

The Group as a Laboratory

<i>If You Relate To People By:</i>	<i>You Might Experiment With:</i>
<i>1. Complying, giving in, being self-effacing.</i>	<i>1. Saying no.</i>
<i>2. Resisting suggestions; holding back.</i>	<i>2. Taking a risk; trying something new.</i>
<i>3. Always talking; filling any silence with words because you feel uncomfortable.</i>	<i>3. Being silent for a minute; getting in touch with uncomfortable feelings; talking about those feelings.</i>
<i>4. Waiting for someone to say something, then reacting.</i>	<i>4. Initiating something yourself, for someone else to react to.</i>
<i>5. Always smiling, even when annoyed or angry.</i>	<i>5. Talking without smiling.</i>
<i>6. Explaining.</i>	<i>6. Simply responding with what you feel (e.g., "I have an impulse to explain")</i>
<i>7. Trying to get people to stop feeling a certain way.</i>	<i>7. Simply accepting the way they feel; at the same time exploring your impulses and feelings.</i>
<i>8. Being polite; not showing anger or judgment.</i>	<i>8. Being judgmental and angry, frankly and outrageously.</i>
<i>9. Expressing anger easily.</i>	<i>9. Checking to see what feelings are underneath the anger.</i>
<i>10. Deflecting praise.</i>	<i>10. Accepting praise and agreeing enthusiastically with it.</i>
<i>11. Feeling bored but being too polite to say anything about it.</i>	<i>11. Talking about your feelings of boredom.</i>
<i>12. When attacked, defending yourself.</i>	<i>12. Not saying anything in rebuttal-but exploring the feelings you have.</i>
<i>13. Being afraid-and hiding your fear.</i>	<i>13. Being openly afraid; letting everyone know it.</i>
<i>14. Always complimenting others.</i>	<i>14. Telling others exactly how you feel about them.</i>
<i>15. Trying to get everybody to approve of you.</i>	<i>15. Being what you are and not giving a damn what they think.</i>
<i>16. Giving advice.</i>	<i>16. Reporting "I feel like giving you advice" – but not doing it.</i>
<i>17. Always helping other people.</i>	<i>17. Asking for help, letting yourself be helped.</i>
<i>18. Always asking for help.</i>	<i>18. Helping someone else.</i>
<i>19. Controlling your feelings and suppressing them.</i>	<i>19. Experiencing your feelings and exploring them.</i>
<i>20. Keeping things secret.</i>	<i>20. Disclosing something about yourself that is hard to say.</i>
<i>21. Playing it safe.</i>	<i>21. Taking a few risks.</i>

In trying these experiments, the important thing is to do something that feels difficult. Old, familiar ways of behaving will probably not result in productive experiments. Moreover, a new behavior may seem difficult at first, but with practice, it gets easier. Then the new behavior may be added to your repertoire-your range options-and it's available whenever you need it.