PATRICK TOMLINSON ASSOCIATES

DEVELOPING PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS

PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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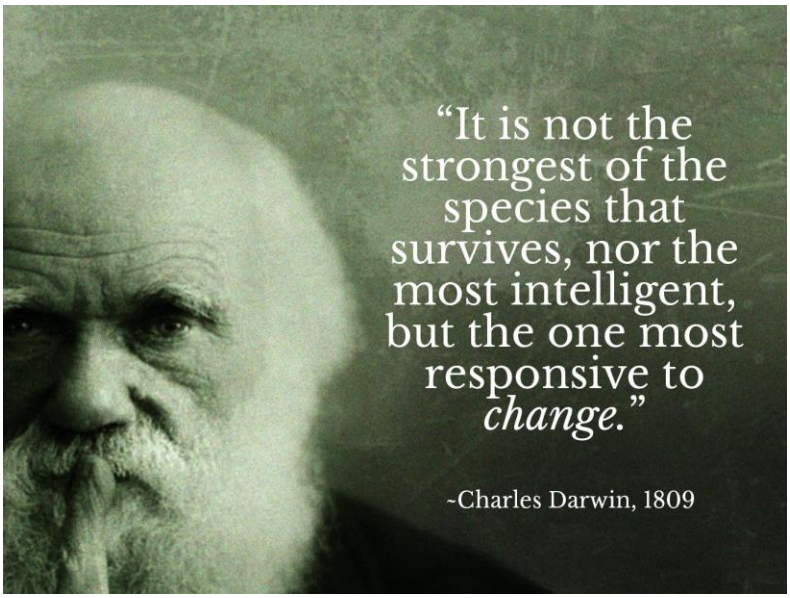
PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
– THE WORKER (2016)



This blog is especially relevant to those who work with traumatized children and young people, but also more widely. My 30 or so years of work in services for traumatized children and young people have always had a focus on development. I think of this as broadly meaning growth, expansion and advancement. Development means learning from experience. This can be exciting and also scary. It means change, leaving familiar territory and going into the unknown. All of which we might understandably resist, but which are essential for evolution and survival. As Charles Darwin, is reported to have implied it is not the strongest that survive but those most responsive to change. It could be argued that in our fast-changing world the ability to respond to change and adapt is increasingly important.

This blog is on our own development as a worker. What often gets referred to as professional development, but I think it is far more than that. I include workers at all levels who are involved with traumatized children. Carers, therapists, supervisors, managers, and directors, among others. The next blogs in this series will focus on the development of the child/young person; our colleagues and teams; the organization as a whole; and those we partner with, such as a child's family, other professionals and the local community. I am starting with the worker, simply because for me, my choice to work with traumatized children was my beginning.

My first job was in 1985 as a residential care worker in a UK therapeutic community for 'emotionally disturbed' boys. We lived and worked on a large rural site. 40 boys in groups of 10 in 4

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separate houses, based on a farm. The staff and their families had their own on-site accommodation. The setting was like a small village. The tranquility was in stark contrast to the primitive emotions and behaviour that were often part of daily life. To some extent, the environment was an essential antidote.

The official hours of work were 7.30 am to 11 pm 5 days a week. One and a half days off each week. I had a Saturday afternoon after 1.30 pm off, and Wednesdays. On workdays getting off at 11 pm could easily turn into 1 am or later. At times we didn't get our time off, due to covering sickness or a crisis. Regular hours were 70 per week, at times up to 100. Going to work there was one of the best decisions I ever made. I am still thankful I was given the opportunity.

I was attracted to doing something challenging helping others, and which I believed would lead to personal change. This possibility was confirmed by most people I talked with on my 3-day long visit, which was part of the staff selection process. The staff I met kept saying, this kind of work will test you, but if you can do it you will learn about yourself and grow as a person. I was already identified with work for disadvantaged children. However, I think the motivating factor was to do with personal change for me and feeling this work might be a way to do it.

I think there are many jobs where we can learn all the time, but not so many which will lead to fundamental change as a person. The kind of occupations that push us to our limits are more likely to do this. Our formative experiences have a major influence on our adult personalities. Working 24/7 with children who keep probing to test who you are and what you are capable of, is another likely catalyst for change. Put the two together and there is a huge potential for growth, both professionally and personally. We find ourselves in a position where it is impossible to escape our vulnerabilities unless we have armour coated skin. Two options that don't take long to surface are – either leave or stay and work through whatever is painful and difficult.

John Whitwell was the Principal of the Cotswold Community for the 14 years I worked there. He captured the centrality of change in a 2011 speech, celebrating the work of the Community,

> The Cotswold Community has been a special place for a lot of people for a long time. Why is it special? ….. It seemed to me that the Cotswold Community supported change. Change for everybody in the place. Change not just for the boys that came here, but change for all the grown-ups. That change was about gaining new insights into the work, but also about becoming more self-aware and also learning new skills. Skills whether they were therapeutic skills, or practical and creative skills as well.

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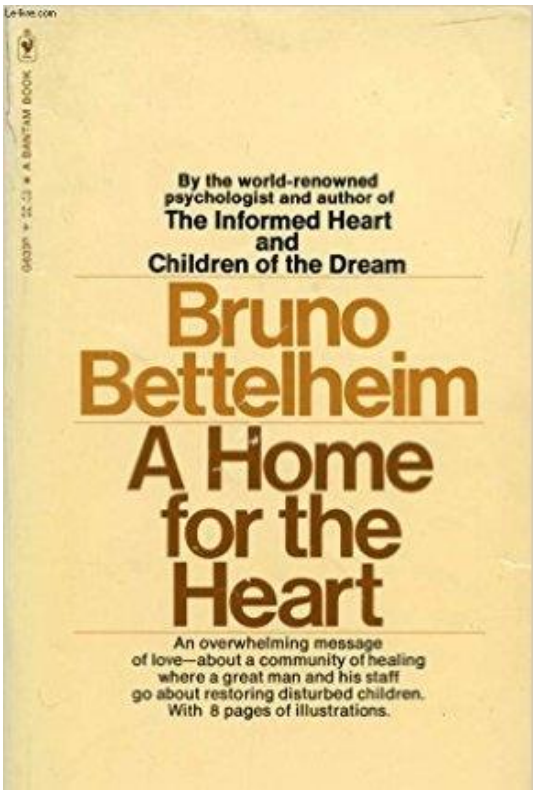

Bruno Bettleheim who was Director of the Orthogenic School in Chicago also wrote about this in his book 'Home for the Heart' (1974). The Orthogenic School was for children with significant difficulties, such as severe autism and childhood schizophrenia. I read parts of his book during my early days in the community. There were a few sections I found particularly interesting.

- Reintegration: The staff member against himself
- Personal Change and Professional Growth
- The Inward Journey

When I started writing this blog, I didn't anticipate referring to Bettleheim. However, I associate him with some of my first insights into the issue of development. So, maybe it is not surprising he has come to mind. Bettleheim's basic premise was this and it is as relevant now as it was then. We go into these extreme work environments because it will meet some of our own needs. We are not likely to be conscious of what those needs are, but we sense the work will be good for us. Sentimental notions of wanting to 'love' children or 'help' a deprived child, on their own will not be enough to sustain our efforts. Hence the well-known phrase 'Love is not Enough' - also a title of one of Bettleheim's books. In fact, many people who do not last long in the work, don't leave because of the children's attitudes towards them. They leave because of their own strong reactions and hostile feelings towards the very children they previously felt so much concern towards. The shock of their own reactions and feelings can be too much to bear. I clearly remember feelings of anger I had never felt before in my life. The children were experts at finding our 'Achilles heel' and 'buttons to push' that we didn't even know we had.

> It isn't so much the patient's actions or feelings against which the staff need to protect themselves, but mainly their own. (Bettleheim)

I'm talking about very difficult children here, who will often attack you, emotionally, verbally and physically and reject everything you offer. They will also behave in a chaotic, unpredictable, bewildering and often dangerous manner. If all of that goes on consistently, for days, weeks and even months it is challenging to the extreme. Thankfully it doesn't go on forever, though it can feel like it. These children need to push those who care and work with them to the limit. Only then and if you survive and carry on, without retaliation will they begin to trust and potentially heal. Tolerating one's own feelings and reactions is sometimes the best we can do. At least this is better than hurting the child, which may have been common in his/her history.

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2nd part of the premise. When we are faced with such consistent attack, rejection, and hostility, our defences, which were good enough to help us survive in ordinary circumstances, begin to disintegrate under this emotional and physical onslaught.

3rd Part - we feel extremely vulnerable, frightened, overwhelmed and confused. Support is critical here. The worker may be in emotional turmoil, which is a normal reaction to a highly stressful situation. Those providing support need to have the confidence and experience so that they too don't become anxiously reactive. Emotional disintegration can be catching. Any organization that provides foster or residential care or any other service to children who have complex trauma must meet this onslaught on the staff, with an equally powerful support. If not, people are likely to get really hurt and not everyone will stay. Either staff or children will leave, or both. I think the same also applies to other related services. The support can be in different forms - training, supervision, mentoring and consultancy, and directly in the work situation. It is essential that time and space to think about the work is provided.

4th part. With defences disintegrating, we can begin to feel and see what's underneath. This provides the potential for learning and growth. Why did a particular incident make us so upset? We begin to make connections, sometimes with events we had completely forgotten. What we remember of our childhoods begins to become more complex, but also more accessible. This 'inward journey' as Bettleheim called it could take many years, usually a minimum of 3.

5th part – re-integration. This is when the unintegrated parts of our personalities begin to become integrated. It is interesting that this concept of integration is now one of the main themes of trauma recovery work. With reintegration, our personality grows. Our narrative becomes more coherent and now includes experiences, sometimes painful, which we were not fully aware. The unconscious and unintegrated past may have made itself known in ways outside of our control. Like an unpleasant repetition, we couldn't stop. For example, a physical symptom or pattern of behaviour.

There is not an end to this process of integration. It carries on, just as new experiences continue. But just as in the way the first 3 years of life are so influential on the rest of our development - the first 3 years of intensive work with severely traumatized children have a similar long-lasting influence. For some people, if they get that far, the 3-year cycle is enough. Change has happened, and it is time to move on. For others, different reasons for continuing can be found. Whatever route we take, our development is central to our well-being. I learnt from Martin Willis (2001) on a training event related to strategic leadership and outcomes - the three key outcome areas for human well-being are **safety, happiness, and development**. Development is important to all of us – for those who work with children who have complex trauma, it is a necessity. Bettleheim said in 1974 and I agree with him,

> Such re-integration around the patient seems to have a near miraculous effect. Actually, what is involved in the process makes understanding it quite readily

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> comprehensible: the worker's integration often induces a parallel process in the patient.

Though he uses the terms patient and worker, I think the same also applies in more familiar and less institutional settings, such as a foster home. There are many routes to development. I am not advocating that experiences like mine would be good for everyone, though it was for me. Those extremely challenging years laid a foundation that I continue to value, use and build upon. There were also many enjoyable times, wonderful shared experiences, fun and humour. The children had great character and are unforgettable. I am glad to still be in touch with a few as adults, 25 or so years later. The therapeutic community I joined had developed a congruent therapeutic model. The support that I was able to make use of was excellent. I had high-quality people around me - colleagues, managers, senior staff and consultants. Maybe the culture allowed their quality to develop and shine through? No one person created the culture, but we all, including the children, had the space to contribute. Without this everything could easily have disintegrated into a complete mess. At times it felt like it was. Many young people, whose lives were not destined for good outcomes did very well. Some didn't and the same could be said of the staff. There are probably many who have mostly negative memories. But many also who have gone on in their work, to achieve on the foundation of this experience.

We cannot overlook the central need for the professional development of all those who are involved in such challenging work. We might call it professional, but in a job that is so personal, there isn't a neat way of separating the two. For example, if a carer is to not be punitive towards an 'ungrateful' child, she might first need to understand her resentment towards her parents who constantly told her she was ungrateful. However, our need for development needs to be manageable within the context of the primary task – enabling children to recover. Too much baggage might really be too much. Some baggage, like the 'wounded healer' might give us the motivation we need. There is a fine line here and it is one of the central struggles of the work.

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THINKING ABOUT COMPASSION FATIGUE, VICARIOUS TRAUMA, SECONDARY STRESS AND BURNOUT (2019)

I was asked by a Health Care Professional if I thought that the terms compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma were still contestable today. I was thankful for the question and wrote a blog on it in 2015. My experience and research since then have led me to develop it.

Up until relatively recent decades, it had been contested whether exposure to armed combat and other seriously threatening situations is a definite cause of PTSD. During the last century, other concepts were put forward as an explanation, implying that a weakness of character, a nervous disorder, a 'fragile heart' and even malingering as the more likely causes. In some cases, the malingering concept was used to justify the withdrawal of financial benefits to war veterans. It was argued that the benefits were fueling the problem.

Therefore, the idea that a person may experience compassion fatigue or vicarious trauma, as a result of 'merely' working with people in need would inevitably be contested. However, there now seems to be a general acceptance that the concepts are a reality that needs to be taken seriously.

Compassion fatigue, secondary stress, and vicarious trauma clearly imply being involved with people, whereas the more general term burnout can be applied to many situations. For example, truck drivers are often under significant stress, which may lead to burnout. On the one hand, they may feel pressure to put in the hours and miles but are also often worried about being away from family and home. It is an isolated kind of job. On top of that, they may witness traumatic events on the roads they travel (Balay and Shattell, 2016). Therefore, they may also be vulnerable to secondary trauma and may have no-one to discuss it with.

A few years ago, I was watching a market trader selling meat. Instead of the usual humorous sales banter, he started throwing meat out at the gathered crowd and ranting that he hadn't had a holiday in years and had to get up at five every morning. This behaviour fits with burnout, which includes qualities such as lethargy, depression, and cynicism – it is more than simply being exhausted.

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Compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and secondary stress are typically related to those who have a role in working with and caring for others who are suffering. Compassion fatigue may be related to roles such as being a care worker for the elderly or a doctor. Figley (2015) refers to it as the natural, predictable, treatable, and preventable unwanted consequence of working with suffering people.

Vicarious trauma is more related to working with people who have suffered trauma. Bloom (2003) describes it as the cumulative transformative effect on the helper of working with survivors of traumatic life events. The symptoms of vicarious trauma are like those of PTSD.

Whereas vicarious trauma is cumulative, secondary traumatic stress can happen quickly in relation to a traumatic event happening to another. It could be caused by the severity of the situation and/or a personal trigger. Bloom (2003) says it is the,

> …natural, consequent behavior and emotions that result from knowledge about a traumatizing event experienced by another and the stress resulting from helping or wanting to help a traumatized or suffering person.

Again, the symptoms are almost identical to those of PTSD. The symptoms of PTSD include disruptions and distortions to a person's view of the world and themselves. He or she may experience a loss of identity and view the world and those in it as more dangerous and malevolent, untrustworthy, exploitative, or alienating. While we can agree to the reality of these four concepts, the specific language we use frames the problem in a certain way, influencing how we understand and respond to it. A term like 'compassion fatigue' is one way of saying something about a situation. It is a metaphor, but on its own does not explain everything involved.

It is incontestable that people have an impact on each other for better and worse. If someone spends most of their working day engaged with people, the needs and moods of those people can have a huge impact. Spending a few minutes with a highly distressed, hyper-vigilant traumatized person can quickly 'get under one's skin'. As can spending time with a depressed, withdrawn person in a different way. It may even be a necessary part of the work that the 'other' is able to get under our skin. Some young people I have worked with would carry on with their difficult behaviour until they knew they had got through and made an impact. Otherwise, their sense of insignificance and worthlessness would be affirmed. Getting someone angry or upset at least meant being alive and visible, rather than insignificant and invisible.

It is how the impact is responded to that is the critical issue for all involved - the worker, 'client' or other and the wider context, family, team, organization, etc. If we use the term 'compassion fatigue', it suggests that the problem is caused by compassionately giving too much to others who are therefore implied to be demanding. The term creates a focus on the demands involved, like there are too many people to look after, or maybe the caseload is too big?

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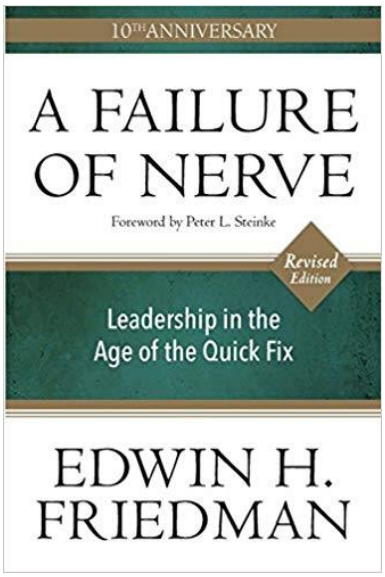
However, as in all demanding, stressful and potentially threatening situations, people respond differently. It may turn out that one person who has 'compassion fatigue' has been neglecting their own needs, maybe out of guilt or a lack of self-worth? There may be many different reasons. Looking at the problem from this angle, a term like 'Self-Neglect Fatigue' could be used. This would focus the issue more on the person suffering the fatigue and how he or she is managing. However, this focus could feel persecutory and unhelpful, especially if the person felt blamed.

Every person also has their unique defence mechanisms and levels of resilience. This is very significant to how a person responds to stressful situations and what can be managed. Some defence mechanisms may be helpful, enabling a natural protective response. Others may be less helpful leading to reactions that need to be managed. The important thing is that a person develops an awareness of their own tendencies and brings them into consciousness. This will help make responses and reactions more manageable and less likely to add further stress to the situation (Khaleelee and Tomlinson, 1997).



Friedman (1999) claimed that the empathetic focus on the other is unhelpful when it leads to a neglect of one's self and own needs. He argued that the focus on the other and his or her feelings, not only shifts attention away from what one needs for oneself, but also often removes a sense of responsibility from the other. This may undermine resilience, making matters worse.

Continuing with this theme, he argues (2008),

"I believe it is the focus on empathy rather than responsibility that has created the incredibly stress triangle in all the helping professions whereby the motivated person winds up responsible for another (client, staff person, or family member and their problem. This is the real source of burnout, not hard work."

From Friedman's perspective, therefore, burnout is more about the position one takes in relation to a situation or task, rather than the task itself or the amount of work involved. For example, when we get caught up in the role of savior or rescuer. Not only have we taken a position that is not likely to work, but it may also become part of a cycle of deterioration for all involved. Victim-Perpetrator-Rescuer dynamics are a recipe for burnout and compassion fatigue.

Compassion can be understood as, to feel or suffer with. If anyone spends a lot of time with those who are suffering, an important question is how much suffering can be borne. Apparently, when the 14th Dali Lama was asked how he managed to be in touch with so much suffering in the world, he said, in glimpses. I am not certain he said that, but it is an important point. In other words, compassion needs to have limits put around it. A person who is overwhelmed by compassion is not much use to anyone.

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> Givers have to set limits because takers rarely do (Irma Kurtz, 2003).

A friend in the air flight business, gave me the example anyone who flies on a plane will know. In the safety briefing, passengers are told that before fixing the oxygen mask on anyone else, including your own children, make sure yours is fixed first. In other words, we need to look after ourselves if we are to be of any use to someone else. This can seem counter-intuitive, the natural reaction of a parent is often the other way around. The same can apply in the 'human services' where it might feel that self-care is somehow equal to neglecting the other, whose needs might seem overwhelming in comparison. Cultures based on guilt, self-sacrifice, and martyrdom can become dominant. Friedman says there is more to it than putting one's own oxygen mask on first,

> This is not merely a matter of putting one's own oxygen mask on first. It has to do with leaders, (or parents or healers) putting their primary emphasis on their own continual growth and maturity……the focus on empathy, because it encourages primary emphasis on others, subverts the nature of that self-differentiating process.

In some cases, compassion may not be the most helpful ingredient. In the case of parenting, he argues,

> Parents cannot produce change in a troubling child, no matter how caring, savvy, or intelligent they may be, until they become completely fed up with their child's behaviour.

Being completely fed up with a child doesn't sound very compassionate! But as Friedman says there are times when it may be necessary and helpful. An excessive focus on compassion may well lead to compassion fatigue. Having compassion should not exclude having boundaries, expectations and holding someone accountable for their own actions and responsibilities.

Similarly, in the way it orientates our focus, the concept of self-care may also be unhelpful. It could be taken to mean that we enter demanding situations and then look after ourselves afterward and in-between. Make sure we eat well, exercise, enjoy relaxing activities, etc. These are all important but not more than how we manage and develop ourselves in every aspect of our life, including the demanding situations we are in.

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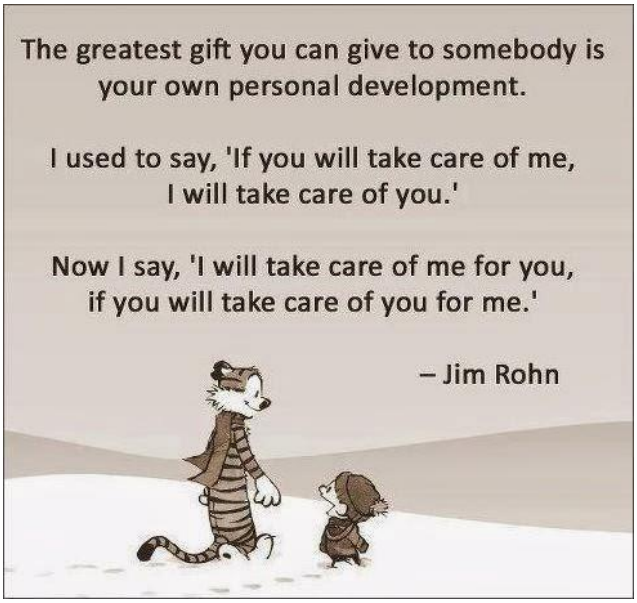

Self-management may be a more useful focus than self-care. For example, how do we respond to a challenging young person? With a focus on empathy and/or an expectation of responsibility? In general life, how do we consider our ways of responding? How do we healthily assert ourselves? How we manage ourselves is a critical factor in preventing burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and secondary stress. Friedman goes as far to say,

"That all leadership begins with the management of one's own health."

And when Friedman refers to leadership, he uses the phrase "from parents to presidents".

Like Friedman, Menzies Lyth (1979) argues that management must be clear about task, roles, and responsibility. When this is done effectively, workers can experience the satisfaction of doing their job well. It is better to achieve a realistically defined task rather than continuously fail at an impossible task. It could be argued that one of the contributions to compassion fatigue and burnout is unrealistic framing. Wanting and aiming to do more for the other than is possible. It can be exhausting and demoralizing to feel that one has never done enough. There needs to be a well-defined match between what is to be achieved and the resources available. This is true for organizations and individuals. Being realistic in this way might even feel as if it is uncaring and lacking compassion.

Menzies Lyth argued that this is especially a major challenge for managers and workers in the human services. The feelings involved in the work can lead to a lack of authoritative management. The very real painful issues that are often involved in working with people who are suffering can also lead to unconscious defensive responses. These defence mechanisms, whilst protecting against anxiety and emotional pain, necessarily also avoid and distort the real issues. Therefore, to prevent this from becoming unhelpful to everyone there must be a quality of support available that makes the pain bearable.

There are always three variables involved in the issues we are thinking about – the event(s), the environment (home, family, work, community, society) and self. Self is the one variable that we are most responsible for and can do most about. That doesn't mean we don't need the help and support of understanding others. However, we do need to have a strong sense of self-management and development.

As well as each person being different, each situation is also unique. The environment a person is in will have a big influence on how he or she experiences whatever takes place. Leadership

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and support are key factors in any environment. The psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion worked in a therapeutic community for soldiers having difficulty in resettlement following WW2. He said that whether a soldier developed panic in battle, depended on how the battle was managed. Trauma is in the system not the event. The system includes the individual and everything he or she is related to, directly or indirectly.

Borjanić Bolić (2018) in her research on residential caregivers provides evidence that these systemic issues, such as quality of leadership, support and training are all related to the likelihood of individuals developing burnout, etc. They affect morale and positive morale is a protective factor. She argues that qualities such as engagement and 'compassion satisfaction' are protective factors. Interestingly, she found these qualities or the absence of them were more significant in relation to burnout than the number of years worked or the level of a person's responsibility. While the absence of these qualities could also be a symptom of burnout, it makes sense that where people have high levels of engagement and satisfaction, they are also likely to be more resilient.

These findings are supported by research in other helping professions. It is therefore important to develop cultures where people feel valued and are helped to find meaningful satisfaction in their work. To facilitate work engagement Bolić highlights the importance of,

- providing access to support, training, supervision (individual and group) and reflective practice
- creating opportunities to use skills
- instilling a sense of control
- setting clear goals and expectations
- introducing variety and diversity to work roles
- providing sufficient pay
- maintaining physical safety
- helping staff feel valued

I would add debriefing as a particularly important process following difficult incidents. Where trauma is involved the support will need to be intensive, specialized and focused on the complex issues involved. The aim is to provide a space where the difficult experiences and feelings involved can be expressed, reflected upon, processed and made sense of. Working on the meaning a person attaches to an event is a vital part of the process. As Van der Kolk and Newman (2007) state,

> So, although the reality of extraordinary events is at the core of PTSD, the meaning that victims attach to these events is as fundamental as the trauma itself.

These principles related to support are likely to be helpful in any work environment. This highlights the issues of leadership, management, culture and support as key factors in the development of compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, secondary stress, and burnout. In this sense, we could replace those terms with, 'Lack of Support Fatigue' or 'Lack of Leadership

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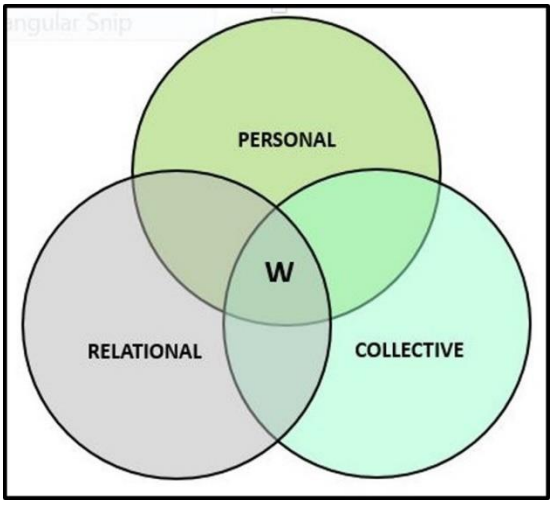
Fatigue', etc. These terms would create a focus more on the context, professional support, organization culture, family and friends. This may be more helpful if one considers burnout for example, as a symptom related to a systemic problem. Our approach, therefore, might be more focused on fixing the environment and not just the individual. Highlighting the importance of the system or *network* Van der Kolk (2014) claims,

> A good support network is the single strongest protection against becoming traumatized

It is the interplay between all these factors I have discussed that needs to be understood and worked with. I think we do need to be aware of how language tends to frame how something is understood and thought about. A helpful way of thinking is one that encourages everyone to acknowledge the situation, consider its roots and take appropriate responsibility. A narrow approach might lead to a tendency to shift the responsibility in one direction, i.e. onto the client, the worker or the organization; or the child, the parent, the family or the community. As Isaac Prilleltensky (2006) has argued,



"There cannot be well-being but in the combined presence of personal, relational, and collective well-being."

When understanding is too narrow the more likely it becomes contestable. Today, it cannot be seriously contested that in virtually any workplace, the nature of the work experience is a key factor in the worker's overall well-being. If awareness of this is maintained, and we keep an open mind on the contributing factors, rather than leading to vicarious trauma, secondary stress, compassion fatigue or burnout - the stresses and challenges involved can lead to personal/professional growth and development. Compassion satisfaction rather than fatigue is likely to be more common.

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Comments

Traci Cimino, Social Worker/Consultant, Canada

Patrick thanks for highlighting the importance and influence of language. Your use of 'Lack of Support Fatigue' seems more encompassing, or at least less narrow. There is no inherent assumption on where the "lack" is coming from therefore allows for a more open exploration.

Sujata Jayaprakash, **Co-Founder of Kites Global & Manager Caring for Carers in Residential Homes, India**

Thank you, Patrick, for sharing this article. It is so, so important and crucial before things get critical. In our work with caregivers in India, we have been emphasizing self-care and have started talking about Vicarious Trauma as part of our training and have introduced EQ group therapy for caregivers in homes, a skill that changes everything.

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Janey Kelf, Training in Art Therapy, Australia
Yes, good article helped me as now Oxygen mask could stand for yoga, fun with friends, a swim a nothing day for rest and relaxation filled with yummy food and nothing that must be done...

Clodagh King, Programme Manager, Carmona Residential Services, Ireland
Great piece- insightful. I am sure that staff working directly with individuals will be happy to have this quite simply recognised and affirmed. Delighted your blogger's block has come undone...

Neil McMillan, Head of Service (Independent Child Protection Consultant), Scotland
Nice piece. I liked the airline metaphor. With staff I often use the lifesaving metaphor for self-care, 'don't jump in to save a life when you can't swim'.

Patrick Tomlinson
Thanks, Neil - early in my career our clinical consultant at the time, Barbara Dockar-Drysdale told me when I was wondering if I could survive the extremely testing behavior of the young people - 'sometimes the most important thing you can do is to survive and be there the next morning'. It was good advice and seemed manageable! It was also an empathetic response as I didn't feel that much else was possible.

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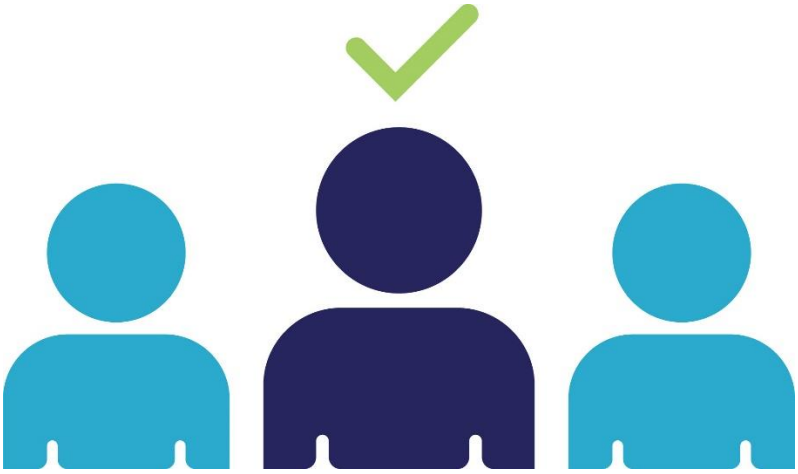
PATRICK TOMLINSON ASSOCIATES (PTA)
PERSONAL and PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT (PPDA)
for the PURPOSES of STAFF SELECTION and DEVELOPMENT

SENSE OF PURPOSE
PERSEVERANCE
OWNERSHIP (RESPONSIBILITY)
GROWTH v FIXED MINDSETS
SUPPORTIVE/DEMANDING SCALES



INTRODUCTION
The Personal and Professional Development Assessment (PPDA) is created by Patrick Tomlinson for the purposes of staff selection and development. It is based on many years' experience and research into the personal qualities most associated with successful performance and development. The aim is to assist:

- organizations in achieving excellent outcomes in staff selection, retention, and development;
- individuals in identifying their developmental needs and objectives to fulfil their personal and professional ambitions.

The assessment is carried out by interview by Skype, etc. Therefore, it is easy and efficient to plan. It takes 1-1 ¼ hours. It can be used in any profession, at any level, - from entry to CEO. It is especially relevant to those involved in demanding and challenging work.

The PPDA can be used to inform decision making on the selection of new staff, as well as the promotion or change of role for existing staff. It assesses -

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- The personal qualities that are linked with resilience, positive performance, and development.
- Where a person is now in their development.
- The level of demand and responsibility currently capable of.
- Potential in the short to long-term.

Results from the assessment provide important information to consider an applicant's suitability for a role and potential for development. This can also be used to help create an Individual Development Plan. It is anticipated that the consistent use of the assessment in organizations will contribute to significant improvements in,

- ✓ retention
- ✓ reduced absence from work
- ✓ engagement
- ✓ quality of performance
- ✓ development

The assessment areas are informed by research that identifies the qualities most associated with successful performance, resilience, and development. It looks at the candidate's life and work experiences, personal qualities and views on key issues. Each assessment area has its own focus, but also overlap with each other. The areas covered in the assessment are,

- Sense of Purpose
- Perseverance
- Ownership (Responsibility)
- Growth v Fixed Mindsets
- Supportive – Demanding Scale 1 ('Parenting' Style, Personal Development– general approach to one's own development and that of others)
- Supportive – Demanding Scale 2 (Professional Development, People Management)

See **Appendix 1** for Glossary of Terms

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

There are three parts to the assessment process,

1. Carrying out the interview
2. Assessing the interview
3. Providing feedback

The same interview and assessment are used for all purposes. It may be used for selection or development, or both.

Confidentiality All interviews respect confidentiality. Where an organization is involved only the overall assessment results are shared. Any personal content of the interview is not shared except with the permission of the candidate or when it is appropriate to share concerns.

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FEEDBACK

There are three feedback options. **Option 1** is feedback to the organization with the overall assessment below. Feedback will be given re suitability for specific roles.

Development Level	Score	Meaning
1		Has demonstrated a high level of resilience and development. Depending on work experience, may be suited to the most senior positions. If relatively experienced has the capacity for significant development.
2	☑☑	Has demonstrated a good level of resilience and development. Depending on work experience may be ready for a management / senior position.
3		Has a good level of resilience. Depending on support needs may be suited to beginning a very demanding and challenging role. Depending on work experience, may have the capacity to be a senior worker in a team.
4		Not ready to take on a very demanding and challenging role. Needs more life and work experience before going in this direction. May be suited to a supportive role within an organization rather than at the 'coalface'.

Feedback **Option 1** is most suited to entry-level positions where there are many assessments to carry out. This summary is emailed to the organization within 1-2 working days.

Option 2 This includes the information from **Option 1** and a full assessment report and recommendations for development (See **Appendix 2**). This can be especially helpful where the development of internal candidates is a part of the process. A ½ hour feedback session is also offered to the candidate with a copy of the report. In this option, the report is emailed to the organization/individual within 3-5 working days.

Costs A full summary of costs is available on inquiry, with any other queries to Patrick Tomlinson ptomassociates@gmail.com Further info @ www.patricktomlinson.com

Patrick Tomlinson Brief Biography: The primary goal of Patrick's work is the development of people and organizations. Development is the driving force related to positive outcomes for all stakeholders. It is closely associated with general happiness and fulfilment, which underpins successful achievement.

Patrick's experience spans from 1985, mainly in the field of specialist residential and foster care services. Beginning as a residential care worker, he has since been a team leader, senior manager, Director, CEO, consultant and mentor. He is a qualified clinician, strategic leader, and manager and author of many publications. He is vastly experienced in staff selection, training, and development. He has carried out longitudinal studies and research on staff retention. With one organization staff retention was improved by 60%.

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In 2008 Patrick Tomlinson Associates was founded to provide development services for individuals and organizations. Services have been provided to clients in Australia, Japan, UK, Ireland, India, and Portugal, among others.

APPENDIX 1 - GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Personal Development - The way someone has developed over time and his/her potential development. Each person's development is unique with different development styles. Different personal qualities may either promote or hinder development. Personal development is a lifelong process. The development during the formative years has a significant influence on professional development.

Professional Development – The way someone develops and progresses over time in his/her work. Professional development is influenced by personal development and vice-versa. For the purpose of this assessment, the individual's general qualities rather than technical skills are assessed. These qualities are very relevant to how a person progresses professionally in any field of work.

Sense of Purpose – Having a clear view of one's life purpose and commitment to it. A strong sense of purpose is like a vocation or calling. A job or occupation is seen as contributing to a bigger cause that benefits others. Having a clear sense of purpose is strongly linked with resilience and development.

Perseverance - The ability to carry out continuous deliberate practice, to persist and overcome obstacles. Each person's capacity is unique. It can change, grow and develop. Perseverance is strongly linked to resilience and development.

Ownership (Responsibility) – The capacity to take ownership of one's life, challenges and development. People with strong ownership take responsibility for themselves in all aspects of life. They also tend to have a positive outlook.

Growth v Fixed Mindsets – A person's outlook on change and development can be categorized into growth and fixed mindsets. People with growth mindsets tend to believe in the possibility of change at the micro and macro levels – from self to society. They tend to see difficulty as an opportunity. People with fixed mindsets, tend to believe that change is not so likely. People with growth mindsets are more likely to persevere and work through difficulties rather than give up. Growth mindsets are like having an open mind, and fixed mindsets a closed mind.

Resilience - The capacity to sustain oneself in challenging situations. The ability to keep on a positive pathway following setbacks. Resilience is important to continuous positive development. Sense of Purpose, Perseverance, Ownership and Growth Mindsets all contribute to resilience and development.

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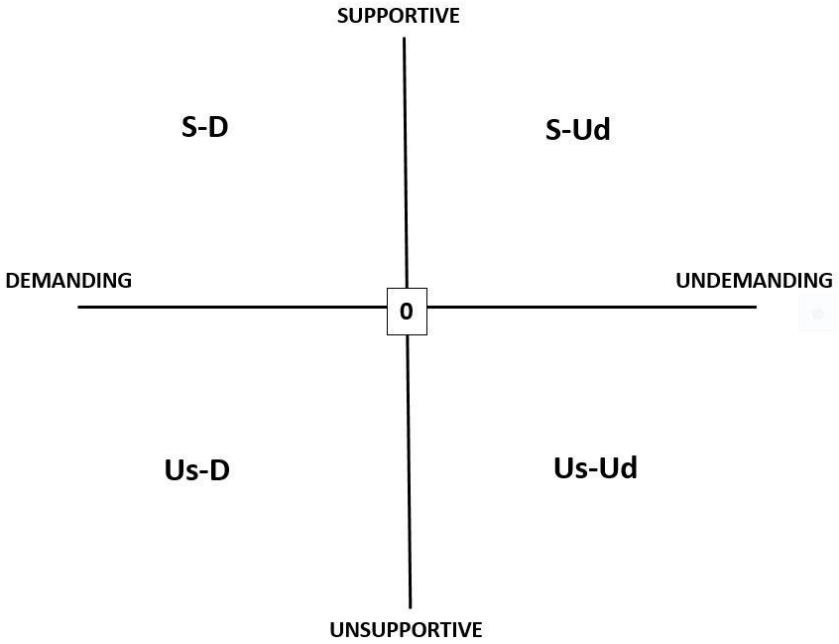
Supportive – Demanding Scales - Development is spurred both by demands and support. Demands push, focus and stretch a person, while support encourages and enables. It is the balance of the two that leads to optimal development.

Our first experiences of development are as an infant. They are significantly influenced by our parents and other caregivers. This continues throughout childhood and into adulthood. The word parent derives from the Latin verb 'parere' – 'to bring forth, develop or educate'. Therefore, parenting style has general relevance - to work with clients, colleagues, and teams. It is likely that a person has a similar approach to others as they do to themselves. By using a horizontal demanding scale and vertical supportive scale, 4 quadrants are created,



- Supportive-Demanding – **S-D**
- Supportive-Undemanding – **S-Ud**
- Unsupportive-Undemanding **Us-Ud**
- Unsupportive-Demanding – **Us-D**

Supportive means the quality of nurturing development, through encouragement, concern, empathy and positive reinforcement. Demanding means having clear expectations, goal setting, constructive criticism, challenging, holding accountable and a focus on improvement. Research has shown that those who are in the S-D quadrant are likely to achieve the most positive development outcomes. Through experience and practice, it is possible to improve one's development style.

'Parenting' Style, Personal Development – This scale focuses on how a person is likely to approach the development of themselves and others. It is especially relevant to 'parenting' and work with clients. Developing a high level of competence in this area can support professional development and people management. The two scales often overlap.

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Professional Development, People Management – This scale focuses on how a person is likely to approach the development of adults. For example, colleagues or team members. It may also reflect a person's approach to their own development. It is especially relevant to progress into management and senior positions. This area of development can be challenging and usually continues to develop many years into work.

Potential Development - This is the pathway a person may aim for. Each person's pathway is different, both in terms of direction and pace. However, everyone has the potential to develop and grow. The starting point is knowing where one is and where one would like to get to. Potential development is usually helped by the support, encouragement, and expectations of others. One's own commitment to development and ongoing perseverance are also key.

Development Plan - An individual's development plan is a way of capturing developmental needs and turning them into focused goals. The goals need to be relevant to the individual's developmental needs and the role that he/she is in. Individual and organizational goals need to be aligned. The plan is agreed between the individual and his/her supervisor/mentor. Usually, a plan looks at the year ahead and progress is reviewed on a regular basis. At the end of the year, it is fully reviewed and a new plan created.

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APPENDIX 2 – OPTION 2 FULL ASSESSMENT REPORT

PTA – PERSONAL and PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT

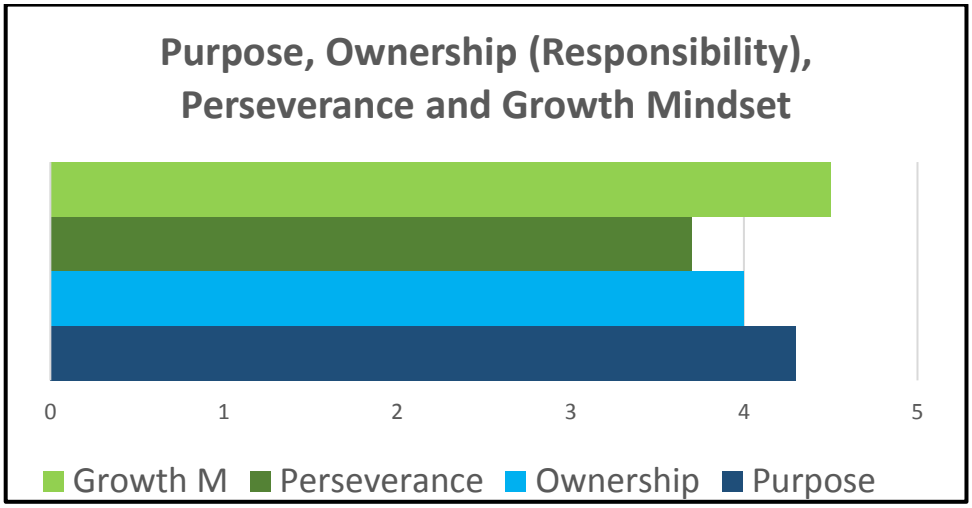
This assessment can be used for considering the suitability of the candidate for different professional roles. It focuses on the candidate's character and development in terms of,

- Sense of purpose
- Perseverance
- Ownership (Responsibility)
- Growth v Fixed Mindset
- Supportive-Demanding scales - approach to the development of self and others

The assessment focuses on characteristics that are associated with successful performance and positive development. It can also be used to inform the candidate's development plan. For a full picture of the candidate's present capability and potential - this assessment should be considered alongside an assessment of the candidate's professional skill set and capability.

Candidate: Jo xxxxx **Assessor:**
Organization: **Int. No.:** **Date:**

Assessment Results



Summary: Jo has a strong sense of purpose supported by a positive change mindset. Her sense of purpose and belief in the possibility of change are clearly connected. This positive philosophy is reflected in her own development, responsibility and willingness to take on new challenges. Jo's perseverance is not quite so strong, and she may lose her focus especially when she feels unsupported. On these occasions, she may appear to take less responsibility for herself.

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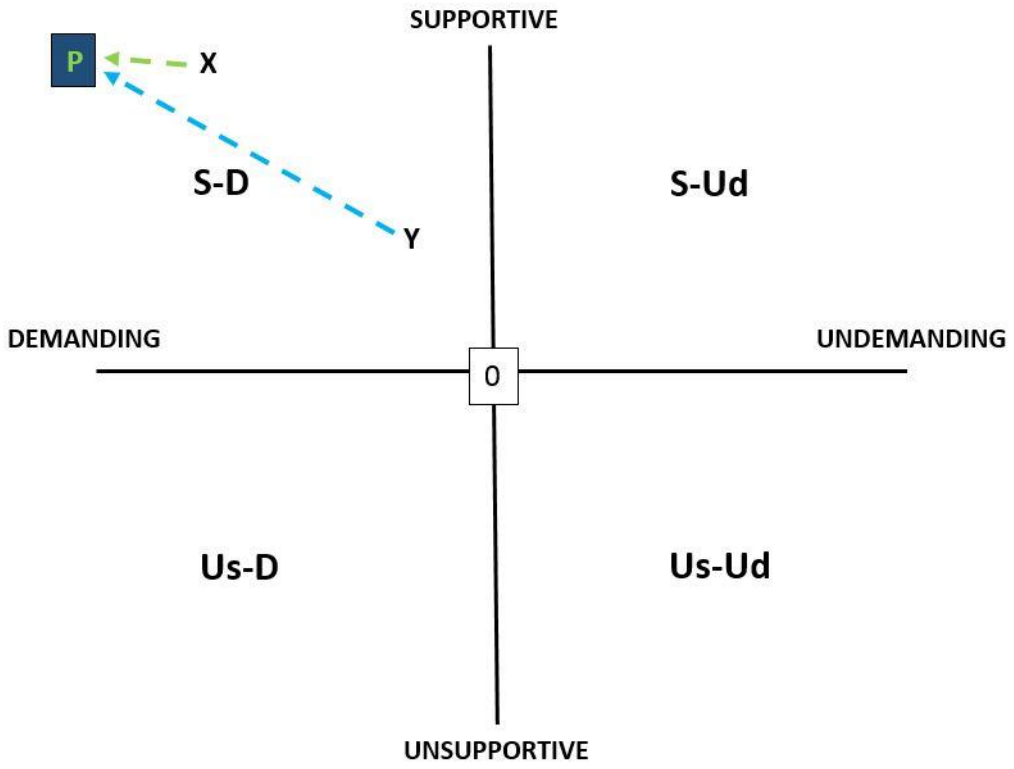
SUPPORTIVE-DEMANDING SCALES

The quadrant that is most associated with positive development is the supportive-demanding quadrant (S-D).

The X and Y on the quadrant indicates where you are now, and the dashed line is the development pathway to optimize your potential development (P).

X = 'Parenting' Style, Personal Development

Y = Professional Development, People Management



X 'Parenting' Style, Personal Development: Jo has a strong style, which is well balanced between a supportive and demanding approach. This means that she understands the need for nurture as well as clear expectations. It is likely that she has a high level of competence in this area and in her work with clients. This may be due to life experiences and practice in work.

Y Professional Development, People Management: Jo has a good balance between supportive and demanding styles. However, there is room for development in both. She tends to be more supportive than demanding. Colleagues and direct reports are likely to find her supportive but may not be fully stretched by her. A focus on this area helps develop the skills to become a successful manager in a challenging environment. Because Jo has developed a positive level of overall competency but is not so high on the adult demanding scale there could be a tendency to stay within a comfort zone.

Overall Summary: Jo's assessment results suggest she is a resilient person with a strong sense of purpose. She has a change mindset and a positive level of perseverance. Though there may be a tendency to lose focus. There may be an avoidance of difficult situations, especially where

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she perceives that conflict could be involved. With her strong sense of purpose, she may try to solve problems on her own and over-work. So, there is a risk of excessive tiredness coupled with frustration.

Overall Jo has achieved positive development and a good level of competency. However, in a management role, she may struggle to have a consistent expectation of others. She may struggle to keep task-orientated and holding people accountable.

Jo's assessment results suggest she has the potential to become effective in a management position in the next year or so.

Recommendations for Development

1. To further develop Jo will need stretching in her work. She will benefit from a supportive manager who will keep her on task. Without this, there will be a tendency to drift in her work and development.

2. As Jo tends to be more supportive than demanding in her work with colleagues, this should be explored in supervision with her manager. It will be helpful for her to identify her concerns and find ways of overcoming her anxiety.

3. It will also be helpful to monitor and regularly review her tendency to over-work and take too much on herself.

4. As part of Jo's development plan, it will help to identify a project where she has to take a lead role in relation to her colleagues. Her progress in this can then be regularly reviewed and worked on. A supportive approach, but also holding her to task will be important helpful.

5. Clarifying her medium to long-term direction will further strengthen her sense of purpose. She is clearly competent in work with clients and could develop as a specialist in this. On the other hand, she also has management potential. Her preferred direction is not clear.

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Blog Site: http://patricktomlinson.blogspot.com

LinkedIn Discussion Group: Therapeutic Residential and Foster Care for Traumatized Children

LinkedIn Discussion Group: Staff Selection and Development (for People and Organizations)

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