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STUCK INSIDE A MOBILE

By Lorri A. Greene, Ph.D.

"And, here I sit so patiently waiting to find out what price, you have to pay to get out of, going through all these things twice."

Bob Dylan (1966)

"Stuck Inside a Mobile with the Memphis Blues Again"



The nightmares wake me each night around 3AM. There are usually tears in my eyes. The visions are clear. A man, my age, gun pointed to his head. He looks for the last time at his beloved cat. He pulls the trigger. Peace at last, at least for him. My pain now begins. I don't sleep well. I am angry, guilty, ashamed, and alone inside with this pain. I never imagined it would be him. What did I miss? All of my professional skills are not helping me now. I am afraid to see most of my clients. What if it happens again? I don't know how to prevent it, but I think I am

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Featured This Month:

- *President's Corner*
- *Roller Coaster Heaven*
- *Questions for...*
- *Personalities*

and much more....

DESTINATION GUAM RETURN AND REUNION: FINAL INSTALLMENT

By Lou Mone, Ph.D., LCSW

Sunday morning, October 24, 2004, and we are approximately 30 miles off the coast of Honolulu going in circles. We can not make our way into Pearl Harbor until it gets close to our docking time of 13:30 hours. The ship was close enough to shore to consider using my cell phone. However, shortly after I announced my intention to the Chief, he informed me that using a cell phone before the announcement of "Secure Sea and Anchor Details" was prohibited. There are many lessons to learn aboard ship and this was another!

Secure Sea and Anchor Details was called, but I waited until we got off the ship and there was less noise. While walking to visit the USS Arizona War Memorial, I placed a call to Elinor. Luckily she was at home. I was so overjoyed at hearing her voice, I began to choke up. I felt like one of the sailors finishing a five month deployment. This experience gave me a much better idea of the emotional turmoil sailors go



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CONSTRUCTS AND SURVEY ITEMS

By Dale N. Glaser, Ph.D.

Evidence for the widespread use of survey research can be found with a glance at a daily newspaper. Virtually every day, the results from a poll or survey are revealed,

uncovering opinions and sentiments about issues ranging from the local to the international. Even though many complexities exist in the survey process, including sampling and non sampling error, when done properly, a tremendous amount of information can be derived from a survey. There are many surveys: for the purpose of this article surveys will be synonymous with inventories, questionnaires, and test instruments, which have met the rigors of scientific scrutiny. This generally means an examination of the psychometric properties such as validity and reliability. Often a survey needs to be modified or customized to fulfill the objectives of the project. It is that particular set of circumstances upon which I will focus.

Creating a survey, though attempted by many, is not easy! There are many variables in an effective survey. First, it entails a comprehensive knowledge of the subject being examined. Given the objective of the survey, whether it be to measure long term sentiments or a current reading, it is important that an

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entire area of focus be covered. Secondly, the crafting of items that are clear, unambiguous, and intelligible is very important. Third, a survey must meet certain scientific criteria, if the interpretation of results is to be trusted. It is the latter point that serves as the gravest injustice when compromised.

It is understandable that under certain circumstances, organizations or agencies may require the construction of a survey geared for a specific purpose, such as focusing on employee opinions or customer satisfaction. The responsibility for constructing and isolating the items to be included in the survey may fall to people of varying experience. Many of us have encountered employee opinion or customer satisfaction surveys that cluster items in certain categories such as "Courtesy" or "Responsiveness" or "Leadership", and it is only logical that we would assume those items indeed measure those categories. With the assumption that the cluster of items correspond to a certain outcome or set of behaviors, many organizations effect a change effort based on the survey results, often basing decisions on nothing more than descriptive statistics, such as means or standard deviations. Notwithstanding the problem of targeting change efforts on what could be trivial drivers of key outcomes (e.g., customer loyalty), a major concern is that without testing the validity of the constructs, how does one know with any type of certainty, if the items they place under the purported categories (e.g., Responsiveness) indeed correspond to the actual behavior? Unless the measuring tool has been subjected to the rigors of validity testing, it will be a stretch to convince the end-user that one's interpretation of the results is valid.

Though it is not within the scope of this article to elaborate on the various techniques that can be used to furnish evidence for validity, significant strides have been made in the last couple of decades in the application of confirmatory factor analysis to

instruments such as employee and customer opinion surveys. Here one can indeed test if one's postulated categories, such as "overall satisfaction" include the item: "How likely will you refer family or friends to _____". It is not unusual to find that items one anticipated would fit within one rubric actually fall under another. If that is the case, this has crucial implications for the ultimate end-user of the tool and the behaviors they decide to target for change or intervention. Even though correlation

and predictive techniques have been in the mainstream for delineating drivers of key outcomes (e.g., customer satisfaction), unless the tool has been subjected to the rigors of validity testing, one must be cautious at best when interpreting such analysis. Confidence in the survey results, interpretation, and change efforts can only come about by doing the "hard work" up front.

Dr. Nancy Haller announces her office relocation

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SDPA MEMBER PROFILE

Name: *Gloria Shurman*
 Clinical Specialty: *Individual, marriage-family, group, and sex therapy*
 Relationship status: *Married to Joe Shurman*
 Number of Children: *One, Brett, a psychiatrist*
 Favorite restaurant: *Mille Fleur*
 Favorite vacation spot: *Tahiti, Antarctica*
 Currently reading: *The Siege*
 Where would you like to retire? *San Diego, The Northwest, and Europe!*
 What is your favorite pastime? *Reading and being in the outdoors.*
 Favorite wine: *Goosegrass*
 What is your favorite part of San Diego? *The ocean*
 What music are you listening to these days? *Placido Domingo and my son, Brett Shurman.*
 If you weren't a psychologist, what would you like to do? *Work for a non profit environmental agency.*

