

Rules and standards for using the CD-ROM " Lou and Us "
in the training of students in family psychology, family education
and in cognitive-behavioral therapy

Prof. Isabelle Roskam

English Translation James M. Day and Birte M. Henkelmann-Day

Notes for Instructors

This document is reserved for instructors in universities or other recognized institutions of higher education. It summarizes the standardized rules and regulations which can be given to students who are training in Parental Educational Guidance (GEP) through use of "Lou and Us " with a family. These rules and suggestions for use can be varied in multiple adaptations for instructors in terms of the target student audience, objectives of course/s in which the tool is used, or the expected degree and level of training and education of participants. In every case, training based on the CD-ROM "Lou and Us " requires preliminary theoretical preparation on the teacher's part, concerning family education, theoretical foundations of interventions within families, and parental education programs.

Each student selects a two-parent family having a child between 3 and 7 years of age. This family cannot be selected from the student's own social network of close family or friend relationship. Insofar as the intervention involves an exercise in GEP methods and training, the family selected should not be a family categorized as needing professional help but instead a family who willingly agree to try the exercise, after having been briefed on the basic elements of the method. The target child for this phase of training should not present specific, professionally classified, behavioral problems. The selected family will have to be in possession of a home computer and a printer.

Standardised instructions for the students

1. First meeting with the family

- Introducing one's self: (personal information, studies in which the student is involved, etc.)
- First, specify the context of the request (what are the objectives of the training project?). Next, specify with the families that it is about a CD-Rom intended for parents having a child presenting behavioral problems. "You will undoubtedly think that your child does not react the way Lou does (for example, fighting during a game) or at least not often (for example arguing with his/her brother at table, or jumping on the bed when it is time to get dressed), and that these seem extreme situations in which you have difficulties to imagine yourself. In the same way, the educational reactions are generated randomly by the CD-Rom and they will offer you proposals you would never use or which will surprise you. It is for you to judge them from the point of view of their effectiveness. The user might just try out, first, then replay, the CD, to try and find something which would correspond to something you would really do." The user can on the other hand if s/he wishes to, explore other methods discipline by clicking on "replay". In is advised that one specify with the parents, that this represents, in your own mind, an exercise aimed at

training for an interview, and the application of an intervention; it is by no means a question of judging the attitudes of the parents or family functioning. Kindly request that the family « play the game » knowing that they are not really in need of help as would be the case of parents impacted by the behavioral disorders of their child.

- Concrete explanation of what will be requested from the family during the three-week trial period.

- Playful use of a CD-Rom on parent-child relationships and child discipline.
- Demonstration of a session¹ with the CD-Rom with the father, the mother (and the child). Check on this occasion that the CD-Rom functions correctly on the computer of the family. Show the various menus of the CD-Rom.
- Participants will be asked to do a session three times per week, initially the parent only the first week, then couples the second week, then with the child between 3 and 7 years of age, the last week. At the end of each week, discussion with the student of approximately half an hour (which will be recorded to enable you to carry out your evaluation), with individual parents the first week, then the two parents as a couple the second week, and then with the parents and the child aged between 3 and 7 years, the last week.
- Finally, one is asked to complete a questionnaire before using the CD-Rom, and again, after the three weeks of use, knowing that the student will help the child to complete his/her questionnaire, and that the parents can see the questionnaires before making a decision. These pre-test questionnaires and post-test round, relate to the cognitive and behavioral variables targeted in the “Lou and us” intervention : the parental self-efficacy beliefs (evaluated by each parent individually ; self-report measures), the disciplinary styles and practices (evaluated by each parent individually ; self-report measures), a questionnaire completed by the child – exterior assessment) and the co-parenting questionnaire (evaluated by each parent individually)².

- One needs to ask the agreement of both parents for involvement in this project, and inform them they have the right to stop their participation at any moment if it doesn't meet with their satisfaction.

- If they agree, leave them the questionnaires to be completed and agree on a date to deliver the CD-Rom to them.

- Attention, all the questionnaires are anonymous! They must be identified with the name of the student and not with the surname of the family.

¹ A **complete session** means: choosing an appropriate locale, whether this be within the home or outside it, where Lou presents a troublesome behavior, plus a disciplinary option, three times, until one gets to the Overview screen, and finally the « golden rule » concluding observations.

² Meunier, J-C., & Roskam, I. (2009). Validation of the preschool and primary school form of a questionnaire assessing Parents' Childrearing Behaviour. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 38 (1), 166-175.

Meunier, J-C., & Roskam, I. (2007). Psychometrical properties of a Parental Childrearing Behaviour Scale for French-speaking parents, children and adolescents. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*, 23 (2), 113-124.

Durning, P., & Fortin, A. (2000). Les pratiques éducatives parentales vues par les enfants. *Enfance*, 4, 375-391.

Meunier, J-C., & Roskam, I. (2009). Self-efficacy beliefs amongst parents of young children: validation of a self-report measure. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 18, 495-511.

Feinberg, M.E., Fisher, A., & Kan, M.L. (to be published). A theoretically based measure of coparenting.

2. Delivery of the CD-Rom and collecting the pre-test questionnaire

- When you deliver the CD-Rom, you collect the completed pre-test questionnaires.
- Don't forget to help the child to complete her/ his questionnaire.
- Ask the parents if they have questions about the use of the CD-Rom. Remind them that they must complete three sessions that week, and they will need to print their results (Overview). Encourage them to note their remarks, reflections or questions on the back of the results screens (Overview) for the sessions planned for the end of each week.

3. After the first week of using the CD rom

You will conduct a semi-structured interview with each parent, father and mother, separately. Herewith some general recommendations for effective preparation.

Knowing the questions

In order to be in charge of the interview, it is necessary for you to know the questions "by heart". The groundwork for the interview which is proposed here aims at helping you in the meeting with the families. In no case, should you give the impression that you are simply reading your questions one after the other! Be professional!

Practicing the interview situation

In order to familiarize yourself with the interview situation and avoid errors which might discredit your interviewer's role during discussions with the parents, we advise you to simulate a such a discussion scenario with one of your friends.

The interview

Setting up the space in which the interview will occur

- A calm space, where it is possible to work with one of the two parents
- A table
- Two chairs placed perpendicularly (avoiding face-to-face discussion where possible)
- Placing the audio recording device on the table

The real interview

- Politesse (at the beginning and the end of the interview)
- Start the recorder
- Present your objectives as thoroughly as possible, what's going to happen during the interview, and answer any questions that might come up
- Allow questions about the use of the CD-Rom

Theoretical preface to the interview

Neutral and open attitude

Preserve a neutral attitude *vis-a-vis* the answers of the parents: try not to react to the statements, not to smile or adopt a doubtful posture. In order to invite the relative to speak, acknowledge his/her speech by nodding your head, accompanied by a small "mm". Make sure never to interrupt the parent when s/he is opening up and speaking. If

s/he perseverates too much on a question, wait for a pause and say something like “it is easy to talk with you, everything seems to come out on its own without prodding, could we turn to the following question? ». If the speaker doesn’t really pause, you can, as a last resort, use a closed question where the answer is either yes or no, in order to stop the verbal flow and to go on to the following question. It is also possible that the parent will speak relatively little, in which case use one or more questions inviting elaboration.

Trying not to influence the answers of the parent

Never translate with your own words a parent’s answers which do not seem clear to you. If you do, it is extremely likely that s/he will assent, even though what you’ve interpreted is not what the parent wanted to say. It is preferable to use the following method: repeat the sentence which poses a problem for you while adding “Can you specify? ». In order not to stimulate the social desirability of the parent, do not dwell on questions of their intentions. Lastly, it is important to understand this handbook really well, which should allow you to feel a certain confidence in yourself during the session.

Questions of clarification and helpful to getting things going (again) for the interviewer

Problems of comprehension

It can happen that the parent doesn’t understand the question. Initially, repeat simply the question, it may be that an acoustical problem hindered understanding. If the problem of comprehension with the contents of the question continues, repeat or reformulate the question

Problem of contents

It may be that the parent doesn’t give any or relevant information in his/her answer. In this case, the following follow-up questions might be useful:

Could you please specify?

Could you give me an example? Ah indeed, and what do you do in such a case? Could you give other examples?

You can also formulate in the form of a question the last sentence of the parent, or a sentence which s/he would have said just before that. When the parent stops speaking, always leave a little time before using a re-launch question. A moment of silence is sometimes necessary to the development of an answer. Never try to start a parent on a subject by saying “is this all that you have to say” but rather by saying “Do you have anything you might like to add on this subject?”. Use open-ended questions wherever possible and to an absolute maximum.

Do not forget to record the interview and to time the amount of time that the discussion lasts, separately with the mother, and the father. The recording makes it possible for you to write your evaluation report (cfr. point 7). Thus, you can listen again to excerpts without being obliged to take notes during the interview. In addition, the recording makes it possible for the instructor to check the degree to which students have respected and followed the instructions set out for their use and guidance.

Open questions

The questions of the interview must allow the parent to encounter and grapple with the complete sets of themes/concepts/options which the CD-Rom offers. Remember to use

the synthesis/results screens (Overview) often to show concrete examples from the parent's perceptions and choices.

- The child's behavior.
 - Are there behaviors Lou does which resemble those that you sometimes observe in your child? Which ones? Which ones might be different from those Lou does? (refer to the screens of synthesis/results (Overview) to remember examples with the parent)
 - Are these behaviors frequent?
 - Do they occur at home or elsewhere?
 - Do they happen in your presence or in the presence of specific other people?
 - Do you consider these behaviors difficult to manage?
 - Are you the only one to think that it is sometimes difficult to manage when your child behaves like this?
 - Does it sometimes happen to you to get negative remarks in connection with the way in which your child behaves? If so, from whom?
 - Do you sometimes ask yourself questions concerning the behavior of your child?
- Parental self-efficacy beliefs
 - Were there moments during the use of the CD-Rom where you wondered how a "good parent" would have reacted? Or did you complete the sessions in a completely spontaneous way?
 - Did the way in which the things are presented in the CD-Rom make you doubt which answer to give? When?
 - Does it sometimes happen to you that you have doubts as to how best to behave as a parent?
 - Does it sometimes happen to you to ask for advice from your friends, colleagues, or other people you interact with on a regular basis?
 - Does the advice you get help you or sometimes lead you to doubt yourself?
 - Do you regularly ask yourself questions in connection with your role as a parent?
 - Do you have the impression that all parents are asking themselves these kinds of questions, or do you think that you doubt yourself more than the average parent does?
 - Does it happen to you "to give up / to resign" *vis-a-vis* your child, in situations where you think that things will end up badly?
 - Do you have the impression that some of your children ask you more questions than their siblings? (if suitable)
 - Do you think that your spouse is asking herself/ himself the same questions as you do?
 - Do you speak about it together?
 - In general, does it help you?
 - Does it happen to you that you compare yourself to other parents (your entourage, among your friends, parents observed going for a stroll ...)?

- Compared to them, do you consider yourself to be a rather good parent?
Or do you think in general that they do better than you do?
- What is a good parent according to you?
 - According to you, does the CD-Rom comprise a kind of implicit definition of what is to be a good parent?
 - Educative and disciplinary strategies
 - Do you sometimes take time, as was suggested when using the CD-Rom, to establish an educative or disciplinary strategy, before interacting with your child, in order to maximize your chances to achieve your parental goals?
 - The CD-Rom requires you to evaluate the effectiveness of your educational strategies. Do you do this also spontaneously?
 - Can you tell me which ways of interacting function best and worst with (name of the child)?
 - Why does it function better/less well, than other ways of interacting with him/ her?
 - The CD-Rom invites you to explore alternative ways of reacting in relation to a given problem behavior. Can you think of real situations in which you feel you've tried lots of different ways of behaving but where none of those ways really works?
 - Were you astonished by any of the options on offer in the CD-Rom? Things you wouldn't have thought of doing, spontaneously? Things you would find difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of in your own situation?
 - Do you find yourself sometimes feeling caught up short when it comes to ideas about how to raise and discipline your child?
 - To whom or to what would you turn in order to get fresh ideas (partner, friends, family members, colleagues, doctors, books, television programs, internet)?
 - In general, do those sources prove helpful?
 - The CD-Rom proposes golden rules, guidelines to keep in mind in « every » situation. In your own situation, are their things you think are applicable in just about every situation? Could you give examples and why you think they should apply across the board? Meanwhile, are there things you think one should never do, or try at all costs to avoid doing? Which ones, and why?
 - Are there things you do in raising and disciplining your child that have elicited positive or negative reactions or comments from other people who were around when you did them? Or ones your partner did?
 - Do you find yourself often re-thinking the ways you discipline your child? Or to debrief in ways you were asked to do in using the CD-Rom?
 - Does that affect you more positively or negatively as you think about future interactions you then have with your child?
 - Do you think the way your parents disciplined you influence the way you discipline your child? In what ways, and to what extent?
 - Parental differential treatment (if suitable)

- Do you think that you behave with (name of target child) in a different way than with siblings?
- When using the cd-rom, did you think that you would make another choices for siblings?
- What are the most important differences between (name of target child) and siblings?
- Do you think that different childrearing behaviour towards different children is appropriate or that on the contrary is problematic?
- Co parenting
 - In general, do you agree on the way in which you interact with your child on the educational level?
 - Which are the areas in which you are more in agreement? More in disagreement? Why?
 - When you use the CD-Rom, are there any moments when you said in a similar situation, your partner/ spouse would undoubtedly not have reacted like you?
 - Are there elements of which you wanted to speak again with your spouse? Did you do it?
 - Are there moments when you'd like your partner to give you concrete support for a disciplinary decision you've made?
 - Are there ways in which your partner reduces your effectiveness, diminishes your role, or authority *vis-à-vis* your child?
 - Do you feel you and your partner offer mutual support and solidarity when it comes to difficult disciplinary decisions? Do you feel you can count on your partner's support when something doesn't go well with your child?
 - Do you feel like your partner is a good confident when it comes to things you find difficult as a parent?
 - Do you think using the CD-Rom will help you have interesting and useful discussions about your ways of raising and disciplining your child, or have an impact on your couple relationship or the relationship you have with your child?

4. After the second week of use of the CD-Rom

You will lead a semi-structured interview with both parents present.

The elements concerning the running of the interview are the same ones as those provided after the first week of interviews. Do not hesitate to go back to those before returning a second time to the family.

The open questions are the same ones as during the first interview but they are posed to the two parents together. Make sure to leave each one a space for individual expression. Do not hesitate to challenge a parent to talk even in the presence of his spouse/ partner.

REMINDER

Do not forget to record the interview and to time the lengths of the discussion with the two parents. The recording makes it possible to help you to write your evaluation report

(cfr. point 7). Thus you can replay and listen again to excerpts without being obliged to take notes during the interview. In addition, the recording makes it possible for the instructor to monitor how a given student is respecting instructions and following guidelines.

5. After the third week of use of the CD-Rom

You will lead a semi-structured interview with the two parents together and in the presence of the child who will have taken part in the three sessions with the CD-Rom.

The elements concerning how to conduct the interview are the same ones as those provided after the first week of intervention. Do not hesitate to refer back to the initial one before picking it up a third time with the family.

Open-ended questions

The questions of the interview must allow the parents and the child to approach all sets of themes/concepts which using the CD-Rom opens up. As often as possible, one should use the synthesis/results screens (Overview) to create concrete examples for the parents and the child. In addition, each participant should be given a time to speak. Do not hesitate to challenge the child or a relative who would not express him/herself with regard to his/ her partner. The interview is shorter by design so that the child remains present and involved for all the necessary length of time. Do not hesitate to formulate the questions so that the child can also express his/her opinion.

- The behavior of the child
 - Are there some of Lou's behaviors that aroused the interest of the child? Did s/he recognize her/himself in some of these behaviors? Which ones? (refer to the synthesis/results screens (Overview) to show examples from the parent).
 - Was the child able to speak about them?
 - Are these behaviors frequent?
 - Do they occur in the house or rather outside of the home?
 - Do they occur in your presence or in the presence of certain other people?
 - Does the child imagine that these behaviors are difficult to manage for his/her parents?
 - Did the child ask questions or react for example by laughing at seeing some of Lou's behavior?
 - you expect this type of reaction of her/him?
 - Did your child surprise you in the way in which s/he is aware of the difficulties that her/his behavior sometimes poses?
- Parental self-efficacy beliefs
 - Were there moments during the use of the CD-Rom where you reacted differently because your child was present? Or did you complete the sessions in a completely spontaneous way?
 - Did you have parent-child exchanges aiming for example at justifying your choices to the child?

- Did the child question your ways of reacting? How? Did you feel obliged to justify yourself?
- Did the child ask you to explain or justify your choices? Did s/he sometimes show disagreement?
- Educative/disciplinary strategies
 - Did your child have the chance to express her/ his opinion as to the way in which s/he perceived things? the parental reaction which s/he deems suitable?
 - It astonished you in his choices?
 - Did it establish links between what it saw on the screens and some of your reactions?
 - Were you often in agreement as to how best to act towards Lou?
 - How did he argue his/her choices?
 - Did your child mention other children whom s/he knows (for example brothers and sisters) and the way in which adults act towards them?
 - Did s/he make comments in connection with the “effectiveness” of your strategies?
 - Does s/he make a difference between the reactions of father and mother or does s/he treat the things overall from the point of view of his/her two parents?
- Parental differential treatment (if suitable)
 - Does the child have the impression that one acts differently with him/her compared to interactions with brothers and sisters?
 - Does that seem to pose any problem for her/him?
- Co-parenting
 - Have the reactions of your child helped make you aware of certain faults in your co-operation mother-father?
 - Does the child give the impression that it is facing a well-coordinated team?
 - Do you think using the CD-Rom between the two of you and with the child, will lead to interesting discussions in connection with your disciplinary style and choices? Relations in the couple and with your child?

REMINDER

Do not forget to record the interview and to time the length of time that the discussion with the two parents lasts. The recording makes it possible to help you to write your evaluation (cfr. point 7). Thus, you can relisten to the extracts without being obliged (E) to take notes during the interview. In addition, the recording makes it possible for the instructor to monitor the following of instructions and respect for guidelines, by the students.

6. Collecting the post-test questionnaires

At the end of the three weeks of intervention, the parents and the child are invited to fill in the post-test questionnaires. They are the same instruments as the ones used for the

pre-test. The family has one week to complete them; it is preferable that they are not filled in immediately after the third session but that the people have time to digest the information and think about their answers. The student collects the questionnaires during the week following the end of his/her intervention.

7. The Intervention Evaluation Report

The evaluation will comprise a maximum of 10, A4 pages. Its contents will relate to whole of your intervention, your “clinical” impressions, the evolution of the family in the course of time you’ve known them, and the interventions on the basis of questionnaires but also on the basis of qualitative information which you will have personally collected over the length of your meetings. Do not hesitate to refer to the contents of your interviews (recorded) to highlight relevant qualitative elements in your interactions.

Your Evaluation Report must be accompanied by the following appendices:

- 12 synthesis screens of results (Overview) printed by the users (3+3 the first week, 3 the second week and 3 the third week),
- Questionnaires completed by the parents and the child divided into pre-tests and post-tests,
- Three audio files relating to the interviews (given on Cd-Rom with the files identified in the name of the student followed by 1, 2 and 3 for the number of corresponding, ongoing, use.)
- Time in minutes and seconds of the lengths of each of the three interviews.