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SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF WISDOM: THE DIALOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The article presents internal dialogical activity as one of the possible ways of developing wisdom, understood here primarily in terms of dialectical thinking. The author explains the relationships between internal dialogical activity and dialectical thinking and describes the cognitive processes that accompany inner dialogs, related to imaginative thinking, attention management, metacognition, and the use of conceptual knowledge with ambiguous contents. The active involvement of these processes seems indispensable for achieving dialectic effects through dialogical activity, including the acceptance of contradictions and the integration of different viewpoints. The final part of the article discusses practical methods of supporting wisdom based on three manifestations of inner dialogical activity: identity dialogs, temporal dialogs, and dialogs simulating social interactions.

Keywords: wisdom; internal dialogical activity; dialogical self; dialectical thinking.

INTRODUCTION

This article is an attempt to present the theoretical perspectives on and related practical proposals to support the development of wisdom by means of psychological interventions. At the outset it should be noted that the very idea of wisdom optimization may seem controversial. The common concepts of wisdom presuppose that it is a derivative of a mature insight into the nature of intrapersonal and interpersonal phenomena, gained with experience and developing

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with age. This belief has strongly penetrated the world of art and culture and resulted in wisdom being associated with the image of a noble grey-haired character, an embodiment of the Jungian archetype of the sage. This understanding of the phenomenon would put into question the possibility of acquiring wisdom in developmental periods prior to middle and late adulthood. So, can wisdom actually be learned? The answer to this question seems to depend largely on how the notion of wisdom is conceptualized. It turns out that theories of wisdom usually focus on defining the criteria of this complex disposition, without indicating the possible paths of its acquisition. Moreover, many scientific theories suggest, more or less clearly, that there is a link between wisdom and maturity defined by biological age.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCEPTS OF WISDOM

Psychological research has so far offered several main approaches to wisdom. In the first one, wisdom is considered as a result of previous experiences involved in the dynamic processes of solving life's dilemmas. The theories proposed by Jung and, particularly, by Erikson may serve as examples (cf. Carr, 2004). According to the latter theoretical perspective, wisdom emerges in late adulthood as the outcome of struggle, in which the individual vacillates between integrity and despair. The constructive solving of dilemmas leads to wisdom, manifested in self-acceptance, in the context of both successes and failures, as well as in the acceptance of loved ones, especially one's parents, in spite of their shortcomings (Erikson & Erikson, 1997). Wisdom perceived in the light of this theory may emerge only after the age of 60, which means it is achievable relatively late in life and only provided that one has successfully coped with other developmental challenges. In another approach, wisdom is considered as a complex property, higher-order intelligence being a the synthesis of various psychological characteristic including cognitive, reflective, and affective elements (Kunzmann & Baltes, 2005; Kunzmann & Thomas, 2015). This understanding of wisdom is founded on a system of expert knowledge on human nature and the meaning of life (Kunzmann, 2004). On the one hand, this knowledge is vast and general; on the other, it may be easily applied in particular contexts and circumstances. The genesis of wisdom in the form of higher-order expert knowledge is largely attributed to a long process of learning, strong internal motivation, and social support, including the guidance of mentors and the ability to cope with failures and critical life events. As in the case of Erikson's approach, wisdom is

predicted to reach its peak in late adulthood. A more detailed analysis of this type of expertise is based on five criteria (Kunzmann & Baltes, 2005). The first two criteria – factual knowledge and procedural knowledge – are typical of expert systems of any type. The other three criteria are specific to this theory. Being embedded in the course of one's life refers to being familiar with multiple life contexts and the dynamics of aspirations and life goals in the course of ontogenetic development. This criterion, therefore, includes the perspective of a lifetime in terms of both horizontal (various areas of life activity) and vertical (changes over time) dimensions. Relativism of values and tolerance concern sensitivity to individual and cultural differences in the perception of values and priorities in life, and taking these differences into consideration when addressing the issues of the meaning of life. Wisdom perceived in this way strives to balance the interest of the individual with the interests of the group and society. The third specific criterion – the awareness of uncertainty and coping with it, elaborates on the statement attributed to Socrates, *Oida ouden eidos* (“I know that I know nothing”) and refers to knowledge about man's cognitive limitations in terms of reliable information processing, predicting the consequences of events, or recognizing another point of view as right in disputes and conflicts, as well as taking these into account when developing strategies for solving problems. It is worth noting that these criteria (especially the specific ones) place emphasis on wise judgment embracing different points of view, the diversity of phenomena, and the resulting complexity and dynamics of life events. Some theoretical approaches to wisdom develop these considerations a step further and present the idea of not so much tolerating diversity as balancing mental mechanisms and juxtaposing different points of view. For example, Birren and Fischer (1990) perceive wisdom as the ability to balance the opposite poles of emotion and indifference, action and inaction, knowledge and uncertainty; Labouvie-Vief (1990) sees it as the integration of logical and subjective processes, and Kramer (1990) – as the equilibrium between cognition and affect as well as between conscious and automatic processes. Sternberg's balance theory of wisdom assumes that it is a result of applied practical intelligence, whose domain is solving vaguely defined problems with a number of possible solutions (Sternberg, 1998). A kind of core of practical intelligence is tacit procedural knowledge, resulting from the accumulation of human experiences in specific life contexts (Reznitskaya & Sternberg, 2004). According to Sternberg, this knowledge is the basis of wisdom manifested in solving complex problems by balancing intrapersonal (individual interests), interpersonal (the interests of others involved in the situation), and extrapersonal interests (the common good). Wisdom usually leads to the decision

to take appropriate action, which in turn is subject to the principle of equilibrium between (a) adaptation to the environment, (b) creative influence on and modification of the environment, and (c) change of the social environment to one that is better suited to the knowledge, skills and values represented by the individual (Sternberg, 1998, 2001). Summing up the theories outlined above, we would obtain a picture of wisdom as primarily a complex ability to solve important developmental dilemmas and to balance different temporal perspectives as well as different intra- and interpersonal points of view in the process of solving problems. The weakness of these theories, however, lies in the fact that they do not acknowledge the possibility of acquiring and developing the skill of wise decision making before late adulthood, assuming it more or less directly to be a product of life experience. In practice, this kind of approach leads to the marginalization of an individual's own activity as a factor in the process of acquiring wisdom in earlier developmental periods.

Wisdom as postformal dialectical thinking

Of all the theoretical concepts described, the one that leaves the largest space for the potential development of wisdom through one's own consciously directed cognitive activity is the concept of wisdom as skill in the use of dialectical thinking (Basseches, 1984). This conceptualization does not explicitly suggest how to develop this skill, but rather focuses on the criteria for dialectically solving complex dilemmas and problems, theoretical as well as practical. In the literature, dialectical (i.e., postformal) thinking is opposed to formal thinking and, from the perspective of development, provides an alternative way of cognitive functioning, which may emerge from the period of late adolescence. The specificity of dialectical thinking stems from the awareness of the relativistic nature of knowledge, an ability to accept opposites and competence in integrating contradictions into a dialectical whole (Wu & Chiou, 2008). From the cognitive perspective, dialectical reasoning allows for the examination of issues from many different points of view, provides for cognitive openness and the willingness to change the way of thinking, allows for paying particular attention to the potential differences and contradictions between ideas and concepts, and then, subsequently, enables forming creative connections and a synthesis of knowledge systems that might previously have seemed inconsistent and opposing (Besseches, 1984; Labouvie-Vief, 1990). Proficiency in the use of dialectical thinking, complemented by extensive knowledge of life, is a cognitive background necessary to make wise decisions that meet the criterion of Sternberg's balance of different interests,

reactions, and points of view. What is important is that the acquisition of this kind of wisdom is possible as early as late adolescence.

Dialog as a potential source of wisdom

As suggested by Oleś and Hermans (Oleś, 2011; Hermans & Oleś, 2013), one of the possible ways of wisdom development may be internal dialogical activity, which involves engaging in debates with oneself reflecting similar social situations, manifested in confronting and reconciling different points of view currently available (Oleś, 2009b; Puchalska-Wasył, 2016a). According to many researchers, a significant part of human experience is based on this kind of imaginary dialog (Watkins, 1999). According to Oleś (2009a), internal dialogs usually manifest themselves in: (1) the simulation of social relations, e.g. imaginary conversations with superiors; (2) conversation with an unavailable person, e.g. a deceased family member; (3) exchange of arguments between different aspects of self, e.g. expressing doubt at the moment of decision-making. However, in the light of Puchalska-Wasył's research, one of metafunctions of internal dialogs is insight, understood as gaining a new point of view, advice, or distance towards the problem (Puchalska-Wasył, 2007, 2016b). In Hermans' view, dialogical activity is possible thanks to the dialogical self, understood as a dynamic multiplicity of relatively autonomous I-positions, endowed with voice and located in the mind-space, which engage in interactions analogical to social interactions, e.g. in the process of negotiation (Hermans, 2003). The dialogical self is a combination of temporal and spatial characteristics; it is in fact constituted by a multiplicity of voices, each with a specific location in time and space. In Hermans' theory, the dialogical self uses both internal and external I-positions (Hermans, 2001, 2013). The internal I-positions are considered by the self as part of itself (e.g., I-husband, I-son); external ones are personalized elements of the environment important for the self (e.g., my wife, my father). The entire process of assuming positions and changing them is extremely dynamic because the importance of individual positions varies depending on the context. Moreover, the dialogical self is capable not only of alternately taking different positions, but also of simultaneously activating different voices, which, on the one hand, can lead to ambivalent attitudes and internal conflicts, and on the other – enables a multifaceted understanding of the world and dialectically balancing different perspectives (Wu & Chiou, 2008; Oleś, 2009b). Dialogical processes, however, need not lead to results that meet the criteria for the dialectical approach to dilemmas or problem solving. This raises the question of the mutual relationship

between dialogical and dialectical thinking. Dialogical thinking is linked with dialectical thinking in the sense that some of its manifestations lead to the integration of opposites and that its more advanced forms naturally approach compliance with the principles of dialectics. In this sense, a dialog is a kind of a technical exercise which involves voicing contradictory points of view and, with the help of the senses (auditory and/or visual imagination), it may (but need not) be a carrier of the abstract idea of dialectics (Borawski, 2011). If we were to talk of acquiring wisdom as a result of internal dialog, such dialog would have to lead to a broadening of insight with the knowledge gained by changing the cognitive perspective or by integrating (though not always fully) opposing viewpoints. This is not possible without the contribution of advanced cognitive processes encompassing imagination, attention, metacognition, and the application of conceptual knowledge with ambiguous contents.

**DIALOG LEADING TO WISDOM:
AN ANALYSIS OF KEY COGNITIVE PROCESSES**

Imaginal processes

When Hermans describes internal dialog he clearly uses the term “imaginal” (Hermans, 1996), suggesting an important role of imagination in dialogical thinking. And even though the role of imagination in internal dialog has not been researched, it seems that both visual and auditory imagery may not only accompany dialectical thinking but also constitute its important component. Actually, the visualization process is present in some dialogical techniques used in therapy (Cooper & Cruthers, 1999). However, the practice of living suggests that auditory imagination plays an important role in dialogical negotiations with oneself. In that case, you can almost clearly hear the color, tone, and intensity of the inner voice as well as the sounds of the language, which in turn corresponds with research that has identified two modalities of hearing: verbal and nonverbal. With the use of imagination, words can be received not only by the senses but also as carriers of meaning. According to Puchalska-Wasyl and her colleagues, the process of inferring the interlocutor’s internal states and possible reactions to our words happens through the spatial system (responsible for the creation of cognitive representations in the form of images), while the formulation of the content of the dialog between speakers occurs in the judgment-based system, which is

the basis of language processes (Puchalska-Wasył, Chmielnicka-Kuter, Jankowski, & Bąk, 2008).

ATTENTION

Dialogical thinking requires that stimuli from various contexts are maintained in focus, and in this view is similar to the mechanisms of creativity, in which so-called “extended attention” plays an essential role (Nęcka, 2002). Kolańczyk’s (1995) concepts of intensive and extensive attention seem to be particularly useful for the reasoning presented here. According to this author, intensive attention embraces a small number of elements, of which the person is well aware and which are selectively isolated from the perceptual field, while extensive attention covers the whole perceptual field. It seems, however, that while creative thinking is usually associated mainly with extensive attention (Kolańczyk, 1995), dialogical thinking leading to a dialectical integration of diverse points of view probably uses both types of attentional processes. Intensive attention takes active part in the formulation of the distinctive point of view of one of the I-positions and is subsequently switched to the perspective of the second I-position; through extensive attention the process of the recognition of both I-positions at the same time is activated, and the searching of space to find opportunities for integration begins.

Metacognitive processes

The integration of different points of view, crucial to the dialectical effects of dialogical thinking, is possible thanks to the metarepresentational and metacognitive properties of cognitive processes. Metarepresentation can be understood as the ability to create mental representations of different states of mind (e.g., beliefs, emotions, attitudes, intentions), both one’s own and other people’s (Flavell, 1979), which allows a person to attain a comprehensive view of the situation. In the interpersonal context these will be representations of one’s own way of thinking and that of the partner in the interaction, while in the context of intrapersonal processes it is a representation of different I-positions, and the realization of various, sometimes opposing, desires and aspirations. Metacognition consists in a special type of monitoring and regulation of mental contents (DiMaggio, Hermans, & Lysaker, 2010), comprising the processes of identification, combination of the variables, differentiation, and integration (Semerari, Car-

cione, Dimaggio, Nicolo, & Procaci, 2004). Identification is the ability to distinguish, recognize, and define one's own internal mental states. It manifests itself in the ability to recognize one's own cognitive processes, emotions, and currently assumed I-positions. By combining the variables, a person apprehends their current states, cognitive processes, and behaviors in causal and motivational terms (e.g., "I did not answer a call from my employee because I was angry at him"). Differentiation is the ability to recognize mental representations as subjective phenomena, different from reality and without a direct impact on it. In the context of dialogical processes, differentiation makes it possible to distance oneself from other voices and become the observer of different I-positions, which is defined as metaposition in the dialogical self theory (Hermans, 2003). Integration is the ability to develop a coherent description of one's (often contradictory) mental states and processes. This function is used to determine, express, and reconcile the points of view expressed by different I-positions, in a way that results in a sense of consistency and continuity of the self. Integration allows for the creation of a synoptic point of view over the often fragmentary, contradictory, or even incoherent points of view.

Using conceptual knowledge

The problem of integrating attitudes can be viewed also from the perspective of the flexible use of concepts. The essence of internal dialog is the exchange of meaning occurring through words and concepts (Puchalska-Wasył et al., 2008). The interlocutors in a dialog can verbally express their positions, often opposing or contrasting. They often communicate their intentions and emotions using concepts which considerably vary in meaning. This situation is particularly significant when it concerns uncertainties in decision-making – e.g., when a young man recognizes two contradictory voices of his self. One says: "Take your son for a walk," and the other says: "Do something exciting at last." It can be argued that the problem described concerns the flexibility of conceptual cores. In order to integrate the opposing sides, it is necessary to agree on the cognitive concepts of at least two categories of "walk" and "excitement." The core is the average or the most common "syndrome of individual values for each of the relevant dimensions of the concept," comparable to the typical characteristics of examples representing a particular category (Trzebiński, 1981, p. 56). The content of the concept is thus reduced to the core and the margin of its possible transformations. The greater the discrepancy between the confronted terms, the greater will be the required transformation, that is, the more you have to "bend" the core to

the particular example. In the light of this conception, the essence of the integration of opposing voices may consist in increasing the flexibility of the conceptual core, so that it may embrace even the least typical examples. This procedure is also referred to as creating capacious concept categories and opening the boundaries of categories. An alternative method is so-called conceptual synthesis, consisting in the creation of a new category using familiar concepts. An example may be Darwin's concept of "natural selection," in which he combined the procedures of the selection of breeding animals with natural selection phenomena (cf. Thagard, 1997). In the young man's dilemma quoted above, the conceptual synthesis could even be "a ride with his son in a sports car."

PREVIOUS REPORTS ON THE PRACTICAL POSSIBILITIES OF SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF WISDOM

Contemporary proposals for the practical optimization of wisdom, originating in a number of experimental studies, and the experience of therapists contain clear references to dialogical processes, although it is worth noting that the various authors do not identify dialogical self theory as an inspiration behind their ideas.

Staudinger and Baltes (1996) asked the participants in their study to discuss a problem whose solutions were marked by different levels of wisdom in the conditions of imaginary and real social interactions. In the first group, individual responses were preceded by a discussion of the problem with a significant other, in the second group respondents conducted an internal dialog with a chosen person before answering, while the third group of participants could reflect on the solutions alone. It turned out that both the actual dialog and its imaginal version improved the level of task performance by almost one standard deviation compared to the results obtained in the third group.

Proposals for the activation of wisdom through a system of appropriate access guidance or a direct reference to wisdom as metaheuristics (cf. Baltes, Glück, & Kunzmann, 2002), can also be considered inspiring. According to researchers, the resources associated with wisdom can, for example, be activated by an instruction such as: "try to give a wise response" (Glück & Baltes, 2006), which, from the perspective of the dialogical self theory, can be considered to activate the meta-position of the self connected with inner wisdom (analogous to the inner comedian in humor research conducted by Tomczuk-Wasilewska, 2009).

As part of so-called “wisdom therapy,” Linden (2014) proposes an exercise that consists in asking oneself questions enabling a change of perspective – first in considering first a fictional problem (e.g., concerning the situation of a long-time manager of a company, who spends a long period in hospital as a result of an accident at work and, in these circumstances, learns that he has been replaced in his position by a younger colleague) and then, subsequently, in considering a real problem of one’s own.

These questions may be:

(1) Imagine that you are a superior of the manager, and then put yourself in the role of his younger colleague. Which motives, beliefs, and needs of those persons do you now have access to?

(2) Imagine four different people involved in dealing with the problem of this manager: a grandmother, a priest, a cultural anthropologist, and Bill Gates. Which solutions to the problem would each of them consider optimal and the least fortunate? What picture of the situation would you get by talking to each of them?

(3) Imagine that the same four people suggest solutions to your current problem. What will these solutions be? What advice could each of these people give you?

(4) Imagine someone who is a role model for you in solving problems, or who you think is an embodiment of wisdom. How would their solutions be different from yours?

These questions are intended to extend the map of the problem situation and to contribute to the innovative development and processing of its constituent patterns and cognitive scripts. As may be noted, some of them require conducting an imaginary dialog.

SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF WISDOM WITH DIALOGICAL TECHNIQUES

It seems that, on the basis of the dialogical self theory, it is possible to suggest a number of further technical means which could potentially develop dialectical thinking and thus stimulate the development of wisdom. The further part of this article is devoted to the presentation of these techniques. Each of them meets the following criteria:

(1) it is based on the theoretical possibilities of conducting internal dialogs and changing the cognitive perspective;

(2) it draws on the theory of wisdom by applying in practice at least one of the criteria of wise thinking and decision-making;

(3) it is based on procedures proven in previous empirical studies (though not necessarily verified in the context of research on wisdom).

These techniques are an operationalization of three important dialogical processes:

- identity dialogs between different internal I-positions;
- temporal dialogs between present and past time perspectives and between present and future time perspectives;
- dialogs simulating social interactions.

Wisdom as an effect of identity dialog

Identity dialog takes place between two internal I-positions, and in the context of the development of wisdom it refers to the previously mentioned idea of bringing together and balancing different points of view and resolving internal dilemmas. Instead of acting on an impulse provided by one source, the individual considers alternative consulting “voices,” often representing radically opposing positions.

In one study (Borawski, 2011), identity dialog viewed in this way was operationalized with the following instructions:

Step 1. Choose one aspect of your life (related to your role or to the activities that you identify with to the greatest degree (e.g., I-student or I-partner in a relationship).

Step 2. Then choose an aspect of yourself, which is also important for you but at the same time contrasts with (is very different from) the one you chose in Step 1; it may even be in conflict with it.

Step 3. Imagine that these two aspects of yourself are different people who meet in order to talk and to reach agreement in spite of the differences. Your task is to present a record of the conversation between them, during which, through the exchange of arguments, you will negotiate a scenario for your life (or a fragment of it, a stage) that will be satisfying to both parties.

As can be seen, by using an integrating formula in the third stage, the instruction distinctly draws on the idea of dialectical thinking.

An identity dialog can also be a tool for solving dilemmas that require balancing contrasting areas of life, e.g. professional life vs. family life. In the case, a dialogical intervention consists in conducting a dialog between the professional self and the family self. In the conditions of creative exchange of meanings, this dialog could take the form of mutual cooperation, which would supplement the “cool” attributes of professionalism with a far “warmer” face of the family self

and ultimately lead to the integration of different personality resources such as decisiveness and empathy. The dialog formula posits the dialog as information exchange between subjects and mutual respect for the originality and uniqueness of the different I-positions, along with what they have to say.

Wisdom as the balancing of temporal perspectives

Another way to broaden insight, stemming from the idea of the dialogical self, may be temporal dialogs conducted between I-positions that are distant from each other in time (Oleś, Brygoła, & Sibińska, 2010). Wisdom in the course of life is identified both with drawing conclusions from the past and with exhibiting certain properties of thinking characteristic not for the current period of development but for future ones, which, in practice, is associated with looking at things from a future perspective (Oleś, 2011, p. 270). In previous studies, temporal dialogs took on the form of a confrontation of different points of view: the current viewpoint with a past one or the present viewpoint with the future one, which were juxtaposed in the form of spatial opposition (Oleś et al., 2010).

In dialogs with the past self, participants chose a significant moment from the past, entered into this perspective, and then formulated an important message for the current self. As a result, they reported an increase in state curiosity. Research on the significance of the dialog between the future self and the current self produced the effect of an increased awareness of meaning in life and situational curiosity as well as reduced the level of anxiety, anger, and depression, understood as states (Oleś et al., 2010). In the context of the development of wisdom, it is possible to suggest a process of considering a decision from four temporal perspectives inspiring potential dialog: past (“How good is this for me considering my previous life experience?”), current (“Is this good for me considering my current situation?”), proximal future (“Is this good for me in terms of the goal that I am currently pursuing?”), and distal future (“Is it equally good for me from an imaginary perspective of the end of life?”). A wise decision will require the balancing of at least two of these time perspectives. For example, in the context of motivation and planning, the consistency of vertical goals (i.e., the degree to which proximal objectives serve distal ones; Sheldon & Kasser, 1995) may seem particularly significant – which, in dialogical terms, would involve coordinating the near and more distant future perspectives.

Wisdom and dialogs simulating social relations

One of the fundamental aspects of internal dialogical activity is the simulation of social interaction by conducting internal dialogs which are a continuation of real discussions or by imagining completely new dialogical relations (Oleś, 2009a). This is often an “adult form” of games characteristic for children, involving the impersonation of imaginary characters (Watkins, 1999). What is typical in this process is the use of external positions which are a source of inspiration and possibilities of widening insight for the self. This seems to be a particularly important process for the development of wisdom because, as noted by Oleś (2011), people often consult imaginary characters in search of solutions to existential dilemmas. In this context, two types of simulation may be important. The first is a dialog which is an imaginary conversation with a mentor/authority, which aims to seek advice on a currently considered dilemma. In this case, the interlocutor may be one of the figures we actually know (e.g., a university professor suggesting a further direction for career development) or an important person we have never interacted with (e.g., Steve Jobs as a consultant in a creative business decision). Taking into account the results obtained in the previously quoted study by Staudinger and Baltes (1996), an imaginary dialog with an authority could significantly contribute to the formulation of solutions which are an expression of practical wisdom. The second type of simulation of social relationships seems to be important in connection with the idea of balance between self-interests, the interests of others involved in the problem considered, and the common good as the foundation of wisdom, as emphasized by Sternberg (2001). Such dialog would involve viewing the problem from the three perspectives suggested in Sternberg’s theory – one’s own, the interlocutor’s, and that of an outside observer (which is similar to Hermans’ concept of metaposition), and then formulating relevant messages, especially between one’s own perspective and that of the interlocutor. This kind of internal dialogic activity may be particularly important as a tool for changing points of view and broadening insight into the process of solving interpersonal conflicts.

CONCLUSION

While the possibility of wisdom development is implied, among other things, by theories defining wisdom as postformal dialectical thinking, the dialogical approach inspired by Hermans’ dialogical self theory is the most practical way of optimizing it.

Within the framework of the dialogical approach and the optimization techniques based on it, wisdom can be developed on three levels:

(1) Identity – by balancing the different aspects of the self and their different points of view;

(2) Temporal – through practice in integrating different temporal perspectives, drawing meaningful conclusions from the past, and developing the ability to think from the perspective of the future;

(3) Interpersonal – consisting in integrating one’s own point of view with the perspective of others by simulating social relations.

The proposed technique for the dialogical development of wisdom can be used as the basis of a program of workshops and a training alternative to Linden’s so-called “wisdom therapy”; they can also complement popular programs of personal development, which are usually focused on the development of positive affectivity, self-esteem, and creativity. The program may be directed both at young people (assuming the need for at least a partial grasp of postformal operations in the cognitive framework) and at adults. However, the implementation of this kind of dialog program supporting the development of wisdom should be preceded by research, which would verify the effectiveness of such interventions. Although the various technical procedures proposed above have been tested empirically, they have not been applied in the context of wisdom issues, with the exception of the study by Staudinger and Baltes.

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