

Social Control Window - Developing Emotional Intelligence

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Introduction

Goulburn Family Support Service, is a small not for profit agency working with disadvantaged families in crisis in regional Australia. We aim to assist families by working with each member to identify harmful behaviours impacting on their significant relationships. We use a practice framework that centres on emotionality as the precursor of behaviours both rewarding and punishing. We then share this new understanding with the family by introducing a new language of emotions, separating out behaviours while working towards repairing their emotional relationships. We don't run 'programs' as such but we focus upon educating families about emotions being central to relationships to bring about an emotionally intelligent potential for wholesome relationships to flourish.

We began over ten years ago by using the alternative criminal justice response of Restorative Justice as a model of conflict resolution after viewing the powerfully emotional healing of the award winning ABC documentary "Facing the Demons", which demonstrated unique outcomes.

The Restorative Justice Model results in an emotional sharing in contrast to western rational models that on the whole aim to exclude anything emotional. Criminologist Laurie Sherman's research (2002, pp1) questions whether "crime is a rational choice of rational actors or whether criminology born in the age of reason needs a new paradigm of what might be called emotionally intelligent justice". This paper aims to provide insights into an emotionally intelligent response which we consider crucial for practical interventions in domestic violence, child protection and family crisis.

We have developed a hybrid practice model that encompasses the "emotional" to respond to the needs of families in crisis emanating from our understanding of Restorative Justice. In this paper we will specifically examine the Social Control Window; Figure 1, (O'Connell et al 1999); one of Restorative Justice's conceptual diagrams; and explain its practical use for developing emotional intelligence.

Agency History

In the year 2000 we were provided with a training opportunity facilitated by Australian *Real Justice* CEO Terry O'Connell, where we were introduced to affect script psychology as the underpinning theory of the Restorative Justice success. (Moore and O'Connell, 1994 pp71).

If familiar with Restorative Justice our practice titled "Explicit Affective Practice" (<http://gfss.ned.org.au/>) incorporates Restorative Justice Components with a focus on Tomkins' Affect Script psychology. (Tomkins, 1962-1992).

Our practice provides a framework by which we have accessed affect psychology by integrating components of Restorative Justice, which in essence is about the sharing of affects and emotions around harm that results from criminal or inappropriate behaviour within relationships.

Vic Kelly of the Tomkins Institute writes:

The work of Silvan Tomkins presents a formidable challenge to all of the psychological scientists whose theories of personality and personality development ignore the affects. ...Tomkins has taken these nine affects and interwoven them with consciousness, cognition, memory, and the drives into a theory of such scope that it extends all other theories of personality, exposing their weaknesses and amplifying their strengths. (1993, pp556)

Tomkins asserts a need to review psychology with an affect revolution to rescue it “from an overly imperialistic cognitive theory” Demos (1995 pp 18). While we are not psychologists we have begun to use Tomkins’ theory in our work with families with encouraging results. We now explicitly incorporate this psychology, and by explaining the theory concisely to our client families suggest movement towards Sherman’s emotionally intelligent justice.

Emotional intelligence in our collegial interactions is also central for as Sherman (2002 pp2) asserts what’s needed are “changes in the behaviour of both officials and offenders”, we need to walk the talk. Our practice sees emotional intelligence as being first and foremost the building blocks of successful relationships especially to support each other in our work.

EXPLICIT AFFECTIVE PRACTICE

Our Explicit Affective Practice; a developing framework; comprises our “Tools of Life” which are explained to each family using the following components once we have heard their unique story.

- Tomkins’ Nine innate affects (Positive: interest through to excitement, and enjoyment through to joy. Neutral: surprise startle, a re-set affect. Negative; shame through to humiliation, distress through to anguish, disgust, fear through to terror, anger through to rage and dissmell). Affects put simply as the innate wiring we are born with by which we experience our emotions. Each affect has its own unique presentation within our body and each has developed throughout evolution to preserve us from danger and to experience positive and negative emotions. Tomkins’ says affects are information about something to pay attention to, negative affects make bad things worse and are inherently punishing and positive affects make good things better and are rewarding.
- Scripting of the nine affects, overview.
- Nathanson’s “Compass of Shame”. (Figure 2.)
- The Social Control Window (Figure 1.)
- The Wagga Wagga Scripted Restorative Justice Conferencing Questions (1999, O’Connell et al).
- Fair Process. (Kim and Maubougne, 2003).
- Tomkins Blueprint for Life. (1962, pp328)
- Kelly’s Blueprint for Intimacy. (1993).

Our explicit practice shares with families a basic understanding the nine affects and emotional scripts formed around each affect over life experiences as related to each story.

The Compass of Shame describes Nathanson's four poles of attack others, attack self, withdraw and avoid with associated behaviours.

The Social Control window shows how to work with families working to achieve improved outcomes by applying pressure and support to create and nurture new learning.

The Scripted Restorative Justice Questions developed in Wagga Wagga are used world-wide within Restorative Justice Conferencing to challenge behaviours and provide an understanding and ownership of harmful behaviours while also providing those harmed with a voice.

Fair Process, encompasses three components, engagement, explanation and expectation clarity. Kim and Maugbourne's research asserts that whether we agree or disagree with a decision we are more likely to accept the outcome when the process used was fair.

Tomkins spent his life endeavouring to describe what it is that human beings want, he then developed Tomkins Blueprint for life. This Blueprint states we need to maximise positive affect and minimise negative affect, express all affect and do anything that achieves the first three.

Kelly in his Blueprint for intimacy based upon Tomkins' Blueprint states we need to mutualise and minimise negative affects and mutualise and maximise positive affects within relationships for true intimacy and healthy relationship bonds.

While the above Tools are listed separately they interweave and are in effect about building a practical knowledge base of affect, affect and emotional sharing and emotional intelligence.

THE SOCIAL CONTROL WINDOW and AFFECTS

The practical use of the Social Control Window will be specifically viewed in this paper as providing clear instructions for positive affect sharing and building wholesome relationships by exploring each of the four sections.

TO Window, punitive: From our clinical experiences behaviours that do things **TO (high pressure)**, causes emotions associated with belittlement and humiliation. Behaviour such as smacking children or fining adults takes the opportunity away from them to have input around their behaviour and make necessary changes and may induce negative affects such as shame, distress, anguish and possibly self disgust.

FOR Window, permissive: Doing things **FOR (high support)** people conjures up feelings of helplessness, for example ongoing handouts and unconditional support may make some decline the inclination to work towards necessary life improvements, once again resulting in negative affects possibly of shame, self disgust or anger.

NOT Window, neglectful: Doing nothing, **NOT (low support and low pressure)** makes people feel unworthy of any interest or potential in them, a negative stimulus for potential affects of shame, anguish, self disgust or anger.

WITH Window, restorative: Doing things **WITH (high support and pressure)** a person makes them feel included, worthy of action and able to take control of their

affairs. Discovering with them the positives in life and opportunities to maximise these begins reflection but working **WITH** also addresses the negatives.

Working **WITH** can stimulate the positive affects of interest through to excitement in ways to improve life, and once this is stimulated, enjoyment through to joy is possible and most likely probable. However, because working **WITH** means a relationship is made up of pressure and support; negative behaviours can be challenged from within this relationship with a process that is fair and so acceptable.

The world of everyday behaviours include the **TO, NOT** and **FOR** approaches. For example parents may be angry with children about inappropriate or hurtful behaviours and deal out punishment or consequences for behaviour, but followed with discussions centred on behaviours with a new understanding of the harm resulting from these behaviours, disciplining can successfully turn a **TO** response into a **WITH** response, making an emotional connection leading to improved emotional and behavioural changes and relationships.

SOCIAL CONTROL WINDOW and SHAME AFFECT

Behaviours that do things **TO, NOT** and **FOR** people can induce a sense of shame as discussed above. Nathanson (1992, pp306) writes “shame affect is triggered any time interest or enjoyment is impeded”. Shame affect can occur resulting from an impediment to the positive affects so quickly at times it can be difficult to identify, but we can identify resulting behaviours that occur, especially when relationships are damaged. If you feel uncomfortable by the word shame you are pretty normal. When discussing shame, the memories around experiences of shame come flooding back, a stimulus affect response sequence presented, and you begin to experience this affect in your body. This is a very crude description of affect script psychology. With an understanding of affects and in particular the affect of shame you will begin to view shame and its presentation as an opportunity to learn and reflect about what is going wrong as an impediment to the positives.

We use shame affect as a central part of our practice because shame affect is a predictor of much negative behaviour as identified in Nathanson’s Compass of Shame. With an understanding of affects, emotions and behaviours we can see that often harmful behaviour has no direct relevance to the underlying issues that precede that behaviour. Harmful compass behaviours present to authority figures which become the focus of attention resulting in punishment or consequences while the underlying interruption of the positive affect is left undiscovered and unaddressed, and more importantly nothing is learnt from the experience and relationships are not healed.

Importantly our practice separates what we have coined “Compass” behaviours from each person which enables a discussion of the real underlying concerns providing an opportunity to learn and reflect and rebuild relationships.

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS

Our agency goal *Helping Families Help Themselves* is a paradigm shift from community welfare or bleeding heart mindset of providing unconditional support.

Our work is primarily about working **WITH** families and working **WITH** is about emotional engagement to set a solid relationship base for change with a clear view of what behavioural improvements look like.

Our practice is primarily ensuring that help is working in the **WITH** section of the Social Control Window providing pressure and support. For wholesome relationships to result and intimacy within relationships nurtured, negative affect needs to be shared and minimised not ignored, and positive affect needs to be shared and maximized as proposed by Kelly (1993). We use the Scripted Restorative Questions to facilitate the emotional dialogue in challenging behaviours and allowing those harmed a voice. In this sense our model diverges from what is known as strength’s based practice which we suggest predominately focuses on the positives and opportunities from these.

While our practice also has a focus and aims to maximise the positive affects we don’t do this by neglecting to address harmful behaviours resulting in negative affects and behaviours affecting family relationships. We are able to challenge inappropriate or harmful behaviours within what we call “Fair Process”.

When using the Social Control Window we systematically explore the four windows and resoundingly family members relate outcomes where positive achievements resulted when pressure and support was applied whether in school life by the best school teacher, the workplace or in a relationship with a person they respected.

FAIR PROCESS - WORKING WITH

Fair Process encompasses a working **WITH** framework. Kim and Maubougne (2003), describe fair process encompassing three major tenets; engagement, explanation and expectation clarity.

Engagement

Our knowledge of Tomkins’ Affect Script paradigm means that the primacy of affects is understood while listening to each person’s journey; affect sharing is integral to the rapport building and trusting relationship provided in counselling. Providing a genuine interest in the client and sharing that affect builds rapport, as Tomkins’ asserts affects are contagious. By facilitating a space for telling their story client families are on the path to a better place.

Explanation

We give client families a space for their unique story to be told and to share an understanding of what improvement is needed. We also provide an explanation of our Tools of Life to assist them understand and change their emotional and behavioural

response within their own experiences and relationships; this once more stimulates interest and possibly excitement at potential new possibilities.

Expectation Clarity

When an understanding of affects and behaviour is shared within the family and clear expectations are stated as to what behaviour is expected, interest and enjoyment at future possibilities without harmful behaviours impacting on relationships are stimulated. Reduced behavioural interruptions to positive relationships, (now commonly understood responses described within Nathanson's Compass of Shame) are now expected. When shame affect presents within the family relationships again; as we know it will because we are all part of this human experience; the family having experienced our Explicit Affect Practice now have Tools and know-how to challenge behaviours once more and rebuild their relationships.

We suggest that as Lieberman writes "social pinches like unfair treatment do appear to activate the social pain system....and being treated fairly activates the reward system of the brain" we suggest advances in neuroscience support the fair process ideal.

TOMKINS' AFFECT REVOLUTION

Those who have read Tomkins have found his affect script theory academically dense and challenging as we have; however, we have been on a supported journey in a shared learning group offered by the Tomkins Institute and supervised by Psychiatrist, Susan Leigh Deppe MD, DFAPA and so have shared this learning experience, finding Tomkins theory intuitively affirming of what it is to be an emotional human being.

We assert that our model in its practical application works towards "Tomkins' Blueprint for Life" as working WITH families provides a cathartic sharing of affect and emotion to express and minimize negative affect and express and maximise positive affect. More importantly however, we consider Tomkins' theory provides a new language of emotions to create this human dialogue.

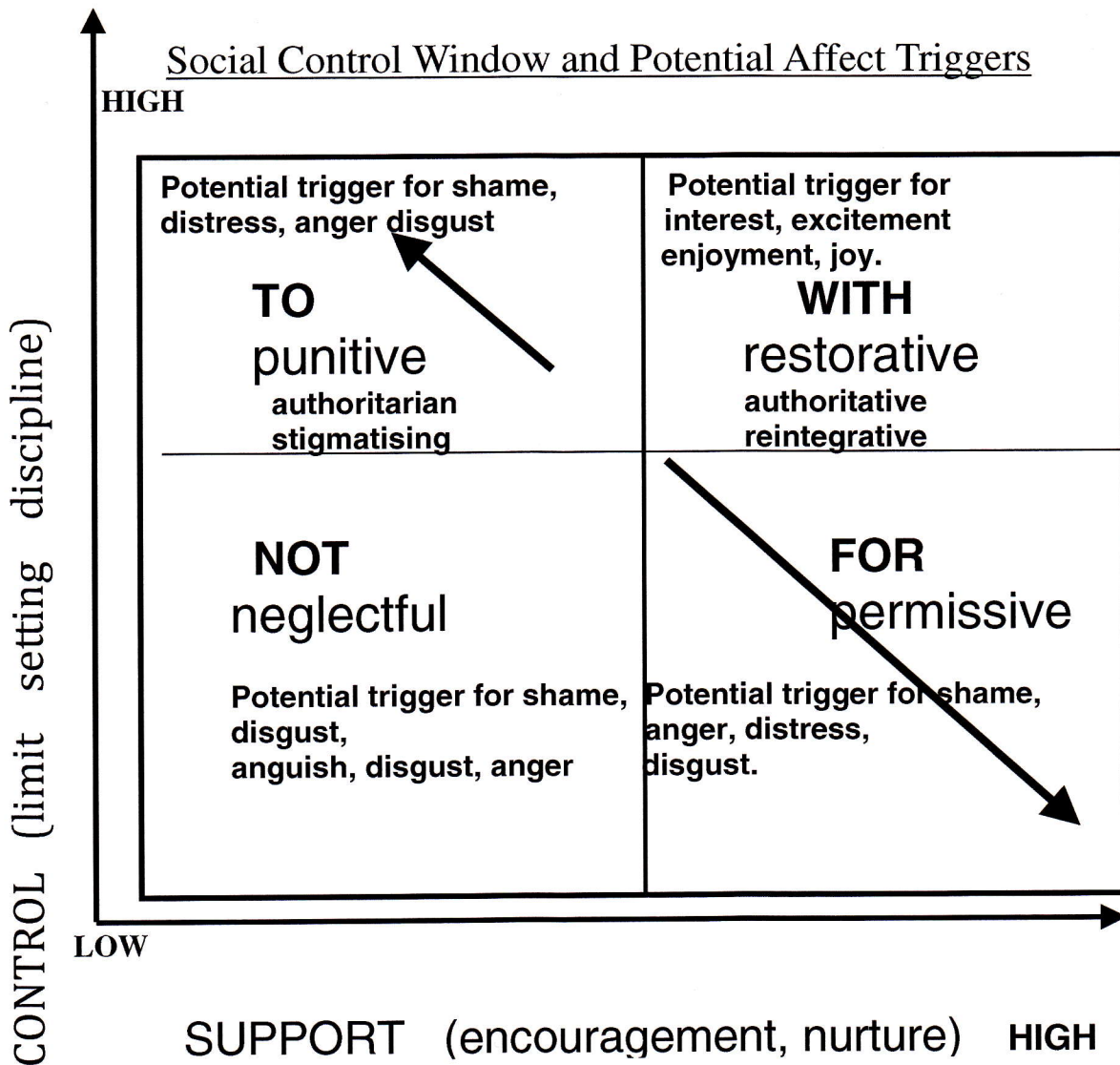
Our client evaluations demonstrate our Explicit Affective Practice provides families with the know-how to change behaviours by understanding their own and other's affects and behaviours, as Tomkins theory asserts affects precede behaviours. It's just no use and is counterproductive telling people to improve their behaviour without giving them the know-how. It's all about how people feel and then behave within relationships whether in relation to domestic violence, child protection, the workplace or day-to-day relationships. (See case study: <http://gfss.ned.org.au/>)

Monbiot (2010) asserts that we overall tend to accept views that align with our identity and values and asserts "confronting people with inconvenient facts is likely only to harden their resistance to change" he says "tell people something they know already and they will thank you for it. Tell them something new and they will hate you for it". We now know from Tomkins' theory and Nathanson's Compass of Shame why this is so. When confronted with the new, an impediment to our continuing experienced established knowledge base occurs, our positive affects are impeded and we experience shame affect with its potentially debilitating shame responses, of attack others, attack self, withdraw and avoid. If we know this cognitively and emotionally then we can see our responses, consider this is a potential time to reflect upon the new

situation and take in the new knowledge for appraisal, it's all about how our interest affect is stimulated or overridden by shame affect, and our challenge to you is to take a look at Tomkins' affect script psychology.

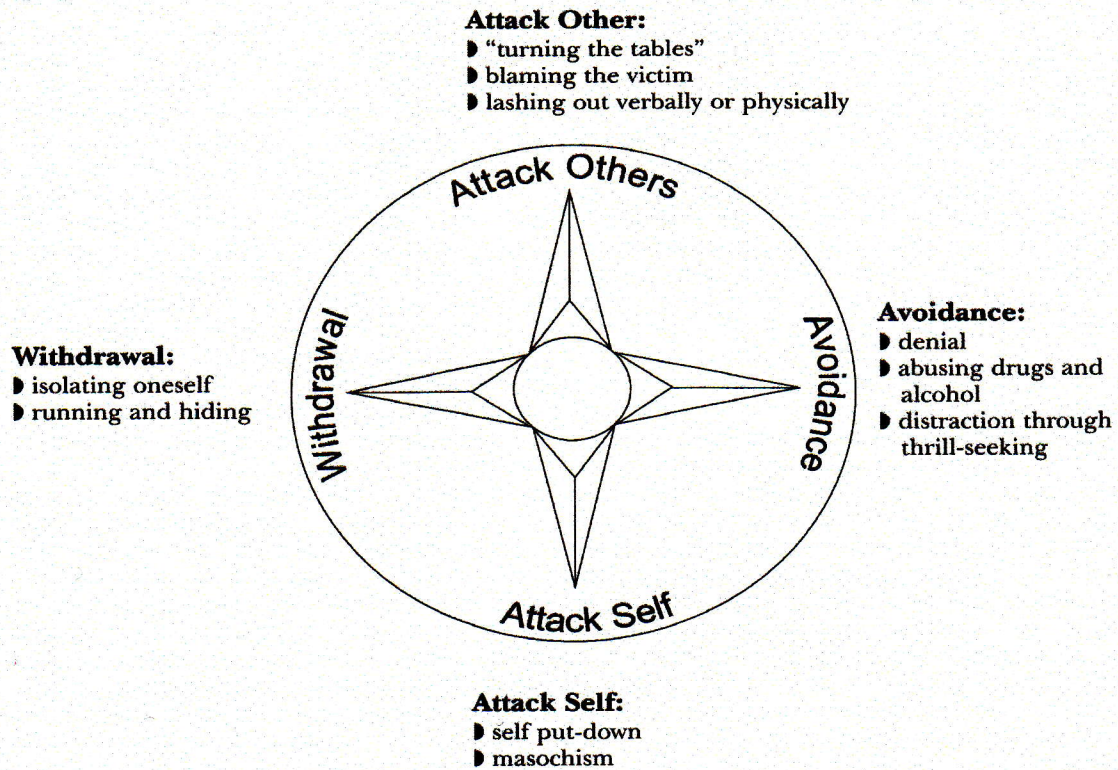
This paper has attempted to advance the discussion of Tomkins' affect script psychology and its potential importance in practical responses to crime and wrongdoing. We further suggest that today a fundamental shift is needed to incorporate this emotional language as suggested by Sherman so as to facilitate emotional intelligent dialogues around crime and wrongdoing.

This analysis hopes to generate interest as to why the Social Control Window as a tool of Restorative Justice has been used successfully as understood and based upon Tomkins' affect script psychology. Further we advocate this paradigm's use to create a new language for necessary dialogues incorporating a head and heart response when responding to the many challenges presenting to our world.



(Adapted by Burton, Curry and Gribben from Wachtel et al, 1999 based on D. Baumrind 1989)
Figure 1.

The Compass of Shame



Adapted from Nathanson, Norton: 1992
Goulburn Family Support Service

Figure 2.

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