Video Futures Project

Dedicated to Advancing Self-Modeling Practices

As an intervention strategy, Video Self-Modeling uses carefully planned and edited positive selfimages of adaptive-only behavior on video to change the frequency or quality of a person's behavior. As a positive behavior support it often facilitates a myriad of special education learning situations where other methods have failed: transitions, job interviews, speech intelligibility, reducing anxiety, activities of daily living such as mobility and dressing, anger management, dating behavior.

What is Video Futures?

Modeling is a powerful and effective way to learn. We model desired behaviors we observe in others with whom we feel comfortable or whom we respect. What better model than seeing ourselves performing positively? Viewing oneself as a competent, highly captivating "learning model" can enhance self-efficacy and the acquisition of targeted skills.



In the 1970s, several researchers were very interested in using video for self-modeling. Peter Dowrick was working with a young girl "Shirley" whose cerebral palsy created difficulties for navigating steps and other obstacles in her New Zealand classrooms and neighborhood. Dr. Dowrick videotaped Shirley attempting to step over a variety of obstacles such as blocks, ropes, etc. All Shirley's mistakes, and occasional supporting hands, were edited out. The resulting 2-minute tape showed what Shirley's behavior "could look like" if performed effectively and without support. After two weeks of watching her "obstacle navigating tape," Shirley went into the community and showed excellent mobility. Not only could she walk over those obstacles in her tape, she could step up curbs as well.



Twenty years and many tapes later, the practice of Video Futures continues. Video Futures is an overall term used to describe video strategies that show any positive future for oneself. Our project is specifically designed to support students with disabilities. These video interventions can help people learn new skills, improve a new or inconsistent skill, transition to a new situation, plan their futures.

A series of federally funded grants has supported activities in video self-modeling strategies, first through the Self-Determination Project (1993-1996) and then

through the Video Futures Project (1996-1999), both coordinated through The Center for Human Development at the University of Alaska Anchorage. Another U.E. Department of Education project is underway at the Center on Disability Studies: UAP, University of Hawaii, Manoa.

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What is the Video Futures Project?*

A federally funded 3 year project, directed through the Center for Human Development that demonstrates research-to-practice special purpose applications of video technology.

What is Video Self-Modeling (VSM)?*

An innovative use of everyday video equipment to produce short tapes of adaptive only behavior with the students themselves.

When is Video Self-Modeling Used?*

For a new skill, a new situation, or envisioning the future: all may be enhanced with a video selfmodeling tape.

Different Types of Video Self-Modeling*

Two types of video self-modeling used in Video Futures are Feed forward and Positive Self-Review.

Why Does Self-modeling Work?*

Seeing oneself as a positive model on tape is a powerful tool.

Success Stories*

Chantelle, Jose, and Martin benefit from Video Futures tapes, each in very different ways.

References and Further Reading*

Articles, books, videos, and more.

External Source

A Program Currently Working on Futures

Links you to Creating Futures website and you will be able to order startup kits from the site.

What is Video Futures Project?

The Video Futures Project at the Center for Human Development in Anchorage, Alaska is an innovative research-to-practice model which works collaboratively with educators, high school students who experience disabilities and their families, and other supports using video explorations and video self-modeling interventions to help prevent dropout and improve transitions.

This demonstration project instructs and supports educators, (especially secondary school and community-based personnel) in the basics of video production and the theory and applications of video self-modeling. Educators learn to use consumer-quality equipment to produce short videotapes that show students in desired roles, editing the video footage to retain adaptive-only skills and behavior. This strategy has proven efficacy with high school students who experience disabilities in preventing course failure and dropout, promoting generalization of academic and vocational skills, and changing behaviors.

The Video Futures Project is funded by a federal grant from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation for three years (October 1, 1996 through September 30, 1999). During the project's third year, a comprehensive training resource kit will be pilot tested by replication site personnel in both rural Alaska and the urban metropolis of Honolulu, Hawaii. Prior to disseminating the final packaged product nationwide, project personnel will incorporate revisions based on summaries and evaluation reports from the pilot replication sites.

What is Video Self-modeling?



Video self-modeling is defined as the procedure of using carefully planned and edited positive self-images of adaptive-only behavior on video. The goal of video self-modeling is to change the frequency or quality of a person's behavior. By using basic video production techniques, images of behaviors which pose special challenges for individuals can be altered or enhanced. Self-modeling involves creative planning and editing to produce short videos approximately two or three

minutes long. Students view their video several times over a two week period and a parent or educator notes their reactions and changes toward the predetermined goals.

Modeling is a powerful way to learn. What better model than seeing ourselves performing at our best? With Video Futures, individuals see themselves mastering new skills, accepting new situations comfortably, living their future dreams. There are very few issues that self-modeling cannot change. The only requirement is that the person wants to change and the desired change is realistic. Perhaps because of its selfmodeling aspect, Video Futures often succeeds where conventional methods have failed.



When is Video Self-Modeling Used?

Video self-modeling can be used to enhance or improve existing skills, or to teach new skills in a wide variety of situations. The main requirement is that the person wants to change and the desired change is realistic. The following table lists a few skill areas commonly addressed with self-modeling:

Video self-modeling uses self-observation for:

- Mastering a New Skill
- Accepting a New Situation Comfortably
- Envisioning the Future

Video self-modeling is the special-purpose use of video. It has proven success by increasing skills in the following areas:

Social Interaction

Peer Interaction Anger Management Dating Behavior Shyness Reducing Anxiety

Communication

Assertiveness Refusal Skills Pragmatics Job Interviews Speech Intelligibility

Activities of Daily Living

Mobility Dressing Swimming Eating Reading

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change. Perhaps because of its self-modeling aspect, Video Futures often succeeds where other methods have failed.





Types of Video Self-Modeling

Video self-modeling is defined as a procedure in which people see themselves on videotapes that, through careful planning and editing, show only adaptive or desired behaviors. Different forms of it can be used to support routines and futures, where specific skills are indicated. There are two methods of video self-modeling used:

Feed forward -- perhaps the most dramatic form of self-modeling refers to video images of adaptive behavior that has not yet been achieved. These are created by editing together components of skills already available. For example, a teenager is at risk for personal safety in public places. She can, however, discriminate "strangers," say a firm "no thank you," make polite small talk, etc. These elements can be videotaped separately and edited together into a novel, competent video image, allowing the teen to view herself performing a new, but developmentally appropriate behavior.



Positive Self-Review -- simpler although not as dramatically effective a strategy. It is commonly used when a person wants to either improve a new skill, or perform a behavior more consistently at a satisfactory level. A person is videotaped performing the same skill or behavior several times. By using selective editing of the best performances recorded, a self-modeling tape is produced for the person to view.

Self-modeling videotapes are typically two or three minutes in length. A typical schedule for viewing is 6 to 10 viewings within a two week period, either at home or at school. An adult should be present during viewing to note the student's reactions and to assess the changes toward the goal. Sometimes the tapes are reviewed again after two or three months when a maintenance "booster" is desirable.



Why Does Self-Modeling Work?



Video self-modeling is a supportive tool that can help teach specific skills. It shows a person how she/he can do something and provides a visual image of the action. There are two primary theories why video self-modeling is effective.

Improves Self-Confidence

Some people believe that self-modeling works because it clearly shows a person specific skills they need, helps perform desired behaviors, and provides a vision for their future. In a self-modeling videotape, people watch themselves performing at a desired skill level, which increases self-confidence in their ability to perform that behavior or skill. With increased confidence, the individual is more likely to actually perform the behavior. This is known as self-efficacy.



Provides Precise Instructions



Other researchers believe that self-modeling works because it provides a person with a correct and precise set of instructions. Because a person is watching her/himself perform the behaviors, she/he obviously understands what she/he is doing, and there is little confusion about what is expected.

The main requirement for self-modeling to work is the person must WANT to change!

Video Futures Success Stories

Video self-modeling often succeeds in situations where other interventions have failed. We have found that people who participate in self-modeling not only enjoy viewing themselves doing things right, but they also learn and make changes from the entire process of creating a self-modeling tape. Following are three examples of successful self-modeling interventions:

- Staying Safe with Strangers Rachel learned to respond appropriately to strangers.
- Speaking Clearly Jose greatly improved his speech fluency and eliminated his facial grimace.
- Managing Home Routines Martin modeled his morning routine at home so he could get to school on time and well-prepared.

Staying Safe with Strangers



Rachel, an adult with developmental disabilities, had difficulty staying safe with strangers. When confronted by strangers in social settings, she would respond inappropriately. A common act for Rachel was to report to others that the stranger was "trying to rape her," even when the stranger was conversing in a polite, friendly manner. A self-modeling tape was created with several different scenes of Rachel responding appropriately to strangers in a variety of settings. Rachel was shown conversing with others in polite "small talk." When asked invasive questions, Rachel responded with "I feel that's none of your business." When asked outright threatening questions, Rachel physically removed herself from the stranger.

Initially, Rachel viewed the tape three times a week for two weeks, and then occasionally during the following months. When a follow-up assessment was conducted over a year later, Rachel was still performing the behaviors she self-modeled on the videotape!

Speaking Clearly

Jose, a 16 year old high school student, stuttered whenever he was asked to speak in class. However, Jose's stuttering was unique. Whenever he experienced difficulty speaking, he exhibited a grimace. After discussing the situation with Jose, his speech and language instructor created a selfmodeling tape for him. First, Jose was asked to read passages from a book. His instructor provided coaching for him, sentence by sentence. Next, he was recorded reading each sentence a few times through, so that Jose's best recorded reading (with no stuttering) could be used to produce his selfmodeling tape. The video footage was edited into a speech, with Jose in front of an audience reading a two paragraph excerpt from a book. In Jose's self-modeling tape, his speech was clear and contained no stutters or errors. After the two minute self-modeling tape was completed, Jose viewed it seven times in the next two weeks. Four weeks later, his speech and language instructor conducted another speech assessment. Jose's fluency level was rated at 90% and he no longer exhibited any facial grimaces. The self-modeling intervention made a big difference for Jose! Managing Home Routines

Martin is a nineteen year old student who experiences cerebral palsy and learning disabilities. Often, Martin was absent from classes, arrived late, or forgot his lunch, money, bus schedule and planner. When he did attend school, his clothes were dirty and his personal grooming and hygiene were unacceptable. Martin's goal was to graduate from high school, then to obtain vocational training at a local post-secondary institution. Martin and his teacher thought a self-modeling video which showed him moving smoothly through his morning routine at home would help improve his school attendance, organization, and hygiene. His family was cooperative and Martin was willing to give it a try.

After planning the scenes and writing a script, the teacher visited Martin's home and filmed him following a pre-written checklist, including turning off the alarm and arising at 6:00 am, shaving, washing, choosing clean clothing from the closet, brushing his hair, eating breakfast, packing lunch and organizing everything he would need for the day, consulting his wristwatch, and leaving home on time



to catch the bus and arrive at school before the first bell. When Martin's teacher completed editing the self-modeling tape, it was three minutes in length. He gave it to Martin, who viewed the tape at home eight times during the next three weeks. His parents signed the viewing schedule and noted Martin's reactions during viewing.

During the next semester, Martin's attendance improved 70%. His teachers reported that his grooming and hygiene were greatly improved, and he was usually well organized and ready for classes. Martin was well on his way toward achieving his goals of graduating and going on to obtain post-secondary training.

DISCLAIMER: The pictures contained in the Video Futures resource do not correspond with any of the stories, names, or disabilities expressed.

References and Further Readings

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