now I’m getting really kind of I suppose spiritual – is fundamentally there is nothing to change in us. There’s nothing to do, there’s nothing to change, there’s nowhere to go. Fundamentally, what we call we, as I’m saying, are pure, perfect and complete as we are. This sense in which there is perfection in every step, and perfection in imperfection of perfection [AUG-val]... So that was a real – that real flash was a real moment.

Q: Yeah, right. So let me play this back and see how close I am. So there was this real search for some kind of truth, or answer [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: True, yeah.

Q: And reading this book led you to see that ultimately, we’re already perfect and it’s just a matter of seeing that [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah, that’s it. Yeah, that’s it. And that was just the most inspiring thing I think I’d ever heard, just really – it was really – really good.

Q: And somehow there’s – what we might frame as imperfection is kind of a limiting perspective on something that is ultimately perfect [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Perfect, yeah. And that to me just – that just really changed the way I saw everything, and just created this incredible love, this incredible sense of love, and good will [AUG-val], if you like, for everything, because you just – I found myself seeing that. And obviously it ebbs and flows and so on, but it was just like, oh, wow. Wow, that’s amazing. And the other thing that was amazing I find – it’s in the present tense still – is that it includes oneself as well. So that it’s not like it’s out there; it does [laughs] – it includes you – and then that’s also where I found a lot of transformation to take place. I mean, you kind of take on things obviously at times, and it ebbs a little bit and flows, but, yeah, that was a – and it continues to be a real sort of source of

strength, and a real kind of – it's almost like something you can abide in, something that you can – that's always there. No matter what happens [VOR].

Q: Big insight! So I just want to catch that again. It sounds like the shift was from seeking perfection and insight as though it was out there to be discovered somewhere, someplace – to actually realising that you embody it, and seeing it for the first time in yourself, and as a consequence in everything around you [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yes.

Q: And so the striving shifted from a seeking, to residing in it [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah.

Q: And it sounds like what you're striving for now is to allow others to create a space in which collectively you reside in it, in perfection, and you can see it [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Absolutely. I mean, that's a lovely way of putting it. I mean, that really is fundamentally what motivates me in these – helping [AUG-val] with these classes, but certainly more broadly as well. It's this – but, yeah. Certainly particularly I found an expression for that through facilitating these (philosophy and mindfulness) classes [VOR].

Q: So, if I were to capture that as a kind of guiding principle – it would be something like, you're guided by a desire to witness the wonder of life itself, within yourself and others. So as a consequence, you're constantly turning your attention back to that. Is that right [RuleValid-probe]?

A: Yeah. Definitely. I think the word freedom is really what resonates with me [AUG-val], is this – the desire to – yes, to experience that for myself, and to help others

experience that. I think for me, if there's one word [laughs] to put to it, it's this *sense of freedom* [AUG-val] [VOR].

Q: Right, yeah. So, freedom to transcend the phenomenal world, but also to be in it really differently [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah. But for me, I – it's interesting. I've never had this conversation, by the way, but the *thing that I really enjoy is – I said it before – is the both, how people – how this kind of wisdom helps people at the practical level* [AUG-val], *but also really has no limit in terms of the depth and subtlety of the things that you might – where it might take you* [VOR].

Excerpt 2.

A: - - - I was this small, little impish kid and very sensitive. And off I went to this – in the Kangaroo Valley for six months, and all those *social structures were suddenly gone and I was basically left to fend for myself* [AUG-con]... And so that was my first, yeah, experience of being alone.

Q: Yeah, huge. So how did you deal with it [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: I really struggled to deal with it and *I also felt like I didn't belong in a lot of ways as well* [AUG-con]. *But I dealt with it by, in many ways, just internalising things and just keeping going a little bit into a shell and just keeping – just putting up the barriers. So not saying things that I thought were going to get me into trouble with the other kids, treading a path of least resistance, keeping quiet, keeping a low profile, avoiding getting too much attention, avoiding too much attention... But I'd write letters to my parents, I'd write letters to my friends and get them, and that was a way of coping* [COR].

Q: Okay. So you kept a low profile [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Keep a low profile; follow paths of least resistance in things, you know? And feel crappy a lot of the time, just feel really isolated and helpless [AUG-con] all of the time [COR].

Q: Yeah, right. So I'm wondering then, that strategy, how well did that work? What were the payoffs and costs associated with it [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yes, it's interesting to reflect. It worked - it solved the immediate problem in it minimised the immediate problem. Because any attention – it's like the mob, the one thing, when you're with a mob, that you don't want, is them to notice you [AUG-con]. And so going low profile and the path of least resistance on any sort of social issue or encounter or whatever just worked. And finding other kids that were a bit more of like mind and in some ways less aggressive and just hanging out with them [COR]... And so, yeah, I just found other friends and did it work, how well did it work?

Q: Mmm, what were the payoffs and costs [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: The payoffs and costs. Well, the benefits were that I probably got bullied [AUG-con] less than I would've because I didn't fight back and take the bait in a fight that I could never win [COR]. And the benefits – and then the letters, that was good, but that would often stir up a lot of emotion and that was painful at times. But the benefits, I guess, was that I knew that I was still connected but, yeah, the costs were that I didn't enjoy it anywhere near as much as I could've, anywhere near as much as I could've.

Q: So that strategy, okay, 'when in a threatening situation, take the path of least resistance and not push back unnecessarily', has that become a strategy or a principle that's continued to work for you [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe] [RuleValid-probe]?

A: Mmm, interesting. It has become a bit of a default strategy but I don't think it works very well.

Q: All right. So that's interesting. So with that default response, what have you learned about how to behave [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Well, basically just that if you want to survive in a hostile environment [AUG-con] you need to be strategic in the way you manage and position yourself. I'm not saying that's altogether a – I'm not saying that I learnt how to thrive in a hostile environment [AUG-con], I just learned more about responding in a way that at least means you're not going to get taken out, kind of thing [COR].

Excerpt 3.

Q: - - - because it feels to me as though there's a bit of a constellation of responses there. There's loyalty and being there and actually choosing to be open - or withdrawing - if trust is not going to be there [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yes. And also, for me - this is something that's had a big impact in my life – is this thing about going under the radar. So to step forward boldly into the spotlight or to not, and that has in many ways massively shaped my subsequent behaviour and choices a lot of times. And a default – it still is today in a lot of ways – is around avoiding conflict [AUG-con] [COR]. I wonder why?

Excerpt 4.

Q: So overall, given what we've talked about – if there is a principle or self-rule you employ generally, explicitly or implicitly, what would you say [RuleValid-probe]?

A: Avoid conflict [AUG-con] at all costs [laughs]. So that you don't hurt others and you don't hurt yourself [COR].

Q: And is there any more to that around taking a stand, because you talked about that? So avoid conflict at all costs, for yourself and others [RuleValid-probe]?

A: Just as much as you can, as much as possible, [laughs] avoid conflict [AUG-con] [COR].

Q: Yeah, okay, that's a big one. And what about risk-taking? Take a risk if?

A: Yeah. Take a risk if it's not going to – if it's not really a risk [laughs], you know, especially around this thing around conflict. Take a risk if you reckon you're going to win [VOR].

Q: Okay. What about the important part? I wondered whether the other part is when something is important, 'I'll be there for them and I'll advocate' [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: That's definitely a rule that I follow when something is important [AUG-val], I'll take a stand and I'll go into the limelight even if I get a tomato [VOR].

Interviewee FSDI-106

Introductory Notes

This interviewee was a 46-year-old Australian female who had previously completed a PhD at MIT, USA and was currently completing an honours degree in art while working as a program manager at an Australian university. She had trained in mindfulness and practiced informally.

In this interview, while discussing moments of 'failure' trying to deal with challenging situations, she discussed having to self-censor her approach to undergraduate study as a mature student, which she experienced as quite aversive. The excerpts from her interview reflect the costs she experienced as she employed various strategies to avoid unwanted inner experience or upsetting others. Various utterances are coded as augmentals [AUG-con] & [AUG-val], and self-rules [COR] & [VOR] reflecting her avoidance and value directed responses.

Values Word Cloud

The interviewee's value word cloud below provides a graphical representation the words they most frequently uttered from their value statements [AUG-val & VOR] across the interviews. This provides an indication of the interviewee's values that were and may reinforce valued living.



Interview Excerpts

Excerpt 3.

Q: Is there anything that you find yourself persistently complaining about that always has a certain kind of response to it [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Mhm. I guess, there's one, a long-standing and persistent complaint is – the difficulty I have fitting into my year group – in my studies, doing my – I'm doing my honours this year. And I'm – I have this feeling over the last few years, I'm having to pretend [AUG-con] I'm an undergraduate student in order to fit in with the structure of the way the course is taught and the expectations of the way you study from the teaching staff or other students [COR]. And that's very – definitely a persistent complaint that I have, that my way of doing research, and the expectations I have of what research is, is different. And at the moment, particularly, than some of the teaching staff.

Q: Well, I'd imagine it would be very different – because you've done a PhD in engineering, haven't you [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah, and so there's that mismatch there where I kind of – I get a sense that my past experience is not considered to translate well or the kind of experience that I bring to the role is not considered relevant or the way I do research is not the way that honours students at this level are expected to do research [AUG-con]. So – yeah...

Q: So how do you deal with that?

A: The first couple of years of my degree, I kind of sucked it up and kept it internal [COR]. So a lot of it came out through my visual diaries that were much more – there was a lot more content in them than most students. But this year, I'm starting to push back. It's been more difficult to pretend than just let things ride. And so I'm more likely, if I have to do a presentation, to talk about my research in a less edited way. That sort of ticks the boxes that they have [VOR]. And that, I suppose, is where I'm starting to – not quite come into conflict – but I'm probably going to have to manage the assessment process more carefully than I would've had to do in the past when I was just turning it around and just making sure that publicly, at least, everything was presented in a way that was manageable [laughs]. You know what I mean? I kind of wore myself out in the first couple of years, complying and it started to break down last year [AUG-con]. And I'm finding myself very reluctant to be seen to be doing things the right way [AUG-val], when – I don't think I'm a stick in the mud and saying, no, it has to be this way or not at all. But I'm less likely to try and pretend [VOR] – no [laughs], just your average undergraduate student and stay really quiet in class and not make a comment or venture an opinion that could suggest that I'm bringing something to the experience of a class that is unusual.

Q: So what's the important stuff that's at stake underneath all that [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: I think it's that sense of knowing and valuing who I am, for me [AUG-val]. In the long run, it doesn't usually matter to me what they think – other people think, now [VOR]. Except that – if I really stuff up my honours assessment ... I've lost a year worth of effort, in which case I'd be cranky. But I can't – I can't accept that complicity

anymore [AUG-con]. That sense of just – it's not enough just to withdraw and just comply [VOR].

Excerpt 4.

Q: It was kind of monitoring your own behaviour for their sake as well [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yes, because I was very aware that all of the – just about all of the students I started in the first year sculpture course with were straight from school. Not even a gap year. So their first year was going to be really important for them and I'd had all of that experience. I didn't need to demonstrate that – I needed to be really careful about how I brought that experience into their learning space. If that was going to be the impact – that me, just being myself [AUG-con], was going to have on their experience of university. That just felt really – really bad, to me.

Q: Yeah, so that's how you consider other people [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah, so I had that sense of having to subsume my learning for a long period of time [AUG-con], not just the experience I could bring to this current time, but what I needed to be able to do in order to learn myself and not just have a sense of sitting on the sidelines, watching other people learn. Because if I'm starting from here, in years and experience and understanding of myself, and they're here, I still need to be able to learn as well [AUG-val] [COR].

Q: Yes, so how did you manage that [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: A lot of that was me – because I have got a teacher training – was me setting myself a program to learn, that was taking what I could from the classes like the actual practical skills of how to work with wood or metal or whatever – some of the conceptual stuff that they were starting to direct towards us. But then taking it and applying in my own space [VOR].

Excerpt 5.

Q: So if there's long-term payoffs that are emerging as a result of – well, designing your own course of study and regulating how that fits in so it doesn't push others or the system around too hard. But you've – it sounds like something new is emerging – it sounds like they're learning something new. What are the payoffs that are emerging? I'm hearing a few, I think [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: I think I'm happier now I've accepted that the way I'm working is going into work for me [AUG-val] and that I'm fairly confident going into the subsequent years that I have the capacity to develop my own art practice, separate than the Art School [VOR] ... I've got a small group of people and we're quite comfortable and confident working with each other ... we can make it happen. And that our work is complimentary and we enjoy working together and pretty understanding of each other [AUG-val], so they're really...

Q: So they're quite significant payoffs, aren't they [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah, so they're really good and well, I'm – there's now still this sense of frustration and feeling squashed in a box. I keep thinking of myself as being chained to the highchair and given a rattle, you know, for the last couple of years. It's becoming more and more a historical frustration rather than a present one [AUG-con].

Q: Yeah, so it's in a state of transition?

A: Yeah.

Interviewee FSDI-103

Introductory Notes

This interviewee was a 31-year-old Australian male who worked as a Sustainability Officer managing projects at an Australian university. He had not trained formally in

mindfulness though he had been introduced to the contemplative practices he mentions in the interview excerpts below.

I have taken excerpts from two interviews with this interviewee. The first interview was about moments when he felt ‘most alive’ (Excerpts 1 & 2), which were while on overseas adventures, particularly to South America. He explained, “(I) worked hard, played hard and adventured hard and see – test myself hard as well to find out who I really was”. A number of incidents he described were highly arousing and evoked emotional responses that he tried to control. I include this excerpt because the interviewee contrasted a control and avoidance strategy, which took a toll, with a newer and more mindful approach. The second interview (Excerpt 3) was about ‘conviction’ where he contrasts his approach to perspective taking with that of his parents, who were outspoken political activists.

Values Word Cloud

The interviewee's value word cloud below provides a graphical representation the words they most frequently uttered from their value statements [AUG-val & VOR] across the interviews. This provides an indication of the interviewee's values that were and may reinforce valued living.



Interview Excerpts**Excerpt 1.**

Q: So I'm curious – if you're in a really tough situation where you've got to act with confidence, what kind of process do you go through [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: It's firstly assimilate the fight or flight – the natural – the reaction that hits you when there's adrenalin and other chemicals hit the brain and manage them. So rather than acting on those impulses straight away, it's like saying, right I can – I understand that they're there, I can understand that that's just happened and that's hit my brain and my natural response is to do this, but, just hold on a second [SX1]. If I've got the time to just – if I don't have to make that split second decision, then, yeah, weigh up the risks and the benefits [AUG-val] of the actions that are forthcoming from here. So first thing to do is get in control [AUG-val] of your natural instincts, get control of them and let reason and logic take over [VOR], so...

Q: So, two things; control of natural instincts and responses and then a more objective reasoned response. So I'm interested in both those halves actually. So how do you go about controlling the flight or flight response and the adrenalin that hits the brain [X-probe] [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: I think it's more – the way I do it personally and then I'm learning new techniques for this at the moment through some of the – I don't think I've actually – I don't think I've mentioned, but I've been going to a couple of spiritual weekends on meditation and that sort of thing.

Q: Yeah, yeah. You did mention that.

A: So that's opened up another avenue for how to try and control those instincts and urges [AUG-con], but, the way that I've principally done it has just – it's almost like a mind block where you just go, right, I understand that this is going on, but, you're just – out of sheer willpower – try and push it away and go no, I've got this – I've got this, I can manage this and try and push it away. It's almost like there's – brain trying to push away those – it's hard to explain because I don't – all I know is that I just – I put

my brain into a lockdown mode where I just – I can say right. And certainly it takes – it's not – it's just about – it just feels like if there's a surge, for example, of something, then I'll just try and have a bigger wave that goes over that surge. It's almost like an ocean current where you've got the undercurrent and then you got the waves coming over and that's the best way I can explain it – I don't – I can't really say what's going on physiologically. And even if it's – there's certainly been times where – I think that – the method that I have principally used is probably not optimal because it takes a lot of power to try and, so, if you're wanting to look as though you feel as – or confident or in control of the situation, it almost takes its toll. So as soon as you leave that situation I just felt, oh, I've got the shakes, I've got the – I've had to hold in my breath and, so, certainly there's been a bit of a build-up, but, it's just been trying to hold... [COR].

Excerpt 2.

A: - - - I think this other avenue, perhaps, that I'm exploring through some of these spiritual weekends and things is just about intense concentration and focus and being able to calm your mind [AUG-val] and understanding how you can manage your - out of your natural instincts and also your urges, whatever it may be, but, through clarity of thought, through deep breathing, through focus and, I think, practise as well – practising for that. So I've never meditated before whereas I've started putting a little bit of that into there [VOR].

Q: So when you say, well, I don't know whether it's useful going back to that metaphor, but, maybe just pick that up and see if it actually is. So it sounded like the undercurrent thing was the adrenalin – that raw, physiological response, but, the wave was actually more, perhaps, a combination of bracing yourself up or now there with this other thinking, considering spiritual orientations and things like that, it's more about a composure and a focus and rationale - those kind of other things. Is that right or am I mixing it all up [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Well, previously - I think they can mean the same thing because previously if my method was feeling like I had – the brainpower was overcoming – knowing that these natural and organic physiological responses [AUG-con] were occurring and

recognising and feeling the difference in my state of being, but, having the mind power and just the strength of will to overcome them, so, that was the wave coming over the undercurrent and recognising that that brainpower was more powerful, but, certainly feeling the physiological effects afterwards as soon as I got away from that situation, so, a bit of a build-up of stress and things. Whereas now I think there's – I don't think the analogy has to be so tumultuous because I think if there's a – it's almost as though the spiritual way of looking [AUG-val] at this would be that there's not a very strong undercurrent at all, there's never – it doesn't get to be so tumultuous in the first place and that everything is a lot calmer, so, the wave that come and subdues it and puts it all back into flat-line is such that you are practising – because you're practising behind the scenes, it's almost as though you're always – you're not as flustered in any given point, perhaps [VOR]. So it's a completely different approach and I don't think I had the maturity or the concentration or the – my energy levels were way, way, way too high and my – I thrived off adrenalin for a long time and thrived off those physiological effects, whereas now I don't enjoy it as much. I feel a bit shaky if I do and I prefer not to have those - the bit more extremes of, yeah, I think it took a lot of energy to overcome what you knew was...

Excerpt 3.

Q: The thing that I'm wondering about now is how you decide what really matters. It sounds like, because of who your parents were, and the fact that they have quite actively stood for some big ticket items in significant ways, and you were a part of that, there's a sense of obligation for you to do it. So, it sounds like deciding what is most important is based on what's been given to you as the most important. But another part of it actually, is knowing this is the ground I stand on in terms of what's important; in terms of family relationships. And, we look after each other or hold each other accountable for what we should believe in and do and respond to [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Certainly, I mean, I've approached those – I've tried to sort of balance [AUG-val] things out a little bit, 'cause I've got both sides in a way [VOR]. I've got the side of the family that – I always – I sort of feel like I am a bit of a – I'm the connector in the family, because I've got two sides [SS-pos]. And there's been a bunch of – there's that

turmoil that's been created, and there's some really deep, underlying issues there. And so I've been the one that's had to try and flatten that. So there has been a certain connectedness in that sense, and an understanding of being able to listen to one side but also listen to another and still take a stance myself and be heard amongst the crowd [OX1].

Q: Like, you're doing it because you're doing it for them, or you're doing it for you because it's important to them [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: [Laughs] it's hard to draw a line between the sand on that.

Q: Yeah. So it's a bit of a continuum?

A: Yeah. The [pause] – certainly there's been – I've tried to live a little bit more along the mantra that was, all right. If – like a – I think I try and stand with my own conviction [AUG-val], and first of all listen to someone else's story or position on something, and then evaluate whether – and then if I know or I think that – still with the pretty deep-seated sense of moral obligation [AUG-val], et cetera, that has been instilled within me. If I think, okay, perhaps I can try and just see it gradually, or just a little bit try and bring them a little bit more towards this point, then I will try and do so [VOR]. But I – it's a very different approach to the one that my parents have instilled, which is kind of just get in there and bombard...

Q: Okay.

A: ... I think I'd said one phrase that resonated with my parents, and especially to my father. I said, "Look, if you guys can't even have peace here at the local level, then what chance have you got for creating peace at the scale that you're talking about?" So it was a little bit trying to say, "Look, hold your tempers down. Listen to each other properly, and not just stick by this is my cause, I'm going to be stubborn, and this is the only way there is to see this issue." And so I think I've tried to live a little bit more by that mantra of try and create peace at the local level in your immediate vicinity. Still be strong in your conviction, but do so in a peaceful, respectful way [AUG-val].

And if you can ascertain that someone perhaps is not going to – if you – the harder you beat against a brick wall is – I mean, it's not going to make any difference to somebody. In fact, it might even turn them further away [VOR].

Q: Turn them away – yeah.

A: So I think it's probably better to pick your fights wisely, and to sort of see it in a more – in a longer-term fashion. So if you say, "Right. Here's someone that I think has got someone – a pretty opposed view to me. I can respectfully hear them out and hear their arguments, and over time, the more and more discussion we have – and I can respect their arguments [AUG-val], so I don't just necessarily think, oh, well. That person has different political beliefs to me so they're not worth talking to ever again [OX1]. That person is off my radar. They're a terrible human being [laughs] [VOR]."

Q: Right. It's just they've got a different worldview [X-probe]?

A: It's – they've got a different worldview, and try and work with them on that, and try and bring them more along the lines of your conviction [AUG-val] [OX1] [VOR].

Interviewee FSDI-109

Introductory Notes

This interviewee was a 51-year-old Australian male who had practiced as a lawyer until going into business as a software architect consulting to the Australian government. He had not trained in mindfulness.

This interviewee, unlike the others, when speaking about moments when he felt 'most alive' spoke quite explicitly about his observing-self. These utterances were coded [SX1] or [SX2]. It was interesting to note the augmenting value for the interviewee of being able to take perspective on experience in various challenging situations. Being able to take perspective meant that he was more able to move in valued directions [VOR] while experiencing strong emotions.

Values Word Cloud

The interviewee's value word cloud below provides a graphical representation the words they most frequently uttered from their value statements [AUG-val & VOR] across the interviews. This provides an indication of the interviewee's values that were and may reinforce valued living.



Interview Excerpts

Excerpt 1.

Q: Can you talk about how you see or how you know yourself and others [X-probe]
[RuleCrel-probe]?

A: I mean, I have this and what I've always called, even a long time before I learnt anything in the psychological area, I've called my observer, I've got this part of me that can watch what's going on and literally talk to me in the quietest, steadiest way no matter what is going on [SX2]. I had an incident [laughs] when I was skydiving when I was in the Army and the instructor said, "When you jump out of the plane, you're going to have to count, you have to count out before."

Q: Okay.

A: You have to count up to 5,000.

Q: Mmm hmm.

A: And I said okay, and I jumped out of the plane and I counted to 5,000 and when we hit the ground, the instructor came to me and he says, "You know I have never seen that happen. I've never seen anybody on his first jump, jump out and continue to count to 5,000. How did you do that?" And I knew the answer, *I knew how I did that, I left that to my observer. I said to myself the guy who's calm while all this chaos is going on, he is going to do the counting [SX2].*

Q: Yes, right, okay.

A: And yeah, and I did, and I remember thinking oh my God, I'm about to die hearing 3,000, 4,000 [laughs].

Q: [Laughs] and so when your observer self said 5,000, the other parts of you said, 'thank God'?

A: Yeah, I don't know if they ever connected it. *What I knew is that the observer had a job and as - that's what I use in conflict because I'm a big, you know, a lot of my work is about conflict or dealing with conflict and if I didn't have that observer self, you know, I don't know what I'd do [SX2].*

Q: Yeah, right.

A: Because I just - you talk to somebody and then their hackles rise and they start having a personal go at you and my observer says can you feel that? Your heart's going like crazy, what are you going to say now? [Laughs] so, yeah [SX2].

Excerpt 2.

Q: And - yeah, you mentioned conflict resolution. So if there's a kind of an operating principle for you underneath this about what works; what would that be [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Well, I - I mean, it comes down to the **observation of the smaller signals** [AUG-val].

Q: Yeah, right.

A: I mean, one of the answers that I didn't give you is that when I was giving that speech, my body started to tingle.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: And I observed it, I could feel it and I could, you know, my observer was saying your body is tingling [SX1] [SX2].

Q: Yeah, right.

A: Yeah, so that's - yeah, it's - the generalisation I take from it is that however bad the emotion is, the **witnessing** [AUG-val] of the emotion is a profound experience [SX1] [VOR].

Q: Yep.

A: So, recently I got a phone call from South Africa and my sister told me my dad had been suffering from heart failure and my sister told me that she had bad news... And in the pause between her saying that she had bad news and telling me that no, no, no, dad, wasn't dead, it wasn't to do with that... I experienced the grief of my dad having died and it was extraordinary for me to actually be on the phone and just say oh here comes the grief and just almost measuring it and realising that the sadness I felt about my dad passing was actually more profound than that of my mother, even

though I was closer to my mother, and then, of course, that didn't happen, but I was still able to actually [SX1].

Q: Yeah, wow. And so that behaviour is generalised; how is it useful?

A: Well, it's amazingly useful in conflict situations or difficult conversations.

Q: Mmm.

A: It's amazingly useful, because no matter how hard the conversation is, there's this thing that you're going to be observing [AUG-val], so you unlock that part and you say you sit down with me here and let's do this thing and the emotional part of you or the sort of experiential part of you goes in and says I don't think you needed to do that or maybe you went in a bit hard and then you watch their reaction and the observer goes yeah, okay [SX2], you seem pretty steady. Or, you're a bit shaky mate [laughs] [VOR].

Q: [Laughs] yeah.

A: I think everybody should have it.

Q: Yeah, I agree. And so the pay offs, this allows you to continue to be effective and not [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: In my mind there's nothing you can't do in a sort of interpersonal situation. There's almost nothing you can't do, you know, you feel yourself pause and you say well, you know, this might be - this might create havoc. Who knows what's going to happen now. And then you jump in and you've got this learning process [AUG-val] going on. So you can say afterwards well, you know, if nothing else I learnt something from this [VOR].

Interviewee FSDI-100

Introductory Notes

This interviewee was a 34-year-old Australian male who worked as an Assistant Director in an Australian government department. He had not trained in mindfulness.

In this interview the interviewee spoke about moments when he felt 'most alive'. These moments were a recollection of his first trip overseas to England in search of new experiences and career opportunities. The values [AUG-val] he espoused were 'exploration', 'new experience', 'freedom', 'adventure' and 'making a difference' through his career. The experience he wanted to avoid [AUG-con] was 'boredom' and a sense of 'being trapped'. The interview excerpts below capture a reiteration of similar value oriented self-rules [VOR] aimed at savouring moments and building a career. Amongst these statements the interviewee utters one control oriented self-rule [COR] about avoiding the experience of feeling trapped and bored.

Values Word Cloud

The interviewee's value word cloud below provides a graphical representation the words they most frequently uttered from their value statements [AUG-val & VOR] across the interviews. This provides an indication of the interviewee's values that were and may reinforce valued living.



Interview Excerpts

Excerpt 1.

Q: Right. So you said you stepped off the plane. So what was it about? Just leaving responsibilities behind, or [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah, it wasn't so much that I was tied down by responsibilities. I was looking forward to this, to living overseas for – it was more looking forwards, and to just the adventure [AUG-val], and just the unknown that was forming in terms of that backpacking trip, but also then really to the UK where I was keen to sort of try my hand at getting a job over there and starting up a new life, and seeing how all that went [VOR].

Excerpt 2.

Q: So talk about the best part of it. What was it about the event [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: I think the adventure and the unknown, which is what I like. The fact that you can create whatever you can try and create [AUG-val], – not knowing what London was going to be like job-wise, or the adventure of sort of discovering [AUG-val], the city, what it had to offer in terms of museums and galleries and parks, and meeting people. What it might have to offer work-wise, and whether that might extend beyond ... So it

was that sense of the unknown of, gee, I don't know where this is going to take me [AUG-val], and I'm really looking forward to it [VOR].

Q: Unknown, adventure, and dipping into a number of spaces, it sounds like. Trying on work as well as – I mean, you mentioned galleries, and people, and things like that [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah. And having complete freedom to sort of experiment [AUG-val] as well, freedom to I guess apply for a whole heap of jobs so that the party eventuates to maybe trying my hand at something a little bit different, which I did [VOR].

Excerpt 3.

Q: So, did you have any criteria that you were using to evaluate the direction you wanted to take and the quality of experience [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Criteria. What were the – I guess the things that were of interest to me were being able to explore [AUG-val] in your career, being able to explore just living in a different country and all that has to offer, being able to explore [AUG-val] in terms of travel into Europe and those sort of things. I think that was probably the three big ones for me [VOR].

Excerpt 4.

Q: So, do you wanted to have a future (in England)? How did you evaluate that [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Well, my evaluation was whether I could get a job [AUG-val] or not. So I'd taken leave, and so I always had by sort of March the following year a job to go back to if I wanted to. So my thinking was always, well, if this is not going to work out, then it's up – at some point in time I'll make that call, and then maybe I'll just go and travel before I come back to Australia, and I can say, well, I gave it a good crack. Whereas having got a good job, and then I thought, okay, well, if that's a good job, then that could potentially lead to another good job, and that's where you're starting to build

up your experience [AUG-val] in that city. So I could be here beyond the 12 months, and then – well, sort of beyond that as well, depending how things work out [VOR].

Excerpt 5.

Q: So there's something like, right now I'm moving towards something important in the long run [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah.

Q: And so you've described getting off a plane, getting a job, as the two main moments, and there's something in both of those that was – well, I'm interested more in what it was in those moments that gave you that sense, "yes, I'm on track and I'm alive" [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Well – okay. Well, on the train on arrival in London, it is [laughs] I've been planning to do this for a long period of time, finally I'm here. And secondly, remember this moment, because you may not have this moment – and it's that similar when I got off in Vietnam: you may not have this moment again. This may be as free as you'll ever be [AUG-val] in your entire life... so enjoy it, remember it, savour it [AUG-val] [laughs] and it's going to go quickly. So there's a bit of reflection and almost anticipating that at some point down the track you're going to reflect on this moment [SX1]. At least you can enjoy that again [VOR].

Q: Right. So something like you've been anticipating it, you showed up and thought, yeah, I'm here. I'm going to be in it [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yep. Yeah, definitely. And with the job, it was more a case of this is going to allow me to enjoy [AUG-val] London in the way that I wanted to enjoy it. It's taken a bit longer than expected, but now I can do the things that I'd intended to do, and maybe it'll lead to something else. And I don't know what that is, so it extends the adventure [AUG-val] [VOR].

Excerpt 6.

Q: Right. So I'm getting the sense it wasn't necessarily discipline-oriented or a particular kind of work; it was more about just trying a whole lot of different things [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah. And seeing what else is out there, and going, I'm enjoying what I'm doing, but I just wouldn't mind having a bit of a play to see what else is out there [AUG-val], just to see whether I'm on the right track or not, or whether there's something else I possibly should be doing, but with no real fixed idea in mind as to what that might be [VOR].

Q: So the payoffs were actually trying new things on to see if it fitted [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yep.

Q: - - - and the costs were, "well, I'm potentially removing myself so far from previous jobs in the agency or whatever, that I can't turn back [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]"?

A: Yeah. A big plus for me was the job and career. So there was an agency I really enjoyed working for. Pay was a lot better, and career-wise I could see more of a future still in Australia, and there'd be better opportunities there. And, yeah, so – and the costs in London being, all right, lower-paying job, lower status, so the level at which I was working at. So for me, the only carrot that would keep me in London from a career perspective was if I could progress reasonably swiftly to a level [AUG-val] at which I had been working here (in Australia) [VOR].

Q: So that's an important category, isn't it, the type of work. No, it's not the type. What is it about the work? It's [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: So it was – the work is that I guess you're doing what you are quite passionate about, that stimulates [AUG-val] [VOR].

Q: What's that? What are you passionate about [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: [Laughs] I've been toying with that question. I think in terms of my criteria for a job, as in it's got to have a broader purpose, in that it contributes to something that makes a positive contribution to society [AUG-val]. Below that, it's got to stimulate me, and it's got to keep me stimulated [AUG-val], so I've got to – so it's got to have certain elements to it that mean that there's still more and more to learn, more challenge [AUG-val] in the job. And then below that, there's a whole – but I'd say those are two biggies [VOR].

Q: Yeah. Well, I mean I'm kind of getting that. So there's a few really dominant themes in there. One is about adventure and learning; another one is about – it's contribution [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah. And the counter to that is not wanting to be bored [AUG-con], not wanting to – maybe this is a slight generational thing – not wanting to be stuck in a job at a time in your life when you're trapped by it [AUG-con], because your circumstances don't allow you to do anything other than probably what you're doing [COR].

Q: Yeah, right. So freedom is a biggie [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah.

Q: Choice [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yep.

Q: So the huge cost would be if you got trapped in a job where the sense of life and opportunity might just end [laughter] [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah, yeah, in a way. But I guess part of the trick in that exploration was to explore what's out there, but also make some decisions around your career [AUG-val], and go,

okay, well, I'm getting to this stage in my life where I might start to settle down and have kids and all that sort of stuff. Explore now to sort of see what's out there so that you can at least confirm that what you're doing is a good place to be [AUG-val], and that you're going to settled in it for the next 10 or 15 years or something [VOR].

Q: Got you. Well, there's two things I'm curious about now. I'm sensing that you've got quite a strong compass actually, that you're always evaluating a context for, on one hand, how constraining is this going to be, how self-limiting, and asking "am I surrendering myself to a set of obligations that will trap me?" And that's juxtaposed with the desire to want to choose life in all its fullness for what it is, and to be learning and discovering things, and making a difference, and not being bored [RuleValid-probe]?

A: Yeah.

Q: I'd imagine that's a bit of a pattern, at different points in your life it's kind of like, "yep, okay, is this closing in a bit or not, do I need to set myself free again [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]"?

A: Yeah. There's periods of time where I give myself licence [AUG-val] just to – you do your work, you get on with life and all those sort of things, and then there's a point at which I go, okay, a decision needs to be made [AUG-val] here, or I need to do some thinking around this to make it cool [VOR].

Interviewee FSDI-107

Introductory Notes

This interviewee was a 46-year-old Australian female completing a PhD in clinical psychology at an Australian university. She had trained in mindfulness and practiced informally. She also taught mindfulness.

In these interview excerpts the interviewee talked about her search for meaning in life. This theme emerged as she was discussing a moment of 'major failure' as a young

child when her parents separated. She described her journey from ‘being lost’, undertaking a search for her personal values and eventually finding unconditional love in her marriage and son. She discussed wanting to set people free as human beings. Many of her utterances are value oriented self-rules [VOR].

Values Word Cloud

The interviewee's value word cloud below provides a graphical representation the words they most frequently uttered from their value statements [AUG-val & VOR] across the interviews. This provides an indication of the interviewee's values that were and may reinforce valued living.



Interview Excerpts

Excerpt 1.

Q: So, you went to the monastery, and then you had this phone call: “Do I go to America to take up this job?” And you decided in that moment, “No, actually, it’s time – life is about something else now. And this used to be all about my identity. [RuleCrel-probe]”?

A: Yeah, yeah. I think it's quite distinct. So back then, my big realisation was a lot of it had been me and my values, but by the end it was more of a habit, I think, and also

more about what other people thought of me. So I didn't want to be boring, or I didn't want to be seen as boring. I wanted to be seen as interesting [AUG-con]. Whereas at the beginning, it was just purely intrinsic. So I got to a point where it just wasn't providing the payoffs, because probably the motives had changed and I had ignored that. So I had a big realisation [laughs] reading Jung, as you do. I don't know why it was Jung, but, yeah. This was all about what I wanted other people to see me to be, and the move towards trying out this meditation thing was about finding what I really wanted, who I was now [AUG-val]. And that was going to be some sort of magic that would help me get there, 'cause I was completely lost [AUG-con] [VOR]...

Q: (You went to a Buddhist monastery for 12 months, then after that). So just talk about that trajectory. Are you still on it, or has it matured [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah, I guess in a sense I am, because I think that – I think that what changed – the next big leap was having – finding ACT and having it articulated in the fact that actually, your values are your values, and they don't have to be someone else's, and then being able to look inside and go, oh, okay. So, yeah, courage is one value [AUG-val]. I can just – but I can act on that in different ways. It doesn't have to be about going to a warzone [laughs] [VOR].

Q: Yeah, yeah, exactly.

A: Or flexibility [AUG-val]. I can be doing that in my head [SX1]; I don't have to be running around the world. And so it's more of a similar value, refining that [VOR].

Q: And it sounds more intrinsic [RuleCrel-probe]?

A: Yeah. Like, for example, the curiosity, yeah. That was a value, but when I was younger, yeah, I was curious, but there was no attention to detail, 'cause there was no mindfulness. Now, I realise that I was curious [AUG-val]; I just didn't know how to embody that value. And now I can be curious by looking inside my head [SX1]; it doesn't have to be – I think that after the year in the monastery, yeah, I moved a lot,

but I didn't get the answer. I was still looking for the meaning of life, as in the one, the one meaning [AUG-val] [VOR].

Q: The one meaning. So where are you at with all of that now, because these are kind of really deep pursuits. Who am I? What's the meaning of life? They're really big questions [RuleCrel-probe] [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Yeah. And, well, I let go of the one meaning of life, and just – I guess judging my meanings as what's reinforcing to me and other people, and I think it just kind of straight back to the values stuff. If you're pursuing and you're acting in this way, then you'll get lots of endorphins and joy, and cortisol along the way sometimes, but that's not really the thing. And I think you're right, it's – since – especially since I've – well, since I've got married, not since I met (my husband), but since (my son) was born – they're connection things. And (my son) made the big difference with that. I realised I can do unconditional love [AUG-val]. I didn't realise I could do it. I couldn't – I didn't think I could do it before I got him [VOR]. I tried it out with a cat, and it seemed to work [laughs].

Q: No, it's just amazing ...

A: No, it's just the idea of what do you love? What do you love [AUG-val]? You love [AUG-val] the package, and the package gets old, and the package loses its hair, and the package gets wrinkles [VOR] and - I think there's a certain faith. There's a certain leap of faith [AUG-val] that – what I've been learning lately is to have faith in the process, and the process of relationships, of open relationships [AUG-val], having faith in that. I mean, (my son) gave me a hit with that, because I realised I did have unconditional love [AUG-val] [VOR], and I didn't care how many legs he has, or how little sense of humour he has; I'll still love him.

Q: That's great.

A: I remember asking a friend who had two children before "What is it with a kid? Is it just distracting, so you don't think about the meaning of life anymore, or is it like

that's – you get it because of the thing?" And he said, "Oh, a bit of both." [Laughs] I agree.

Q: You agree?

A: Yeah. There's too much else to do. But you want to be spending your time doing functional things, and trying to grapple with the meaning of life is just – it's a pursuit for the younger person [laughs].

Q: Well, that becomes the meaning of life, doesn't it [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Well, that's true. But yeah, the meaning of life is to help – yeah, is to enjoy and help assist [AUG-val] the younger person. It's a bit like where we started from, is that they've got their life now, and they're making up the world after us. And I get a whole bundle of energy from working with that age group. I love it [VOR]. Just doing that little mindfulness workshop at (location) a few weeks ago, just a little one-hour, two-hour workshop, there was only about eight, 22 year old law students and stuff there, just love it. The endless – and back to their value. The endless possibilities [AUG-val] sitting in that room excites me. It's not – and no longer it's me – will I live in this country or that country? It's now them. What will happen to them? Where can they go [AUG-val] [VOR]?

Q: Yeah. And there's endless possibility. And there's a huge pull to that, and it's about – check me if I'm wrong, but knowing you, and it's just about actually setting them free as human beings [RuleCfunc-probe]?

A: Absolutely... It's – yeah. If one of those eight people could just approach things a little bit differently, that would be cool. Start them on a track to doing something new.

END

Appendix 3

FSDI Interviewer Capability Evaluation Method

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FSDI Interviewer Capabilities

In this thesis evaluating the Functional Self-Discrimination Interviewer (FSDI) behaviours involved coding a subset of the interviews for three interviewer capabilities - *Listening* (questions & reflection), *Collaboration & Engagement* and *Empathy* using the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity (MITI) assessment method (Moyers et al. 2014; Moyers et al. 2010). As discussed in Chapter 5, extending this set of capabilities to include the other Motivational Interviewing (MI) capabilities of *Autonomy Support*, *Evocation* and *Direction* provides an opportunity for further research into interviewing for behaviour change based on a combination of the FSDI and MI. A description of all these interviewer capabilities and what constitutes high and low ratings is provided below. For full details on the coding and rating method refer to the MITI manual (Moyers et al. 2014; Moyers et al. 2010).

Interviewer Behaviours Suited to an Assessment Interview

Collaboration & Engagement

This scale measures the extent to which the interviewer behaves as if the interview is occurring between two equal partners.

Low on Scale

Interviewers are rated low in *Collaboration & Engagement* if they do not work towards a mutual understanding during the session. Rather, they tend to rely on one-way communication based on their authority and expertise for progress. They may be dismissive, overly passive or so acquiescent that they do not make a genuine contribution to the interaction. In this way, the interviewer relies on their knowledge to respond to the interviewee and does not appear to value the interviewee's knowledge. Their interactions with the interviewee appear more like wrestling than dancing.

High on Scale

Interviewers are rated high in *Collaboration & Engagement* if they work cooperatively with the client and support the interviewee to express him or herself openly. They tend not to rely on dominance, expertise or authority to

achieve progress. They are curious about client ideas, and are willing to be influenced by them. An interviewer high in *Collaboration & Engagement* appears to be dancing with their client during an interview—one moment leading, the next following—in seamless motion.

Empathy

This scale measures the extent to which the interviewer understands or makes an effort to grasp the interviewee's perspective and feelings: literally, how much the Interviewer attempts to “try on” what the interviewee feels or thinks. Care is taken not to confuse empathy with warmth, acceptance, genuineness, or client advocacy; these are independent of the empathy rating. Reflective listening is an important part of this characteristic but this global rating is intended to capture all efforts that the interviewer makes to understand the client's perspective and convey that understanding to the client.

Low on Scale

Interviewers are rated low in *Empathy* if they show indifference or active dismissal of the interviewee's perspective and experiences. They tend to probe for factual information or pursue an agenda, and do so to “build a case” for their point of view, rather than for the sole purpose of understanding the client's perspective. They show little effort to gain a deeper understanding of complex events and emotions, and questions asked reflect shallowness or impatience. In the extreme they might express hostility toward the client's viewpoint or directly blame the client for incapacities to express him or herself.

High on Scale

Interviewers are rated high in *Empathy* if their approach to the session is taken as an opportunity to learn about the interviewee. They are curious. They spend time exploring the client's opinions and ideas about the target experiences being discussed especially. Empathy is evident when the interviewer shows an active interest in understanding what the client is

saying. Empathy is also apparent when the interviewer accurately follows or perceives a complex story or statement by the client or probes gently to gain clarity.

Questions

Evaluating interviewer questions is a behaviour count and requires the coder to tally instances of this particular interviewer behaviour. Counts are taken for each of the following types of questions:

Closed Question

This behaviour code is used when the interviewer asks the client a question that could be answered with a “yes” or “no” response. Closed questions that are intended to be open questions but begin with a stem word such as (can, could, did, would, should, are, will, have) are coded as closed questions.

Open Question

An open question is coded when the interviewer asks a question that allows a wide range of possible answers. The question may seek information, invite the client’s perspective or encourage self-exploration. Open questions allow the option of surprise for the questioner. “Tell me more” statements are coded as open questions unless the tone and context clearly indicates the question is to Direct or Confront.

In general, stacked questions (repeated questions from the Interviewer before the client gives an answer), are coded as only one question. Sometimes the interviewer stacks questions by asking an open question and then giving a series of “for example” follow up questions before the client answers. These are coded as *one* open question.

Similarly, when the interviewer offers more than one question in an utterance, only one question is coded. If the interviewer offers both an open and a closed question in the same utterance, the open question code trumps the closed

question, therefore, only a code for an open question is given. For example, if the interviewer were to say, “How might you have gone about changing that behaviour? It sounds like this is really important to you. Have you tried before?” This utterance would receive an open question code and a reflection code (see below).

Questions-trying-to-be-reflections

Occasionally an interviewer may offer a statement that otherwise meets the criteria for a reflection, but it is given with an inflection at the end (thereby making it “sound like” a question). These statements are coded as Questions (either open or closed), NOT as reflections.

Reflection

This category is meant to capture reflective listening statements made by the interviewer *in response to* client statements. A Reflection may introduce new meaning or material, but essentially it captures and returns to the interviewee something about what they have just said. Evaluating interviewer reflections is a behaviour count and requires the coder to tally instances of this particular interviewer behaviour. Reflections are categorised into Simple or Complex categories and counts are taken for the following types of reflection:

Simple Reflection

Simple reflections typically convey understanding or facilitate interviewee/interviewer exchanges. These reflections add little or no meaning (or emphasis) to what the interviewee has said beyond their original intent in the statement. Interviewer summaries of several interviewee statements are coded as simple reflections *if* the interviewer does not use a summary to add an additional point or direction.

Complex Reflection

Complex reflections typically add substantial meaning or emphasis to what the interviewee has said. These reflections serve the purpose of conveying a

deeper or more complex picture of what the interviewee has said. Sometimes the interviewer may choose to emphasise a particular part of what the interviewee has said to make a point or take the conversation in a different direction. The Interviewer may add subtle or very obvious content to the interviewee's words, or they may combine statements from the client to form summaries that are complex in nature. When the coder can't distinguish between a simple and complex reflection, the simple designation is used. Default category: simple.

Series of Reflections

When the interviewer offers a series of simple and complex reflections in the same utterance only the complex reflection is coded. If the interviewer offers a simple reflection, followed by a statement, and then a complex reflection, only the complex reflection code is given.

Reflection and Question in Sequence

Sometimes the interviewer may begin with a reflection, but then adds a question to "check" the reliability of the reflection (either open or closed). Both elements are coded.

Reflections-Turned-Into-Questions

Occasionally the interviewer may offer a statement that otherwise meets the criteria for a reflection but it is given with an inflection at the end (thereby making it "sound like" a question). These statements are coded as Questions (either open or closed) NOT as reflections (see *Questions-trying-to-be-reflections*).

Additional Interviewer Behaviours Suited to a Change Interview

Interviewing to elicit 'change talk' and enhance motivation for behaviour change (Miller & Rollnick 2013), from an RFT perspective would mean focusing on eliciting value directed self-rules (Hayes et al. 2012). This type of interviewing requires that

the *designated target behaviour* for change be identified and the additional capabilities of *Autonomy Support*, *Evocation* and *Direction* be employed.

Designating a Target Behaviour

Interviewing to elicit value oriented self-rules specific to a persons desired change would involve identifying a particular behaviour or problem that the client wishes to impact. Skilful interviewers would then reinforce their client's sense of autonomy to choose, and attempt to elicit and reinforce client self-rules for valued living, or change talk, relative to that behaviour or problem. If this type of interview were to be coded for interviewer capability, coders would need to know in advance of the coding task what the designated target behaviour was for the intervention. This would allow coders to judge more accurately whether the Interviewer had directed interventions toward the target behaviour, were floundering or hopelessly lost. This approach to coding the interviewers behaviour would not be applicable for interventions in which target behaviours have not been identified. For example, when coding an FSDI to evaluate interviewer capabilities for eliciting rich code-able transcript suited to an analysis using the FSDM in order to evaluate a client's current trajectory for valued living.

Autonomy Support

This scale is intended to convey the extent to which the interviewer supports and actively fosters the interviewee's perception as opposed to attempting to control the client's behaviour or choices. Scores on the autonomy scale include the avoidance of particular behaviours *and* proactively pursuing strategies to enhance the interviewee's autonomy or support.

Low on Scale

Interviewers low on *Autonomy/Support* view the client as incapable of moving in the direction of wellbeing without input from interviewer. They may assume that the client will change their behaviour in the direction that the interviewer thinks is best. The interviewer may explicitly tell that client that he or she has no choice. In addition, the interviewer may imply that external

consequences (such as coercion from others) have removed choice.

Interviewers may also insist that there is only one way to approach a target behaviour or they may be pessimistic or cynical about the client's ability to change. Interviewers low on *Autonomy/Support* may convey choices but do so dismissively or with sarcasm.

*Note: *Autonomy/Support* scores are *not* lowered if the interviewer is empathising with the client's perceived lack of choices, hopelessness or resentment about current circumstance.

High on Scale

Interviewers high on *Autonomy/Support* ensure, either directly or implicitly, that the topic of choice and control is raised in session. They view the client as having the potential to move in the direction of wellbeing. Interviewers high on this scale work to help the client recognise choices with regard to the target behaviour. In addition, interviewers may explicitly acknowledge that the client has the choice to change or maintain the status quo. They may also express an optimism about the client's ability to change.

Evocation

This scale is intended to measure the extent to which the interviewer conveys an understanding that values underpin motivation for change; and, that the client's ability to move toward that change, resides within the client and manifests as an elucidation of their values as qualities of committed action. The interviewer therefore concentrates effort to elicit and expand such client talk within the interview interaction.

Low on Scale

Interviewers low on this scale have only superficial interest in the client's ambivalence or reasons for change, and miss opportunities to explore these in detail. They may make assumptions about the client's intent to change (or not change) without exploring this in detail, or may ignore the client's ideas when

they are offered. Interviewers low in *Evocation* may rely on persistent fact gathering or information-giving as a means of facilitating change, and often convey a distrust of the client's current knowledge base about the problem under consideration. Interviewers on the low end of this scale do not respond to values and change talk when it is offered, or do so in a perfunctory manner. They are likely to *provide* the client with reasons to change, rather than *eliciting* them.

High on Scale

Interviewers high on this scale are curious about their clients' personal and unique values and ideas about why change is a good idea or might not be. They not only follow up on these ideas when the client offers them but also actively seek to explore them when the client does not. Although they might provide information or education, interviewers high in evocation do not rely on it as a means of helping clients to change. Instead, they prioritise exploration of the client's personal values and reasons for change and the means to go about it, and do not allow this exploration to be neglected amid other content or information in the session. Interviewers high on the *Evocation* scale understand the value of hearing the client's own language in favour of change, and actively create opportunities for that language to occur.

Direction

This scale measures the degree to which Interviewers maintain appropriate focus on the specific target behaviour or concerns directly tied to it.

Low on Scale

Interviewers low in *Direction* exert little influence concerning the topic and course of the session. They do not appear to explore any particular behaviour change on the part of the client, and do not take opportunities to bring change into the discussion. Sessions with Interviewers low in *Direction* may lack structure, and are likely to have an aimless quality. Clients may end up discussing any topic of interest to them, without attempts by the Interviewer

to focus on any particular troublesome behaviour. The Interviewer may accept an excessive focus on historical topics or theoretical explanations that divert attention from changing a current behaviour. Interviewers low in *Direction* appear to lack a compass to help them move the session toward to a specific, desirable end.

High on Scale

Interviewers high in *Direction* exert substantial influence concerning the topic and course of the session. They are transparent in their focus on a target behaviour or referral question and they make consistent efforts to return to the target behaviour when conversation wanders. An Interviewer who is domineering and unyielding in their focus on the problem at hand would score high in *Direction*, however Interviewers high in *Direction* need not be harsh or authoritarian. They may exert direction by selectively reinforcing client discussion toward the possibility of concern or change with regard to the target behaviour. Interviewers high in *Direction* seem to use a compass to implement course corrections when the focus of the session drifts too far away from the target behaviour.

Employing the capabilities discussed above when conducting and evaluating an interview has positive implications for the training and practice of professional coaches and therapists. An approach to interviewing designed to elucidate and reinforce interviewee value oriented self-rules and cultivate perspective-taking as precursors to long-term wellbeing by employing this set of tailored MI capabilities could prove to be a more powerful intervention for positive change. Further research would validate this proposition.

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