

COMBINE

Manual For The Administration of the Important People Instrument*

Adapted for use by COMBINE

by

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IMPORTANT PEOPLE INSTRUMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Preface

This manual has been revised for use in COMBINE. The version used in Project MATCH has been shortened to exclude the IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES component of the instrument. The component of the instrument devoted to establishing the person's social network has also been shortened. Finally, the number of questions devoted to establishing the network's support of the patient's drinking have been reduced. A question addressing the network's support of the patient's participation in treatment has been added.

If you experience difficulties in administration or interpretation, or have suggestions for further revisions of the IP please contact Dick Longabaugh.

Introduction

The Important People and Activities (IPA) data collection instrument was originally designed for the purpose of gathering information pertaining to an alcohol abuser's social support system. The present version is focused on assessing the client's network on two dimensions: 1) establishing the client's social network and 2) assessing the support of network members for the client's drinking and participation in the COMBINE treatment.

Clients are queried regarding the members of their network, including their relationship to each person, the amount of contact they have with the person, how important the person is, and how generally supportive the person is. Then the subject is queried regarding each person in the network vis a vis: their drinking status, their frequency and intensity of drinking, their response to the patient's drinking, and their support of the patient's participating in the treatment.

Information requested prior to treatment is limited to the four month period immediately preceding this semi-structured interview. At follow-up interviews the time period covered is the previous four months.

Contents

The IP consists of 6 pages. The first two are for recording the subject's responses. Pages 3-5 are templates that include questions and response options for the subject to use. Page 6 is the "Important People Code Sheet." (Throughout this manual the terms "client," "subject," "patient," and "participant" are used interchangeably.)

Administration

Page 1:

The IP is an interviewer-assisted instrument designed to be utilized in a face to face interview format and requiring, on average, approximately 12 minutes to complete. First, the interviewer should record the client's ID #, the Clinical Research Unit #, and the date of the interview. Then, the interviewer should record their first name on the blank after "Hi, my name is."

Next, the interviewer should introduce the instrument by reading the introduction that appears on the first page:

"Hi, my name is _____. During the course of this interview I am going to ask you some questions about the people who have been important to you and with whom you've had contact during the past four months. These people may be family members, friends, people from work, or anyone that you see as having had a significant impact on your life, regardless of whether or not you like them. Should you have any questions during the interview please don't hesitate to ask. Now before we begin, do you have any questions?"

(Here, contact is defined as "face to face" or telephone contact. In response to queries reflecting technological changes (in contrast to prior administration) email contacts are now included in the definition of contact We are interested in interactions where the subject's intoxication can be detected.) After you have responded to all the client's expressed concerns proceed with the interview:

Administration Format:

This interview is administered column by column. This method helps the client to understand the information requested of him / her.

Question 1 - Name

"Who have been the important people in your life with whom you've had contact during the past 4 months?"

A subject will usually identify network members by their first name or the nature of the relationship (my mother, my wife). Write down the first names in column A, and the specific relationship in column B. For people identified by their first name, ask for the initial of their last name as well. For people identified by the relationship, ask for their first name and initial of the last name.

The first level of prompting for more network members consists of asking:

“Can you think of someone else who has been important to you during the past 4 months?”

“Who else?”

“Anybody else?”

When the client has run out of network members, give him/her “Study Participant Template #1.” This template lists different categories of network membership.

Tell the client....

“Look over these different categories. Is there anyone else in any of these categories with whom you’ve had contact, who has been important to you during the past 4 months, even if you don’t like them?”

Prompt the subject until either you have 10 people listed or the subject cannot name anyone else.

General Instructions: Size of Network

Clients will vary considerably in the size of their social networks. Some will have difficulty naming anyone. In such cases you should try hard to elicit at least some names. A standard prompt should be used to assist in this task: "Is there anyone [else] that you can think of whom you have spent a lot of time within the past four months [that you have not mentioned yet]?"

You should have the client list no more than 10 people. About 5% will want to list more than 10. If they want to list more, limit them to the ten most important with whom they have had the most contact in the past four months. This may require that they eliminate one or two people that they had already put on their list. In such an instance, cross out the earlier person, and add the substitute person to the list, either by making the entry where the earlier person was erased, or in the extra rows provided at the bottom of the first page. If the extra rows are used, renumber the people starting with the first one crossed out so that the numbers go in order from 1 to 10 not counting the one or two people crossed out.

If the person wants to list their children, ask them to list only those who are old enough to know about their drinking and have feelings about it. Friends should be at least 13 years or older.

Question 2 - Relationship

If you have not given the client Template 1 yet, then hand this template to the client now. Unless already known, for each person listed ask:

“What is _____’s relationship to you?”

Use Template 1 to get the specific relationship for significant others and immediate family. Until you become very acquainted with the Important People Code Sheet, refer to this and make sure you have enough information listed in column B to code the relationship number once the interview is done. It’s OK if the subject happens to see the Code Sheet, but do not hand it to the subject as a prompt.

The study template #1 classifies relationships into 10 categories. If the person listed does not fit into any of the first nine categories, then classify them as 0, “Anybody else not classified in the above categories.”. Other questions may be asked to clarify the relationship.

Sample questions for different scenarios are listed below:

“How long have you lived with this person?” (asked to determine common-law status)

“Did you know this person before you worked together?” (to clarify if it is a friend or friend from work)

Coding guidelines:

Daughters and Sons -

- Include both biological, step and adopted children of the client. Adult children are still "children".

Mothers and Fathers - The client's natural or legal mother or father.

Brothers and Sisters - Includes brothers and sisters by marriage or adoption as well as biological.

If a person is both a friend and a family member, code them as a family member.

Friends from work - a friend with whom they currently work, or originally got to know at work, but who are still friends in their lives, despite the fact that they no longer have a work connection.

After completing Column B, make sure that each person is uniquely identified by the combination of first name, last name's initial, and relationship. If this is not the case (for example the subject has two friends named Bill W.) then ask for the second letter of the last name for those ambiguously identified.

After completing Column B then take Template 1 from the subject and give him / her Template 2. You will now complete column C for each person listed as a network member.

Question 3 - Amount of Contact:

“Using the choices here (indicate contact categories on template) for amount of contact, during the past 4 months on average, how frequently have you been in contact with John Doe?”

Contact refers to the number of days that the client has contact with the individual during an average week. Here, contact can be in-person, over the telephone or email. If contact is infrequent, then start with category number 1, and work upwards until the category no longer applies.

If there are two different patterns of contact, choose the longer pattern if it is more than 2 months long. If there are two patterns that are each 2 months long then choose the most recent pattern. If no pattern of contact occurs for (a total of) 2 months, then take the average of the patterns reported.

After Column C is completed, go on to Column D, etc.

Question 4 - How important has this person been to you

“Using this rating system here (indicate importance ratings on template) how important has John Doe been to you during the last 4 months?” If the respondent says the person is “not at all important”, do not question this classification even though the person presumably was important enough to be listed in the first place.

Question 5 - General supportiveness of the client

Read the question at the bottom of the page....

“To what extent is John Doe generally supportive of you, by being sensitive to your personal needs, helping you think about things, solve problems, and by giving you the moral support you need?”

A network member may be generally supportive in one or more ways, they may be emotionally supportive, helpful to the person in thinking things through, giving the patient things that s/he needs, or may provide moral support to the client. If the client indicates that the person is helpful in some of these ways, but not in others, ask them to make a rating of the person's average helpfulness taking all of these factors into consideration.

Page 2 and Template 3

At this point you are ready to gather information on the client's perceptions of the drinking behavior and support of treatment by the members of his/her network. It will be easier if pages 1 and 2 are separated. First, copy the names on page 1 into the corresponding rows of the first column on page 2. If the rows in page 1 have been renumbered, use the new numbering system for page 2.

Take Template 2 from the subject and hand them Template 3. Complete page 2 by doing one column at a time.

“Now I’d like to ask you some more questions about these important people in your life.”

For each of these questions, the client can use the response template to guide them in giving their response. They can provide the response number or the category. If the client cannot respond between two adjacent response categories, encourage him/her to choose one or the other. If this doesn't work, select the less socially desirable of the two responses. The direction of the less socially desirable response for each question is indicated below:

- C. Amount of Contact - less contact
- D. Importance - less important
- E. Supportive - less supportive
- F. Drinking Status - heavier drinking
- F. Drinking Frequency - more frequent drinking
- G. Drinking Quantity - higher quantity of drinking
- H. Reaction to Drinking - greater acceptance of drinking
- I. Reaction to Treatment - less support for treatment

An exception to this rule is seen in Question H. Here the response of 1 (Left, or made you leave when you’re drinking) includes response 2 (Didn’t accept). In this case, if the subject says that

Brenda didn't accept his drinking, and she left his apartment when he was drinking, then this is coded as a 1.

Question F - Drinking Status

“During the past 4 months would you say that John Doe was a heavy drinker, moderate drinker, light drinker, abstainer, or recovering alcohol?”

In general, category definitions are defined by the subject's ideas of these terms. If the subject indicates that a network member hasn't drunk in the past 4 months, ask “are they in recovery?” to distinguish between abstainers and recovering alcoholics. The “Recovering Alcoholics” category is used only for those recovering alcoholics that have been abstinent for the last 4 months. A recovering alcoholic that has had a slip in the last 4 months is coded as a light drinker.

Question G - Frequency of Person's Drinking

“How often does this person drink alcohol?” The judgment is the clients, and is independent of the amount of the client's actual observations of the persons drinking (i.e., the subject can infer this information).

Daily means the person has at least one drink virtually every day.

Several times a week, would be less than daily, but more than two days of the week (e.g., more than two days on the weekend.)

Once or twice a week, would cover people who drink only on weekends for example.

Every other week would cover occasional drinkers who drink less than once a week but more often than once a month. It would also cover a binge drinker in which the number of binge days over the four month period was less than 13.

About once a month. As above, this could also cover a binge drinker who drank on six or less days in the past four months.

"Don't Know" should be used rarely, only when the client has no idea whether the person has or has not drank any alcohol in the past four months. If the client believes the person has drank during this period, but is unsure how often, ask for a best guess.

When ascertaining how often the person drinks alcohol, if the person's pattern has varied over the four month period, get the patient to give an average estimate. Sometimes however, the pattern will have changed dramatically, such that a heavy drinker has become abstinent, or an abstainer initiates a period of heavy drinking. In such cases the predominant pattern over the longest part of the period of observation (i.e., the most months) would provide the data for the assessment. However, if there are two 2-month time periods, categorize the last 2 months. If no single pattern

predominates over a 2 month period, get the patient to make an average estimate across the whole 4-month period.

Infrequently the client will indicate that a person has drunk on one day in the last 4 months, even though they said that the person was a recovering alcoholic, and the prior question will have to be recoded. In such an instance, tell the client “Since Doris had a slip in the past 4 months, I’m going to categorize her as a light drinker.” If the client indicates that Doris drank excessively on that day, categorize her as a moderate drinker.

Question H - How has this person reacted to your drinking?

This question is attempting to measure the potential influence of the important people in the client's social network with respect to the client's drinking.

If the person knows the patient has been drinking, ask:

“How has this person reacted to your drinking?”

If the person doesn't know the patient has been drinking, or the patient hasn't been drinking, ask:

“How would this person react to your drinking?”

Encouraged implies that the person actively attempts to get the client to drink. For example, the person may provide them with alcohol, take the client to a bar, or tell him that one drink won't do him any harm. The person is intentionally providing stimuli to drink, and takes the initiative in doing so.

Accepted implies the person did not actively encourage the client to drink, but does respond in a way that is likely to be rewarding to the client. For example, the person may drink right along with the client, or let them know that they are fun to be with when they are drinking. If the person both encourages and reinforces the client's drinking, then the response should be coded as "encourages" (rather than accepted).

Neutral implies the person neither responds positively or negatively to the client's drinking. The person neither encourages nor discourages it. The client has no idea how the person feels about his/her drinking, even when the client has consumed alcohol in the presence of this person.

Didn't Accept implies the person has let the patient know that he or she disapproves of their drinking, but doesn't make the continuation of their interaction contingent upon the client's not drinking.

Left or made you leave when you're drinking The other person will not remain in the client's presence when s/he is drinking. Either the person leaves, or makes the client leave their presence.

Doesn't Know Client Drinks This category is reserved for the infrequent occasions when the client would say s/he doesn't know how the other person feels about their drinking because this person doesn't know that the client drinks. If the client has consumed alcohol in the presence of the other person, but doesn't know how the person feels about his/her drinking, this should be categorized as 3, neutral.

If the person encourages controlled drinking but discourages heavy drinking then this is coded as encouraging drinking.

Question I

Baseline information regarding responses to entering treatment

Prior to treatment initiation, when the IP interview occurs, people in the client's network may not yet know that the client has entered treatment. In such a case, the client's expectancy about network member responses to this event may be just as important as their actual reactions. Therefore the client should complete the question on the basis of the anticipated reactions of others in his/her network if he or she doesn't know what their actual responses have been. Either way, at follow-up the client will be queried again about the following question.

Question I. - How has the person felt about your coming for treatment?

Strongly supports my getting treatment. The person has initiated the suggestion on one or more occasions that the client get treatment.

Supports getting treatment. The person, while not initiating the idea that the patient should get treatment, has reacted only favorably to the event. Has let the client know in one or more ways that it is a good thing for the client to be doing.

Neutral. Doesn't say, or hasn't indicated. This person knows that the client is in treatment and has given the client no indication at all about how they feel about this.

Mixed. The patient has gotten contradictory signals from the person, indicating that the person may be ambivalent about it. While supporting the effort, indicates in one or more ways that there are negatives to doing so.

Opposes getting treatment. Has let the client know that seeking treatment is problematic in one or more ways, and has not indicated that he/she is supportive of it.

Strongly opposes getting treatment. Has indicated to the client that their relationship is jeopardized by the client seeking treatment.

Don't know how they would feel about my getting treatment. The client really isn't sure how this person feels about them getting treatment. Try to avoid using this category by getting the subject to "best guess" the person's reaction.

Closing Comments

If the subject has known the network member for less than 4 months, then questions apply to this shorter time period for that network member. The length of time known is not used to

pro-rate the responses. This coding rule takes priority over the earlier one regarding more than one pattern (of frequency of contact, or of frequency of person's drinking) in the last 4 months.

When the interview is done, code question 2 (relationship) using the Important People Code Sheet, if you have not already done this. Also be sure that all answers have been coded into one of the response categories available, and be sure everyone entered has an assigned identity number. Make a photocopy of the first page of the IP (first two columns only: name and relationship) and staple this to the contact sheet that will be used to pursue the subject for the next interview when the IP will be administered.

Should the interviewer be unclear as how to code a client's response, the interviewer should record as much information as necessary to afford a later determination of the most appropriate response category. However, it is important to remember that it is the client's perception that is of interest.

Prior to terminating an interview session, be sure to ask the client if (s)he has any questions. If you, the interviewer, cannot answer the client's question(s) inform him/her that you will get back to him/her with the requested information. Be certain to thank the client for his/her time and willingness to respond to your inquiries.

If you have any questions as to how to score a particular answer, consult the Project Coordinator. If neither of you can determine the correct coding, call or email Dick Longabaugh (401-444-1835 or Richard_Longabaugh@brown.edu). If calling and no one is available, please leave a message.

Reassessment at Follow-up.

When the client is re-interviewed at follow-up, the format for administering the instrument is largely the same, but there are some exceptions. There is a separate recording form for the follow-up interview (pages 1 and 2) and Study Participant Template #3 is different at follow-up. For Templates 1 and 2 and the Revised (1/15/01) Important People Code Sheet, the initial interview version are used at follow-up.

Again, the interview is administered column by column. After the client has completed the first two columns, you should compare this list with the one provided prior to treatment. The numbers you use to assign to the people in the network at follow-up should be those assigned to each person on the earlier form administered prior to treatment. (You will need to have the hard copy of the baseline interview with you when interviewing the client at follow-up).

If there are less than 10 people listed as a result of the first pass at the follow-up interview, consult the prior list to determine whether anyone on this initial list has been omitted from the new list. When this happens, you follow-up by asking: "When you provided us with this information earlier, you listed (persons' names') as people you spent time with. During the past four months, have you continued to spend time with e.g., John?" If the answer is "no", you would not enter that person on the new list. However, if the answer is "yes", you would ask the client which of these people they would like to add at the current interview up to a total of ten. You should add an asterisk after the number of any person who was on the original list but only got on to the follow-up list because of your prompt.

If the subject has listed 10 as a result of the first pass at the follow-up, go ahead and ask the subject if they want to list two of the people from the earlier interview for this interview (if there are any that have not been named). If so, they will have to decide which of the other two people to drop from the list from the first pass.

After getting the list of new people and adding people from the old list, and numbering the people from the old list with the same number that they had before, then start numbering the new people in the order they were listed, starting with the first number available from where the earlier listing left off (#11 if they listed 10 people at baseline).

(This is an iterative process, so if the IP was administered at baseline and a prior follow-up, at the second follow-up you will be referring to a possible list of up to 20 people from previous assessments.

In getting the client's perceptions of the person at follow-up, you should remind them that the answers pertain to the person during the past four months, irrespective of what they might have been like prior to that time. In order to minimize any influence on this account you should

not share the client's previous responses with him/her at the present time. (Columns C, D and E should not have been copied.)

Next you will complete column C, then column D, and then column E.

Then copy the names and numbers from the first column of page 1 onto the first column of page 2. The second page is completed by asking question F for everybody listed, and then asking question G for everybody listed, and finally question H.

For Question H, if the client has not drunk in the previous 4 months, then the client should answer the question by indicating how he/she thinks the person would react if the client did drink.

The questions and response formats are the same in the follow-up interview and the initial interview except for questions I.

Question I at the initial interview:

“How has this person felt about you coming for treatment?”

Question I at the follow-up:

“How did this person feel about you getting treatment (___ months ago)?”

For the follow-up interview conducted at the end of treatment clients are asked:

“How did this person feel about you getting treatment?”

For the follow-up interview conducted 8 months later ask:

“How did this person feel about you getting treatment 8 months ago?”

Response options are changed to past tense (e.g., “strongly supports it” is changed to “strongly supported it”).

When the interview is over, code question B (relationship) using the revised Important People Code Sheet. Then copy the new version of column 1 and 2 and staple this along with the old one to the Contact Sheet used to pursue clients for follow-ups (unless the IP will no longer be administered at any more follow-ups for this subject).

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