



Intensive Interaction Newsletter



Nov/Dec 2004

News in Brief:

For those people looking for training in the use of *Intensive Interaction*, useful contacts are **Marion Crabbe** (0113 3055393) and **Graham Firth** (0113 3055160) in Leeds.

Also very useful are **Concept Training** who organise training by Phoebe Caldwell and Janet Gurney. They can be contacted on 01524 832828 or at www.concept-training.co.uk

BILD also offer some useful training by Dr Penny Lacey on working with clients with pml on 01562 723025 or at www.bild.org.uk

Dave Hewett's open access training dates can be viewed on www.davehewett.com

(If anyone knows of other training opportunities please contact Graham Firth for inclusion in the next newsletter.)

The Ethnicity Training Network: is currently establishing a database of people interested in learning disabilities, ethnicity and health. If you would like to find out more about the organisation, please contact them on the following address.

Dr Hala Abuateya
or Miss Catherine Bennett
Centre for Research in
Primary Care,
University of Leeds,
71-75 Clarendon Road,
Leeds LS2 9PL
Tel: 0113-343-6903

Leeds Mental Health Trust Research Presentation Day— Thanks to all that came and contributed



The Leeds Mental Health NHS Trust *Intensive Interaction* Research Project Report was presented to an audience of over 80 people in Leeds on 24th November. The presentation concerned the introduction of *Intensive Interaction* into the social care setting of clients with profound and multiple learning disabilities.

People attended from many places, both locally and nationally, even from as far away as Birmingham. There were also representatives from many different organisations (a variety of NHS services, educational service providers, Leeds University, Social Services and some voluntary organisations). It was pleasing to see that many different groups of professionals were represented, including care-staff, learning disability nurses, advocacy workers, teachers, service managers, research workers, speech and language therapists and psychologists.

From the feedback on the day, the research was received with great interest, and stimulated a good deal of debate concerning the provision

of *Intensive Interaction* and issues relating to the care setting for clients with profound and multiple learning disabilities.

The report is written up as a full draft report (approx. 100 pages), and also as a summary (approx. 30 pages). Copies of these are available by contacting Graham Firth.

A flow diagram pictorially illustrating the issues related to *Intensive Interaction* adoption by care staff in the research study was also presented, and is reproduced inside this Newsletter (unfortunately without the moving arrows and multitude of colours!). This attempts to summarise the overall scenario in which the use of *Intensive Interaction* was employed. The diagram is split into 2 phases, one concerned with the influences on the trainee prior to and during the training, and the second describing the adoption of *Intensive Interaction* during a supported period of implementation.

Graham Firth

Intensive Interaction with clients with PMLD is

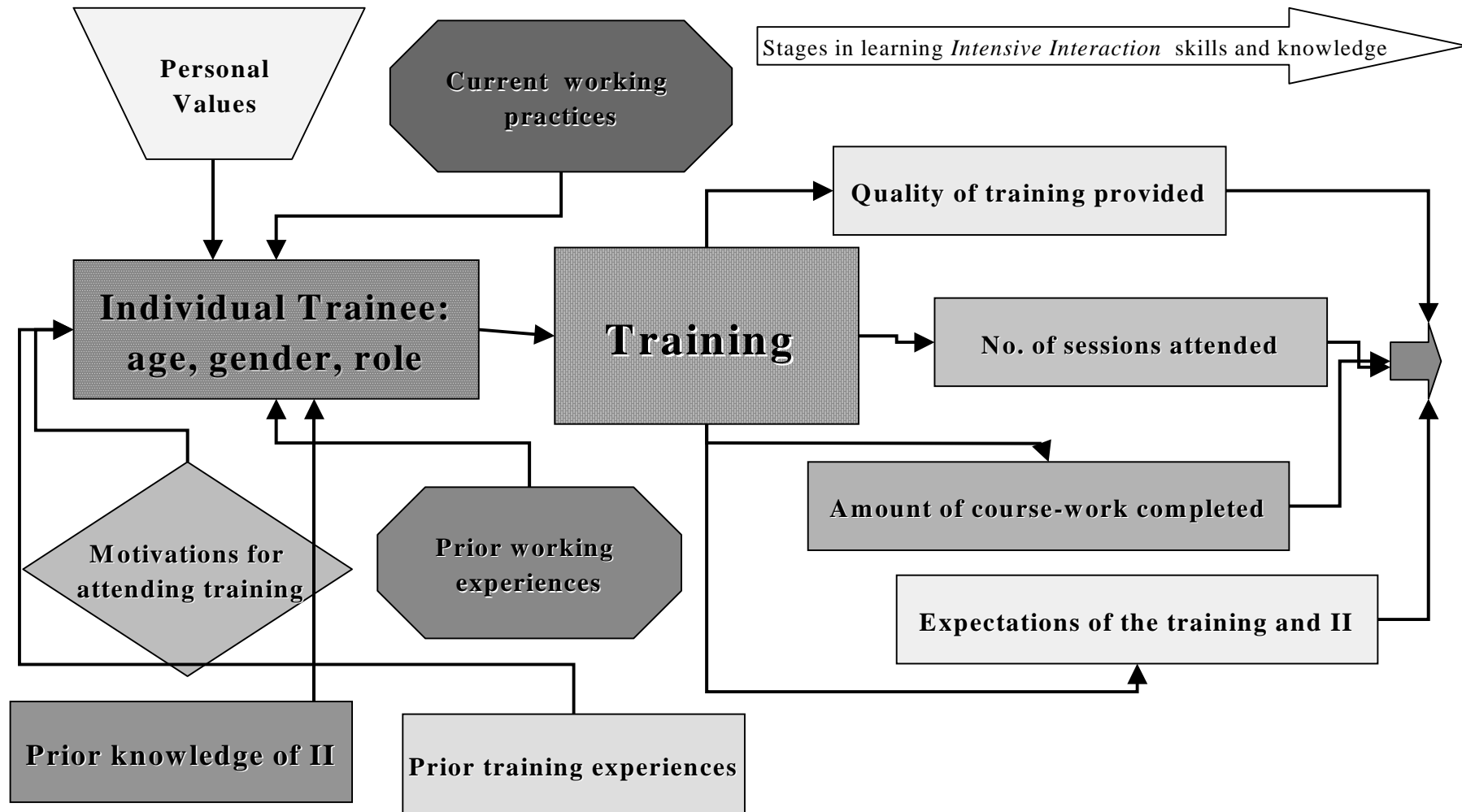
“...giving people the opportunity to have a conversation but using their form of communication, whatever it may be ...”

Leeds Mental Health Trust Care Staff Research Respondent

Copies of both the draft report and summary are available from Graham Firth by phone on 0113 3055160 or by e-mail at graham.firth@leedsmh.nhs.uk or at the address on the back of this newsletter.

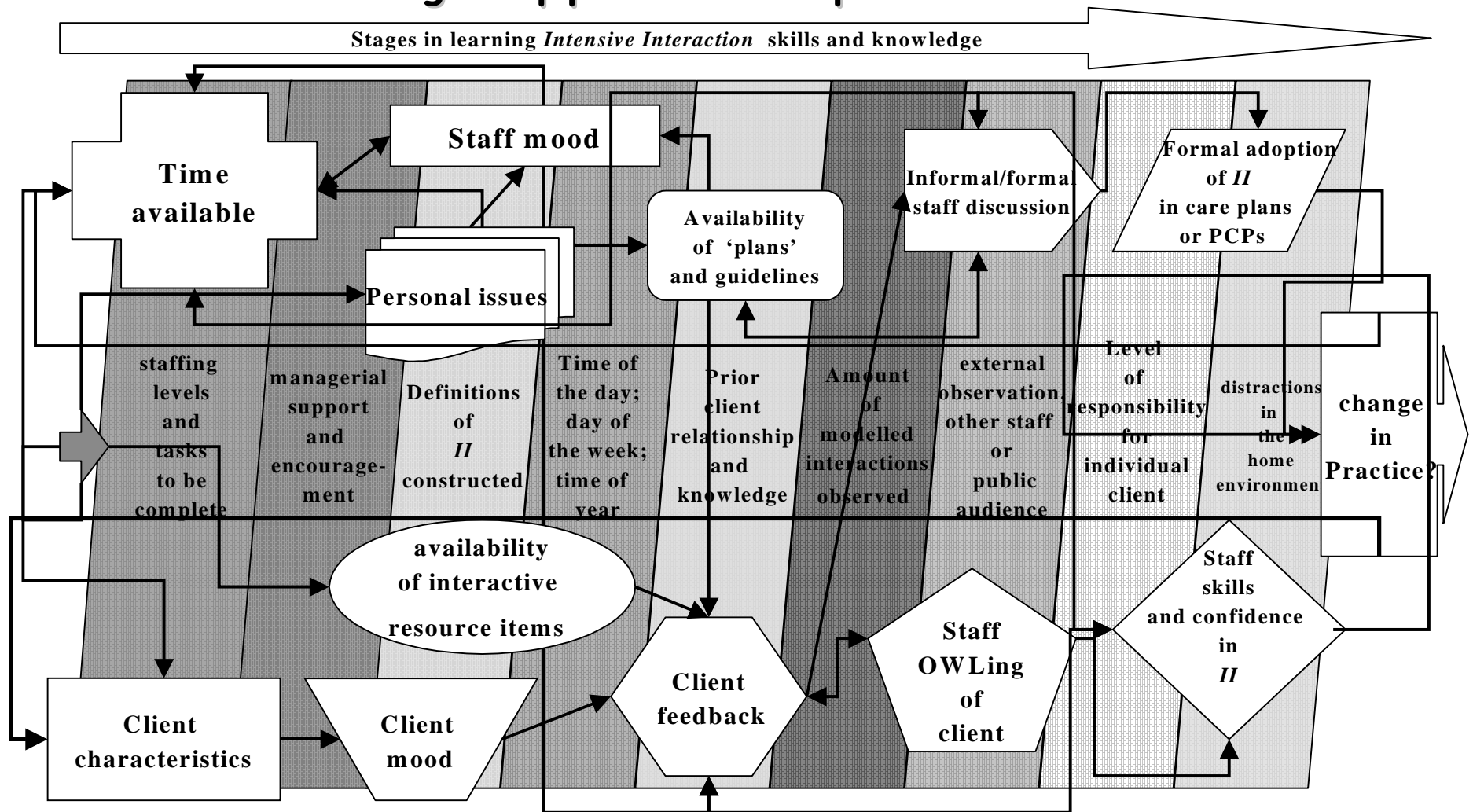
The flowchart describing the influences on the trainee prior to and during the training

Phase 1 : Prior to and During the Training



The flowchart describing the influences on the trainee during a supported period of approach implementation.

Phase 2: Staff *Intensive Interaction* during supported implementation





Judith Watson & Christine Knight (1991) in *Child Language Teaching and Therapy* 7 (3) p 310-25

AN EVALUATION OF INTENSIVE INTERACTIVE TEACHING WITH PUPILS WITH VERY SEVERE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

Background Information:

This article describes an approach to the curriculum which has been explored by staff at a School in Edinburgh. The areas of work that guided their thinking were *Intensive Interaction* and the theoretical model used by Burford (1986) and Nind and Hewett (1988), which was described as being based on the early interaction between babies and their carers. In this curriculum model the researchers attempted to analyse the skills used in infant-parent interaction and apply them to their educational situation. Also the members of staff did not teach in a traditional way, but responded more creatively to the pupils.

Participants:

Six pupils with severe learning difficulties were studied over the school year. They were chosen to represent a range of age and ability. Some pupils exhibited specific idiosyncratic behaviour, related to their special needs, physical condition and history, which were not shown by others. Six members of staff consistently worked on interaction with a given pupil over this period of time.

Method:

Staff involved in the interactive teaching programme were asked to behave as naturally as possible. They were also asked to introduce a toy or object that they felt would be interesting to the child at some point when they felt that it was appropriate to do so. The beginning of the session was signalled by taking off the pupils' shoes and leading them into the soft play area. The entire session was filmed, with the researcher holding the camera and trying to be as inconspicuous as possible. The only interruption was a result of extraneous noises from other pupils in the class.

Directly after each session staff completed an interaction recording form outlining the sequence of events, identifying the best and worst parts and how they felt the session had gone. It was anticipated that learning through interactive teaching should be evident on the videotapes. Additionally, summaries of each session and detailed description of short extracts were made from the videotapes. The collection of accurate information concerned the length of sessions, how they were terminated, and the nature and timing of the toy introduced. Sessions were usually terminated when the staff member decided that the pupil had had enough, on the basis of yawns or decreased responsiveness. Each of the six members of staff were interviewed individually after the videotaping of the study had been ended. The questions were focused on the effects of *Intensive Interaction* teaching on their pupils and on the staff. Questions also concerned the possible existence of any disadvantages with this way of working.

Findings:

From this study it appeared that interaction was very important for the pupils, and staff emphasised the fact that '*it builds a good relationship*' and '*there is confidence and trust that is built up*'. Staff also talked about other positive effects of *Intensive Interaction*, which included positive outcomes for the other pupils in the class, as well as staff being more relaxed, tolerant and willing to wait for responses as well as improvements in their observation skills. In general, staff developed high levels of expertise, and it was claimed that the interactive experiences had benefited their pupils and improved their own working practice.

Anna Sampson (Research Assistant Psychologist)

Contact us!

Have you got any pieces of news or information that you think might be of interest to other people working in this area? It might be your own story of using *Intensive Interaction*, perhaps a book review, or some information on a training event. Anything will be very gladly received.

If you have, then just send it in to the address below.

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