STiP-5.1

Semi-structured Interview for Personality functioning DSM-5

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Introduction

First get acquainted with the person to be interviewed and then explain the nature of the interview. "This interview is about you as a person. In other words, we are going to talk about what you think about yourself, how you feel, what characteristics are typical of you, and what goals you set. We will also talk about how you interact with other people." The interview pertains to current functioning. When you, as the interviewer, ask for concrete examples, try to elicit recent examples and preferably examples from the last few weeks. Take a longer period of time into consideration when the current circumstances have been exceptional (e.g., an admission).

Design of the interview:
− Listed on the left page are the levels of scoring for the interview as operationalized in the DSM-5 scale for levels of personality functioning (section III). The list of criteria can be called upon during the interview to decide if sufficient information has been gained for assignment of a tentative score . The definitive scores for all facets are only assigned after completion of the full interview.

− Listed in the first column on the right page are the questions that can be asked. The interview has a funnel structure, which starts with *open questions*. These questions can then be followed by *help questions* for further assessment of specific components — particularly when the initial answer does not provide sufficient clarity for scoring. When it is possible to already assign a score on the basis of the initial response to the open question, further questioning is not necessary. The interviewer then reformulates the response provided by the interviewee such that it fits with one of the levels of functioning described on the left side of the page (i.e., presents a *check question*).

− In unclear cases, the help questions can be used to attain greater insight into the various aspects of personality functioning needed for scoring. When the assignment of a score still remains difficult even after the posing of help questions, a test question should be posed to obtain further information for scoring. The *test question* presents two options referring to the different levels of personality functioning to be decided upon ("Do you mean x or rather y?"). In the formulation of the two options for the test question, the extreme opposites for the two levels of functioning should be taken (e.g., when there is doubt about whether level 1 or 2 should be scored, option 1 is formulated largely in the direction of level 0 and option 2 largely in the direction of level 3); the interviewee is then asked to explain their choice (see manual for more examples of test questions).

− Listed in the second column on the right page is an explanation of the characteristics of the relevant components of personality functioning that the interviewer must gain insight into for assignment of a score. The interviewer can use this information as a short cut for determining if sufficient information has been gathered for the assignment of a score.

LEVEL OF PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING SCALE

1.1 Experience of oneself as unique, with clear boundaries between self and others

0.   Has ongoing awareness of a unique self; maintains role-appropriate boundaries

1.   Has relatively intact sense of self, with some decrease in clarity of boundaries when strong emotions and mental distress are experienced

2.   Depends excessively on others for identity definition, with compromised boundary delineation

3.   Has a weak sense of autonomy / agency; experience of a lack of identity, or emptiness. Boundary definition is poor or rigid: may show overidentification with others, overemphasis on independence from others, or vacillation between these

4.   Experience of a unique self and sense of agency / autonomy are virtually absent, or are organized around perceived external persecution. Boundaries with others are confused or lacking

IDENTITY

QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	
1.1 Uniqueness / boundaries The first questions concern you as a person. 1. How would you describe yourself? What kind of a person are you? *Help questions:* • What other features characterize you as a person? • To what extent do you have a clear image of who you are? • Do you sometimes feel "empty" or that you no longer know who you are? 2. To what extent are you capable of really being yourself and staying yourself? Are you also able to do this when in contact with other people? *Help questions:* • Does it sometimes happen that you overly adapt (or let yourself be influenced) such that such that you are no longer yourself? If so, does this happen frequently? • To what extent on such occasions can you lose yourself completely? • Does it sometimes happen when you are very, very tense or emotional that you hardly recognize yourself ("I'm not myself anymore," "I'm losing myself")? • Do you often have difficulties staying yourself because you feel threatened by others or think that others are against you? • Is it sometimes the case that you assert your sense of self by rebelling against others or, for example, intentionally adopting an opposing standpoint?	*Try to gain insight into the following two matters:* 1. *Does the person have a clear sense of self?* 2. *Is the person capable of maintaining that sense of self under conditions of stress and in contact with others?* ***Ask for concrete examples.***	**IDENTITY**

IDENTITY

1.2 Stability of self-esteem and accuracy of self-appraisal

0. Has consistent and self-regulated positive self-esteem, with accurate self-appraisal

1. Self-esteem diminished at times, with overly critical or somewhat distorted self-appraisal

2. Has vulnerable self-esteem controlled by exaggerated concern about external evaluation, with a wish for approval. Has sense of incompleteness or inferiority, with compensatory inflated, or deflated, self-appraisal

3. Fragile self-esteem is easily influenced by events, and self-image lacks coherence. Self-appraisal is un-nuanced: self-loathing, self-aggrandizing, or an illogical, unrealistic combination

4. Has weak or distorted self-image easily threatened by interactions with others; significant distortions and confusion around self-appraisal

QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	
1.2 Self-esteem / Self-appraisal The following questions concern your sense of self-esteem. 1. How satisfied are you with yourself? *Help questions:* • How apparent are the positive/negative feelings about yourself? • Can the negative feelings about yourself be so extreme that you are repulsed by yourself (or really dislike yourself)? • Can the positive feelings about yourself be so extreme that they are out of proportion? 2. Can you explain what makes you particularly dissatisfied or satisfied with yourself? *Help question:* • Do you notice (or sometimes others say) that you look too negatively (or too positively) at yourself? That how you look at yourself and just how satisfied/dissatisfied you are with yourself does not fit with what you can achieve or have achieved in your life? 3. To what extent do your feelings about yourself fluctuate? *Help questions:* • What do the fluctuations depend upon/what are they associated with? • To what extent are your feelings about yourself determined by what others think of you?	*Try to gain insight into the following three matters:* *1. Does the person have sufficient positive self-esteem?* *2. s the person's self-esteem compatible with apparent achievements and personal qualities?* *3. Is the person's self-esteem sufficiently stable (e.g., in cases of failure or criticism)? Is self-esteem largely internally regulated or does it fluctuate with external circumstances and/or evaluation (such as failure or criticism)?* ***Ask for concrete examples.***	**IDENTITY**
QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	

	LEVEL OF PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING SCALE
IDENTITY	**1.3 Capacity for, and ability to regulate, a range of emotional experience** 0. Capable of experiencing, tolerating and regulating a full range of emotions 1. Strong emotions may be distressing, associated with a restriction in range of emotional experience 2. Emotional regulation depends on positive external appraisal. Threats to self-esteem may engender strong emotions such as rage or shame 3. Emotions may be rapidly shifting or a chronic, unwavering feeling of despair 4. Emotions not congruent with context or internal experience. Hatred and aggression may be dominant affects, although they may be disavowed and attributed to others LEVEL OF PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING SCALE

QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	
1.3 Emotions The following questions concern your emotions. 1. What emotions do you experience during daily life? *Help question:* • Do you *also* recognize feelings of sorrow, anger, fear, and happiness on your part? 2. How intense can the emotions that you experience be? Are you sometimes overwhelmed by them? *Help questions:* • Do the feelings of anger that you experience sometimes turn into feelings of rage or hate? Self-hate? How strongly do these emotions dominate your daily life? • Do the feelings of sorrow sometimes turn into despair? Does this occur on a daily basis? 3. To what extent is there always a clear reason for your emotional reaction? Is your emotional reaction appropriate? *Help questions:* • To what extent do you notice that your emotional reactions are often too strong in light of the cause? Is your reaction "over-emotional"? • To what extent do you notice that your emotional reaction is particularly strong when others are critical of you? • Do you sometimes react with surprisingly little emotion to terrible events that thus leave you cold or indifferent? 4. How well can you handle these (sometimes intense) emotions? *Help questions:* • Do you frequently have the idea that you cannot keep your emotions sufficiently under control? • To what extent do you notice that you can get upset when your emotions become intense?	*Try to gain insight into the following four matters:* *1. What is the range of emotions experienced?* *2. What is the intensity of the emotions experienced?* *3. How closely do the emotions match internal or external cause or context?* *4. How well can the emotions be regulated?* ***Ask for concrete examples.***	**IDENTITY**
QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	

LEVEL OF PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING SCALE

SELF-DIRECTION

2.1 Pursuit of coherent and meaningful short-term and life goals

0. Sets and aspires to reasonable goals based on a realistic assessment of personal capacities

1. Is excessively goal-directed, somewhat goal-inhibited, or conflicted about goals

2. Goals are more often a means of gaining external approval than self-generated, and thus may lack coherence and/or stability

3. Has difficulty establishing and/or achieving personal goals

4. Has poor differentiation of thoughts from actions, so goal-setting ability is severely compromised, with unrealistic or incoherent goals

LEVEL OF PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING SCALE

QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	

2.1 Goals
 	
The following questions concern goals that you would like to reach in your life and how you are working towards these.
 	
1. What goals have you set for yourself lately?
 	
Help questions:
  • Are you capable of setting goals for yourself in order to give direction to your life?
  • When you see that you are not going to achieve something, are you capable of adjusting your goals accordingly?
 	
2. Why are these important goals for you?
 	
Help questions:
  • Were they really your own personal goals?
  • Do you recognize a tendency in yourself to adapt your goals to what you think others might expect of you?
 	
3. To what extent are you able to realize the goals that you set for yourself in a step-by-step manner?
 	
Help question:
  • Do you recognize a tendency in yourself to set unrealistic goals for yourself? That you often overestimate yourself.
	Try to gain insight into the following four matters:
	
	1. Does the person set goals for him/herself?
	
	2. Are the goals authentic, personal goals?
	
	3. Are the goals realistic and achievable? Does the person succeed at not only setting goals for him/herself but also taking steps to actually achieve them?
	
	Both larger, more long-term goals and smaller goals or the intermediate steps needed to achieve long-term goals can be of concern here.
	
	Challenge the person to talk about some concrete goals. Make it clear for yourself whether the person also strives to achieve these goals and if there are examples that suggest that they succeed at doing this.
	
	Ask for concrete examples.
		SELF-DIRECTION

QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	

SELF-DIRECTION

2.2 Utilization of constructive and prosocial internal standards of behavior

0. Utilizes appropriate standards of behavior, attaining fulfillment in multiple realms

1. May have an unrealistic or socially inappropriate set of personal standards, limiting some aspects of fulfillment

2. Personal standards may be unreasonably high (e.g., a need to be special or please others) or low (e.g., not consonant with prevailing social values). Fulfillment is compromised by a sense of lack of authenticity

3.   Internal standards for behavior are unclear or contradictory. Life is experienced as meaningless or dangerous

4. Internal standards for behavior are virtually lacking. Genuine fulfillment is virtually inconceivable

QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	
2.2 Standards The following questions concern the norms or standards that you have for yourself and how you act in accordance with these, how you use the standards. 1. What are important norms or rules of life for you? What demands do you impose on yourself or what expectations do you have of yourself? *Help questions:* • Do you have a clear image to live up to, an image of what and how you should be? Or what and how you should not be? • Do you use these personal standards to give direction to your life? How does doing this contribute to giving your life meaning/significance? 2. How do you handle the standards that you have set for yourself? How successful are you at meeting the standards? *Help questions:* • How hard are you on yourself when it comes to meeting standards that you have set for yourself? • Do you recognize a tendency to expect too much (or too little) of yourself?	*Try to gain insight into the following two matters:* *1. Does the person have clear internal norms and standards that he/she must try to meet or adhere to as a guideline in life?* *2. How does the person handle these norms and to what extent do they manage to live according to the norms or — in other words — not too strict or rigid, not too lax or passive?* ***Ask for concrete examples.***	**SELF-DIRECTION**
QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	

SELF-DIRECTION

2.3 Ability to self-reflect productively

0. Can reflect on, and make constructive meaning of, internal experience

1.   Is able to reflect on internal experiences, but may overemphasize a single (e.g., intellectual, emotional) type of self-knowledge

2. Has impaired capacity to reflect on internal experience

3. Has significantly compromised ability to reflect on and understand own mental processes

4. Is profoundly unable to constructively reflect on own experience. Personal motivations may be unrecognized and/or experienced as external to self

QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	
2.3 Self-reflection The following questions concern your capacity to understand yourself. 1. How good are you — as a rule — at understanding what is going on in you: what you are thinking, what you are feeling, and what you want? *Help questions:* • How good — as a rule — do you understand why you feel the way you feel? Or why you do what you do? • Do you recognize that you can sometimes get confused and feel completely incapable of understanding yourself at times? • When you try to understand yourself, do you notice a tendency to primarily analyze and try to understand things rationally? Or do you follow your instinct and fully trust your feelings and intuitions about yourself?	*Try to gain insight into the following:* 1. *Is the person capable of reflecting upon his or her own mental processes (thoughts, feelings, desires, intentions) or do they become confused and are they unable to zoom out from their own mental processes? Is there a balance between insight and emotion, between cognitive understanding and intuitive feeling?* **Ask for concrete examples.**	**SELF-DIRECTION**
QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	

	LEVEL OF PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING SCALE
EMPATHY	**3.1 Comprehension and appreciation of others' experiences and motivations** 0. Is capable of accurately understanding others' experiences and motivations in most situations 1. Is somewhat compromised in ability to appreciate and understand others' experiences; may tend to see others as having unreasonable expectations or a wish for control 2. Is hyper-attuned to the experience of others, but only with respect to perceived relevance to self 3. Ability to consider and understand the thoughts, feelings and behavior of other people is significantly limited; may discern very specific aspects of others' experience, particularly vulnerabilities and suffering 4. Has pronounced inability to consider and understand others' experience and motivation

VRAGEN	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	
3.1 Comprehending others The following questions concern your capacity to understand others, by which I mean how you attune yourself to what others feel, want, or intend — how you sympathize with others. 1. Can you sketch a picture of what you do well and what you do less well in this respect? To what extent, as a rule, are you capable of understanding what others feel, think, or want exactly? *Help questions:* • To what extent do you see yourself as trying to understand what others think and feel? • Is it perhaps the case that you often really do not care what is going on in others? • Is it sometimes the case that you completely do not understand the emotions or thoughts of others? 2. To what extent are you inclined to quickly fill in what others are thinking or feeling, which leads you to miss (perhaps unintentionally) what others are actually thinking or feeling? *Help questions:* • To what extent are you sensitive to specific emotions and thoughts when trying to understand others? • To what extent do you notice that you are inclined to look for the vulnerable places in another in order, for example, to try to hurt them)?	*Try to gain insight into the following two matters:* 1. *Can the person adequately follow and comprehend the line of thinking and emotional world of another?* 2. *Is the person capable of recognizing and understanding the thoughts and feelings of another as separate from their own? Does the person have a tendency to be particularly sensitive to certain emotions on the part of another (e.g., anger, rejection, abandonment), which can clearly color the person's interpretation of the intentions of others?* ***Ask for concrete examples.***	**EMPATHY**
VRAGEN	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	

	LEVEL OF PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING SCALE
EMPATHY	**3.2 Tolerance of differing perspectives** 0. Comprehends and appreciates others' perspectives, even if disagreeing 1. Although capable of considering and understanding different perspectives, resists doing so 2. Is excessively self-referential; significantly compromised ability to appreciate and understand others' experiences and to consider alternative perspectives 3. Is generally unable to consider alternative perspectives; highly threatened by differences of opinion or alternative viewpoints 4. Attention to others' perspectives virtually absent (attention is hypervigilant, focused on need-fulfillment and harm avoidance)
	LEVEL OF PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING SCALE

QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	

3.2 Perspectives

People sometimes have the experience of holding a viewpoint that differs from that of others. The following questions are about how you usually deal with such a situation.

1. How good are you, in general, at comprehending the standpoints of others, also when they differ from your own opinion or standpoint? What do you manage to do well and less well when doing this?

Help questions:
- Do you notice that you sometimes find it hard to put yourself in the shoes of another with thus a lack of understanding of how they came to their standpoint as a result?
- Do you sometimes notice that you are not aware that the other has a completely different opinion or point of view on something?
- Do you notice that you are not really very interested in the standpoint of another?

2. How well can you handle another person having a different opinion or perspective on things — one that clearly differs from your own?

Help questions:
- Do people sometimes say that you are stubborn? Or that you rigidly stick to your own opinion?
- When this happens, do you have the idea that there is simply a difference of opinion or that it is more personal: that they are against you

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Try to gain insight into two matters.

1. *Is the person capable of recognizing and understanding that others can have different perspectives on things*

2. *How does the person experience others having a different opinion on things?*

Ask for concrete examples.

EMPATHY

QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	

	LEVEL OF PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING SCALE
EMPATHY	**3.3 Understanding the effects of one's own behavior on others** 0. Is aware of the effect of own actions on others 1. Has inconsistent awareness of effect of own behavior on others 2. Is generally unaware of or unconcerned about effect of own behavior on others, or unrealistic appraisal of own effect 3. Is confused about or unaware of impact of own actions on others; often bewildered about peoples' thoughts and actions, with destructive motivations frequently misattributed to others 4. Social interactions can be confusing and disorienting LEVEL OF PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING SCALE

QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	
3.3. Impact The following questions are about your capacity to estimate the impact of your behavior on others. 1. How well can you estimate the impact of what you do on others? What do you do well in this regard? What do you do less well? *Help questions:* • Do you sometimes notice that you do not take the consequences of your actions for others very much into consideration? • Is it sometimes the case that you are surprised by the impact of what you have said or done on another, for example, that the other feels hurt or misunderstood? • Is it regularly the case that you contemplate for quite some time how something you said or did came across by another? • Do you sometimes get completely confused when you interact with others because you no longer understand yourself or the other?	*Try to gain insight into the following:* 1. *Can the person understand and estimate the impact of their behavior on another?* ***Ask for concrete examples.***	**EMPATHY**
QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	

	LEVEL OF PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING SCALE
INTIMACY	**4.1 Depth and duration of connection with others** 0. Maintains multiple satisfying and enduring relationships in personal and community life 1. Able to establish enduring relationships in personal and community life, with some limitations on degree of depth and satisfaction 2. Is capable of forming and desires to form relationships in personal and community life, but connections may be largely superficial 3. Has some desire to form relationships in community and personal life, but capacity for positive and enduring connections is significantly impaired 4. Desire for affiliation is limited because of profound disinterest or expectation of harm. Engagement with others is detached, disorganized or consistently negative

QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	
4.1 Connections The following questions concern your relationships with other people and how your contact with others goes. Think in this connection of not only your relationships with those people close to you but also your contacts with people at work, at school, in the neighborhood, etc. 1. Can you sketch how your contact with others generally goes? What goes well for you and what goes less well in your contact with others? And in the maintenance of your friendships and relationships? *Help questions:* • Can you mention which people you have regular contact with? • Are you capable of interacting with people in a manner that satisfies you? • Are you capable of having a positive relationship with most of them? Or do you notice, in contrast, that your contact with others is often difficult? When the person being interviewed does not mention any contacts of significance: - Has this always been the case? What do you think the reason for this is? - Does this mean that you do or do not have a longing or need for contact with others? - Or are there perhaps other reasons for not having any close relationships? 2. How satisfying do you find the contacts that you have? How well-connected do you feel to the people around you? *Help question:* • Do you notice a tendency to keep people at a distance, with — as a result — most contacts remaining superficial? 3. How good are you at maintaining contact with friends, partner, colleagues, neighbors, and others such that the contact remains stable and satisfying over time? *Help questions:* • Do you notice that your relationships with others quickly become annoying or conflictual after some time? • Do you have a tendency to keep others at a distance because you are afraid of getting hurt (damaged)?	*Try to gain insight into the following three matters:* *1. Is the person capable of positively connecting to others* *2. Is this connection meaningful?* *3. Is this connection sufficiently stable and positive in the long run?* *Relationships in the personal sphere are of concern here along with other social relationships. Try to determine if the person is capable of establishing a broad network of positive relationships and maintaining this. Try to determine if there is a longing for connection.* ***Ask for concrete examples.***	**INTIMACY**

INTIMACY

4.2 Desire and capacity for closeness

0. Desires and engages in a number of caring, close and reciprocal relationships

1. Is capable of forming and desires to form intimate and reciprocal relationships, but may be inhibited in meaningful expression and sometimes constrained if any intense emotions or conflicts arise

2. Intimate relationships are largely based on meeting self-regulatory and self-esteem needs, with an unrealistic expectation of being perfectly understood by others

3. Relationships are based on a strong belief in the absolute need for the intimate other(s), and/or expectations of abandonment or abuse. Feelings about intimate involvement with others alternate between fear/rejection and desperate desire for connection

4. Relationships are conceptualized almost exclusively in terms of their ability to provide comfort or inflict pain and suffering

QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	
4.2 Closeness Let us now focus on relationships with people who are of importance to you. 1. How important is it for you to have more intimate relationships and friendships with people? Why or why not? To what extent do you succeed at doing this? *Help questions:* • How good are you at allowing another to get really close? • How difficult is it for you to be really open about what you think and feel within a close relationship? • To what extent are you able to really be yourself and stay yourself within an intimate relationship? • When tensions arise between you and an intimate other, do you immediately experience a considerable distance in the relationship? 2. How equal and reciprocal are your close relationships with others? *Help questions:* • Do you notice that you are primarily busy attuning yourself to what you assume others expect or think of you? • Do you notice a tendency to always place yourself central (be egocentric) in a relationship by, for example, assuming that the other should always agree with you or completely understand you? 3. How well do you succeed at maintaining close relationships, at keeping them up? How certain or safe do you feel in such relationships? *Help questions:* • Are you often afraid that important friendships and relationships are going to break down, for example, when you get more attached to someone? • Have relationships of yours sometimes broken down because you invested too little/thought too much about only yourself?	*Try to gain insight for the closest relationships into the following three matters:* 1. *Does the person have a capacity for intimate/close contact (in contrast to distant and superficial)?* 2. *Can one speak of reciprocity/equality in the relationships (versus egocentrism)?* 3. *Can one speak of the person feeling safe in long-term, intimate relationships?* ***In cases of doubt about interpersonal functioning, explore two or three close relationships in greater detail in order to gain sufficient insight into the above matters.*** ***Ask for concrete examples.***	**INTIMACY**

	LEVEL OF PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING SCALE

4.3 Mutuality of regard reflected in interpersonal behavior

0. Strives for cooperation and mutual benefit and flexibly responds to a range of others' ideas, emotions and behaviors

1. Cooperation may be inhibited by unrealistic standards; somewhat limited in ability to respect or respond to others' ideas, emotions and behaviors

2. Tends not to view relationships in reciprocal terms, and cooperates predominantly for personal gain

3. Little mutuality: others are conceptualized primarily in terms of how they affect the self (negatively or positively); cooperative efforts are often disrupted due to the perception of slights from others

4. Social/interpersonal behavior is not reciprocal; rather, it seeks fulfillment of basic needs or escape from pain

QUESTIONS	INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED	
4.3 Mutuality of regard The following questions concern how you cooperate with others. 1. How well do you generally succeed at cooperating with others on a task or assignment? *Help questions:* - Do you sometimes have the impression or hear that others find it difficult to work with you? - Do you sometimes have conflicts (at work, at school)? - Do you prefer to work alone or together with others? 2. How do you handle input from others when cooperating? *Help questions:* - How good are you at taking into consideration the ideas of others with whom you must work (even when they are different from your own? - Do you sometimes have the idea that you take the input from others *too* much into consideration? What remains of your own opinion and input in such cases? - Do you think that others should mostly adapt their opinions and ideas to yours?	*Try to gain insight into the following two matters:* 1. *Is the person capable of constructive cooperation?* 2. *Is the person capable of flexibly handling input from others (not taking too much or too little into consideration)?* ***Ask for concrete examples.***	**INTIMACY**