

CONCEPT PAPER
ON THE
DEVELOPMENT OF A PROGRAM
TO ASSESS AND CONTROL
POLICE OFFICER JOB STRESS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the work proposed here is to develop and evaluate a training program which will enable police officers to recognize and deal effectively with job stress. The theoretical foundation of the program is a psychological stress assessment technique and a decision-making model of coping patterns and behavioral options. The behavior at issue is that involved in both the officer's job performance and the off-duty situations which influence and are, in turn, influenced by his work.

The program includes assessment devices to reveal stages in the development of an individual's coping style, and role modelling training to produce changes in that style, resulting in more situationally appropriate behavior. Because the assessment and change mechanisms are connected in their theoretical foundations, an evaluation capability for the change program is built into the process. Objective on-the-job behavioral criteria will also be monitored to provide further evaluation of the impact of the program.

I. Introduction and Need for the Study

It has been generally conceded that police work is a hazardous, high-stress occupation (for a comprehensive review, see Kroes & Hurrell, 1975). Many sources of stress in police work are related to the real dangers and time pressures in the officer's occupational role, what Lewis (1973) called "danger stress." In actuality, an officer spends a relatively small proportion of his working time at direct risk of injury or death; however, the knowledge of potential hazards and the unpredictability of violence constitutes a significant stressor in police work. Selye (1976) proposed that both overstimulation and understimulation can increase stress. Police work seems to combine a critical amount of simultaneous over- and understimulation. That is, while much of police work is routine and boring, there is the concomitant requirement that the officer be alert for anything unusual. He must be prepared to shift gears instantly from idling to high action. This situation may constitute the stress precursor par excellence.

In addition, the estimated 80% of a police officer's work which entails providing service to citizens is stressful in itself. Crisis intervention is perhaps the primary task of the police officer. Basing his assessment on studies by police departments in Syracuse, Dallas, Kansas City, New York, and Cambridge, Bard (1977) stated that the management of the line of violence that originates in interpersonal conflict is "probably the largest single subset of police action."

The stress observed in police work is clearly based in the same dynamics conceptualized in psychological research, and seen in industrial contexts.

Stressors, the agents that produce a state of stress in an organism (a condition of physical or mental strain which produces changes in the autonomic nervous system) can include, among other examples, fighting, anger and hate (Allikmets, 1974; Moyer, 1971), anxiety, anticipation, fear, and arousal (Nomikos et al., 1968; Spielberger, 1966; Coleman, 1960), catastrophes and accidents (Parker, 1972), and occupational stresses, especially those associated with interpersonal conflicts and shift work (Buck, 1972; Margolis et al., 1974).

The same stressors can elicit different manifestations in different individuals, or in the same individual at different times (Selye, 1975). These differential reactions are influenced by the quantity, intensity, and duration of the stressors, as well as by the individual's characteristic ways of dealing with stress (his "personality"), and his past learning experiences.

The stress response is an adaptive mechanism necessary for the organism to avoid disease, mobilize for fight or flight, and adapt to new environmental conditions. If the stressor remains, however, and/or if the individual has an insufficient, excessive, or inappropriate reaction, a stress-related disorder can occur. Some specific symptoms or disorders that result from stress include backache and neck pain, subjective fatigue states, insomnia, chronic anxiety, phobias, depression, anger states, hypertension, and sexual dysfunction.

In the context of industry, Pritchett and Finley (1971) described the direct and hidden costs of stress-related disorders, especially alcoholism, low productivity on the job, lateness, absenteeism, safety hazards and accidents, poor decision-making, early retirement, unfavorable public relations with the

community, and supervisory time lost dealing with the troubled employee.

Stressors related to the nature of the police organization as a quasi-military structure which occasions stress concern assignments, promotions, authority relations, following orders, etc. (Symonds, 1970; Reiser, 1974). Eisenberg (1975) identified and discussed as important stressors certain intra-organizational practices and characteristics (i.e., poor supervision, absence of career development opportunities, inadequate reward system, offensive policy, and excessive paperwork), inter-organizational (between or among police agencies) practices and characteristics, and the criminal justice system itself (e.g., unfavorable court decisions, misunderstood judicial procedures) which combine with sources of stress inherent in the public image and reaction to police officers, police work itself, and the police officer him/herself.

A different kind of organizational stress affects the police supervisor, who is wedged in a pressure position of being responsible for the conduct and safety of his subordinates, law enforcement in the community, and accountability to higher echelon administrators (Kroes, Hurrell, & Margolis, 1974). In their study which consisted of interviews of 30 police administrators from the Cincinnati Police Department, these authors found that "administration"—complaints about policies and procedures ("bureaucracy") and lack of higher echelon support—was cited as a bothersome stressor by 60% of the respondents, followed by concerns about the adequacy of equipment and/or manpower, community relations, court rulings and treatment of police officers, changing shift routines, feelings of not accomplishing anything, and work overload.

Another set of stressors derives from the officer's sense of identity within an ambiguous and changing occupational and social role, i.e., the police peer group and the pressure to conform to their values and attitudes (Reiser, 1974); and the "thin blue line" or the "us" (the cops—the good guys) versus "them" (the criminals and other potentially explosive elements in a "powderkeg" situation) syndrome, which sets the officer apart from the rest of the community and may lead to police anomie.

Finally, there are stressful factors implicated in the very nature of police service which "affords unusual opportunities and temptations to accept graft, to indulge in other forms of dishonesty, immorality, and excesses and to wreak vengeance on persons who have offended (President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice, 1967)." These factors are simultaneously stressors, in that alcoholism and corruption add to the impairment already caused by the initial stress experience, and the results of stress (stress-related disorders) in that the threshold for yielding to these job-related temptations may be lowered by an officer's general level of stress and characteristic response to that stress.

Edward Shev, the San Francisco psychiatrist who has screened and counseled some 6,700 police officers and applicants in 20 California communities over the last 13 years, stated in his 1977 book, "alcoholism among police is one of the most devastating problems facing communities today. And the tendency toward heavy use of drugs results in large measure from the pressures of police work." (p. 13). Another key problem cited by Shev is that 35% of all police officers now on duty are "bad cops," whose personalities seem unsuited for

police work and who seem unable to learn about themselves or accept treatment that will allow them to function adequately in their jobs. In a stressful situation, these are the individuals who are in danger of falling apart and acting impulsively, perhaps violently.

Other stress-related problems that directly affect a police officer's effective functioning include the taking of excessive sick leave, whether consciously illegitimate, as in malingering, or unconsciously so, as in the case of psychophysiological or psychosomatic illnesses. If a police officer makes excessive use of sick leave, this is a serious problem not only because of lost productivity, but because this often indicates an underlying problem such as depression.

Stress related problems that indirectly affect the police officer's work are alcoholism, police suicide (Lewis, 1973; Heiman, 1975), divorce, and psychological disorders. There seems to be a consensus that alcoholism, suicide, and divorce are higher among police officers than among the general population (Jacobi, 1975).

The impact of these many kinds of stress on the police officer's job performance and on his personal well-being is therefore extremely damaging. These effects create a social problem of large proportions. The project described here is a direct attempt, based on sound research, to alleviate this problem.

II. Rationale for the Study Approach

The present project proposal is concerned with the effects of all these combined stressors, which appear to be affecting the police officer's job satisfaction, and in turn, influencing his functioning both on and off the job. Job satisfaction has been related to person-environment or person-role fit (e.g., Kelling & Pate, 1975), which in the present context could be reinterpreted as factors within the person which interact with the stressfulness of police work to produce a good or poor person-role fit. This proposal will consider how factors within the individual determine his capacity to adapt to or cope with stress. Within this psychosocial stress model, it would seem important to (1) identify individuals who will have difficulty dealing with stressors inherent in the job of a police officer, and (2) formulate a program which will help the individual officer who is ineffectively coping with stress, on and off the job, to make better decisions in potentially stressful situations. Thus, the project embraces a testing phase and a training phase.

1. Previous work

Other assessment studies have been concerned with the police officer's I.Q., his attainment of specific knowledge and skills relevant to police work, or his "personality" as measured by such techniques as the M.M.P.I, C.P.I., or 16 P.F. (for a review, see Murphy, 1972). Certainly, a fair, valid, and job-related cognitive intellectual abilities test, such as the written test developed and described by Crosby, Rosenfeld, and Thornton (1977) is needed to assist in the selection of police officers. Such a test, however, would have to be supplemented with information about the candidates' non-cognitive functioning.

It has been suggested (Hunt, 1977) that if 75% of the learning for police work is gained on the job, and involves job-related, complex decision-making, then what is needed is a test to indicate the aptitude of the candidate to perform some of the behaviors actually required in police work. Gathering valid decision-making information in this area appears to be less successful and more controversial than more purely cognitive testing.

While clinical interviews (e.g., Shev, 1977) can be remarkably sensitive in picking out problematic candidates, the interview procedure suffers from the drawbacks of being arduous for both the interviewer and interviewee, costly, and nonstandardized. Its value in assessment depends on the skill of the individual interviewer. Standardized personality tests, while more easily administered, have at least three serious problems related to the trait-centered approach on which they are based: (1) which traits define the "good police officer;" there are, for example, obvious contradictions implied in selecting for this definition the traits "assertiveness" or "restraint," "friendliness" or "firmness" and "optimism" or "wariness," (2) how to measure reliably and validly whatever traits are selected, (3) whether these traits, even if well-defined and well-measured, predict to the police officer's actual on-the-job performance, where the three-dimensional reality situation is likely to differ dramatically from the paper and pencil testing circumstances under which the traits were tapped.

A further problem with the trait-centered assessment approach is revealed when intervention (training or therapy) is desired. A change program based on such an approach would seem to imply logically that candidates not meeting

an acceptable profile must either change their entire personality structure, or be eliminated at the outset. In fact, much of the research on selection of capable police officers has been either merely descriptive—dealing with the personality characteristics of successful police candidates, or proscriptive—concentrating on detecting unfit candidates (Hogan & Kurtines, 1975).

2. Theoretical rationale for the testing phase

The model which will be developed here asserts that future behaviors can be predicted through a technique which implicates some of the expected situational constraints. Such a test would not assess "personality," but a person's reactions and responses to a situation which is similar to the context in which the assessor and/or change agent is interested, in this case, the police officer's work.

The assessment technique which will be discussed here combines the advantages of a standardized easily administered test with the obvious ecological validity of situational testing (cf. Crosby, 1975), a simulated stress group method (Mills, 1975), or the assessment center approach, where candidates' behavior is observed in a series of job-related situations (e.g., Guion, 1977). The concept underlying the present assessment technique is that film, in its unique capacity to simulate reality, can provide the stimulus and emotional impact of real life experience. A questionnaire, based on the filmed situations, can then tap the subjects' individual reactions and responses according to the structure of a decision-making model. Subjects can be normatively compared because the situations are standardized across subjects, and because the fact that the situations are filmed and not real eliminates the complicating problem of feedback from actual interactions (which then alters the subjects' behavior in experimentally uncontrollable ways.)

The questionnaire is designed to elicit subjects' modes of responding to the stressful stimuli depicted in the film within the categories of cognition, affect, and action potential. The questionnaire was so structured to meet some of the recent criticism aimed at the weak empirical links between measured attitudes (what a test taps) and observed behavior (what a test is trying to predict) (e.g., Kiesler, Collins, & Miller, 1969; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Wicker, 1969).

In the traditional distinction made by social psychological attitude theories between the affective and cognitive components of an attitude, the affective component refers to an individual's general level of positive or negative feeling concerning an issue, while the cognitive component reflects the individual's beliefs concerning the issue. Rosenberg (1968) suggested that the greater the consistency between the affective and cognitive components, the more stable the attitude. Ross (1976) further tested this proposition, and found that greater structural (affective-cognitive) consistency is related to the predictive validity of a verbal attitude to a behavioral measure. Kelman (1974) considered the array of evidence suggesting that the concept of "attitude" is possibly overworked and that there is little support for the notion of stable, underlying attitudes within individuals which influence later behaviors. To update the definition of 'attitude' and to enhance its empirical relevance as a concept, Kelman stressed the importance of action:

"Attitude...is not an index of action, but a determinant, component, and consequent of it...An attitude is embedded in an action sequence." (p. 316)

Kelman proposed that any given attitude represents a "range of commitment" to the attitude object, by which he seems to mean action potential—the kinds of action a person is prepared or is expecting to take.

We have accepted this notion, but go even further to hypothesize that action potential can be conceived of as a "third component" of an attitude, or perhaps more precisely, a script. Thus, based on the work of Ross (1976), we might expect that the best predictor of an action is the consistency of the cognitive, affective, and action potential components of a script. To further enhance the presently described instrument's potential to predict behavior, these components are illustrated by specific statements about specific feelings, ways of thinking and ways of acting. This test construction innovation was introduced in response to recent work in cognitive social psychology (e.g., Abelson, 1976), which suggests that people do not have generalized abstract attitudes or response predispositions, but specific perceptions and expectations concerning specific situations—situational scripts. Thus, the more specific or concrete your assessment, the better it can predict behavior in similar concrete (real life) situations.

The questionnaire in the present study consists of cognitive, affective and action potential statements. Within each structural component, there are four choices that the subject must rank order. The questionnaire limits the range of the subject's responses by structuring these choices into four categories for (1) affect or feeling states (fear, anger, humiliation, or complacency) that result from interaction with a situation, (2) cognition or perceived aspects of a situation that might predispose someone to react angrily,

fearfully, with humiliation, or complacently, and (3) action potential—expectations of likely behavior in a situation (to react immediately and impulsively, to withdraw from action, to delay action, or to describe thoughts, feelings, and contemplated actions).

3. Connection of theoretical assessment rationale to a decision-making model

While these categories were developed from classical social psychological theories of attitudes (scripts) and behaviors, they are applicable to a recent decision-making model of coping patterns posed by Janis and Mann (1977). The main advantage of being able to relate the theoretical rationale of FAST to such a decision-making model is that an intervention strategy to promote more effective decision-making in the face of stress (described in the next section) can be built logically upon these theoretical foundations. Further, we agree with writers such as Christy and Rasmussen (1963) who, in a discussion of the Navy's human reliability program, expressed that assessment would be more successful if it aimed at the significance of alleged psychopathology, rather than at its detection alone.

Thus, while one aspect of the current assessment project will determine the convergent validity of the Filmed Assessment of Stress Technique (FAST) against an estimate of I.Q., and an estimate of psychopathology (such as the M.M.P.I.) or personality (such as the C.P.I.), we believe that FAST will provide more meaningful assessment data than these other techniques because FAST is uniquely concerned with predicting noneffective decision-making outcomes—the consequences of noneffective stress coping patterns. That is,

a low I.Q. and evidence of psychopathology would correlate to some extent with noneffective coping patterns, but these would be peripheral rather than direct measurements of the behavior in which we are most interested: effective decision-making in response to stress.

The assumption of Janis and Mann (1977) is that psychological stress is an unpleasant emotional state evoked by threatening environmental events or stimuli. According to their description, a stressful event is any change in the environment that typically induces a high degree of unpleasant emotion. Janis and Mann discussed four basic patterns of coping behavior that are occasionally adaptive, especially for minor decision, but which often result in defective decision-making, particularly if serious consequences are involved:

(1) Unconflicted inertia, in which there is little or no emotional arousal, the person is not aware of a serious threat, and does not feel stressed. In the present questionnaire, this pattern might be identified by a predominant affective and cognitive response of complacency, and a behavioral proclivity to delay action, for example.

(2) Unconflicted change to a new course of action, in which a person is not aware of the serious risks of salient protective action. In FAST, this pattern corresponds to an action tendency to react immediately and impulsively, perhaps ignited by cognitions and affects which are mainly centered around unconflicted fear (fear in both cognitive and affect categories) or anger.

(3) Defensive avoidance, in which a person abandons hope for a solution or for a means of escape, and tends to avoid the situation or take evasive/defensive measures. This pattern seems to be described in FAST by the action tendency to withdraw, perhaps connected with a cognitive recognition and feeling of humiliation or psychic pain.

(4) Hypervigilance, in which a person panics under pressure of a demanding stress in a frantic search for a solution or escape, and fails to use the remaining time to make an effective decision. The action potential implied by FAST which corresponds to this pattern is to delay action. While this resembles in terms of action potential Janis and Mann's pattern of "unconflicted inertia," here instead of an "unconflicted" state of cognitive and affective complacency, the person could have "conflicted" cognitions and affects (e.g., a cognitive recognition of elements of anger set in an affective context of fear, or a recognition of elements of fear within an affective state of humiliation). It should be stressed, however, that this is only one hypothesis.

A fifth pattern, described by Janis and Mann as resulting in high quality decision-making is Vigilance, in which there is a thorough information search and a survey of the full range of alternative courses of action. In the present questionnaire, the corresponding action potential is to describe thoughts, feelings, and considered actions. It might be supposed that a thorough survey of internal as well as external information would result in a broad spectrum of cognitions and affects. That is, across a number of filmed situations, a

subject could envision characters in the films responding with a variety of thoughts and emotions, rather than seeing the characters bound to a single, stereotyped mode of response. Support for such a hypothesis is provided by Symond's (1970) statement that police work "demands the use of good judgment under stress. The policeman must have the ability to be flexible under stress and to be able to adapt to rapidly changing unpredictable situations" (p. 155). Further support for the importance of describing thoughts, feelings and potential actions is provided by Esbeck and Halverson's (1973) emphasis on self-disclosure by police officers—describing feelings, in order to reduce the level of stress, and thus to cope with the tension of the situation.

4. Theoretical rationale for the training phase

Even if assessment were 100% successful in screening out poor candidates for police work, something would have to be done about the 60% of police candidates who, according to Shev (1977) are "treatable;" that is, while they are liable to break under stress, they could become well functioning police officers with counseling and/or training. The ranks of these "at risk" candidates would be swelled by otherwise stable officers for whom the quantity, intensity, or duration of on-the-job or off-duty stress reaches their individual threshold points. Whatever the cause of the perceived stress, these officers are more likely to make maladaptive decisions in potential stressful situations and to develop stress-related disorders.

Remedies for such stress-related disorders will not come from changing the situation; it is likely that the job of police officer will always be

potentially and even increasingly stressful, given our current social structure and its multiple strains. Remedies which aim at changing the particular symptom of stress, may not generalize into different stress contexts or to different stress reactions. Examples of this class of interventions include alcoholism programs, marriage counseling, or biofeedback, which alters the psychophysiological response systems of subjects suffering from stress-related disorders.

While all these remedies are certainly effective to some degree, it would seem that an intervention strategy which aimed at assisting an individual to modify salient existing stress responses, and to learn more adaptive ones, might enhance the transfer of training to everyday life. A program which diagnosed and changed an individual's habitual responses to perceived stressors and those behaviors known to have destructive long-term consequences for the individual, and for society, might also have more of an impact on preventing poor decision-making in future responses to stress.

The training phase of the proposed project is based on the theoretical implications of the decision-making model of stress assessment. The conceptual and behavioral components of the training were designed to encompass the seven major criteria for evaluating the quality of decision-making which were extracted from the literature by Janis and Mann (1977):

1. Canvassing a wide range of alternative courses of action.
2. Surveying the full range of alternative courses of action.
3. Carefully weighing costs and risks of negative and positive consequences for each alternative.

4. Searching for new information relevant to further evaluation of alternatives.
5. Taking account of new information or expert judgment, even if it doesn't support one's initial action preference.
6. Reexamining positive and negative consequences of all known alternatives before making a final decision.
7. Making detailed provision for, implementing or executing the chosen course, with attention to contingency plans.

(From Janis & Mann, 1977, p. 11)

These authors also stressed that effective intervention depends on both (1) "cognitive confrontations," which make a person aware of previously latent thoughts and feelings through verbalizing his beliefs about a situation, and which sensitizes the person to inconsistencies between his beliefs and actions; and (2) "emotional confrontations," particularly via role-playing, which provides for the context for a thorough, systematic examination of the pros and cons of each alternative course of action.

The importance of emotional and behavioral consolidation of any intellectually stimulated changes has a long history, illustrated by concepts such as Freud's notion of "working through" of analytically obtained insights. Lewin (1948) viewed "re-education" as the primary task of acculturation where effectiveness depends on linkages between changes in an individual's cognitive structure, his values and valences, and his motoric action. Insko and Cialdini (1971) suggested that long-term persistence of attitude change could depend on a behavioral commitment, which has an effect over and above that produced by a two-factor (cognitive, in terms of information and emotional, in terms of "rapport" with the change agent) theory of interpersonal influence.

It is this emphasis on emotional confrontation and behavioral commitment via role-playing that distinguishes the currently proposed training scheme from training packages such as the recent Harper & Row Media Program (1977), which is a series of police training films providing an approach to conflict management. While these films vividly illustrate the dangers in certain stressful situations, and enact the pros and cons of various means of resolving the conflicts depicted, the training seems limited to what we designated as only the first component of change—the conceptual. Zacker and Bard (1973), in an evaluation of two training conditions representing the affective-experimental training model and the cognitive training model found the former generally more effective according to certain criteria. They concluded that:

"Police training is characteristically like the cognitive-training approach, which can be seen as a 'military-vocational model.' This approach, geared to the training of technicians through the transmission of information to large groups in a lecture format, minimizes individual decision making by the practitioner. It may be that the passivity fostered in the recipient of such training is countervailing to the activity required in effective police work. Hence, the policeman-practitioner may be seriously compromised in both his ability to process information received while in a passive mode and in translating it to the active mode required by his daily functioning." (p. 207)

Brodsky (1975) described the use of situation-specific stressors in the form of filmed vignettes depicting specific interpersonal problems presented in law enforcement. This study is very similar in intent to the present project with two major differences: (1) Brodsky's situational training was applied with no variation to all trainees, while the present strategy makes structural provision for individual training needs, and (2) that study assessed

the perceived validity of the training by administering to the trainees (a) subjective questionnaires about the films' importance and accuracy, and (b) self-report questionnaires concerning the subjects' feelings about how "prepared" they felt to handle various situations and how "at ease" they would feel in these situations. In contrast, the present study proposes to validate and evaluate the assessment and training phases by behavioral criteria—on-the-job performance measures and supervisor's ratings, which would seem to provide more solid and directly relevant validation criteria.

Another study which employed a basically similar approach was Esbeck and Halverson's (1973) team-building approach to the professional police officer. The goals of this training program were to emphasize means by which individuals could learn to recognize their tension and predict subsequent personal reactions, to provide a learning experience which would help supervisors deal with tension levels in subordinates, to assist officers in recognizing high tension levels in groups, and to provide basic skills for intervening in confrontation situations.

While these goals are basically congruent with the aims of the present project, our proposed training differs in terms of (1) being more systematically based on a decision-making model of stress assessment and training in stress management, and (2) being packaged in the form of film modules with minimal trainer output, rather than the seminar format of Esbeck and Halverson. (They also used a self-report questionnaire of perceived value of the training as "evaluation," a procedure which was discussed above in the context of Zacker and Bard's work as inadequate.) The training seminar or workshop format,

while probably effective, is probably more expensive, more difficult to standardize, staff and evaluate, and more difficult to mount as a full-scale nationwide police stress education and training program.

III. Methodology

Project activity will be directed to two distinct but related technical tasks: confirming the validity of the FAST questionnaire, and developing and evaluating a training program to help officers manage stress.

1. FAST Questionnaire

The hypothetical patterns of response to the FAST questionnaire are based on a decision-making model of coping patterns engaged in response to a stressful situation, and may be tested empirically in a study of the predictive validity of the hypothetical response patterns. It is expected that patterns of responses to the questionnaire will distinguish police officers who are able to cope more effectively with stress from those who are less effective.

Effective coping with stress will be assessed behaviorally according to:

- (a) monthly evaluations of the police officers on several dimensions of stress with behavioral anchors by their immediate supervisors (Dunnette & Motowidlo, 1976; Furcon & Froemel, 1973; Landy, 1976). Because there will be several supervisors over a period of time, inter-rater reliability can be established.
- (b) objective criteria which seem to indicate dysfunctional responses to stress, such as the "violence profile" developed by the New York Police Department, which is drawn from a central repository of

negative report allegations, investigative reports, and poor evaluations of an officer.¹ This list could be supplemented with criteria such as those used by Cascio (1976).²

Another approach to validation of FAST, beside hypothesis testing of the decision-making model would be strictly empirical: to develop independent factors (via a computer factor analysis) and dependent factor (consisting of objective behavioral criteria), and then generate a regression equation which can be used as a prediction criterion for police personnel selection.

For both approaches (hypothesis testing and empirical), cross-validation procedures will be employed to confirm that the predictive validity of FAST to these behavioral criteria is not a chance finding related to any particular sample tested originally.

2. Stress Training and Education Project (STEP)

The training scheme outlined in this concept paper may be considered either preventative—as part of the training procedure for police candidates, or as part of the regular, in-service training for officers, and/or remedial—as extramural training for officers identified as needing help. The training package is designed for mounting by existing trainers or educational personnel in conventional workshop settings; no psychological specialists or consultants are needed once the program is adapted.

¹These criteria include: questionable use of firearms, removal of firearms, referral to alcoholic counseling, civilian complaint of excessive use of force substantiated by Review Board, pattern of chronic sickness, administrative transgression, loss of firearms, loss of shield, a pattern of department charges such as drinking on duty, off-duty incidents with force involved, off-duty employment over the maximum allowed hours, or garnishment of paycheck.

²These criteria include: number of injuries on the job, number of sick days a year, number of injuries by assault and battery, number of preventable accidents, disciplinary action from preventable accidents, the number of sustained investigations, reprimands, suspensions and other disciplinary actions for citizen complaints or internal review of allegations: false arrests, discourtesy, misconduct, harassment, missing property, damage to property, malicious prosecution, shooting incident, criminal misconduct, discharge of firearms.

The training package will consist of printed trainer's guides and a series of short, open-ended film modules, (Cf. the simulated film vignettes for training created by Danish & Brodsky, 1974), which would depict a variety of work-related and off-duty stress situations (e.g., race relations, an officer marriage or family problem, temptations on-the-job concerning "broads, booze, and bribes" in the words of Shev, supervisor-supervisee altercations, third-party intervention situations, etc.).

The training phase of the assessment-training package is designed to follow up the assessment phase, where officers will be evaluated in terms of their individual repertoire of cognitive appraisals, affective responses and projected behavioral options.

Cognitive component. After each film, there will be a peer group discussion in which (a) trainees will write down what they see as possible outcomes to the filmed vignettes, and (b) all the possible outcomes generated by the group will be discussed. This procedure is intended to expand the trainees' sensitivity to the wide range of cognitive appraisals, affective responses, and behavioral options available to all the individuals involved in a particular situation. Further, it is expected that this will make the trainees more aware of individual choice in a decision-making situation, and more cognizant of how they may be personally limited or biased in their existing response repertoires. Awareness of these limitations seems especially important because a person is more likely to resort to extreme modes of defense, and thus we might assume more maladaptive decision-making when conflict-producing elements are at an unconscious, rather than a conscious, level. Particular attention

will be paid to the behavioral options, highlighting appraisal of their relative risks-costs and rewards-benefits. Finally, the emphasis on learning a "grid" of four major feelings, cognitions, and behavioral options provides the trainee with a ready-made structure. This structure acts as a readily available "cognitive anchor" under stressful conditions of confusion and stimulus overload.

The trainees will learn a grid of primary feelings which are valuable in a practical sense to his perception of stress.

This "feeling" grid consists of fear, love (or compassion), anger, and psychic pain. Like the written Miranda card, a solid commitment to memory of this grid serves as an anchor during periods of stress and confusion.

Since affective issues are an important part of the decision-making model, it is crucial for any subject to be aware of these dominant feelings. For example, am I angry because he insulted me? (psychic pain) Do I want to belong? (loved) Am I afraid that my boss will be annoyed (angry) if I tell him what happened?

Fear, love, anger and pain should be perceived as both incoming and outgoing emotions. They occur in every possible combination and change direction at high frequency. "He insulted me in front of my boss (incoming pain) and I'm furious (outgoing anger)," etc.

The cognitive training session will teach this self-awareness grid (fear, love, anger, pain). The training modules will trigger a peer discussion designed to teach the trainees the grid by having them attribute the defined

feelings to the characters in the films. Having the group in a peer setting attribute these feelings will heighten a discovery of their own emotions and the direction of their cognitions of others.

Behavioral component. Trainees will take turns role-playing the consequences of the behavioral options which they generated in the conceptual component, enacting both positive and negative outcomes in terms of their previous cost/benefit analysis. The purpose of this exercise is to reinforce behaviorally what was first indicated conceptually. Any discussion of the causes and nature of stressors in police work must take into consideration the heterogeneity among police officers—the differential vulnerability of officers to stress (Brodsky, 1975). To this end, individuals who were diagnosed in the assessment phase as having difficulty envisioning certain lines of thinking, feeling and/or acting will be assigned to role-play these same personally conflicted themes (e.g., "Imagine what it would be like for you to feel really hurt and humiliated in this situation, and to realize what elements in the situation made you feel this way. Now, take the role of Character B and act out an ending to this vignette along these lines."). This series of structured exchanges and role play in a peer group context is intended (a) to increase trainees' understanding of their own thinking, feeling, and action tendencies through giving them experience with other ways of responding and (b) to optimize their appropriate assessment of a situation, of the other actors in that situation, and the most appropriate response.

The behavior options are:

- Option 1. ACT - taking command, acting-out verbally or physically (e.g., yelling, hitting, shooting, etc.), arrest, restrain
- Option 2. WITHDRAW - freeze, become impotent, admit defeat, hide, surrender
- Option 3. DESCRIBE FEELINGS AND INTENDED ACTIONS - verbalize reactions
- Option 4. DELAY - planning, scheming, regrouping, wait for better or advantageous circumstances.

Again the training modules will serve as the triggers for peer discussion to explore how the screen characters might resolve the issues presented in the films. This part of the training will not only teach the grid of behavioral options but ask trainees to evaluate each behavior in terms of the potential costs and benefits. The learned grid of behaviors (like the grid of emotions) serves as an 'anchor' under real life conditions of stress to encourage more sophisticated decision making.

Thus, to bridge the gap between knowing and doing, the training will employ a modified role-play technique. The same trigger films will be used to guide and define the experiential training. These films are situation specific. They deal with everyday police-stress issues but offer no resolution to the conflicts presented.

The behavioral training combines the results of both assessment and cognitive training to address the training needs of the individual. The assessment profile will provide the trainer with profile of how each trainee perceives his own emotions, how he sees others and the kinds of "scripts" he develops. Having learned the grid of feelings and behaviors in the cognitive

training, the trainee is prepared to experiment (in role play) with those scripts with which he is least comfortable.

Since the role module films require resolution, the trainer can assign specific sets of feelings and behaviors to role play. Feedback from the group will provide support and or criticism of the behaviors selected. The feedback will be expressed in terms of likely costs as opposed to rewards of the "scripts" selected by each trainee.

3. Evaluation

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the FAST questionnaire is a matter of carrying out further concurrent validation studies to supplement the promising validity evidence already obtained with initial sample groups. The new validation studies will use as criteria intelligence and personality tests, as well as judgmental ratings on stress-coping effectiveness by judges to whom the subjects are well-known. Thus, several kinds of validity inferences can be drawn, and the question of chance findings can be answered by virtue of the cross-validation using new sample groups.

The STEP training program will be evaluated by pre- and post-training behavioral measures made by the researchers based on role-play observation, and by on-the-job stress-coping measures made by supervisors. Apart from quantitative, statistical tests of these effects, an analysis will be made of factors relating to the acceptance of the training by officers and administrators, the institutionalization of the concept in police agencies, and its generalizability among agencies of different size, type, and location.

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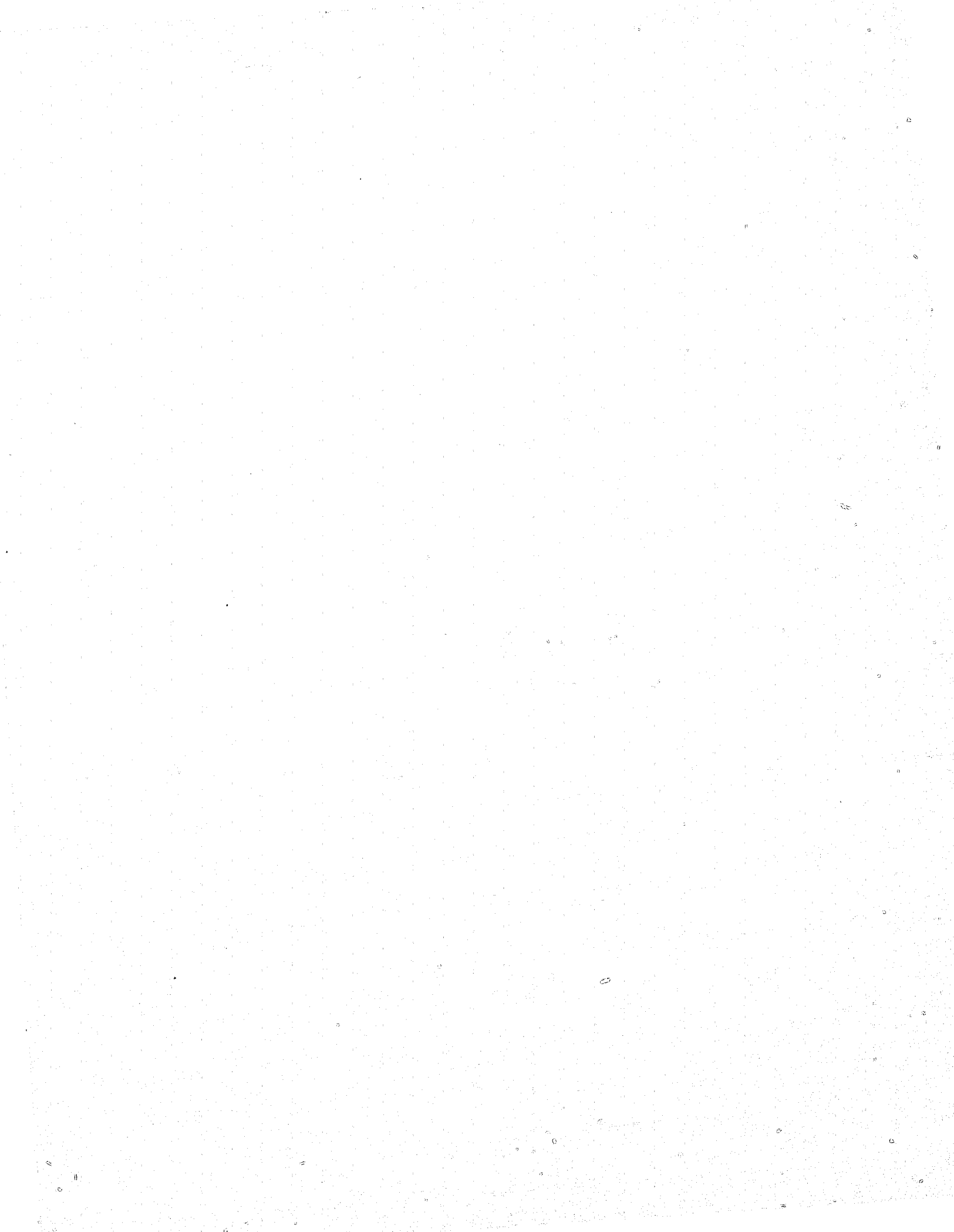
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