

THE ESSENTIAL 5 METHODOLOGY IN A CARE SETTING

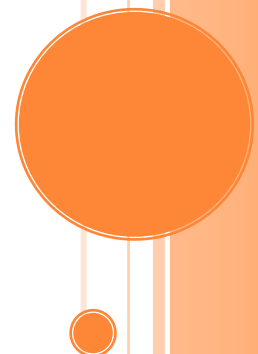
Effectiveness of The Essential 5 methodology in the JP van den Bent care facility

This academic report describes the findings regarding the effectiveness of working with The Essential 5 methodology in a care setting. The results within a small population reveal that the staff of the care facility experience a reduction in pressure of work, with positive consequences for work enjoyment and absenteeism due to sickness figures, while clients experience less stress, exhibit less problem behaviour and are able to develop more independently, with clear positive consequences for the entire group.

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December 2017

Study by the Erasmus University Rotterdam, on behalf of
Autimaat



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The aim of The Essential 5 methodology is to offer structure and to make the environment predictable and understandable for people with an autism spectrum disorder. It becomes clear that the methodology also offers many benefits for people with no autism spectrum disorder.

Studies reveal that working in the care sector is accompanied by high levels of stress. This in turn leads to high levels of absenteeism due to sickness among staff. Moreover, 30 - 60 percent of people who start working in care leave the sector within one year. This represents a loss of knowledge and skills and results in additional pressure of work for those employees who do remain, because new staff have to be introduced to the work and cannot take up their full workload. This shortfall has to be made up by other staff members. This high turnover is also disruptive for clients, which leads to more problem behaviour in the group, resulting in additional work pressure for the staff.

A sound methodology can considerably alleviate this problem. With a methodology that offers structure to both staff and clients, predictability and clarity can increase work satisfaction and reduce work pressure and the related stress, thereby lowering levels of absenteeism due to sickness and slowing down the turnover of staff. The Essential 5 methodology can reduce the pressure of work in the care sector by offering transparency and clarity in communication and behaviour towards clients. As a

Studies reveal that The Essential 5 methodology can reduce the pressure of work in the care sector, resulting in: less stress and less problem behaviour among clients. The methodology can help clients function more independently thereby further reducing the burden on the staff.

consequence, clients will experience less stress, leading to them exhibit less problem behaviour.

The Essential 5 methodology can also help clients to function more independently, which in turn reduces the burden on staff.

This report contains the results of the survey into effectiveness. To investigate the effectiveness of The Essential 5 methodology working at the JP van den Bent care facility, use was made of questionnaires that were completed by the staff prior to The Essential 5 training and following completion of the training course. The questionnaires contained questions about work satisfaction, work stress and the relationship with the client.

The training lasted six months, during which period six training days were organised. The staff were able to put the lessons learned directly into practice. Each member of staff at JP van den Bent was asked to complete a questionnaire prior to and after completing the training course, with questions about work satisfaction and work stress related to clients, for the same three clients; one easy client and two of their most challenging clients.

Unfortunately it proved impossible to have all staff complete the questionnaires prior to and after completing the training, for the same clients. Eventually, the questionnaires were completed prior to and after the training, for 166 clients. These were 59 easy clients and 107 most challenging clients.

RESULTS

The analyses relating to work pleasure revealed that the implementation of The Essential 5 methodology at JP van den Bent led to an increase in work enjoyment.

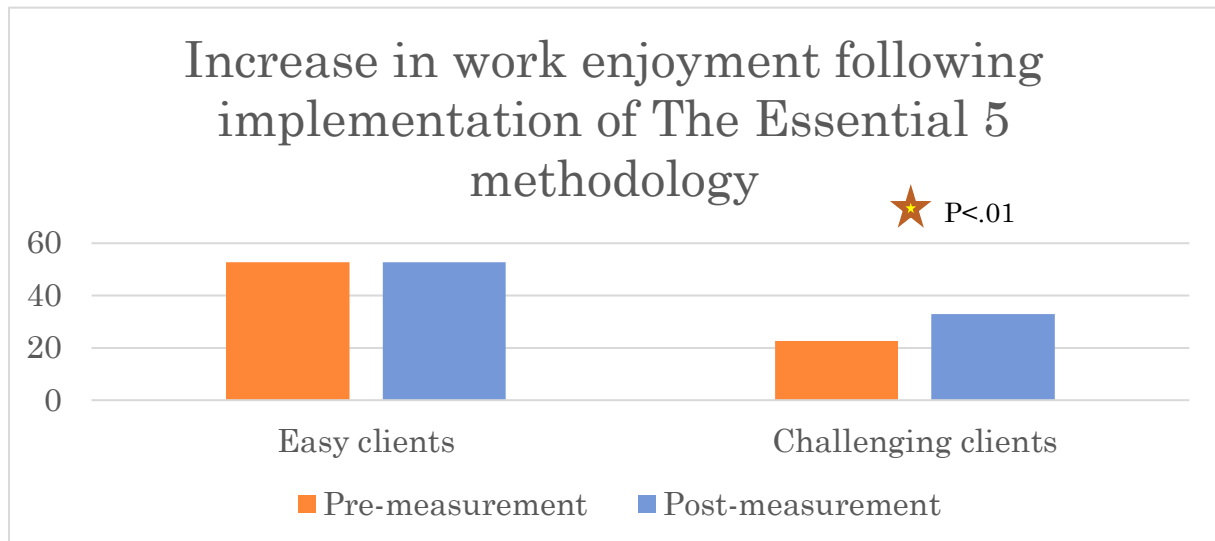


Figure 1. Effect of implementation of The Essential 5 methodology on work enjoyment for staff

Work enjoyment following implementation showed no change for staff in interaction with easy clients ($p=.81$). With the most challenging clients, on the other hand, the study showed a significant increase in work enjoyment among staff at JP van den Bent ($p<.01$) following implementation of the methodology (see figure 1).

The questionnaires completed by staff relate to various subscales. The effects of implementation of the methodology are shown for the various scales, in the figures below.

The first aspect considered was the overall reduction in perceived stress among staff. Analyses reveal an overall reduction that is not statistically significant ($p=.06$).

However, if this perceived stress is broken down between easy and most challenging clients, the figures reveal that there is no change in perceived stress among staff in relation to easy clients ($p=.68$). In relation to most challenging clients, however, there is a significant downturn in perceived stress among staff ($p=.03$) (see figure 2).

The study reveals that implementation of The Essential 5 methodology leads to an improvement in work enjoyment.

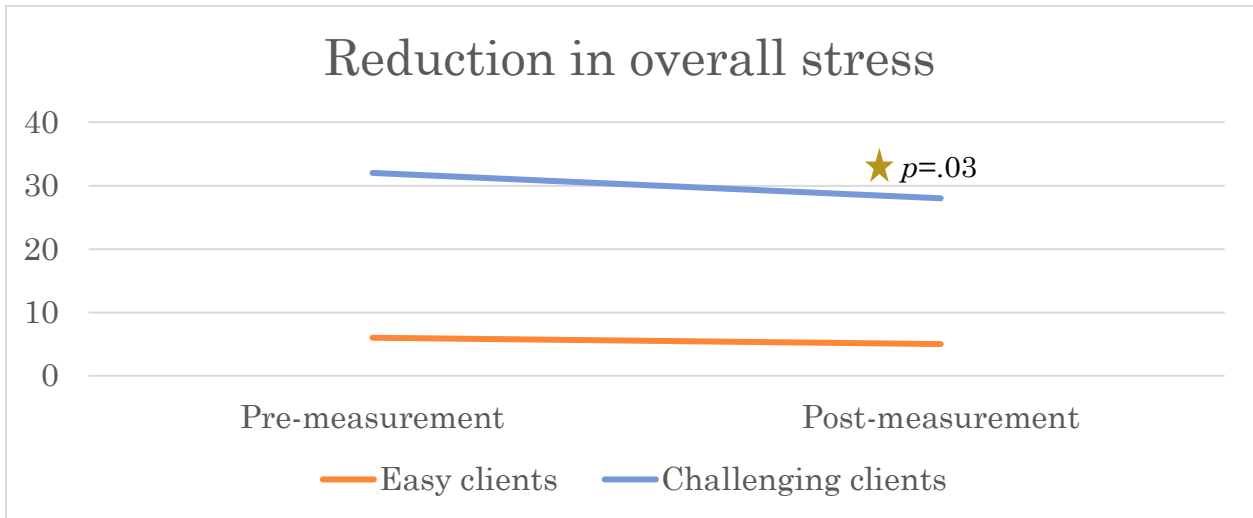


Figure 2. Reduction in overall stress among staff in interaction with easy and most challenging clients following implementation of The Essential 5 methodology.

The effect of The Essential 5 methodology on perceived stress among staff is therefore immediately visible in interaction with the most challenging clients.

The next aspect considered was the effect of the methodology on the number of conflicts reported by staff prior to and following implementation. There is a significant reduction in the number of conflicts following implementation for the entire group ($p<.01$). After a closer examination of the data in relation to easy and most challenging clients, it emerges that despite the fact that there were fewer conflicts with the easy clients, the number of conflicts for both groups fell considerably following implementation (both groups $p<.01$) (see figure 3).

The study shows that following implementation of The Essential 5 methodology, there is a significant reduction in the number of conflicts for the entire group.

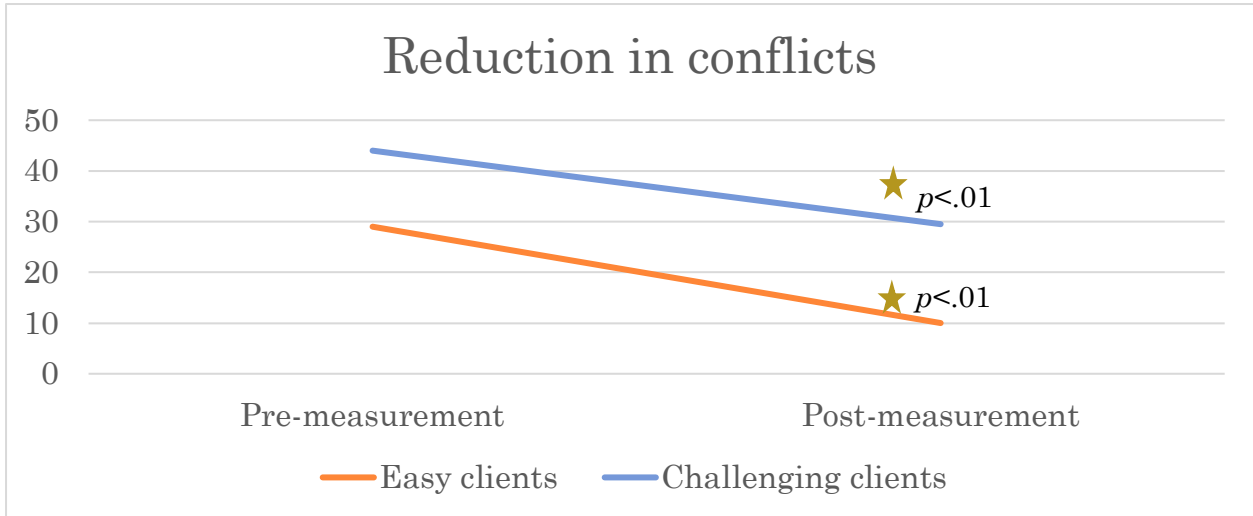


Figure 3. Reduction in the number of conflicts in the group for both easy and the most challenging clients following implementation of The Essential 5 methodology.

Although there are fewer conflicts with easy clients, for this group, too, implementation of The Essential 5 methodology results in a considerable reduction in the number of conflicts. The benefit was however greatest in the group with most challenging clients. The number of conflicts fell considerably, ending up at the level of easy clients prior to implementation of the methodology.

Stress among care staff is often linked to the number of conflicts with clients on the work floor. Certainly in the case of serious conflicts in which a client must be separated from the group, the outcome is greater stress, both for the member of staff required to isolate the client from the group and for the staff who remain behind with the group. By reducing the number of conflicts, stress levels among staff and clients will fall.

In addition to conflicts, the attention claiming behaviour of clients towards staff represents a serious burden for staff. The general analyses show that all clients demonstrate less attention claiming behaviour following implementation ($p < .01$). If broken down according to easy and most challenging clients, here too, the methodology results in so much more clarity for both groups that the clients exhibit less claiming behaviour towards staff (for both groups, the decline in this behaviour is significant $p < .01$, see figure 4).

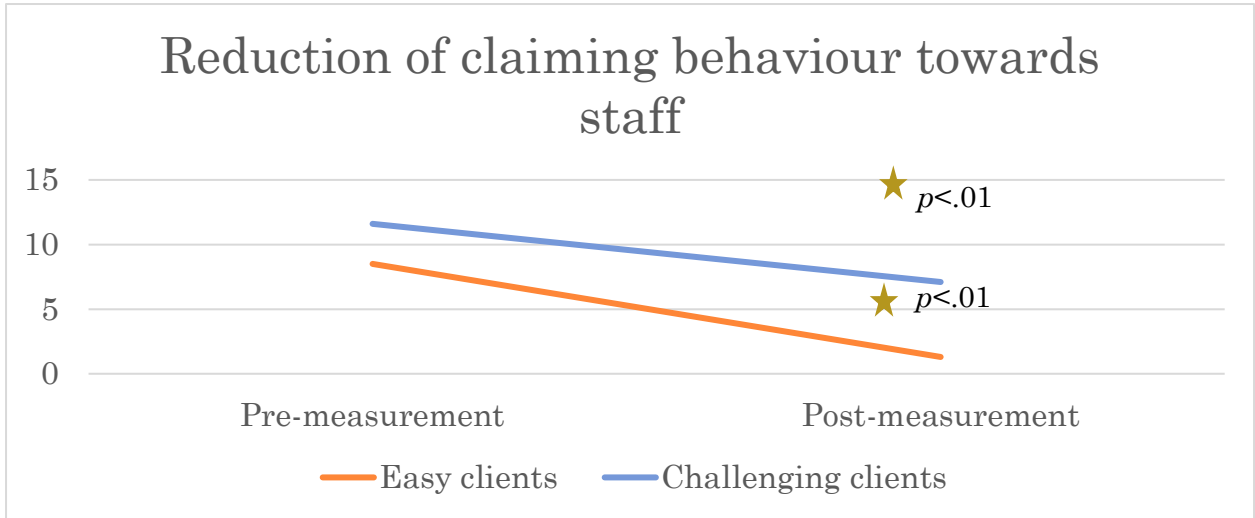


Figure 4. Reduction of claiming behaviour towards staff from both easy and most challenging clients following implementation of The Essential 5 methodology

When clients often demand proximity to obtain confirmation and as a consequence they demonstrate greater dependency, this can be an additional burden for staff. If clients become more independent, thereby improving the quality in terms of seeking proximity because the contact becomes less claiming, this could result in a reduction in stress levels for staff.

The general analyses reveal that dependency on staff also falls significantly ($p < .01$). For both groups, the degree of dependency on staff prior to implementation of the methodology was the same. Both groups show a decline in dependency ($p < .01$) (see figure 5).

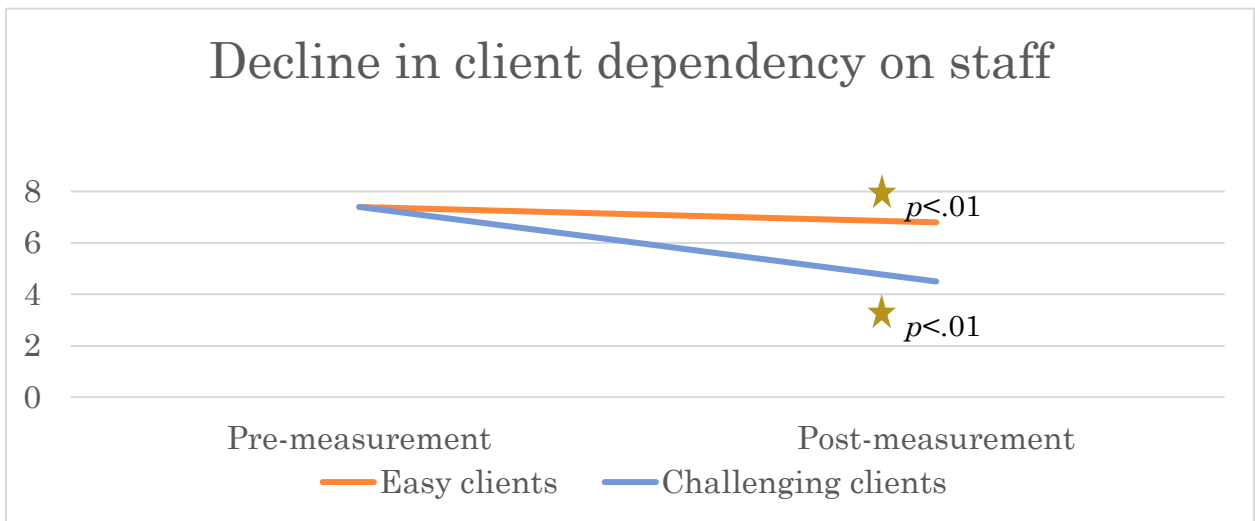


Figure 5. Decline in staff dependency among both easy and most challenging clients following implementation of The Essential 5 methodology.

Both groups of clients revealed a decline in dependency following implementation of The Essential 5 methodology. Reduced dependency means an increase in independence. This in turn represents a burden reduction for staff, leading to a decline in work stress. At the same time, the increased independence can have a positive effect on the client's self-image.

General analyses in respect of positive interaction between staff and clients show an improvement in positive interaction for both groups (see figure 6). The effect of the methodology on positive interaction is however greatest for interaction between staff and easy clients ($p<.01$). There is also an increase in positive interaction between staff and the most challenging clients. However, this increase is less pronounced ($p=.04$).

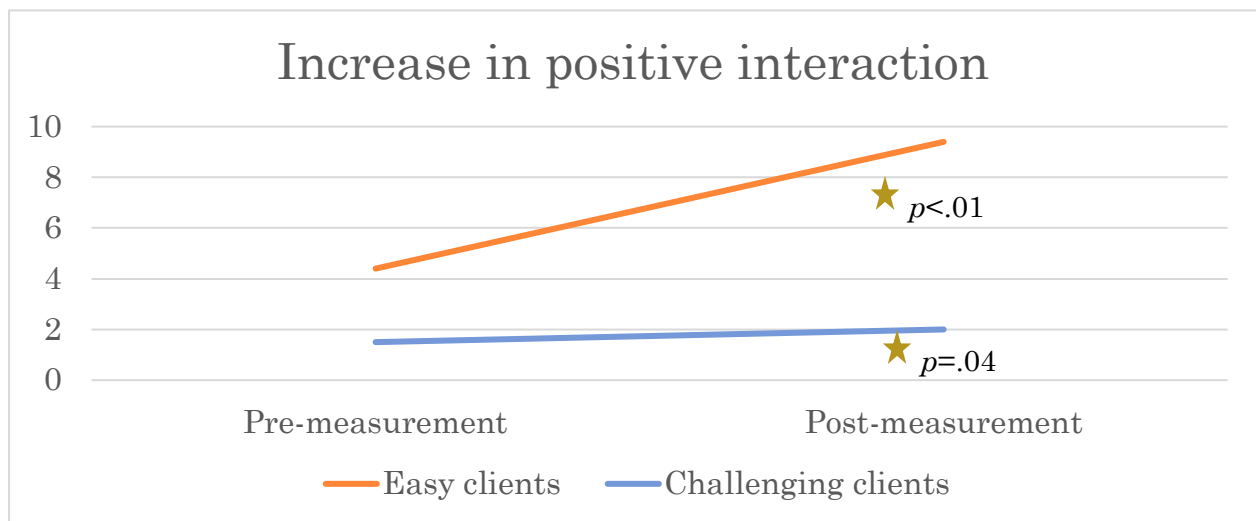


Figure 6. Increase in positive interaction between staff and easy and most challenging clients following implementation of The Essential 5 methodology.

The effect of the methodology on negative interaction were also examined. As expected, negative interaction declined considerably across the entire group ($p<.01$). If both groups are considered, it emerges that the volume of negative interaction falls considerably among both easy clients and challenging clients ($p<.01$) (see figure 7).

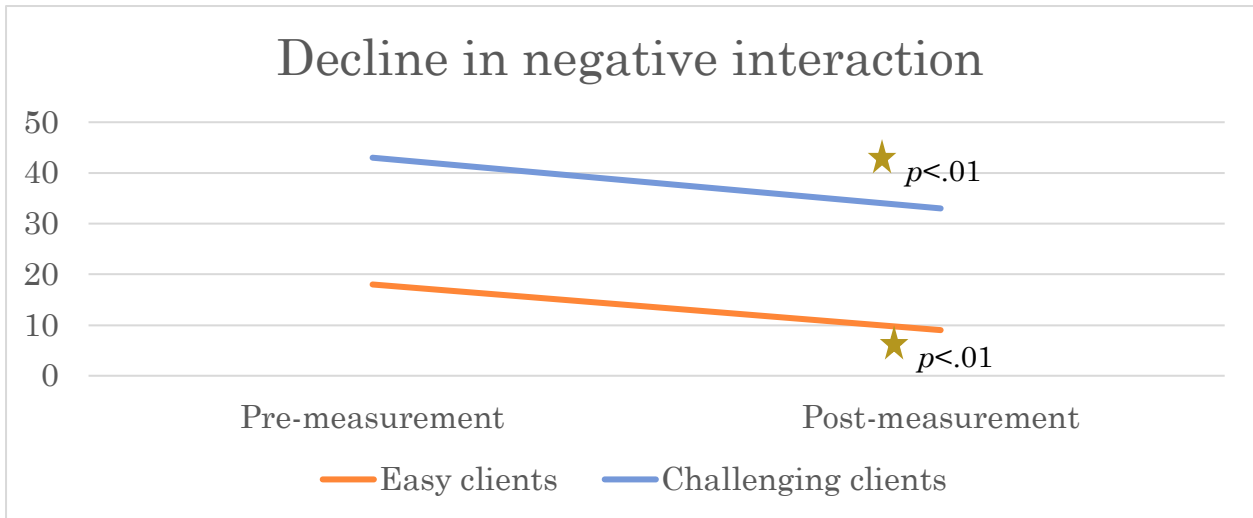


Figure 7. Decline in negative interaction between staff and easy and most challenging clients following implementation of The Essential 5 methodology.

Prior to implementation, there is already evidence of a discrepancy in the number of negative interactions between staff and easy and challenging clients. Nonetheless, the number of negative interactions with easy clients also declines. For both groups of clients, therefore, the methodology is of considerable added value for the quality of interaction.

It also emerges that implementation of the methodology leads to less frustration among staff in interaction with the parents of clients ($p<.05$).

CONCLUSION

The overall conclusion is that implementation of The Essential 5 methodology in a care setting leads to a reduction in overall stress among staff, an increase in positive interaction and a decline in the number of conflicts and negative interactions. These effects are visible both in the group of easy clients and the group of most challenging clients. Prior to the training, in their interaction with easy clients, the staff of JP van den Bent already reported fewer problems, compared with the group of most challenging clients. Nonetheless, even in respect of the group of easy clients, there were clear measurable improvements in interaction, following implementation of The Essential 5 methodology.

However, easy clients do not cause the stress perceived by staff in their interaction with their most challenging clients.

The greatest benefit for staff is achieved in respect of perceived stress in interaction with the most challenging group of clients. As a result of this measured stress reduction in interaction with the most challenging clients, staff will feel better but certainly also more competent, which in turn benefits staff health. This could result in less absenteeism due to sickness and a reduction in staff turnover. The resultant continuity in the group is positive for both staff and clients. Clients are better aware of what they can expect, which increases the independence and self-reliance of clients, and reduces client stress. This in turn will result in fewer conflicts in the group, and as a consequence a more positive atmosphere and reduced workload for staff. A further benefit of fewer conflicts and less stress among clients is that it also creates more space for clients to develop. By implementing The Essential 5 methodology, staff and clients will be able to make the transition from merely surviving to living.

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