

Emotional Intelligence and Improv

December 2, 2016

Lawrence Hedblom, PCC

Kristin R. Krueger, PhD

Program

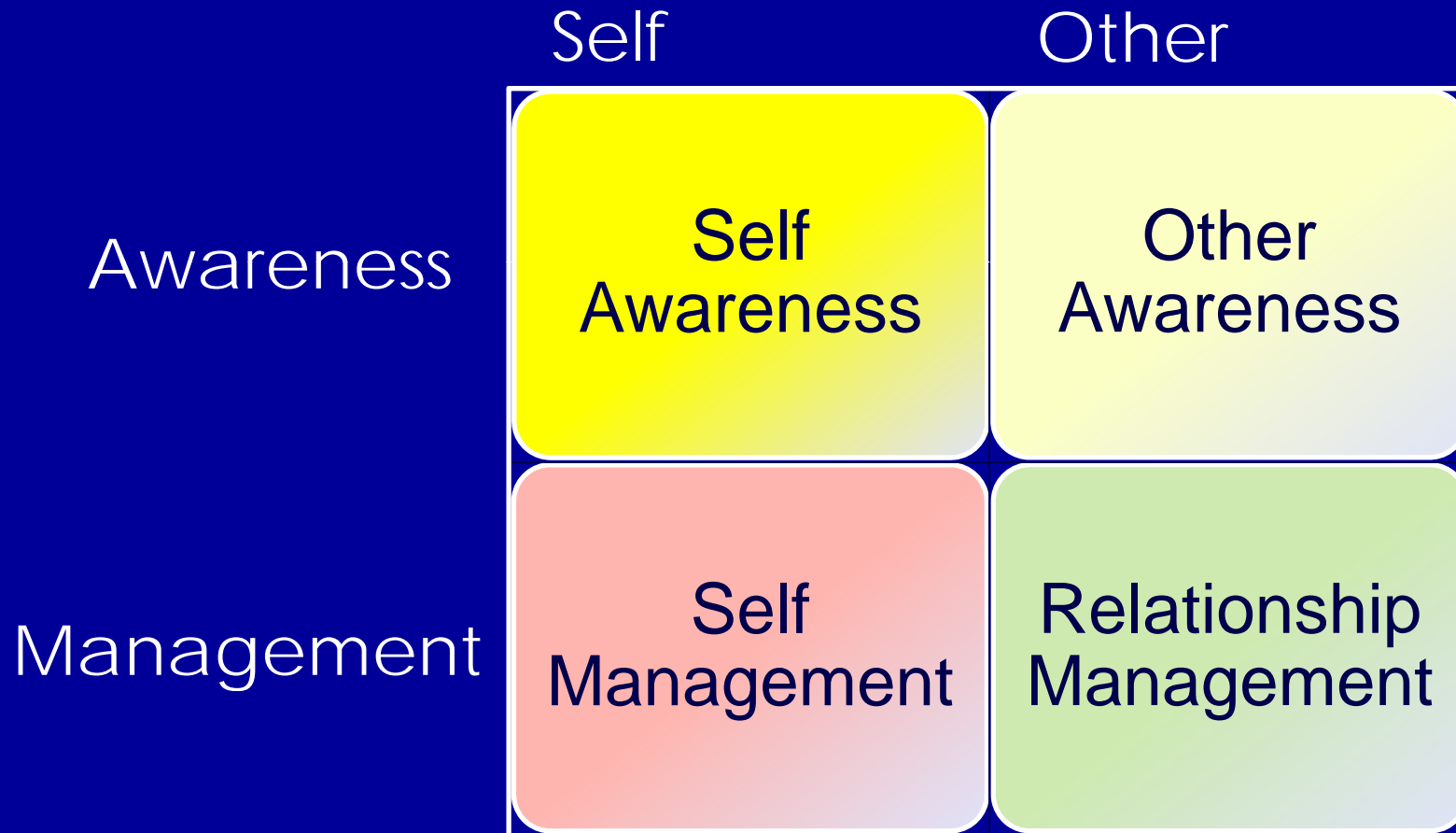
- Introduction to Emotional Intelligence and Improv
- Four important tenants of improv
 - *Yes, and*
 - Good passes
 - Surrender to the ensemble
 - Be **Bold** and celebrate mistakes
- Researching the effects of Improv

What is Emotional Intelligence?

A Working Definition

Emotional intelligence is the ability to be aware of our own emotions and those of others, *in the moment*, and to use that information to manage ourselves and manage our relationships.

EQ Four-Quadrant Model



Soft Skills Matter

In Life

- Individuals
 - Are healthier
 - Live longer
 - Enjoy more satisfying marriages
 - Have larger, deeper and more fulfilling social networks

In Work

- Greater
 - Productivity
 - Retention of top performers
 - Employee satisfaction & engagement
 - Profitability

Improvisation - Defined

The art or act of composing, uttering, executing, or arranging anything without previous preparation.

Advantages of Improv

- Experiential exercises
- Better listening
- Letting go
- Flexibility
- Agility
- Resilience

Yes, AND . . .

- NO
- Yes, but
- Yes, AND

Good Passes

Our success at home and at work depends on “good passes” or good communication.

Surrender to Ensemble

- Appreciation Bombardment - Part I
- Get into groups of 6
- Interview each other: about aspects the others appreciate about themselves
- A asks B; swap roles; A asks C
- “Please tell me something about yourself that you’re proud of “
- Accomplishment, skill, high point in life, talent, challenge overcome, hobby

Surrender to Ensemble (cont.)

- Part II
- Form a circle. One at a time . . .
- . . . each person takes a turn as the focal point
- One by one, each of the others in their circle shares back the positives they learned in the interviews
- Move to the next person until all have been the focus

Be Bold and Celebrate Mistakes

We have to take chances in life in order to move forward.

So why not celebrate bold attempts, even if the attempt doesn't work out?!

Researching Improv

1. Getting started
2. Improv in Mental Health Settings:
Multiple uses across the US and the world
3. Ideas on why Improv works
4. The *Get-On-Track* Intervention

Researching Improv: Getting started

- Viola Spolin
 - Viola Spolin
 - Cognitive activity to Emotions
- From Cognitive Activity to Emotional Outcomes

Improv in Mental Health Settings

- Second City and Panic Anxiety Recovery Center
- North Shore-Evanston: Neely Benn, LCSW – fliers!
- Ashley Curiel, PsyD, Los Angeles, CA
- Margot Escott, LCSW, Naples, FL
- Living Improv Groups, Oakland, CA

Ideas on Why Improv Works

- Many books, many ideas
- Unconditional Positive Regard (Bermant, 2013)

Intervention: Get-On-Track

- No Funds
 - Just Me in Fantus Clinic
 - Busy Clinic
 - Many Different Patients
 - Novel idea – who will come?
-
- Solution: Thera-prov, improv exercises used in a therapeutic manner to treat patients with symptoms of depression and anxiety

Get-On-Track: Participants

- N = 32
- Age range: 27 to 72, Mean: 50, *sd*: 14
- 50% had prior* psychotherapy or AA/NA
- 75% women
- 34% White, 34% Black, 29% Hispanic, 3% mixed
- Average years of edu: 12.9; *sd*=2.4
- 6 different groups

Get-On-Track: Structure

- 4-week group
- Meets weekly for 2 hours

Get-On-Track: Sessions

	Improv Theme	Psychotherapeutic Theme
Week 1	<i>Yes, and Surrender to the ensemble</i>	Cohesiveness in group
Week 2	Be Bold and Celebrate mistakes	Accept self and efforts
Week 3	Identify emotions in characters	Identify emotions in self
Week 4	Change emotions in scenes	Manage emotions in life

Get-On-Track: Measures

Administered pre and post:

- Patient Health Questionnaire – 9 (PHQ-9)
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7-Item Scale (GAD-7)
- Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)
- Perfectionism Inventory (PI)
- Neuro-QoL – Satisfaction with Social Roles and Activities – Version 1.0 (NQoL)

Administered only post:

- Participant Satisfaction Questionnaire (PSQ)

Get-On-Track: Results

	Pre-Tx	Post-Tx	T-value	P-value	Cohen's d
GAD-7	12.81(4.60)	9.63(5.27)	4.67	<0.001* **	0.64
PHQ-9	14.38(6.83)	10.00(5.42)	3.78	0.001**	0.71
RSES	20.47(4.75)	22.72(5.36)	-3.31	0.002**	-0.44
NQoL	143.03(15.14)	140.53(16.71)	0.76	0.495	0.16
PI	26.90(5.09)	26.00(5.50)	1.62	0.087	0.17

Example exercises

- The gift I received
- Partner listening exercise
- Giving circle
- Give a gift
- Yeah/Boo
- Emotional Carpool

Future Research

- Program evaluations on mental health outcomes
- Cogni-prov
- Randomized controlled, longitudinal
 - Outcomes: symptoms of depression and anxiety
 - Outcomes: self-esteem and perfectionism
 - Outcomes: Cognitive activity

Summary and Conclusions

- Improv is a powerful mental health tool
- Many people are incorporating improv into their treatments, which is a great thing.
- The effects of improv need to be studied systematically. Initial signals point to an important effect.