Empowerment science: New Horizon for Self-Actualization through Empathy

1. What is Empowerment?

Empowerment is something that gives people hopes and dreams, brings them courage, and prompts them to be filled with the strength to live. It is a wonderful quality that should be present in everyone.

People are born with splendid abilities. And throughout their lives, they can continue to demonstrate magnificent strengths.

It is empowerment that draws out that magnificent power—in the same way that spring water flows steadily out of a natural fountain, it is empowerment that allows the vital force and potential that lie hidden deep within us to flow.

In the practice of healthcare and welfare, the magnificent potential that each individual initially has is awakened, prompted to manifest, and is leveraged through activities for the good of people's lives and for the development of society.

In groups of people such as in the context of a business enterprise, the potential vigor and capabilities of each employee can be drawn out skillfully and leveraged as energy to be linked to staff development and corporate growth. These are the things that empowerment—needed by organizations, groups, and people—is all about.

There are eight principles for empowerment:

(1) A person chooses his or her own objectives.

(2) The person takes initiative and the authority to make decisions

(3) The person considers his or her issues and the ways through which to resolve them.

(4) Successes and failures are analyzed as opportunities to learn and build capacities.

(5) Inner elements within the person and their supporters are discovered and fortified to change behaviors.

(6) The person is prompted to participate in the process of resolving issues to boost their sense of responsibility.

(7) Improvements are made to networks for supporting the process of resolving issues and their resources.

(8) Motivation is boosted toward improving conditions for the person (such as the achievement of his or her objectives or their well-being).

2. Empowerment synergy models

There are three types of empowerment: self-empowerment, peer empowerment, and community empowerment.

The combined use and leveraging of these different types of empowerment are essential in order to realize something that is both sustainable and effective, and are called empowerment synergy models.

Figure 2-1 Empowerment synergy model (Anme, 2012)

3. Eight Elements for Creating an Empowering Environment

In order to create an environment that enables empowerment, there is a need to have eight values for empowerment.

These elements are necessary for exercising empowerment and can also be used as indicators for evaluation for measuring results.

(1) Empathy

Empathy means individuals have their own will and also recognize that likewise, others also have their own clear will.

(2) Self-Actualization

Self-actualization is a sense among each and every member that through their individual activities, they are able to realize their values.

(3) Inter-Sectoral Characteristics

Inter-sectoral characteristics are measured to indicate the ways in which each member is involved in the affairs of others, as if they were matters that pertained directly to them.

(4) Participation

Participation is an indicator for the extent to which each member actually feels that they are impacting their activities.

(5) Equality

Participants will not be able to perform unless they feel that a project or program is being

conducted fairly, as well as the feedback that is given and the treatment of each member.

(6) Diversity of Strategies

The presence of diversity in strategies is a significant strength for individuals, groups, and also for the environment.

(7) Plasticity

Plasticity is an indicator for assessing whether it is possible to deal flexibly with various changes in conditions and presents significant impact on the development of an individual or an organization.

(8) Innovation

Innovation for future development and possibilities for sustainability will bring members a sense of security.

4. Empowerment program designs

For empowerment, there is a need to reveal current positions while moving forward, during which time a CASE model (Creation, Adaptation, Sustenance, and Expansion), used in empowerment program designs throughout the world (Anme & McCall, 2008), can be used as a yardstick. It is effective for the subjects involved in the empowerment to leverage various techniques as they proceed while grasping the current level of development.
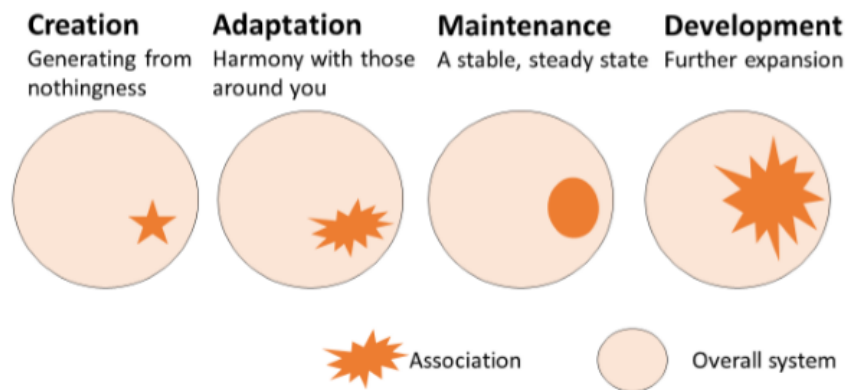

Figure 4-1 Steps for the development of empowerment (Anme & McCall, 2008)

5. Design for the empowerment process

The use of a design for the empowerment process is effective for designing empowerment measures so it reflects the needs and intentions of the subjects (Fig. 4-2). A characteristic of this model is that it allows the path and basis for determining if objectives and support methods will lead to the success of a particular project to be clearly shown. In addition to

whether or not a project will be successful, the method (how) and the basis (why) are also to be clarified in a logical manner (Anme & McCall, 2008).

These points are sorted in order, in line with the following six steps:

Step 1: What are the intended results?

Step 2: How is the current status?

Step 3: What sort of background is there?

Step 4: What are the primary causes that impact the problems, points of issue, and background factors?

Step 5: What support measures (strategies) ring change to impacting factors?
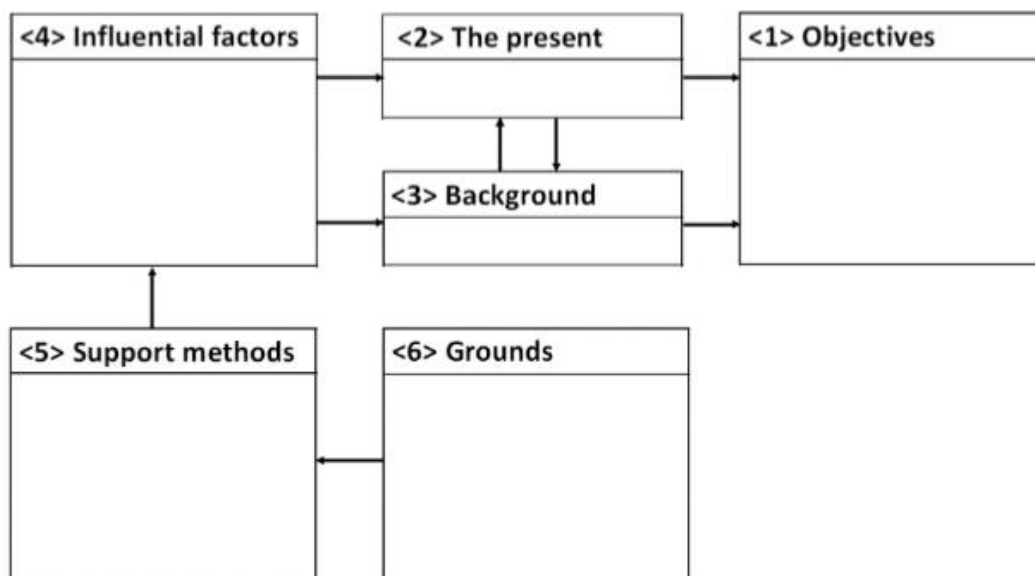
Step 6: On what grounds?

Figure 4-2 Design for supporting empowerment (Anme, 2005)

6. Seven tips for promoting empowerment

(1) Have Clear Objectives

(2) Enjoy Relationships

(3) Create Networks of Empathy

(4) Produce a Sense of Comfort

(5) Offer Flexible Forms of Participation

(6) Always Aim for Development

(7) Have a Perspective of Evaluation