

**A Job-related Self-Image Enhancement  
Programme**

by

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**Submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements**

**for the Degree of**



**in the Department of Psychology**

**at the**

**Rand Afrikaans University**

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**September 1996**

**“All that you can enjoy about life and all that others  
can enjoy about you depends upon the extent to which  
you are living comfortably with yourself and  
thoughtfully with others”**



**Wren, 1980, p. 159.**

## Acknowledgements

The following companies have been so kind as to assist with supplying the subjects and venues for the self-image enhancement programme:

American Express  
Auto Deutsch BMW  
Laptop Technologies  
Media Link  
Nedtravel  
Tempest Car Hire  
Toyota South Africa  
ZF South Africa

Their management and staff have been most helpful and accommodating in enabling me to test the subjects and run the training courses. I am most grateful for their support and assistance.

**My sincerest thanks go to the following people without whom the completion of this doctoral dissertation would not have been possible:**

- Prof. Jena Raubenheimer for her ongoing guidance and understanding; she has been a continuous inspiration and wonderful role model;
- The subjects of this study for participating in the self-image enhancement programme and their patience for answering the questionnaires three times;
- Prof. Wijd, Martie Bester, and Dr. Louise Snyman for their help with the statistical computations and analyses;
- Mrs. Lenette Venter, the subject librarian who so diligently assisted me with the literature search;
- Karyn Pieterse, my dedicated assistant, for the enormous amount of work she completed in order to help me with organising the training groups and the testing of subjects; she also attended to many administrative tasks, much of the scoring, and entering of data;
- Lyn Pieterse, Erin Georgiou, Christine Mayer and others who helped with the scoring of questionnaires;
- Althea Rogers, my friend of many years, who checked the language aspects of this thesis;
- Gill Persson for always being there when I needed her help;
- Mia Strohmeier who transported “precious cargo”;
- Morné Buchner for his kind assistance;
- Dr. Liz Greyling for translating the summary into Afrikaans so expertly and promptly;
- Dave Wiley who provided me with ideas for certain of the course exercises and sparked my interest in the area of self-improvement many years ago;
- My many friends who have always encouraged me and believed in me.

I would like to express a very special thank you to my family, the most important people in the world:

- My husband Allen for his moral support and reliable help at home;
- My children Chanel and Devon for the patience they displayed while their mother was pre-occupied with this doctorate.

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## Summary

This research focuses on self-concept improvement for adults. A self-image enhancement programme has been developed and its impact tested with regard to short- and medium term developments. Various training approaches have been compared to establish whether massed or spaced sessions training is more effective, and whether individual follow-up after the programme is of advantage.

Self-image enhancement is seen as central to a person's functioning and psychological well-being. Self-management and the improvement of the self have taken an important role in today's society where a lot of emphasis is placed on personal achievement and self-actualisation.

The background to the research is the question of self-enhancement versus self-consistency. The self-enhancement thinking promotes the possibility for adult change, while the consistency theories emphasise resistance to change. While an integrated view that places self-image change within the frame of a stable personality becomes necessary, this research aims at establishing the positive changes expected to take place after the self-image enhancement programme.

The theories and therapy approaches underlying the design of the self-image enhancement programme include rational-emotive therapy, self-efficacy theory, locus of control theory, and the concept of learned helplessness and learned optimism.

The main and subhypotheses were formulated regarding the improvement of the following variables: *Total self-concept*, *physical and personal self*, *acceptance of others*, *self-confidence*, *self-esteem*, *self-control*, *nervousness*, *sociability*, *formal relations*, and *self-efficacy*. *Self-criticism* and *external locus of control* were expected to decrease.



The subjects that made up the sample were drawn from companies in Johannesburg and consisted of 133 participants. They were tested before the intervention started, at the end of the course, and again five months later. The self-image enhancement programme was administered to groups of 10 to 12 people.

The measurement instruments included the short version of the MMPI, used as the screening device, Vrey's Adolescent Self-Concept Scale, Acceptance of Others Scale, the PHSF Questionnaire, Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale, and a self-efficacy scale. The latter measurement instrument had to be adjusted from another self-efficacy questionnaire and an item analysis was completed.

The statistical results show that the self-image enhancement programme is effective in achieving improvement of most of the self-concept variables for all experimental groups taken together. The achieved change was maintained over the medium term except for the *self-efficacy* and *self-control* variables. The variables that remained unchanged were *acceptance of others*, *sociability* and *formal relations*, although, based on the literature, an improved self-image is expected to occur with an improved acceptance of others. More research is required regarding interpersonal aspects and self-image enhancement.

Regarding the effectiveness of various types of training groups, previous research has not been conclusive. It has also not been established through this study that massed training sessions differ in their effectiveness from spaced sessions, but further research is indicated. The same applies to the role of individual feedback sessions after a training programme.

An encouraging finding has been that the self-image enhancement programme is also helping individuals with psychological problems to better their self-image and self-

perceptions. This has been shown through the improved results of the MMPI rejected group and relates to the subhypotheses formulated for this research.

This research has confirmed that self-concept improvement during adulthood can be achieved and should in fact be seen as part of ongoing self-development and self-management.



## Opsomming

Hierdie navorsingsprojek fokus op die verbetering van volwassenes se selfkonsep. 'n Selfbeeldverbeteringsprogram is ontwerp en die impak daarvan op kort- en mediumtermyn is getoets. Verskeie opleidingsbenaderings is vergelyk, ten einde te bepaal of aaneenlopende of gespasieerde opleidingsessies meer effektief is en of individuele opvolgwerk na 'n sodanige program enige voordeel inhou.

'n Persoon se selfbeeld word as die kern van menslike funksionering en psigologiese welsyn beskou. Selfbestuur en selfverbetering speel 'n belangrike rol in die hedendaagse samelewing, wat sterk klem lê op persoonlike prestasie en selfaktualisering.

'n Sentrale vraagstuk in die navorsingsprojek is of 'n individu se selfbeeld stabiel of veranderbaar tydens die volwasse jare is. Die kwessie van selfverbetering teenoor selfstabiliteit is in hierdie studie ondersoek. Eersgenoemde denkrigting ondersteun die moontlikheid van verandering by volwassenes, terwyl die stabiliteitsteorieë weerstand teen verandering beklemtoon. 'n Geïntegreerde standpunt plaas selfbeeldverandering binne die raamwerk van 'n stabiele persoonlikheid. Hierdie navorsing het ten doel om die verwagte positiewe veranderinge wat waarskynlik met behulp van die selfbeeldverbeteringsprogram sal plaasvind, te bepaal.

Die teorieë en terapeutiese benaderings onderliggend aan die ontwerp van die selfbeeldverbeteringsprogram sluit in: rasioneel-emosionele terapie, selfeffektiwiteits-teorie, lokus van kontrole teorie, asook die konsep van aangeleerde hulpeloosheid en aangeleerde optimisme.

Die navorsingshipotese is geformuleer met betrekking tot die verbetering van die volgende veranderlikes: Totale selfkonsep, fisiese en persoonlike self, aanvaarding van ander, selfvertroue, selfgating, selfkontrole, senuagtigheid, sosiale en formele

verhoudinge en selfeffektiwiteit. Selfkritiek en eksterne lokus van kontrole sou na verwagting 'n afname toon.

Die proefpersone wat as ondersoekgroep gebruik is, was afkomstig van maatskappye in Johannesburg en het uit 133 proefpersone bestaan. Hulle is getoets voordat die ingreep plaasgevind het, aan die einde van die kursus en weer vyf maande later. Die selfbeeldverbeteringsprogram is op groepe van 10 tot 12 persone toegepas.

Die meetinstrumente het ingesluit: die verkorte weergawe van die MMPI wat as siftingsmeganisme gedien het, Vrey se adolessente selfbeeldskaal, Aanvaarding van ander - skaal, die PHSF-vraelys, Rotter se interne-eksterne lokus van kontroleskaal en 'n selfeffektiwiteitskaal. Laasgenoemde meetinstrument moes vanaf 'n ander selfeffektiwiteitsvraelys aangepas word, waarna 'n itemanalise uitgevoer is.

Die navorsingsresultate dui daarop dat die selfbeeldverbeteringsprogram effektief meewerk ter verbetering van die meerderheid selfkonsepveranderlikes vir al die eksperimentele groepe gesamentlik. Die verandering wat ingetree het, is oor die mediumtermyn gehandhaaf, met uitsondering van die selfeffektiwiteits- en selfkontroleveranderlikes. Die veranderlikes wat onveranderd gebly het, was aanvaarding van ander, en sosiale en formele verhoudinge, alhoewel uit die literatuur blyk dat 'n verbeterde selfbeeld met verwagte verbeterde aanvaarding van ander gepaard gaan. Verdere navorsing sal oor die verband tussen interpersoonlike aspekte en selfbeeldverbetering onderneem moet word.

Vroeëre navorsing rakende die effektiwiteit van verskillende tipes groeopleiding is nie afdoende nie. Op grond van hierdie studie kon ook nie bepaal word of die effektiwiteit van aaneenlopende-opleidingsessies beduidend van dié van gespaseerde sessies verskil nie. Verdere navorsing word in hierdie verband aanbeveel. Dieselfde geld vir die rol van individuele terugvoersessies na afloop van 'n opleidingsprogram.

Die navorsingsbevinding dat die selfbeeldversterkingsprogram ook individue met psigologiese probleme ondersteun om hulle selfbeeld en selfpersepsies te verbeter, is bemoedigend. Hierdie bevinding word versterk deur die verbeterde resultate van die MMPI uitvalgroep en hou verband met die sub-hipoteses wat vir hierdie navorsing gestel is.

Die projek het bevestig dat selfkonsepverbetering wel gedurende volwassenheid kan intree en dat dit inderwaarheid as deel van kontinue selfontwikkeling en selfbestuur beskou behoort te word.



# ***CHAPTER 1***

## ***INTRODUCTION***

### **1.1 Research Problem**

Traditionally the formation and improvement of self-concept have been associated with childhood development, while little emphasis has been placed on the self-image improvement of adults. This research has been designed to focus on the possibility of enhancing the self-image of adults.

According to Williams and Long (1979) self-management is a question of the quality of life an individual can achieve. Gardner (1981) speaks of self-development as the process of self-renewal. He emphasises that self-discovery and the development of one's potentialities never end and that they cannot be left to chance, but have to be pursued systematically.

In this research a self-image enhancement programme for adults has been developed and its effectiveness on a short and medium term level investigated. The research attempts to answer the following questions:

a) Is self-image improvement, or any change for that matter, possible in adult years? The literature, as can be seen from chapter 2, indicates conflicting opinions in this regard and the majority of researchers tend to favour a rather consistent adult self-image. This poses a challenge for the clinician who develops and conducts self-image enhancement programmes.

b) What type of psycho-educational approach is more effective:

- \* massed or spaced sessions;
- \* with or without individual feedback sessions following the programme?

With regard to this aspect of the research one also finds opposing views and conflicting previous research results which are discussed in chapter 3.

In studying the above, self-image enhancement has been investigated in terms of an overall measure of self-concept, as well as variables such as sense of physical and personal self, self-criticism, self-confidence, self-control, and nervousness. It has also been of interest to establish whether an improved self-image, as measured by these variables, correlates significantly with a better acceptance of others, improved sociability and formal relations, lower external locus of control, and higher self-efficacy.

Although this research studies the effects of a self-image enhancement programme on normally functioning individuals, a further area of investigation came to light during the course of the project. A high number of subjects were rejected by the screening device which identified individuals with emotional disturbance. The question arose, whether self-image enhancement programmes could also be effective for this subgroup and how this group compares to normally functioning subjects in terms of the test results.

The reader is asked to note that throughout this dissertation the nouns “individual” and “person” refer to both genders.

## **1.2 Background**

Although more exact definitions of various terms will follow later in this chapter, it is relevant at this point to mention that the concept of self-image for this research is to be understood in its broader context. Terms such as self-image, self-esteem, self-concept and self-empowerment are used interchangeably under the umbrella of self-development in that they are all part of feelings and perceptions of the self.

The background to this study can be seen from two perspectives. Firstly, it is necessary to consider the far-reaching importance of self-development and the vital role the self-image plays in various areas of functioning. Secondly, one needs to look at the aspect of adult

change where the focus on development processes can be shifted away from environmental determinants.

### **1.2.1 The importance of self-development**

Self-concept has often been referred to as the central area of human functioning. Lawrence (1988) emphasises that the way people feel about themselves influences their levels of achievement, while Burns (1979) sees self-image as the source of many satisfactions in life. It has also been stated that an individual's beliefs about himself affect every area of functioning (Cross, 1988). Anderson (1952) maintains that the self-image is a person's road map for living.

According to Burns (1979), the self-concept is central to every person's psychosocial existence and plays a major role in the direction of behaviour and performance. He also emphasises that personal self-worth plays a critical role in happiness. Healthy development is regarded as a function of a healthy self-attitude which requires self-knowledge and self-acceptance (Baller & Charles, 1968).

Furthermore, Fromm (1949/1982) defines man's main task as giving birth to himself to fulfil his potential, and discusses it in terms of happiness and unhappiness. He states that happiness is accompanied by increased vitality, good feelings and greater productiveness. In the same vein Maslow (1954/1994) emphasises psychological health as the most important aspect of a self-actualising individual. Both writers discuss the individual's inner core or self as made up of potentialities which have to be fulfilled in order to achieve psychological health. Maslow talks of a new kind of illness such as "the diminished or stunted person" (p.193) who exhibits a failure to grow and lacks self-acceptance and healthy self-affirmation. Raath (1987), in studying the self-concept of teachers, has also emphasised the link between self-concept and self-actualisation.

It has been stressed that cognitive learning and moral development are closely linked to self-esteem and that a positive self-image is fundamental to psychological well-being by Wideman and Clarke (1987). "I CAN is at least ten times as important as IQ" (p.24).



The literature repeatedly points to self-concept as significantly related to academic performance (e.g. Bester, 1985; Du Toit, 1985; Purkey, 1970; Shavelson & Bolus, 1982). Woodard and Suddik (1992), in studying the self-esteem of adult college students, established a positive correlation between self-esteem levels and academic success. In an earlier, South African study, Malan (1978), while not establishing a statistically significant correlation between self-concept and academic performance, found a highly significant relationship between self-concept and performance motivation.

Harmse (1979), in testing South African managers, found a positive correlation between self-image and performance motivation, as well as a negative correlation between anxiety and self-image. Vermeulen (1992), in another South African management context, showed that high self-concept corresponds with high managerial skills. Coopersmith (1968) states that "it is universally recognised that self-confidence and an optimistic assessment of one's abilities contribute markedly to business success" (p.96).

Organisations are becoming more aware of the need for self-image development. Warner (1994) emphasises that the challenge to grow people is intensifying and states that self-esteem is directly related to greater job satisfaction, higher morale, and increased productivity. Jacobs (1985) found better career adjustment and self-actualisation, greater self-control, a stronger need for achievement, more assertiveness, as well as less anxiety and stress with high self-esteem managers in a South African study. Orpen (1994) showed that positive self-esteem and personal control moderated the impact of job insecurity on psychological well-being.

Rosse, Boss, Johnson and Crown (1991) established that self-esteem was related to staff burn-out in terms of cause and consequence. They defined it as an important factor in predicting who will be more likely to develop burn-out and suggest that rebuilding the self-esteem should be part of the rehabilitation of burned-out employees. Golembiewski (1989), in an earlier study of organisational behaviour, established that self-esteem decreased as burn-out stages advanced.

Haasbroek (1991), who investigated psychological burn-out, self-esteem and social support in a South African study, found that individuals with low self-esteem and external

locus of control, as well as little social support, are more vulnerable to burn-out. Self-esteem was also found to be a predictor of the general practice of wellness behaviours in a study by Abood and Conway (1992).

In his review of the literature, Fortin (1992) links high levels of self-esteem, internal locus of control, and self-efficacy to stress reduction. Although the moderating effects of self-esteem were greatest under lower life stress conditions, Whisman and Kwon (1993) found that residual change in dysphoria was significantly associated with self-esteem. They concluded that self-esteem is an important moderator with regard to the impact of stress on individual functioning and can be associated with a decreased risk for dysphoria. According to Vrey (1974) a person with a strong self-concept is better equipped to cope with failure and difficulties.

Self-image and self-concept have also been linked to relationships (Bauer, 1989). According to Maslow (1967, 1968), self-respect on the one and relatedness to others on the other hand, are part of human maturity. Coopersmith (1968) maintains that self-confidence and self-esteem have important implications for the formation of friendships.

There is an urgent need for self-esteem in coping with life's challenges. Spencer, Josephs and Steele (1993) discuss high self-esteem as a resilience factor providing individuals with more resources of positive self-affirmation when dealing with life problems.

The importance of self-image can also be understood in terms of the wellness philosophy and self-management thinking which has gained special momentum in recent years. Seligman (1993) maintains that our era is characterised by the need for self-development and self-improvement, and that our society has placed the self into focus more than any other society before. He maintains that psychologists must aim at enriching healthy people's lives in addition to, as has traditionally been the case, treating psychopathologies.

As can be seen from the above, self-image is central to one's functioning in terms of fulfilling one's potential as well as in terms of one's relationships. It therefore makes sense to learn to improve the self-image as part of self-development. In doing that one impacts on self-actualisation, performance and personal success, as well as on

relationships. Learning to better oneself is particularly relevant since “man is the only creature that does take a hand in determining what he is to become” (Baller & Charles, 1968, p. 416). Maslow (1967, 1968) also states that a person is his own main determinant, that life is a continual series of choices and that every person takes part in making himself.

### **1.2.2 Changing the self-image**

Many researchers have pointed out that the formation of the self-concept is intrinsically linked to one’s environment. The roles of teachers and parents in shaping a child’s self-image have long been recognised as instrumental (e.g. Bauer, 1989; Bester, 1985; Coopersmith, 1981; Le Roux, 1990; Marshall, 1989; Rees, 1981). Burns (1979) emphasises that during childhood one is stuck with one’s parents for better or for worse due to restricted interpersonal communications.

It is generally accepted that during childhood, significant others form a vital part in shaping the individual’s self-image and that self-concept develops largely within a social context. An individual acquires self-knowledge through the reactions and expectations of others.(e.g. Bester, 1985; Hamachek, 1971; Lipka, Hurford & Litten, 1992; Marshall, 1989; Shavelson & Bolus, 1982; Wideman & Clarke, 1987). Piaget (1952/1976) maintains that the self and its boundaries are discovered through exploring objects and through interactions with others, while Critelli (1987) also states that a person’s self-esteem is based on numerous interactions with significant others. It is the communication with others that teaches one what value to place on oneself.

For small children it seems logical to achieve self-concept improvement via feedback from teachers, parents and peers. This aspect has been studied by various researchers and programmes have been developed to support significant adults in this process to provide a more positive environment (e.g. Burns, 1982; Critelli, 1987; Felker, 1974; Gram & Guest, 1977; Lawrence, 1988; Meyer, 1992; Shavelson & Bolus, 1982).

The emphasis in this research is placed on adult self-improvement, and to illustrate that it is possibly not necessary to be only the product of one’s childhood, if that does not allow a person to function at his best. It is also of relevance, as mentioned above, that self-

renewal needs to be considered an ongoing life process. In this context, Williams and Long (1979) maintain that most individuals have situations in the areas of personal, physical, academic, and vocational functioning which affect their feelings about themselves, but that many problems do not become severe enough to require psychiatric attention and self-management becomes a vital aspect of improved functioning.

Although it is recognised that the environment a person is exposed to plays an important part, an adult can also improve his self-concept from within which leads him to self-empowerment. This in turn has an impact on the environment in the form of changed interactions, different perceptions by others, and success experiences. A positive cycle of development can be started. It is important however to keep in mind, that the experience of the self-enhancement programme is in itself an environmental stimulus. The point that needs to be made here is that this impact from outside the individual can be a catalyst for inner change since the individual is being given strategies and methods for better self-management.

An important point of view for this research that specifically investigates self-image enhancement for adults is Fontes' (1991) emphasis on potential for growth and development throughout life. She reports that recent scientific findings provide strong evidence that a human life must be seen in terms of an ascending line rather than, as it used to be illustrated in the past, a curved line with its peak somewhere near midpoint. Self-improvement during adulthood must be a conscious process and should, because of its impact on a person's level of functioning and productivity, be supported by a person's work environment.

### **1.3 Necessity of Research**

Due to the above mentioned far reaching impact of self-image enhancement, the relevance of this research needs to be seen from the following perspectives:

- Importance of a self-image enhancement programme.
- Importance regarding the type of intervention programme used.

### **1.3.1 Importance of self-image enhancement programmes**

A self-image enhancement programme needs to be considered for the following areas of human functioning:

#### **a) Community and Business**

The community has many problems. People are facing difficult economic and political circumstances. The divorce rates are continuously on the increase, people fear retrenchment, and pressure is experienced in all areas of life due to high demands placed on individuals in business and industrial settings.

Well functioning people seem to be the answer for a healthy community and more emphasis needs to be placed on preventive and self-help strategies. Coopersmith (1968) states that "one of the more significant concerns of modern society is how to produce competent and self-respecting citizens"(p.96). Seligman (1993) emphasises that our society has pushed the self into the foreground, and that a culture which believes in self-improvement will encourage and support psychotherapy, self-help groups, and mental health organisations. Gardner (1981) stresses that society can do much to help individuals fulfil their potential and to encourage self-development resulting in a renewing society.

Corporations have great impact on their employees' development. Self-empowerment and individual growth is not only a personal matter, but must also be a concern of the business community. As Nixon (1995) states, successful organisations are on their way to recognise the importance of empowering people, in which regard the development of a high self-esteem and personal initiative are considered central.

Shamir (1991) suggests that a self-concept based theory needs to be added to current work motivation theories. In this respect many job related aspects are relevant with regard to the improvement of the self-image which underlines the link between work and self-image enhancement.

Further emphasis on the importance of building employee confidence and self-esteem becomes apparent in an article on empowerment by Alexander (1992), while Sullivan (1989) also points out that work conditions must foster personal growth in order to increase employee motivation. Green (1992) speaks of a “silent problem” since nobody speaks about their fears or self-doubts, especially when people are overwhelmed, overworked, and under pressure. This situation becomes costly for a company since productivity and efficiency suffer.

In the area of management training, the development of self-esteem receives great attention (Blitzer, Peterson & Rogers, 1993; Cyr, 1992; Foxman & Polsky, 1991; O’Connell, 1995; Sauers & Bass, 1993; Sullivan, 1989). Borinstein (1983) highlights the importance of building self-esteem for better work results and Indermill (1991) found that managers who have high self-esteem themselves tend to focus more on their employees’ needs. He also concludes that a self-esteem enhancing work environment is essential. Blanchard (1991) emphasises that supervisors, among other requirements, need the skills to enhance staff members’ self-esteem. Points for working on one’s self-esteem are summarised by Postle (1993) in an article of Productivity S.A.

Eisman (1990) also emphasises that business people take self-esteem very seriously and that improving people’s feelings of self-worth is a crucial aspect of improving performance in the work place. It has been highlighted that the question of personal growth is especially important for the corporate environment since well-functioning people increase productivity and profits, while stress problems, substance abuse, and communicational difficulties must be seen as costly conditions (Nelson-Jones, 1991).

The above highlights the need to incorporate self-image enhancement programmes in business and industry, whether it forms part of management training, or is designed to help employees develop further. Self-empowerment, or as Manz (1992) terms it, self-leadership, can result in better adjusted, better motivated personnel who can improve their productivity by becoming more self-confident, self-responsible and therefore more efficient. Especially in the companies where affirmative action programmes have been implemented, a self-image enhancement programme can prove of value, while in the area

of retrenchment such a programme could equip people better regarding career and job changes.

### **b) Tertiary Education**

There is an urgent need to address self-development perspectives as part of tertiary education to prepare young adults for job entrance. This would impact on an entire generation's mentality, focusing on personal potential and growth, and individual empowerment and responsibility.

“Students must learn about their personal characteristics, develop life skills to cope with a variety of challenges, generate a number of alternatives, and make plans for the future” emphasises Studd (1989).

### **c) Halfway Houses and other Institutions**

More emphasis should be placed on self-help programmes in any institution which prepares the person for life in the main stream. A self-image enhancement programme which has been proven to effect positive change, must be considered an important stepping stone into greater personal independence.

### **1.3.2 Importance regarding the types of self-enhancement programmes**

It is considered imperative to gain more knowledge regarding the question of what type of psycho-educational training is more effective. Whether one achieves better results with a spaced or massed sessions programme, with or without individual follow-up, determines further development of programmes.

The aim is to develop effective programmes, which are acceptable from a practical point of view in that they can be accommodated in various business, industrial or institutional settings with regard to time and financial costs. Proven results are necessary to justify the inclusion of self-image enhancement programmes in the work and institutional environment.

## 1.4 Aims of Research

The aims for this research can be summarised as the following:

- To develop a self-image enhancement programme for adults
- To measure self-image improvement following the programme
- To compare the effectiveness of spaced versus massed sessions programmes on a short and medium term level
- To investigate the effectiveness of self-image enhancement training for individuals with psychological problems as opposed to a normally functioning sample

The above aims are discussed in greater detail in chapter 4 under the heading of research objective.

## 1.5 Rationale of Research

In the field of applied psychology too much emphasis has traditionally been placed on human pathologies and far too little emphasis on human potential, self-actualisation and self-improvement. Maslow (1954/1994) emphasises the necessity of shifting more attention to the psychologically healthy individual. He stresses that health cannot merely be explained as the absence of illness.

Coopersmith (1968) also stresses that efforts need to be made to study the development processes of healthy and effective individuals. He says that “the question is no longer how to avoid maladjustment and insecurity but rather how to generate those capacities that enable an individual to function effectively in his private, personal and public activities”(p.96). He underlines that more attention needs to be devoted to finding ways of building the constructive capacities of human personality. This enables people to find better ways of dealing with life stresses which they inevitably encounter.

While the traditional role of the psychologist revolves around helping with problems, the self-image enhancement programme shifts the focus to prevention rather than cure and



focuses on the development of a person's potential. Seligman (1993) speaks of a current self-development movement which places problem solutions and the improvement of conditions into the hands of the afflicted.

Many serious psychological problems can be avoided through self-improvement and increased self-knowledge. Adults need to be made more aware of self-help strategies through corporations, institutions, and private clinicians. Individuals must learn that they can acquire better self-management skills and experience that the improvement of their quality of life can be within their reach. Personal responsibility and initiative can have positive results and kick an upward success spiral into motion.

According to Allport (1955), ego-enhancement is based on the need for survival and he considers self-assertion and self-satisfaction as natural impulses. He nevertheless also underlines the fact that the self, while neglected in earlier psychological theories, has come into focus again. Concepts such as self-image, self-actualisation, self-affirmation, and phenomenal ego have gained much attention. He proposes that self-extension, a warm relating to others, and self-acceptance are among the most important aspects of healthy functioning. He points out that, for self-fulfilment to take place, a central theme of striving must be present.

More information regarding the various approaches to self-image enhancement training is necessary to improve current knowledge on the subject. This will lead to the development of further self-help programmes.

## **1.6 Explanations of Concepts**

The literature abounds with conflicting terminology and many definitions overlap with regard to use by various writers and researchers. For the purposes of this study the definitions of self-concept/self-image and self-esteem/self-worth are discussed here for clarification.

### 1.6.1 Self-concept/self-image

In some instances a distinction between self-concept and self-image is made (e.g. Burns, 1979, 1982; Coopersmith, 1967; Du Toit, 1985). Burns (1982) defines the self-image or self-picture as the descriptive element of the self-concept and summarises the self-concept as all the beliefs and evaluations a person has of himself. In his earlier writings (1979) he describes the self-concept as a constellation of attitudes towards the self and speaks of a “composite image of what we think we are, what we think we can achieve, what we think others think of us and what we would like to be” (p.vi). It is interesting to note that, although Burns (1979, 1982) distinguishes between self-concept and self-image, he specifically uses the term “image” in describing the self-concept.

Most researchers however, consider self-concept and self-image synonymous and use them interchangeably (Marshall, 1989; Wideman & Clarke, 1987). Gouws, Louw, Meyer and Plug (1979) for instance define the self-concept, self-image, or self-percept as a person’s perception and evaluation of himself, including emotional, cognitive and evaluative elements.

For this study it is practical to adopt the approach of dealing with self-concept and self-image as one and the same. Both terms will be used interchangeably and relate to the overall question of “Who am I?” with its various components discussed in the definitions presented here.

Allport (1955) terms the self “the proprium” and defines it as everything which is warm, important and specifically individual, belonging to a particular person. The proprium consists of a bodily sense, the self-identity and a self-image. The self-image he describes as the phenomenal self which includes the way an individual regards his abilities, status, and roles, as well as an idealised self-image which relates to a person’s aspirations.

Cross (1988) sees the self-concept as learned, and maintains that it is based on the individual’s interpretations of his experiences. This phenomenological perspective is also highlighted by Burns (1979) who states that the individual continuously perceives his environment of which the self-concept is central and all-pervasive. Rogers (1961/1995)

who was one of the first to emphasise the subjective experience of the self-concept, defines the self-concept as a configuration of perceptions of the self, of one's characteristics and the abilities which are admissible to awareness. He also discusses concepts of the self in relation to others and to the environment. Evaluative or affective attitudes regarding these concepts are either positive or negative.

Felker (1974) defines the self-concept as the sum total of the view an individual has of himself. He describes it as unique and, in varying degrees, as different from the view others have of oneself.

While Campbell & Lavalley (1993) refer to self-concept as the beliefs an individual holds about his attributes and call these the knowledge components of the self-concept. Epstein (1973) calls the self-concept a self-theory which is hierarchically organised and draws information from the outside as well as from within. He speaks of dreams, emotions, thoughts, fantasies, and feelings of pleasure and pain as aspects of the self-concept.

In a similar way, Critelli (1987) describes the self-concept as "our beliefs about who we are" including "typical behaviour, feelings, moods, and other characteristics" (p.71). He also, much in the same vein as Epstein (1973) talks about the self-theory, maintains that the self-concept can be seen as a definition of oneself which can lead to the restriction of behavioural options since it is a description of experience, rather than the experience itself.

The basic functions of a self-theory are to maintain a favourable balance between pleasure and pain, to maintain the self-esteem, and to incorporate new information and experience. The self-theory comes under stress if it fails to carry out its functions and could even collapse, which results in the subjective experience of disorganisation (Epstein, 1973).

Du Toit (1985) emphasises the multi-dimensionality of the self-concept, consisting of cognitive, emotional, and self-evaluative aspects. According to Du Toit, the self-concept embraces the inner self, as well as self-identity, self-image, and self-respect. The self-concept has been explained by Baller & Charles (1968) as the inner aspect of personality which is based on self-awareness.

The hierarchical, multifaceted organisation of the self-concept has also been highlighted by Shavelson and Bolus (1982). They see the social, emotional and physical self-concepts as subdivisions of the general self-concept (in their study they also define the academic self-concept as a separate subdivision). In each subsection of the self-concept they distinguish various areas of self-concept (such as peers and significant others for the social self-concept, physical ability and appearance for the physical self-concept). At the base of the hierarchical structure are behaviours based on situation specific self-concepts. Like many writers they confirm that self-concept, broadly defined, can be explained as an individual's perceptions of himself which are formed through experience with the environment.

A multi-dimensional structure of the self-concept is also discussed by Burns (1979). He defines the totality of personality, which includes all psychological processes, as the global self. For the self-concept, he also uses the term self-attitudes. These attitudes of self are similar to attitudes one has of other things, but the object of self-attitudes are important and central to every person's psycho-social existence. Burns divides the self-concept into the self as known by the individual, the self, as the individual believes is perceived by others, and the ideal self which represents the way the individual would like to be.

Burns (1979) discusses various perspectives of the self, namely:

1. The **basic self-concept** which can be summarised as everything the person thinks he is.
2. The **transitory self-concept** which is based on a person's current mood.
3. The **social self** is what others see and evaluate.
4. The **ideal self** which is everything a person would ideally like to be, or aspires to be.

Burns (1979) further describes four components of the self-concept:

- a) The belief or cognitive component
- b) The affective or emotional component
- c) The evaluative component
- d) The behavioural component which is a predisposition to respond.

Burns (1979, 1982) explains that the cognitive or belief component is based on objective information as well as subjective opinion, either true or false. This information leads to generalised conclusions about the self which reflect the consistent and habitual way we come to perceive ourselves. This creates the notion of consistency, an aspect which will be discussed later.

The affective experience or the feelings aroused regarding one's self-concept are based on the evaluative component which in turn follows comparisons with cultural, societal and group values. It is interesting to mention here that, according to Burns (1982), this evaluative loading is learned and can therefore be influenced through experience, environment, and exposure to changed values. He also emphasises that self-evaluation must not be seen as fixed, but that it is context related and changes as one grows older. These points have important implications for this research since it would indicate that self-image change through a psycho-educational group intervention during adulthood could be possible and that self-image-enhancement is in fact necessary. More about the aspect of self-evaluation according to Burns is dealt with under the next heading which discusses various definitions of self-esteem. The aspect of change over time will also be discussed further in another section.

### **1.6.2 Self-esteem/self-worth:**

Self-esteem is generally seen as the evaluative dimension of the self-concept. It is reflected through an attitude of approval or disapproval, as a global positive or negative attitude towards the self (Coopersmith, 1981; Marshall, 1989; Newman and Newman, 1980). If self-concept answers the question of "who am I?", self-esteem has to be linked to the question of "what am I worth?".

To Campbell & Lavalley (1993) on the other hand, self-esteem revolves around the question of "How do I feel about who I am" (p.4). Various writers agree, however, that the aspect of affect plays a central role. Critelli (1987) also defines self-esteem in terms of the feelings one has about oneself.

Self-esteem does not seem to be linked to objective measures of life success, but rather provides a subjective sense of well-being (Campbell, 1976; Campbell, Converse & Rodgers, 1976). Coopersmith (1968) also emphasises that self-esteem is a personal judgement of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes an individual holds towards himself and that “it indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful, and worthy” (p.5). In the same way, Burns (1979) defines self-esteem or self-evaluation as “the process in which the individual examines his performance, capacities and attributes according to his personal standards and values which have been internalised from society and significant others” (p.68).

According to Newman and Newman (1980) the evaluative component of the self-concept is based on two sources, namely the comparison between actual achievement and expectation, and the messages of love, support and approval from others.

Burns (1979) regards the following as the basis of self-evaluations:

1. The ideal self-image which is the ratio between what a person has actually accomplished and what he aspires.
2. The internalisation of societal judgements which relates to the evaluation by others.
3. Self-evaluation based on how well one does something.

Burns (1979) speaks of psychological selectivity in that various evaluations are based on subjective assessments of success in relation to what an individual considers important. Burns goes on to explain that, in spite of a certain amount of freedom, a person also faces restrictions with regard to the selection of roles, standards, and aspirations which he renders relevant. A number of objective facts, such as height, talents or objective performance results, also come into play with regard to self-evaluations. In addition individuals need the opportunity to test their self-worth under various conditions in that they compare themselves to the group. Regarding this latter aspect, Raath (1987) describes the other person as a mirror for self-evaluation.

While it is stated that feelings of self-regard can fluctuate with regard to different roles, situations and events, general self-esteem or global self-worth remains stable over time (Campbell & Lavalley, 1993). This point relates to the question posed in this research regarding the possibility of adult self-image change.

### **1.6.3 Other related terms**

The literature is not entirely clear as to the exact distinctions between self-respect, self-acceptance, and self-confidence. Coopersmith (1981) points out that positive self-esteem has been associated with terms such as self-respect, pride, self-acceptance, and self-love, while negative self-appraisal is often seen as inferiority, self-hatred, lack of personal acceptance and timidity. In this research, terms such as self-confidence, self-acceptance and self-respect are grouped together as aspects of self-esteem or self-worth.

### **1.6.4 Summary of definitions**

As can be seen from the above, one can be confused with conflicting and overlapping aspects of various definitions of self-concept, self-esteem and related terms. The most interesting fact is, that some researchers consider the self-evaluative dimension of the self as part of the self-concept, others define it as self-esteem itself.

Another area of distinct difference between writers comes through in the discussion of affect. Some define it as a self-concept component, others explain it as specifically related to the self-esteem which has been termed the evaluative dimension of the self.

In general it is necessary to develop psychological concepts in order to classify, organise and understand human behaviour (Burns, 1979). In the same way, a person requires a self-concept, which can be understood in terms of a self-theory as set out in the above definitions. This helps the individual to order his experiences and understand his behaviour.

As mentioned previously, in this research, self-concept and self-image are used synonymously, while self-esteem and other related terms refer to various dimensions of the self concept. They all need to be regarded in terms of self-improvement or self-development of the individual.

The self-concept can be summarised as a multi-dimensional self-theory. The social, emotional, physical, and ideal self-concepts are divisions of the global self. Attitudes and beliefs about the self are subjective. Self-perceptions and self-evaluations have a cognitive, as well as an affective component. The evaluative aspect of the self-concept has mainly been explained in terms of self-esteem or feelings of self-worth.

While there is a certain amount of stability through life, the self-concept does also absorb new information and experiences. This is the point which leads one to the research question of how much change is possible during adult life.

The summary of the various terms has been compiled with the present research in mind. The term self-image enhancement must be understood as an umbrella term, which relates not only to the improvement of a self-picture, but to self-concept development in general and includes all of the above mentioned concepts.

## **1.7 Structuring of Further Chapters**

The following chapter deals with the “change in adulthood” question, where theory and research regarding consistency and stability of the self-image are considered, as opposed to change and flexibility.

Chapter 3 investigates how self-image enhancement can be achieved. Various training approaches are discussed in the areas of group intervention and psycho-educational programmes. Current research is included here in order to illustrate important considerations.



The theoretical basis for the self-image enhancement programme is presented in chapter 4. The course topics and their practical implementation in the programme are also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 5 deals with the experimental design, which includes a discussion of the objectives, hypotheses, methods and statistical techniques of the research.

The statistical results are presented in chapter 6, and an interpretation and discussion of the research findings can be found in chapter 7. In chapter 8 the research is summarised, conclusions are drawn, and the shortcomings of the study are dealt with. Guidelines for future research close off this dissertation.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### ***CHANGE IN ADULTHOOD - THEORY AND RESEARCH***

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter looks at the question of whether change in adulthood can be expected even though there seems to be more support in the literature for the view of stability and consistency of the self. Related research in this regard is also discussed here.

#### **2.2 Consistency versus Change**

Many researchers focus on the issue of self-concept stability versus the possibility for change. Demo (1992) reports that previous research highlights a seemingly paradoxical situation where the self-concept has been defined as stable, while at the same time it is susceptible to change. Evidence of these seemingly contradictory hypotheses can be found throughout the literature (Brockner & Guare, 1983; Costa, Gatz, Neugarten, Salthouse & Siegler, 1989; Fitch, 1970; Heatherton and Ambady, 1993; Spencer, Josephs & Steele, 1993; Sullivan, 1989). A summary of these opposing theories is presented here, followed by an attempt to integrate the various views.

##### **2.2.1 Consistency theories - resistance to change**

The current research focuses on developing and testing an improvement programme for the self-concept of the adult person. Changing an adult's self-concept seems to be an arduous task since much of the literature points to stability and consistency of the self (Brockner & Guare, 1983; Demo, 1992; Sullivan, 1989). Most people have a natural inclination to resist change and avoid having to give up a self which they have grown familiar and comfortable with. Various defense mechanisms serve the individual to protect

or preserve the self-system (Hamachek, 1971), an aspect highly relevant for this research. Stanwyck (1972), who concluded a longitudinal study, found that the self-concept must be seen as a stable variable which is difficult to change.

It has been highlighted by Costa et al. (1989) that no one questions that a child learns a great deal throughout its development, but in the case of adults there is a considerable amount of doubt whether meaningful changes can be experienced beyond adolescence. He refers to Neugarten (1964) who suggests that intrapsychic and socio-adaptational processes develop substantial stability, while Vrey (1974) speaks of the adolescent as settling into a more harmonious self-unity, in other words, a stabilisation of self-concept.

The self-consistency theories support the notion that the individual has a strong tendency to maintain a consistent cognitive state regarding his evaluations of himself. Wylie (1957) emphasises the tendency of the self-concept to attain a certain degree of consistency as it forms an organised hierarchy of hypotheses regarding the self. Coopersmith (1981) confirms that the individual arrives at a general appraisal of his worth that remains relatively stable over the years, while Felker (1974) and Burns (1982) define the self-concept in terms of maintenance of inner consistency and set expectations.

The fact that the individual behaves in accordance with the self-concept he has, and that he resists change even if it meant a personal improvement, is also highlighted by Critelli (1987). Hamachek (1971) describes the individual as projecting a rather stable personality style which makes him more or less identifiable and to a certain extent, as well as predictable to others. He reports studies that found the behaviour of subjects to be consistent from childhood to adulthood. Persistence of patterns was more frequent than change and when changes occurred they were mostly temporary. This is an important point in terms of the impact of the self-image enhancement programme in this research. The investigation of medium term developments over and above the immediate effects of the programme are therefore an attempt to test the relative permanence of achieved changes.

Canfield and Wells (1976) emphasise the fact that it takes a long time to change a poor self-image to a positive one, while Wideman and Clarke (1987) also underline that the

self-image provides a sense of psychological security. They state that one resists self-image change since it is experienced as an anxiety provoking process. Burns (1979) highlights that defense mechanisms serve to maintain personal stability and preserve integrity. According to him great stress is experienced by an individual as soon as his ego or sense of self is threatened.

It is comforting to be able to predict one's behaviour fairly accurately. Baller and Charles (1968) speak in this regard of self-protection and Horney (in Burns, 1979) says that the central and important aspects of self-concept are cherished and most people cling to their essential beliefs about themselves like a drowning man holding a straw. In this sense, a self-enhancement programme, especially one that challenges the individual's self-view, could only be expected to have rather unpredictable results.

Coopersmith (1981) also suggests that the self-concept is relatively resistant to change. "Once established it apparently provides a sense of personal continuity over space and time, and is defended against alteration"(p.11). Since a belief a person has of himself influences the way he approaches a new situation, this in turn influences his success in this situation which in turn affects or reinforces beliefs due to the well-known Pygmalion effect (Marsh, 1984). Expectations of others have further impact in often maintaining existing beliefs (Du Toit, 1985; Marshall, 1989).

Another view regarding the stability of the self-concept is Costa et al.'s (1989), who highlight that the unit of analysis has mostly been the personality trait which characterises the individual. It is traits which, according to him, identify "enduring dispositions in individuals, characteristic ways of thinking, feeling, acting; they are basic emotional, interpersonal, experiential, attitudinal, and motivational styles"(p.50).

According to Wylie (1961) self-concept and self-esteem have often been understood in terms of underlying, stable traits or tendencies. She further explains that these tendencies are formed early in life and continue to shape a person's experience and behaviour throughout life. Demo (1992) also explains that the structural self-concept model traditionally defines the self-concept as a configuration of personality characteristics which is relatively stable over time.

Shamir (1991) maintains that one of the assumptions about self-concept and behaviour include the view that people are motivated to retain their sense of self-consistency. According to Epstein (1973) thoughts about the self function as conceptual tools and help the individual to predict and control life experiences. For this reason individuals strive to maintain their current self-views and “any experience that challenges or disturbs a person’s self-concept is potentially threatening” (Brown, 1993, p.118). Brown highlights the importance of well-defined and stable conceptions of the self because they serve many functions such as enabling the individual to process personal experience, providing a guide for behaviour and action, and establishing a sense of security and self-identity.

Epstein (1973), in defining the self-concept as a self-theory (see chapter 1), states that to demonstrate contradictions means to destroy a theory. He therefore sees inconsistency through new information which is not entirely in line with the existing experience of self, as a potential source of stress and disorganisation. In this sense, a self-image enhancement programme must be seen as a fundamental self-theory challenge.

The protection and maintenance of the self-picture is the central concept of Lecky’s (1973) theory of consistency. Lecky explains it in terms of the self-consistency motive which protects the self-concept against change. He points out that resistance can arise from the fact that a person has accepted a certain suggestion in the past which he has introduced into his definition of self. He explains, “The point is that all of an individual’s values are organised into a single system, the preservation of whose integrity is essential. The nucleus of the system...is in the individual’s valuation of himself....Any value entering the system which is inconsistent with the individual’s valuation of himself cannot be assimilated; it meets with resistance and is likely, unless a general reorganisation occurs, to be rejected.”(p.109).

Lecky (1973) further discusses that feelings of distress are the result of threatening information or experiences that unbalance the organisation of the personality. The self-consistency motive strives for unity regarding the sense of self. It leads an individual to reject ideas and information which are at variance with his value system and existing self-view. Lecky maintains that resistance can be seen as the opposite of assimilation and

learning and represents a refusal to change one's values, especially values about the self. Resistance to change following self-improvement interventions must be understood in this light. It is also important however, to take note that Lecky speaks of resistance "unless a reorganisation occurs" (see above paragraph) which in itself implies the possibility of change. It is this reorganisation which should perhaps be the aim of a self-image enhancement programme.

Wylie (1957) also discusses the experience of self-discrepancies with regard to the relationship between the self-concept and defensiveness. She states that contradictions within the self-concept tend to lead to anxiety and defensive reactions. Wylie explains the self-concept as an organised hierarchy of hypotheses maintaining stability and consistency.

According to Lecky (1973) the aspect of consistency is not relevant with regard to single situations, but must rather be seen as an attitude regarding a variety of situations. He emphasises that individual self-maintenance can be seen in terms of habit being the major phenomenon of behaviour. "All the acts of an individual have the goal of maintaining the same structure of values"(p. 51). Terms such as character, style, or personality bring the concept of total organisation of the self into focus.

An important argument for consistency and stability is also the theory of cognitive dissonance developed by Festinger (1957; 1964). He states that individuals have opinions and attitudes which occur in clusters that are internally consistent, otherwise cognitive dissonance is the result. With the occurrence of dissonance which can be understood as a state of cognitive disequilibrium regarding beliefs, attitudes, and values, the person experiences pressure to reduce the dissonance. The individual attempts to reduce it through various approaches such as rationalisation or avoidance behaviour. Festinger's theory therefore also underlines the fact that one expects a resistance to change with regard to self-development programmes.

Another way of investigating the question of possibility of change is by means of turning to self-concept definitions which focus on the centrality of the belief components. Self-concept has been understood in terms of being an attitude, which is in essence a set of beliefs one holds about oneself (see chapter 1). In the light of the fact that beliefs, and

therefore attitudes cannot be altered easily, the self-image is expected to resist change. Rokeach (1969) sees an attitude as a relatively enduring organisation of beliefs regarding an object or situation which influences a person's response and predisposes one to certain behaviour. While these self-attitudes are not necessarily on a conscious level, once formed they tend to maintain themselves (Burns, 1979).

Burns (1979) explains that the difficulty with regard to self-image change arises from the fact that the cognitive component of the self-description is not only based on objective evidence, but relies heavily on subjective opinion, whether true or false. He also emphasises that many self-values established early in life under the influence of significant others have been strongly reinforced and become central to a person's identity. It becomes a difficult task to achieve change, even if it is in the interest of the individual. Jourard (1974) states that "We are often so heavily 'reinforced', or rewarded for remaining the same, that it takes powerful pain to make us willing to give up our more familiar ways in order to risk change" (p.197).

Besides the more commonly discussed need to maintain an inner consistency, Hamachek (1971) deals with the issue from a different angle. He cites the following reasons for resisting personal growth:

*1) Fear of maturity*

Some individuals avoid finding out more about themselves because they have grown comfortable with the way they are and they cannot add new or different behaviour to their current concept of self. Often personal shortcomings serve certain functions and help to maintain old patterns. By resisting personal growth the person also avoids taking risks and possible social disapproval, as Hamachek (1971) formulates it, "nothing ventured, nothing lost" (p.2). Maturity implies greater independence and autonomy, more self-discipline, goal setting, a greater need for achievement, and greater personal responsibility.

## 2) *Fear of success*

It is frightening for some individuals to achieve success since it implies that a certain level of achievement is then expected which they have to live up to. This leads to anxiety if the person doubts his abilities to sustain a high level of performance.

## 3) *Fear of one's best*

Maslow (1967) spells out that many people stop short of becoming what they are capable of becoming and do not actualise their full potential due an ambivalence mankind has regarding human greatness: "We surely love and admire ... the truly successful. And yet, they also make us uneasy, anxious, confused, perhaps a little jealous or envious, a little inferior, clumsy" (p. 164). A person who is superior in a particular way momentarily makes the other more aware of his own lesser abilities or skills. This in turn leads the other person to engage in defensive, excuse-finding behaviour and self-defeating feelings (Hamachek, 1971). By denying that another person is bright or skilled, or by looking for reasons why the other one "had it so easy", one also denies the possibilities of these qualities existing within oneself. Through these defensive tendencies personal growth is avoided.

The resistance to change and consistency aspects reported above are of great importance with regard to the effectiveness of training courses since, through defense mechanisms or other types of resistant behaviour, the course participant would generally want to maintain the status quo regarding his self-concept. He would attempt to reduce dissonance, if the material he is confronted with, introduces new information or self-experiences. A self-image enhancement programme must therefore be seen in the light of a threatening and stressful experience since previously held belief structures about the self are being challenged.

Based on the above, it is expected that self-concept improvement is difficult to achieve and one could easily place a question mark on the possibility for self-improvement if there was not, at the same time, a strong tendency in the literature to present theories and research which underline the possibility for change. Although there seems to be an



overwhelming resistance to change thinking, so-called enhancement or development theories support the view that self-image improvement is possible, even necessary for adult development.

### **2.2.2 Self-enhancement theories - possibility for change**

Enhancement theories, as opposed to consistency views, assume that the individual has a strong need to enhance his self-evaluation (Jones, 1973). It has been stressed by many writers that the individual is able to change his self-beliefs and that he plays an active role in determining what he is to become (e.g. Baller & Charles, 1968; Frankl, 1970; Gorrell, 1990; Manz, 1992).

Supporters of the “change view” are for instance Eckleben (1983) who continuously emphasises the dynamics of the self-concept. He maintains that it is especially the adult who carries on learning throughout life, which is quite opposed to the view mentioned earlier regarding the doubt that exists with regard to adult improvement. Eckleben specifically refers to the absorption of new experiences with regard to the various roles an adult assumes over the years such as career, parental, and marital roles. Demo (1992) speaks of a working concept of self and emphasises that the sense of self fluctuates depending on varying roles, changing motivation, and emotions.

The “processual model of the self” (p.305) has been highlighted by Demo (1992) who maintains that too little is known about the dynamic tendencies of human self-images. “The modifications and revisions in self-attitudes, the shifting self-evaluations, peaks and valleys in feelings of self-worth” (p.307) are of special interest, he states. Besides methodological problems regarding the measurement of self-image dynamism, he argues that researchers have overstated self-concept stability. In the same vein, Sullivan (1989) also stresses that the self must be explained in terms of process, while Cross (1988) also looks at, what he calls self-concepting, as a process which aims at maximum development. In emphasising that the self-concept is learned, Cross also encourages the possibility of positive change, and Baller and Charles (1968) on the other hand, emphasise the importance of “becoming” as well as the desire to improve, as specifically human.

An important enhancement aspect is the experience of personal growth which Allport (1955) highlights in discussing the ideal self-image which guides the person towards therapeutic improvement. This and the concept of propiarte striving, which Allport sees instrumental in human motivation, and the desire to reach beyond oneself, certainly suggest that positive change must be achievable. Maslow (1954/1994) and Rogers (1961/1995) also underline self-enhancement and self-actualisation aspects in their theories of human development.

Bauer (1989) says “it is possible to sit down with oneself on a more ‘permanent’ basis and decide on whether one wants to cultivate a positive or a negative self-concept”(p.11). This statement also implies an aspect of consciousness, and with it the opportunity of choice an adult has with regard to self-management and self-improvement.

Williams and Long (1979) maintain that the very term “self-management” implies that human conditions can be changed. Felker (1974) states that self-esteem is learned which of course also implies that change can be achieved while Jourard (1974) maintains influencing a person’s beliefs about himself can lead to powerful changes in a person’s life. Hamachek (1971) also highlights the abundant evidence that suggests that perceptions towards the self and towards others can be modified and Baumeister (1993) emphasises that permanent change in self-esteem has been shown to occur in either direction depending on a person’s circumstances and experiences.

Coopersmith (1981) speaks of the possibility of change as the person becomes aware of certain predispositions when exposed to various situations. The self-image enhancement programme would be creating such situations which lead to greater awareness. Demo (1992) cautions the researcher not to overlook the importance of social processes which can lead to sudden changes and disruptions in self-concept. Considering the possible impact of a group intervention programme, this once again would point into the direction of possibility of change and new learning within the social context of the training group.

In offsetting the stability aspect against the possibility of change, many researchers however maintain that the individual’s self-concept reflects both, stability *and* change.

### 2.2.3 An Integrated View

It is necessary to conceptualise the self-image in terms of a synthesis of the seemingly contradictory aspects of stability and change. As Wells (1992) underlines, self-evaluation is an ongoing complex process with context and role related fluctuations in response to life experiences. Although, according to Wells, a sense of stability and predictability is an important part of self-conceptualisation, it would be an oversimplification to state, that one purely deals with the maintenance of stability, or on the other hand, with fluctuation and change only.

Perhaps a good way of understanding these opposing tendencies within the individual, is Sullivan's (1989) explanation of metatheories of self. The two of relevance here are the so-called "Stable Self Theory" and the "Developing Self Theory". The first one refers to the existence of an "unchanging inner essence" (p.349), the second to the striving of the individual to achieve his best self. Both are applicable for the functioning of a person. Even Lecky (1973), who developed the theory of consistency proposes that, although resistance must be seen as a natural and necessary aspect of the self, individuals need to free themselves from inhibiting self-definitions.

Brown (1993) summarises the synthesis effectively when he states that "alongside the self-enhancement motive stands a drive towards self-consistency"(p.117). Another short quotation highlights the core of the issue: "Self-concept is a structural product of reflexive activity, but it is also susceptible to change as the individual encounters new roles, situations, and life transitions" (Demo, 1992, p.303). It is Epstein (1973) who maintains that, although the self-theory during adulthood is rather stable and serves as an anchor point, new learning and adjustments do take place.

Demo (1992) describes the self-concept process which reflects stability as well as change, as movement from a baseline. A person's self-feelings remain fairly stable over longer periods of time, yet fluctuations following certain situations encountered are part of the pattern. While this view seems to see change in terms of situation bound fluctuations rather than enduring change which one would like to aim at for the purposes of self-image

enhancement, it is nevertheless an indication that, depending on a situation a person is exposed to, self-perceptions and self-feelings can be altered.

It is impossible to consider the human being without bringing both the stability and the change tendencies together. The challenge for this research therefore consists in achieving positive change while working within the framework of a relatively stable self. It is necessary to expect that the participants resist change and experience feelings of threat and anxiety in the light of new information that is inconsistent with previously held beliefs and self-perceptions. There is nevertheless also hope that the self-enhancement programme widens the participants' theory of self. As Epstein (1973) explains, it is vital for an individual to be exposed to a diversity of experiences in order to avoid a restrictive self-theory.

In concluding the argument regarding the possibility of self-concept change, Demo's (1992) summary of describing the self-concept in terms of both structural as well as process components, is most fitting. He speaks of "a dynamic structure that responds to situational stimuli, incorporates new elements, rearranges, adjusts, and stabilises temporarily before encountering new stimuli and undergoing further revisions"(p.322).

### **2.3 Related Research**

Relatively little research exists in the area of adult self-image enhancement. Many of the studies have used college students, and little evidence exists with regard to adults in their work environment. Since existing research data for adults are so rare, some studies with adolescent subjects which may be relevant, are included in this section.

Not all studies cited here have specifically used self-image enhancement programmes. Group therapy and similar interventions are included here if there is a measurement focus on self-concept or other self-related aspects.

### **2.3.1 Adults - work environment**

Mangle (1983) conducted a field experiment with 69 subjects in a large corporation studying the effects of human potential training on self-image and selected work behaviour. The findings showed that the experimental group differed significantly from the control group with regard to increased self-acceptance, self-determination, self-motivation, and empathic regard.

The treatment outcome of an employee assistance programme was investigated in terms of locus of control, self-esteem, and ego strength by Morrissey (1993). The focus of the brief group therapy was on the improvement of self-concept and self-management. Thirty subjects were self-referred, another 30 referred by others, while the control group also consisted of 30 subjects. Only the self-referred subjects differed significantly from the control subjects regarding the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale. On the 16 PF and the Rotter Internal-External Scale no differences were found. These findings emphasise that the question of referral versus voluntary participation in a programme should be considered important. This point will be elaborated on under the section of shortcomings of this research in the last chapter.

With regard to the absence of significant changes on the 16 PF one could find confirmation of the fact that, as has been highlighted in the literature (see above), individuals have fairly stable personalities or characteristics which seldom change. It is interesting to note however, that positive changes were found in the area of self-concept.

### **2.3.2 Adults - Other**

The effect of intensive short group therapy on the self-concept of drug addicted persons was investigated by Tuck (1984). With eight subjects the size of the experimental group was very small, and no control group was used. Vrey's Self-Concept Scale and the Q-sort were used as measurement instruments. Only the Q-sort results showed statistically significant improvements at the post-intervention level.

In the areas of self-exploration and self-congruence Tuck (1984) found a degree of improvement but no statistically significant differences. He explained the results in terms of the difference between self-reports which reflect the person's subjective self-cognitions and feelings, as opposed to the ratings of others. Vrey's scale and the Q-sort are self-reports while self-exploration and self-congruence were rated by observers. The individuals felt differently about themselves after the group intervention. Tuck explains this in terms of an elevated feeling after an intensive, powerful group experience and that deeper levels of self-concept take more than a brief therapy intervention to develop.

With Tuck's (1984) findings one must keep in mind that the subjects were only tested at the post-intervention level and no further developments were observed. His findings are in line with many theoretical views (see above) regarding the difficulty to achieve change in the short term. Tuck's mention of the elevated feeling after a group or training experience has often been raised as a concern regarding the effectiveness of intervention programmes. It is for this reason, that the current research also assesses subjects on a medium term level, which should at least provide some indication of whether changes are merely momentous and fade away soon after the intervention, or if they can be more permanent.

A project to build self-esteem of substance abusers was incorporated in adult basic education programmes (Pennsylvania State Dept. of Ed., 1987) since counsellors have noted poor self-image as a core issue with regard to drug and alcohol problems. There were 41 students in the programme and mathematics and reading results improved but the findings of the personality tests were inconclusive, often due to medication being taken. Once again it was nevertheless reported that the subjects' comments and those of teachers were positive which does point to changed self-perceptions and experiences even though these could not be statistically documented. These findings indicate that individuals could well feel differently, although they have not changed in an objective sense. This emphasises the importance of subjective self-perception since a person who feels differently should, as a result, start to behave differently too.

Dierks (1991) developed and tested a treatment programme designed to increase perceptions of self-efficacy. Fifty-eight adult women were randomly assigned to either an experimental group or a control group. The short-term intervention consisted of six sessions over a six-week period. Both groups were assessed on a pre- and post-

intervention level, while the treatment group also completed a follow-up questionnaire. Both, self-efficacy for difficult social situations, and outcome expectations increased significantly for the experimental group, while depression decreased. In the area of self-esteem and generalised self-efficacy however, no significant improvements were found in comparison to the control group.

With older subjects a self-esteem enhancement programme was implemented at a nursing home (Frey, Kelbley, Durham & James, 1992). Out of 21 subjects 12 were randomly assigned to a control group and 9 to an experimental group. The self-esteem was found to be significantly improved after the experience of a decrease in feelings of self-worth due to anxiety. The authors emphasise the importance of the midtreatment observation which established the existence of this curvilinear development over time. This point should be kept in mind, when administering and assessing self-image enhancement programmes.

### **2.3.3 Students - young adults**

Greater self-awareness and a higher sense of self-worth were the outcome of a personal growth group for undergraduate college students which was conducted by O'Leary, Crowley and Keane (1994). Rubin (1967) found significant increases in self-acceptance and decrease in prejudice as a result of sensitivity training.

In a study investigating the effects of coping skills training on generalised self-efficacy and locus of control, Smith (1989) found significant decreases on various measures of test anxiety and a higher level of academic achievement in the trained group as compared to a waiting-list control group. Generalised self-efficacy was also raised, but locus of control remained unchanged. Changes in self-efficacy were seen as unrelated to locus of control which Smith considered to be a more global measure. Smith's research seems to have achieved a specific, situation bound improvement, rather than a global self-improvement. Based on the above, it seems a lot harder to achieve overall, generalised self-image improvement.

Rubi (1990) investigated the short, intermediate and long-term impact of a self-concept enhancement programme on self-concept and academic performance. The subjects took

part in a two and a half day self-esteem building seminar entitled "Investment in Excellence". Participants underwent pre- and post-test assessments and were retested after five, and again after nine months. The experimental group showed significant increases in levels of self-esteem and academic self-concept and these improvements were sustained over the nine months period. Once again, it is interesting to note that the self-concept aspects which improved were specifically related to the academic self-concept, rather than to the general concept of self.

In investigating the effect of an integrative self-enhancement and basic-skill programme, Owens (1991) found that perceived academic competence and perceived school satisfaction were causally linked to academic achievement, but global self-esteem was not. Again the emphasis and success of a training programme relate to a specific area of self-concept rather than to overall self-concept improvement.

Thirty-seven subjects took part in Birkland's (1986) study. He developed a self-enrichment programme for resident students. Birkland reports that the only statistically significant finding was an increase of self-acceptance in the self-enrichment group, while the controls actually showed a decrease of self-acceptance. Although the self-enrichment participants moved closer to the ideal in four out of five measures, only few significant results were found. A notable shortcoming regarding this study is the small sample size; the experimental group consisted of 14 subjects.

Del Polito (1973) developed and assessed a self-enhancement programme to be adapted into existing communications courses at university. The hypothesis, that a better self-concept improves communicational abilities, was not supported statistically. This is of interest insofar as this research also investigates acceptance of others with regard to self-concept improvement.

#### **2.3.4 Adolescents**

A study by Leonard (1983) examined the effects of a six-week self-enhancement programme on the self-concept of pregnant adolescents. Experimental and control groups consisted of 15 subjects each. No significant pre- and post-test differences were found for



either group. Wurtz (1983) on the other hand, achieved a significant improvement of self-concept after administering an enrichment programme which consisted of 18 weeks of classroom modules for emotionally disturbed, institutionalised adolescents. Both studies used small samples, but it is interesting to note, that the duration of Wurtz's programme was three times longer than that of Leonard. More on this point is discussed in chapter 3, where the different training approaches are under discussion.

Van der Riet (1985) conducted a self-enrichment programme for adolescents in a children's home. Both, the experimental group consisting of 12 subjects, and the control group which was made up of 10 subjects, showed no significant differences on a post-test level. According to Van der Riet, these findings confirm the fact that changes towards greater self-acceptance take place gradually, although even the follow-up test results which were taken 12 weeks later also showed no significant increase. A more recent, brief psycho-educational programme examined by Fertman and Chubb (1992) also showed no significant changes in self-esteem and locus of control.

On the other hand, a self-concept development programme for adolescents was evaluated by Le Roux Ferreira (1992) where some significant improvements were noted. He specifically reports an increase of self-respect and improvement of personal self, social self, and general self-concept. Regarding the family self, significant changes were only found in the female group, while self-criticism only changed significantly for the male adolescents. These findings point to the importance of investigating how male and female subjects differ with regard to self-image improvement. This topic is dealt with in the last chapter.

A self-concept enhancement programme in the form of a one month residential survival training produced positive changes in self-concept, and discrepancies between self and ideal self were reduced. In this study, the changes were general rather than specific, and were related to the initial level of self-evaluation. The sub-group with poorer initial self-concept seemed to account for most of the changes. More on this point is found in the last chapter in the section on shortcomings of this research.

### 2.3.5 Conclusion

Even though there were some significant improvements in some areas of self-concept, the above studies exhibit inconclusive findings. In most cases, the research samples were small and only one study re-tested after nine months, while another had a follow-up assessment after 12 weeks. Mainly immediate developments have been investigated and no other results are available regarding medium or long term changes. An interesting observation is, that situation bound, specific areas of self-concept seem to be more easily achievable than a generalised improvement of self-image. This confirms the consistency view presented earlier.

Although methodological considerations must be taken into account with the existing research, the above findings seem to confirm that it is difficult to achieve self-concept change and that very little evidence is available to prove the opposite.

### 2.4 Summary



In this chapter the theory and research regarding the possibility of self-concept change during adulthood was discussed. The consistency or stability view was highlighted as opposed to the enhancement or change view. It was concluded that it is necessary to bring together both, stability and change when studying the adult self-concept. In terms of self-image enhancement however, one needs to harness the dynamics of learning within the framework of a stable, fairly predictable self even though it is expected that self-image improvement is difficult to achieve.

The following chapter investigates how effective various training approaches have been. Aspects of group interventions and psycho-educational training programmes are discussed. Some considerations regarding the spaced versus massed sessions programmes are presented and a number of research samples are used to highlight the differences in results.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### ***A COMPARISON OF TRAINING APPROACHES***

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Various types of training approaches have been used in the past. The most common way of dealing with self-image enhancement and related programmes are by means of group interventions.

For this research the focus is placed on training groups which assist the normally functioning individual to improve his self-image. An improved self-concept enables the person to fulfil his potential more fully. Nelson-Jones (1991) distinguishes these so-called growth groups from counselling and psychotherapy groups.

*Counselling and psychotherapy groups:*

These groups are visited by clients either concurrently with, or instead of individual counselling and generally last for months, sometimes even years (Nelson-Jones, 1991). Nelson-Jones (1991) defines them as remedial, rather than developmental or preventive and explains that they are suitable for individuals who do not function effectively in everyday life. Often group participants are psychiatric in- or out-patients.

*Growth groups:*

Nelson-Jones (1991) defines training or lifeskills groups as time-limited groups with defined learning goals and a structured programme. Their main objectives are developmental and preventive, focusing on self-development and improvement of interpersonal communications and relationships. They assist individuals with general problems of living, or help the person to achieve better self-management. The groups provide the opportunity for participants to get in touch with themselves and others, to

express feelings, and to experience openness. Growth groups, according to Nelson-Jones (1991), include T-groups, sensitivity and encounter groups, experiential groups, and human relations groups.

A confusing fact here is, that Nelson-Jones' (1991) above definition of growth groups explains them in terms of structured content; in summarising various types of growth groups however, he also includes sensitivity and T-groups which have no or very little structure. Perhaps this must be understood in the light of these groups aiming at personal growth and social skills, and not at resolving specific psychological problems as is the case with counselling and psychotherapy groups.

### **3.2 Effectiveness of Training Groups**

According to the above distinctions, the self-image enhancement groups in this research are clearly defined as growth groups. They are designed for normally functioning, psychologically healthy individuals, are time-limited, have a pre-determined learning goal, and are structured with regard to process and content. The self-enhancement programme is also psycho-educational because, besides achieving personal growth, it also teaches participants certain self-help and self-management strategies, and provides information regarding various self-development topics.

Although this research deals with a fairly structured training group with a topic-centred agenda, information about T-group effectiveness and other growth groups that are less structured is also considered useful in this discussion and findings regarding such related groups are included here.

Since there are many types of training groups, Burns (1979) says that "Intensive group experience is perhaps the best overall term to cover a wide variety of other labels" (p.233). He explains that in general groups provide the participants with the opportunity to learn more about themselves and to improve their insight and evaluations of self and others. Group experience has frequently been found to facilitate personal growth and self-actualisation in normal populations (Izard, 1966). Positive effects of group experience

with regard to self-image are well documented in Burns (1979). He talks of a flood of evidence that highlights the fact that intensive group experience does induce changes in self-attitudes. Many studies he cites involve T-groups and sensitivity training. Even intensive weekend groups are reported as having made significant impact on the improvement of self-awareness. He also mentions summarised studies by Gibb who concluded that persons show an increase in their self-evaluation as a result of participation in groups.

Enns (1992) reports that women's groups have made an important contribution to female development and have evolved from loosely organised, structureless consciousness-raising groups to skill-oriented self-esteem groups. While Enns emphasises that groups have played a great role in decreasing women's isolation from each other and provide a context where the women gain support and validation, the same could surely be said for both sexes.

In a research of the literature Campbell and Dunette (1968) found that in most cases the focus of investigating T-group training was placed on internal criteria, such as perceptions of self, interpersonal sensitivity, attitude and personality change. They concluded that T-group methods do induce changed behaviour although they caution the reader with regard to generalisations due to methodological and measurement difficulties in this area of research.

Stanton (1973) quotes Gibb who, after examining the effects of human relations training, found that individuals become more aware of their own and other people's feelings, of perceptions of others, show greater self-actualisation, self-determination and inner-directedness, as well as better self-acceptance, self-esteem, and confidence.

Foulds (1970) discusses the importance of growth groups as part of a growth centre for college students in that they foster increased levels of self-actualisation and human effectiveness through providing educative and developmental experiences. He emphasises that these groups cater for the relatively healthy, normally functioning, growth seeking individual.

McIntire (1973) emphasises that various types of group training have come to play a major role with regard to helping individuals in the areas of life adjustment and re-adjustment in all walks of life. Through his study he confirmed that group participants achieved greater self-actualisation through training and that subjects maintained their increased levels over time.

There seem to be a variety of different ways as to how these groups should be run. Participation including discussions and practical exercises seem to achieve better results than mere lecture type groups. Writing down thoughts and comments which helps subjects to relive experiential moments, on the other hand, have been found to be more effective than a totally experiential, anti-intellectual approach (Burns, 1979).

This combination of approaches introduces the importance of the psycho-educational approach which combines experiential group experience with mini-lectures, verbal persuasion, and structured exercises, an approach also utilised by rational-emotive therapists when they provide articles, books, manuals, audio- and video tapes for clients in conjunction with therapy (Dryden, 1991). Macaskill (1989), in an article on RET, also emphasises the education process which is seen as part of the therapy to enable the client to take on personal responsibility and initiative.

Cooper (1991) used the psycho-educational approach for his study on anxiety, anxiety reduction and self-concept. He highlights, following Schoeman's model of psycho-education, the perspectives of prevention and human development regarding this type of intervention. The importance to teach individuals and groups the skills and strategies to function at an optimal level is discussed and the need for counselling psychologists to place more emphasis on this area of intervention is stressed. Cooper also mentions the aid of psycho-technology such as workbooks and other written hand-outs, audio- and video material, as well as the use of audio- and video taping, mass media input, slides and more.

The psycho-educational trend must be seen in conjunction with the so-called self-help movement, a phenomenon described by various authors and discussed by Parry (1985) in a book review. The difference between self-help and therapy groups has been highlighted

and the fact underlined, that only recently self-help groups have become recognised as a challenging area for research.

The counsellor as teacher is discussed by Martin (1985) in an article on instructional group counselling. Practitioners are urged to analyse the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed for effective living and self-management. Martin even suggests to incorporate life-skills curricula into school timetables. He advocates groups as a suitable vehicle for teaching clients skills and strategies for self-management and self-improvement.

### **3.3 Massed versus Spaced Group Sessions**

There seems to be a common assumption that, although intensive massed or marathon group experience may produce striking changes, these are of a rather transient nature and become extinguished in the back-home setting and through experiences in the real world. It is generally expected that the extended group sessions with short, frequent meetings, the type of sessions characteristic of traditional group psychotherapy, are more efficient (Burns, 1979).

On the other hand however, King, Payne and McIntire's (1973) studied the impact of organisational forms of sensitivity training on the self-concept. They found that the marathon training which lasted 24 hours was more effective than the spaced sessions programme which consisted of weekly three- to four-hour sessions for the duration of a term. In an earlier study, Guinan and Foulds (1970) established that, according to the Personal Orientation Inventory, significant positive changes occurred following a weekend marathon.

With regard to another massed session programme, Stanton (1975) found that the self-insight scores of the experimental group were significantly higher than that of the control group after a weekend encounter group.

Research by Watkins, Noll and Breed (1975) also showed significant gains in positive self-evaluation following massed and partly massed group training, while the distributed

sessions did not generate any significant improvements. In the latter study however, analyses of co-variance established that the various experimental treatments did not significantly differ from one another at either post-test or follow-up level and the authors felt that greater effectiveness of massed sessions could not be confirmed.

Hewitt and Kraft (1972) conducted a laboratory investigation on the effect of a massed encounter group experience. Compared with the control group, the encounter group displayed a better self-concept and the encounter group participants felt that they had improved their ability to relate to others outside the group. An extremely strong increase in mutual liking within the experimental group was also noted. An interesting finding with regard to this study however is, that the encounter group participants were not rated as having improved ability to relate to others by observers; in fact, there was a tendency for control subjects to receive better ratings. This latter point is interesting insofar as this research also investigates any changes in acceptance of others on a post- and follow-up level. Another matter of interest is, that subjects perceived themselves differently from the way observers rated them. This was also mentioned with regard to Tuck's (1984) research discussed in the previous chapter, where the point was raised that a person's own perceptions and feelings about what he has gained from a group experience can differ from so-called objective measures of observation.

Burns (1979) points out that descriptions of participants of massed session programmes seem to focus on the impact and intensity of the prolonged group experience while these type of descriptions seem lacking with the spaced session approach. Burns explains this in terms of the intense group experience providing an especially accepting group atmosphere which is maintained throughout. He adds that "because of fatigue, an individual member usually finds his psychological defenses are weakened and remain weakened throughout the marathon. In a spaced session group, individuals have time between each session to re-establish defenses." (p.238).

The above seems to indicate that, contrary to common assumptions, the massed sessions approach creates better impact. The self-enhancement studies mentioned in chapter 2 however, varied in their use of spaced or massed sessions and results do not indicate a definite pattern of effectiveness with one approach or the other. These findings make it



impossible to formulate predictions with regard to which type of training group, massed or spaced, is expected to be more successful.

### **3.4 Other Aspects of Training Groups**

#### *a) Length of Exposure*

When investigating the effectiveness of various training approaches and designing enhancement programmes, it could be of importance to consider the length of group exposure or intervention as a further aspect of group training which could make a difference regarding the positive impact of training.

In the study by Watkins, Noll and Breed (1975) significant positive changes were evident after the 12-hour and the 20-hour interventions at post-test level, while the four-hour group did not show any significant improvement. An interesting point however is, that one month later all three groups showed significant changes and co-variance analyses revealed that all three experimental treatments did not differ from one another in any significant way. This indicates that brief interventions can be just as effective as longer lasting group experiences. Although the authors caution against generalisations, it could mean that for eventual positive change to take place, all that is needed is a brief, but intense exposure to growth group experience.

Another research comparison however creates doubt with regard to the above point made. Leonard's (1983) study of a six-week self-enhancement programme showed no significant changes, Wurtz's (1983) results following an 18-week enrichment programme did result in significant improvements (see chapter 2). Perhaps the difference in findings could be due to the fact that Wurtz's programme was three times longer than Leonard's.

In considering this aspect of group training, Burns (1979) underlines that advantages of extended group experience have not been demonstrated. He comes to the conclusion that one needs to remember that individuals change at different rates and at different times. It is also interesting to note that some individuals only start improving during the post-

intervention phase once they are back home in a “safer” environment. (Watkins et al., 1975). This would confirm that individuals have different needs with regard to tempo of change and intensity of impact.

### *b) Individual follow-up*

In none of the studies consulted for this research the question of individual follow-up sessions has been dealt with. As another aspect of training approach it was decided to include the difference of assisting the subjects of some of the groups with individual counselling interviews following the group intervention. Due to the lack of data available no specific predictions can be made, but it seems common sense that individual support for participants after the group intervention should be an advantage.

## **3.5 Summary**

The effectiveness of training groups with regard to positive changes in self-concept has been well documented. Besides the content and the way the groups are run, various aspects which influence their effectiveness have been discussed. It has however been difficult to pinpoint the exact ingredients of an effective growth group intervention.

A possible way of concluding why many groups show positive results even in terms of a variety of approaches, is to take note of the way Burns (1979) explains the phenomenon. He states that two reasons must be considered important:

- Most individuals see themselves in a more negative light than outsiders do. As group members openly explore aspects of themselves, many begin to realise that their inadequacies, both real and imagined, are not unique, and that even persons they may admire share many of their ‘hang-ups’” (Burns, 1979, p.239).
- Members learn through the group’s feedback that even with their shortcomings they are acceptable individuals. This supportive feedback is experienced in abundance, an aspect vital for the learning process.

While this research still attempts to establish whether a certain approach resulted in better self-enhancement, it is with certainty that the group approach is accepted as an effective vehicle for self-image enhancement. The training groups for this study contain many of the above discussed aspects and can be summarised the following way:

The maximum number of participants for the self-image enhancement programme never exceeds twelve participants in order to allow for the best possible participation by group members. Each group member receives individual attention from the trainer as well as the group. The programme is defined as topic-related and goal-oriented, with ongoing opportunity for group discussions and exercises for the individual participants. Feedback is provided by the trainer as well as the other group members. In terms of psycho-technical aids, the participants receive a course manual, while during the programme, various audiocassettes, one videotape, and many overhead illustrations on various topics are used.

The following chapter presents the theoretical basis for the process and content of the self-enhancement course.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### ***THE SELF-IMAGE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME***

#### **4.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the theoretical basis for the content and process of the self-image enhancement programme is discussed. The training intervention contains psycho-educational aspects in the form of mini-lectures which are underlined through overhead presentations. Written material is given to the participants at the beginning of the course in the form of a manual. The following topics are presented in the course manual:

- Mental attitude and life views
- Beliefs and thought patterns
- Self-image, self-worth
- Self-acceptance, self-actualisation
- Self and others
- Autosuggestion and mental visualisation
- Goal setting

The most important theories underlying the self-image enhancement programme are the cognitive and rational-emotive therapy approaches (Trower & Dryden, 1989; Dryden 1991), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Schwarzer, 1992), locus of control (Rotter, 1966), as well as the concepts of learned helplessness and learned optimism (Abramson, Seligman & Teasdale, 1978; Seligman, 1993). A short summary of their main points follows in this chapter before the various course topics are presented.

Aspects of motivational and self-actualisation theories (Allport, 1955; Maslow, 1968; Rogers, 1961/1995) also form part of the background to the training course. Mental imagery (Neck & Manz, 1992), autosuggestion techniques (Coué, 1922), psycho-

cybernetics (Maltz, 1960), and goal setting strategies (Brunstein, 1993) add to practical methods people can learn in order to achieve self-improvement. These latter approaches are discussed under the various course headings presented later.

In presenting the theoretical and practical essence of the self-image enhancement programme the following course topics are covered:

1. *Mental attitude and general beliefs*: The importance of attitude is highlighted and the possibility of learning an optimistic life view brought to the fore.
2. *Self-image*: Areas such as self-worth, self-acceptance, self-actualisation, self-knowledge, and self-confidence are dealt with. Cognitive re-structuring of self-beliefs presents the core of the practical self-management approach. Feedback from others in the group is utilised.
3. *Self and others*: The consequences of attitude and self-beliefs with regard to relationships are discussed.
4. *Autosuggestion and visualisation*: These techniques are explained and practised.
5. *Goal setting*: It is emphasised that better self-knowledge leads to improved and clearer prioritising. Through this an individual exercises greater control over his life.

Pen and paper exercises, acting out tasks, talking about oneself in front of the group, group discussions, dealing with certain topics in break-away groups, introspection periods, and structured interpersonal exercises, such as hugging and giving one another compliments, create the dynamics of the course process. Feedback from the trainer as well as other group members also play an important part of the training intervention.

## 4.2 Theories

Various psycho-therapy approaches and theories that revolve around cognitive aspects are important in terms of their influence on the design of the self-image enhancement programme since the area of beliefs and thoughts plays such an important role. They include:

- Rational-emotive therapy according to Ellis (Dryden, 1984)
- Self-efficacy theory as formulated by Bandura (1977)
- Locus of control theory developed by Rotter (1966)
- Seligman's theory of learned helplessness and its reformulation (Abramson, Seligman & Teasdale; 1978)

A brief discussion of these theories follows:

#### **4.2.1 Rational-emotive therapy:**

Cognitive therapies such as rational-emotive therapy, commonly referred to as RET, apply cognitive re-structuring techniques in terms of investigating an individual's irrational beliefs and exploring alternative thought patterns. RET has also been effectively utilised for preventive purposes and many of its methods have been incorporated into self-help books (Corsini, 1984). Because of its emphasis on self-help and self-management, RET approaches have played a vital part in influencing the content of the self-image enhancement programme.

In an interview with Dryden (1991), Albert Ellis, the founder of RET, emphasises the general tendency of human beings to whine, moan, and horrify themselves instead of act. He states that individuals feel upset because of events, but what really upsets them are their beliefs and the way they think about these events. He maintains that individuals must construct their own belief systems. The therapist needs to help clients to redirect exaggerated thinking and to reframe certain situations. According to Ellis, individuals have to learn how to stubbornly refuse to make themselves miserable about anything.

Huber (1989), a rational-emotive therapist states that a person's knowledge is influenced by personal evaluations humans impose on their own perceptions not existent in absolute form. Erroneous conclusions and faulty thinking create states of poor mental health and stress. Epictetus, the Roman philosopher said " Humans are disturbed not by things but the views they take of them" (in Huber, 1989). McLennan (1987), after studying the role of irrational beliefs with regard to self-esteem and depression, confirmed that the belief

system of depression-prone individuals is characterised by negative self-statements and dysphoric affect.

Goldfried, Decenteceo and Weinberg (1974) describe the individual's tendency to label situations in positive or negative ways and emphasise the impact of these labels on emotions and behaviour. They state that "because of the habitual nature of one's expectations or beliefs, it is likely to become as automatic and seemingly involuntary as any over-learned 'set'", (p.248). The need to modify ineffective cognitive sets for approaching various events is highlighted.

Macaskill (1989), in explaining cognitive therapy, states that irrational beliefs related to a person's view of the world, others and himself, are the main determinants of emotional problems and dysfunctional behaviour. As Ellis (1973) does, he also advocates educational and self-help aspects as part of the therapeutic interventions. These take the form of reading assignments, the handing out of a guide to rational living, and the signing of a contract of commitment to change. Homework given to the client between therapy sessions, and the writing down of thoughts, and replacing them in writing with rational self-statements, are part of RET techniques.

RET aims at internalising new rational beliefs by employing cognitive, emotive and behavioural methods of change (Dryden, 1991,b). Imagery methods, verbal repetition of rational statements and cognitive rehearsals of particular situations, as well as practising cognitive improvement for 30 days in order to establish new habits (Dryden, 1984), have also influenced the content of the self-image enhancement programme.

As described in Corsini (1984), Ellis describes resistance to change in terms of the perpetuation of a certain type of thinking. Individuals have formed thought habits and often avoid to work at altering them. According to Ellis people feel more comfortable with the discomfort of a situation than attempting to change. In the self-image enhancement programme participants are cautioned that they will have to move out of a comfort zone if improvement and personal growth are to be achieved.

According to RET, resistance to change has also been explained in terms of cognitive blocks which are reflected through thoughts such as “I can’t”, “It is impossible”, “There is no point”, “It is too difficult”, “it is hopeless”, “I would be a failure” (Macaskill, 1989). The learning of constructive self-talk, which is part of self-instructional training, plays an important role (Dryden, 1984) in the RET approach. The checking of vocabulary and the practice of constructive self-thoughts are also important techniques for the self-image enhancement programme. More on this topic can be found under the section on verbalisations.

The encouragement of risk taking behaviour has been explained as part of the process of confronting discomfort and anxiety (Dryden, 1984). During the self-image enhancement programme participants have the opportunity to engage in such behaviours through various exercises such as completing tasks in front of the group, or citing a contract of commitment publicly (see later).

Cognitive therapists also emphasise the client’s active position as a responsible party who is able to make choices and does not need to blame others for his situation. The client is encouraged to ask daily if he has done everything possible to further his psychological and interpersonal growth (Macaskill, 1989). These approaches are taken into the self-image enhancement programme, as will be seen later, since the aspects of personal control and self-management are central for improved functioning.

#### **4.2.2 Self-efficacy theory:**

It has been highlighted that “the development of self-confidence should be associated with an awareness or concern about self-efficacy” (Owens, 1993, p. 290). Bandura’s (1980) self-efficacy theory also emphasises cognitive mechanisms as the basis to a person’s emotions and behaviour. According to Bandura, individuals primarily respond to their own cognitive representations of the environment rather than the environment *per se*. He highlights that an individual’s efficacy judgements influence further thought patterns and emotional reactions. It is the thought component that accounts for much of human distress, especially if a person exaggerates the severity of a threat, dwells on personal, real



or imagined, deficiencies, and worries about problems that hardly ever materialise (Bandura, 1982).

Self-efficacy beliefs have been defined as one of the best predictors of effort, exertion, persistence and degree of coping (Skinner, 1972). High self-efficacy has been equated with positive personal beliefs and is seen as providing individuals with a better capacity to resist and cope with stress. It is reflected through selective cognitive processes. In relation to this Schwarzer (1992) emphasises the importance and consequences of thought control. In terms of self-efficacy expectations he speaks of so-called “can-do” cognitions which are linked to self-confidence. He underlines that self-efficacy is not equivalent with unrealistic optimism and illusions, but includes a realistic self-appraisal and skills improvement where necessary.

While actual capabilities and the development or improvement of skills play an important role, individuals' beliefs regarding their own effectiveness and success or failure expectations influence the choice of behavioural situations. Low efficacy which also leads to avoidance of risk situations brings about a further lack of possible success experiences (Bandura, 1977). Although it cannot be overlooked that self-efficacy and expectancy must also be considered in terms of situation specific aspects, a general positive self-efficacy is important. Cognitions that emphasise positive aspects of the self and avoid an over-critical attitude towards the self form the core of self-efficacy thinking according to the self-image enhancement programme.

Schwarzer (1992) maintains that a personal sense of control is vital for action taking and problem solving. He sees the change of self-beliefs as an efficacy activating process with affective and motivational components. In terms of cognitive re-structuring he defines self-efficacy as a self-persuasion process.

Self-efficacy can be improved through various ways. The most effective one is the personal experience of performance accomplishment, another the observation of others succeeding, and a third one is verbal persuasion (Bandura & Adams, 1977). Through various exercises during the self-image enhancement programme, opportunities are created for the participants to test their abilities and courage in facing certain anxiety provoking

situations. Experiencing success and positive affect with regard to, for instance, talking in front of a group, hugging a near stranger, reciting a contract of commitment publicly (see later), allows the person to extend previously held efficacy beliefs. Verbal persuasion takes place in terms of the lectures presented on the course, but also through feedback and encouragement provided for the individual participants by other group members.

The aspect of personal control mentioned above brings one to Rotter's (1966) theory of internal versus external control.

#### **4.2.3 Locus of control theory**

The belief of an individual that an event is contingent upon his own behaviour or his relatively permanent characteristics, is termed internal control. On the other hand, the perception of an event as dependent on luck, fate, or the control of powerful others is defined as external control (Rotter, 1966). Individuals who believe they have some control over their reinforcements and believe they "can", are called internals. Externals, on the other hand, believe that their lives are controlled by others or by chance, do not believe that they "can", and generally display a negative expectancy for success (MacDonald, 1971).

The degree of perceived personal control over one's life has great influence on affect, behaviour and new learning (Rotter, 1966). While Rotter points out that individuals on either extreme of the internal-external scale are most likely to be unrealistic and maladjustive, a tendency to be more internally controlled indicates better coping and greater well being. Orpen (1994) found internal locus of control and high self-esteem important factors in moderating the impact of job insecurity, and Abouserie (1994) established that students with predominantly external control beliefs were more stressed than those with internal locus of control.

In line with the other theories discussed in this section, the cognitive components, expectancy thoughts, and personal control aspects of Rotter's locus of control theory contribute greatly to the design and content of the self-image enhancement programme.

#### **4.2.4 Learned helplessness and learned optimism**

The final theoretical background that plays a great part with regard to the self-image enhancement programme are Seligman's (Abramson, Seligman & Teasdale, 1978; Seligman, 1993) re-formulation of the theory of learned helplessness and his latest concept of learned optimism.

The theory of learned helplessness was formulated by Seligman (1993) in response to findings regarding the development of depression. It explained depression as the reaction to events where the individual experienced a lack of control over certain outcomes. Later laboratory experiments showed that not all subjects who had no control over a situation developed depression and Abramson, Seligman and Teasdale (1978) reformulated the theory by adding the aspect of attributional style. This means that individuals, after realising they have no control over a situation, or after experiencing a failure, employ certain explanations regarding the outcome; they attribute their helplessness to a cause. Whether future helplessness will be acute or chronic depends on whether an individual considers the cause to be stable or unstable, global or specific, internal or external. In this context, attributions are in essence cognitive structures.

Abramson, Seligman and Teasdale (1978) argue that people who typically tend to attribute failure to global, stable, and internal factors should be most prone to general and chronic helplessness depressions with low self-esteem. For improvement and prevention, one of the methods suggested is the possibility of changing the expectation from uncontrollability to controllability, and to train the appropriate skills needed for these responses. This also ties in with strategies for improving self-efficacy and locus of control.

The importance of attributions in the case of failure has been highlighted as influencing further developments of the self-esteem by Brockner and Guare (1983). Crittenden and Wiley (1985) also place great emphasis on the interpretation of the experience of success and failure. They highlight that a so-called ego-defensive, self-serving pattern helps to preserve self-esteem. "Greater 'future productivity' and 'professional maturity' are linked

to attributions that emphasise external factors for failure and internal factors for success” (p. 364).

In one of his most recent writings, Seligman (1993) added the importance of optimism in terms of well-being. He states that the key to whether an individual is prone to develop depression or not lies in the difference between an optimistic or pessimistic world view. Whether an individual has developed a habitually positive or negative way of looking at life and circumstances has far reaching consequences. Seligman stresses that optimists are usually better performers, seem to have better chances and opportunities in life, and are generally healthier.

Seligman (1993) describes depression as an extreme form of pessimism and defines learned optimism as a changed way of thinking that helps the individual to utilise his best self. To think optimistically, he argues, provides the individual with a permanent tool that can help him to prevent depression and adds to the stability of his health. He sees cognitive therapy as a way of stopping the worry habit and creating optimistic, action oriented views. An improved self is not merely a fantasy, according to Seligman, and personal control starts with the control of one's thinking.

### **4.3 Course topics**

The presentation of the course material follows the sequence they are presented with on the course and in the course manual. The presentation of the theoretical background to a relevant course topic, is followed by a brief discussion of practical implications for the course content and process. The implementation of theoretical aspects in the form of various tasks and exercises, however, are discussed in terms of their relevance to a certain topic, but do not follow a chronological order. Some exercises are mentioned under more than one course topic, if they serve to illustrate various points relating to more than one topic.

The following discussions are based on the three-day programme. The 12-sessions programme follows the same content, although the timing of various sections had to be adjusted according to the spacing of sessions.

#### **4.3.1 Mental Attitude and Beliefs**

“It is our beliefs, rational or irrational, that determine our reactions to external events and ultimately the quality of our life experiences” (Manz, 1992, p. 72).

##### *a) Theoretical background*

The area of mental attitude and belief structures can be seen as the starting point for this self-image enhancement programme. The theories discussed above, that form the basis for the self-image enhancement programme, all centre around cognitions and their effect on emotions and behaviour.

The thought patterns which form a person's attitude towards life in general, as well as certain events, refer to those one has developed since birth. One's life experiences and feedback from significant others help in shaping one's attitude and beliefs. As mentioned before, a habitually positive or negative way of looking at life and circumstances has far reaching consequences. Frankl (1970) states that individuals project their own meaning into situations and things, and therefore the human being approaches reality in a subjective manner. He stresses the need for a life-affirming “Weltanschauung”.

Rokeach (1969) defines attitude the following way: “An attitude is a relatively enduring organisation of beliefs around an object or situation predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner”(p.112). Beliefs which according to Rokeach make up attitudes, have cognitive, affective and behavioural components. They always have an evaluative character and lead to a predisposition to respond in a preferred manner.

It is understandable that attitudes and beliefs can create strong bias and that they are quite resistant to change since they deal with fundamental thoughts and feelings individuals

have. Rokeach (1969) states that "...an attitude is a prejudgement; it may be selective and biased, it may support the status quo, it may arouse affect when challenged, and it may resist change in the face of new evidence"(p.131). He explains that the most central beliefs are most resistant to change. This is usually the case with regard to self-image beliefs (see later) and beliefs that are connected with other beliefs. In the case of changing such a belief the implications and consequences are widespread.

As became clear from the discussion of the above theoretical background to the self-image enhancement programme, beliefs and attitudes play an important role in influencing the expectations and perceptions a person will have with regard to various situations in life. They determine much of one's behaviour because people tend to behave in ways consistent with what they believe (Hamachek, 1971). Hamachek also points to the difficulty of changing beliefs, especially where strong prejudices have developed. He calls fixed beliefs "permanent props in one's personality structure" (p. 41). This reminds one of the resistance to change aspects presented in chapter 2.

The cognitive structure of beliefs and their affective components have been emphasised by Rosenberg (1956). He states, "when a person has a relatively stable tendency to respond to a given object with either positive or negative affect, such a tendency is accompanied by a cognitive structure" (p.367).

As was discussed earlier, rational-emotive therapy, self-efficacy theory, locus of control theory, and learned optimism all revolve around the belief structures underlying human emotions and behaviour. To improve the self-concept one must start by changing one's attitude and investigating specific beliefs as to their effectiveness in allowing the person to fulfil his potential and function at his best.

More about belief components is found under the section of "self-image" further on in this chapter.

### *b) Practical implementation*

In the light of the above, it becomes a great challenge for the training facilitator, to change, or at least to get the participant to think about and re-evaluate, certain attitudes

and beliefs through the group intervention and the material presented. As can be seen from the above, a great amount of resistance must be expected. The most effective ways, based on previous group experience are the following:

\* The poem:

The playing out of certain exercises highlights participants' current attitudes and beliefs. One of the most potent exercises to this end is the learning of a long poem (see appendix 2) and the task of reciting it in front of the group. Many feelings and thought patterns are discussed after the exercise; attitudes and beliefs which had developed since school days, or even before, are explored and dealt with; participants are confronted with their long held beliefs in terms of their impact on feelings and performance. The importance of the influence of others is discussed, the strong need to conform to the group, a desire not to look foolish or embarrass oneself, and how these aspects impact on behaviour is dealt with.

\* Specific beliefs:



Beliefs regarding certain topics, such as time, relationships, marriage, success, money, health, career, ageing, happiness, leisure, hobbies and more, are explored. Each participant writes down what comes to mind regarding the various topics, and in a group discussion these beliefs are worked through. The group examines the various beliefs as to whether they are “positive”, in that they help the individual to be happy, successful and fulfilled, or whether one deals with a “negative” belief which hurts the person, reducing well-being and relationships, preventing the person to function at an optimal level.

Negative beliefs are reformulated into positive ones and as such, provide a blueprint for healthier beliefs (these can be utilised through autosuggestion which will be discussed later). As can be seen from the above theoretical discussion on beliefs, many beliefs will take a long time to change if they change at all. It is however of importance that the participants' negative beliefs have been challenged, or some small amount of change started. At worst the individual has received some food for thought. One must keep in

mind, that in many cases, improvement only starts taking place in the back-home situation (see chapter 3).

**\* Mini-lecture:**

Through mini-lectures and anecdotes the importance of a positive life view is presented. The impact of attitude and beliefs on behaviour and emotions is discussed. The importance of taking control of one's thoughts, and of checking one's beliefs is highlighted.

### **4.3.2 Self-Image**

This is the central topic of the self-image enhancement programme and commands most of the course time. Since it is based on the mental attitude and various beliefs an individual holds, the preceding discussion of the various theories and the topic of mental attitude and beliefs in general, forms the basis for the work around self-image.

#### **1) Thoughts and perceptions**

##### *a) Theoretical background*

Following various definitions of self-image (see chapter 1) one can conceptualise it as a special type of attitude, namely the attitude about the self and the beliefs connected to such. As Wideman and Clarke (1987) point out, "the self-image is part of a larger personally held belief system" (p.25). Raath (1987) also underlines the fact, that the self-concept of a person develops and operates from within the framework of a life and world view.

The importance of attitudes towards the self and others has been emphasised in the areas of human motivation, performance and training (Axelrod, 1989; Stickney, 1990). Without repeating various definitions already presented earlier in this dissertation, here the focus is placed on the belief aspects of the self-image or self-concept and how they impact on



affect, behaviour and personal achievement. Perceived competence is based on the beliefs a person has about his ability to complete a task successfully (Marshall, 1989).

Most writers emphasise the fact that the self-concept is a repertoire of beliefs about oneself, and that one behaves in ways consistent with those beliefs (Alder, 1992; Bergen, 1989; Brockner, Wiesenfeld & Raskas, 1993; Critelli, 1987; Hamachek, 1971; Jourard, 1974; Tice, 1993; Wideman & Clarke, 1987). Burns (1982) also highlights the cognitive component of the self-concept and points out that these self-beliefs can be either true or false, based on objective evidence or merely on subjective opinion. This subjectivity is especially important with regard to the self-esteem which is seen as particularly associated with affective states (Coopersmith, 1968).

According to Rokeach (1969), self-beliefs are the most central beliefs with widespread repercussions. Both ego-enhancing, as well as ego-deflating beliefs tend to maintain themselves and are therefore so difficult to change. This view is shared by Wideman and Clarke (1987), who emphasise that an adult who perceives himself to be a loser will find it difficult to change this belief, even if there is evidence to the contrary. These arguments are in line with the consistency theories discussed in chapter 2.

Since the self-concept determines what an individual expects to happen in various situations, and consequently how one behaves and performs (Burns, 1982), the so-called self-fulfilling prophecy or Pygmalion effect is an important phenomenon. Many writers have referred to it and discussed the "circular process" that develops (Alder, 1992; Critelli, 1987; Hamachek, 1971; Newman & Newman, 1980).

Dryden (1984), in applying rational-emotive and cognitive therapy, also discusses the self-fulfilling prophecy as a way of perpetuating disturbances. An individual tends to act according to his own predictions or elicits actions from others which serve as confirmational evidence of the original belief. These negative predictions and their confirmation through selective perception, as well as behaviour that actually elicits those negative outcomes, are also discussed by Trower and Dryden (1989) who see the self-fulfilling prophecy as an important factor in resistance to change.

While believing that one is incapable of doing something, or that one is for instance fearful, anxious or shy, the person tends to reinforce fearful, anxious or shy behaviour with corresponding results. This way he carries on maintaining a low self-esteem (Brockner et al., 1993; Wideman & Clarke, 1987). Low self-esteem persons expect to fail and their failure feedback is consistent with their cognitive structures and expectations (Tice, 1993). Jourard (1974) describes the prescriptive tendencies of the self-concept, referring to a process he calls self-labelling.

Bandura's (1983) theory of self-efficacy is applicable here in terms of self-referent thought. Individuals choose certain behaviours, and expend a certain amount of effort on a task, depending on their self-percepts of efficacy. It has been maintained that behaviours and decisions may have little to do with actual skills and resources. Thoughts and behaviour are linked far more closely to our own perceptions of a situation and our perceived competence to control processes and outcomes (Krueger & Dickson, 1994).

Mager (1992) emphasises that self-efficacy beliefs must not be underestimated since people who believe in their capabilities think, feel, and behave differently from those who harbour self-doubts. This of course also influences risk taking behaviour and personal motivation, highlighted in an article by Krueger and Dickson (1994). Mager also stresses the facilitative thought patterns of high self-esteem individuals and the positive self-talk they engage in. Brockner and Guare (1983) discuss the causal attributions of low self-esteem individuals and how they tend to minimise their successes. As was mentioned earlier, Crittenden and Wiley (1985) also stress attributional style in terms of a person's reaction to success and failure and that a so-called egotistical style helps to preserve the self-esteem. Individuals who choose internal attributions in the face of successes, but external attributions when confronted with failure, tend to maintain and develop a more positive self-presentation.

Bandura (1983) highlights the need for cognitive control and the removal of aversive cognitive and affective states in order to achieve personal empowerment. In studying self-actualisation and cognitive processes, Wexler (1974) underlines the importance of understanding self-actualisation in terms of differences in cognitive functioning. The

importance of thoughts and feelings with regard to self-esteem changes has been emphasised in a research by Anderson and Williams (1985). Recollection of positive feelings created positive impact on the subjects' self-esteem.

Kehoe (1993), a writer of motivational books and well-known speaker on the subject of self-image, states that one becomes what one consistently thinks about and stresses the importance of confident thoughts. Baumeister (1993) formulates the issue of self-perpetuating patterns this way: "Poor self-regulation strategies deprive one of chances for successful experiences that might have raised self-esteem....people with low self-esteem may skip some undertakings that might have brought them important success experiences" (p.207). Critelli (1987) also stresses how low self-esteem individuals pursue cognitive strategies that maintain their low esteem, such as dismissing actual successes and compliments of others. This process has been referred to as self-handicapping (Tice, 1993).

As a further illustration of the self-fulfilling prophecy, Hamachek (1971) explains the fact that an individual projects his expectations into his behaviour, perpetuating his particular type of self-image. A negative self-image becomes reinforced because the negative responses usually lead to further negative experience or performance. This in turn leads to even more "negative evidence" that supports an already negative self-image. Hamachek formulates the dilemma in a precise manner when he says, "The very process of *beginning* with a negative attitude usually guarantees that it will be projected in behaviour in such a way as to 'bring back' to the person evidence that he really cannot do what he thought he couldn't do in the first place" (p.42). The importance of attitude in terms of self-image improvement has been highlighted by Critelli (1987) when he says that it is possible to change the self-image by changing one's attitude.

It is interesting to note that, as Hamachek (1971) explains, the boomerang effect of a self-fulfilling prophecy can work in the other direction too. To start with a positive attitude can lead to the accumulation of positive evidence, therefore enabling the person to develop and maintain a more favourable self-image. This is the most important perspective in terms of the self-image enhancement programme, which aims at helping participants to become

aware of negative self-perceptions and their consequences, and to kick into motion positive self-beliefs that will sustain and nurture themselves.

In this context, Brockner et al. (1993) argue that within the organisational setting, managers should take advantage of the fact that people behave in accordance with what is expected of them, and that managers should therefore communicate high expectations to their staff in order to elicit better performance. Harter sees self-esteem and feelings of competence related to a sense of personal control (in Marshall, 1989).

It is interesting to note that the aspect of personal control has been discussed by Rotter (1966) in terms of internal versus external locus of control. Here too the term expectancy, in the form of self-thoughts, plays a central role. Rotter has found that there are significant differences between individuals in how they perceive the same situation. Individuals who are predominantly internally oriented seem to be more pro-active, accept greater personal responsibility and therefore have better control over their environment (Gerdes, Moore, Ochse & Van Ede, 1988).

Wallace, Cunningham and Del Monte (1984) also emphasise the link between self-concept and locus of control, and established a significant relationship between positive self-esteem, acceptance of responsibility for success or failure, and internality. By changing an individual's perceptions regarding the amount of control he can exercise, the person could become more empowered and self-confident. Within this context however it is also important to remember that in addition, practical skills training or specific problem solutions might also be required.

In concluding this section, Frankl's (1970) view of the individual as being capable to choose his attitude towards himself and to have the freedom to shape his own character, needs to be considered as an important influence with regard to the self-image programme. He refers to the "capacity to take such a stand is what makes us human beings" (p.17). Freedom of choice and the necessity for personal responsibility are also highlighted by Jourard (1974) who says, "Under most circumstances of life, humans have the freedom to choose how they will be and how they will act"(p. 153).

*b) Practical implementation*

As was the case with the aspects of mental attitude and general beliefs, self-beliefs and self-perceptions are explored through various exercises:

\* The learning of the poem and the recital thereof

As part of the above mentioned exercise (see mental attitude), each person's feelings towards and about the task, as well as the individual's perceptions regarding his abilities are also discussed. Long held beliefs of what each person can expect of himself, or what can be expected from the entire group, are points of discussion. The importance of previous experiences, very often school incidents, and how these have influenced present day behaviour and performance is highlighted. The self-fulfilling prophecy and its limiting effect on performance and personal improvement is discussed. Certain long nurtured, restricting self-beliefs are uncovered and their irrationality or, in many cases, their present redundancy is highlighted.

A special point to notice is the way participants feel about having to "expose themselves" with a task which is truly difficult to perform. The sensitivity about what other people think of one's performance comes to the fore, as well as the whole question of conforming with the group. The questions of self-esteem and self-confidence, and the willingness to expose oneself, to open up, are also dealt with.

\* Lecture on self-image / audio tape

Overhead transparencies and notes on the formation and maintenance of self-image are presented to the group. The importance of significant others, self-labelling and labelling by others, as well as the role and importance of peer pressure, are topics dealt with. The issues of personal control and self-management with aspects such as self-efficacy and locus of control are discussed.

\* Audio tape:

A tape by Bobbie Gee (1986), an American speaker and image consultant, follows the mini-lecture. She deals with the topic of self-image, its formation and perpetuation, as well as the role of media influence and the influence of others on self-evaluations.

## 2) Verbalisations and self-talk

Verbalisations and self-talk reflect thoughts, beliefs and perceptions. The circular process between thoughts and words needs to be taken into account. Although, as has just been said, they reflect the person's cognitions and perceptions, they also serve to maintain or reinforce those very thoughts. One way of becoming aware of one's cognitions is to become sensitive to one's verbalisations and self-talk. Learning the habit of controlling one's vocabulary is therefore one of the possibilities of changing one's thinking.

### a) *Theoretical background*

Many self-image writers place great emphasis on the importance of mental as well as actual verbalisations and self-talk. As was stated before, successful people have been noted to engage in positive self-talk (Mager, 1992). Wideman and Clarke (1987) maintain that the self-image manifests itself through language and that self-talk contributes to the ongoing creation of the self-image. As discussed before, this can be the maintenance and nurturance of a positive or negative picture. The verbalisations reinforce whatever perceptions the person has of himself. "What people say about themselves to themselves can be debilitating and imprisoning or enabling and affirming" (p.26).

Hamachek (1971) has also emphasised the debilitating effects of self-defeating attitudes and restrictive self-beliefs that find expression through either actual or internal verbalisations. In terms of the expression of negative self-thoughts, the consequences of perpetuating a negative self-image are spelt out clearly. Marshall (1989), in her self-concept work with children, has found that spontaneous statements such as "I can't", "I am", "I can" provide a great deal of information about the child's self-evaluations.

Felker (1974) points out that self-talk is particularly powerful since it is the turning inward of self-attitudes which leads to strong emotions. He states that self-directed attitudes cannot be avoided and are not as easily dealt with through the use of usual defense mechanisms. He speaks of a dilemma since one cannot run away from oneself. Felker also sees language as the central factor in the development of the self-concept and refers to self-talk as internal language.

Ellis, in his interview with Dryden (1991), maintains that one's thoughts influence one's language and that it is important to change people's language. As was discussed earlier, practising constructive thinking and self-talk is an important RET technique. The primary goal is to help the client modify unrealistic internal sentences. Through self-talk the individual re-indoctrinates himself until these cognitions become part of the person's life perspectives (Goldfried, Decenteceo & Weinberg; 1974).

The emphasis on self-talk can also be seen in Seligman's (1993) writings where he highlights the impact of negative self-statements as linked to worry patterns. The greatest harm is caused by explanations the individual forms that are permanent, global and personal, and usually lead to negative expectations. He views these patterns as crucial in the development of depression. Cognitive changes, he argues, provide the individual with positive input for constructive self-talk after failure, or serve as preventive measures against depressions and psychological ill-health.

The impact of self-verbalisations on behaviour and emotions has been demonstrated in a number of studies. Neck and Manz (1992) report many examples of positive results of self-verbalisations in various areas of human achievement. In a research project by Harrell, Chambless and Calhoun (1981), rational and irrational self-statements were specifically related to corresponding affective states in a non-clinical population. Hannum (1972) investigated the modification of evaluative self-thoughts and their effect on overt behaviour. Although his findings were inconclusive due to methodological difficulties, the experimental subjects reported a significant increase in positive self-thought with corresponding results on the self-esteem measure and daily report questionnaires. Anecdotal evidence indicated that the subjects felt happier and more relaxed.

Manz (1992) in his book on self-leadership, emphasises the importance of learning how to speak to oneself constructively, pointing out the need for self-reward. Rewarding the self particularly with verbal rewards, and improving self-labels and self-descriptions are points also raised by Felker (1974). These latter approaches help the individual to build on successes, even if they are small, rather than focusing on potential problems and real or imagined shortcomings.

The strategy offered by Critelli (1987) is to develop an awareness of one's self-thoughts and to challenge the evidence, as well as one's assumptions and conclusions in the face of negative self-talk. In the same vein, Seligman (1993) suggests that the individual must learn to mentally argue with himself in terms of exploring evidence regarding the negative self-thought. He suggests to look for alternative reasons why something happened or felt a certain way, establishing the "real" implications, and investigating gains one has from thinking and verbalising in a particular way.

*b) Practical implementation*



Although emphasis is placed on the participants' thoughts throughout the various course exercises, one particular course rule highlights the importance of self-talk:

\* "No-no words":

In order to create a special sensitivity to negative verbalisations and self-talk, the course participants are prohibited from using certain words and phrases for the duration of the entire programme. These words are listed below with a short explanation (in brackets) of the rationale behind the prohibition of the particular word as it was discussed in the group:

**can't** (reinforces the feeling of inadequacy and/or an actual or imagined inability)

**try** (instead of "will" which would imply decision and commitment)

**if** (in the sense of "if I was better looking", "if I was more intelligent", etc.)

**impossible** (things become impossible as soon as we perceive and accept them as impossible)



This exercise does sometimes feel arbitrary since there is a rightful place for these words in the vocabulary. For the sake of increasing participants' awareness of their self-talk however, this rule is maintained throughout. It exposes many thoughts people habitually have without realising them while also creating a lot of fun in the group when group members start to "catch one another out". For breaking this rule, a fine gets paid into a money box (this collection is used as tips for the tea staff who look after the training group): 50c on the first day, R1 on the second day, and R2 on the third.

The no-no words usually come to the fore when participants explain why they have difficulty in completing a task such as the reciting of the poem, or at those times of the intervention where they speak about themselves in terms of who they are, what their beliefs are, what their shortcomings are, how they relate to others, and which goals they need to or want to achieve.

\* Lecture on the importance of verbalisations and self-talk:

Overhead slides and information about the topic are presented and various discussions encouraged.

### **3) The importance of self-knowledge and self-acceptance**

To get to know oneself better and to achieve self-acceptance in spite of shortcomings, is one of the most important goals of the self-image enhancement programme. Self-knowledge is therefore a vital prerequisite for self-acceptance, but besides that it also helps the individual with personal goal setting and with regard to dealings with others. The two latter topics will be discussed later.

#### *a) Theoretical background*

The meaning and importance of the self-concept have changed over the years depending on the prevailing views of the society at large. Before Fromm's (1939) writings it was condemned to place any emphasis on a positive self. Fromm (1957/1980) speaks of Western culture as having been pervaded by a taboo on "selfishness". He discusses the

influence of ideologies and philosophies that influenced the way people feel about self-love.

While self-love had been branded as selfish and bad, Fromm (1939) brought the necessity of self-acceptance and self-respect to the fore. He emphasised the importance of self-love as a prerequisite to be able to love others and redefined selfishness as necessary self-regard. Fromm (1949/1982), stresses that modern society fails in that it is not concerned enough with self-interest.

Allport (1955) also points out, that although represented in the philosophy literature, the self as a psychological concept had historically been objected to. Although Fromm (1939) had advocated the importance of the self many years before, a change only started to take place during the early fifties. According to Allport's words, psychologists have, "as if to make up for lost time, now employed ancillary concepts such as self-image, self-actualisation, self-affirmation, phenomenal ego, ego-involvement, and ego-striving" (p.37).

Emphasis began to be placed on the self-image of an individual, but a positive self-image and true self-acceptance were still considered with suspicion for decades. To put one's self-interest first was considered selfish and frowned upon, while self-acceptance was confused with egotism. Maslow (1954/1994) maintains that our culture has to be blamed for many guilt feelings and anxieties that are in the way of self-acceptance.

Seligman (1993) in more recent writings, emphasises that our culture of today has virtually swung around to the other extreme and given the self a particularly powerful position. Today, according to Seligman, the self is accepted as playing a vital role in the economics of society and it has been given the power to change itself and its thoughts. He highlights that this is the age of personal control and that helplessness is no longer in vogue, but the move towards greater self-acceptance has gained momentum instead.

Even though Seligman (1993) highlights how society has changed its view of self-acceptance, there is still widespread self-doubt and lack of positive self-regard, as has been illustrated through various researchers' reports presented earlier in this dissertation. One

must assume that it will take a long time to overcome societal views that have despised self-love for centuries and mistaken it for selfishness and sin (Fromm, 1939).

Various writers have emphasised the need for self-acceptance and self-love (Allport, 1970; Critelli, 1987; Fromm, 1980, 1982; Maslow, 1954/1994; Rogers, 1961/1995). Rogers (1961/1965) maintains that the central question for a human being is to find himself and to fulfil his real self. For healthy functioning to take place, positive self-acceptance is vital. It is also required for an individual to fulfil his potential.

Fromm (1939) in spelling out various doctrines and philosophies, highlights the difference between selfishness and self-love. A great amount of misunderstanding and confusion regarding this subject has been the order of the day. According to him it is due to misconceptions that individuals have learned to feel guilty with regard to self-love. Fromm stresses that selfishness and self-love are actually opposites and defines selfishness as greediness that in fact reflects a low self-esteem since the person overcompensates for a lack of self-love.

The rational emotive therapy approach also highlights the difference between self-interest and selfishness. The latter indicates a disregard for the goals and purposes of others. On the other hand, the process of self-damnation or self-downing, reflected through rating the self as bad, is seen as the cause of many emotional disturbances. Self-interest, self-direction and self-acceptance are seen as part of the corner stones of mental health (Dryden; 1984, 1991).

Fromm (1939) explains that self-dislike, which through the ages has developed as a common occurrence, is concealed in various ways. Signs of self-dislike are inferiority feelings and self-criticism. Fromm also points out that being harsh with oneself, being one's own slave driver, not allowing oneself any enjoyment, or having a bad conscience when one does, are all signs of a lack of self-love.

Allport (1970) considers self-acceptance as a sign of personal maturity. Self-acceptance and positive self-respect are considered the core of a self-concept which forms the basis of psychological health (Vrey, 1974, p.89). Eckleben (1983) explains self-respect and self-

acceptance in terms of values individuals attach to certain personal qualities. The formation of these values have of course been influenced by significant others, the peer group, and society at large, and self-acceptance must be seen as embedded in a particular culture. It is interesting to note that social forces usually operate in such a way as to keep self-esteem low. Many shortcomings are revealed since people compare themselves to others (Baumeister, 1993).

Gerdes et al. (1988) point out that self-acceptance refers to all aspects unique to a particular person. This includes physical aspects, intellectual abilities, talents and aspirations, feelings, values, strengths, weaknesses and more. Gerdes et al. explain that although an individual does not experience the same level of self-acceptance in every area of his characteristics, generally a mature and well functioning person has developed an overall positive feeling of self-acceptance.

Maslow (1968) underlines that “no psychological health is possible unless the essential core of the person is fundamentally accepted, loved and respected by others and by himself” (p. 196). For this end it is important to recognise one’s inner nature. This statement of Maslow highlights the importance of accepting and knowing oneself including one’s weaknesses. This forms an essential part of some of the self-image work done during the self-image enhancement programme.

Maslow (1954/1994) also cautions the reader as not to nurture the illusion that a self-actualising person is perfect. “We learn also about our strengths and limits and extend them by overcoming difficulties, by straining ourselves to the utmost, by meeting challenge and hardship, even by failing” (Maslow, 1968, p. 200). Wholesome self-acceptance means to incorporate and come to terms with “the good, the bad, and the ugly” in oneself (Heatherton & Ambady, 1993, p. 140). Critelli (1987) also points out that an individual must learn to understand his strengths as well as weaknesses. Kehoe (1993) explains that self-love does not mean one is better than another person, but that one nurtures the feeling of “I’m OK as I am” (p.39). This of course is in line with Rogers’, Maslow’s and Allport’s theories of accepting oneself as the person one is. Christian (1978) found that the important difference between high and low self-esteem individuals is the amount of negative, rather than positive self-regard that people experience. This confirms the need to

help course participants to explore and re-formulate their negative self-pictures and self-evaluations.

Positive as well as negative self-evaluations are part of global self-esteem. While the acknowledgement of one's faults and shortcomings is also necessary, it is the experience of self-respect and the feeling of worthiness that have been defined as the basis of high global self-esteem (Owens, 1993). In terms of understanding one's weaknesses and emphasising one's strong points, personal growth is a matter of striving to achieve one's ideal self-image (Jourard, 1974).

Another way to improve the self-concept emphasises the importance of highlighting an individual's successes. Teaching participants to interpret events selectively, to remember them positively, and to modify recall in such a way as to support a favourable self-concept are suggested techniques (Owens, 1993). Fox (1994) also suggests that companies, when training their employees to increase their self-confidence, should encourage self-audits of accomplishments, skills and resources. Keys who developed a teachers' training programme to facilitate the development of positive self-perceptions of students, advocated for teachers to learn to praise themselves and thereafter to teach the children to praise themselves (in Keys, 1981).

Fontes (1991) discusses the same approach in that she advocates a "positive celebration of self" (p. 39) through building on personal as well as environmental strengths. With regard to the latter, she refers to positive personal circumstances and a person's support systems. She highlights, as has been found by the researcher from previous experience, that most people focus on their shortcomings more easily than considering their positive aspects. Fontes maintains that an individual has received feedback about his flaws throughout his life because our culture is generally more tuned into negative aspects and problem identification, rather than into highlighting individual strengths and successes. She emphasises that an individual needs to capitalise on personal strengths. A great deal of emphasis is placed on this in the self-image enhancement programme.

Gardner (1981) emphasises the fear of failure as a powerful obstacle to growth that prevents a person from exploring and experimenting. Baumeister (1993) speaks of

“roadblocks to self-love” (p.205) when he describes how people get stuck at a low level of self-esteem when they are unable to minimise the importance of their weaknesses. As in the case of the above mentioned views, he also emphasises the relative lack of positive beliefs about the self as the core problem of low self-esteem, rather than a focus on one’s bad qualities.

In order to strengthen one’s positive aspects and to deal with one’s shortcomings effectively, the need for sound self-knowledge has been emphasised. Baller and Charles (1968) maintain that a healthy self-attitude requires self-knowledge and self-acceptance. Meyer (1992) speaks of self-insight which leads to a strong feeling of self-identity and self-awareness. Increased self-knowledge has been described as a facilitator of self-esteem development and a contributing factor towards reduction of stress (Haasbroek, 1991).

Low and high self-esteem subjects have also been found to differ in the clarity of self-knowledge by Brockner et al. (1993). The authors discuss the discomfort of having to get to know oneself better and describe how individuals avoid introspection. Based on their findings they maintain that low self-esteem people experience more anxiety in the face of self-focused attention and are therefore more prone to avoiding such endeavours. Setterlund and Niedenthal (1993) also confirm that individuals with low self-esteem display a lack of self-clarity.

Although self-knowledge is so important for self-development, it is not as easily achievable as it would seem. Gardner (1981) has highlighted the fact that human beings have always employed a number of strategies to run away from themselves. He states, “We can keep ourselves so busy, fill our lives with so many diversions, stuff our heads with so much knowledge, involve ourselves with so many people and cover so much ground that we never have time to probe the fearful and wonderful world within. More often than not we don’t want to know ourselves, don’t want to depend on ourselves, don’t want to live with ourselves. By middle of life most of us are accomplished fugitives from ourselves” (p.13).

Maslow (1968) points out that growth is not only about rewards, but includes the experience of pain and risk. He further argues that homeostatic tendencies, such as defense

mechanisms are the opposite of growth tendencies and promote consistency (see chapter 2). Although necessary at times because of their pain-reducing function, these prevent individuals from enhancing themselves.

An interesting point is made by Seligman (1993). He maintains that an optimistic attitude is not always entirely realistic and states that, in fact, pessimistic persons were found to be more realistic. Mitchell (1959) found that, while self-rejectant subjects underestimated themselves, and often exceeded their expected grades, the self-acceptant subjects often overestimated their expected performance. Heatherton and Ambady (1993) speak of the dangers of high self-esteem in that it could lead to overly ambitious goal setting and expectations. A person with high self-esteem, they argue, might become overly confident, persevere at unsolvable tasks, or function poorly under pressure. They stress that one needs to be cautious with regard to positive illusions at extreme levels since they can lead to out-of-control behaviour and may be associated with poor self-regulation and poor reality testing.

Another concern raised with regard to self-acceptance and self-love is the difficulty of differentiating between true and inflated self-esteem. It must be kept in mind that for some individuals a positive self-concept may be compensatory in nature. Extremely high levels of self-esteem are generally an overcompensation for feelings of inadequacies and insecurities (Jervis, 1959). A truly positive self-image does not include these tendencies. The distinction between a good self-image and a pompous one also relates to the difference between self-love and selfishness mentioned earlier. In this light it can be understood that an individual can never have a self-image that is too positive, since a healthy, positive self-image always incorporates one's weaknesses, as well as the consideration of others. An extreme version of a seemingly positive self-concept, on the other hand, always indicates emotional insecurities.

In spite of indications that optimists are sometimes less realistic than pessimists, Seligman (1993) argues that it is more beneficial to develop optimism for an individual's sense of well-being and the strengthening of his coping mechanisms. In the same vein, Baumeister (1993) talks of "positive illusions" (p. 206) as an integral part of mental health and adjustment. At the same time, however, Heatherton and Ambady (1993) maintain that

extreme exaggerations of self-esteem into both directions, positive or negative, might become counterregulatory if they contradict the actual level of competence.

Although it is considered important to help course participants to be realistic with regard to their abilities and potential, the researcher however emphasises, as has been stated elsewhere in previous chapters of this dissertation, that the greater problem is the fact that people generally underestimate themselves. Significant others and society at large have educated individuals to be self-critical rather than self-accepting (Fromm, 1939; Hamachek, 1971). Hamachek summarises the issue at hand when he says “most of us are better than we give ourselves credit for” (p.42). As mentioned before, rational-emotive therapists describe this tendency as self-downing or self-damnation. Although these self-critical attitudes and feelings of inadequacies relate to different culturally defined deficiencies, according to Ellis, they are found all over the world (Dryden, 1991). It is therefore an important task to assist course participants to celebrate their strengths, as Fontes (1991) has formulated it, and at the same time to accept their shortcomings by developing the courage to be imperfect.

#### *b) Practical implications*

##### **\* Standing up:**

For tasks and exercises, as well as the personal introduction of each group member, participants stand up and state their names every time before they address the group. Many group members experience discomfort when they are first confronted with this course rule, but as the programme progresses and the participants receive practice in “publicly” facing the group, their self-confidence increases and they begin to feel more comfortable in voicing their own views. This is often particularly difficult since during the self-image enhancement programme the participants get to speak mostly about themselves and their own feelings and beliefs. As discussed earlier, this self-exposure can be a threatening experience and since high self-esteem individuals open up more easily, this is an important practice for raising self-esteem.



**\* Discussions:**

Discussions of feelings and experiences, as well as exploring behavioural responses to various tasks are tools for improving the participants' self-knowledge. Here again, the learning and reciting of the poem provides much ground work.

**\* Strong versus weak personal points:**

Another self-knowledge task in the self-image enhancement programme focuses on the group members' strengths and weaknesses. Participants list their own characteristics and discuss them within small subgroups of two or three people. A further point of self-exploration covers questions such as "What would I like to change about me?", "What would somebody else like to change about me?" (specific examples of boss, work team, and partner are used).

After the mini-discussions participants come back to the main group and a feedback session takes place. Various points are of importance for all discussions:

1. Are the listed weaknesses really shortcomings or are they perceptions based on what somebody else has told them frequently? Only shortcomings that are defined as such by the individual have "legality". The role of significant others comes to the fore, and course members learn to identify between constructive and non-constructive feedback from others.
2. The relationship between weaknesses and strengths is discussed and the fact highlighted that in many instances weaknesses can actually be strengths and vice versa, but that certain circumstances, or extreme tendencies, tip them over to the other side.
3. Participants explore ways of turning shortcomings into strengths.
4. Each person is encouraged to write a long list of good points, in many cases with the help of the group. It is highlighted that the list of positive points must be longer than the list of weaknesses in order to build on strengths and focus on the positive.

5. The difference between immature selfishness/greediness and self-acceptance/self-love is emphasised.
6. The importance of handling failures in a constructive way is highlighted. Failure as challenge, and as a learning experience, is the focus here. Strategies for dealing with limitations and failures are discussed.

\* “Positive public statements” :

In front of the group each individual gets a turn to stand up and announce something positive about themselves they are really proud of.

\* Topic - self-love and self-knowledge:

In a mini-lecture with overhead slides, self-acceptance is explained as the corner stone of happiness and success and the necessity to know oneself well is highlighted.

\* “Silent period”:

A period of two hours is utilised to experience quiet introspection during which time participants are required to make notes regarding various issues. The task is to look at one’s life up to the present moment and to decide which tasks still need to be accomplished. Participants are to come back to the group and provide a summarised feedback of their thoughts. During the silent period nobody is allowed to speak to anybody else including people outside the group.

The following questions are posed for the silent period:

1. Who am I? Where do I fit in? What kind of person am I? What are my needs, wants and talents?
2. What have been my failures in the past? How have I dealt with them? What do they mean to me today? Which of these past failures are truly redundant and therefore

irrelevant from this day on? Which past failures represent unfinished business? What are my strategies and plans of action for these?

3. What have been my successes, big and small? What can I be proud of and feel good about?
4. Where do I go from here? What would I like to achieve?

After completion of the silent period, the participants each come to the front of the group and relate the material they have collected regarding the above questions. This task takes place towards the end of day two and by this time the participants have had some practice of self-exposure. This exercise however does usually create intensity and many group members also display emotional responses.

For this task the participants stand outside the group and voice their feelings and thoughts publicly, a rather stressful situation for most individuals. Because each person receives a great amount of support, empathy, and understanding from the group this becomes a powerful and positive experience that boosts each group member's self-confidence and self-acceptance.

\* Reciting the "contract with myself":

As "homework" between the second and the last day, participants are asked to learn a "contract of commitment" for self-improvement and self-actualisation (see appendix 3). On the last day they are asked to recite it in front of the group. This task is a symbolic way of illustrating the importance of repetition of affirmations, a topic dealt with under the heading of autosuggestion. It also provides the participant with the opportunity to make a public promise of being committed to self-knowledge and self-improvement. It further gives individuals the opportunity to be better at something than they would generally expect or believe (the panic experienced with the first learning task, the poem referred to earlier, is used as a comparison). Another point illustrated through this exercise is the fact that individuals have to display trust, belief, and confidence in their abilities, that they have to persevere when they get stuck or feel panicky, instead of giving up and turning away from the task. It also highlights that they need not worry about what others think of them or their performance. In a playful way, participants are exposed to a miniature success

experience, since they have as many turns as they need in order to feel satisfied with their accomplishment. How many of their behaviours during this task can be generalised to other tasks in life is also discussed.

The contract recital ties together all the topics of the self-image enhancement programme. Group members have the opportunity to test how their attitude and thinking affects their behaviour and the success followed. The learning of the contract and its recital creates a situation within which individuals practice the application of various self-improvement techniques learned during the programme.

### **4.3.3 Self and Others**

Based on the literature available, a natural link exists between the way an individual feels about himself and the way he relates to others. Self-image enhancement cannot be dealt with in isolation. Significant others play an important role in the formation and maintenance of the self-image, as has been highlighted in this and previous chapters, and self-image is associated with the way one views others.

#### *a) Theoretical background*

In Fromm's (1939) article on selfishness and self-love, the link between self-love and love for others is explored. Fromm states clearly that "the attitude towards others and towards ourselves, far from being contradictory, runs basically parallel...Love for others and love for ourselves are not alternatives"(p.513). An interesting point he raises is that most people are unaware of a basic dislike they have for others and that society has taught its members how one is supposed to feel, namely to like others unless or until they have committed an aggressive act.

Considering this fundamental dislike for others, one must keep in mind that, as Fromm (1939) says, love for others reflects love towards oneself and vice versa. This must then be associated with a generally low level of self-acceptance and self-regard. From this point of view it is therefore vital to better one's own self-acceptance which in turn improves one's

relationships with others. The selfish person is incapable of loving others as well as loving himself (Fromm, 1949/1982).

Allport (1970), in discussing emotional maturity and self-acceptance, highlights the need for compassion and warm relating to others. He pulls these aspects together under the heading “acceptance of self, others, and nature” (p.280). Maslow (1967, 1968) also sees human maturity in an individual who displays self-respect as well as relatedness to others. Burns (1979) expresses it clearly when he says “...those who seem to like and respect themselves are inclined to be positive, at least in their attitudes towards others, and to be generally less critical of those around them” (p.59). Rogers (1961/1995) is well known for supporting the view that an individual who accepts himself will have better interpersonal relations with others, while Jourard (1974) discusses Maslow’s self-actualisation theory as including the importance of self-acceptance as well as acceptance of others.

Self-esteem has been explained as a self-social construct by various authors. Self-other perceptions have been underlined. Key, in identifying various key activities for improving one’s self-esteem, argues that one needs to praise oneself as well as others (in Rees, 1981). Berger (1951) reports that a positive correlation between acceptance of self and acceptance of others has been established and maintains that self-rejection may play an important role with regard to hostility towards groups and other individuals. Rubin (1967) has found that significant increases in self-acceptance also lead to significant decreases in social prejudice after sensitivity training. Rubin argues that one way of changing a person’s ethnic attitudes is to change the attitudes he has towards himself.

How important the link is between self-acceptance and acceptance of others is reflected in Hamachek’s (1971) view of the fact that individuals find excuses why others are superior in the face of their own low self-esteem due to envy and resentment. He is of the opinion that the more an individual is capable of accepting the highest values and qualities in others, the more he will be able to accept these qualities in himself. Gardner (1981) defines the self-renewing individual as the person who has fruitful relationships with others and is capable of accepting and giving love.

Fey (1954) conducted a study that investigated acceptance of self as related to acceptance of others. His hypothesis of significant correlation was confirmed. Stock (1949) and Berger (1951) also found a definite relationship between the way an individual feels about himself and the way he feels about others.

The effects of assertion training on college students have been documented by Workman, Bloland, Grafton and Ketser (1987). They found that the experimental group increased significantly with regard to assertiveness, locus of control, and self-concept. They also came to the conclusion that persons who feel good about themselves tend to display, besides other improvements, better interpersonal actions.

In a study by Mangle (1983) the experimental subjects showed, with significant improvements in the areas of self-acceptance, self-determination and self-motivation, also an increased level of empathic regard. A great deal of emphasis has been placed on the correlation between self-esteem and relationship to others, particularly in the area of empathy and assertiveness (Faul, 1978). In Faul's study, however, no significant difference in empathy was found between the high and low self-esteem groups of students. Although high self-esteem persons view and relate to others in more positive ways, empathic regard does not necessarily occur concurrently. Jervis (1959) also reports that attitude towards others does not always significantly correlate with self-concept. He found that both positive and negative self-concept groups of men actually displayed negative attitudes towards others. Difference in gender might be an important factor and would need to be confirmed through further studies.

Omwake (1954) reports various studies that do indicate an increase in favourable attitude towards others with increased self-acceptance following therapy. Her study also confirmed that a lower opinion of the self correlates with a lower opinion of others, and that a fairly high degree of self-acceptance is necessary to relate to others effectively. Jacobs (1985) found that middle aged managers with a good self-image tend to display friendlier, more courteous behaviour, and are more outgoing than the low self-image group.

It has also been confirmed that people who tend to express negative attitudes towards others are more likely to harbour negative self-attitudes by Jacobs, Berscheid and Walster

(1971). They established that low-esteem individuals appear to like others less and perceive them as more rejecting than do high-esteem individuals. This could be linked with negative expectations which are, as discussed before, rather characteristic of low-esteem persons. Goldfried et al. (1974), on the other hand, concluded that depreciation of others makes it easier to tolerate one's own shortcomings and inferior self-concept.

Faul (1978) summarises the relationship between self-image and the way a person feels about others in that she emphasises that high self-respect goes hand in hand with respect for others, and a willingness to open up, since the high self-esteem individual does not feel threatened by the other person.

### *b) Practical implementation*

Within the group context of the self-image enhancement programme there are many occasions of learning to deal with others. While individuals receive the opportunity to complete certain tasks without worrying about what the others in the group think of them, they also receive a great deal of positive feedback and support for their "accomplishments" and the fact that they have the courage to expose themselves to varying degrees.

Because the emphasis is placed on being positive with oneself as well as with others, participants tend to become less critical of themselves and of others. They realise that they are not unique in experiencing certain fears and insecurities, and find that others are also not "perfect", even if they seem to be in total control of their lives.

#### **\* Mini-lecture:**

The link between self-image and relationship with others is highlighted. Overhead slides are used to illustrate the transactional positions of "I'm OK - you're OK" (Harris, 1973).

**\* Video:**

A video presenting the well-known speech of Leo Buscaglia, an Italian-American professor of education, is used to highlight important points for dealing with others. This talk is always well received and creates intensity in the group.

**\*Hugs:**

Towards the end of day two, after the completion of the silent period and its feedback, the participants are asked to get up and give everybody in the group a hug. This is based on Buscaglia's (1983) advice of hugging others - literally as well as figuratively. These hugs are to be understood in the same light as the strokes the transactional analysts have conceptualised (Harris, 1973). Although some participants find this exercise frightening or threatening, this task warms up the group tremendously and interaction becomes lively. Various difficulties people experience with this sort of interaction are discussed.

**\* Compliments:**

Another exercise that allows individuals to provide others with positive strokes, are the giving and receiving of compliments. This wraps up both self-acceptance as well as positive regard for others. It presents participants with the challenge of accepting compliments without feelings of shame or unease, and to display the courage and sensitivity to observe as well as voice positive aspects of others. This exercise also heightens people's awareness of other people's positive points.

#### **4.3.4 Autosuggestion - visualisation**

The introduction to autosuggestion and the use of visualisation and mental imagery provide the course participant with practical self-help steps. While the majority of course time is spent to assist participants to get to know themselves better, to achieve a more positive self-image, to learn about the importance of one's thoughts, and the concepts of



self-control and cognitive re-structuring, this section is intended to present the group member with specific actions he can attend to in the back-home environment. These techniques should also serve to reinforce what has been learned after the intervention has ended. As can be seen, all the material on autosuggestion and visualisation relates to the topics of beliefs, thoughts, and verbalisations discussed earlier in this chapter.

*a) Theoretical background:*

The earliest writings about conscious autosuggestion were presented by Coué (1922), a French physician and therapist. He defines autosuggestion as “the influence of the imagination upon the moral and physical being of mankind” (p.15). He further explains it as the implanting of an idea in one’s mind by oneself. While every person uses autosuggestion throughout their lives without realising it, it is the conscious process of autosuggestion that Coué maintains, needs to be learned in order to control one’s imagination. He sees this as necessary since the imagination usually wins over the will, a situation illustrated through the way a person thinks “I want to, but I cannot”, imagining the difficulties and hurdles in the way.

Coué (1922) summarises the workings of autosuggestion this way: “If you persuade yourself that you can do a certain thing provided this thing is possible, you will do it however difficult it may be. If on the contrary you imagine that you cannot do the simplest thing in the world, it is impossible for you to do it” (p.16). This can easily be understood within the framework of the topics discussed earlier under the sections of thoughts and beliefs, and their impact on behaviour and performance.

Because one unknowingly uses autosuggestion, it often leads to negative or damaging results that have devastating effects on one’s life (Coué, 1922). As an adult one is able to make conscious decisions and start re-programming the mind by being selective in terms of one’s thoughts and vocabulary. The conscious use of autosuggestion means that the individual re-affirms certain positive sentences and visualises positive results. These are aspects that need to be linked to the discussion of mental attitude, beliefs and verbalisations earlier in this chapter.

Brooks (1933) confirms that the individual is clogged with adverse suggestions which have been accumulated since childhood, and says that every disease is either strengthened or weakened by the action of the mind. Coué (1922) emphasises that individuals need to be taught these techniques of autosuggestion. He suggests that vivid imagination of positive end results in a relaxed state of mind, and the nurturing of positive beliefs and faith, need to be practised daily. This aspect of repetition has also been highlighted by Baudouin and Lestchinsky (1924) since actions and thoughts repeated frequently form habits and become “second nature”.

Highlighting the importance of repetition, Coué (1922) formulated the phrase “Every day, in every way, I am getting better and better”. This affirmation is still in use today in various mind technique approaches, such as the Silva Mind Control method (Silva, 1988). Coué gave his patients ropes with 20 knots and instructed them to, daily, hold each knot while saying the above or any other affirmation.

To create a positive emotion while visualising and verbally affirming a desired state or result, it is of importance to indulge in “full-colour” mental images, a tendency that adults have often left behind with their childhood. It seems to be more appropriate for children to daydream and to be intuitive, to play “pretend” (Brooks, 1933). The self-image enhancement programme aims at instilling the importance of adding creativity and imagination to the analytic adult mode of thinking.

Maltz (1960) explains the autosuggestive method in terms of psycho-cybernetics, the control of the mental system through feedback in the form of thoughts, verbalisations, and mental pictures. Maltz speaks of psycho-cybernetics as the way to control cognitive processes through mental feedback. This he defines as a way to intercept the self-fulfilling prophecy. A plastic surgeon by profession, he speaks of it as non-specific therapy that helps to heal the individual. Brooks (1933) states that “even in the most serious organic diseases the element contributed by wrong thought is infinitely greater than that which is purely physical” (p.75).

Brooks (1933) highlights that, the greater the effort or will power to achieve a desired result, the more difficult it is to conquer such. The aspects of relaxation, trust and faith are important for the success of this technique. However, as Fromm (1949/1982) formulates it, "faith is not one of the concepts that fits into the intellectual climate of the present world" (p.197). Maybe this is one of the reasons why very little was found in the area of autosuggestion since its early beginnings until recently.

Today the autosuggestive approach seems to have gained renewed attention, especially in the areas of self-help strategies, motivational and self-development training, peak sports performance, pain control, faster healing of physical ailments, cancer treatments, and managerial training (Neck & Manz, 1992; Siegel, 1988). Visualisation, mental imagery, and verbal affirmations have been dealt with in various recent publications. Since the areas of application are too manifold and varied it would go beyond the scope of this dissertation to describe any of them in detail. A brief overview is given here with regard to areas most relevant for the self-enhancement programme.

Uncontrolled mental images could potentially block effective performance due to self-defeating images (Manz, 1992). Exercising choice and control over one's imagined experiences helps to improve the quality of one's inner psychological world, according to Manz. Sauers and Bass (1993) talk of gaining the inside edge through the use of mental imagery. They argue that using visualisation can help individuals to use more of their mental powers the way it has helped many top sportsmen and -women to achieve peak performances. They point out that the inner vision of personal behaviour and expectations with regard to its effectiveness have great impact on the actual performance. Since relaxation exercises form the basis for the visual or mental practice of problem solving and success achievement, it is also seen as a way of reducing managerial stress.

Self-efficacy theorists also point out visualisation as a form of shaping thoughts. Many studies have shown that cognitive stimulation in which individuals imagine themselves achieving a goal or completing a task skilfully enhances self-image and performance (Schwarzer, 1992). The term cognitive simulation is used for this strategy.

Neck and Manz (1992) describe autosuggestion as thought self-leadership and see it as a way to influence oneself. They emphasise that individuals must utilise cognitive strategies that focus on self-dialogue and mental imagery. Self-talk as a self-influencing tool for improving personal effectiveness has been dealt with earlier. Mental imagery is defined by the authors as imagining successful results before a task is actually completed. Other writers (in Neck & Manz, 1992) have viewed it as a method of mental rehearsal of physical actions, or the experience of imagined positive results prior to the event taking place. Neck and Manz report various studies where mental practice resulted in significantly improved performance.

The visualisation technique is used by Susskind (1970) as a new strategy in confidence training as part of a broad spectrum approach. She highlights that individuals, by focusing on past mistakes, inadequacies and rejections perpetuate and reinforce the problems. Mental imagery is used for the so-called idealised self-image technique with the goal of creating a more positive identity. In this regard the person is encouraged to visualise his ideal self-image and to see himself approaching it progressively.

It needs to be stressed that the solving of particular problems does not entirely rest upon autosuggestion, but it must be kept in mind that the self-image enhancement programme has first and foremost been developed for psychologically healthy individuals to achieve greater self-actualisation and to better their self-development. Brooks (1933) summarises the point when he says that autosuggestion cannot be seen as a cure, but rather as the development of mental qualities, an individual attitude of mind, essentially an individual practice.

#### *b) Practical implementation*

##### *\* Mini-lecture:*

Autosuggestion and mental visualisation of desired end results are presented through the use of overhead slides. The importance of relaxation for the mental imagery exercises is explained and the power of imagination and its consequences on behaviour, emotions and

performance discussed. A step-by-step programme for practising visualisation and verbal affirmations is offered.

**\* A practice run:**

Participants receive the opportunity to practice visualising some of their most important goals in a group exercise. The trainer uses the technique of counting, and describing a beautiful spot in nature, to achieve full relaxation and slowed brain frequency. The group participants then have time to enjoy their visualisation and development of positive emotions connected to the mental imagery. The group “wakes up” from the exercise refreshed and rested.

**\* Drawings:**

An interesting, but also fun exercise is the drawing of pictures. The group is given a choice of various topics to draw:

a princess with a horse outside a castle,  
a rider on horseback,  
a few elephants.



Colour pens are provided, but the participants are also allowed to use their pens or pencils only. The interesting fact is that most individuals will draw only black and white, while the drawings made by an eight-year old which are used to compare the group drawings to, are entirely colourful and elaborate in their design. The impoverished imagination and creativity of adults, as compared to a child's, is discussed.

**\* Audio-tape:**

A tape by Dennis Waitley, an American clinical psychologist, entitled “The psychology of winning” is presented. Waitley talks of the importance of repetition of mental practice and relates many applications of the technique in various areas of functioning.

**\* The rope with ten knots:**

A symbolic reminder of the importance of mental repetition is a rope with ten knots which each group member receives to take home.

**\* Pretend-exercise:**

As another way of practising the visualisation of positive end results, the subjects choose a particular goal (goal setting is discussed under the next point) and, in front of the group, act out the accomplishment of this goal. Participants are encouraged to relate their experience in descriptive detail, and display their feelings regarding the accomplished achievement. This task could relate to self-image goals, career or personal goals, or material goals. The group supports the presentation with much enthusiasm and genuinely share the person's joy or feeling of accomplishment.

**4.3.5 Goal setting**

To round off an improved self-image, it is considered important for an individual to know what he wants, and to set specific goals in order to achieve self-actualisation and life satisfaction. Goal setting has also been associated with levels of self-esteem and well-being by various writers (e.g. Brunstein, 1993; Dryden, 1984; Manz, 1992; Schwarzer, 1992).

*a) Theoretical background:*

The area of goal setting is only given brief mention here, since the focus of the self-image enhancement is not placed on goal setting. Goals are however considered a part of self-development. It has been emphasised that goal selection and the achievement of goals have great influence on self-beliefs (Gorrell, 1990). In terms of the self-image enhancement programme, this topic provides an introduction to the necessity of goal setting and of establishing one's priorities. The self-knowledge dealt with earlier forms the basis for setting goals.

Studies of high achievers have shown that one of the reasons for their success is the setting of goals (Emery, 1989). Emery lists the most important steps of goal setting:

- a) goals need to be written down,
- b) they need to be read regularly and kept in a visible place as reminders,
- c) they need to be set as challenges while staying within a realistic framework,
- d) one needs to organise goal rewards, even for personal goals.

Brunstein (1993) states that various motivational theories are built on the assumption that the achievement of personal goals contributes greatly to an individual's psychological well-being. RET therapists also place great emphasis on the achievement of goals (Dryden, 1991). It has been concluded that well-being is enhanced to the degree that individuals are engaged in personal meaningful projects that provide a sense of efficacy (in Brunstein, 1993). Brunstein found goal commitment and goal attainability, as well as progress towards goal achievement, to be factors contributing significantly to students' well being.

A study by Mitchell (1959) showed that self-rejecting, anxious individuals set more cautious and conservative goals. This means that they would, as a result, also achieve less challenging results with a smaller success experience. Personal goal setting has also been described as influenced by self-appraisal of one's capabilities and self-efficacy by Schwarzer (1992) and Gorrell (1990). They highlight the interrelationship between level of self-esteem and effective goal setting. In order to set challenging but realistic goals, the self needs to have reached a positive level. The person's self-knowledge regarding strengths and weaknesses also plays an important role in guiding the individual with regard to goal setting. Appropriate goal setting provides the person with meaningful success achievement.

Cook (1990) has highlighted the importance of goal setting in small steps as a means of building self-esteem. The importance of reaching one goal at a time has also been stressed by Williams and Long (1979). Heatherton and Ambady (1993) emphasise that goals must be attainable. They point out that goals should be based on a realistic self-appraisal in

order to avoid counterproductiveness. Key who developed a teachers' training programme, also highlighted the need to set realistic goals (in Rees, 1981).

As reported by Locke, Frederick, Lee and Bobko (1984) the effect of goals on task performance has been firmly established through various studies. They found that goal choice was closely related to self-efficacy, ability and past performance. From this perspective it is important that the self-image programme participants attend to goal setting once their self-image has improved and their self-efficacy increased. The goal setting in itself will assist them in achieving the desired success which in turn reinforces a positive self-picture.

#### *b) Practical implementation*

##### *\* Three years to live:*

Group participants are asked to write a list of activities they wish to do, should they only have three years left to live. The emphasis is placed on absence of limitations in order to listen to innermost needs and desires. Although this list might not be realistic (many course participants would stop to work for a living), it usually highlights people's priorities and helps to establish some important goals. The message people receive from this task is that time is limited. For really important wishes one needs to find time today, and a way to set goals and accomplish them within a time frame.

##### *\* Mini-lecture:*

Overhead slides about important aspects of successful goal setting are presented. Long, short, and medium term goals are discussed, as well as the importance of setting deadlines and reinforcing the goals through the use of autosuggestion and visualisation. The importance of self-knowledge comes into focus again, since one needs to know oneself and one's desires as well as capabilities in order to set effective, achievable goals.



\* Pretend:

As mentioned before, one of the tasks revolving around goals, entails acting out the achievement of a chosen goal.

#### 4.4 Summary

This chapter presented the theoretical basis for the various course topics and exercises of the self-image enhancement programme. It also spelt out specific course tasks and activities that were compiled according to the theories discussed. Based on the above, the statistical investigation of this research tested the hypotheses formulated in the next chapter with regard to the following variables:

Self-concept (an overall measure),

physical self,

personal self,

self-criticism,

acceptance of others,

self-esteem,

self-control,

nervousness,

sociability,

formal relations,

external locus of control,

self-efficacy.



The findings regarding these variables for the different groupings of training interventions are presented in chapter 6.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the objective of this research and the research hypotheses are spelt out. Subjects, measurement instruments, and procedure of the research are discussed under the section on the experimental method of the study. An introduction of the statistical techniques used for the analysis of the data concludes this chapter.

#### **5.2 Objective**

It was found that there is little research done in the area of adult self-image development or improvement. As can be seen from chapter 2, the literature also reflects contradictory findings about the possibility of successful self-image change in adults and researchers differ in their opinion as to whether adult programmes can be effective and if they are, how long could improvement last. If one can expect positive change, the question arises as to what type of enhancement programme would be most effective.

The objective of this research encompasses the following aims:

1. To develop a self-image enhancement programme for adults which can be applied easily in a business or industrial setting.
2. To measure a possible degree of self-image improvement following the exposure of adult subjects to this self-image enhancement programme.
3. To establish if there is a difference in results depending on the type of programme administered (massed or spaced sessions, with or without individual follow-up) on the short as well as medium term.

4. To investigate, if individuals with psychological problems also profit from psycho-educational programmes.

The main areas of investigation are central aspects of the self-image reflected through variables like self-concept, aspects of physical and personal self, self-criticism, self-confidence, and self-esteem. More peripheral variables such as self-control and nervousness are also examined. Since locus of control and self-efficacy are closely linked to self-image, as can be seen from the previous chapter, they have also been included as variables to be tested. The researcher considers the above variables as the core of self-development and in order to achieve adult self-image enhancement, a programme needs to focus on these aspects. The research emphasises the effects of the self-image enhancement programme on these variables.

The other, for this research considered secondary variables, relate to aspects which link the self to the other person. These are acceptance of others, sociability, and formal relations since the relationship to others is considered an intricate part of self-development (see chapter 2). Effects of the self-image enhancement programme on these are also investigated.

The knowledge one gains from studying the above will help the professional to develop further programmes for adult self-image enhancement and many potential development projects could become part of the work environment of the adult. This should increase the potential for self-help, improved life satisfaction and better psychological health. For the employer, this means greater productivity, and the individual more personal success.

### **5.3 Hypotheses**

As the reader will see, the hypotheses that follow relate to two types of statistical data:

a) **multivariate analyses** (MANOVA's and Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests) which entail examining the vector of mean differences between groups of subjects, or between test levels for each group, for various combinations of variables;

b) **univariate analyses** (ANOVA's and t-tests) which allow one to investigate separate variables regarding mean differences between group scores, or between test levels for each group.

Unless stated otherwise, the alternative hypotheses are that of significant differences. Where relevant the direction of this difference is indicated clearly.

The single variables that were tested are listed below. Abbreviations used in this or any other chapters (for purposes of tabulation) are stated in brackets:

1. **Total self-concept** (Total S.C./Tot. S.C.)
2. **Physical self** (Physical S.)
3. **Personal self** (Personal S.)
4. **Self-criticism** (Self-crit.)
5. **Acceptance of others** (Accept.O.)
6. **Self-confidence** (S-confid.)
7. **Self-esteem** (S-esteem)
8. **Self-control** (S-contr.)
9. **Nervousness** (Nervousn.)
10. **Sociability** (Sociab.)
11. **Formal relations** (Form.Relat./Formal Rel.)
12. **External locus of control** (Ext.Locus)
13. **Self-efficacy** (S-efficacy)

Variables grouped together for statistical analyses were the following (abbreviations in brackets):

**1. Self-concept variables (S.C. variables):**

physical self, personal self, self-criticism combined;

**2. Personal, Home, Social and Formal (PHSF) relations:**

self-confidence,

self-esteem,

self-control,

nervousness,

sociability,

formal relations, combined.

**3. All variables:**

all sub-variables of the self-concept scale,

acceptance of others,

all PHSF relations,

external locus of control, and

self-efficacy.

**5.3.1 Formulation of main hypotheses**



The hypotheses are based on two types of comparisons:

\* Group test results for the various groupings of variables are compared for each group, as well as some group combinations, **between various test levels**: pre- versus post-test, post- versus re-test.

\* Comparisons are also made for the relevant groupings of variables **between groups** on a particular test level: pre-test,  
post-test,  
re-test.

From tables 5.1 to 5.3 one can see which groupings of variables are under discussion, as well as which groups, or combinations of groups, are relevant for the various hypotheses.

Table 5.1

*Hotelling's T<sup>2</sup> tests/t-tests*

Code	Pre- versus post-test comparisons	Hypothesis
HoT1(E)	all experimental groups combined (1 to 4)	There is no statistically significant difference between the mean pre- and post-test scores of these groups in respect of the self-concept variables <i>physical self</i> , <i>personal self</i> , and <i>self-criticism</i> combined against the alternative hypothesis HaT1 that the difference is significant.
HoT1(C)	control group (group 5)	
HoT1(1)	group 1	
HoT1(2)	group 2	
HoT1(3)	group 3	
HoT1(4)	group 4	
HoT2(E)		There is no statistically significant difference between the pre- and post-test group scores in respect of the <i>PHSF relations</i> combined against the alternative hypothesis HaT2.
HoT2(C)		
HoT2(1)		
HoT2(2)		
HoT2(3)		
HoT(4)		
HoT3(E)		There is no significant difference between the pre- and post-test scores in respect of all variables combined. The alternative hypothesis is HaT3.
HoT3(C)		
HoT3(1)		
HoT3(2)		
HoT3(3)		
HoT3(4)		
Hot1 to 13 (E,C,1,2,3,4)		There is no significant difference in respect of each of the variables measured (as listed above): pre $\bar{X}$ = post $\bar{X}$
(E,C,1,2,3,4):		There is a significant difference with regard to: <i>Total Self-concept</i> : post $\bar{X}$ > pre $\bar{X}$ <i>Physical self</i> : post $\bar{X}$ > pre $\bar{X}$ <i>Personal self</i> : post $\bar{X}$ > pre $\bar{X}$ <i>Self-criticism</i> : post $\bar{X}$ < pre $\bar{X}$ <i>Acceptance of others</i> : post $\bar{X}$ > pre $\bar{X}$ <i>Self-confidence</i> : post $\bar{X}$ > pre $\bar{X}$ <i>Self-esteem</i> : post $\bar{X}$ > pre $\bar{X}$ <i>Self-control</i> : post $\bar{X}$ > pre $\bar{X}$ <i>Nervousness</i> : post $\bar{X}$ > pre $\bar{X}$ <i>Sociability</i> : post $\bar{X}$ > pre $\bar{X}$
Hat1		
Hat2		
Hat3		
Hat4		
Hat5		
Hat6		
Hat7		
Hat8		
Hat9		
Hat10		
Hat11		

Hat12		<i>Formal relations:</i> post $\bar{X}$ > pre $\bar{X}$
Hat13		<i>External locus of control:</i> post $\bar{X}$ < pre $\bar{X}$ <i>Self-efficacy:</i> post $\bar{X}$ > pre $\bar{X}$

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**Post- versus re-test comparisons**

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HoT1PR(E) HoT1PR(1) HoT1PR(2) HoT1PR(3) HoT1PR(4)	all experimental groups combined, as well as each experimental group 1 to 4	There is no statistically significant difference for the various groupings of variables as against the HaT1PR, HaT2PR, and HaT3PR for all experimental groups combined, as well as for each group separately.
HoT2PR (E,1,2,3,4)		
HoT3PR (E,1,2,3,4)		
Hat1PR to 13PR (E,1,2,3,4)		There are statistically significant differences between the mean post- and re-test scores for each of the variables measured. The alternative hypotheses Hat1PR to 13PR are those of significant differences.

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**Post-test comparisons between the understated groups:**

---

(1&3)/(2&4) HoT1P HoT2P HoT3P	groups 1&3 versus groups 2&4	There is no statistically significant difference between these groups on a post-test level regarding the various groupings of variables as opposed to the alternative hypotheses of significant difference: HaT1P, in respect of <i>physical self</i> , <i>personal self</i> and <i>self-criticism</i> combined; HaT2P, in respect of the <i>PHSF relations</i> combined; and HaT3P, in respect of all variables combined.
Hot1P to 13P		There is no significant difference for any of the variables. Alternative hypotheses are Hat1P to 13P.

<b>Re-test comparisons between the understated groups:</b>		
(1&3)/(2&4) HoT1R HoT2R HoT3R	groups 1&3 versus groups 2&4	There is no statistically significant difference between the mean test scores of groups 1&3 and groups 2&4 on a re-test level for the various combinations of variables. The alternative hypotheses of significant difference apply: HaT1R, HaT2R, HaT3R
Hot1R to 13R		There is no statistically significant difference for any of the variables measured. Alternative hypotheses of significant difference are Hat 1R to Hat 13R.
(1&2)/(3&4) HoT1R HoT2R HoT3R	groups 1&2 versus groups 3&4	The hypotheses are as above.
Hot1R to 13R		



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**Table 5.2**

**MANOVA/ANOVA**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Post-test comparisons</b>	<b>Hypothesis</b>
(1-4) HoM1P	all experimental groups 1 to 4	There is no statistically significant difference between the vectors of mean test scores of groups 1 to 4 in respect of the <i>self-concept</i> variables combined against the alternative hypothesis HaM1P of a significant difference.
HoM2P		There is no significant difference in respect of the <i>PHSF relations</i> combined. Alternative hypothesis HaM2P.
HoM3P		There is no significant difference in respect of all variables combined; HaM3P.



HoA1P to 13P

There is no significant difference between the experimental groups on a post-test level with regard to each of the variables tested. The alternative hypotheses are HaA1P to 13P.

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**Re-test comparisons**

---

(1-4)  
HoM1R  
HoM2R  
HoM3R

all experimental groups

There is no statistically significant difference between the experimental groups on a re-test level for each of the 3 variable groupings. HaM1R, HaM2R, HaM3R are the alternative hypotheses.

HoA1R to  
HoA13R

There are no statistically significant differences for any of the variables measured separately against the alternative hypotheses of significant differences, HaA1R to 13R.



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### 5.3.2 Formulation of subhypotheses

Hypotheses were also formulated with regard to pre-test differences between groups 1 to 5 and group 6 (MMPI rejected subjects), pre- and post-test differences of group 6b (rejected controls omitted), post-test differences between groups 1 to 4 and group 6b, as well as post- versus re-test comparisons for group 6b (see table 5.3).

Table 5.3

*Hotelling's T<sup>2</sup> tests/t-tests*

Code	pre-test comparisons	Hypothesis
(1-5)/6 SHoT1.1	groups 1 to 5 combined versus group 6	There is no statistically significant difference between the mean pre-test scores of groups 1 to 5 and group 6 with regard to the <i>self-concept</i> variables combined.
SHoT1.2		There is no significant difference with regard to the <i>PHSF relations</i> combined.
SHoT1.3		There is no significant difference with regard to all variables combined.
SHot1.1 to 1.13		<p>The alternative hypotheses are SHaT1.1, T1.2, T1.3.</p> <p>There is no significant difference between the mean scores of groups 1 to 5 and that of group 6 on a pre-test level for each of the variables measured: <math>\bar{X}(1-5) = \bar{X}(6)</math></p> <p>The alternative hypotheses Hat1.1 to 1.13 state significant differences in the following directions:</p> <p><i>Total Self-concept:</i> <math>\bar{X}(1-5) &gt; \bar{X}(6)</math></p> <p><i>Physical self:</i> <math>\bar{X}(1-5) &gt; \bar{X}(6)</math></p> <p><i>Personal self:</i> <math>\bar{X}(1-5) &gt; \bar{X}(6)</math></p> <p><i>Self-criticism:</i> <math>\bar{X}(1-5) &lt; \bar{X}(6)</math></p> <p><i>Acceptance of others:</i> <math>\bar{X}(1-5) &gt; \bar{X}(6)</math></p> <p><i>Self-confidence:</i> <math>\bar{X}(1-5) &gt; \bar{X}(6)</math></p> <p><i>Self-esteem:</i> <math>\bar{X}(1-5) &gt; \bar{X}(6)</math></p> <p><i>Self-control:</i> <math>\bar{X}(1-5) &gt; \bar{X}(6)</math></p> <p><i>Nervousness:</i> <math>\bar{X}(1-5) &gt; \bar{X}(6)</math></p> <p><i>Sociability:</i> <math>\bar{X}(1-5) &gt; \bar{X}(6)</math></p> <p><i>Formal relations:</i> <math>\bar{X}(1-5) &gt; \bar{X}(6)</math></p> <p><i>External locus of control:</i> <math>\bar{X}(1-5) &lt; \bar{X}(6)</math></p> <p><i>Self-efficacy:</i> <math>\bar{X}(1-5) &gt; \bar{X}(6)</math></p>

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**pre- versus post-test  
comparisons**

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(6b) SHoT2.1 SHoT2.2 SHoT2.3	group 6b	There are no significant differences between the mean pre- and post-test scores of group 6b in respect of each of the 3 groupings of variables against the alternative hypotheses of significant difference: SHaT2.1 to SHaT2.3.
Shot2.1 to Shot2.13		There are no significant differences for each of the variables tested: $\text{post}\bar{X} - \text{pre}\bar{X} = 0$ .  For the alternative hypotheses, the following directions are expected: <i>Total Self-concept:</i> $\text{post}\bar{X} > \text{pre}\bar{X}$ <i>Physical self:</i> $\text{post}\bar{X} > \text{pre}\bar{X}$ <i>Personal self:</i> $\text{post}\bar{X} > \text{pre}\bar{X}$ <i>Self-criticism:</i> $\text{post}\bar{X} < \text{pre}\bar{X}$ <i>Acceptance of others:</i> $\text{Post}\bar{X} > \text{pre}\bar{X}$ <i>Self-confidence:</i> $\text{post}\bar{X} > \text{pre}\bar{X}$ <i>Self-esteem:</i> $\text{post}\bar{X} > \text{pre}\bar{X}$ <i>Self-control:</i> $\text{post}\bar{X} > \text{pre}\bar{X}$ <i>Nervousness:</i> $\text{post}\bar{X} > \text{pre}\bar{X}$ <i>Sociability:</i> $\text{post}\bar{X} > \text{pre}\bar{X}$ <i>Formal relations:</i> $\text{post}\bar{X} > \text{pre}\bar{X}$ <i>External locus of control:</i> $\text{post}\bar{X} < \text{pre}\bar{X}$ <i>Self-efficacy:</i> $\text{post}\bar{X} > \text{pre}\bar{X}$

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**post-test comparisons between  
the understated groups**

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(1-4)/6b SHoT3.1 SHoT3.2 SHoT3.3	groups 1 to 4 compared to group 6b	There are no significant differences between these groups on a post-test level with regard to the 3 combinations of variables. SHaT3.1 to 3.13.
Shot3.1 to Shot3.13		There are no significant differences for each of the variables measured. The alternative hypotheses SHaT3.1 to 3.13 apply.

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**post- versus re-test  
comparisons**

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<p>(6b) SHoT4.1 SHoT4.2 SHoT4.3</p>	<p>group 6b</p>	<p>There are no significant differences between the mean post- and re-test scores of group 6b for the groupings of variables against the alternative hypotheses of significant difference. SHaT4.1 to 4.3.</p>
<p>Shot4.1 to SHot4.13</p>		<p>There is a significant difference for each of the variables measured. The alternative hypotheses are Shat4.1 to Shat4.13.</p>

## 5.4 Method

### 5.4.1 Subjects:

White, adult subjects were drawn from corporations to attend the so-called Personal Development Programme on a voluntary basis. The age of the subjects varied from 20 to 52, with the mean and median at 30. The bulk of the subjects fell into middle adulthood with 91% being under the age of 42, while 17% were younger than 25.

Forty three subjects were male, 90 female. Sex was random inasmuch as the names for delegates for the various course dates were given to the researcher through the companies which provided the subjects.

Out of 133 subjects 35 were rejected by the MMPI short version which was used as a screening device. All subjects were office staff from supervisory or middle management levels, since superiority was seen as a nuisance variable, while subjects from lower corporate levels should attend a programme differently tailored for their needs.

### 5.4.2 Measurement Instruments

The measurement instruments used in this research are self-administered questionnaires. Self-report measures have come under criticism since their validity has been questioned (O’Leary, Crowley & Keane; 1994; Tuck, 1984). Defending self-reports, Barlow, Hayes and Nelson (1984; in O’Leary et al., 1994) maintain that they must not be considered inferior measures but simply different. Tuck (1984) has highlighted that self-reports reflect a person’s cognitive decision making. These self-perceptions are relevant and valid with regard to the way a person feels, even without objective measures. Self-reports are acceptable in that they reveal the reality the way the person experiences it and they have been declared an accurate source of information regarding the individual’s thoughts and feelings (O’Leary et al., 1994).

#### \* Cannon’s Mini Mult

This instrument is a short version of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. It was used as a screening device in order to identify subjects with specific psychological problems such as depression, anxiety and other conditions which could have an impact on daily functioning.

This screening of course participants was done in order to have a group of “normally functioning” subjects undergo the Personal Development Programme. This measure was also an attempt to avoid contamination of results by providing a homogeneous group of subjects with regard to psychological health.

The following are the clinical scales of the MMPI which were used for this research:

Scale	Abbreviation	Name of scale
1	Hs	Hypochondria
2	D	Depression
3	Hy	Hysteria
4	Pd	Psychopathy
6	Pa	Paranoia
7	Pt	Obsessive-compulsive neurosis
8	Sc	Schizophrenia
9	Ma	Hypomania

L	Lie factor
F	Frequency factor (“insanity”)
K	Defensiveness factor

Although there are varied opinions with regard to the definition of high scores (Graham, 1977), it seems widely accepted that a T-score higher than 70 on any of the MMPI scales must be considered an elevated score indicating psychopathology (Butcher, 1979). Gilberstadt & Duker (1965) nevertheless maintain that this cut-off point indicates an arbitrary definition of normality.

The MMPI scales have however been used effectively to identify emotional disturbance in groups of individuals not identified as patients. They were successfully utilised to detect maladjustment in stressful academic environments, in military recruiting, as well as in the area of job applications in industry (Butcher, 1979).

Butcher (1979) also reports that a moderate amount of psychopathology, as measured by the MMPI, can be found in “normal range” populations. This could explain, why the rate of rejection of subjects by the MMPI short form was rather high for this research sample.

The shortened version of the MMPI was developed due to practical considerations (Holzberg & Alessi, 1949) but reliability data were not available initially. Holzberg & Alessi compared results of the original MMPI with scores of the short form in a research project and found the correlations between the scales to range from 0,519 to 0,927. “Although significant statistical differences were reported for half of the scales, inspection of the graph showing mean weighted scores for each scale reveals little, if any, significant clinical differences.” (p.291). The writers further maintain that no statistical correction is needed in using the short form, since there is no general lowering of scores for all scales.

All scores were K-corrected in order to take into account the impact of a defensive attitude or fake responses.

### \* Adolescent Self-Concept Scale

This measurement instrument was developed in South Africa by Vrey (1974) because a need was felt for a local measure of self-concept. The instrument is based on the Tennessee Self-concept Scale and Vrey's own research.

Although it was initially designed for adolescents, the scale is also suitable for adults. Norms were not being utilised since for this research raw scores were used.

A *Total Self-Concept* score was achieved which reflects a person's convictions and dynamic attitudes about himself which he can be, or can become, conscious of (Vrey, 1974).

The subtests scored for this research were the following:

#### \* *Physical self:*

The person with a positive self-concept identifies with a healthy, attractive, well groomed physical self and is satisfied with his weight and appearance. His behaviour would not be impaired by anxiety, nervousness or clumsiness.

#### \* *Personal self:*

This refers to a person's psychological condition. A person who feels positive about himself is usually cheerful, calm, and satisfied with his achievements.

#### \* *Self-criticism:*

According to Vrey and Venter (1983) a person who has a realistic and positive self-concept is critical of himself and does not need to defend himself by overprotecting his self-image. Although the researcher agrees with the latter point, it is felt, that an improvement of self-concept implies a *decrease* of self-criticism since most people are overcritical of themselves and tend to run themselves down (see chapter 2).

Vrey and Venter (1983) report the following reliability measures for the total self-concept score:

Kuder-Richardson 20 = 0,850

Kuder-Richardson 14 = 0,851

Vrey's self-concept scale has been used extensively in South Africa. Vermeulen (1992) applied the scale to adults in a study investigating management behaviour. Jacobs (1985) and Harmse (1979) also used the scale when studying managers. Gericke (1986) tested first year female students, Tuck (1984) drug addicted persons, and Malan (1978) first, second and third year female students.

### **\* Acceptance of Others Scale**

This scale was devised to test the relationship of feelings of self-acceptance, acceptance of others, and feelings of acceptability by others.

The split-half reliability for this scale was found to be 0,90, while there were no validity data available (Fey, 1954).

The Acceptance of Others scale was used in this research to establish whether an improved self-concept is accompanied by increased acceptance of others since McIntire (1952) indicates that high self-acceptance individuals tend to have higher acceptance of others.

### **\* The Personal, Home, Social and Formal Relations Questionnaire - PHSF**

This measurement instrument focuses on a person's degree of psychological adjustment as defined by dynamic processes within the person, as well as between the self and the environment (HSRC Manual, 1971).

Although there are 11 components in this questionnaire, the ones used for this study were the following:



**\* *Self-confidence:***

The degree to which a person feels confident in his ability to be successful.

**\* *Self-esteem:***

The inner appraisal a person has of his evaluation regarding his characteristics.

**\* *Self-control:***

The degree to which a person controls his emotions and needs in accordance with his principles.

**\* *Nervousness:***

As a reversed measure, a high score indicates an absence of nervousness and anxiety.

**\* *Sociability:***

This score reflects a person's need for and spontaneous participation in social group interaction.



**\* *Formal relations:***

The degree to which a person is successful in his interactions with authority figures and superiors.

*A desirability scale* was used to identify any possible problems of dishonesty with regard to the answering of the questionnaire.

The reliability for the various components which was calculated according to a split-half method was found to be between 0,63 and 0,94.

The following validity studies have been reported (HSRC Manual, 1971):

a) Research regarding construct validity involved comparisons with the NBQA, the Adjustment Questionnaire of the National Bureau of Educational and Social Sciences (later the HSRC). The components of the PHSF showed a clearer factor composition.

Eight factors were identified with the additional three probably pointing to factors concerned with self-control, health and relations with the opposite sex.

b) The PHSF has been applied to pupils of two schools of behavioural deviates. The questionnaire discriminated relatively consistently between the norm group and the deviates. The only scores which did not show statistically significant differences between the group means were those of *sociability* with regard to the opposite sex for the male group, and *self-esteem* for the female group.

#### **\* Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale - I-E scale**

The items of this questionnaire deal with a person's belief about the nature of the world. The instrument is seen to be a measure of a generalised expectancy and is concerned with an individual's perception regarding the relationships between someone's behaviour and events which follow that behaviour (Rotter, 1966).

With regard to reliability a Kuder-Richardson of 0,70 was achieved (Rotter, 1966). Rotter states that a great number of investigations have been concluded which establishes a satisfactory validity of the scale. Although there are still methodological problems the scale has been found to be sensitive to individual differences in perception of one's control over one's destiny and has been recommended as a measure of generalised expectancy.

#### **\* The Self-Efficacy Scale**

This scale was a questionnaire adapted from a previously used self-efficacy scale for sales people by Beattie (1981). Traditionally self-efficacy assessment has mainly taken place in the areas of snake phobias as well as academic and racial environments (Beattie, 1981). Beattie's self-efficacy scale for sales personnel was adapted for this research since it provided a suitable basis for studying the self-efficacy of normal adult subjects who are holding positions in a business setting.

The items of the adapted self-efficacy scale relate to the following dimensions:

- \* work environment
- \* career development
- \* interpersonal adeptness
- \* outdoor and sporting
- \* family and home life

The Likert type questionnaire measures responses on a 7 point scale. This is, according to Schepers (1992), the best format scale for assessing interests, attitudes and values. A dichotomy is avoided while the intensity scale provides a continuum for possible answers.

The new questionnaire consisted initially of 81 items. The responses of the research sample to these items were subjected to a factor analysis to categorise the items according to constructs measured. The NP 50 programme of the National Institute for Personnel Research was used. The first order analysis resulted in 21 factors, the second iteration revealing 4 factors. Seven items were rejected. The items falling into the 4 factors correlated highly and further investigation was called for.

On closer inspection of the content of the these items, it was found that the items could be tested as to whether they measure two factors, rather than four, namely outcome expectancy and efficacy expectancy. However, the factor loadings regarding two factors only, showed significant loadings only on one factor (see table 5.4).

**Table 5.4**

*Sorted rotated factor loadings (pattern)*

	<b>Factor 1</b>	<b>Factor 2</b>
Factor 2	0,807	0,000
1	0,792	0,000
4	0,751	0,000
3	0,711	0,000
18	0,700	0,000
12	0,663	0,000
9	0,603	0,000

19	0,589	0,000
8	0,587	0,000
6	0,543	0,254
7	0,533	0,000
17	0,000	0,673
14	0,000	0,457
16	0,000	0,347
13	0,000	0,337
11	0,000	0,000
15	0,337	0,000
20	0,000	0,000
10	0,471	0,000
21	0,433	0,000
5	0,403	0,000

Note: The columns appear in decreasing order of variance explained by factors. Loadings less than 0,2500 have been replaced by zero.

Under factor 2 the higher loadings were those of already rejected items. It has been concluded that the subscales did not generate separate predictions and all items are therefore seen to measure one construct, namely efficacy beliefs.

The remaining 74 items were then subjected to an item analysis to ensure internal consistency. Through the item-test correlations another two items were rejected. The following are the correlations and reliability indices of the final 72 items:

**Table 5.5**

*Correlations and reliability indices for remaining items*

Item No.	Rx Sj	Rx
1	0,660	0,490
2	0,650	0,403
3	0,666	0,564
4	0,646	0,620
5	0,408	0,430
6	0,526	0,554
7	0,750	0,536
9	0,486	0,508

10	0,397	0,495
11	0,321	0,363
13	0,631	0,610
14	0,556	0,376
15	0,695	0,536
16	0,701	0,601
17	0,525	0,575
18	0,588	0,606
19	0,884	0,686
20	0,687	0,643
21	0,802	0,526
22	0,697	0,511
24	0,718	0,566
25	0,364	0,370
26	0,785	0,663
27	0,491	0,538
28	0,643	0,676
29	0,555	0,624
30	0,536	0,538
31	0,624	0,561
32	0,622	0,586
33	0,517	0,577
34	0,698	0,570
35	0,820	0,548
36	0,745	0,582
37	0,469	0,548
38	0,553	0,410
39	0,640	0,466
40	0,504	0,444
41	0,560	0,584
42	0,559	0,565
43	0,636	0,617
44	0,693	0,425
45	0,602	0,707
46	0,569	0,548
47	0,697	0,627
49	0,369	0,268
50	0,459	0,337
51	0,725	0,587
52	0,554	0,432
53	0,661	0,636
54	0,626	0,508
55	0,727	0,589
57	0,573	0,579
58	0,622	0,598
59	0,573	0,338
60	0,636	0,628
61	0,605	0,600
62	0,363	0,424

63	0,948	0,664
65	0,622	0,457
66	0,383	0,534
67	0,565	0,370
68	0,591	0,640
69	0,443	0,386
70	0,692	0,615
71	0,734	0,556
72	0,864	0,445
73	0,717	0,550
74	0,592	0,402
75	0,701	0,430
76	0,641	0,466
78	0,940	0,645
80	0,578	0,576

---

Rx is the correlation of each item with the scale total,  
 Rx Sj is Rx multiplied by the standard deviation of the item.

In order to reach the best possible internal consistency, which gives us an indication of reliability, the correlation of each item with the whole scale was investigated by using Gulliksen's index (Rx Sj) as the criterion for rejection of items. The highest coefficient of reliability for the final 72 items was achieved after the second iteration. It was a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0,960.

### 5.4.3 Procedure

The above measuring instruments were administered to all 133 subjects before the self-enhancement programme was started for the experimental groups. The 35 subjects which were rejected by the screening device remained in their various groups and carried on with their respective experimental or control programmes. The results for these were merely grouped differently for the statistical analyses.

All experimental subjects were grouped together according to the type of programme they underwent. The first indication of  $\underline{n}$  relates to the number of subjects on a pre-screening level, the second  $\underline{n}$  indicates the theoretical group size (in practice all subjects attended the

programmes) after the screening. Since it was necessary to administer the intervention programme to small groups, the programmes had to be run in the following way:

- 4 groups of 8 to 12 people attended the 3 day programme; all these subjects are classified as **group 1** for statistical analyses:  $\underline{n}=32/\underline{n}=26$
- 2 groups of subjects attended the 6 week (12 sessions) programme, making up **group 2**:  $\underline{n}=20/\underline{n}=14$
- 3 groups visited the 3 day course and the group participants had two individual follow-up sessions each; they combined to form **group 3**:  $\underline{n}=30/\underline{n}=27$
- 2 groups went through the 6 week (12 sessions) programme and the subjects had two individual follow-up sessions each; they were defined as **group 4**:  $\underline{n}=18/\underline{n}=10$

For post-testing all measurement instruments, except the screening device, were administered again to each subject at the end of the self-enhancement programmes. A re-test, where the questionnaires and scales were given to the subjects a third time, took place five months after the completion of the self-enhancement programme.

The experimental groups were told that the researcher was examining different approaches to personal development training. It was further explained that a 3 day training programme was being compared to a six week course as to establish which type of training would be more effective.

The self-enhancement programmes and individual follow-up sessions were spread out over a period of eight months. The re-testing, which was the third testing, was staggered for the various groups according to the lapsing of five months.

The four experimental groups were compared to a control group, **group 5** ( $\underline{n}=33/\underline{n}=22$ ), which underwent a training session in customer relationships instead of any self-enhancement intervention. They were tested before the half-day training session, took post-tests three days after the training, and were re-tested five months later.

The self-enhancement programmes were administered in company training rooms, which were all suitable for uninterrupted training sessions. The venues were air conditioned, quiet and secluded from the rest of the offices. The participants were seated behind tables in a U-shape and had an uninterrupted view of the trainer, the flip chart, the TV monitor and overhead projector. Starting times, breaks with refreshments, and finishing times were the same for all the groups.

The 3 day course started at 8h00 and ended at 16h30 each day, with a 15 minute tea time morning and afternoon, and 45 minutes for lunch. Every participant completed the entire programme.

The spaced sessions enhancement programme was held over twelve two-hour sessions per week for six consecutive weeks. Subjects who missed more than one session were disqualified as far as research statistics went.

The subjects who had individual follow-up sessions had two appointments with the researcher during the five months following the self-image enhancement programme. Subjects were asked to relate any experiences they had since the training course with regard to personal development and relationships. During the interviews participants also had the opportunity to reflect on how they had applied newly learned insights and behaviours. Any problems subjects had experienced in the back home situation were discussed.

Each subject, whether they took part in the 3 day programme, or the spaced sessions programme, received the same training manual which covered the topics of the course in a summarised fashion. Control subjects were given no materials.

## **5.5 Statistical Techniques**

The statistical techniques which had to be selected were methods which would enable the researcher to assess differences in group means. Multivariate and univariate analyses, MANOVA's and ANOVA's respectively, were chosen to compare group means from



more than two samples. Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests and Student's t-tests for paired values were used to test for differences between test levels within one group, or differences between two selected groups on the same test-level.

The MANOVA's and Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests were applicable in the case of investigations of group means with regard to combinations of variables, while the ANOVA's and t-tests compare group means in terms of single variables.

**a) Pre-test comparisons:**

All experimental groups, excluding the rejected subjects, were compared with regard to their pre-test results. This was done through a Multivariate Analysis (MANOVA) which allowed analysis of group differences in respect of various combinations of variables, and a Univariate Analysis (ANOVA) which investigated the group differences for each of the variables tested.

**b) Main hypotheses:**



In order to test the main hypotheses formulated earlier in this chapter, the following statistical techniques were utilised:

Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests for paired values were used for the combinations of variables, and Student's t-tests for paired values for comparing the groups' results with regard to single variables. The differences between various test levels were investigated for all experimental groups combined, each experimental group (groups 1 to 4) separately, and the control group (group 5). The test level comparisons were pre- versus post-test, and post- versus re-test comparisons.

MANOVA's for combinations of variables, and ANOVA's for the single variables, were used to analyse the differences between the groups with regard to the various test levels. In this analysis all experimental group means were compared on a post-test and re-test level.

Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests and Student's t-tests for paired values were also applicable for comparing the effects of the various types of training programmes. Mean results of groups 1 & 3 (the 3 day programme) were compared to groups 2 & 4 (the 12 sessions programme) on a post- as well as re-test level. To study a possible impact of individual follow-up sessions, Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests and Student's t-tests were done to compare groups 1 & 2 (no individual follow-up sessions) to groups 3 & 4 (with two individual follow-up sessions per person) on the post-test level.

### **c) Subhypotheses:**

The subhypotheses were tested in the following manner:

Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests, for groups of variables, and Student's t-tests for single variables, were used to compare all "normally" functioning subjects of the research sample (groups 1 to 5) to the subjects who were rejected by the MMPI short version (group 6).

Group 6b, which included rejected experimental subjects, was investigated with regard to pre- and post-test results, as well as post- and re-test differences. Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests and t-tests for paired values were used.

The differences between all experimental groups combined (groups 1 to 4) and group 6b (rejected, experimental subjects) were studied on a post-test level through Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests and t-tests.

## **5.6 Summary**

In this chapter the research objective and hypotheses were formulated. Furthermore a discussion of the research methodology was presented here. A report of all statistical results follows in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **STATISTICAL RESULTS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

All statistical results are presented in tables with the code of the applicable hypotheses (abbreviated: hyp.code) clearly indicated for easy cross reference. The findings reported are the following:

- a) pre-test, post-test, and re-test comparisons between groups,
- b) comparisons between test levels, namely pre- and post-test comparisons as well as post- and re-test comparisons for each group and some group combinations.

In some instances there are fluctuations of  $n$  due to missing data but these have been correctly handled in the statistical analyses.

The probability values chosen as acceptable for meaningful interpretation of data relate to the 5% and the 1% significance levels throughout.

#### **6.2 Pre-test investigations**

The MMPI short form which was used in order to ensure that the self-image enhancement programme was administered to psychologically healthy subjects, rejected 35 of the original 133 subjects. These were grouped together into group 6 ( $n=35$ ) for which certain subhypotheses were formulated.

All groups (groups 1 to 5,  $n=98$ ) without their “rejected” subjects were compared with regard to their pre-test results through a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA).

No hypotheses were formulated regarding the pre-test differences. The results can be seen from table 6.1:

**Table 6.1**

*MANOVA for groups 1 to 5/pre-test*

<b>Hyp. code N/A</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>F-Value</b>	<b>D.F.</b>		<b>p-value</b>
	S.C. variables	0,94	12	241,05	0,5071
	PHSF relations	0,65	24	304,72	0,8956
	All variables	1,10	48	314,06	0,3103

The above shows that there were no significant differences between the groups on a pre-test level for the variables of the *self-concept* scale, the variables measured through the *PHSF Relations* questionnaire, as well as for *all variables* combined. An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed for groups 1 to 5 regarding each of the variables tested. The findings are presented in table 6.2.

**Table 6.2**

*ANOVA for groups 1 to 5/pre-test*

<b>Hyp.code N/A</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>F-Value</b>	<b>D.F.</b>		<b>p-value</b>
	Total S.C.	0,56	4	93	0,6908
	Physical self	0,70	4	93	0,5949
	Personal self	0,13	4	36	0,9715
	Self-criticism	1,42	4	93	0,2330
	Acceptance O.	1,50	4	93	0,2094
	Self-confidence	0,85	4	92	0,4986
	Self-esteem	1,06	4	92	0,3833
	Self-control	1,00	4	92	0,4126
	Nervousness	0,22	4	92	0,9278

Sociability	1,03	4	92	0,3974
Formal relations	0,33	4	92	0,8587
External locus	0,19	4	93	0,9422
Self-efficacy	3,23	4	93	0,0157*

For the *self-efficacy* variable a significant difference was found. To establish, which groups in particular differed, the Scheffé method for pairwise comparison was used. According to this the difference was found to be between groups 3 and 4. Since the difference was on a 10% level of significance it was considered too small to be valid as a relevant difference.

With regard to the pre-test comparisons of groups it is concluded that there are no significant differences for all variables with regard to the MANOVA and ANOVA reported above. The experimental and control groups of this study can therefore be considered equal on a pre-test level.

### 6.3 Statistical results regarding the main hypotheses

#### 6.3.1 Pre- and post-test Results:

Hypotheses regarding the pre- and post-test results were examined through the calculation of Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests and Student's t-tests for paired values. A report of the results follows. In order to have a better overview, the pre- and post-test findings of all experimental groups combined ( $n=75$ ) are presented first (tables 6.3 and 6.4), followed by the results obtained from the control group (group 5,  $n=21$ ; tables 6.5 and 6.6). Thereafter the results of the experimental groups (groups 1 to 4) are tabulated per group (see tables 6.7 to 6.14).

**Table 6.3**

*All experimental groups (groups 1 to 4) - Hotelling's T<sup>2</sup> tests/pre-post*

Hyp. code	Variable	T <sup>2</sup> value	F-value	D.F.	p-value	
HoT1(E)	S.C. variables	20,7835	6,7455	3	74	0,0004**
HoT2(E)	PHSF relations	29,7318	4,6293	6	71	0,0005**
HoT3(E)	All variables	148,9224	10,6140	12	65	0,0000**

\*\* Significant at the 1% significance level

As can be seen from the above table there are statistically significant differences at the 1% significance level between the vector of mean differences between pre- and post-test scores of all experimental groups combined in respect of all groups of variables:

The *self-concept* variables combined, p=0,0004

*PHSF relations* combined, p=0,0005

*All variables* combined, p=0,0000.

**Table 6.4**

*All experimental groups combined (groups 1 to 4) - t-tests/pre-post*

Hyp. code	Variable	$\bar{X}_{post}-\bar{X}_{pre}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value
Hot1(E)	Total S.C.	3,2727	6,5527	4,38	76	0,0000**
Hot2(E)	Physical self.	0,9351	2,0088	4,08	76	0,0000**
Hot3(E)	Personal self.	0,7273	2,3822	2,68	76	0,0045**
Hot4(E)	Self-criticism	-0,4935	1,5696	-2,76	76	0,0036**
Hot5(E)	Acceptance O.	-1,0779	6,5248	-1,45	76	0,0756
Hot6(E)	Self-confidence	2,0000	3,5395	4,83	72	0,0000**
Hot7(E)	Self-esteem	2,5616	5,2862	4,14	72	0,0000**
Hot8(E)	Self-control	0,7945	3,7563	1,81	72	0,0379*

Hot9(E)	Nervousness	0,6712	4,1501	1,38	72	0,0856
Hot10(E)	Sociability	0,3151	3,9926	0,67	72	0,2512
Hot11(E)	Formal Relations	0,3014	4,1823	0,62	72	0,2700
Hot12(E)	External locus	-2,5325	2,6387	-8,42	76	0,0000**
Hot13(E)	Self-efficacy	20,8052	26,8696	6,79	76	0,0000**

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

\*\* Significant at the 1% significance level

There is a statistically significant difference at the 5% significance level between the mean pre- and post-test scores of all the experimental groups combined in respect of the variable *self-control*,  $p=0,0379$ . There are statistically significant differences at a 1% significance level between pre- and post-test scores of all the experimental groups combined in respect of the following variables:

*Total self-concept*,  $p=0,0000$

*Physical self*,  $p=0,0000$

*Personal self*,  $p=0,0045$

*Self-criticism*,  $p=0,0036$

*Self-confidence*,  $p=0,0000$

*Self-esteem*,  $p=0,0000$

*External locus of control*,  $p=0,0000$

*Self-efficacy*,  $p=0,0000$

For all the above variables the null hypotheses are rejected and the alternative hypotheses accepted.

As can be seen, Hot5,9,10,11(E) are not rejected since there are no significant differences for these variables.

Table 6.5

*Group 5 (control group) - Hotelling's T<sup>2</sup> tests/pre-post*

Hyp. code	Variables	T <sup>2</sup> value	F-value	D.F.	p-value	
HoT1(C)	S.C. variables	1,1510	0,3453	3	18	0,7929
HoT2(C)	PHSF relations	7,0327	0,8791	6	15	0,5760
HoT3(C)	All variables	49,5524	1,8582	12	9	0,1790

There are no statistically significant differences between the vector of mean differences between the pre- and post-test scores of the control group in respect of *physical self*, *personal self*, and *self-criticism* combined, the *PHSF relations* combined, as well as for *all variables* combined. The null hypotheses are not rejected

Table 6.6

*Group 5 (control group) - t-tests/pre-post*

Hyp. code	Variable	$\bar{X}_{post} - \bar{X}_{pre}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value
Hot1(C)	Total S.C.	-1,2000	5,7363	-0,94	19	0,1806
Hot2(C)	Physical self	0,0000	2,0774	0,00	19	0,5000
Hot3(C)	Personal self	0,2500	1,3717	0,82	19	0,2125
Hot4(C)	Self-criticism	-0,3000	1,9762	-0,68	19	0,2527
Hot5(C)	Acceptance O.	-2,7143	7,1982	-1,73	20	0,0497*
Hot6(C)	Self-confidence	-0,4762	2,7499	-0,79	20	0,2184
Hot7(C)	Self-esteem	-0,4762	4,8023	-0,45	20	0,3272
Hot8(C)	Self-control	0,0476	3,7746	0,06	20	0,4772
Hot9(C)	Nervousness	0,0000	3,1623	0,00	20	0,5000
Hot10(C)	Sociability	-0,4762	3,1244	-0,70	20	0,2465
Hot11(C)	Formal relations	-1,7619	3,2696	-2,47	20	0,0113*
Hot12(C)	External locus	0,0952	3,7404	0,12	20	0,4542
Hot13(C)	Self-efficacy	-9,0952	32,6495	-1,28	20	0,1082



\* Significant at the 5% significance level

There are statistically significant differences at the 5% significance level between pre- and post test scores of the control group in respect of the following variables:

*Acceptance of others*,  $p=0,0497$  (movement into the opposite direction)

*Formal relations*,  $p=0,0113$  (movement into the opposite direction)

Since the movement for both the above variables were found to be into the opposite direction from what the alternative hypotheses predicted, the null hypotheses  $HoT5(C)$  and  $HoT11(C)$  are accepted.

Concerning all the other variables no significant differences were found. The null hypotheses are not rejected.

 **Table 6.7**  
*Group 1 (3 day programme) - Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests/pre-post*

Hyp. code	Variable	$T^2$ value	F-value	D.F.		p-value
HoT1(1)	S.C. variables	14,9626	4,5885	3,	23	0,0117*
HoT2(1)	PHSF relations	27,4220	2,9772	7,	19	0,0276*
HoT3(1)	All variables	100,1069	4,0043	13,	13	0.0090**

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

\*\* Significant at the 1% significance level

There is a statistically significant difference at the 5 % significance level between pre- and post-test scores of group 1 in respect of the variables *physical self*, *personal self*, *self-criticism* combined ( $p=0,0117$ ), and for the *PHSF relations* combined ( $p=0,0276$ ).

There is a significant difference ( $p=0,0090$ ) at the 1% significance level in respect of *all variables* combined. The null hypothesis must be rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted for all of the above.

**Table 6.8**

*Group 1 - t-Tests/pre-post*

Hyp. code	Variable	$\bar{X}_{\text{post}}-\bar{X}_{\text{pre}}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value
Hot1(1)	Total S.C.	2,8462	5,6899	2,55	25	0,0086**
Hot2(2)	Physical self	1,1154	1,7280	3,29	25	0,0015**
Hot3(1)	Personal self	0,2308	2,0061	0,59	25	0,2814
Hot4(1)	Self-criticism	- 0,7308	1,7334	-2,15	25	0,0207*
Hot5(1)	Acceptance O.	- 2,9615	4,5474	-3,32	25	0,0014**
Hot6(1)	S-confidence	2,4167	3,2560	3,64	23	0,0007**
Hot7(1)	Self-esteem	1,6250	3,5363	2,25	23	0,0171*
Hot8(1)	Self-control	1,1250	4,2663	1,29	23	0,1046
Hot9(1)	Nervousness	0,9583	4,2167	1,11	23	0,1385
Hot10(1)	Sociability	1,0417	4,7866	1,07	23	0,1487
Hot11(1)	Formal relat.	1,2500	3,7792	1,62	23	0,0594
Hot12(10)	External locus	- 1,8846	2,2508	-4,27	25	0,0001**
Hot13(1)	Self-efficacy	25,3462	23,0494	5,61	25	0,0000**

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

\*\* Significant at the 1% significance level

There are statistically significant differences between the mean pre- and post-test scores of group 1 in respect of the following variables:

1% significance level:

*Total self-concept*,  $p=0,0086$

*Physical self*,  $p=0,0015$

*Acceptance of others* (movement into the opposite direction),  $p=0,0014$

*Self-confidence*,  $p=0,0007$

*External locus of control*,  $p=0,0001$

*Self-efficacy*,  $p=0,0000$ .

5% significance level:

*Self-criticism*,  $p=0,0207$

*Self-esteem*,  $p=0,0171$ .

The null hypotheses for all of the above variables must be rejected and the alternative hypotheses supported.

For the following variables the null hypotheses are not rejected:

*Personal self*,  $p=0,2814$ ,

*Self-control*,  $p=0,1046$ ,

*Nervousness*,  $p=0,1385$ ,

*Sociability*,  $p=1487$

*Formal relations*,  $p= 0,0594$ .



**Table 6.9**

*Group 2 (12 sessions programme)- Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests/pre-post*

<b>Hyp. code</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b><math>T^2</math> value</b>	<b>F-value</b>	<b>D.F.</b>		<b>p-value</b>
HoT1(2)	S.C. variables	3,6203	1,0211	3	11	0,4205
HoT2(2)	PHSF relations	9,4180	0,9659	6	8	0,5027
HoT3(2)	All variables	153,1658	1,9637	12	2	0,3866

There are no significant differences between pre- and post-test scores for any of the above combinations of variables and the null hypotheses are not rejected.

Table 6.10

*Group 2 - t-tests/pre-post*

Hyp. code	Variable	$\bar{X}_{post}-\bar{X}_{pre}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value
Hot1(2)	Total S.C.	2,0714	7,5188	1,03	13	0,1607
Hot2(2)	Physical self	0,7857	2,3592	1,25	13	0,1173
Hot3(2)	Personal self	0,7143	2,8937	0,92	13	0,1862
Hot4(2)	Self-criticism	- 0,6429	1,4469	-1,66	13	0,0601
Hot5(2)	Acceptance O.	- 1,2857	6,0055	-0,80	13	0,2187
Hot6(2)	Self-confid.	1,5385	3,7107	1,49	12	0,0804
Hot7(2)	Self-esteem	2,9231	5,4077	1,95	12	0,0375*
Hot8(2)	Self-control	0,6923	3,3512	0,74	12	0,2353
Hot9(2)	Nervousness	0,6923	3,2502	0,77	12	0,2286
Hot10(2)	Sociability	- 0,9231	4,3101	-0,77	12	0,2274
Hot11(2)	Formal relat.	- 2,7692	5,1826	-1,93	12	0,0390*
Hot12(2)	External locus	- 3,2857	2,1278	-5,78	13	0,0000**
Hot13(2)	Self-efficacy	17,2857	24,4711	2,64	13	0,0101**

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

\*\* Significant at the 1% significance level

There are statistically significant differences between the mean pre- and post-test scores of group 2 in respect of the following variables:

5% significance level:

*Self-esteem*,  $p=0,0375$

*Formal relations*,  $p=0,0390$ .

*Self-efficacy*,  $p=0,0101$

1% significance level:

*External locus of control*,  $p=0,0000$

For the variables *self-esteem*, *self-efficacy*, and *external locus of control* the null hypotheses must be rejected and the alternative hypotheses are supported. *Formal relations* showed a movement onto the opposite direction and the null hypothesis is therefore not rejected. For all the remaining variables the null hypotheses are also not rejected since no significant differences were found.

**Table 6.11**

*Group 3 (3 day programme plus individual follow-up) - Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests/pre-post*

Hyp. code	Variables	$T^2$ value	F-value	D.F.		p-value
HoT1(3)	S.C. variables	11,0834	3,4103	3	24	0,0337*
HoT2(3)	PHSF relations	22,9360	3,0875	6	21	0,0251*
HoT3(3)	All variables	51,1358	2,4585	12	15	0,0513

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

There are statistically significant differences between pre- and post test scores of group 3 in respect of *physical self*, *personal self*, and *self-criticism* combined ( $p=0,0337$ ), and in respect of *PHSF relations* combined ( $p=0,0251$ ). The null hypotheses are rejected and the alternative hypotheses accepted.

For *all variables* combined the null hypotheses are not rejected.

**Table 6.12**

*Group 3 (3 day programme plus individual follow-up) - t-tests/pre-post*

Hyp. code	Variable	$\bar{X}_{post}-\bar{X}_{pre}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value
Hot1(3)	Total S.C.	3,3704	4,5247	3,87	26	0,0002**
Hot2(3)	Physical self	0,7407	1,8727	2,06	26	0,0250*
Hot3(3)	Personal self	1,4074	2,4061	3,04	26	0,0026**

Hot4(3)	Self-criticism	- 0,3333	1,4412	-1,20	26	0,1201
Hot5(3)	Acceptance O.	- 2,1852	6,6739	-1,70	26	0,0504
Hot6(3)	Self-confidence	2,1111	3,9549	2,77	26	0,0050**
Hot7(3)	Self-esteem	3,2963	5,7500	2,98	26	0,0031**
Hot8(3)	Self-control	0,1111	3,2026	0,18	26	0,4291
Hot9(3)	Nervousness	0,2222	4,4231	0,26	26	0,3980
Hot10(3)	Sociability	0,0000	3,0128	0,00	26	0,5000
Hot11(3)	Formal relat.	0,5926	3,6083	0,85	26	0,2006
Hot12(3)	External locus	- 2,3333	3,0000	-4,04	26	0,0002**
Hot13(3)	Self-efficacy	19,9259	32,3834	3,20	26	0,0018**

\* Significant at the 5% level of significance

\*\* Significant at the 1% significance level

There are statistically significant differences between the mean pre- and post-test scores of group 3 in respect of the following variables:

5% significance level:

*Physical self*,  $p=0,0250$

1% significance level:

*Total self-concept*,  $p=0,0002$

*Personal self*,  $p=0,0026$

*Self-confidence*,  $p=0,0050$

*Self-esteem*,  $p=0,0031$

*External locus of control*,  $p=0,0002$

*Self-efficacy*,  $p=0,0018$

For all the above variables the null hypotheses must be rejected and the alternative hypotheses supported while for the remaining variables the null hypotheses cannot be rejected.

Table 6.13

*Group 4 (12 sessions programme with individual follow-up) - Hotelling's T<sup>2</sup> tests-pre-post*

Hyp. code	Variables	T <sup>2</sup> value	F-value	D.F.	p-value	
HoT1(4)	S.C. variables	0,4039	1,0472	3	7	0,4294
HoT2(4)	PHSF relations	21,0115	1,5564	6	4	0,3481
HoT3(4)	All variables	332,5363	4,1054	9	1	0,3665

There are no statistically significant differences between pre- and post-test scores of group 4 in respect of *physical self*, *personal self*, and *self-criticism* combined, the *PHSF relations* combined, as well as *all variables* combined.

Table 6.14

*Group 4 - t-tests/pre-post*

Hyp. code	Variable	$\bar{X}_{post} - \bar{X}_{pre}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value
Hot1(4)	Total S.C.	5,8000	11,0433	1,66	9	0,0655
Hot2(4)	Physical self	1,2000	2,6998	1,41	9	0,0967
Hot3(4)	Personal self	0,2000	2,3476	0,27	9	0,3968
Hot4(4)	Self-criticism	- 0,1000	1,7288	-0,18	9	0,4294
Hot5(4)	Acceptance O.	7,1000	5,7436	3,91	9	0,0018**
Hot6(4)	Self-confidence	1,2222	3,0322	1,21	8	0,1305
Hot7(4)	Self-esteem	2,3333	7,7136	0,91	8	0,1953
Hot8(4)	Self-control	2,1111	4,5399	1,40	8	1,1002
Hot9(4)	Nervousness	1,2222	4,8162	0,76	8	0,2341
Hot10(4)	Sociability	1,1111	3,8873	0,86	8	0,2080
Hot11(4)	Formal relations	1,3333	3,7749	1,06	8	0,1601
Hot12(4)	External locus	- 3,7000	2,9078	-4,02	9	0,0015**
Hot13(4)	Self-efficacy	16,3000	24,9535	2,07	9	0,0344*

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

\*\* Significant at the 1% significance level

There is a statistically significant difference at the 5% significance level ( $p=0,0344$ ) between pre-and post test scores of group 4 in respect of the variable *self-efficacy*.

There are statistically significant differences at the 1% significance level in respect of the following variables:

*Acceptance of others*,  $p=0,0018$

*External locus of control*,  $p=0,0015$ .

The above indicates support for the alternative hypotheses, while for the remainder of variables the null hypotheses are not rejected.

### 6.3.2 Post-test comparisons of groups 1 to 4

As can be seen from tables 6.15 and 6.16 a MANOVA and ANOVA were calculated to establish any significant differences between the experimental groups on a post-test level:

**Table 6.15**

*MANOVA for groups 1 to 4 (all experimental groups)/post-test*

Hyp. code	Variable	F-value	D.F.		p-value
HoM1P(1-4)	S.C. variables	0,88	9	165,64	0,5443
HoM2P(1-4)	PHSF relations	0,74	18	178,68	0,7655
HoM3P(1-4)	All variables	1,35	36	169,14	0,1077

There were no significant differences between the experimental groups on a post-test level for any combinations of variables. The null hypotheses are not rejected in respect of the combinations of variables seen in table 5.15.



**Table 6.16***ANOVA for groups 1 to 4/post-test*

<b>Hyp. code</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>F-value</b>	<b>D.F.</b>		<b>p-value</b>
HoA1P(1-4)	Total self-concept	0,78	3	73	0,5093
HoA2P(1-4)	Physical self	0,31	3	27	0,8205
HoA3P(1-4)	Personal self	0,97	3	73	0,4117
HoA4P(1-4)	Self-criticism	0,63	3	73	0,5954
HoA5P(1-4)	Acceptance O.	2,16	3	73	0,0996
HoA6P(1-4)	Self-confidence	0,25	3	69	0,8619
HoA7P(1-4)	Self-esteem	0,80	3	69	0,4968
HoA8P(1-4)	Self-control	0,18	3	69	0,9076
HoA9P(1-4)	Nervousness	0,32	3	69	0,8073
HoA10P(1-4)	Sociability	1,14	3	69	0,3410
HoA11P(1-4)	Formal relations	1,16	3	69	0,3316
HoA12P(1-4)	External locus	0,98	3	73	0,4085
HoA13P(1-4)	Self-efficacy	3,08	3	73	0,0325*

The only difference found was for the variable *self-efficacy*. In investigating further, by using the Scheffé method of pairwise comparison, it was found that the difference existed between groups 3 and 4 on a 10% significance level. This was not significant enough to be taken into account. The null hypotheses are not rejected with regard to each of the variables tested.

In order to test the hypotheses regarding the effectiveness of a 3 day compared to a spaced sessions programme, Hotelling's and t-tests for independent values were used for groups 1&3 versus groups 2&4 (see tables 6.17 and 6.18).

**Table 6.17**

*Hotelling's T<sup>2</sup> tests for comparing groups 1&3 (3 day programme) versus groups 2&4 (12 sessions programme)/post-test*

Hyp. code	Variable	T <sup>2</sup> value	F-value	D.F.		p-value
HoT1P	S.C. variables	1,6351	0,5301	3	70	0,6631
HoT2P	PHSF relations	5,5897	0,8669	6	67	0,5239
HoT3P	All variables	17,7158	1,2508	12	61	0,2712

There were no statistically significant differences between groups 1 & 3 and groups 2 & 4 on a post-test level for any of the above combinations of variables. The null hypotheses are not rejected.

**Table 6.18**

*Student's t-tests for comparing groups 1&3 versus group 2&4/post-test*


Hyp.code	Variable	Group	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value																																																																																																																
Hot1P	Total S.C.	1 & 3	53	79,4151	8,6078	1,05	72	0,2995																																																																																																																
		2 & 4	21	76,9048	10,9449				Hot2P	Physical S.	1 & 3	53	14,1321	2,1307	0,82	26,3	0,4217	2 & 4	21	13,4762	3,4296	Hot3P	Personal S.	1 & 3	53	14,3396	2,9283	0,30	72	0,7623	2 & 4	21	14,0952	3,5764	Hot4P	S-criticism	1 & 3	53	6,3585	1,8820	0,41	72	0,6796	2 & 4	21	6,1429	2,3299	Hot5P	Accept. O.	1 & 3	53	54,6415	8,4218	-1,66	72	0,1012	2 & 4	21	58,0952	7,0633	Hot6P	Self-confid.	1 & 3	51	33,7255	5,5537	0,24	70	0,8106	2 & 4	21	33,3810	5,4541	Hot7P	Self-esteem	1 & 3	51	29,7255	6,6033	-0,43	70	0,6695	2 & 4	21	30,4762	7,1177	Hot8P	Self-control	1 & 3	51	27,9020	3,9863	0,57	70	0,5684	2 & 4	21	27,3333	3,3961	Hot9P	Nervousn.	1 & 3	51	28,4902	4,5404	-0,50	70	0,6199	2 & 4	21	29,0476	3,6943	Hot10P	Sociability	1 & 3	51	30,0196	7,0583	0,63	70
Hot2P	Physical S.	1 & 3	53	14,1321	2,1307	0,82	26,3	0,4217																																																																																																																
		2 & 4	21	13,4762	3,4296				Hot3P	Personal S.	1 & 3	53	14,3396	2,9283	0,30	72	0,7623	2 & 4	21	14,0952	3,5764	Hot4P	S-criticism	1 & 3	53	6,3585	1,8820	0,41	72	0,6796	2 & 4	21	6,1429	2,3299	Hot5P	Accept. O.	1 & 3	53	54,6415	8,4218	-1,66	72	0,1012	2 & 4	21	58,0952	7,0633	Hot6P	Self-confid.	1 & 3	51	33,7255	5,5537	0,24	70	0,8106	2 & 4	21	33,3810	5,4541	Hot7P	Self-esteem	1 & 3	51	29,7255	6,6033	-0,43	70	0,6695	2 & 4	21	30,4762	7,1177	Hot8P	Self-control	1 & 3	51	27,9020	3,9863	0,57	70	0,5684	2 & 4	21	27,3333	3,3961	Hot9P	Nervousn.	1 & 3	51	28,4902	4,5404	-0,50	70	0,6199	2 & 4	21	29,0476	3,6943	Hot10P	Sociability	1 & 3	51	30,0196	7,0583	0,63	70	0,5318	2 & 4	21	28,8571	7,3232								
Hot3P	Personal S.	1 & 3	53	14,3396	2,9283	0,30	72	0,7623																																																																																																																
		2 & 4	21	14,0952	3,5764				Hot4P	S-criticism	1 & 3	53	6,3585	1,8820	0,41	72	0,6796	2 & 4	21	6,1429	2,3299	Hot5P	Accept. O.	1 & 3	53	54,6415	8,4218	-1,66	72	0,1012	2 & 4	21	58,0952	7,0633	Hot6P	Self-confid.	1 & 3	51	33,7255	5,5537	0,24	70	0,8106	2 & 4	21	33,3810	5,4541	Hot7P	Self-esteem	1 & 3	51	29,7255	6,6033	-0,43	70	0,6695	2 & 4	21	30,4762	7,1177	Hot8P	Self-control	1 & 3	51	27,9020	3,9863	0,57	70	0,5684	2 & 4	21	27,3333	3,3961	Hot9P	Nervousn.	1 & 3	51	28,4902	4,5404	-0,50	70	0,6199	2 & 4	21	29,0476	3,6943	Hot10P	Sociability	1 & 3	51	30,0196	7,0583	0,63	70	0,5318	2 & 4	21	28,8571	7,3232																					
Hot4P	S-criticism	1 & 3	53	6,3585	1,8820	0,41	72	0,6796																																																																																																																
		2 & 4	21	6,1429	2,3299				Hot5P	Accept. O.	1 & 3	53	54,6415	8,4218	-1,66	72	0,1012	2 & 4	21	58,0952	7,0633	Hot6P	Self-confid.	1 & 3	51	33,7255	5,5537	0,24	70	0,8106	2 & 4	21	33,3810	5,4541	Hot7P	Self-esteem	1 & 3	51	29,7255	6,6033	-0,43	70	0,6695	2 & 4	21	30,4762	7,1177	Hot8P	Self-control	1 & 3	51	27,9020	3,9863	0,57	70	0,5684	2 & 4	21	27,3333	3,3961	Hot9P	Nervousn.	1 & 3	51	28,4902	4,5404	-0,50	70	0,6199	2 & 4	21	29,0476	3,6943	Hot10P	Sociability	1 & 3	51	30,0196	7,0583	0,63	70	0,5318	2 & 4	21	28,8571	7,3232																																		
Hot5P	Accept. O.	1 & 3	53	54,6415	8,4218	-1,66	72	0,1012																																																																																																																
		2 & 4	21	58,0952	7,0633				Hot6P	Self-confid.	1 & 3	51	33,7255	5,5537	0,24	70	0,8106	2 & 4	21	33,3810	5,4541	Hot7P	Self-esteem	1 & 3	51	29,7255	6,6033	-0,43	70	0,6695	2 & 4	21	30,4762	7,1177	Hot8P	Self-control	1 & 3	51	27,9020	3,9863	0,57	70	0,5684	2 & 4	21	27,3333	3,3961	Hot9P	Nervousn.	1 & 3	51	28,4902	4,5404	-0,50	70	0,6199	2 & 4	21	29,0476	3,6943	Hot10P	Sociability	1 & 3	51	30,0196	7,0583	0,63	70	0,5318	2 & 4	21	28,8571	7,3232																																															
Hot6P	Self-confid.	1 & 3	51	33,7255	5,5537	0,24	70	0,8106																																																																																																																
		2 & 4	21	33,3810	5,4541				Hot7P	Self-esteem	1 & 3	51	29,7255	6,6033	-0,43	70	0,6695	2 & 4	21	30,4762	7,1177	Hot8P	Self-control	1 & 3	51	27,9020	3,9863	0,57	70	0,5684	2 & 4	21	27,3333	3,3961	Hot9P	Nervousn.	1 & 3	51	28,4902	4,5404	-0,50	70	0,6199	2 & 4	21	29,0476	3,6943	Hot10P	Sociability	1 & 3	51	30,0196	7,0583	0,63	70	0,5318	2 & 4	21	28,8571	7,3232																																																												
Hot7P	Self-esteem	1 & 3	51	29,7255	6,6033	-0,43	70	0,6695																																																																																																																
		2 & 4	21	30,4762	7,1177				Hot8P	Self-control	1 & 3	51	27,9020	3,9863	0,57	70	0,5684	2 & 4	21	27,3333	3,3961	Hot9P	Nervousn.	1 & 3	51	28,4902	4,5404	-0,50	70	0,6199	2 & 4	21	29,0476	3,6943	Hot10P	Sociability	1 & 3	51	30,0196	7,0583	0,63	70	0,5318	2 & 4	21	28,8571	7,3232																																																																									
Hot8P	Self-control	1 & 3	51	27,9020	3,9863	0,57	70	0,5684																																																																																																																
		2 & 4	21	27,3333	3,3961				Hot9P	Nervousn.	1 & 3	51	28,4902	4,5404	-0,50	70	0,6199	2 & 4	21	29,0476	3,6943	Hot10P	Sociability	1 & 3	51	30,0196	7,0583	0,63	70	0,5318	2 & 4	21	28,8571	7,3232																																																																																						
Hot9P	Nervousn.	1 & 3	51	28,4902	4,5404	-0,50	70	0,6199																																																																																																																
		2 & 4	21	29,0476	3,6943				Hot10P	Sociability	1 & 3	51	30,0196	7,0583	0,63	70	0,5318	2 & 4	21	28,8571	7,3232																																																																																																			
Hot10P	Sociability	1 & 3	51	30,0196	7,0583	0,63	70	0,5318																																																																																																																
		2 & 4	21	28,8571	7,3232																																																																																																																			

Hot11P	Formal rel.	1 & 3	51	35,0392	5,4625	1,55	70	0,1262
		2 & 4	21	32,8095	5,7846			
Hot12P	Ext. locus	1 & 3	53	5,4528	3,2732	1,28	72	0,2040
		2 & 4	21	4,3333	3,6652			
Hot13P	S-efficacy	1 & 3	53	421,4340	40,6592	1,38	28,8	0,1769
		2 & 4	21	402,8571	55,9136			

As can be seen from the above table there were no significant differences between the mean post-test scores of groups 1&3 as compared to that of groups 2&4. The null hypotheses are not rejected.

### 6.3.3 Post- and re-test results

The post-test results, and the re-test measures which were taken 5 months later, were compared for the experimental group as a whole (groups 1 to 4; see tables 6.19 and 6.20), as well as for each of the individual groups (tables 6.21 to 6.28):


**Table 6.19**  
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*All experimental groups (groups 1 to 4)- Hoteling's  $T^2$  tests*

Hyp. code	Variable	$T^2$ value	F-value	D.F.	p-value	
HoT1PR(E)	S.C. variables	1,9261	0,6244	3	71	0,6015
HoT2PR(E)	PHSF relations	9,5247	1,4787	6	68	0,1986
HoT3PR(E)	All variables	25,8084	1,8266	12	62	0,0631

There were no significant differences between the experimental groups with regard to the above combinations of variables and the null hypotheses are not rejected.

Table 6.20

*All experimental groups - t-tests/post- and re-test*

Hyp. code	Variable	$\bar{X}_{re} - \bar{X}_{post}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value
Hot1PR(E)	Total S.C.	0,09324	7,2609	1,10	73	0,2729
Hot2PR(E)	Physical self	0,3378	2,4002	1,21	73	0,2299
Hot3PR(E)	Personal self	0,3243	2,9429	0,94	73	0,3462
Hot4PR(E)	Self-criticism	-0,1757	2,0960	-0,72	73	0,4732
Hot5PR(E)	Acceptance O.	0,4459	6,7988	0,56	73	0,5743
Hot6PR(E)	Self-confid.	-0,4722	5,7098	-0,70	71	0,4850
Hot7PR(E)	Self-esteem	0,1389	5,1983	0,23	71	0,8213
Hot8PR(E)	Self-control	-1,2222	4,008	-2,59	71	0,0116*
Hot9PR(E)	Nervousness	0,1806	4,9769	0,31	71	0,7591
Hot10PR(E)	Sociability	0,1806	7,2371	0,21	71	0,8330
Hot11PR(E)	Formal relat.	-0,6667	6,5650	-0,86	71	0,3918
Hot12PR(E)	External locus	0,8378	3,9380	1,83	73	0,0713
Hot13PR(E)	Self-efficacy	-10,7027	35,7260	-2,58	73	0,0120*

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

For the variables *self-control* and *self-efficacy* there are statistically significant differences between the post-test and re-test scores of the total experimental group on a 5% significance level ( $p=0,0116$  and  $p=0,0120$  respectively). The null hypotheses for these variables have to be rejected and the alternative hypotheses accepted.

**Table 6.21***Group 1 (3 day programme) - Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests/post- and re-test*

Hyp. code	Variable	$T^2$ value	F-value	D.F.		p-value
HoT1PR(1)	S.C. variables	1,1861	0,3637	3	23	0,7798
HoT2PR(1)	PHSF relations	10,3253	1,3767	6	20	0,2717
HoT3PR(1)	All variables	52,5337	2,4516	12	14	0,0562

No significant differences were found between post- and re-test scores of group 1 with regard to the above combinations of variables. The null hypotheses are not rejected.

**Table 6.22**


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*Group 1 - t-tests/post- and re-test*  
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Hyp. code	Variable	$\bar{X}_{re} - \bar{X}_{post}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value
Hot1PR(1)	Total S.C.	1,6154	8,0899	1,02	25	0,3183
Hot2PR(1)	Physical self	0,3077	2,3625	0,66	25	0,5127
Hot3PR(1)	Personal self	0,5385	2,9964	0,92	25	0,3683
Hot4PR(1)	Self-criticism	0,0000	1,8330	0,00	25	1,0000
Hot5PR(1)	Acceptance O.	0,7308	5,9502	0,63	25	0,5368
Hot6PR(1)	Self-confid.	-1,7917	4,6249	-1,90	23	0,0703
Hot7PR(1)	Self-esteem	-0,6250	4,7256	-0,65	23	0,5234
Hot8PR(1)	Self-control	-2,1250	4,6933	-2,22	23	0,0367*
Hot9PR(1)	Nervousness	-1,0000	6,3997	-0,77	23	0,4518
Hot10PR(1)	Sociability	-0,2083	9,8686	-0,10	23	0,9185
Hot11PR(1)	Formal relat.	-0,7083	5,5598	-0,62	23	0,5387
Hot12PR(1)	External locus	1,0000	3,9395	1,29	25	0,2074
Hot13PR(1)	Self-efficacy	-14,1154	27,1032	-2,66	25	0,0136*

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

For the variables *self-control* and *self-efficacy* there are significant differences at the 5% significance level ( $p=0,0367$  and  $p=0,0136$  respectively).

For the above the null hypotheses are rejected and the alternative hypotheses supported.

**Table 6.23**

**Group 2 (12 sessions programme) - Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests/post- and re-test**

Hyp. code	Variable	$T^2$ value	F-value	D.F.		p-value
HoT1PR(2)	S.C. variables	2,3022	0,6279	3	9	0,6150
HoT2PR(2)	PHSF relations	47,2470	4,2952	6	6	0,0497*
HoT3PR(2)	All variables	170,2367	1,4069	11	1	0,5829

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

There is a statistically significant difference between the post- and re-test scores of group 2 for the *PHSF relations* combined ( $p=0,0497$ ). The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis supported. For the other combinations of variables the null hypotheses are not rejected.

**Table 6.24**

**Group 2 - t-tests/post- and re-test**

Hyp. code	Variable	$\bar{X}_{re} - \bar{X}_{post}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value
Hot1PR(2)	Total S.C.	-0,5000	6,3747	-0,27	11	0,7909
Hot2PR(2)	Physical self	-0,5833	2,1515	-0,94	11	0,3678
Hot3PR(2)	Personal self	0,5833	2,5030	0,81	11	0,4366

Hot4PR(2)	Self-criticism	-0,2500	1,4848	-0,58	11	0,5715
Hot5PR(2)	Acceptance O.	0,5833	6,9342	0,29	11	0,7762
Hot6PR(2)	Self-confide.	0,8333	6,4503	0,45	11	0,6632
Hot7PR(2)	Self-esteem	-0,8333	4,3450	-0,66	11	0,5201
Hot8PR(2)	Self-control	-0,5000	3,0302	-0,57	11	0,5791
Hot9PR(2)	Nervousness	0,9167	2,9683	1,07	11	0,3076
Hot10PR(2)	Sociability	2,4167	3,4234	2,45	11	0,0325*
Hot11PR(2)	Formal relat.	0,9167	7,7043	0,41	11	0,6881
Hot12PR(2)	External locus	1,9167	6,8018	0,98	11	0,3500
Hot13PR(2)	Self-efficacy	-20,5000	39,7915	-1,78	11	0,1019

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

For the variable *sociability* there is a statistically significant difference between the post- and re-tests scores of group 2 ( $p=0,0325$ ). The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis supported.

For all other variables there are no significant differences and the null hypotheses are not rejected.

**Table 6.25**

***Group 3 (3 day programme plus individual follow-up)- Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests/post- and re-test***

Hyp. code	Variable	$T^2$ value	F-value	D.F.		p-value
HoT1PR(3)	S.C. variables	1,3607	0,4187	3	24	0,7412
HoT2PR(3)	PHSF relations	5,2476	0,7064	6	21	0,6480
HoT3PR(3)	All variables	17,1773	0,8258	12	15	0,6259

For the above combinations of variables there are no significant differences between post- and re-test scores of group 3. The null hypotheses are accepted.

**Table 6.26****Group 3 - t-tests/post- and re-test**

Hyp. code	Variable	$\bar{X}_{re} - \bar{X}_{post}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value
Hot1PR(3)	Total S.C.	0,4815	6,3933	0,39	26	0,6987
Hot2PR(3)	Physical self	0,4444	2,5166	0,92	26	0,3672
Hot3PR(3)	Personal self	-0,1852	3,1870	-0,30	26	0,7651
Hot4PR(3)	Self-criticism	-0,0370	2,4570	-0,08	26	0,9382
Hot5PR(3)	Acceptance O.	0,7778	7,8217	0,52	26	0,6097
Hot6PR(3)	Self-confid.	-0,1852	5,9423	-0,16	26	0,8726
Hot7PR(3)	Self-esteem	0,5556	5,9829	0,48	26	0,6335
Hot8PR(3)	Self-control	-0,5926	3,2612	-0,94	26	0,3538
Hot9PR(3)	Nervousness	0,5926	4,5426	0,68	26	0,5039
Hot10PR(3)	Sociability	-0,2963	4,7297	-0,33	26	0,7474
Hot11PR(3)	Formal relat.	0,8889	4,9251	-0,94	26	0,3570
Hot12PR(3)	External locus	0,1111	2,5621	0,23	26	0,8235
Hot13PR(3)	Self-efficacy	-13,6667	37,2321	-1,91	26	0,0676

There are no significant differences for group 3 with regard to the mean post- and re-test scores for each of the variables and the null hypotheses are not rejected.

**Table 6.27****Group 4 (12 sessions programme plus individual follow-up) - Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests/post- and re-test**

Hyp. code	Variable	$T^2$ value	F-value	D.F.		p-value
HoT1PR(4)	S.C. variables	3,3663	0,8416	3	6	0,5190
HoT2PR(4)	PHSF relations	22,7234	1,4202	6	3	0,4166
HoT3PR(4)	All variables	21,8630	0,3416	8	1	0,8745

For none of the above combinations of variables is there a significant difference between post- and re-test scores and the null hypotheses are not rejected.



**Table 6.28***Group 4 - t-tests/post- and re-test*

<b>Hyp. code</b>	<b>Variable</b>	$\bar{X}_{re} - \bar{X}_{post}$	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>D.F.</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Hot1PR(4)	Total S.C.	2,2222	8,9830	0,74	8	0,4792
Hot2PR(4)	Physical self	1,3333	2,3979	1,67	8	0,1338
Hot3PR(4)	Personal self	0,8889	2,8038	0,95	8	0,3694
Hot4PR(4)	Self-criticism	-1,0000	2,4495	-1,22	8	0,2555
Hot5PR(4)	Acceptance O.	-1,5556	6,4053	-0,73	8	0,4870
Hot6PR(4)	Self-confid.	0,4444	6,8394	0,19	8	0,8503
Hot7PR(4)	Self-esteem	2,2222	4,9694	1,34	8	0,2166
Hot8PR(4)	Self-control	-1,6667	5,1720	-0,97	8	0,3620
Hot9PR(4)	Nervousness	1,1111	4,0449	0,82	8	0,4338
Hot10PR(4)	Sociability	-0,3333	9,3274	-0,11	8	0,9173
Hot11PR(4)	Formal relat.	-2,0000	11,2805	-0,53	8	0,6093
Hot12PR(4)	External locus	1,1111	2,0883	1,60	8	0,1492
Hot13PR(4)	Self-efficacy	21,1111	36,3127	1,74	8	0,1193

There are no significant differences between the post- and re-test scores for any of the variables measured. The null hypotheses are not rejected.

#### **6.3.4 Re-test comparisons**

On a re-test level a MANOVA and ANOVA were calculated to compare the various experimental groups in terms of effectiveness of the self-image enhancement programme after a time period of 5 months had elapsed (see tables 6.29 and 6.30).

**Table 6.29***MANOVA for groups 1 to 4 (all experimental groups) /re-test*

<b>Hyp. code</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>F-value</b>	<b>D.F.</b>		<b>p-value</b>
HoM1R(1-4)	S.C. variables	0,83	9	165,64	0,5916
HoM2R(1-4)	PHSF relations	0,92	18	184,33	0,5534
HoM3R(1-4)	All variables	1,18	36	175,05	0,2442

There are no significant differences between any of the experimental groups for any of the groupings of variables 5 months after the completion of the course. The null hypotheses are not rejected.

**Table 6.30**

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*ANOVA for groups 1 to 4/re-test*  
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<b>Hyp. code</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>F-value</b>	<b>D.F.</b>		<b>p-value</b>
HoA1R(1-4)	Total S.C.	1,28	3	70	0,2886
HoA2R(1-4)	Physical self	0,69	3	70	0,5604
HoA3R(1-4)	Personal self	0,41	3	70	0,7484
HoA4R(1-4)	Self-criticism	1,29	3	70	0,2853
HoA5R(1-4)	Acceptance O.	1,65	3	70	0,1851
HoA6R(1-4)	Self-confidence	1,04	3	70	0,3804
HoA7R(1-4)	Self-esteem	3,22	3	70	0,0277*
HoA8R(1-4)	Self-control	0,78	3	70	0,5098
HoA9R(1-4)	Nervousness	1,69	3	70	0,1776
HoA10R(1-4)	Sociability	0,71	3	70	0,5482
HoA11R(1-4)	Formal relations	0,29	3	70	0,8290
HoA12R(1-4)	External locus	0,68	3	70	0,5679
HoA13R(1-4)	Self-efficacy	1,88	3	70	0,1405

For the variable *self-esteem* there was a significant difference, which however, once investigated through the Scheffé method of pairwise comparison, was found to be on a 10% significance level and therefore not significant enough to be reported.

Since the experimental groups can be considered equal on a re-test level, the null hypotheses with regard to each variable tested are not rejected.

To establish which programme (3 days or 12 sessions) was more effective in maintaining or improving the self-image over a period of 5 months after the intervention, Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests and student's t-tests were calculated for groups 1&3 versus groups 2&4 (see tables 6.31 and 6.32):

**Table 6.31**

*Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests for the comparison of groups 1&3 (3 day programme) to groups 2&4 (12 sessions programme)/re-test*

Hyp. code	Variable	$T^2$ value	F-value	D.F.		p-value
HoT1R (1&3)/(2&4)	S.C. variables	5,1045	1,6542	3	70	0,1848
HoT2R (1&3)/(2&4)	PHSF relations	5,5550	0,8615	6	67	0,5278
HoT3R (1&3)/(2&4)	All variables	21,9900	1,5525	12	61	0,1305

There are no significant differences between group 1&3 combined versus groups 2&4 combined on a re-test level for the above groupings of variables. The null hypotheses are not rejected.

Table 6.32

*t-tests for groups 1&3 versus groups 2&4/re-test*

Hyp.code	Variable	Group	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	t-value	D. F.	p-value
Hot1R	Total S.C.	1 & 3	53	80,4529	9,1852	1,23	72	0,2244
		2 & 4	21	77,5714	8,9419			
Hot2R	Physical S.	1 & 3	53	14,5094	2,5086	1,16	72	0,2502
		2 & 4	21	13,7143	3,0190			
Hot3R	Personal S.	1 & 3	53	14,5094	2,9653	-0,40	72	0,6906
		2 & 4	21	14,8095	2,7680			
Hot4R	S-criticism	1 & 3	53	6,3396	2,4569	1,28	72	0,2041
		2 & 4	21	5,5714	1,9383			
Hot5R	Accept. O.	1 & 3	53	55,3962	7,2040	-1,33	72	0,1888
		2 & 4	21	57,7619	6,0984			
Hot6R	Self-confid.	1 & 3	53	32,8679	5,3423	-0,84	72	0,4051
		2 & 4	21	34,0476	5,7661			
Hot7R	Self-esteem	1 & 3	53	29,7170	5,7559	-0,82	72	0,4126
		2 & 4	21	30,9524	5,9622			
Hot8R	Self-control	1 & 3	53	26,7359	3,7011	0,42	72	0,6739
		2 & 4	21	26,3333	3,6788			
Hot9R	Nervousn.	1 & 3	53	28,2641	4,4685	-1,56	72	0,1229
		2 & 4	21	30,0476	4,3299			
Hot10R	Sociability	1 & 3	53	29,6981	6,9713	-0,22	72	0,8297
		2 & 4	21	30,0952	7,5359			
Hot11R	Formal rel.	1 & 3	53	34,0377	6,5220	0,89	72	0,3764
		2 & 4	21	32,4762	7,4875			
Hot12R	Ext. locus	1 & 3	53	6,0000	3,5137	0,09	72	0,9306
		2 & 4	21	5,9048	5,6737			
Hot13R	S-efficacy	1 & 3	53	407,5472	39,7456	0,73	72	0,4678
		2 & 4	21	400,1905	37,3304			

There are no significant differences between the above groups on a re-test level for any of the variables tested. The null hypotheses are not rejected.

A further hypothesis related to what role individual feedback plays with regard to post intervention developments. For this aim, Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests and t-tests were calculated for groups 1&2 versus groups 3&4 (see tables 6.33 and 6.34).

**Table 6.33**

*Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests for comparing groups 1&2 (without individual follow-up) to groups 3&4 (with individual follow-up)/re-test*

Hyp. code	Variable	$T^2$ value	F-value	D.F.		p-value
HoT1R (1&2)/(3&4)	S.C. variables	1,8250	0,5914	3	70	0,6227
HoT2R (1&2)/(3&4)	PHSF variables	9,5945	1,4880	6	67	0,1957
HoT3R (1&2)/(3&4)	All variables	19,0157	1,3425	12	61	0,2190

There are no statistically significant differences for the above combinations of variables and the null hypotheses are not rejected.

**Table 6.34**

*t-tests for groups 1&2 versus groups 3&4/re-test*

Hyp.code	Variable	Group	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value
Hot1R	Total S.C.	1 & 2	38	78,1053	9,7421	-1,49	72	0,1406
		3 & 4	36	81,2500	8,3096			
Hot2R	Physical S.	1 & 2	38	14,0000	2,6509	-0,94	72	0,3504
		3 & 4	36	14,5833	2,6873			

Hot3R	Personal S.	1 & 2	38	14,2632	3,0991	-1,01	72	0,3149
		3 & 4	36	14,9444	2,6613			
Hot4R	S-criticism	1 & 2	38	6,4211	2,0877	1,14	72	0,2598
		3 & 4	36	5,8056	2,5615			
Hot5R	Accept.O.	1 & 2	38	56,3421	6,5689	0,35	72	0,7296
		3 & 4	36	55,7778	7,4147			
Hot6R	Self-confid.	1 & 2	38	32,2895	5,2706	-1,49	72	0,1399
		3 & 4	36	34,1667	5,5472			
Hot7R	Self-esteem	1 & 2	38	28,2368	5,7207	-2,93	72	0,0045**
		3 & 4	36	32,0000	5,3023			
Hot8R	Self-control	1 & 2	38	26,1842	3,3760	-1,05	72	0,2959
		3 & 4	36	27,0833	3,9596			
Hot9R	Nervousn.	1 & 2	38	28,0263	5,2787	-1,50	72	0,1388
		3 & 4	36	29,5556	3,3248			
Hot10R	Sociability	1 & 2	38	28,7632	6,9338	-1,31	72	0,1933
		3 & 4	36	30,9167	7,1729			
Hot11R	Formal rel.	1 & 2	38	33,2895	6,5674	-0,39	72	0,6943
		3 & 4	36	33,9167	7,1048			
Hot12R	Ext locus	1 & 2	38	6,5526	4,9138	1,22	72	0,2246
		3 & 4	36	5,3611	3,2351			
Hot13R	S-efficacy	1 & 2	38	396,5527	35,2908	-2,06	72	0,0425*
		3 & 4	36	414,8611	40,9014			

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

\*\* Significant at the 1% significance level

As can be seen from the above table there is a statistically significant difference at the 1% significance level for the variable *self-esteem* ( $p=0,0045$ ) with regard to the comparison of groups 1&2 to groups 3&4, while there is a significant difference at the 5% significance level in respect of *self-efficacy* ( $p=0,0425$ ). The null hypotheses for these variables are rejected and the alternative hypotheses accepted.

## 6.4 Statistical results regarding the subhypotheses

### 6.4.1 Pre-test differences between groups 1 to 5 and group 6

Since there were no statistically significant differences between the various groups on a pre-test level, groups 1 to 5 were combined and compared to group 6 in order to test the subhypotheses which state that groups 1 to 5 combined are significantly different from the MMPI rejected subjects with regard to combinations of, and single variables.

The following Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests for independent values (see table 6.35) were calculated for various groupings of variables:

**Table 6.35**

*Hotelling's  $T^2$  for the comparison of groups 1to5 (all "normal" subjects) to group 6 (MMPI rejected subjects)/pre-test*

Hyp. code	Variable	$T^2$ value	F-value	D.F.	p-value	
ShoT1.1(1-5)/6	S.C. variables	28,5811	9,3816	3	129	0,0000**
ShoT1.2(1-5)/6	PHSF relations	21,3837	3,4279	6	126	0,0036**
SHoT1.3(1-5)/6	All variables	38,7515	2,9581	12	120	0,0012**

\*\* Significant at the 1% significance level

There are statistically significant differences at the 1% significance level between the mean test scores of groups 1 to 5 and the vector of mean test scores of group 6 on a pre-test level in respect of all the above groupings of variables. The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis supported.

Table 6.36 indicates Student's t-tests for independent values in respect of each of the variables tested:

**Table 6.36***t-tests for comparing groups 1 to 5 to group 6/pre-test*

<b>Hyp.code</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>n</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>D.F.</b>	<b>p-value</b>
SHot1	Total S.C.	1 to 5	98	75,8367	9,8981	4,48	47,2	0,0000**
		6	34	64,9706	12,8946			
SHot2	Physical S.	1 to 5	98	13,1020	2,8950	4,07	46,7	0,0001**
		6	34	10,1765	3,8334			
SHot3	Personal S.	1 to 5	98	13,6531	2,9986	3,98	130	0,0000**
		6	34	11,1176	3,7235			
SHot4	S-criticism	1 to 5	98	6,7653	2,0144	0,21	130	0,4178
		6	34	6,6765	2,4951			
SHot5	Accept.O.	1 to 5	98	56,9694	6,7510	2,07	131	0,0201*
		6	35	54,1143	7,6534			
SHot6	Self-confid.	1 to 5	97	32,0928	4,7105	3,04	46,6	0,0019**
		6	35	28,3429	6,7298			
SHot7	Self-esteem	1 to 5	97	27,9588	5,8629	4,25	130	0,0000**
		6	35	22,6857	7,3596			
SHot8	Self-control	1 to 5	97	26,7113	3,9580	0,57	130	0,2865
		6	35	26,2571	4,3948			
SHot9	Nervousn.	1 to 5	97	28,1443	4,1508	1,74	130	0,0424
		6	35	26,5714	5,6583			
SHot10	Sociability	1 to 5	97	29,8454	6,9257	3,67	130	0,0002**
		6	35	24,5714	8,2472			
SHot11	Formal rel.	1 to 5	97	34,0309	5,0486	2,84	130	0,0026**
		6	35	31,1143	5,6296			
SHot12	Ext. locus	1 to 5	98	7,6633	3,8233	-2,81	130	0,0028**
		6	34	9,8235	3,9655			
SHot13	S-efficacy	1 to 5	98	398,1837	41,5718	2,89	131	0,0022**
		6	35	373,5714	47,4969			



\* Significant at the 5% level of significance

\*\* Significant on the 1% level of significance

There is a statistically significant difference at the 5% significance level between the mean scores of group 1 to 5 combined and that of group 6 for the variable *acceptance of others*,  $p=0,0201$ . while for the following variables there is a significant difference at the 1% level:

*Total self-concept*,  $p=0,0000$

*Physical self*,  $p=0,0001$

*Personal self*,  $p=0,0000$

*Self-confidence*,  $p=0,0019$

*Self-esteem*,  $p=0,0000$

*Sociability*,  $p=0,0002$

*Formal relations*,  $p=0,0026$

*Locus of control*,  $p=0,0028$

*Self-efficacy*,  $p=0,0022$



The null hypotheses for the above are rejected and the alternative hypotheses supported.

#### **6.4.2 Pre- and post-test results of group 6b**

The experimental subjects which had been rejected by the MMPI short form (group 6b,  $n=26$ ) were examined with regard to their pre- and post-test results through the calculation of Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests and student's t-tests for paired values (see tables 6.37 and 6.38)

Table 6.37

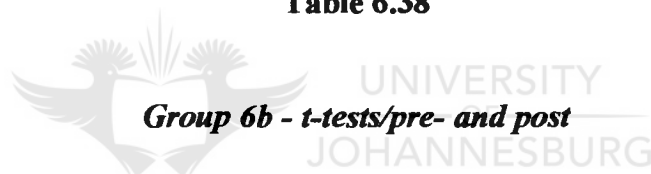
*Group 6b - Hotelling's T<sup>2</sup> tests/pre- and post-test*

Hyp. code	Variable	T <sup>2</sup> value	F-value	D.F		p-value
SHot2.1(6b)	Self-concept	30,0480	9,2147	3,	23	0,0003**
SHot2.2(6b)	PHSF relations	38,9859	5,1981	6,	20	0,0023**
SHot2.3(6B)	All variables	87,8753	4,1008	12,	14	0,0071**

\*\* Significant at the 1% level of significance

There is a statistically significant difference at the 1% significance level between the pre- and post-test scores of group 6b in respect of all the groupings of variables as seen in the above table.

Table 6.38

*Group 6b - t-tests/pre- and post*

Hyp. code	Variable	$\bar{X}_{\text{post}} - \bar{X}_{\text{pre}}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value
SHot2.1(6b)	Total S.C.	8,7308	10,6904	4,16	25	0,0000**
SHot2.2(6b)	Physical self	2,7308	3,2809	4,24	25	0,0000**
SHot2.3(6b)	Personal self	1,7308	3,6283	2,43	25	0,0056*
SHot2.4(6b)	Self-criticism	0,0000	1,5748	0,00	25	0,2500
SHot2.5(6b)	Acceptance O.	-1,3077	6,3357	-1,05	25	0,0756
SHot2.6(6b)	Self-confid.	3,5385	4,9415	3,65	25	0,0003**
SHot2.7(6b)	Self-esteem	6,8462	6,3479	5,50	25	0,0000**
SHot2.8(6b)	Self-control	0,1538	3,1962	0,25	25	0,2020
SHot2.9(6b)	Nervousness	2,0000	4,1280	2,47	25	0,0051*
SHot2.10(6b)	Sociability	2,3077	3,4730	3,39	25	0,0000**
SHot2.11(6b)	Formal relat.	2,0000	3,3106	3,08	25	0,0011**
SHot2.12(6b)	External locus	-2,7600	3,6661	-3,76	24	0,0002**
SHot2.13(6b)	Self-efficacy	23,1923	34,4894	3,43	25	0,0005**

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

\*\* Significant at the 1% significance level

The above table shows that there are statistically significant differences at the 1% significance level between the pre- and post-test scores of group 6b in respect of:

*Total self-concept*,  $p=0,0000$

*Physical self*,  $p=0,0000$

*Self-confidence*,  $p=0,0003$

*Self-esteem*,  $p=0,0000$

*Sociability*,  $p=0,0000$

*Formal relations*,  $p=0,0011$

*External locus of control*,  $0,0002$

*Self-efficacy*,  $p=0,0005$ .

With regard to the variables *personal self* ( $p=0,0056$ ) and *nervousness* ( $p=0,0051$ ) there are statistically significant differences on the 5% significance level. The null hypotheses for these variables are rejected and the alternative hypotheses accepted.

#### 6.4.3 Post-test differences between groups 1 to 4 and group 6b

Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests and student's t-tests for independent values were calculated in order to compare groups 1 to 4, comprising of all experimental subjects, and group 6b which consisted of MMPI rejected experimental subjects (tables 6.39 and 6.40).

**Table 6. 39**

***Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests for comparing groups 1 to 4 (all experimental groups combined) to group 6b (MMPI rejected experimental subjects)/post-test***

<b>Hyp. code</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b><math>T^2</math> value</b>	<b>F-value</b>	<b>D.F.</b>	<b>p-value</b>
SHoT3.1 (1-4)/6b	Tot. S.C.	3,7987	1,2412	3 99	0,2989
SHoT3.2	PHSF relations	8,9686	1,4208	6 96	0,2146

(1-4)/6b

SHoT3.3 All variables 22,1617 1,6902 12 90 0,0825

(1-4)/6b

For the various groupings of variables as seen in table 5.39 there were no statistically significant differences between groups 1 to 4 and groups 6b. The null hypotheses are not rejected.

**Table 6.40***t-tests for the comparison of groups 1 to 4 to group 6b/post-test*

Hyp.code	Variable	Group	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value																																																																																																												
SHot3.1	Total S.C.	1 to 4	77	78,9091	9,1984	2,10	101	0,0382*																																																																																																												
		6b	26	74,1923	11,7916				SHot3.2	Physical S.	1 to 4	77	14,0649	2,5820	1,33	32,5	0,1917	6b	26	12,9615	3,9444	SHot3.3	Personal S.	1 to 4	77	14,2857	3,0857	1,84	101	0,0680	6b	26	12,8846	4,0430	SHot3.4	S-criticism	1 to 4	77	6,2208	2,0172	-0,93	101	0,3565	6b	26	6,6538	2,1898	SHot3.5	Accept. O.	1 to 4	77	55,5195	8,0191	1,13	101	0,2608	6b	26	53,5385	6,7423	SHot3.6	Self-confid.	1 to 4	73	33,6712	5,4647	1,47	97	0,1448	6b	26	31,8077	5,7898	SHot3.7	Self-esteem	1 to 4	73	29,9452	6,6685	0,19	97	0,8522	6b	26	29,6538	7,2660	SHot3.8	Self-control	1 to 4	73	27,7260	3,7832	1,35	97	0,1795	6b	26	26,5385	4,0222	SHot3.9	Nervousn.	1 to 4	73	28,6712	4,2657	-0,64	97	0,5247	6b	26	29,3462	5,5421	SHot3.10	Sociability	1 to 4	73
SHot3.2	Physical S.	1 to 4	77	14,0649	2,5820	1,33	32,5	0,1917																																																																																																												
		6b	26	12,9615	3,9444				SHot3.3	Personal S.	1 to 4	77	14,2857	3,0857	1,84	101	0,0680	6b	26	12,8846	4,0430	SHot3.4	S-criticism	1 to 4	77	6,2208	2,0172	-0,93	101	0,3565	6b	26	6,6538	2,1898	SHot3.5	Accept. O.	1 to 4	77	55,5195	8,0191	1,13	101	0,2608	6b	26	53,5385	6,7423	SHot3.6	Self-confid.	1 to 4	73	33,6712	5,4647	1,47	97	0,1448	6b	26	31,8077	5,7898	SHot3.7	Self-esteem	1 to 4	73	29,9452	6,6685	0,19	97	0,8522	6b	26	29,6538	7,2660	SHot3.8	Self-control	1 to 4	73	27,7260	3,7832	1,35	97	0,1795	6b	26	26,5385	4,0222	SHot3.9	Nervousn.	1 to 4	73	28,6712	4,2657	-0,64	97	0,5247	6b	26	29,3462	5,5421	SHot3.10	Sociability	1 to 4	73	29,7123	7,0602	0,87	97	0,3887								
SHot3.3	Personal S.	1 to 4	77	14,2857	3,0857	1,84	101	0,0680																																																																																																												
		6b	26	12,8846	4,0430				SHot3.4	S-criticism	1 to 4	77	6,2208	2,0172	-0,93	101	0,3565	6b	26	6,6538	2,1898	SHot3.5	Accept. O.	1 to 4	77	55,5195	8,0191	1,13	101	0,2608	6b	26	53,5385	6,7423	SHot3.6	Self-confid.	1 to 4	73	33,6712	5,4647	1,47	97	0,1448	6b	26	31,8077	5,7898	SHot3.7	Self-esteem	1 to 4	73	29,9452	6,6685	0,19	97	0,8522	6b	26	29,6538	7,2660	SHot3.8	Self-control	1 to 4	73	27,7260	3,7832	1,35	97	0,1795	6b	26	26,5385	4,0222	SHot3.9	Nervousn.	1 to 4	73	28,6712	4,2657	-0,64	97	0,5247	6b	26	29,3462	5,5421	SHot3.10	Sociability	1 to 4	73	29,7123	7,0602	0,87	97	0,3887																					
SHot3.4	S-criticism	1 to 4	77	6,2208	2,0172	-0,93	101	0,3565																																																																																																												
		6b	26	6,6538	2,1898				SHot3.5	Accept. O.	1 to 4	77	55,5195	8,0191	1,13	101	0,2608	6b	26	53,5385	6,7423	SHot3.6	Self-confid.	1 to 4	73	33,6712	5,4647	1,47	97	0,1448	6b	26	31,8077	5,7898	SHot3.7	Self-esteem	1 to 4	73	29,9452	6,6685	0,19	97	0,8522	6b	26	29,6538	7,2660	SHot3.8	Self-control	1 to 4	73	27,7260	3,7832	1,35	97	0,1795	6b	26	26,5385	4,0222	SHot3.9	Nervousn.	1 to 4	73	28,6712	4,2657	-0,64	97	0,5247	6b	26	29,3462	5,5421	SHot3.10	Sociability	1 to 4	73	29,7123	7,0602	0,87	97	0,3887																																		
SHot3.5	Accept. O.	1 to 4	77	55,5195	8,0191	1,13	101	0,2608																																																																																																												
		6b	26	53,5385	6,7423				SHot3.6	Self-confid.	1 to 4	73	33,6712	5,4647	1,47	97	0,1448	6b	26	31,8077	5,7898	SHot3.7	Self-esteem	1 to 4	73	29,9452	6,6685	0,19	97	0,8522	6b	26	29,6538	7,2660	SHot3.8	Self-control	1 to 4	73	27,7260	3,7832	1,35	97	0,1795	6b	26	26,5385	4,0222	SHot3.9	Nervousn.	1 to 4	73	28,6712	4,2657	-0,64	97	0,5247	6b	26	29,3462	5,5421	SHot3.10	Sociability	1 to 4	73	29,7123	7,0602	0,87	97	0,3887																																															
SHot3.6	Self-confid.	1 to 4	73	33,6712	5,4647	1,47	97	0,1448																																																																																																												
		6b	26	31,8077	5,7898				SHot3.7	Self-esteem	1 to 4	73	29,9452	6,6685	0,19	97	0,8522	6b	26	29,6538	7,2660	SHot3.8	Self-control	1 to 4	73	27,7260	3,7832	1,35	97	0,1795	6b	26	26,5385	4,0222	SHot3.9	Nervousn.	1 to 4	73	28,6712	4,2657	-0,64	97	0,5247	6b	26	29,3462	5,5421	SHot3.10	Sociability	1 to 4	73	29,7123	7,0602	0,87	97	0,3887																																																												
SHot3.7	Self-esteem	1 to 4	73	29,9452	6,6685	0,19	97	0,8522																																																																																																												
		6b	26	29,6538	7,2660				SHot3.8	Self-control	1 to 4	73	27,7260	3,7832	1,35	97	0,1795	6b	26	26,5385	4,0222	SHot3.9	Nervousn.	1 to 4	73	28,6712	4,2657	-0,64	97	0,5247	6b	26	29,3462	5,5421	SHot3.10	Sociability	1 to 4	73	29,7123	7,0602	0,87	97	0,3887																																																																									
SHot3.8	Self-control	1 to 4	73	27,7260	3,7832	1,35	97	0,1795																																																																																																												
		6b	26	26,5385	4,0222				SHot3.9	Nervousn.	1 to 4	73	28,6712	4,2657	-0,64	97	0,5247	6b	26	29,3462	5,5421	SHot3.10	Sociability	1 to 4	73	29,7123	7,0602	0,87	97	0,3887																																																																																						
SHot3.9	Nervousn.	1 to 4	73	28,6712	4,2657	-0,64	97	0,5247																																																																																																												
		6b	26	29,3462	5,5421				SHot3.10	Sociability	1 to 4	73	29,7123	7,0602	0,87	97	0,3887																																																																																																			
SHot3.10	Sociability	1 to 4	73	29,7123	7,0602	0,87	97	0,3887																																																																																																												

		6b	26	28,3077	7,2264			
SHot3.11	Formal rel.	1 to 4	73	34,4521	5,5977	1,05	97	0,2984
		6b	26	33,1538	4,9452			
SHot3.12	Ext. locus	1 to 4	77	5,1039	3,3466	-1,74	33,4	0,0912
		6b	26	6,8846	4,8442			
SHot3.13	S-efficacy	1 to 4	77	416,8312	45,5037	1,93	101	0,0560
		6b	26	396,4615	49,2506			

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of groups 1 to 4 as compared to group 6b on a post-test level in respect of total self-concept variable. The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis supported.

For all other variables measured the null hypotheses are not rejected.

#### 6.4.4 Post- and re-test comparisons for group 6b

Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests and student's t-tests were calculated for group 6b in order to establish whether the subjects maintained their improved self-image over a period of 5 months. The findings are presented in tables 6.41 and 6.42:

**Table 6.41**

***Group 6b - Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests/post- and re-test***

Hyp. code	Variable	$T^2$ value	F-value	D.F.		p-value
SHoT4.1(6b)	S.C. variables	4,9302	1,5005	3	21	0,2435
SHoT4.2(6b)	PHSF relations	20,4708	2,6701	6	18	0,0494*
SHoT4.3(6b)	All variables	59,0433	2,5671	12	12	0,0580

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

With regard to the PHSF relations combined, there is a significant difference between post- and re-test scores at the 5% significance level. The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis supported.

For the other combinations of variables the null hypotheses are not rejected.

**Table 6.42**

*t-tests for group 6b/post- and re-test*

Hyp. code	Variable	$\bar{X}_{re} - \bar{X}_{post}$	S.D.	t-value	D.F.	p-value
SHot4.1(6b)	Total S.C.	0,7083	9,3599	0,37	23	0,7142
SHot4.2(6b)	Physical self	0,0833	3,3740	0,12	23	0,9047
SHot4.3(6b)	Personal self	0,9583	3,5075	1,34	23	0,1938
SHot4.4(6b)	Self-criticism	-0,4583	1,7440	-1,29	23	0,2107
SHot4.5(6b)	Acceptance O.	3,4583	8,3509	2,03	23	0,0542
SHot4.6(6b)	Self-confid.	0,5000	4,9519	0,49	23	0,6255
SHot4.7(6b)	Self-esteem	-0,7500	7,1277	-0,52	23	0,6111
SHot4.8(6b)	Self-control	0,5417	3,8896	0,68	23	0,5019
SHot4.9(6b)	Nervousness	0,5000	3,3492	0,73	23	0,4719
SHot4.10(6b)	Sociability	1,7500	3,2471	2,64	23	0,0146*
SHot4.11(6b)	Formal relat.	-1,9167	5,9994	-1,57	23	0,1312
SHot4.12(6b)	External locus	0,7971	2,6699	1,45	23	0,1598
SHot4.13(6b)	Self-efficacy	-8,5417	26,6735	-1,57	23	0,1304

\* Significant at the 5% significance level

There is a significant difference at the 5% significance level for the variable sociability ( $p=0,0146$ ). The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis supported.

For all other variables there are no significant differences and the null hypotheses are not rejected.

## **6.5 Summary**

The statistical results of pre-test investigations, comparisons of pre-and post-test, as well as post- and re-test results for various groups and group combinations were presented in this chapter. Comparisons of group results on various test levels were also included.

The results tabulated here are explained according to the main and subhypotheses formulated for this research in the following chapter.



## **CHAPTER 7**

### ***DISCUSSION OF RESULTS***

#### **7.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the results that are presented in the previous chapter are interpreted and discussed. As can be seen from the hypotheses formulated in chapter 5, variables and certain combinations of variables have been tested with regard to the following:

- Each group's results are compared with regard to pre- and post test differences, as well as post- and re-test differences after five months.
- Differences between the groups as well as certain group combinations with regard to the various test levels are also investigated.
- Results are discussed in terms of main- and subhypotheses.

Besides the design of a self-image enhancement programme for adults, the objective of this research was to evaluate the effectiveness of this programme. This was done by measuring any changes that occur on a short and medium term level after the experimental groups took part in the self-image enhancement programme. A further aim of this research was to establish if there are any differences regarding the effectiveness of various types of training approaches.

Significant changes between pre- and post-test findings would demonstrate that change in adulthood is possible, and that the self-image enhancement programme is successful in achieving such. The findings with regard to post- and re-test results are indicative of the medium term effect of the self-image enhancement programme on the self-concept and related variables.



Differences between various groups and group combinations furnish the researcher with information regarding the efficiency of various training approaches. On a post-test level experimental groups that attended the three day programme were compared to groups participating in the 12 sessions programme. The re-test level comparisons involved the investigation of results for the three day versus the 12 sessions programme and results of groups that, in addition also had individual follow-up sessions versus groups that did not, were also compared.

The subhypotheses revolve around possible changes with regard to the MMPI rejected subjects who were identified as having emotional or adjustment problems. According to the subhypotheses the predicted improvements due to the self-image enhancement programme are the same as for the psychologically normal experimental groups. Findings that lead to the acceptance of the alternative subhypotheses would indicate that the programme is also effective for individuals who display emotional difficulties. Re-test versus post-test comparisons of the rejected experimental group also investigate possible medium term effects of the self-image enhancement programme.

On a post-test level the rejected experimental group is compared to the normal experimental groups. Since they were also compared on a pre-test level, the absence of significant differences after the intervention would be due to the group changes that resulted from the effect of the programme.

## **7.2 Pre-test investigations**

As can be seen from chapter 6, pre-test investigations were used in order to ensure that only psychologically healthy subjects were being included in the statistical analyses regarding the main hypotheses. A surprisingly high number of subjects (35 out of 133) were rejected by the MMPI, the screening device. As mentioned in chapter 5, the MMPI is a highly sensitive measurement instrument and has been noted for identifying psychological problems, maladjustment, and a moderate amount of psychopathology in normal populations. The current results are therefore in line with previous findings.

Although these rejected subjects from the different groups still participated in the self-image enhancement programme, they formed a subgroup for the statistical analyses. They were excluded from the statistical investigations testing the main hypotheses, and were investigated with regard to subhypotheses.

With regard to the main hypotheses the comparison of statistically similar groups did take place since no initial significant differences were found between the various groups of normal subjects on a pre-test level as can be seen from tables 6.1 and 6.2. In comparing the groups of normal subjects with the MMPI rejected group a significant difference was established (see tables 6.35 and 6.36) confirming the fact that the psychologically healthy subjects do have a better self-concept and differ significantly with regard to the variables chosen for this research.

### **7.3 Discussion of results regarding the main hypotheses**

#### **7.3.1 Pre-versus post-test - experimental and control groups**

As reported in chapter 2, the literature abounds with conflicting views regarding the possibility of adult self-concept change. While the consistency theories are opposed to the self-enhancement theories, it seemed necessary to formulate an integrated view. In this regard, change in adulthood takes place within the framework of certain stable characteristics of an individual. Against the background of bringing together consistency and change, the change aspects are of particular importance since the research focuses on the possibility of adult improvement, and change also plays a vital role in terms of the integrated view discussed earlier. With regard to the interpretation of the research findings emphasis is therefore placed on the aspects of change achieved through the self-image enhancement programme.

##### *1) All experimental groups combined*

The comparison of the pre- and post-test results of all experimental groups combined showed highly significant results. Although various groups were exposed to different

training approaches, all groups that underwent the self-image enhancement programme taken together improved significantly with regard to all combinations of variables on the 1% significance level (see table 6.3). In terms of *total self-concept* as measured by Vrey's Adolescent Self-Concept Scale, various *PHSF relations* measured through the Personal, Home, Social, and Formal Relations Questionnaire, as well as *all variables* used in this research combined, the self-image enhancement programme has been shown to be effective.

Most single variables used in this research also showed significant improvements, as can be seen from table 6.4. For all variables but one that showed improvement, the changes after the self-image enhancement programme were established at the 1% significance level. All changes occurred in the expected directions, which means that the self-image enhancement programme was successful in improving the *total self-concept*, *physical self*, *personal self*, *self-confidence*, *self-esteem*, *self-control* (this change was significant on the 5% significance level), and *self-efficacy*. *Self-criticism* and *external locus of control* were reduced significantly for the experimental groups, as was predicted in the alternative hypotheses.

These highly significant findings confirm that change in adulthood can be achieved for overall self-concept and certain other variables considered relevant with regard to self-concept. This underlines Sullivan's (1989) theory of the individual striving to achieve his best. It also supports Hauser's (1989) view of the fact that self-esteem can be raised, and Lecky's (1973) opinion that individuals need to free themselves of inhibiting self-definitions. All three authors are associated with the integrated view of adult self-concept where change is defined as taking place around a stable inner essence.

In terms of these results one is reminded of Demo's (1992) theory which explains that, although a person's self-feelings remain stable over long periods, certain situations the person experiences lead to changed self-perceptions. The self-image enhancement programme must be considered such a situation. It created enough impact to influence the participants' self-evaluations and self-views reflected through the improvements of the *total self-concept*, *physical and personal self*, *self-confidence*, and *self-esteem*. Following

Epstein's (1973) formulation, the programme achieved to widen the individuals' self-theories.

This changed thinking has also been confirmed in the increase of *self-efficacy*, since theorists such as Bandura (1980), Krueger and Dickson (1994) and Mager (1992) have linked self-efficacy to the perceptions and self-views a person holds (see chapter 4). The same applies to the decrease in external *locus of control* which highlights, according to Rotter (1966) discussed in chapter 4, that positive expectancies in the form of positive self-thoughts operationalise themselves in terms of greater internal locus of control. The current findings support this view which implies that the individual with a better self-concept accepts personal responsibility for various situations and their outcomes more readily (see chapter 4).

Regarding the increase of *self-control*, and the decrease of *self-criticism*, comparisons with other studies are not available.

In general, as discussed in chapter 2, previous studies did not produce conclusive results in the area of self-image enhancement. It must however be emphasised that many researchers, who did not establish significant changes after an intervention, used small samples. The studies of Leonard (1983) who used 15 experimental and 15 control subjects, Tuck (1984) with eight subjects, and Van der Riet's research (1985) with 12 experimental and 10 control group members, come to mind. On the other hand, researchers such as Birkland (1989), Rubi (1990) and Dierks (1991) used larger samples and found significant improvements. Although other factors, as discussed in chapter 3, also play a role with regard to effectiveness of training groups, the results of this research with a sample of 135 subjects can, in comparison, be considered more reliable in indicating the possibility for adult self-concept change.

The null hypotheses were not rejected with regard to *acceptance of others*, *nervousness*, *sociability*, and *formal relations*, all of which remained unchanged. The variable *nervousness* had been included in the research as a relevant variable with regard to self-concept since it was assumed that it might be associated with self-confidence. However the self-image enhancement programme has not led to changes of this variable. Perhaps

these findings show that nervousness does not reflect self-concept changes but, since no other previous studies were found testing this particular variable in relation to self-concept development, comparisons are not possible. Final conclusions with regard to this variable cannot be made and further research is required.

*Acceptance of others, sociability, and formal relations* were included in this investigation because, as discussed in previous chapters, there is strong evidence in the literature that self-concept influences one's relationship with others and vice versa. It is interesting to note that the experimental groups taken together did not change with regard to interpersonal aspects. This is in contrast with various theories mentioned in chapter 4, such as Fromm's (1939), Allport's (1970), Maslow's (1967), and Rogers' (1961/1995).

Previous findings, such as those reported by Rubin (1967), showed an increase in self-acceptance with a decrease in prejudice, while Le Roux Ferreira (1992) established an improvement of the social self alongside an increased level of self-respect and a better self-concept (see chapter 2). Other studies, however, also reported in this dissertation, are the one by Del Polito (1973) who could not confirm that a better self-concept correlates with improved communicational abilities, and Faul's (1978) research where empathy did not correlate significantly with self-esteem, support the results of this study.

While all intra-personal variables considered central in terms of the self-concept do show changes, the fact that variables which relate to the relationship with others did not change, could indicate that self-concept improvement is not reflected by interpersonal changes. It could also mean that relations with others are not affected by self-concept changes as expected. An explanation for this could be that the participants did not have sufficient time to practice interpersonal skills, especially in the case of the massed sessions groups as opposed to the spaced sessions programme (see later). More time and effort were devoted to address self-image issues on an intra-psychic level.

It must, however, also be kept in mind that Epstein and Feist (1988) emphasise the danger of oversimplifying the relationship between self-regard and regard for others. They maintain that other factors, such as the characteristics of the other person and perceived similarities for instance, also play a role with regard to interpersonal dimensions. A mere

comparing of self-concept and interpersonal measures presents an oversimplification in this regard. This means that the findings regarding the variables such as *acceptance of others, sociability* and *formal relations* must be understood within the context of methodological difficulties as well as the intra-personal focus taken in programme. Further research with regard to the variables that relate to interpersonal relationships, associated with self-concept improvement, is required.

Although there were no significant changes in the areas of *nervousness* and interpersonal aspects, the results confirm that the groups that attended the self-image enhancement programme felt better about themselves, believed more in their own capabilities, and began to criticise themselves less. As can be seen from chapter 4, these changed variables are based on certain changed beliefs and self-perceptions which ultimately lead to different behaviour. The findings certainly support the view that individuals can change during adulthood.

The stability aspect was also highlighted in chapter 2, as part of the integrated view, following the results of Morrissey's (1993) study whose subjects did not show any changes on the 16 PF after group therapy. The Pennsylvania State Department (1987) also did not find any changes with regard to personality tests. The literature does not seem to clearly demarcate the areas of personality trait testing versus self-concept measurement, a distinction which would provide clearer results. Various studies, also reported in chapter 2, did not utilise personality tests, but rather measured variables such as self-respect, self-esteem and other self-perceptions. Numerous of these studies also achieved significant improvements after intervention programmes unless very small samples were used. The current research results confirm these findings of self-concept improvement, rather than changes of personality traits.

Based on previous research results and the findings of this research, it is concluded that, while personality tests tend to reflect the stability of the personality, self-concept variables on the other hand, are more likely to indicate changes of self-feelings and self-evaluations. A measure of stability which could have been provided by a personality test was not included in this study, since the emphasis of the research questions revolves around the possibility of adult change as part of the integrated view formulated in chapter 2.

Improvement of self-perceptions have been indicated through significant changes of group scores regarding the variables of *total self-concept*, *physical* and *personal self*, *self-confidence*, *self-esteem*, *self-control*, *locus of control*, and *self-efficacy*.

## 2) Control group

In comparing the pre- and post test results as shown in table 6.5 the null hypotheses were not rejected for *all the combinations of variables*, confirming the findings regarding the effectiveness of the self-image enhancement programme with regard to the experimental groups.

From table 6.6 it can be seen that for all but two single variables the null hypotheses were also not rejected. A puzzling finding is the fact that in this group the *acceptance of others* and *formal relations*, which remained unchanged for the experimental groups, dropped significantly (at the 5% significance level) for the control group. It is however assumed that this could be due to a nuisance factor, especially since all the other, specifically self-concept related variables, showed no significant differences.

While the self-image enhancement programme was effective for the experimental groups taken together, the control group did not show any improvements in terms of *total self-concept*, *physical* and *personal self*, *self-confidence*, *self-esteem*, *self-control*, *locus of control* and *self-efficacy*. The integrated view formulated in chapter 2 which places change alongside consistency, has been underlined by the results of the experimental groups' changes versus the control group's lack of changes regarding the central aspects of the self-concept.

## 3) Each experimental group

### a) The 3 day programme - group 1

For this experimental group all combinations of variables showed significant changes on a pre- versus post-test comparison. *All variables* together were found to be significantly different at the 1% significance level while the *self-concept variables* and the *PHSF*

*relations* differed at the 5% significance level (see table 6.7). Therefore it can be concluded that the three day version of the self-image enhancement programme is effective in achieving change for the various combinations of variables tested. This is in line with other research findings mentioned in chapter 2. Rubi's (1990) subjects for instance, achieved better self-esteem and academic self-concept following a massed sessions programme and Morrissey (1993) found significant changes on the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale after brief group therapy.

In terms of the single variables the following changed in the expected direction at the 1% significance level: *total self-concept*, *physical self*, *self-confidence*, *locus of control*, and *self-efficacy*. *Self-esteem* improved significantly at the 5% significance level, and *self-criticism* was reduced significantly at the 5% significance level as predicted according to the alternative hypotheses.

An interesting finding is the fact that *acceptance of others* did not increase after the self-image enhancement programme as was expected, but instead was significantly reduced at the 1% significance level. Although, as discussed in chapter 4, self-acceptance seems to be closely linked to acceptance of others, it seems possible that individuals who feel more in control of their lives and are more self-assured due to a better self-concept, become more impatient and less tolerant with others. It was mentioned above, that this area requires further research before conclusions in this direction can be made.

The variables that remained unchanged for this group were *personal self*, *self-control*, *nervousness*, *sociability*, and *formal relations*. Except for the variable *personal self*, the variables that did not change were the ones defined as peripheral with regard to self-concept and conclusions regarding these variables were presented above. With regard to the variable *self-control* no other previous studies are available for comparisons.

#### b) The 12 sessions programme - group 2

Table 6.9 shows no significant changes with regard to the various combinations of variables, *total self-concept*, *PHSF relations*, and *all variables* combined for the spaced sessions programme. The null hypotheses could therefore not be rejected. With regard to



the single variables, the 12 sessions programme also showed fewer significant changes. *Locus of control* and *self-efficacy* improved at the 1% significance level, *self-esteem* and *formal relations* at the 5% level.

At first glance it seems, comparing these results with those of the three day programme, that a massed sessions intervention is more effective. This is also in line with the findings of King et al. (1973), Guinan and Foulds (1970), and Stanton (1975) who all found massed sessions more effective. However, as will be seen later, a MANOVA and ANOVA comparing all experimental groups at the post-test level do not confirm this.

In comparison Dierks (1991), whose study was reported in chapter 2, did not achieve improved self-esteem and generalised self-efficacy, although self-efficacy for specific social situations improved significantly. Smith's (1989) results showed an increase in general self-efficacy but no changes in locus of control. Leonard's (1983) and Wurtz's (1983) findings following spaced session programmes were contradictory with Leonard not achieving significant improvements and Wurtz finding significant changes. It was, however, mentioned before that the lengths of the programmes could have been a deciding factor regarding these two studies.

It needs to be concluded that self-esteem and self-efficacy changes are achievable through spaced sessions. In terms of *locus of control* the results of this research, added to previous findings, have to be considered inconclusive. With regard to *formal relations* no comparisons with other studies have been available, except that Del Polito (1973) found no improvement of communicational abilities with self-concept changes. This contradicts the findings of this research regarding the improved *formal relations* established in this particular group. A deciding factor for this could be the spaced sessions approach since none of the massed sessions training showed any improvements in the area of interpersonal variables. It is interesting to note that for the 12 sessions group with individual follow-up an improved *acceptance of others* was recorded, which is another interpersonal variable (see later).

c) The 3 day programme with individual follow-up - group 3

It must be kept in mind, that the factor of individual follow-up for group 3 comes into play after the medium term and can only be considered for interpretation on the re-test level. Here the results reported reflect merely the effectiveness of the training programme. At this pre- versus post test level group 3 does not differ from group 1 with regard to the training approach.

Significant improvements were found at the 5% significance level for the *self-concept variables* combined and the *PHSF relations* combined. This indicates that the three day programme was effective with regard to these combinations of variables, but for *all variables* combined, no significant changes were found.

Regarding the investigation of single variables, this group displayed significant changes at the 1% significance level for *total self-concept, personal self, self-confidence, self-esteem, locus of control,* and *self-efficacy*. *Physical self* improved at the 5% significance level.

d) The 12 sessions programme with individual follow-up - group 4

According to table 6.13 none of the combinations of variables showed any significant changes regarding the pre- versus post-test comparison for this group and the null hypotheses were not rejected. The same results were found with regard to the 12 sessions programme without the individual follow-up reported earlier, while both three day programmes did mostly show significant changes. This would again point to a greater effectiveness of the massed sessions programme (see point made above).

Regarding the single variables, *locus of control* and *acceptance of others* improved at the 1% significance level, *self-efficacy* at the 5% significance level. The 12 sessions self-image enhancement programme can be considered effective in achieving the improvement of central self-concept variables. It is interesting to note that this is the only experimental group that showed an increase in *acceptance of others* as was hypothesised. In all other groups the changes were in the opposite direction. This would require caution in terms of placing conclusive meaning on this finding.

### 7.3.2 Post-test comparisons - experimental groups

#### 1) *All experimental groups*

The MANOVA results in table 6.15 reveal no significant differences between any of the experimental groups on a post-test level. Although the previously reported findings point to a greater effectiveness of the three day programme, the statistical analysis of the group differences does not confirm this. A significant difference in terms of effectiveness between massed and spaced sessions programmes regarding the combination of variables *self-concept, PHSF relations, and all variables* combined that were used in this research could not be established. The ANOVA's results in table 6.16 also show no significant differences between the groups with regard to the single variables tested after the self-image enhancement programme. This confirms the above conclusion and the null hypotheses are not rejected.

Similar results were achieved by Watkins, Noll and Breed (1975), as reported in chapter 3. While their massed training resulted in significant changes and the distributed sessions did not, co-variance analyses also did not confirm greater effectiveness of massed sessions. Although, at first glance, massed sessions seem to produce more positive changes, the differences regarding all the groups taken together are not statistically significant to identify one particular approach as more effective.

#### 2) *Groups 1&2 versus groups 2&4 - 3 day versus 12 sessions programme*

The results that can be seen from tables 6.17 and 6.18 show no significant differences between groups 1&2 and groups 2&4 on a post-test level. The null hypotheses could not be rejected and the above findings of no significant difference between the massed and spaced programmes in terms of their effectiveness is confirmed.

### 7.3.3 Post- and re-test differences - experimental groups

#### 1) All experimental groups combined

In order to establish how effective the self-image enhancement programme is after an amount of time has elapsed, the experimental groups were tested again five months after the intervention.

Table 6.19 reveals that no significant changes have occurred between the post- and re-test levels for the combined *self-concept variables*, the *PHSF relations* combined, and *all variables* combined. This indicates that the effectiveness of the self-image enhancement programme is maintained on a medium term level for the various combinations of variables.

Regarding the single variables used in this research all remained unchanged except *self-control* and *self-efficacy*. Compared to the immediate effect of the training programme reported earlier the scores of these two variables were reduced at the 5% significance level five months later (see table 6.20). These results reveal that the self-image enhancement programme maintained its effect over the medium term with regard to all but two variables.

The fact that *self-control* decreased again after five months indicates that individuals might not be able to stay with the self-discipline they were motivated to develop and practice as a result of the training course. It could also point to a difficulty one experiences to sustain a level of commitment with regard to controlling one's emotions and habits once faced with real life issues.

The decrease of *self-efficacy*, which showed a specifically good improvement after the self-image enhancement programme, is also an interesting finding. While the *total self-concept* and aspects central to the self-concept, such as *self-confidence* and *self-esteem* remained unchanged, in other words, did not decrease again over the five month period following the self-image enhancement programme, it seems more difficult to maintain *self-efficacy* over a longer period of time. After the intense, perhaps elevated positive feelings

developed through the self-image enhancement experience, it is obviously much harder to feel like that in the back home setting of every day life. During day-to-day experiences subjects come across various situations in which their newly developed efficacy thinking is challenged. It is quite possible that the course participants do become disillusioned with the actual lack of control they come across in many situations.

This tendency points to the necessity of addressing specific skills training over and above the general self-improvement programme which has been shown to be successful in achieving a better self-image. This subject is discussed further in chapter 8.

### *2) The 3 day programme - group 1*

The same results as in the case of all experimental groups combined, were found in the case of group 1 which consisted of subjects who attended the 3 day programme (see tables 6.21 and 6.22). This is in contrast with a commonly held assumption that the impact and effect of a massed sessions programme is rather transient as reported by Burns (1979; see chapter 3). The aspect of an elevated feeling after an intensive group experience which is expected to wane after a certain amount of time has elapsed, was also raised by Tuck (1984), discussed in chapter 2.

But the findings of this research, and those of Rubi (1990) reported in chapter 2, who also re-tested subjects after five, and again after nine months, provide evidence to the contrary. Most self-concept improvements of this research were sustained over the medium term periods and massed sessions programmes can be considered effective past their immediate impact.

### *3) The 12 sessions programme - group 2*

Group 2 displayed a difference between post- and re-test level for the variable combination *PHSF relations*. The change was significant at the 5% level as can be seen from table 6.23 and can be traced to the single variable *sociability* in table 6.24.

All other variables remained unchanged over the five months period following the self-image enhancement programme indicating that the effectiveness of the spaced sessions self-image enhancement programme was also well maintained on a medium term level.

As reported in chapter 5, the variable *sociability* of the PHSF relations questionnaire reflects a person's need for and spontaneous participation in group interaction. The increased score on the post-test level indicates that this group has developed further in terms of interpersonal and group aspects as time went on. These findings suggest that a spaced training intervention, characterised by extended group interaction spread out over various weeks, enhances the individuals' tendency for group participation. This is in contrast with the findings for the three day groups and it must be concluded that spaced sessions programmes play a greater role in terms of the improvement of interpersonal aspects. As was mentioned earlier, the 12 sessions programme possibly offers more opportunities for practicing interpersonal skills.

However, these findings were not recorded with regard to the 12 sessions programme that included individual follow-up (see later on) and could therefore not be confirmed. The difference in findings could be due to the specific group dynamics found in these groups and caution is required with regard to generalised interpretations in this area. Further research will be needed to verify this aspect.

### *3) 3 day programme with individual follow-up sessions - group 3*

#### *12 sessions programme with individual follow-up - group 4*

All combinations of variables as well as single variables investigated, remained unchanged over the five months period for both above groups. This suggests that the effectiveness of the self-image enhancement programme was maintained for the massed sessions as well as for the spaced sessions groups with individual follow-up. No previous research results were available for comparisons with regard to the impact of individual follow-up.

It must be kept in mind though that group 2, the three day group without individual follow-up discussed above, also showed no loss of previously achieved improvements. Group 1, on the other hand, was the only group where a significant reduction of two of

the variables was found. This means that the three day programme without individual follow-up sessions, although having achieved highly significant self-image changes, as well as self-efficacy improvement on a post-test level, did not maintain *self-control* and *self-efficacy* over a five months period as was reported earlier.

It is interesting to note that both groups, groups 3 and 4, had individual follow-up sessions during the months following the self-image-enhancement programmes, while group 2 which also maintained the improvements was a 12 sessions group without follow-up. These results would point in the direction that individual follow-up on the one hand, or spaced sessions on the other, would help to maintain the positive effect of the self-image enhancement programme. However this could not be confirmed since there was no statistically significant difference between any of the experimental groups on a re-test level (see below). These findings could well be due to methodological problems which will be addressed in the next chapter.

#### 7.3.4 Re-test comparisons

##### 1) *All experimental groups*

The MANOVA and ANOVA results shown in tables 6.29 and 6.30 do not indicate any significant differences between any of the experimental groups five months after the completion of the self-image enhancement programme. From these results it must be concluded that none of the training approaches can be considered significantly more effective than any of the others in maintaining self-image improvement over a medium term period, although methodological considerations must be kept in mind which will be dealt with later.

##### 2) *Three day versus 12 sessions training - groups 1&3 versus groups 2&4*

Tables 6.31 and 6.32 reveal the results of comparing the three day groups, namely groups 1&3, to the 12 sessions groups, groups 2&4. None of the variable combinations as well as single variables show any significant differences between these groupings, indicating that

none of the training approaches, massed or spaced, could be considered superior in maintaining the effects of the self-image enhancement programme on a medium term level.

### *3) Training with individual follow-up versus no follow-up as part of the intervention - groups 1&2 versus groups 3&4*

With regard to the combinations of variables, no significant differences were found between the two above mentioned groups.

In terms of single variables, two displayed significant differences, namely the variables *self-esteem* and *self-efficacy*. The individual follow-up groups, groups 3&4 showed a significantly higher group average of *self-esteem* at the 1% significance level, as well as a significantly higher group average of *self-efficacy* than the groups that had no individual follow-up. These findings would lead one to conclude that individual follow-up assists in maintaining improved self-esteem and self-efficacy, especially since it was the self-efficacy which was particularly reduced again after a five months period for the three day group without individual follow-up.

It is of importance to note that these differences with regard to the effectiveness of training groups depending on the inclusion of individual follow-up have not been confirmed statistically through the MANOVA and ANOVA completed for the comparison of all experimental groups on a re-test level reported above.

## **7.4 Discussion of statistical results regarding the subhypotheses**

### **7.4.1 Pre-test comparisons - groups 1 to 5 versus group 6**

While all experimental groups (groups 1 to 5) and the control group (group 6) displayed no significant differences on a pre-test level, it was assumed that the MMPI rejected subjects that were grouped together for statistical purposes as group 6 must be significantly different from all the other groups combined. The direction of the various differences expected can be seen from table 4.3 that spells out the alternative hypotheses.



With regard to the various combinations of variables, group 6 differed significantly at the 1% significance level from groups 1 to 5 combined (see table 6.35). According to table 6.36 the results regarding the single variables show significant differences in the predicted directions for all but three variables. *Self-criticism*, *self-control*, and *nervousness* were not significantly different for these groups and the null hypotheses could not be rejected for these.

The findings regarding all other variables confirm that group 6 which was made up of individuals who were identified as having psychological problems, showed significantly lower scores for *total self-concept*, *physical self*, *personal self*, *acceptance of others*, *self-confidence*, *self-esteem*, *sociability*, *formal relations*, and *self-efficacy*. The group also displayed a higher degree of *external locus of control*.

The significant difference between the normal groups and the MMPI rejected groups underlines the reliability of the MMPI. It also highlights that psychologically healthy individuals do have a better *self-concept*, *self-confidence*, *self-esteem*, and *self-efficacy*, and that self-concept is central to human functioning and psychological health. This was formulated by various theorists such as Burns (1979), Maslow (1954), and Fromm (1949), as can be seen from chapter 1.

While many of the psychological problems are due to a low self-image, low self-image could certainly also be a result of many problems. How important a positive self-image is for wellness, and the relative absence of depression, has also been highlighted by Seligman (1993) and Dryden (1984), all discussed in chapters 1 and 4. Based on their theories, an improvement of self-image, especially since it implies changed cognitions about the self, is instrumental in changing the way a person feels about himself and how he behaves. A self-image enhancement programme should not be underestimated in its effects upon the self-concept of individuals with psychological problems, especially in conjunction with, or in support of, specific therapeutic interventions.

An interesting point to mention here is the fact that the “normal” experimental groups displayed a higher score for *acceptance of others* compared to the “rejected” group on a pre-test level. The experimental groups however, although having improved many aspects

of their self-concept, did not show an increase in *acceptance of others* as was expected based on various theories discussed in chapter 4. The rejected experimental group, on the other hand, did have an increased *acceptance of others* following the self-image enhancement. This could mean that in the case of individuals with psychological problems interpersonal aspects regarding the self-image training are of special importance. This however, needs to be verified through further research.

#### **7.4.2 Pre- versus post-test comparisons - group 6b**

For all combinations of variables and most of the single variables the differences between the group scores on a pre-versus post-test level were significant according to tables 6.37 and 6.38. Two of the changes were significant at the 5% level (*personal self* and *nervousness*), the rest were all significant at the 1% significance level. The variables that remained unchanged were *self-criticism*, *acceptance of others*, and *self-control*.

These results indicate that individuals with emotional problems also benefit from self-image enhancement. Different findings were achieved by Tuck (1984) who tested the impact of intensive group therapy on drug addicted adults, and at the Pennsylvania State Department (1987) where a programme was also administered to adult substance abusers. None of the two studies with emotionally disturbed groups, as presented in chapter 2, provided evidence of significant changes. As stated before, Tuck's sample was very small, and with regard to the other project, problems with medication were reported. Wurtz (1983) however, also found significant self-concept improvements in emotionally disturbed, institutionalised adolescents after an enrichment programme. This and the current findings confirm the possibility of the effectiveness of self-image enhancement for individuals with psychological problems.

#### **7.4.3 Post-test comparisons - groups 1 to 4 versus group 6b**

After having been exposed to the self-image enhancement programme, the MMPI rejected experimental group was not significantly different from the other experimental groups with regard to any of the combined variables of *total self-concept*, *PHSF relations* and *all variables* combined (see table 6.39).

With regard to all other single variables tested, the only difference was found, at the 5% significance level, for *total self-concept*. Overall self-concept of the MMPI rejected subgroup is still lower than that of the total normal experimental group but the self-concept subvariables, such as *physical self*, *personal self*, and *self-criticism*, as well as other self-concept related variables, namely *self-confidence* and *self-esteem* showed no statistically significant differences. The same can be said of the variables *locus of control* and *self-efficacy*. These findings confirm the above pre- versus post-test results, namely that the self-image enhancement programme is effective in achieving self-concept improvement for participants with emotional or adjustment problems.

The results show that the MMPI rejected subjects who had displayed psychological problems, and were significantly different with regard to all the variables and variable combinations before the self-image enhancement, were not distinguishable as a group from the normal experimental groups combined after the intervention. This leads to the conclusion that the rejected experimental group improved to a greater degree than the normal experimental groups in order to close the gap between themselves and the normal groups. While they started out with significantly lower scores except for *self-criticism* and *self-control*, there was no significant difference between them after the self-image enhancement.

Other research with regard to the impact of self-enhancement for healthy versus psychologically ill subjects is not available for comparison. The results of this research regarding the MMPI rejected group support Clifford and Clifford's (1966) study who found that most of the self-concept improvement took place in the subgroup with the poorer initial self-concepts. This is applicable here since the MMPI rejected subjects were identified as having started out with significantly lower scores on most self-concept variables. This means that in the case of the rejected subjects there was more room for improvement since they had functioned at a level much lower than their optimal level.

As highlighted by Brockner, Wiesenfeld and Raskas (1993), as well as Tice (1991), high and low self-esteem individuals differ in the way they self-handicap. The first group tends to reinforce their successes and therefore maintain a self-enhancing orientation. The low self-esteem person places barriers in his own way and practices avoidance behaviour to

protect himself from threatening experiences. The high self-esteem group tends to be more interested in their strengths and cultivate those, thus self-enhancing themselves, while the latter group focuses on failure and weaknesses. The self-image enhancement programme teaches the low self-image individual to change the self-regulatory processes. Instead of maintaining and reinforcing a low self-image, subjects learn and engage in self-enhancing tendencies which are naturally more utilised by high self-esteem individuals.

As discussed in chapter 4, Tice (1993) established another natural difference between high- and low-esteem individuals, namely the expectancy of success and failure respectively. The self-efficacy concept developed by Bandura (1980) also addresses this issue (see chapter 4). This links to Seligman's (1993) attributional styles, as well as the impact of locus of control as discussed in chapter 4. According to these theories, the low esteem individual perceives that failure is due to his own making and that he has little or no control over situations and their outcomes.

The findings regarding the subhypotheses of the current research support these views. After the participants were taught to improve their self-views and self-feelings, and to change their expectancies with regard to success and failure, their self-concept scores improved significantly. Possible "dangers" of overly high self-esteem were addressed earlier.

#### **7.4.4 Post- versus re-test comparisons - group 6b**

Table 6.41 shows that the only significant difference between the post- and re-test scores lies with the PHSF relations. In investigating table 6.42 this difference is found to be due to a significant increase in *sociability*. This indicates that for the MMPI rejected group aspects of interpersonal dimensions seem to play an important role. It is interesting that it is particularly the MMPI rejected group which shows the expected improvement of a self-other variable, and not the normal groups as was predicted. Perhaps the area of interpersonal functioning is particularly important for individuals with psychological problems, possibly because they have a greater need for improvement in this area. Regarding interpersonal developments in terms of self-image enhancement for normal

subjects versus individuals with emotional problems further research is indicated before firm conclusions can be drawn.

As was the case with the normal experimental groups, the self-image enhancement programme for the MMPI rejected group has been effective in maintaining all combinations of variables and single variables over the five months period following the intervention. The impact of the programme in the medium term has therefore also been confirmed for this subgroup.

## 7.5 Summary

The above results are summarised as follows:

### 7.5.1 Effectiveness of the self-image enhancement programme

One of the main aims for this research was to establish whether adult self-image change is possible and to measure any short- and medium term changes that would occur following a self-image enhancement programme.

#### 1) Short-term changes

The self-image enhancement programme was found to be effective on a post-test level with regard to central self-concept variables for all experimental groups combined, as well as the MMPI rejected experimental group. The programme indicated that the experimental groups displayed an improved self-concept and that variables such as *total self-concept*, *physical self*, *personal self*, *self-esteem*, *self-confidence*, and *self-efficacy* increased significantly, while *self-criticism* and *external locus of control* decreased significantly as was formulated through the alternative hypotheses.

Fewer changes were noted with regard to variables which relate to an interpersonal context, namely *sociability*, *formal relations* and *acceptance of others*. What seems to be

an unexpected finding is that *acceptance of others* has indeed decreased in some of the groups.

Developments regarding the variables *self-control* and *nervousness* were not found to be consistent for the various groups and the impact of the self-image enhancement programme on these is not clear from the results of this research.

It is also important to note that the MMPI rejected group improved to such an extent, that after the self-image enhancement programme there was no significant difference between them and the normal group, although the difference had been firmly established prior to the intervention. This finding leads one to conclude that a self-image enhancement programme is not only effective for individuals without emotional problems. The MMPI rejected group might have in fact benefited from the programme to a greater degree than the psychologically healthy group.

## 2) Medium-term changes

All experimental groups taken together maintained the originally achieved changes except with regard to the variables *self-control* and *self-efficacy*, both of which decreased significantly after five months had past, following the intervention.

These findings point to the fact that the cognitive changes of improved *self-efficacy* and *self-control* need to be supported through skills- and assertion training. This would equip course participants better to deal with adverse experiences in the back-home situation. Individual follow-up, an aspect discussed later, could also be of importance in this regard.

A specifically positive result was achieved by the MMPI rejected group. All their improvements were maintained over the five months period, with in fact a further significant improvement in the area of *sociability*. These findings, while confirming the effectiveness of the programme for individuals with emotional problems on a medium term level, also point to the need for the development of interpersonal skills for this type of group.

### 7.5.2 Effectiveness of various training approaches

Some training groups consisted of massed sessions, others of spaced sessions, half of all groups were exposed to individual follow-up sessions, the other half were not. As can be seen from the MANOVA's and ANOVA's on a post- as well as re-test level, significant differences between these various groups that were exposed to different types of training interventions were not established statistically. This leads to the conclusion that none of the training approaches were more or less effective than any of the others.

In spite of the above findings, some significant results with regard to different groups need to be mentioned.

Important to note is the fact that *acceptance of others* did improve significantly in the 12 sessions group with individual follow-up, but not in any other group. In fact, *acceptance of others* showed a decrease after the self-image enhancement programme for all experimental groups combined, and for the three day group without individual follow-up. Other significant improvements only to occur in a 12 sessions group, this time without individual follow-up, are the variables *formal relations* and *sociability*. The fact that all three variables that relate to an interpersonal context improved in 12 sessions groups, would point to the importance of interpersonal aspects in a group experience that is maintained over various weeks. Since this has not been confirmed statistically, however, through the ANOVA and MANOVA results, further research in this area is indicated.

Another result that stands out is the fact that only the groups with individual follow-up maintained their previously improved levels of *self-esteem* and *self-efficacy*. This indicates the importance of having individual coaching and consulting in order to maintain the changed perceptions. This also relates to the point made earlier regarding the need for specific skills training required to sustain improved self-efficacy.

These above findings do indicate that a spaced sessions programme tends to address interpersonal developments more closely, and that there is merit in individual follow-up sessions after the self-image enhancement programme, specifically for maintaining heightened self-efficacy and internal locus of control. While these single differences

between the groups create an awareness of certain tendencies that need to be investigated further, they are not indicative of an overall difference in effectiveness of various training approaches.

As reported above, no statistically significant differences for the various training approaches regarding the self-image enhancement programme were established. Through MANOVA's and ANOVA's on the post- and re-test levels all experimental groups were compared with one another. A further comparison regarding the training approaches were the comparisons of group means of the massed sessions groups with spaced sessions groups on the post-test level. On the re-test level the massed sessions groups were again compared with the spaced sessions, as well as the groups with individual follow-up with groups without individual follow-up. No statistically significant differences between any of the training variations were established.

The following chapter presents a summary of the research and the conclusions based on this investigation. Limitations of this study and suggestions for further research are also dealt with.





## **CHAPTER 8**

### **SUMMARY**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

In this final chapter the research will be summarised in terms of the research objective, the theoretical basis for the self-image enhancement programme, the experimental design, and the statistical data. This is followed by a number of conclusions drawn based on the findings, as well as a discussion of the shortcomings of this research with suggestions for future investigations.

#### **8.2 Summary of investigation**

##### **8.2.1 Research objective**

The research objective, as spelled out in chapter 5, included the development of a self-image enhancement programme which would be effective in achieving self-concept improvement in adults. A research question posed was whether adult self-concept improvement is principally possible since the literature reflects conflicting theories regarding the possibility of change during adulthood. The theories of the self-consistency view versus the change view were dealt with in chapter 2.

Another aim was to design the programme in such a way as to ensure easy incorporation of such a training course in the business or industrial setting. This was accomplished since the self-image enhancement programme was conducted within a business setting without any practical problems.

The final aim of this study was to establish whether massed or spaced sessions programmes would be more effective, and whether individual follow-up makes a significant difference with regard to the results obtained. The literature background to this question was presented in chapter 3.

The last research question, dealt with the effectiveness of the self-image enhancement programme for individuals who were identified as having psychological problems. This is an interesting question since the programme was designed for normally functioning individuals.

Main and subhypotheses regarding the self-concept changes and related aspects were formulated in chapter 5. The predictions reflected in the hypotheses included an improvement of *total self-concept*, *physical and personal self*, *self-confidence*, *self-esteem*, and *self-control* after participation on the self-image enhancement programme. *Nervousness*, *self-criticism*, and *external locus of control* were expected to be reduced, and *self-efficacy* to be increased. On an interpersonal level, the effects of the self-image enhancement programme were also expected to improve *acceptance of others*, *sociability* and *formal relations*.

### **8.2.2 Theoretical basis for the self-image enhancement programme**

The theoretical basis that forms the background for the course content of the self-image enhancement programme is discussed in chapter 4. The various perspectives presented help to understand how self-concept change is expected to take place. A great deal of emphasis is placed on cognitive re-structuring rooted in cognitive and rational-emotive therapy approaches. Psycho-educational material, exercises in the group, and feedback from others contribute to the context and dynamics of the training intervention. Autosuggestive and goal setting techniques provide practical self-help strategies.

### 8.2.3 Experimental design

The sample for this research was made up of 133 white, adult subjects from a number of corporations. Male and female participants were randomly distributed throughout the groups.

Prior to the self-image enhancement programme, all subjects completed a battery of five psychological measurement instruments, including a screening device. All questionnaires except the MMPI short version, used as the screening test, were re-administered at the end of the training intervention, and again five months after the end of the course.

The measurement instruments used were Vrey's Adolescent Self-concept Scale, the Acceptance of Others Scale, the Personal, Home, Social and Formal Relations (PHSF) Scale, Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale, and a Self-Efficacy Scale. The latter had to be adjusted from a scale for sales personnel and an item analysis had to be performed.

The self-image enhancement programme was conducted in small groups of a maximum of 12 participants in each. Subjects were then grouped for statistical purposes into

- \* group 1 - the three day programme
- \* group 2 - the 12 sessions programme
- \* group 3 - the three day programme with individual follow-up
- \* group 4 - the 12 sessions group with individual follow-up.

Group 5 was the control group and group 6 consisted of all MMPI rejected subjects. This latter group was then divided into rejected controls and rejected experimental subjects (group 6b) depending on whether they had participated in the self-image enhancement programme.

#### 8.2.4 Statistical techniques

The statistical methods chosen were multivariate and univariate analyses (MANOVA's and ANOVA's) which enable the researcher to compare group means from more than two samples. The MANOVA's provided data about group differences for various combinations of variables and the ANOVA's for single variables.

Hotelling's  $T^2$  tests and Student's t-tests for paired values were used to establish differences between test levels within one group, as well as differences between two groups on one test level. The  $T^2$  tests provided data for combinations of variables, the t-tests for single variables.

#### 8.2.5 Results

The statistical findings point to the effectiveness of the self-image enhancement programme in that all experimental groups combined achieved significant self-image improvements as compared to the control group who did not show any relevant changes. Significant results were reported with regard to the variables *total self-concept, physical self, personal self, self-confidence, self-esteem, self control, locus of control, and self-efficacy*. The findings confirm that self-concept change is possible during adulthood and the alternative hypotheses apply for these variables. Most of these improvements were also successfully maintained over the five months following the intervention except for the variables *self-efficacy* and *self-control*. The scores for the latter two variables decreased again for the experimental groups combined as well as the three day group without individual follow-up. It must be noted though that for the other experimental groups these variables did not decrease significantly over the medium term.

The variables that did not change as was expected were *acceptance of others, sociability, and formal relations* for all experimental groups combined, as well as the three day programme without individual follow-up. These groups even showed a decrease in *acceptance of others*. This could point to a lesser degree of patience and tolerance towards others with a better self-concept. This was an interesting finding since the literature as discussed in chapter 4, indicates that self-acceptance correlates positively with

*acceptance of others* and other relationship aspects. These theories were not confirmed through this research and the null hypotheses for these variables were not rejected. It is furthermore assumed that a different approach in terms of course content and exercises would be required to achieve improved *acceptance of others*, increased *sociability*, and better *formal relations*, along with an improvement of self-concept. The way this programme is designed, it places the emphasis on positive self-perceptions and self-acceptance.

An important aspect to note however is, that the *acceptance of others* variable did improve for the 12 sessions group with individual follow-up on the post-test level, and the *sociability* score on the re-test level for the 12 sessions programme without individual follow-up. These findings point into the direction of the importance of a prolonged group experience in terms of variables that relate to interpersonal aspects. This means that a different training approach could be a deciding factor with regard to these variables.

With regard to differences of effectiveness of various training approaches the results were not entirely convincing. There seems to be a tendency for massed sessions to be significantly more successful in improving variables which relate to interpersonal aspects, while individual follow-up sessions showed some significant results with regard to maintaining *self-efficacy* and *self-control* over the medium term more successfully. These findings however, were not confirmed through the statistical analyses of group differences on a post- and re-test level. At first glance it appears that for some variables, such as *acceptance of others*, *sociability*, and *formal relations*, a spaced sessions approach is more effective, for the maintenance of *self-control* and *self-efficacy* an individual follow-up approach. However, for overall self-image enhancement these tendencies were not confirmed. In terms of all variables taken together none of the training approaches was more successful than any other.

The self-image enhancement programme was also found to be successful in improving the self-concept of the MMPI rejected group. In fact, this group must have benefited to a greater extent in order to close the initial gap between them and the normal experimental groups based on pre- and post-test comparisons. It is also interesting to note that the MMPI rejected group improved on all variables except *acceptance of others*, *self-control*,

and *self-criticism* which remained unchanged. This group did not decrease their *acceptance of others* as did the experimental groups combined and the three day group without individual follow-up. All improved scores were maintained over the five months period following the intervention. In fact, they were the only group which improved *sociability* further in the medium term.

### 8.3 Conclusions

The findings of this research provide evidence for the fact that adult self-concept change is possible and that a self-image improvement, based on an enhancement programme, is maintained over the medium term for most self-concept variables.

What could not be confirmed through the results of this study, is the correlation between self-concept improvement and improvement of relations with others. Since this self-image enhancement programme was designed to focus on the essence of self-perceptions, the course would have to address other issues as well to create a bigger impact on variables such as *acceptance of others*, *sociability*, and *formal relations*. On the other hand, the findings could also mean that self-concept improvement does not, as has generally been theorised, directly reflect better interpersonal relationships. Further research in this area is required.

The results of this research further underline the need for self-image enhancement for individuals with emotional problems. A psycho-educational approach should not be underestimated in its effectiveness for providing important help with regard to psychological problems. It is stressed that a self-image enhancement programme achieves self-concept improvement, and through that leads to new behaviours. Specific problem issues however, would have to be addressed through therapy or counselling.

Although a few variables, such as *self-efficacy* and *acceptance of others*, seemed to fare better with a certain training approach, it has not been established that any one type of training group is superior to another in terms of achieving overall self-image enhancement. Although this conclusion has to be made with caution since methodological considerations could play an important part (see later), based on the findings of this research it is stated

that massed as well as spaced sessions, with or without individual follow-up, will achieve the desired self-image enhancement.

## **8.4 Limitations of investigation**

The shortcomings of this research are mainly found in the area of methodological aspects:

### **8.4.1 Group comparisons**

A lack of clarity with regard to the effectiveness of different training approaches could be due to the way the groups were compared. The results obtained from the MANOVA's and ANOVA's on the post- and re-test level, which compared all groups and showed no significant differences, raise no concern. Nor does the comparison of the three day groups (groups 1&3) with the 12 sessions groups (2&4) on the post-test level create a problem, since all groups had merely attended the self-image enhancement programme: half the groups the three day programme, the other half the 12 sessions version. The issue of another difference such as individual follow-up had not entered the analyses yet.

However, the way the different experimental groups were grouped together for the comparisons on the re-test level poses some problems. Groups 1&3 who had attended the three day programme were compared to groups 2&4 from the 12 sessions programme, and groups 1&2 were taken together against groups 3&4 to establish the impact of individual feedback. This distinction did not account for all the differences the groups had between them. In this way, the effect of individual follow-up, and the difference of effectiveness regarding massed or spaced sessions on a re-test level could not be established clearly. Groups who only attended massed or spaced sessions need to be analysed against massed and spaced sessions groups with individual feedback.

### 8.4.2 Sample criteria

#### 1) *Age*

This study has investigated the impact of a self-image enhancement programme on normal adults. Subjects were chosen from within an occupational setting. The range of ages was rather widely spread with the average age at 30. Although most participants were under the age of 42, a few subjects were between the ages of 42 and 52, while 17% of the sample were younger than 25.

Although the bulk of the sample fell into middle adulthood, the younger as well as older subjects could have distorted some of the findings. Mullener and Laird (1971) established that a person's self-evaluations become more differentiated with age. In their study regarding the importance of dispositional optimism and personal control after surgery, Fitzgerald, Tennen, Affleck and Pransky (1993) report findings that underline the change of esteem gratification through the life span. A more homogeneous sample with regard to age would provide more accurate data and possibly reveal different tendencies.

For this research it was however necessary, for practical reasons, to allow for the wider age range. This spread of ages was accepted since 91% of the sample was under the age of 42.

#### 2) *Gender*

Previous studies have found gender differences with regard to self-esteem training (Enns, 1992; Le Roux Ferreira, 1992). This research has not distinguished between the impact of self-image enhancement on male versus female subjects. This again interferes with the homogeneity of the sample. Selecting subjects according to gender would have posed an immense problem of finding a large enough sample.



### *3) Referred versus self-referred*

An important consideration is the fact that some individuals were referred by a superior in their work environment, while others entered the programme due to voluntary decision. This could have an impact on the effect of the self-image enhancement programme as Morrissey (1993) found that only self-referred subjects differed significantly from controls. A self-referral clearly indicates greater motivation to change. Once again it was not possible to select subjects according to this criterion for practical reasons.

### *4) Differences of self-concept at the beginning of the intervention*

Faul (1978) found that an improvement of self-image only took place in the low self-esteem group. Clifford and Clifford's (1966) results showed that the subgroup with the poorer self-image achieved greater changes. This research has also shown that the subjects with the lower self-concept, namely the MMPI rejected subjects, experienced a more profound change.

Heatherton and Ambady (1993) discuss the process of self-regulation as based upon differences of high and low self-esteem in terms of the self-fulfilling prophecy. Brockner et al. (1993) also look into differences of self-consistency mechanisms in terms of high and low self-esteem and indicate that the low self-esteem individual tends to maintain the lower level since their goal setting and self-expectations are based on the lower self-esteem level. Tice (1991) points out that low self-esteem participants employ more intense self-handicapping strategies which has implications for the amount of change which can be achieved through an intervention.

This research has not taken into account differences in self-concept at the start of the investigation except for the distinction between normally functioning subjects and those who experience psychological problems. To differentiate more closely between self-concept levels at the outset of a programme could provide valuable information as to varying developments for various individuals.

### **8.4.3 Long term effects**

Concerns have been raised that initial improvements after a self-development experience could be temporary (Baumeister, 1993; Tuck, 1984) and investigation of variables some time after the programme is considered a necessity. Reddy (1973) found that in general participants who displayed pre- and post-test differences were not those who achieved the greatest gains during the year following the programme.

Although in this project the self-concept developments of the sample were investigated five months after the intervention, longitudinal studies would provide further important outcomes.

### **8.4.4 Specific skills training**

The problems with the maintenance of self-efficacy over the medium term suggests that specific skills training would be required in order to better prepare the participants in the face of every-day challenges. It would however have been beyond the scope of this self-image enhancement programme to include other aspects of training.

### **8.4.5 Interpersonal variables**

The findings indicate that a different approach would be required to deal with variables that relate to interpersonal aspects. To view interpersonal variables as directly linked to self-concept is clearly an oversimplification. This is confirmed by Epstein and Feist (1988) who underline, as was mentioned in the previous chapter, that psychologists and lay people share a common belief of positive regard being directly associated with positive regard for others. They caution the researcher not to overlook the fact that many other factors and parameters, such as for instance the nature of the other person and perceived similarity, also play a deciding role. They conclude that, although the relation between self and other-acceptance is fairly well established, the various other factors must also be taken into account.

#### **8.4.6 The trainer**

A variable which has not been considered in this research is the influence of a particular group leader. The idiosyncrasies of a trainer's approach will generate different outcomes due to different group dynamics and trainer feedback. As was the case with Foulds' (1970) study, it must be kept in mind that the present findings are based on a specific group process and trainer input. Caution is therefore required with regard to generalisations. In order to keep the trainer variable as constant as possible, for all groups in this research the same trainer presented the self-image enhancement programme, although it must be expected that even by keeping the trainer variable constant, a group will always develop its unique group dynamics.

### **8.5 Guidelines for Future Research**

Based on the above it becomes clear which directions one needs to take for further research.



It will be valuable to design studies which distinguish more clearly between the advantages and disadvantages of various training approaches. Larger samples for each type of training and stricter demarcations with regard to the groupings of training approaches for statistical purposes are needed to provide more clarity as to possible differences in effectiveness of massed and spaced sessions programmes. The role of individual follow-up also needs to be established more clearly.

More research in terms of adult self-image enhancement for various age groups, and adult development stages, is also required. Self-image enhancement can then be achieved more effectively depending on the various needs of different age groups within the adult range.

Studies that investigate gender related differences would also supply important information as to different needs for male and female participants. Further distinctions with regard to future research samples would include referred versus self-referred participants,

as well as different levels of self-esteem as a starting point for various enhancement programmes.

Testing the effectiveness of training programmes of various lengths would provide additional information. The significance of the length of the programme comes to light in terms of Wurtz's (1983) results that were different from Leonard's (1983) whose intervention programme was much shorter (see chapter 2).

Longitudinal studies are needed to provide further information of developments following an intervention, as well as developments through various stages of adulthood and life experiences. In this vein the need for follow-up programmes should also be addressed.

Designing self-image enhancement programmes that are linked to specific skills training, tailored for various groups of participants, should also be considered valuable. This would especially be important for maintaining the increased self-efficacy, and for assisting individuals with practical every day problems in the back-home situation.

## **8.6 Close**

Although caution is always required with regard to generalisations, it has been of value to find that the sample used in this research has achieved positive self-image changes. Further research will throw light on many details regarding the type and length of self-image enhancement programmes as well as the needs for more clearly demarcated sample groups. It has however been confirmed that it is worthwhile to aim for self-image improvement during adulthood as part of self-development. "Under most circumstances of life, humans have the freedom to choose how they will be and how they will act" (Jourard, 1974, p. 153).

In the area of self-development it is the task of the psychologist to aid the individual in exercising his freedom of choice.

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## Appendix 1

### SELF-EFFICACY SCALE

#### Instructions:

Please complete the following questionnaire as comprehensively as possible bearing in mind that all items refer to your own evaluations and opinions. Each item has seven possibilities.

Please place a cross over the possibility most applicable to you.

This questionnaire is part of a research project and your answers are completely confidential. Please be honest in your answer and treat each item individually. Remember that your first response is typically the one that best reflects your attitude.

THERE IS NO TIME LIMIT.



#### EXAMPLE:

I relate well to other people.

EXTREMELY  
POSSIBLE

TOTALLY  
IMPOSSIBLE

1

X

1

1

1

1

1

THANK YOU

EXTREMELY  
POSSIBLE

COMPLETELY  
IMPOSSIBLE

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

1. I can interact with people that I do not like.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

2. I am good at sport.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

3. I believe I can succeed in any career.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

4. I am convinced that I am a logical thinker.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

5. I believe that I improve my chances of success by learning more about my current job.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

6. I am capable of dealing skilfully with my colleagues.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

7. I am sure that participation in sport produces a well balanced individual.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

8. I do not believe that accepting authority figures increases my financial rewards.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

EXTREMELY  
POSSIBLE

COMPLETELY  
IMPOSSIBLE

1            1            1            1            1            1            1

9. I can develop myself through attending educational programmes.

1            1            1            1            1            1            1

10. I have the ability to become better at my work.

1            1            1            1            1            1            1

11. I believe that a happy work atmosphere makes me relaxed at home.

1            1            1            1            1            1            1

12. I believe that success in my career can limit my opportunities in life.

1            1            1            1            1            1            1

13. I can iron out weaknesses in my work.

1            1            1            1            1            1            1

14. I can use third party influence.

1            1            1            1            1            1            1

15. I can make quick decisions.

1            1            1            1            1            1            1

16. I have the ability to ask questions skilfully.

1            1            1            1            1            1            1

EXTREMELY  
POSSIBLE

COMPLETELY  
IMPOSSIBLE

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

17. I believe that a good problem solving ability helps me to stay calm in crises.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

18. I am capable of ironing out faults in my solution.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

19. I believe that I can project my personality well.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

20. I believe that opening myself to other's suggestions raises my chances of success.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

21. I believe that accepting people in authority will ensure progress in my career.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

22. I believe that being a good problem solver increases my prestige.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

23. I am convinced that quick decisions waste resources and money.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

24. I am sure that confident projection of myself gains me social contacts.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

EXTREMELY  
POSSIBLE

COMPLETELY  
IMPOSSIBLE

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

25. I believe that the ability to schedule my time effectively raises my productivity.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

26. I believe that getting on with people helps me to obtain the things I want in life.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

27. I believe that I can accept authority.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

28. I believe that projecting myself as confident ensures progress in my career.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

29. I believe that I can relate well to my colleagues.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

30. I believe I can follow up all questions and requests.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

31. I believe that a good home life increases my chances of success in my career.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

32. I believe that hard work must produce personal benefits.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1



EXTREMELY  
POSSIBLE

COMPLETELY  
IMPOSSIBLE

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

33. I am sure that logical thinking extends my effectiveness.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

34. I believe that knowledge of company regulations will make my life easier.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

35. I believe I am outgoing in my behaviour.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

36. I believe that being a good conversationalist ensures my social acceptance.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

37. I believe that good work performance is up to me.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

38. I am sure that poor handling of relationships decreases my effectiveness in my career.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

39. I believe that a good socialising ability helps me progress in my career.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

40. I am sure that bringing family problems to work decreases my effectiveness.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

EXTREMELY  
POSSIBLE

COMPLETELY  
IMPOSSIBLE

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

41. I believe that I am a good problem solver.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

42. I believe I play a vital role in creating successful communication at work.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

43. I believe that self development leads to prestige.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

44. I believe that being skilled at sports boosts my confidence.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

45. I believe I can adapt to changes in business life.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

46. I believe I can control situations at work.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

47. I feel that a bad listening ability decreases the chances of getting ahead.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

48. I do not believe that listening to others helps my progress in any way.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

EXTREMELY  
POSSIBLE

COMPLETELY  
IMPOSSIBLE

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

49. I believe that failure to learn something new will hinder my career progress.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

50. I believe that a lack of confidence in myself decreases chances of promotion.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

51. I am good in relationships.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

52. I can commit myself to periodic service calls.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

53. I am convinced that competent handling of difficulties increases my prestige.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

54. I believe that congratulating a client builds prestige.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

55. I relate well to members of the opposite sex.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

56. I believe that quick decisions save time and money.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

57. I believe that self education ensures my progress.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

EXTREMELY  
POSSIBLE

COMPLETELY  
IMPOSSIBLE

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

58. I believe that I can establish my confidence in the work place.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

59. I am not sure of myself.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

60. I believe that I can demonstrate my job knowledge to my colleagues.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

61. I believe that education increases my earning power.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

62. I believe that good family relationships lead to a happy home life.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

63. I am a good conversationalist.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

64. I do not believe that being a good sportsman increases my number of social contacts.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

65. I believe that success in my career will raise my standing in the community.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

EXTREMELY  
POSSIBLE

COMPLETELY  
IMPOSSIBLE

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

66. I have the ability to improve my job knowledge.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

67. I believe that interacting with people I don't like broadens my horizons.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

68. I believe I can bring up well adjusted children.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

69. I am convinced that cutting out home tensions results in a happy family.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

70. I believe that good relationships with colleagues boosts my prestige.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

71. I can calm tensions in my home environment.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

72. I excel at outdoor sporting activities.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

73. I believe that the ability to mix socially boosts popularity.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

EXTREMELY  
POSSIBLE

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

74. I believe that hosting a party boosts my popularity.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

75. I believe that a good career boosts my prestige in the neighbourhood.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

76. I believe that interacting with people in all walks of life earns me respect.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

77. I am not convinced that devotion to my job boosts my earning power.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

78. I am a good mixer in social situations.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

79. I believe that I relate well to family members.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

80. I believe that I can listen attentively.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

81. I do not believe that it is necessary to adapt to changes in order to produce successful results.

1 1 1 1 1 1 1

## Appendix 2

### IF

If you can keep your head when all about you  
     are losing theirs and blaming it on you,  
 If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
     but make allowance for their doubting too,  
 If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
     or being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
     or being hated, don't give way to hating,  
     and yet, not look too good, nor talk too wise,  
 If you can dream - and not make dreams your master,  
 If you can think - and not make thoughts your master,  
 If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster,  
     and treat those two impostors just the same,  
 If you can bear the truth you've spoken  
     twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
     or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,  
     and stoop and build 'em up with worn out tools,  
 If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
     and risk it in one turn of pitch and toss,  
     and lose, and start again at your beginnings,  
     and never breathe a word about your loss,  
 If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
     to serve your turn long after they are gone,  
     and so hold on when there is nothing in you  
     except the Will which says to them; "Hold on!",  
 If you can talk to crowds and keep your virtue  
     or walk with Kings - nor lose the common touch,  
 If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,  
 If all men count with you, but none too much,  
 If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
     with sixty seconds' worth of distance run,  
     yours is the Earth and everything that's in it.  
 And - which is more - you'll be a Man, my son!

*Rudyard Kipling*

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