

# 6 Personal Projects and the Distributed Self: Aspects of a Conative Psychology

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The study of the self has figured centrally in diverse subfields of psychology. As previous volumes in this series amply demonstrate, self psychology has both contributed to and benefited from research in areas such as social, personality, comparative, developmental, cognitive, and clinical psychology (Suls, 1982; Suls & Greenwald, 1983, 1986). In recent years a new field of theory and research has been emerging that also may have considerable relevance for self psychology. This new specialty is a *conative* psychology (from the Latin, *conari*, to try) and can be provisionally defined as the examination and explanation of the content, structure, and dynamics of personal goal-directed activity. Its roots extend back to antiquity and the study of conation as the power or act of willing has been a perdurable concept in Western thought. Although the empirical study of conative processes or volitional action is coterminous with the rise of experimental psychology, its viability was dampened by successive waves of behavioral and cognitive domination of psychology. There is now increasing evidence, from a diversity of sources, that a conative psychology is in the process of re-emerging (Little, 1987a, 1990).<sup>1</sup>

The renewal of conative concerns can be seen in the ascendancy of goal concepts in areas as diverse as organizational, environmental, developmental, and social psychology (Heckhausen, 1991; Karoly, in press; Little, 1990; Pervin,

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<sup>1</sup>A thorough account of the historical development of interest in conation would explore its pre-Aristotelian roots, the contributions of William Hamilton (1788–1856) at Edinburgh, who distinguished the conative aspects of human conduct from the affective and cognitive, and pioneers in experimental psychology such as Narziss Ach who initiated empirical research on a volitional psychology of intentional action. Its “middle period” would certainly include Lewinian theory and even the classic Hull-Tolman debates within learning theory (Heckhausen, 1991; Hilgard, 1980).

1989). A conative orientation is particularly visible in personality psychology with the emergence of new units of analysis for the assessment of personal action constructs (PAC units) (Little, 1983, 1989, 1990; Little, Lecci, & Watkinson, 1992). PAC units might be considered the basic measurement units for a conative personality psychology. They provide a focus for the elicitation and appraisal of conative pursuits, particularly those assumed to be central to an understanding of personality. Among these new PAC units are current concerns (Klinger, 1977), life tasks (Cantor, Norem, Niedenthal, Langston, & Brower, 1987), personal projects (Little, 1983), possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986), personal strivings (Emmons, 1986), and personal goal systems (Karoly, 1990b, in press). The common focus of these different PAC unit is on the causes and courses of extended sets of personally salient conduct.<sup>2</sup> The simultaneous rise and vigorous development of such units in diverse areas of the discipline suggest that the conative turn may have some enduring consequences for psychology.

The major goal of this chapter is to explore how such a conative psychology casts traditional concerns about the self in a different light and how research in self psychology, in turn, may illuminate productive directions for a conative psychology.

#### THE DISTRIBUTED SELF: BRUNER'S NEW LOOK AT THE OLD NEW LOOK

A useful starting place for developing the major themes of the chapter is Jerome Bruner's (1990) recent *Acts of Meaning*. At the outset of the book Bruner reflects on the direction that cognitive psychology has taken over the past 4 decades. Bruner was both a major contributor to the New Look in perception in the 50s, a perspective expressively concerned with creating a more active, selective perceiver for perceptual theory. He was also one of the framers of the cognitive psychology that was to assume hegemony over the field in the ensuing decades. So it is particularly noteworthy that his retrospective glance over nearly half a century of cognitively oriented psychology is a decidedly ambivalent one. In Bruner's judgment the cognitive revolution was diverted from its core aspiration of exploring the meaning-making propensities of human beings. Instead of study-

<sup>2</sup>While such a definition might seem to include much that would fall within the theoretical purview of conventional personality and social psychology, the new PAC units are distinctive in that research subjects typically report *directly* on the personal goals and extended actions in which they are currently involved. These lists of goals, projects, tasks and undertakings then serve as a kind of assessment motherboard, to borrow a computer term, into which a variety of assessment modules can be "plugged," typically in the form of rating matrices (see Little, 1983, 1987). This allows for the systemic appraisal of an individual's personally phrased goals, including assessment of how they are evaluated, their mutual impact, and their linkages with more superordinate values and more molecular level acts.

ing meaningful action, Bruner claims that cognitive psychologists became increasingly preoccupied with the minutiae of information processing. A major cause of the diversion, claims Bruner, was the computer. Seduced by the phenomenal rise of increasingly sophisticated computers, cognitive psychologists became less concerned about meaning as a focus for their explorations and more concerned with *computability* as a criterion for the adequacy of their models of human information processing. Thus, despite its success in displacing the hold of behaviorism over much of psychology, and its central role in the creation of a robust cognitive science, the cognitive revolution failed to achieve its original goal of providing a viable psychology of meaningful action.

But, as Bruner goes on to explain, the aspiration, if not the accomplishment, of the kind of psychology envisaged by the early cognitivists has been pursued by a loose congeries of researchers in the social sciences over the past 2 decades. Whether they identify themselves as contextualists, hermeneutical or narrative psychologists, cultural psychologists or critical theorists, they seem united in dissociating themselves from mainstream cognitive psychology and to promote the sort of psychology envisioned by the early framers (e.g., Baumeister, 1986; Bruner, 1990; Giddens, 1991; Sampson, 1985; Sarbin, 1986).

Although there is an affinity between these perspectives and the conative psychology described earlier, there are also some distinctive features of the latter to which we give special attention. In particular, conative personality psychology is distinctive in its critique and reformulation of principles for the psychological assessment of individuals (e.g., Little, 1987b). Several of these will be illustrated below.

In a later chapter in *Acts of Meaning*, Bruner develops a second line of argument about the way in which meaningful acts are related to the concept of self. He argues that the significance of acts such as personal projects derive, in part, from their capacity to represent or reflect aspects of the self. They may serve as the outwardly visible manifestations of an individual's sense of who she is. Bruner draws upon work on distributed processing in cognitive and instructional psychology to argue that knowledge is not just in the cortex but *distributed* throughout our contexts. A psychology graduate student's distributed knowledge is found in highlighted lecture notes, E-mail colleagues' letters, and tear-stained pages of venerated stats texts.

Bruner (1990) suggests that the self, too, is distributed. Rather than being exclusively an internal, nuclear core, the self may be seen to be distributed through our deliberative acts and personal undertakings. Note that this is not the same as saying that the self is multiple rather than unitary or that it is ephemeral rather than substantial. Rather it suggests that we can discover something of importance about the nature of selves in the tasks and commitments, projects and relationships that constitute the daily ecology of individuals. As an example of the distributed self Bruner describes a 60s student engaged in the project of finding himself by "going off to the Maine woods":

This was Self in use, its "meaning in praxis." It was Self distributed in action, in projects, in practice. You went to *somewhere* to do something with an anticipated goal in mind, something you couldn't do elsewhere and be the same Self. (p. 117)

It is precisely these links between projects and selves that we wish to explore in this chapter. We wish to take Bruner's notion of a distributed self seriously, to show how it might be operationalized by the use of Personal Projects Analysis and to propose it as a central feature of an emerging conative psychology. In a sense we are trying to show that a *new* New Look may be emerging in psychology which captures the essence of the old New Look and that the self is a central feature of this perspective. We show how a person's projects enable us to examine four key aspects of the concept of self: self-expression, self-enhancement, self-exploration, and self-extension. Finally, we stand back and see what paths are unfolding as we begin anew to study the self as distributed in meaningful action.

#### NORMS, NEEDS, AND NECESSITY: PERSONAL PROJECTS AND THE MOTHERS OF INTENTION

Personal projects are extended intentional acts that can range from barely noticed routines like "warm up the car" to overarching life commitments such as "avenge my father's death" but that tend to fall into the range of middle-level units in personality psychology (Buss & Cantor, 1989; Little, 1987c).<sup>3</sup> Personal projects may be delightful or abhorrent, personally initiated or thrust upon us. They may be the major routes through which we experience joy in our lives. They may also be the source of unbearable pain.

As units of analysis, personal projects have many features in common with other PAC units in personality psychology. Like Klinger's (1977) current concerns, personal projects are assumed to have a directive influence upon behavioral and perceptual processes. But while current concerns are primarily internalized recurring foci of attention, personal projects are more clearly externalized and extended sets of action which draw from and act upon the surrounding ecological context (see Klinger, 1989). In this respect personal

<sup>3</sup>It will be apparent that the *extended* nature of such intentional acts is very much a relative thing. For example, while "warm up the car" may be a rather inconsequential routine for one person, and never appear on his list of projects, for others, such as those with disabilities it may be a more onerous undertaking. Environmental affordances too determine how extended and demanding a personal project might be. Warming up the car in the driveway in Tempe or Tampa in the middle of winter is decidedly not the same project as doing it in Toronto. Moreover, the methodology does not explicitly discourage the listing of relatively inconsequential projects: we have been able to show that individual differences in the frequency or appraisal of such projects will correlate significantly with measures of adaptation and well-being (e.g., Little, 1989).

projects are similar to the "life task" units of Cantor and her colleagues (e.g., Cantor, 1990).

Life tasks are socially mandated and often age graded undertakings. For example, young adults in their first year at college are expected to keep up their academic work, make new friends, and develop some independence from family. Life tasks are closely linked to cultural expectations and normative prescriptions, including the time frame within which they are expected to be carried out (Helson, Mitchell, & Moane, 1984). While current concerns may often be hidden from the view of others, life tasks are more clearly visible to others and their success or failure will often be greeted by social censure or celebration. Normative pressures, in short, may be major sources of influence on both personal projects and life tasks. Such undertakings are, in part, acts of meaning in which we *ought* to be engaged. Bruner's example of the student who went off to "find himself in the Maine woods" is as much an illustration of a normative expectation of the 60s decade, (a life-task in Cantor's terms), as it was an idiosyncratic pursuit. In the context of the 90s, "going to the Maine woods" may more likely be in the service of finding jobs than selves. As we shall see, such a pursuit may be less self-conscious but no less self-expressive.

Unlike life tasks, however, which are primarily normative or mandated courses of action, personal projects may be in the service of sheer bloody-mindedness or high whimsy and perhaps because of this, they may be particularly self-expressive. Arthur, for example, may initiate the personal project of "collecting airsickness bags from around the world" an undertaking difficult to explicate as a normatively mandated task. Yet it may come to consume his passion and deeply reflect an aspect of himself that could not be distributed in any other project. This personal project may come to dominate his life and for Arthur, at last, life will reflect Art.

As Bernard Williams (1981) in his philosophical analysis of projects and self-identity has argued, personal projects are not *necessarily* individualistic pursuits. A person may have:

a *ground* project or set of projects which are closely related to his existence and which to a significant degree give a meaning to his life. . . . Ground projects do not have to be selfish, in the sense that they are just concerned with things for the agent. Nor do they have to be self-centred, in the sense that the creative projects of a Romantic artist could be considered self-centred (where it has to be him, but not for him). They may certainly be altruistic, and in a very evident sense moral, projects; thus he may be working for reform, or justice. . . . (pp. 12-13)

Other personal projects may appear utterly inconsequential at first blush. On probing, however, they may be found to be the expression of more superordinate needs, values or aspirations (Omodei & Wearing, 1990). The fleeting project "Win the staring contest with my dog" may be in the service of the more superordinate goal of "never backing down." Here, personal projects are similar

to Emmons' (1986) personal strivings, which are the end states that individuals are *typically* trying to achieve in their daily action.

Both personal strivings and personal projects impel actions intended to achieve individually defined goals. They frequently entail acts of meaning which we *need and desire* to carry out.

But unlike personal strivings, which are, by definition, typical and therefore recurring phenomena, personal projects may well be one-shot affairs. While the personal striving "try to achieve well intellectually" may be a recurring theme in Juanita's life, she will be engaged in the personal project "defend my dissertation" only once, one hopes. While Rob may have a personal striving to "attend to his son David's needs," his personal project for February 10th may be to "arrange for David to meet Lisa's son," a project intended to introduce a new friend into his son's life. Personal projects such as these are characterized by a high degree of ecological contingency. Their course depends not only upon the initial thrust or internal striving, but also upon the environmental affordances or contextual constraints within which they are inevitably embedded. In the case of Rob's project, the dynamics of its unfolding entail the cooperation of Lisa, and her son. It also requires some resolution of the quotidian complexities that a mid-winter's morning might cough up in the form of bad colds and stalled cars. And the stalled car itself may well become the pre-emptive personal project of February 10th. For personal projects, then, necessity can be added to norms and needs as the multiple mothers of intention.

Although there is strong family resemblance to each of the PAC units currently being developed in personality research, and while PAC methods allow them to be systematically linked with one another, each has a particular focus of applicability. In this chapter, we are concerned primarily with personal projects, but issues that may be more fruitfully conceived in terms of other PAC units are also addressed where appropriate.

### Personal Projects Analysis: Basic Assumptions and Research Framework

Personal Projects Analysis (hereafter PPA) is a methodology designed to operationalize personal action constructs or conative units of analysis. More extensive treatment of the methodology appears elsewhere (Little, 1983, 1987b, 1989; Palys & Little, 1983) but the basic assumptions underlying PPA can be briefly summarized in order to set the stage for applying PPA to the study of the self.

*Assumptions and Assessment Modules of PPA.* A number of methodological criteria guided the development of PPA, three of which are focused on here. First, following Kelly (1955) we adopt a *credulous* approach to assessment. We assume at the outset that individuals will respond directly to the request to tell us about the content and appraisals of their personal projects. Thus our first assess-

ment module in PPA is a Project Elicitation List which requests respondents to write down, or in interview versions of PPA, to tell us about, the content of their current personal projects. Appendix A (Part 1) displays the standard version of this module. Given these instructions and examples (which are themselves modifiable), the typical respondent generates approximately fifteen personal projects on the List in the time required.

By direct solicitation of a person's ongoing personal projects we are able to increase the likelihood that the units we work with are personally relevant and reflect aspects of the individual's daily reality. Personal projects and other PAC units, in this respect, are substantially different from orthodox test items which are not necessarily personally salient nor ecological informative. In the case of carrying out PPA with a single parent, for example, we may elicit projects such as "arrange day care again for David," a project that reflects both the personalized nature of daily pursuits and the ecological context within which it is embedded (Little & Ryan, 1979).

The credulous assumption also undergirds the second module of PPA, the Project Rating Matrix, which asks individuals to appraise each of ten personal projects on between 16 and 25 11-point (0-10) rating dimensions developed over the years on the basis of their theoretical relevance and their practical utility, such as potential clinical use (Appendix A, Part 2).

A second assumption underlying PPA is the need for *systemic* assessment. A personal project is part of a system and needs to be linked to other units of analysis, including other projects, subordinate acts through which they are carried out, and superordinate value, tasks, or strivings which serve as the ends towards which projects are directed (Little, 1983). We illustrate the use of new dimensions and impact matrices in later sections of the chapter. A derivative consequence of seeing projects as forming systems is that we are able to analyze an individual's personal projects both normatively and idiographically; that is we can compare the respondents ratings on personal projects (by taking the mean of ratings on dimensions across projects) and comparing these with other individuals, or we can focus on the individual single case and eschew making normative comparisons entirely. For example, we can look at the relationship between ratings on project control and project stress by looking at the correlation between the mean scores on these columns for a whole sample of respondents, or we can select individuals and run ipsative correlations between the control and stress column across their personal projects. These ipsative correlations can then be transformed into standard scores for purposes of aggregation and generalization. While clinical use emphasizes the ipsative or idiographic measurement possibilities of PPA (Little, 1987b), the present chapter focuses on the more conventional normative approach.

A third assumption is that *modular* assessment is necessary in order to capture the distinctive nature of the project systems of certain groups of respondent. Again, in contrast with orthodox trait assessment, PPA is not a fixed test

with a set of invariant items. Rather it involves a core set of dimensions, to which can be added any number of *ad hoc* dimensions deemed important for a particular investigation. Examples have included dimensions assessing guilt or depression associated with a project in a study of student mothers, the age that middle-aged males felt themselves to be while engaged in different types of project, and language problems posed by projects of recent immigrants to Canada.

*Research Framework: A Social Ecological Model.* The research framework within which personal projects analysis has been developed over the past decade has been a social ecological one (Little, 1987b; Little & Ryan, 1978). The model conceives of personal projects as the means through which individuals handle the demands arising from biological, social/cultural, and environmental systems of influence. Through personal projects the often conflicting claims of these different eco-systems are resolved, balanced, and brought into some sense of coherent integration (Antonovsky, 1979; Little, 1989). A key component of any social ecological model is an explicit focus upon explaining and enhancing the adaptation and well-being of individuals in context. Accordingly, much of our research has been directed toward confirming a five-factor model of well-being based on the identification of project themes of meaning, structure, community, efficacy, and stress.

Project *meaning* comprises dimensions such as perceived importance, enjoyment, and value congruency which together indicate how worthwhile individuals appraise their projects to be. Project *structure* refers to dimensions tapping into how well structured or managed a project is in terms of initiation and control and having sufficient time to work on the project. Project *community* appraises the social awareness or visibility of projects and perceptions of how other individuals evaluate the importance of the project. Project *efficacy* subsumes ratings of current progress and anticipated outcome of projects. Finally, project *stress* includes dimensions assessing the stress, difficulty, and challenge associated with projects.

Previous research has shown that well-being is enhanced to the extent that an individual is engaged in projects that are meaningful, structured, supported, perceived to be efficacious and relatively unstressful, and clinical/counseling modules have been developed to enhance project management skills in these domains (Little, 1987b, 1989). We have also shown that individual differences in neuroticism and conscientiousness are closely linked with scores on these factors, such that neuroticism is associated with patterns of stressfulness, disorganization, and inefficacy in projects while conscientiousness is associated with greater meaning, efficacy, and less stress (Little, Lecci, & Watkinson, 1992). Given this brief introduction to the assumptions and assessment components of Personal Projects Analysis, we turn now to an examination of how this framework can aid in the understanding of the self; in the ways in which the self is reflected in one's projects, in the manner through which our sense of self worth

can be enhanced or diminished by the pursuits we engage in, how self-exploration can be a core personal project, and how projects may serve as the vehicles through which our possible selves may become realities. In short, we will explore some ways in which the study of personal projects assists in the construction of a conative self psychology.

#### FOUR ASPECTS OF A CONATIVE SELF PSYCHOLOGY: SELF EXPRESSION, ENHANCEMENT, EXPLORATION AND EXTENSION THROUGH PERSONAL PROJECTS

We can begin by looking directly at the content of some of the personal projects that have been generated by undergraduate students in recent studies:

trying to attract John's attention  
break up with a long term boyfriend on good terms  
trying to make some sense out of Jennifer's suicide  
buying Sherry a bottle of vodka  
get more skiing time in this winter  
wishing brother would solve his problems with his sickening girl friend  
overcome the habit of saying the wrong thing at the wrong time  
spending at least 1/2 hour with pet budgie  
do some serious partying in Florida  
be kinder and more tolerant of people who don't think like me  
try to avoid some weird girl on the bus  
overcoming my alcohol-induced destructive tendencies

Even cursory scanning of the content of the personal projects listed above suggests several functions that projects might fulfill vis-à-vis the self. First, a person's projects might perform a *self-expressive* function, that is, provide a vehicle through which the person can convey something self-defining. The clearest examples of this would be where individuals with a strong interest or orientation towards a particular domain of activity mount projects within that domain such as the skiing and partying projects listed above. But we also suggest more subtle ways in which a project can be evaluated as self-expressive.

Second, a personal project may serve a *self-enhancement* function for individuals, providing a means through which they may raise or lower their sense of self-worth. The ("overcome . . . destructive tendencies") project listed before, for example, were it to be successfully completed, could add considerably to the person's sense of self-worth.

Third, *self-exploration* can be the prime focus of a personal project, as when

person attempts to clarify personal values and beliefs, or change relatively enduring dispositions and habits. The "making sense of . . . suicide" and "be kinder and more tolerant . . ." projects might exemplify this function.

Finally, personal projects can serve a *self-extension* function, in that they may be the prime vehicles through which new, future, possible selves are brought into being (Markus & Nurius, 1986). The "(attracting) John's attention" project, for example, might be an explicit step in the process of becoming a different self.

In the following sections we show how these different self-related functions of personal projects can be operationalised and review some of our research in this area.

### SELF-EXPRESSION THROUGH PERSONAL PROJECTS

While the sample projects listed earlier are by definition, personal, we might also ask to what extent they are self-distributive in the Brunerian sense: that is, to what extent are these projects deeply expressive of the individual and therefore serve as carriers or distributors of that person's sense of self?

Some projects may be truly self-expressive or high in self-identity, others only moderately reflective of the self and still others deeply alien. Ed's pursuit of fun in the sun may be essentially Edwardian. Or it may not. Vicki's Nordic ski project may be less a distinctive and defining Victorian pursuit than a consequence of her parents' core project "to raise an Olympic champion." In short, the elicitation of personally meaningful pursuits by open-ended listing, is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the detection of personal projects that are deeply expressive of the self.

For that, we need to probe further and again, the probative inquiry can begin with a credulous question: One of the standard dimensions on PPA (See Appendix A, Part 2) is labeled Self-Identity and it asks the individual to rate each project on "To what extent is this project typical of you?" In our more recent studies we have attempted to tap more into the distinctively personal aspects of a given project by asking: "To what extent does this personal project represent a kind of personal trade-mark, something that is deeply self-expressive for you?" In short, these questions allow us, operationally, to inquire into how well personal projects serve as carrier units for the distribution of selves.

#### Self-Prototypical Projects: Accessing the Distributed Self

One conceptual framework through which we can explore the distributive functions of self is by invoking the notion of prototypicality as used in cognitive and personality research (Buss & Craik, 1983; Cantor & Mischel, 1979; Rosch, 1978).

We can conceive of a gradient of self-prototypicality in which some personal projects are seen to be clear manifestations of the individuals' "true self"; acts which reflect their quintessential self. In contrast, some personal projects may be essentially unrelated to a person's sense of self, neither reflecting nor abnegating their sense of who they are.

Finally, some personal projects may run so contrary to the identity of the individual undertaking it that they are experienced as deeply alienating, or, in extreme cases such as in multiple personality disorders, as not being "them" in any sense at all. Similarly, individuals who have undergone "conversion" experiences (Pauls looking back at their erstwhile Sauline projects) can find a gulf of incomprehensibility as to why such projects were ever pursued.<sup>4</sup>

In a later section we deal with how different subselves or "working self-concepts" (Markus & Nurius, 1986) can be differentially linked with different personal projects; in the present section we focus primarily upon how personal projects differentially reflect a core or singular prototypical self.

*Self-Expressive Projects: The Integrative Functions of Self-Identity.* One of our guiding assumptions in developing a self-identity column for PPA was that it could serve as an index of an individual's specialized orientations toward different domain of interest (Little, 1972, 1976). The question of whether attributes of the self-concept are domain specific or broadly general continues to attract research in the self psychology literature. One way of formulating this question is to see if there are coherent linkages between individuals' personalities and the type or domain of personal projects they feel to be particularly self-expressive. We have recently shown, for example, that extraversion as measured by the NEO-PI (Costa & McCrae, 1985) is significantly correlated with the *general* tendency to appraise one's projects as high on self-identity, but when only *interpersonal* projects are examined, this relationship is even stronger (Little, Lecci, & Watkinson, 1992). When the interpersonal category is partitioned further—into interactions with primary (e.g., family, intimate others) and secondary groups (e.g., casual friends, strangers), extraversion is distinctively associated with feeling self-expressive in the secondary encounters. It is interesting to speculate on whether this might reflect the greater need for stimulation postulated to undergird extraversion (e.g., Eysenck & Eysenck, 1985) such that extraverts feel most "themselves" in those interpersonal projects where novel encounters are being experienced.

When scores on the Self-Identity column of PPA are correlated with other project dimensions, it is readily apparent that the self-expressive function of

<sup>4</sup>It should be noted that personal projects that are rated low in self-prototypicality are not necessarily experienced as alienating but may be seen as just inherently uninteresting undertakings. To more clearly differentiate these two possibilities it would be interesting to create another column explicitly asking for ratings on how alienating each project is.

TABLE 6.1  
Correlations Between Self-Identity Ratings of Personal Projects and Dimensions  
Assessing Project Meaning, Structure, Community, Efficacy, and Stress<sup>a</sup>

Project Self-Identity	
Meaning	
Importance	.34
Enjoyment	.41
Value congruency	.51
Structure	
Initiation	.35
Control	.32
Time adequacy	.32
Community	
Visibility	.31
Others' view	.31
Efficacy	
Progress	.36
Outcome	.47
Stress	
Stress	-.01
Difficulty	-.02
Challenge	.02

<sup>a</sup>N = 975 subjects drawn from SEAbase, our integrated data bank (see Little, 1989). Given the large N, all the correlations above, with the exception of those relating to the Stress dimension, are highly significant ( $p < .001$ ).

projects show are extensively correlated with other appraisal dimensions. This is displayed in Table 6.1, which is based on responses of 975 respondents drawn from SEAbase, our personal project data archives (see Little, 1989). This particular sample comprises primarily undergraduate students.

Our original assumption (Little, 1983) had been that Self-Identity would constitute primarily a meaning dimension, correlating significantly with dimensions such as value congruency and enjoyment. Table 6.1 confirms this expectation. However, it is also apparent that self-expressiveness as measured by the self-identity dimension has a strong pattern of correlations with the three other "positive" project dimensions of structure, community, and efficacy. Its correlation with project outcome, the likelihood of successful completion of a project, is particularly noteworthy.

It should also be noted that self-expressiveness correlates significantly and positively with dimensions which themselves are typically uncorrelated (enjoyment and outcome for example). In short, we can suggest that the self-expressive function of personal projects may form a central nexus through which other positive project dimensions are organized. Highly self-expressive projects are also likely to be meaningful, structured, supported, and efficacious.

Being engaged in self-expressive projects, however is no guarantee that they will be unstressful. Self-expressiveness and stress in projects are essentially orthogonal. Indeed, Lydon and Zanna (1990) have shown that commitment to a personal project can actually be enhanced by its degree of stress, particularly if it is a project that is congruent with the person's core values.

The self-psychology literature suggests another way in which self-expressiveness of personal projects might play a central, integrating role. Cheek and Hogan (1981) have proposed a two factor model of identity in which they distinguish personal identity from social identity, the former having to do with identity based on one's own sense of who one is, the latter with one's social role. Given that some of the project dimensions tap into personal-identity concerns (e.g., value congruency) and others into social awareness and evaluation of projects (e.g., visibility) it was of interest to see whether a similar two factor structure of self-identity would emerge from personal project data.

Using the same data set as in Table 6.1, and assuming that one of the factors would be a stress factor orthogonal to the positive project dimensions, a forced three factor principal components solution was explored. The results are shown in Table 6.2. While Factor 2 is the anticipated project stress factor, Factors 1 and 3 are similar to Cheek and Hogan's social identity and personal identity respectively. They also could be readily interpreted as the Communion and Agency factors which appear to be fundamental, overarching dimensions of social relations (Bakan, 1966; Wiggins, 1991). It is particularly noteworthy, then, that self-expressiveness has significant loading on *each* of these two factors. The only other dual loading project dimensions is project outcome, which, as shown in Table 6.1 also correlates strongly with self-expressiveness.

These and related results (Little, 1989) suggest that self-expressiveness, as indexed by the self-identity column in PPA, serves several integrative functions within a personal project system. First, within the domain of meaning, self-expressive projects correlate with both hedonistic and more value-laden approach

TABLE 6.2  
Factor Loadings From Principal Components Analysis of Personal Project  
Dimension Intercorrelations

Project Dimensions	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
	Social Identity/ Communion	Negative Affect/ Stress	Personal Identity/ Agency
Importance	.60		
Enjoyment	.60		
Difficulty		.83	
Visibility	.69		
Control			.62
Initiation			.71
Stress		.78	
Time Adequacy	.54		
Outcome	.41		
Self-expression	.51		.53
Others' view	.64		
Value congruency			.61
Positive impact	.48		
Negative impact			-.43
Progress	.69		

Only salient loadings ( $> .40$ ) are shown.

to personal meaning. Second, as self-expressive projects are also associated with greater efficacy and structure, the pursuit of self-expressive projects appears to be one way in which the manageability-meaningfulness tradeoff in personal projects can be effectively managed (Cantor, 1990; Little, 1989). Finally, self-expressive projects appear to form a common link between dimensions of personal identity and social identity, or between agency and communion.

Just as personal projects can be seen as serving as a final common pathway through which individuals integrate competing sources of eco-system demands, self-expressiveness appears to serve as a final common pathway *within* personal project systems in which potentially competing sources of value are rendered compatible. The causal direction of this pattern of correlations remains to be untangled. Whether self-expressiveness is cause or consequence of the other positive project dimensions with which it is pervasively correlated is as yet unresolved. It seems likely, however, that a central integrating role in the daily lives of people is played by those personal projects in which individuals feel truly themselves.

#### SELF-ENHANCEMENT THROUGH PERSONAL PROJECTS

While self-expressiveness is a measure of the extent to which a personal project reflects or distributes the self, it does not capture the extent to which the self so distributed is evaluated positively or negatively. Self-evaluation is a central theme in research within self psychology and includes terms such as self-esteem, self-worth, and self-acceptance that continue to have considerable currency in both the popular and research literature. We assume that here too personal projects and other PAC units may play a pivotal role. The projects we engage in, or which we are forced to endure, may serve to enhance or diminish our evaluations of ourselves. Again, we can directly tap into this aspect of individual lives by asking respondents to rate the extent to which each of their projects enhances their self-esteem or their sense of self-worth.

A recent study on self-evaluation and personal projects examined senior women public servants in Canada and the way in which work and domestic projects were managed, balanced, and related to measures of well-being and adaptation (Phillips & Little, 1992). One of the new dimensions added to PPA asked of each project "To what extent does this project enhance your sense of self-worth?" It was anticipated that self-worth would be significantly correlated with other positive project dimensions, perhaps offering a somewhat more extreme pattern in this respect than self-identity. Based on measures derived from project oriented interviews with 56 senior managers, Table 6.3 displays the correlations between self-identity, self-worth, other project dimensions, and several measures of well-being. Only the results with work projects are reported here for illustrative purposes.

The results with self-identity generally confirm the results for undergraduate students. The meaning, community, and efficacy correlations are replicated

TABLE 6.3  
Correlations Between Self-Identity, Self-Worth, Personal Project Dimensions,  
and Well-Being Indices

<i>PPA Dimensions</i>	<i>Self-Identity</i>	<i>Self-Worth</i>
Meaning		
Enjoyment	.63***	.69***
Self-identity		.47***
Value congruency	.53***	.75***
Self-worth	.47***	
Structure		
Initiation	.34*	.30*
Control	.11	.03
Time pressure	.17	-.02
Community		
Others' view	.30*	.51***
Support	.29*	.51***
Efficacy		
Competency	.48***	.40***
Outcome	.42***	.25*
Stress		
Stress	-.25*	-.15
Difficulty	.16	-.01
Challenge	.13	.30*
<i>Well-Being Indicators</i>		
Life satisfaction	.22	.34*
Nonwork satisfaction	.17	.05
Work-satisfaction	.21*	.39**
Health satisfaction	.12	.36**
Burnout	-.11	-.28*

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

at approximately the same levels of magnitude. Self-expressiveness of projects with these senior managers was less clearly linked with measures of project structure, however, suggesting that for a least some of these respondents, self-expressiveness in their demanding jobs did not necessitate project control or lack of time pressure. Clearly, as anticipated, the self-evaluative aspect of personal projects has a consistent and strong pattern of correlation with the other positive dimensions, generally paralleling the results for self-identity, but notably higher on project value congruency, on the community or support dimensions, efficacy, and challenge. Self-worth in one's work projects is also significantly and extensively correlated with measures of well-being, including life satisfaction, work satisfaction, health satisfaction, and absence of burnout. The pattern of results suggest that while self-identity and self-worth are significantly correlated and show similar patterns of covariation with other project and well-being variables, the self-worth associated with projects is more likely to involve socially supported challenge and a certain degree of risk. Such projects are also more likely to contribute to a sense of physical and emotional wellbeing.

The links with well-being and burnout, suggest that self-evaluative aspects of



personal projects may also have some utility in studies of clinical phenomena. Two studies illustrate different ways of approaching this issue.

In one of the earliest studies to examine self-evaluative aspects of personal projects (Goodine, 1986; Goodine & Little, 1988) the personal project systems of individuals with clinical eating disorders were compared with a *control* group of weight-preoccupied and non-weight preoccupied women. Here, the modular flexibility of PPA was used to focus in on "weight control projects" of young women. By priming all respondents to include weight control projects within their rating matrix, we were able to run specific comparisons at the single project level as well as with the standard project dimensions. Because clinical speculation has long suggested that self-esteem may be deeply implicated in weight control projects we augmented the standard project dimension list with a self-esteem column.

Discriminant function analysis was used to determine what project dimensions would differentiate among and between clinical eating disorder groups and controls. This particular set of results was based on the weight control project only. Two significant discriminant functions emerged, the first centered on the degree of stressfulness of the project, and the second on the degree of self-esteem engendered by the project. While the clinical groups of anorexics and bulimics were clearly differentiated from nonclinical groups by project stress, anorexic patients and bulimic patients were differentiated from each other by the extent to which their projects were self-enhancing. For anorexic patients, weight control projects contributed positively to their self-esteem, while for bulimic patients they were associated with considerable diminishment of self-esteem.

One consequence of this approach to self-evaluation is that it enables the clinician to isolate specific goals or projects within a individual's life which serve to carry or distribute the self-evaluative information and to design programs in which more effective self-regulatory pursuits might be adopted (Karoly, 1990a, 1990b; Little, 1987b).

A second, clinically oriented example of how self-esteem and personal projects may be related was recently reported by Salmela-Aro (1992). She examined the personal projects of counseling clients and a non-counseling control sample to determine whether there were differences in their personal project systems. As well as completing a modification of PPA, groups were administered a set of scales including a Finnish measure of self-esteem. Salmela-Aro reports a significant correlation of self-esteem with a factor resembling project efficacy ( $r = .50$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and with negative affect ( $r = .27$ ,  $p < .001$ ). She also showed self-esteem to be positively correlated with the proportion of work and routine projects, and negatively correlated with the proportion of projects dealing explicitly with the self. We will examine this finding in more detail in the following section.

### SELF-EXPLORATION THROUGH INTRAPERSONAL PROJECTS

A different set of issues in self psychology is offered by examination of the

*content* of personal projects. Twenty-one different project categories have been used in studies with students, the most frequent of which are interpersonal, academic, and recreational pursuits (Little, 1987c). Though less prominent in frequency, one of the most theoretically interesting domains of personal projects are those that focus on an individual's own motivation, personal characteristics, and sense of identity. We refer to these as *intrapersonal* projects (Little, 1983, 1989). Examples of such projects would be "to control my temper better," "clarify my real motives for coming to university," or "work through my feelings about my parents' divorce." Though diverse in content these pursuits share a concern with examining the self-relevant aspects of one's unfolding life. In Giddens' (1991) terms they are "reflexive projects of the self" (p. 244).

Several studies have examined the mean ratings on each of the project dimensions for projects in different content categories. In all of these studies, intrapersonal projects have been shown, relative to other categories, to be particularly onerous and demanding (Little, 1988).

Given the demandingness of intrapersonal, self-focused projects, it is instructive to look at correlates of the frequency of such projects in one's project system. Evidence from several studies suggest that negative affect is significantly associated with being engaged in a high frequency of intrapersonal projects.

Howe (1986), has shown that the proportion of intrapersonal projects in students' project listings is significantly related to scores on the CES-D Depression scale (Radloff, 1977), consistent with Salmela-Aro's (1992) depiction of such projects as "struggles with the self." Table 6.4 displays further evidence on the onerous nature of intrapersonal projects. Based on responses of 180 university students to a battery containing PPA modules and the NEO-PI measures of the "Big Five" personality traits (Costa & McCrae, 1985), it shows that individuals engaged in large numbers of intrapersonal projects, relative to the number of other types of pursuits, experience problems. They experience lower self-identity and control, lower likelihood of successful completion and, in particular, more stress, difficulty, and challenge in their projects as a whole. Intrapersonal project usage is significantly related to Neuroticism, particularly its facets of depression, self-consciousness, anxiety, and vulnerability. It is also negatively correlated with Extraversion, specifically warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, and positive emotion. Interestingly, the tendency to be engaged in intrapersonal projects is also significantly related to Openness to Experience, particularly openness to aesthetic experience. This raises the question of whether, for some individuals, those of more neurotic or somewhat introverted dispositions, self-focused projects may be primarily ruminative and potentially futile struggles with the self, while for others, particularly open or creative individuals, they may be meaningful self-exploratory ventures.

To study these possibilities we can examine the correlation between selected project dimension ratings on intrapersonal projects only and scores on the NEO-PI. Table 6.5 presents the results for likelihood of successful outcome or efficacy and for self-identity. Neuroticism is unrelated either to efficacy or self-identity in

TABLE 6.4  
Correlation Between Proportion of Intrapersonal Projects, Project Dimension Scores,  
and NEO-PI Scales

PPA Dimensions	Proportion of Intrapersonal Projects
Meaning	
Importance	-.00
Enjoyment	-.10
Self-identity	-.15*
Value congruency	-.06
Structure	
Initiation	-.03
Control	-.12*
Time adequacy	-.05
Efficacy	
Progress	-.05
Outcome	-.20**
Stress	
Stress	.30***
Difficulty	.32***
Challenge	.30***
<i>NEO-PI Domain and Facet Scores</i>	
Neuroticism	.28***
Depression	.32***
Self-consciousness	.28***
Anxiety	.23***
Vulnerability	.28***
Extraversion	-.22**
Warmth	-.22**
Gregariousness	-.13*
Assertiveness	-.16*
Positive emotions	-.25***
Openness to Experience	.14*
Aesthetics	.14*
Agreeableness	-.09
Conscientiousness	.09

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

TABLE 6.5  
Correlations Between NEO-PI Five Factor Scores and Efficacy and Self-Identity Ratings  
on Intrapersonal Projects

	Efficacy	Self-Identity
NEO-PI domain		
Neuroticism	-.05	.08
Extraversion	.29*	.10
Openness to experience	.04	.40***
Agreeableness	.11	-.24*
Conscientiousness	.14	.06

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

intrapersonal projects. However, Openness to Experience is strongly related to appraising intrapersonal projects as high in self-identity, suggesting that open individuals do indeed extract positive meaning from their self-focused projects. Given their aesthetic orientations, perhaps open individuals see themselves more as intriguing works of art to savor than interminable problems to be solved. In this respect, they differ not so much from Neurotic individuals but from Agreeable individuals who see their self-focused intrapersonal projects as significantly less likely to be self-expressive. For highly agreeable individuals such projects may represent temporary, uncharacteristic self-focused aberrations that divert them away from the main focus of their daily routines—other people.

The greatest degree of efficacy in achieving successful outcomes in intrapersonal projects is found among extraverted respondents. Why this is so is not yet clear. Their assertiveness is likely to work well in successfully completing outward directed projects, but would not be of obvious help in dealing with intrapersonal projects. Perhaps they are more likely to phrase their intrapersonal projects in ways that are more conducive to working on them. There is evidence, for example, that efficacy is inversely related to the abstraction level with which one identifies or phrases an ongoing action or personal project (Little, 1989; Vallacher & Wegner, 1987).

Finally, we return again to the recent study by Salmela-Aro (1992). She has examined differences between the project systems of individuals who have sought psychological counseling in university with those who have not. Consistent with the data on Neuroticism discussed before, she found that the counseling clients had a significantly higher proportion of intrapersonal or self-projects and a lower proportion of task related projects such as work or routine activities. She concludes that the deleterious effect of having a large number of self-related personal projects may reflect Ingram's (1990) model of how excessive internal attention may underlie maladaptive functioning.

To summarize: Individuals who are engaged in relatively high levels of self-focused intrapersonal projects have been shown to have more problematic personal project systems and generally experience more clinical problems, particularly relating to depression. On the other hand, open, creative individuals also generate more intrapersonal projects, but appraise them as more self-expressive. A potentially fruitful area of inquiry would be to examine the genesis of intrapersonal projects and how they are formulated and acted upon. Of particular importance would be studies designed to explain how intrapersonal projects may be constructed to be adaptive self-explorations rather than self-absorbed struggles which may exacerbate rather than eliminate personal problems.

#### SELF-EXTENSION: PERSONAL PROJECTS AND POSSIBLE SELVES

Markus and her colleagues have presented a strong case for viewing an indi-

viduals' possible selves as key motivational factors, at least as important as current self perceptions in influencing current affect (Markus & Cross, 1990; Markus & Nurius, 1986).

Possible selves may be desired or dreaded future selves that might emerge in the near or distant future. Although they may arise simply as a result of our growing older, most possible selves are brought into being by personal actions, achievements and transactions. Given this, we anticipate that personal projects may serve as vehicles through which such possible selves may be facilitated or frustrated.

In an early study in our laboratory, Rosemary Doyle and I examined the extent to which personal projects might facilitate self-completion in a group of women who were single parents. Self-completion was defined as "the extent to which the respondent feels that, as a result of engaging in a personal project, she is or is growing toward becoming personally complete, that is, realizing her mental and/or physical potentials, feeling 'whole'" (Doyle, 1980). Consistent with Markus' theory, self-completion was found to be a stronger predictor of how much individuals evaluate their projects as contributing to life satisfaction ( $r = .68, p < .001$ ) than the current self-concept associated with their projects ( $r = .38, p < .01$ ).

A recent study in our laboratory (Little, Goodine, Melia-Gordon, & Sourani, 1992) was undertaken to examine the linkages between personal projects and other middle level PAC units in personality, including life tasks, personal strivings and possible selves. Again exploiting the modular flexibility of PPA, we created a special column for the rating matrix in which individuals appraised the extent to which each personal project facilitated or frustrated the achievement of tasks, strivings and possible selves which had been previously designated as important by the respondent. Following Markus, we were particularly interested in seeing whether well-being indicators were better predicted from appraisals of the possible-self facilitation of personal projects than by their ratings on self-identity. In short, we were asking whether the self-extensive aspects of one's current personal projects are better predictors of well-being than their self-expressive aspects. Table 6.6 suggests that the answer to this question depends very much upon the age of respondents, even within the relatively homogeneous population of first year undergraduate students. For the older students, well-

TABLE 6.6  
Correlations Between Personal Project Self-Identity, Possible Self-Facilitation, and Well-Being for Two Age Groups of University Student<sup>a</sup>

PPA Dimension	Depression		Life Satisfaction	
	Younger	Older	Younger	Older
Self-Identity	.06	-.20	-.08	.36*
Possible Self-Facilitation	-.29*	-.08	.38**	-.09

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ .

<sup>a</sup>Younger group (M = 20 years 4 mos); older group (M = 35 years 3 mos).

being, as measured by life satisfaction (somewhat less so with depression) is promoted by the self-expressive, but not self-extensive, aspects of their personal projects. For younger subjects, the reverse holds; well-being is enhanced to the extent that one's personal projects are facilitating achievement of their possible selves, but not by the extent that they feel *themselves* in their current projects. It is interesting to speculate on whether these differences reflect the way in which individuals at different stages of the life-span use different information to guide their self-appraisals (see, for example, Suls & Mullen (1985). It will be particularly interesting to see if possible-self facilitation is a better predictor of well-being at the beginning of transitional periods, such as entering university or a marital separation, while self-identity predicts better for those who have moved beyond the early stages of the new phase of life.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS: PERSONAL PROJECTS AND SELF-PSYCHOLOGY

The case has been presented that selves can be regarded as distributive in the Brunerian sense, and that personal projects serve as important vehicles through which such self-distribution is accomplished. Four specific functions important to self-psychology have been addressed in personal project research.

Research on the self-expressive function of personal projects suggests that to the extent that an individual is engaged in personal projects appraised high in self-identity, that is reflecting their quintessential selves, their project systems tend to be meaningful, well structured, supported by others and likely to be successfully completed. In short, we argue that the self-expressiveness of personal projects serves as a central nexus or pathway through which independent positive project dimensions are routed.

Research on the self-enhancement function of personal projects has shown that the self-worth associated with personal projects appears strongly linked to measures of well-being and is associated with negative affect, including measures of depression. Its potential use in clinical assessment was also noted.

The self-exploratory functions of personal projects was illustrated by examining some of the correlates of being engaged in intrapersonal, or self-focused, projects. These were shown to be associated both with problematic behavior, being found more frequently in individuals reporting with counseling problems, but also in open, creative individuals who appraise them as more self-defining. Exploration of the difference between self-potentiating and problematic aspects of intrapersonal projects was suggested as a priority area for further research.

Finally, the self-extending aspects of personal projects was examined by showing how they serve to facilitate or frustrate the emergence of possible selves. With single parent mothers, we found evidence that well-being was facilitated by being engaged in projects in which the mothers saw a self-

completion function being fulfilled by the project. Evidence was also presented that, while possible self-facilitation in personal projects was a predictor of well-being for younger students at university, older students were better predicted by the self-identity of their projects. It is suggested that the motivating aspects of possible selves facilitation may be limited primarily to certain transitional stages during the life span (Little, 1992).

Conative units of analysis such as personal projects provide a rather different set of lenses through which to view the self and its manifestations. While only briefly noted in this chapter, one of the benefits of adopting such units is that they afford the opportunity to assist individuals in *changing* their self-conceptions by the examination and reformulation of their everyday personal projects. Thus, while contributing to the basic understanding of how selves are implicated in daily goal-oriented pursuits, a conative psychology may also help us contribute to the expression, enhancement, exploration, and extension of those selves for the benefit of all.

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## APPENDIX A (Part 1)

## Personal Projects Analysis

We are interested in studying the kinds of activities and concerns that people have at different stages of their life. We call these *personal* projects. All of us have a number of personal projects at any given time that we think about, plan for, carry out, and sometimes (though not always) complete.

Here are some examples of projects:

Completing my English essay.  
 Trying to help Gary get along better with others.  
 Overcoming fear of meeting new people.  
 Getting more outdoor exercise.  
 Trying to finish the book Allan gave me.  
 Taking a trip to Ottawa.  
 Cutting the grass.  
 Finding a part-time job.  
 Redecorating my bedroom.  
 Trying to clarify my religious beliefs.  
 Losing ten pounds.  
 Making a birthday present for my friend.

We are also very interested in finding out how people feel about these personal projects, how enjoyable they are, and so on. We would appreciate it if you could begin by just writing down in the next ten minutes as many personal projects as you can that you are engaged in or thinking about at the present time--remember these are not necessarily formal projects, or important ones--we would prefer you to give us more of the everyday kinds of activity or concerns that characterize your life at present.

Please go ahead and write down as many as you can in ten minutes.

## List of Projects

(One page is then provided for the completion of the list of personal projects)

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## APPENDIX A (Part 2)

Now copy the projects in as brief a form as possible on PAGE 5. Just make your description long enough to keep each project clearly in mind. As you can see, there is space for 10 projects. If your initial list contains *more* than 10, select the 10 that you are most likely to engage in over the next month or so. If you wrote down fewer than 10, see if you can think of several more, or break down some of those you listed into several projects. It is important for everyone to try to fill in 10 projects.

In columns 1 to 17 please rate each of your projects using any number from 0 to 10 on the following dimensions. Remember that numbers between 0 and 10 can also be used.

1. Importance: how important each project is to you at the present time (use 10 if the project is very important to you and 0 if it is not at all important to you).
2. Enjoyment: how you enjoy working on each project (use 10 if you enjoy it a great deal and 0 if you do not enjoy it at all).
3. Difficulty: how difficult you find it to carry out each project (use 10 for a project that you find very difficult to carry out and 0 for one that you do not find difficult at all).
4. Visibility: how visible each project is to the relevant people who are close to you, that is how aware are they that you are engaged in this project (use 10 for a project which is very visible to those around you and 0 for a project which is not at all visible to those around you).
5. Control: how much you feel you are in control of each project (use 10 for a project over which you feel in complete control and 0 for a project over which you feel you have not control at all).
6. Initiation: how much you feel responsible for having initiated each project (use 10 if you feel fully responsible for having initiated a project and 0 if you feel you have taken no part whatsoever in initiating a project).
7. Stress: how stressful it is for you to carry out each project (use 10 if a project is very stressful to carry out and 0 if a project is very relaxing to carry out).
8. Time adequacy: how much you feel that the amount of time you spend working on each project is adequate (use 10 if you feel that the amount of time spent on a project is perfectly adequate and 0 if you feel, for one reason or another, that the amount of time you spend working on a project is not at all adequate).
9. Outcome: what you anticipate the outcome of each project to be (use 10 if you think that a project will be

extremely successful and 0 if you think that a project will turn out to be a total failure).

- 10. Self-identity: how typical of you each project is (use 10 if a project is very typical of you and 0 if it is not at all typical of you).
- 11. Others' view: how important each project is seen to be by relevant people who are close to you (use 10 if a project is seen by others as very important and 0 if it is seen as not important at all).
- 12. Value congruency: to what extent is each project consistent with the values which guide your life (use 10 if a project is totally consistent with your values and 0 if a project is totally at odds with them).
- 13. Positive impact: how much you feel that each project helps the others. Don't worry whether it hinders or not, we'll get to that on the next dimension (use 10 to indicate that a project greatly increases your chances of working on other projects and 0 to indicate that a project has no positive effect).
- 14. Negative impact: how much you feel that each project hinders other projects (use 10 to indicate that a project seriously hinders your chances of working on other projects and 0 to indicate that it does not have any negative effect).
- 15. Progress: how successful you have been in a project so far (use 10 to indicate that you have been very successful and 0 to indicate that you have had not success at all).
- 16. Challenge: to what extent each project is demanding and challenging to you (use 10 if a project is most challenging and 0 if it is not challenging at all).
- 17. Absorption: to what extent you become engrossed or deeply involved in a project (use 10 if you generally get absorbed in an activity and 0 if you tend to be uninvolved when doing it).

In column 18, please write down the names of the other people involved in each project with you. You may use only first names, but include the initial of the last name to differentiate people who share the same first name. If there is no one else involved in a project with you, leave the corresponding space blank.

In column 19, please indicate the setting in which you would most likely or most typically carry out each project. Some projects may not be taking place in any particular setting, in which case you would leave the corresponding space blank.

10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	List of Projects		
											Importance	1
											Enjoyment	2
											Difficulty	3
											Visibility	4
											Control	5
											Initiation	6
											Stress	7
											Time Adequacy	8
											Outcome (likelihood of Success)	9
											Self Identity (How typical of you?)	10
											Others' View (of importance)	11
											Value Congruency (Consistency with your values)	12
											Positive Impact	13
											Negative Impact	14
											Progress	15
											Challenge	16
											Absorption	17
											With whom?	18
										Where?	19	

Personal Project Matrix