

Revenge Versus Rapport: Interrogation, Terrorism, and Torture

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This review begins with the historical context of harsh interrogation methods that have been used repeatedly since the Second World War. This is despite the legal, ethical and moral sanctions against them and the lack of evidence for their efficacy. Revenge-motivated interrogations (Carlsmith & Sood, 2009) regularly occur in high conflict, high uncertainty situations and where there is dehumanization of the enemy. These methods are diametrically opposed to the humanization process required for adopting rapport-based methods—for which there is an increasing corpus of studies evidencing their efficacy. We review this emerging field of study and show how rapport-based methods rely on building alliances and involve a specific set of interpersonal skills on the part of the interrogator. We conclude with 2 key propositions: (a) for psychologists to firmly maintain the Hippocratic Oath of “first do no harm,” irrespective of perceived threat and uncertainty, and (b) for wider recognition of the empirical evidence that rapport-based approaches work and revenge tactics do not. Proposition (a) is directly in line with fundamental ethical principles of practice for anyone in a caring profession. Proposition (b) is based on the requirement for psychology to protect and promote human welfare and to base conclusions on objective evidence.

Keywords: interrogation, high-value detainees, torture, rapport, interpersonal skills

The blame . . . must lie with those who decided that in emergency conditions we should abandon our legal, well-trying and highly successful wartime interrogation methods and replace them by procedures which were secret, illegal, not morally justifiable and alien to the traditions of . . . democracy.

—G. Gardiner (Parker, 1972, p. 22)

Psychologists and Torture: The Elephant in the Room

Allegations that psychologists were involved in the design, implementation, justification, and concealment of torture of detainees (Arrigo & Wagner, 2007; Melendez-Pallitto & Pallitto, 2012; Risen, 2014; Tolin & Lohr, 2009) have created unparalleled criticism of the American Psychological Association (APA). This led to the APA's Board of Directors commissioning an independent review in No-

vember 2014 from attorney David Hoffman of the Sidley Austin law firm. Key conclusions of the 542-page independent review (Hoffman et al., 2015) into the APA's involvement in the use of abusive interrogation techniques included the following: (a) that key APA officials colluded with Department of Defense (DoD) officials to maintain loose, high-level ethical guidelines that would not constrain the DoD interrogation practice in any greater fashion than existing guidelines; (b) that some APA officials engaged in a pattern of secret collaboration with the DoD to ensure that the APA policies fell in line with DoD goals; (c) certain APA staff sought to obscure APA's involvement and protect key prominent national security psychologists; (d) that there was no evidence of APA officials having overt knowledge of the CIA's “enhanced interrogation techniques,” nor was there evidence of a relationship with the CIA affecting ethical guidelines; and (e) there was evidence of substantial

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Knowledge Fund-UK to examine the impact of training advanced suspect interviewers in the use of ORBIT. Researchers have also been asked to contribute to advanced suspect interviewer training on an ad hoc consultancy basis.

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Laurence Alison

indifference to information that abusive techniques were being employed (Hoffman et al., 2015, pp. 9–10). The Hoffman report was preceded 5 years earlier by an open letter to then APA president Carol Goodheart by the Coalition for an Ethical Psychology alleging that alterations in policy and wording had been made to fall in line with the DoD and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) policies on the use of abusive tactics within interrogations and that senior roles within the APA were compromised (see Reisner, 2010).

Hoffman reported that in the vast number of emails and other documents reviewed there was little to no record of official discussions on the ethical position of the profession or the implications for social or individual well-being. In response to such a deviation from its fundamental values and principles, the APA Council of Representatives voted in August 2015 (and reaffirmed in April 2016) that psychologists “shall not conduct, supervise, be in the presence of, or otherwise assist any national security interrogations for any military or intelligence entities, including private contractors working on their behalf, nor advise on conditions of confinement insofar as these might facilitate such an interrogation” (APA, 2015).

This resolution is not without controversy or its own ethical implications. It can be argued that psychological input and consultation has helped interrogation more than it has harmed. It has been the bedrock of a number of critical advancements in investigative interview practice, in particular in the United Kingdom (Pearse & Gudjonsson, 1997; Soukara, Bull, Vrij, Turner, & Cherryman, 2009; Walsh & Bull, 2010). O’Mara (2015), who has rigorously examined the decisions and arguments that led to the use of torture in

Iraq and Afghanistan, has even advocated the replacement of current interrogators with forensic psychologists on the basis that they be “subject to monitoring and review, be members of relevant professional associations and are regularly subject to ethical clearance by such associations” (p. 271). The concern is that a resolution prohibiting psychologists’ direct involvement regarding any national security interrogations will not (a) stop the use of torture or (b) provide psychologists a defensible position when such abuses occur. In fact, embracing the scientific method and discipline of psychology is one important way to disprove what has historically sustained the use of torture—the mistaken belief that it works.

Revenge Before Information

The media has frequently reported that the so called enhanced interrogation techniques were developed in the wake of 9/11. More specifically that they were reverse-engineered by psychological consultants Mitchell and Jessen¹ (contracted by the CIA) from the SERE program—a training program to enable captured military personnel to survive, evade, resist (interrogations), and escape if captured (see United States Army & Marine Corps, n.d.). Mitchell’s logic (McCoy, 2014) for the use of such strategies appears to have been the theory of learned helplessness (Seligman, 1975). However, the origin of specific strategies is complex and varied and such methods can be found further back in history (see Rejali’s, 2007, comprehensive review, *Torture and Democracy*). Rejali gives a historically exhaustive account of the various methods used to degrade and dehumanize detainees, highlighting the evolution of so-called white torture—torture that leaves no marks. In his nonpareil account of torture, he demonstrates how ineffective it has been throughout history as a means of securing information, and that “strategic talk about torture in the face of terrorism turns out to have a deep undercurrent of bloodlust” (p. 535) as well as longer term negative social, political, and cultural influences.

The use of torture within democracies is often accompanied by attempts at its justification. The British employed the now notorious five techniques in Kenya in 1953/1954 (hooding, sleep deprivation, food deprivation, white noise, and stress positions). Details of these tactics emerged as part of the Parker (1972) inquiry in response to public and parliamentary challenge to the use of the techniques in Northern Ireland with 14 individuals, who became known as the “Hooded Men.” Newbery (2015) noted that the Ministry of Defense defended the use of the techniques by alleging they were not designed to break individuals but rather to secure and isolate them. It was argued that hooding

¹ It is of note within the current context that Mitchell was a member of the APA until he resigned in 2006; Jessen was a senior psychologist at the DoD and was never an APA member.



Emily Alison

and white noise would protect the detainee from identification when they were being taken for interrogation. The suggestion was that these techniques were designed to show the detainee who was in charge, that their situation was futile, that they were under the control of the interrogation facility, and that they would not be assisted (and nor indeed should they be afraid of repercussions from) their comrades. The rationale was that the intent behind such strategies was to establish control and authority rather than fear or distress. Objectively, the real consideration should be an evaluation of the evidence regarding the impact such behavior has on the detainee's mental and physical well-being, their willingness to cooperate, and the value of the information they provide.

However, the idea that generating helplessness, dread, and fear would be a reliable strategy for eliciting information actually runs counter to the research. O'Mara (2015) provided a methodical review of how the brain responds under stress, demonstrating how tactics such as sleep deprivation, exposure to heat and cold, and stress positions actually impair recall (Morgan et al., 2013). Further, research has found that such strategies increase resistance (Dreher, Gassebner, & Siemers, 2010), damage the value and reliability of the information generated (Gudjonsson, 2003), and create disengagement, withdrawal, and psychological trauma (LoLordo & Overmier, 2011). Torture has significant negative effects on mental health (Lankford, 2009), such as anxiety, depression, cognitive disturbances, distortions, obsessive thoughts, paranoia, and psychosis (Metzner & Fellner, 2010). War-related captivity that included cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment and prolonged detention is associated with posttraumatic stress

disorder, fear, and learned helplessness (Başoğlu, 2009; Storm & Engberg, 2013). A closer examination of the use of torture reveals that it actually impairs communication and creates significant lasting trauma.

O'Mara (2015) provided a compelling account of the so-called torture memos and the paper tiger arguments used to bolster the continued use of enhanced interrogation techniques in the modern war on terror. Explicitly, the memo from Bybee, the then assistant attorney general, attempted to narrow the definition of torture to "pain equivalent in intensity to serious physical injury, impairment of bodily function, organ failure or death" (as referenced in O'Mara, 2015, p. 4). Bybee argued that the five techniques, as well as strategies such as physical confinement in small spaces, nakedness, and waterboarding (Gross, 2010), were below this threshold and were therefore legal. In summary, torture has many immediate, medium-term, and long-term negative effects; breaches all the most basic moral codes of psychologists and psychiatrists; has been shown, historically, to be ineffective; contravenes international law; and has no empirical basis or evidence for being effective. Why then, despite all the many reasons not to use it, does it consistently reappear?

The Template for Revenge Interrogation: Dehumanization and Hatred

At least part of the reason why torture continues to emerge may lie in our human nature to accept that it is only used when there is no alternative, and it appears to be for the greater good (see Lerner & Simmons, 1966, "just-world" cognitive distortion). This provides a template for the belief that people get what they deserve and that all noble actions will eventually be rewarded and all evil actions eventually punished. Consider the emergence of the highly structured committed use of torture in the 16th century to justify the trial and execution of hundreds accused of witchcraft. For many if not most, it was impossible to escape the torture unless they confessed to what was clearly untrue and implausible but which matched the expectations of truth their interrogator(s) held. In many cases, such accusations were not simply superstition, but were used to resolve grievances, seek revenge, or rid communities of problematic individuals. Disturbingly, the techniques used then bear a striking similarity to the enhanced methods employed in the war on terror—sleep, food, and water deprivation—forced pacing to induce fatigue. If all else failed, more robust methods such as "swimming the witch" were used—the accused was bound finger to toe and plunged into water to see if they would float, proving guilt, or sink, proving innocence. The tactic carried a significant risk of death if incorrectly administered and was therefore outlawed in the 1700s, though it continued to be used illegally (Gaskill, 2005).

Staub (1996) suggested that a fundamental aspect of terrorist rhetoric is the use of just-world thinking. He argued that certain conditions help generate acts of terrorism—the evolution of collective violence, the devaluation of a cultural group, obedience to authority, and a mentality of aggression as defensive (e.g., we are under attack by the target group). The parallels of such thinking from an active combat military force against their target enemy must be considered. If hatred is an essential or at least useful strategy in the facilitation of violence against an enemy in combat, then it is perhaps not surprising that armed forces find it difficult to “put the muzzle back on” their behavior toward the enemy within the context of an interrogation. Such feelings are not constrained to a military interrogation context. Roberts (2011) considered such issues in relation to urgent threat interviews conducted by law enforcement and security personnel if there is felt to be an immediate risk of harm to the public. He wrote,

Anger, fear, feelings of powerlessness and a desire for revenge are powerful emotions that, in the context of urgency, may make the use of tactics not normally associated with interviewing such as threats, overt aggression, and even torture seem more acceptable or even desirable to some. (p. 6)

Sternberg (2003) highlighted the role of hate in the development of terrorism, genocide, and other crimes against humanity. Hatred is not an impulsive, chaotic emotion—it is constructed and directed toward a particular target to achieve the aims of the group. Instrumental hatred starts with (a) generation of hatred and disgust for the target group; (b) creation of anger and fear toward the target group—producing an “us or them” mentality; (c) contempt for the target group, often by highlighting violations of the in groups’ communal codes for dress, behavior, life choices; and (d) punishment of any members of the in-group, who do not support the views of the target group. Individuals who raise concern are branded “sympathizers” or collaborators.

Bandura (2015) suggested that individuals and institutions who engage in violence suspend the moral judgment attached to these actions by cognitively restructuring inhumane conduct into benign or worthy conduct through sanitizing language (e.g., for instance, in this case labeling the more extreme methods “enhanced interrogation strategies”), diffusion or displacement of responsibility (e.g., the use of the Department of Justice’s legal ruling to mitigate any direct accountability for the use of such tactics), minimization of the injury caused (e.g., the Justice Department narrowing the definition of torture), and dehumanization of the victim (e.g., the removal of human rights and due process for detainees on the grounds of the immediate threat posed; See Bybee, 2002).

In many cases, questionable methods emerged in the immediate aftermath of severe threat, high-uncertainty situations. In such contexts, it is not difficult to see how

revenge rather than securing information or intelligence can become the goal (Janoff-Bulman, 2007). Allowing practices that violate human rights and liberties in extreme circumstances then opens the door to their application to prevent circumstances from becoming extreme or to inflate circumstances to a level that justifies such violations (Mialon, Mialon, & Stinchcombe, 2011). Rejali (2007) also discussed the slippery slope of torture—highlighting three key dangers: (a) the criteria for who meets the threshold for torture is extended; (b) the torturers go beyond the approved methods; and (c) torture degrades supervision and management strategies, leading to actions without accountability (p. 530). Rejali (2007) also noted the deskilling effect of torture, which often weakens police and security forces preventative efforts, as they adopt a default position of using coercion and intimidation rather than investing in more sophisticated and productive tactics.

An e-mail quoted within the Hoffman et al. (2015) report (p. 71), the Senate Intelligence Committee Report (2014), and a number of other related fora captures this sentiment:

We need to take a deep breath and remember who we are. It comes down to standards of right and wrong. We have NEVER considered our enemies justified in doing such things to us. We are American soldiers, heirs of a long tradition of staying on the high ground. We need to stay there. (p. 169)

Holding the High Ground

There were a number of individuals who attempted to hold the high ground in response to the push toward torture. Mark Fallon (2015)—former Naval Criminal Investigative Service deputy assistant director and DOD al Qaeda task force commander—has been particularly vocal: “Torture is illegal, immoral, ineffective, and inconsistent with American values” (p. 1, paragraph 2). However, knowing that torture does not work is not enough to stop the notion that it is better than doing nothing. To do that, you must present an alternative option that does work. David Petraeus, former commander of forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, hinted at a solution when he stated after his experience of overseeing some of the world’s largest detention centers that the best way for an interrogator to extract information from a detainee is “to become his best friend” (Clark, 2014).

This sentiment is borne out time and time again in investigations with actual interrogators. Russano, Narchet, Kleinman, and Meissner (2014) found that in interviews with highly experienced military and intelligence interrogators, all of them believed that noncoercive approaches were superior to coercive ones. Goodman-Delahunty, Martschuk, and Dhami (2014) found that detainees were more likely to disclose meaningful information and to do so earlier in the interview when rapport-building techniques were used. It seems that the answer to the elusive question, “If not torture, than what?” is answered by the opposite end of the spec-

trum—rapport. So, while it is critically important to challenge the revenge based torture methods and show how they do not work, it is also incumbent on us to indicate what will work.

The Evolution of Rapport-Based Approaches to Interviewing

Solutions to current issues are often buried within lessons from the past. Specifically, there is a great deal to glean from the evolution of police interrogation (since 1992 referred to as *interviewing* in the United Kingdom), which may hold lessons for both military and intelligence interrogation. Each domain contains its own challenges and contexts (see Evans, Meissner, Brandon, Russano, & Kleinman, 2010, for a comparison review), but there is common ground.

For instance, in the United Kingdom, the introduction of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984) occurred after a series of notorious wrongful convictions of individuals accused of terrorist offenses. The interrogations were deemed coercive and aggressive and the tactics unsafe and prone to false confessions (see Gottlieb, 2005, for a full review). As a result, police interviews of suspects in the United Kingdom are now some of the most strictly regulated and highly monitored (e.g., always audio or video recorded) in the world (Gudjonsson, 2003). Mandatory audio recording of interviews also led to the rise of a productive research agenda. Research projects after the Police and Criminal Evidence Act indicated that coercive and manipulative tactics significantly decreased since the introduction of the act (Soukara, Bull, & Vrij, 2002). Equally important was the overall change in the intentions and objectives of the interview—namely, that information-gathering approaches were favored over an accusatory and confession driven agenda (Moston & Engelberg, 2011; Hartwig, Granhag, Stromwall, & Vrij, 2005). Investigations were no longer conducted behind closed doors and interviews could be assessed and evaluated by colleagues.

In the United Kingdom, rapport is included in the “engage and explain” phase of the (preparation and planning; engage and explain; account, clarify, and challenge; closure; evaluation) (PEACE) investigative interview model used in England and Wales (see Milne & Bull, 1999, for an overview). Evans et al. (2013) found that in a laboratory test of questioning methods, information gathering/rapport-based approaches produced more information and intelligence than accusatorial ones. However, specifically measuring rapport in the field on real interrogations with high-value detainees has proved elusive (Abbe & Brandon, 2013). Walsh and Bull (2012) did, however, examine rapport in genuine suspect interviews and more recently, studies have begun to unpack,

describe, and define two key areas: rapport (Vallano & Schreiber Compo, 2015) and interpersonal skills (Kelly, Redlich, & Miller, 2015).

Evidence for an Interpersonal and Rapport-Based Approach

While rapport may seem misplaced in the adversarial context of a terrorist suspect interview, interrogators have long recognized its significance and utility. In Arrigo and Wagner’s (2007) interviews with senior military interrogators, they found that the interrogator’s placed highest value on “the capacity to relate—on tolerance, sociability, flexible thinking, empathy, situational awareness, self-mastery, cultural knowledge, and linguistic skills” (p. 396). An interrogator summarized his method: “Everybody wants to talk. My job is to become the person he wants to talk to” (McCauley, 2007, p. 399). More recently, and under the auspices of the High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group (HIG²), the positive impact of rapport has been repeatedly highlighted (Alison, Alison, Noone, Eltnib, & Christiansen, 2013; Russano et al., 2014). Vanderhallen and Vervaeke (2014) noted that there are two key assumptions underlying the role rapport plays: (a) it enhances cooperation and (b) elicits more accurate information.

Rapport has proven a difficult concept to define, let alone measure (see Vallano & Schrieber Compo, 2015, for a comprehensive review). It can broadly be considered the interpersonal relationship or connection between interviewer and interviewee established over the course of their interaction (Evans et al., 2010; Kelly, Miller, Redlich, & Kleinman, 2013). It is based on a reciprocal understanding of one another in terms of respect, empathy, and trust (O’Toole, 2016) and may be felt by one party but not the other at various points. It may evolve and change in depth and feeling over an the course of an interaction (Hall, Roter, Blanch, & Frankel, 2009).

Russano et al. (2014), in their interviews with 42 highly experienced military and federal government interrogators, found that those who were considered effective interrogators were both highly interpersonally skilled and adaptive. Vallano, Evans, Schrieber Compo, and Kieckhaefer (2015) found that police officers self-reported using at least three rapport-building techniques on average during the course of investigative interviews, with the most common being “finding common ground, engaging in self-disclosure, and displaying understanding via sympathy or empathy” (p. 90); however, the actual interviews were not able to be observed to verify this. The United States Army Field manual (2006) emphasizes the need for “patience and tact” and “objectivity

² Created in 2009 under the Obama Administration and directed at developing a specialist interrogation unit that would draw on best practice and research across the globe.

and self-control” in creating and maintaining rapport with possible intelligence sources (p. 1.11).

Clearly, investigators believe that rapport works but this is obviously not sufficient evidence that it actually does or that they are actually using it within interrogations. Prior to the introduction of the PEACE model (which explicitly advocates rapport), Baldwin (1993) reviewed 400 video recordings and 200 audio recordings of police interviews and found that interviewers showed little effort to establish rapport; adopted a confession-seeking approach; failed to listen; and, at times, displayed flustered, aggressive, or provocative reactions to suspects. Early studies of the quality of investigative interviews in the United Kingdom shortly after the introduction of the PEACE model found that almost half of interviews with witnesses and suspects contained no rapport-building and of those that did the skills were of low quality (Clarke, Milne, & Bull, 2011). However, more recent studies have found that rapport is not only present in modern police interviews but that it is playing a critical role in obtaining reliable information and evidence (Bull, 2014). Meissner and colleagues (2014), in a meta-analysis comparing information-gathering approaches (rapport-based) to accusatorial strategies (confession-oriented), found that the information-gathering approaches produced fewer false confessions. Bull and Soukara (2010) found that shifts from denial to confession within police interviews was associated with police officers continuing to ask open questions and with the strategic disclosure of evidence. In a unique study of 142 genuine police interviews with individuals suspected of benefit fraud, Walsh and Bull (2012) found that opportunities to build rapport (defined as strategies such as active listening, calmness, empathy, summarizing, and explaining) in the initial stages of the interview were often missed and that where it had been established—it was not always maintained throughout the interview. Subsequently, interviewers who were able to establish *and* maintain rapport throughout the interview were five times more likely to obtain a satisfactory outcome (42% vs. 8%).

According to Mulqueen, Kahn, and Kirkpatrick (2012) successful communicators are competent (they avoid adopting maladaptive behaviors—see also Spitzberg, 1997) and versatile (they identify which behaviors to use and when). Interpersonal versatility has been highly correlated with various measures of emotional intelligence (Kraiger & Crane, 2009). Versatility is the ability to be flexible in selecting an appropriate manner to communicate, to be empathic and to manage relationships effectively (Mulqueen et al., 2012). Being versatile allows one to adopt a variety of behaviors, to understand other people’s perspectives and experiences, value different opinions and treat others with support and respect (Mulqueen et al., 2012). For interrogators the challenge is to consistently demonstrate and maintain empathy, adaptive regard, and respect in an

environment that, by default, can be seen as adversarial, austere, and restrictive.

Subsequently, the challenge for researchers is to create an accurate system of measurement that can capture a concept that is nuanced, interpersonally fluid, and evolves dynamically and responsively across an interaction.

ORBIT: A Synthesis of Interpersonal Skills and Humanistic Approaches

In our own work, we explicitly drew upon and adapted the research from counseling to create an interrogation-specific model (Alison et al., 2013). We accessed and analyzed a large data set of terrorist interrogations (878 [45-min] interrogations of audio and video footage of 181 [subsequently] convicted suspects ranging from international terrorism, domestic terrorism and paramilitaries; see Alison et al., 2013, for further description of the data set). To capture the use of various strategies through observation, we developed the Observing Rapport-Based Interpersonal Techniques (ORBIT) coding framework. Two key models from client-centered, humanistic approaches informed our thinking: motivational interviewing (Miller & Rollnick, 1992) and the interpersonal circumplex (a visual model with a circular order, such that variables that fall close together are more related than variables that fall further apart on the circle, with opposite variables being negatively related and variables at right angles being unrelated [orthogonal]; Leary, 1957). ORBIT’s behavioral coding framework is based on well-established methods of measuring interpersonal skills in counseling (Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1990), in particular the interpersonal circumplex (Freedman, Leary, Ossorio, & Coffey, 1951; Birtchnell, 2014) and motivational interviewing (Miller & Rollnick, 1992).

At the heart of ORBIT, is an interrogation interpersonal circumplex model that measures dyadic interactions between suspect and interrogator, according to whether the behaviors observed are adaptive (conducive to communication) or maladaptive (hampering communication; Birtchnell, 2014). Most interpersonal theorists now consider models of communication structured along a vertical (agentic) dimension ranging from submission (e.g., passive, nonengagement) to dominance (e.g., demanding, in-charge) and a horizontal (communal) dimension ranging from hostility (e.g., threatening, intimidating) to cooperation (e.g., supporting, sociable; Horowitz et al., 2006). The resultant circular model represents communication patterns in which the styles adjacent on the circumference are conceptually and statistically more similar than those on the opposing side (see Figure 1). For example, it is possible to communicate in an adaptive authoritative manner by being *in charge*, *setting the agenda*, and *advising* or to be maladaptive authoritative by being *demanding*, *dogmatic*, *pedantic*, and *rigid*. The intensity of each style is represented by the distance from

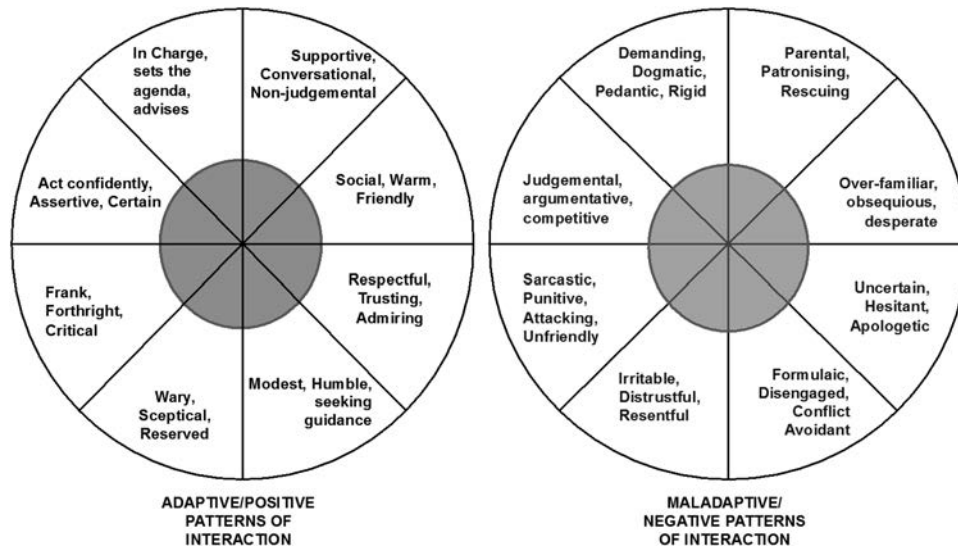


Figure 1. Adaptive and maladaptive variants of interpersonal behavior (from Alison et al., 2013).

the center of the circular model (Wiggins, 1982). Accordingly, the circular structure provides a framework for measuring and potentially predicting interpersonal dynamics between individuals.

The second component of ORBIT are the five key global approaches (acceptance, empathy, adaptation, evocation, and autonomy) of the Motivational Interviewing Skill Code (Miller, Moyers, Ernst, & Amrhein, 2008; see Table 1). Within counseling, these approaches are intended to generate an atmosphere of open communication, mutual respect, and cooperation. More than 200 clinical trials, efficacy reviews, and meta-analyses of motivational interviews have been conducted demonstrating its effectiveness in engaging people and motivating them to change across therapeutic, medical, and institutional settings (Arkowitz, Westra, Miller, & Rollnick, 2008; Rubak, Sandbaek, Lauritzen, & Christensen, 2005), providing an ample pedigree on which to develop our interrogation-specific model.

Our field corpus of material allowed us to test the adaptations of both interpersonal and rapport based models (and interactions between them). Due to the ethical and legal agreements to access the data, all suspects in the ORBIT studies have been convicted of terrorism, and therefore, conclusions are limited to this group. It is unknown what effect such strategies would have on suspects not convicted either due to their innocence or lack of evidence, and this is both an ethical and logistical challenge for future research with real-world data involving criminal suspects. ORBIT was used to code rapport-based behaviors through the observation of 45-min videotaped interview segments of police interviews by researchers trained in motivational interviewing. All coders were also familiar with the background literature and underlying principles of the interpersonal circumplex. Test coding sessions were completed initially on publically available interrogation examples to calibrate coding and establish interrater reliability prior to applying the

Table 1
Abridged Definitions and Examples of Measures Used to Observe and Define Rapport

Measure	Definition
Acceptance	Unconditional positive regard/respect for the detainee; it does not mean agreeing with the detainee or condoning or being complicit with their views or behaviors. Efforts to “see the good” in the detainee despite the behavior he/she is suspected of participating in.
Empathy	Seeks to understand the detainee’s perspective, expressed through reflective listening. Seeks genuine understanding of another person’s motives or perspective.
Adaptation	Able to adapt to responses and manage a fluid format with timeline jumps and deviation from the interview plan.
Evocation	Draws out beliefs and views of detainee rather than putting forward one’s own views, suspicions, or advice. Remains curious and patient; does not “leak” assumptions about personal views or guilt.
Autonomy	Makes clear that it is the detainee’s choice not to talk or cooperate; conveys an understanding that the power to provide information is a choice that lies with the detainee; absence of force, coercion or persuasion. Concept is one of “leaving a door open” rather than trying to force someone through it.

Note. Full details in Alison et al. (2013).

model to real-world data (similar methods have been used when examining the efficacy of motivational interviewing between client and therapist in the context of drinking behavior; see Moyers, Martin, Houck, Christopher, & Tonigan, 2009).

Initially, Alison et al. (2013) investigated the impact of the global rapport-based strategies (see Table 1) on interview yield, where yield was defined as any information or intelligence related to the following categories: capability; opportunity; motive; and persons, locations, actions, and timings relevant to the enquiry. The use of rapport-based strategies was positively associated with adaptive communication (on both the part of detainee and interrogator), and this, in turn, increased yield (similar to results found by Walsh & Bull, 2015). An expanded data set was examined by Alison et al. (2014) extended to 878 interview tapes. Adaptive communication and high scores on the global rapport themes were far more effective at reducing suspects' use of specific counter interrogation tactics (e.g., remaining silent, monosyllabic responses, scripted or known responses, claiming lack of memory, retraction of previous statements, or no comment) than maladaptive communication or strategies counter to rapport approaches (e.g., using aggression, intimidation, sarcasm, appearing judgmental, hesitant, or overfamiliar). This is supported by Granhag, Kleinman, and Oleszkiewicz's (2016) work examining the Scharff technique in relation to not pressing for information or forcing an agenda on the suspect. In contrast, even minimal expression of maladaptive communication strategies was associated with greater resistance by detainees as well as directly reducing interview yield. While adaptive/rapport-based behaviors were more likely to be associated with securing information and reducing tactical resistance, maladaptive/accusatorial strategies were directly associated with reduced information and increased tactical resistance. In other words, it was not always possible for interrogators to make it better, but it was possible for them to make it much worse.

Discussion

Rapport: More Than Just Being Nice

Manfred Nowak, when he was the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture, stated, "torture works but values are more important" (referenced in Rejali, 2007, p. 522). Our review of the evidence does not support this thinking—in fact, it supports exactly the opposite. An increasing number of studies show that information yield is improved *only* by adaptive styles of interaction, *never* by maladaptive ones. Even studies that appear on the surface to run counter to the majority of studies, such as Beune, Giebels, and Taylor's (2010) examination of culture and its impact on rapport are still consistent with the use of what we term adaptive

dominant techniques (being in charge, setting the agenda) but not with maladaptive variants of dominance (being attacking, punitive or sarcastic). So, adaptive behavior is not limited to cooperative communication but may include direct, firm authoritative (but never cruel or degrading) behavior as well as more reflective, reserved humble behavior (but never weak or passive). What will be most effective must be molded and adapted to the specific context and individual.

Similarly, findings demonstrate that not all adaptive rapport based behaviors are effective across all interview phases. For example, during the central swathe of interrogations, adaptive confrontational styles (frank, forthright, critical) actually reduced yield. The issue of timing and sequence, in particular, challenging too soon (Dando, Bull, Ormerod, & Sandham, 2015) appears to be critical. It is essential for interrogators to adopt the right interpersonal behaviors from the outset, as this sets the scene for subsequent interrogations. Walsh and Bull (2012) found the maintenance of rapport to be especially important in this regard.

The growing body of research on rapport also illustrates that humanistic approaches alone (where the hallmark in counseling includes client dignity, autonomy, and acceptance) are insufficient to gain information from detainees. Versatile, adaptive interpersonal skills matter too. Glynn and Moyers (2010) and Moyers (2014) have started to hint at this on their work with clients and shown that being interpersonally adaptive is critical in forming a therapeutic alliance and sustaining client involvement. So, we should not imagine securing information is quite as simple as Petraeus' suggestion of befriending detainees. Instead, a range of skills that are detainee and context dependent (sometimes firm, other times humble) appear to be what works. The relationship between humane treatment, interpersonal skills and the extraction of human intelligence merits far more attention. Moreover, these are not the only set of expert skills required by interrogators. Granhag et al.'s (2016) work on the Scharff technique reveals a cognitive framework that hints at the importance of winning the battle of wits. Beyond that of course is an appreciation of legal issues, knowledge of terrorist ideology, religion and culture, the specific details of the battlespace and an unwavering focus on the goals of the interrogation.

What is consistent though is that maladaptive communication styles predictably exert an extremely damaging effect on the interpersonal relationship and, concurrently, the amount of information obtained. Thus, encouraging the removal of all maladaptive interpersonal behaviors from any interrogator's repertoire is the first and most important principle in obtaining information. This makes the Senate Report (Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, 2014) into the CIA's enhanced interrogation strategies, developed in direct consultation with some psy-

chologists, even more discouraging reading. Not only was it clearly morally reprehensible and psychologically damaging, but the profound and relentless emotional and psychological pressures proved to be consistently ineffective in obtaining useful information. Our review of a large body of studies reveals how and why such aggressive techniques could not work (Blakeley, 2011). In fact, even a cursory examination of resistance in the counseling arena would have shown that ‘revenge’ would not produce results. The fundamental underpinning of the enhanced interrogation techniques employed in the CIA’s interrogation program conflict directly with the existing and expanding body of literature that highlights the value of rapport and interpersonal skill on the part of the interrogator and emphasizes the costs associated with intimidation, coercion, or aggression.

Encouraging interrogation communities to place value on qualities such as empathy and rapport may be assisted by presenting an objective body of evidence that is based on the systematic examination of real world interrogations. Alison, Sarangi, and Wright (2008), in a study with Indian police officers, established that simply insisting law enforcement follow a human rights agenda is insufficient in encouraging ethically compliant interrogations—they needed to be convinced that such methods actually worked. Vallano and Shreiber Compo (2015), in a recent review of rapport-based interrogation approaches with significant witnesses and criminal suspects, urged more thorough research into the specific measurement of both rapport-based and other influential components of investigative interviews in an effort to discern which qualities were genuinely contributing to producing reliable information. ORBIT has been integrated into the U.K. advanced interviewer training program, and its wider impact on interview practice is currently being evaluated. The APA ethics code requires psychologists to respect the dignity and worth of all individuals and to strive for the preservation and protection of fundamental human rights. The APA has contributed to the U.S. government’s High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group Research Committee, the mission of which is to bring science to bear on the review and promotion of humane interrogation techniques. Psychologists have been an integral part of the development of ethical interviewing practice for almost 30 years. As such, the vote to exclude psychologists from making any sort of contribution to interrogating high-value detainees is actually at variance with support for the McCain-Feinstein amendment (APA, 2015):

mandating immediate and then periodic review of the Army Field Manual to ensure it reflects current, evidence-based, best practices for interrogation that are designed to elicit reliable

and voluntary statements and do not involve the use or threat of force. (p. 1, paragraph 2)

In that light, can psychologists go beyond the fundamental principle of “first do no harm”? Surely they have an obligation to actually *prevent* harm and *reduce suffering*. Indeed, in the wake of the organizational crisis APA has an opportunity (and some may argue a duty) to “make good” by taking positive action rather than just avoiding any further contribution. Psychologists can commit fully to APA’s fundamental mission to “protect and promote human welfare, and to advance the creation, communication and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people’s lives” by conducting research in this area and enabling psychologists (albeit with all the necessary oversight, ethical scrutiny, and impartiality) to assist in research that supports effective, humane, and evidence based methods of interrogation. Indeed, without the right psychological contributions, we will continue to let down our security, defense, and law enforcement services and, critically, the public to whom we owe a duty of care. Neither descending the slippery slope alongside our security professionals nor remaining a safe distance from their interrogation practices embraces the ethical and professional responsibilities we hold as psychologists.

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