

Goldsmith J B & McFall R M. Development and evaluation of an interpersonal skill-training program for psychiatric inpatients. *J. Abnormal Psychol.* 84:51-8, 1975. [Illinois State Psychiatric Institute and Department of Psychology, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI]

**Following the empirical development of a skill-training program and several treatment-outcome measures, 36 male psychiatric inpatients received skill training, pseudotherapy, or assessment-only treatments. Only skill training yielded significant improvement on behavioral and self-report measures. [The SSC<sup>®</sup> and the SC<sup>®</sup> indicate that this paper has been cited in more than 165 publications.]**

## Development and Evaluation of an Interpersonal Skill-Training Program for Psychiatric Inpatients

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Inspired by early descriptions of M.R. Goldfried and T.J. D'Zurilla's behavioral-analytic method for assessing competence, we spent nearly two years systematically using this method to develop an interpersonal skills-training program for the treatment of male psychiatric inpatients, along with an associated measurement model. As we were completing this developmental work, Goldfried informed us that he had found the method unworkable due to its inherent tendency toward producing a data overload. For purely practical reasons, however, we had modified the method, restricting our focus

to a limited range of interpersonal situations typical of a specific subject population. Fortunately, with this modification, we inadvertently had avoided the overload problem.

Over the next six months, we completed our planned treatment-evaluation research. The final results demonstrated simultaneously that our skills-training treatment package was effective and that our modified behavioral-analytic method was viable and valid.

When we submitted the finished work for publication, the editor requested that we delete coverage of our modified behavioral-analytic method and that we report only the results of the treatment-evaluation study. We eventually persuaded him to include both phases of the work.

Ironically, the most important and lasting contribution of this article has been its demonstration of the viability and promise of the modified Goldfried-D'Zurilla methodology. In subsequent years, investigators have employed this methodology successfully to study a variety of clinical populations, ranging from adolescent delinquents,<sup>2</sup> to alcoholics,<sup>3</sup> to women with eating disorders.<sup>4</sup> More recently, this methodology has played a central role in the development of an information-processing model of social competence.<sup>5,6</sup>

The publication that originally inspired the present work now is considered a classic in its own right—even though its authors never completed their own research with the method—thanks, in part to the attention it received through the publication of our now-Classic article and subsequent work.

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