Using the Synergetic Navigation System in

SUPERVISION & TRAINING

Matej Vajda

Sigmund Freud University Vienna – Ljubljana branch

matej.vajda@mail.sfu.ac.at

PSYCHOTHERAPY TRAINEES RESEARCH

Jutta Fiegl (2016)

Empirical research of
young psychotherapists

WHAT IS „MATURE"?

- **Personal experience of therapy speeds up the process of personal maturation**

- Psychotherapy effectiveness research: on average young therapists are as successful and effective as older, experienced ones
(Goldberg et al., 2016, etc., etc.)
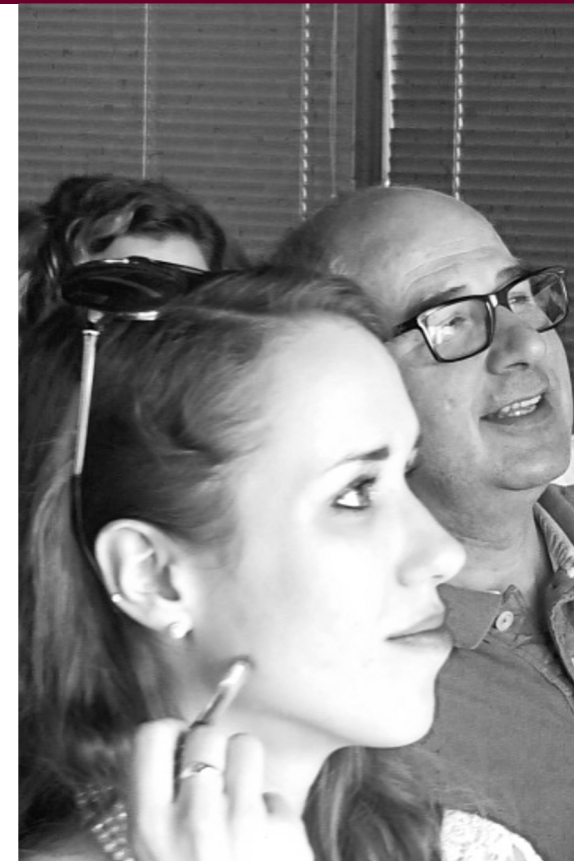
SUITABLE TO TRAIN IN PSYCHOTHERAPY?

- Ability to self-reflect
- Ability to engage contact
- Curiosity, interest in people and life patterns
- Love for people
- Political and social culture
- Humor
- Respect, willingness to empower people
- A sense of reality, awareness, flexibility

- Ability to express yourself verbally
- Ability to self-criticize
- Courage to express an opinion
- Ability to develop relationships, authenticity
- Relaxed communication with authority
- Openness instead of expectations
- Mental stability, empathy

MATURITY CRITERIA

- Ability to provide information about your past
- Separation from parents
- Financial independence
- Fulfillment of obligations
- Recognizing possibilities of different solutions
- **Good self-observation**
- Standing by your opinion
- Non-irritability, knowledge of the colorfulness of life
- Independence from outside opinion
- A sense of reality and endurance

PSYCHOTHERAPY TRAINING: UNIQUE

THEORY + **PRACTICE** + **PERSONAL EXPERIENCE** + **SUPERVISION**

PSYCHOTHERAPY TRAINING: CHALLENGE

Folkes-Skinner et al., 2010, p. 91:

„Trainees are required to change not only their thinking and to develop new skills, but also to adapt aspects of their personality to meet the needs of their clients.“

„Training is therefore a potentialy disturbing PERSONAL journey that requires a deconstruction of self in order to make space for the new therapist-self to emerge.“

PSYCHOTHERAPY (TRAINING) AS A SELF-ORGANIZING PROCESS

PSYCHOTHERAPY

- **destabilization** of non-functional patterns

- **in a stable frame**: therapeutic relationship

- (+ stabilization of new, functional patterns)

- Source of destabilization: **CLIENT'S LIFE**

PSYCHOTHERAPY TRAINING

- **destabilization** of patterns of thought, emotions, behavior

- **in a stable frame**: peer group, relationship with teacher(s), social support

- Sources of destabilization: **TRAINEE'S LIFE + WORKING WITH CLIENTS**

CONTEXT OF LEARNING IN PSYCHOTHERAPY (SCHIEPEK, 1999)

(the theory of self-organization of complex systems)

- process (nonlinear dynamics)
- complexity
- »black box«
- limited prediction
- limited possibilities for guidance
- multiplicity of meanings
- open, often contradictory goals

RECOMMENDATIONS

(Previous research by Grafanaki, 2010)

- Better understanding of the training process and its impact on trainees' overall development

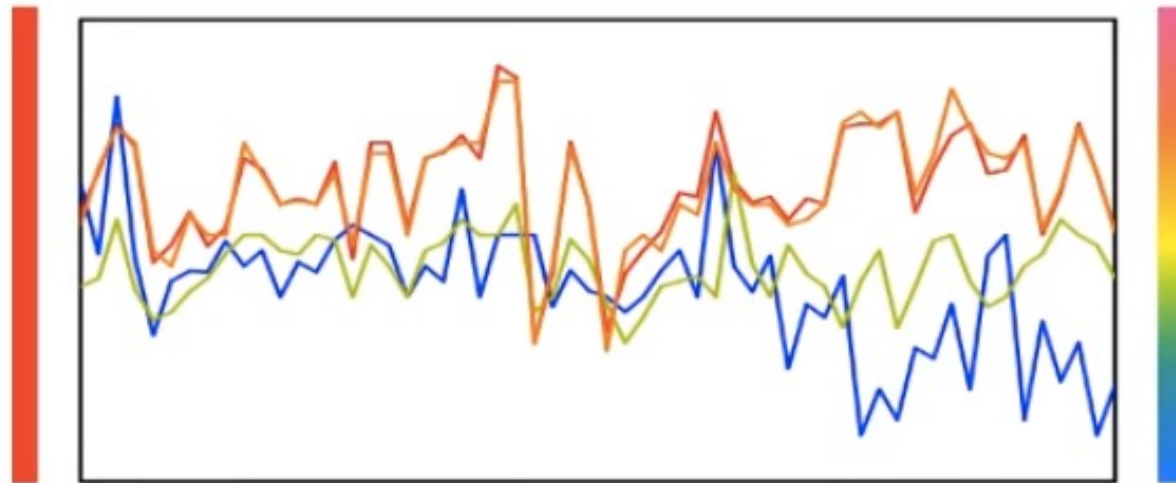- Move from external perspectives to trainee's perspective

OUR (RESEARCH) APPROACH TO TRAINEES' DEVELOPMENT

- multidisciplinary theoretical foundations (systemic theories, complex systems, non linear dynamics, synergetics,...)
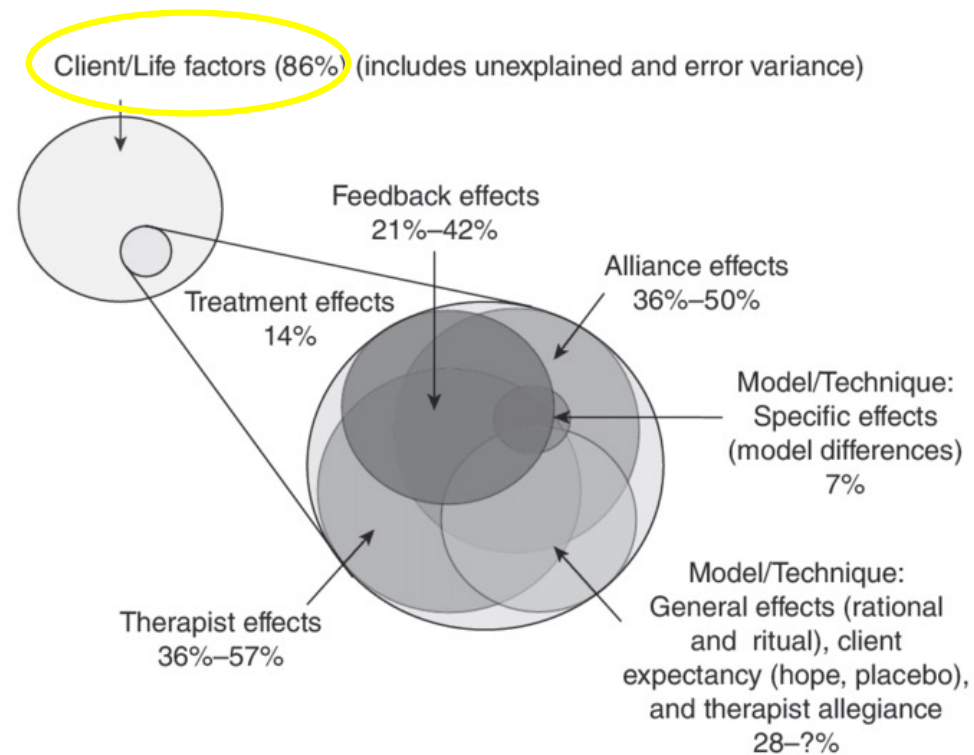
TRAINEE PROCESS RESEARCH

preparing for →

CLIENT PROCESS RESEARCH

+

SUPERVISION PROCESS RESEARCH

Training

Outpatient clinic

PROCESS-OUTCOME RESEARCH

Black Box

Pre-measurement

Post-measurement

COMMON FACTORS (DUNCAN, 2017)

Client/Life factors (86%) (includes unexplained and error variance)

Feedback effects
21%–42%

Alliance effects
36%–50%

Treatment effects
14%

Model/Technique:
Specific effects
(model differences)
7%

Therapist effects
36%–57%

Model/Technique:
General effects (rational
and ritual), client
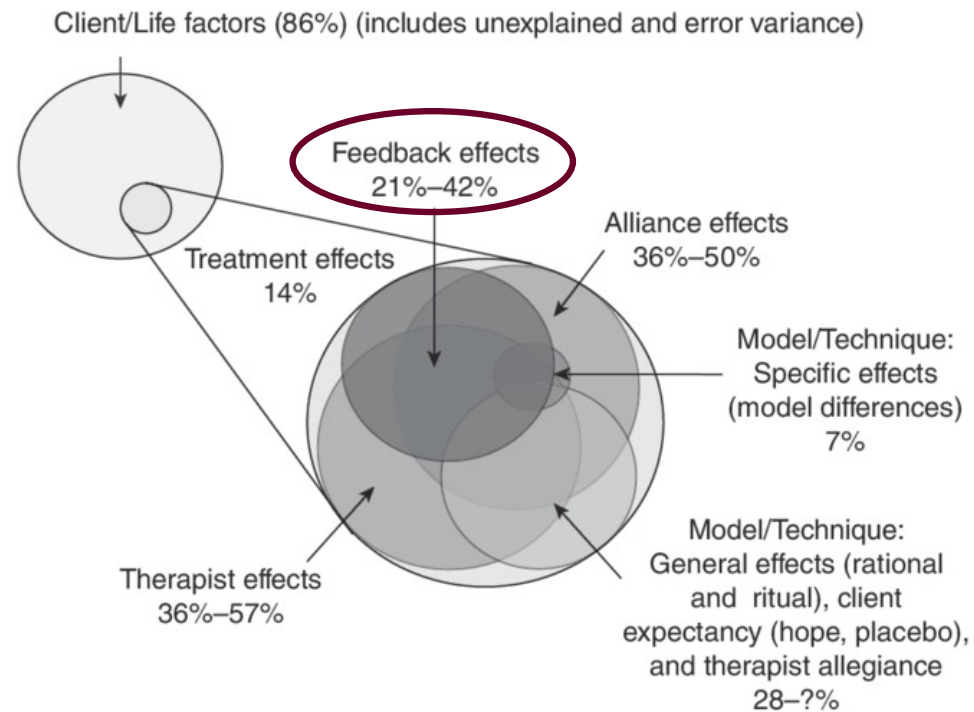expectancy (hope, placebo),
and therapist allegiance
28–?%

EXTRATRAINING FACTORS

Most of
trainees' development
takes place
outside of contact hours
with teachers!

COMMON FACTORS (DUNCAN, 2017)

Client/Life factors (86%) (includes unexplained and error variance)

Feedback effects
21%–42%

Alliance effects
36%–50%

Treatment effects
14%

Model/Technique:
Specific effects
(model differences)
7%

Therapist effects
36%–57%

Model/Technique:
General effects (rational
and ritual), client
expectancy (hope, placebo),
and therapist allegiance
28–?%

FEEDBACK INFORMED THERAPY/TRAINING/SUPERVISION

Systematic, ongoing collection
of client/trainee/supervisee
outcome data
& relationship feedback

CONVERSATIONAL TOOL
talking about their responses
(in the same or next session)

DATA ANALYSIS
qualitative, quantitative;
identification of change trends

WHY FEEDBACK

- Makes the process visible

- Progress monitoring

- Motivates interest in change

- Deeper insight into biopsychosocial dynamics

- More creative working hypotheses, based on data

- Collaborative, inclusive, empowering

Like a GPS for therapy/training/supervision !

FEEDBACK INTERVIEW

Results
are
always
interpreted
in collaboration
with the
client/trainee!

RESEARCH EXAMPLE

- Participants: group of 15 trainees (1st year sys. psych.)
- Data collection duration: 8 months

- Daily questionnaire with (optional) diary entries

- Feedback interview weekly or at least monthly

LEARNING PROCESS QUESTIONNAIRE

6 factors, 45 questions:

- Learning progress / confidence / self-efficacy
- Intensity of problem resolution / learning motivation
- Development of new perspectives
- Teaching relationship quality / trust
- Peer group climate
- Dysphoric emotions / self-relatedness
- Problem ("symptom") severity

+ Progress in the development of systemic competencies

LEARNING PROGRESS / CONFIDENCE / SELF-EFFICACY

- I am getting better and better at solving my problems on my own
- I now feel up to situations that I didn't feel up to before
- I believe that I am now better able to behave the way I would like
- I have the feeling that I now understand myself and my problems better
- I have the feeling that I am really making progress in my training
- Today I was confident that I will solve my problem(s)
- In my personal goals, I felt that today I am [unsuccessful/sucessful]
- From today's perspective: I myself am largely responsible for the outcome of my training
- …

INTENSITY OF PROBLEM RESOLUTION / LEARNING MOTIVATION

- Today I let my mind wander in search of new perspectives and ideas

- Today I worked on what really moves me

- Today I was strongly motivated to work on my problem or its solution/change

- Today I dared to tackle stressful aspects of my life

- After today's experience, I am determined to tackle my problem(s)

- Interest/curiosity

DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PERSPECTIVES / INNOVATION

- Today I perceived my problem(s) differently (from a different perspective, in a different context)

- Today I realized connections that I had not seen before

- New ideas/perspectives have emerged for me today

- Today, the content I dealt with was new and unusual

TEACHING RELATIONSHIP QUALITY /OPENNESS / TRUSTING THE TEACHER

- I find working with the teacher productive
- The teacher asks me helpful questions and makes important suggestions
- I feel comfortable in my relationship with the teacher
- I have the feeling that I can be open and honest with my teacher
- I have the feeling that the teacher thinks something different about me than s/he tells me
- I think a different training approach would be more suitable for me
- I feel safe and supported in training

PEER GROUP CLIMATE AND/OR INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS QUALITY

- Today I had the feeling that the people / colleagues I dealt with think differently about me than they tell me
- The openness of the people / colleagues I dealt with today was
- Today I felt comfortable in the relationship with the people / colleagues I dealt with
- My own openness towards other people / colleagues today was
- I feel safe and supported in my social environment
- Today I experienced the climate in my social environment as [tense / relaxed]

DYSPHORIC EMOTIONS / SELF-RELATEDNESS

- Grief
- Anger/rage
- Anxiety
- My self-esteem today is [low/high]
- Joy
- Today I dealt intensively with myself
- Today I was quite insecure emotionally

PROBLEM ("SYMPTOM") SEVERITY

- Symptom/problem load
- My symptoms/problems bothered me today
- My symptoms/problems interfered with my everyday life today
- Today I felt helplessly at the mercy of my symptoms/problems
- I avoided situations related to my symptoms/problems today
- Today I felt I had enough strength, courage or willingness to risk facing my problems/symptoms

INDIVIDUAL SYSTEMIC COMPETENCE (HAKEN & SCHIEPEK, 2006)

- Social competence

- Time dimension

- Emotions, stress coping, activation of resources

- Creating conditions for self-organization

- Knowledge (theoretical)

- Recognition of patterns and modelling

PROGRESS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SYSTEMIC COMPETENCIES

- Today I was able to activate and/or expand my resources

- Today I have expanded my therapy-related knowledge

- Today I have expanded my diagnostic skills

- Today I have improved my social skills

- Today I have improved my competence in dealing with the dimension of time

TAKE-AWAYS: CHALLENGES

- Technical difficulties

- Problems related to life situations of trainees

- Missing data - only 3 trainees responded regularly

- 3 trainees quit training (negative or positive?)

- 1 trainee will make a 1 year pause from training

TAKE-AWAYS: INTERESTING?

- + and – influences of trainees' life situations

- Training as rare influence factor → humbling

- Positive experience with young full-time students

- Critical instability can be explored in multiple ways

- Correlation of missing data and phases of critical instability (e.g. cancer)

TRAINEES' EXTRATRAINING FACTORS

- T1: 1 year after divorce, overburdened → quit

- T2: overburdened, lead role at work → quit

- T9: financial and marital crisis → quit

Dropout NOT RELATED to training!
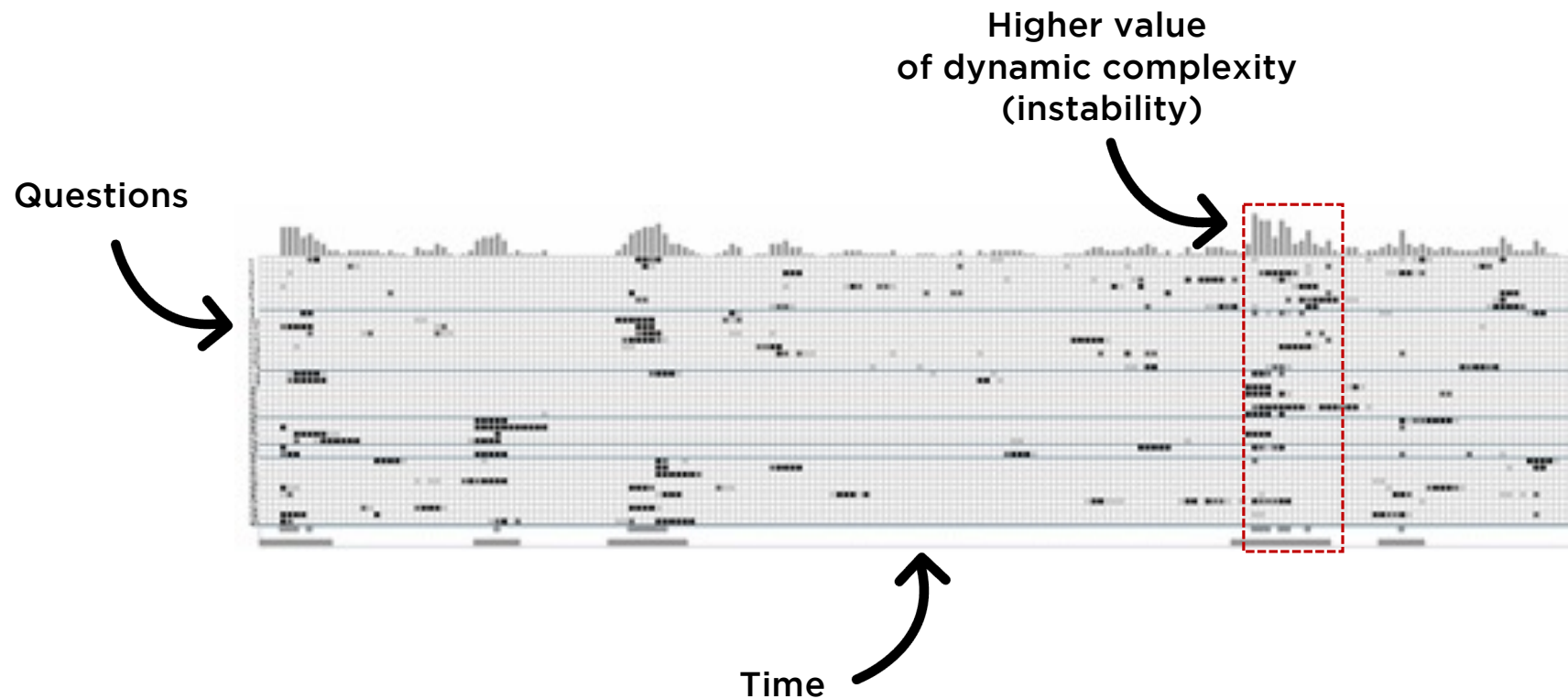
- T14: 2 trainings simultaneously → 1 year pause

TRAINEES' EXTRATRAINING FACTORS

- T3: relationship breakup and cancer

- T4, T5, T6, T7: job difficulties

- T8: family problems

- T13: childbirth

- T15: marital crisis (possible divorce), lead role at work

CASE EXAMPLE –
SK: „STAR" OF THE GROUP

- 22 years old

- Full-time student: simultaneously social work masters

- Commited to change: individual therapy, regular self-care

- Training very meaningful for her life

- Made connections between personal changes & training

CASE EXAMPLE -
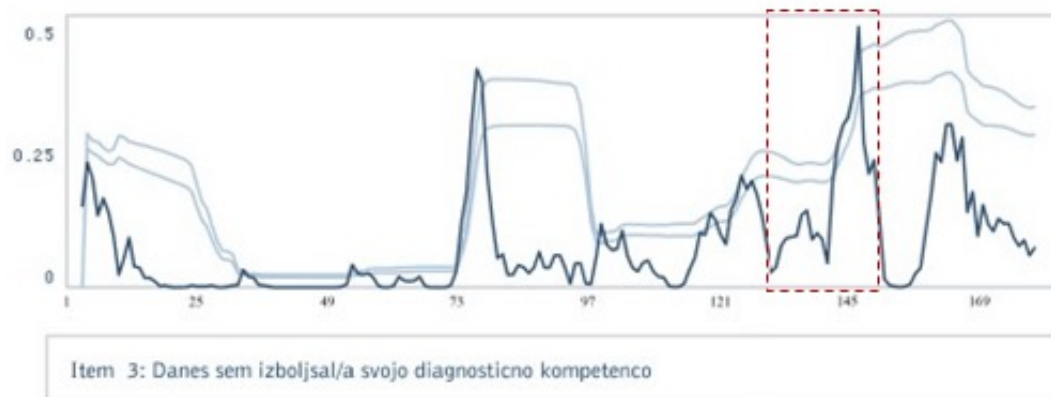# SK: FRUITFUL YEAR & FINISH

Higher value
of dynamic complexity
(instability)

Questions

Time

SK: CRITICAL INSTABILITY

Knowledge, relevant for psychotherapy

Item 2: Danes sem razsiril/a svoje znanje, ki je pomembno za psihoterapijo

Diagnostic competency

Item 3: Danes sem izboljsal/a svojo diagnosticno kompetenco

SK: CRITICAL INSTABILITY

Time competency

Item 5: Danes sem izboljsal/a svojo kompetenco v ravnanju z dimenzijo casa
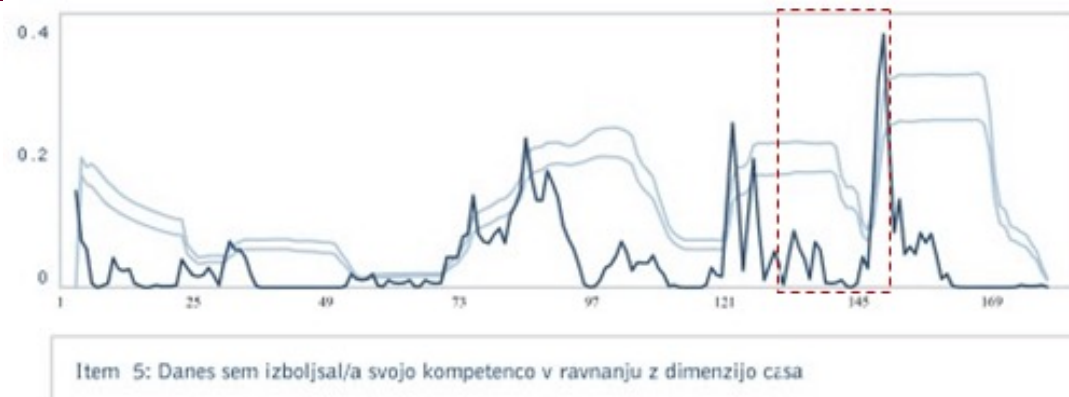
Self-organisation competency

Item 7: Danes sem izboljsal/a svojo kompetenco v razvijanju samoorganizacije

Flow
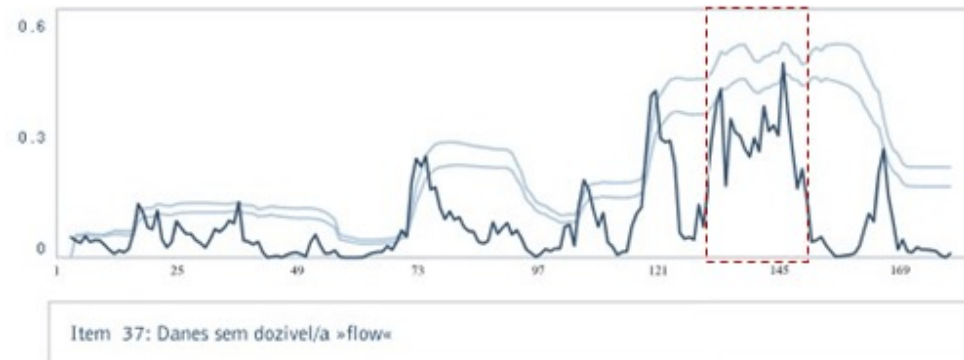
Sytemic competency (factor)
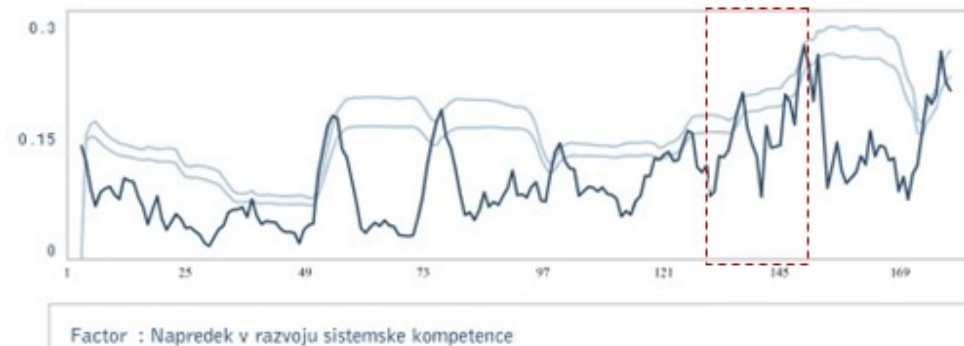
Learning progress (factor)

Item 37: Danes sem dozivel/a »flow«

Factor : Napredek v razvoju sistemske kompetence

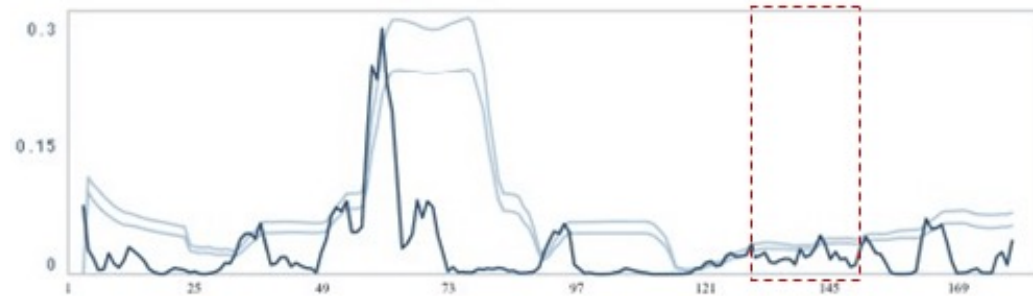Factor : Napredek v procesu ucenja / v osebnostnem razvoju

Pattern recognition & (systemic) modelling
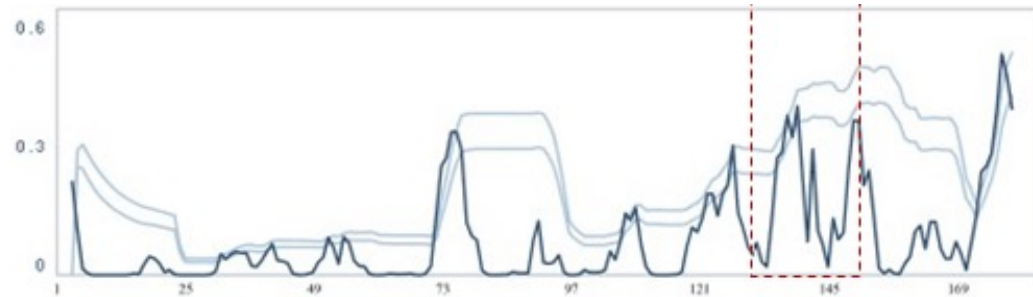
Item 8: Danes sem izboljsal/a svojo kompetenco za prepoznavanje vzorcev in (sistemsko) modeliranje

Anxiety

Item 33: Danes sem cutil/a tesnobo

SK: FROM ANXIETY TO CURIOSITY

- „Last week at the intensive I demonstrated the River of life, and I got the feeling that I was doing well...
- ... in the past I was anxious when doing practical work.
- My goal is to be curious.
- Because I have this resource in me, too.
- I research a lot, I work on myself in my spare time...
- ... and I could turn this curiosity outwards to work with others in the same way."

SK: CURIOSITY AS BODILY EXPERIENCE

- „In my chest I feel ligthness,

- … there is no unpleasant heart beating,

- … also in my stomach I am relaxed.

- And my legs are relaxed, where otherwise I am tense…"

THANK YOU! :)