Lessons from Hypnosis

Standing at the Shoulders of Colleagues

Thanks to Susy!

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Standing on the Shoulders of Mentors

Sigmund Freud, M.D.
Milton H. Erickson, M.D. (1901-1980)

Audience Background?

Workshop Topics:
- The Ericksonian Approach to Psychotherapy: States Model
- Basic Principles of an Ericksonian Approach.
- Schools of Ericksonian Therapy.
- Choice Points
- Assessment: Questions as Strategic Interventions.
- Demonstration Interview Sculpting: An Experiential Intervention.
- Tailoring Therapist Development: Exercises for BEING the best therapist
- Erickson Video?

Hypnosis is the “mother” of all therapies
And there is often rejection of the mother.

Imagine this Diagram is a Car:

Opening Thesis
"Clients want to change their “state,” or they want others to change theirs."
Imagine this Diagram is a Car:

- Behavior
- Thinking
- Affect
- Sensation "State"
- Physiology

My Background

To provide an orientation from which to understand my perspectives.

My Background

In Hypnosis and Psychotherapy

Hypnosis

- I started studying hypnosis in 1971, including learning traditional methods.
- I studied intermittently with Milton Erickson from 1973 until he died in 1980.
- Studying hypnosis changed my orientation to therapy. It has made me experiential rather than didactic or psychoeducational.

Psychotherapy

I have advanced training in:
- Transactional Analysis
- Gestalt
- Family Therapy
I integrate approaches from diverse approaches including psychodynamic and cognitive behavioral methods.
I consider myself an experiential, integrative psychotherapist.

My Work at the Milton Erickson Foundation.

- I am the Founder and Director of the Foundation.
- The Foundation organizes Conferences, houses an archive, has a Press.
The Erickson Foundation Press
A new branch of the Milton H. Erickson Foundation.
A library of printed, audio, video and CD resources
For a complete catalog and order form:
www.erickson-foundation.org/press

Books from the Erickson Press

Training Videos Featuring Milton Erickson: Now in DVD!

Activities of the Foundation
Erickson’s parents and older siblings

Bout with Polio

Erickson’s Three Professional Careers
• Researcher (From 1920s to late 1940s)
• Clinician (from 1947 to 1970 when he retired)
• Teacher (From 1973 to 1980): The Teaching Seminar Years.

Traveling and Teaching

The Teaching Seminars
Milton Erickson
Respected Intellectual Figure

Margret Mead and Mrs. Erickson at the Erickson Home.

Erickson and Bateson, 1978
In Erickson’s living room.

Erickson’s Intellectual Heirs
• Jay Haley
• Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch.
• Rossi
• Bandler and Grinder
• Gilligan, Lankton, Yapko, O’Hanlon, etc

With Jeff Zeig, circa 1975

Milton H. Erickson, M.D.
His Work
Representative Case

Erickson’s Couple Therapy
With an Alcoholic

Basic Principles of an Ericksonian Approach

Basic Principles

1. Utilization
2. Individualized treatment
3. Orienting toward
4. Precision: Communicate for effect
5. Experiential treatment: Using drama
6. Positive expectation
7. Resource elicitation — Strength takes precedence over pathology

Basic Principles (cont.)

8. Atheoretical
9. Gift-wrapping
10. Responsiveness
11. Goal orientation
12. Guiding Associations

Revolutions in Therapy

Commencing in 1885
- Psychoanalysis and Psychodynamic Approaches: Freud and his followers
Post World War II
- Behavioral Therapy: Wolpe
- Humanistic Therapy: Rogers, and Perls.
- Systemic Approaches: Bowen, Satir, Whitaker, Haley, and Minuchin.
- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy: Beck and Ellis.
- Communications Approach: Erickson
The Evolution of Therapy

- Freud’s emphasis on understanding “Why,” which helped him develop a theory of personality.
- Intervention, which came second to developing theory, was based in illuminating the transference. It is based in a traditional (psychodynamic) lens, which presupposes that the problem is something other than its presentation, and that insight (into the transference) is the “royal road” to change.

Lenses

- Biology
- Developmental History
- Psychoanalysis
- Physical Structure
- Relationship Patterns
- Belief Systems
- Cognitions
- Spirituality
- Etc.

An Evolutionary/Darwinian “Lens”

Sometimes lenses fail us, and a way of viewing does not lead to the most effective way of doing.
Hypnosis
An Phenomenological Ericksonian “Lens”

Ericksonian Hypnosis
- An Orientation to Phenomenology and Heuristics
- Hypnosis is a strategic approach to change.
- Practicing hypnosis changes one’s orientation to psychotherapy.

Hypotheses that Underlie Contemporary Therapy
1. Patients come to therapy because they want a change in “state,” either that of themselves or that of others.
2. Hypnosis is a way of changing “states.”
3. Hypnotic (heuristic) principles of changing states can be applied without the necessity of a formal induction to facilitate change.
4. To modify states by using heuristics we must first map the phenomenology of the problem and the solution. Additionally, it is best if the therapist can flexibly assume different “states.”

Heuristics and Algorithms
- Algorithms can be used when there are concrete steps that lead to a finite solution.
- Heuristics must be used when steps and solutions are ambiguous.
  Mathematics is learned by a series of algorithms.
  Learning to love (or be happy) is a heuristic process.

Deconstructing and Reconstructing Hypnosis, Therapy and the Therapist
Important considerations:
- Hypnosis is about altering phenomenology
- Therapy is about altering phenomenology, in the structure of both the problem and the solution.
- BEING the best therapist requires altering phenomenology
Phenomenology

- “What is phenomenology? It's the bold project to eschew conceptualization of 'the real' for description of whatever presents itself as real in our deepest experience. It is, in other words, the discipline that makes the implicit meanings of lived experience explicit...”

Christopher M. Aanstoos, Ph.D

A “non-induction”

Do not go into trance.

A “non-induction”

Do not go into trance.

• I was not giving information or advice: I was NOT a teacher.
• I was working to influence mood and perspective. I was a Poet, using non-linear communication.

The Phenomenology of Hypnosis

ATTENTION

1. Internal
2. Focused
The Phenomenology of Hypnosis

INTENSITY
3. More Vivid
4. Less Vivid

ATTENTION
1. Internal
2. Focused

DISSOCIATION
5. “Things Just Happen.”
6. “Apart from” & “A part of”
7. Destabilization

RESPONSE
8. Minimal Cues/Implication
9. Search for Personal Meaning

Conclusions

• “Hypnosis” does not exist. It is a construct of convenience used to describe a sub-phennomenology.
• It is elicited by using heuristic processes.

Heuristics

To elicit phenomenological changes one must use heuristic principles. These heuristic principles are lessons from hypnosis that inform contemporary therapy.

Before listing some heuristics, I will further elaborate phenomenology by discussing the phenomenology of “problems,” “solutions,” and the “therapist.”
The “States” Model

Depression

• Internal
• In the past
• Inactive
• Negative
• Hopeless – no goals
• Intropunitive
• Withdrawn socially
• Tactile
• Vision limited

• Judgmental
• Negate/discount accomplishments
• Absorb social energy
• “If only …” vocabulary
• Physiologically deadened
• “I am not okay” existentially
• Victim

Conclusion

• “Depression” does not exist. It is a construct of convenience used to describe a sub-phenomenology.
• It is maintained by using heuristic processes.

The “States” Model

Phenomenology of the solution

Depression Happiness

• Internal
• In the past
• Inactive
• Negative
• Hopeless – no goals
• Intropunitive
• Withdrawn socially
• Tactile
• Vision limited

• External
• Present
• Active
• Positive
• Hope – directed
• (Balanced)
• Engaged
• Visual
• Scope and depth

• Judgmental
• Negate/discount accomplishments
• Absorb social energy
• “If only …” vocabulary
• Physiologically deadened
• “I am not okay” existentially
• Victim

Depression

Happiness

(cont.)

• Open
• Acknowledge accomplishments
• Emit Social Energy
• “Yea and …” vocabulary
• Arousal
• “We are okay” existentially
• Victor
Conclusion

• “Happiness” does not exist. It is a construct of convenience used to describe a sub-phenomenology.
• It is elicited by using heuristic processes.

The “States” Model

Phenomenology of the therapist

Traditional Therapist
- Empathic
- Attentive
- Accepting
- Quiet
- Educational
- Inquisitive
- Placid
- Warm
- Present
- “Vanilla”

Traditional Hypnotist
- Directed
- Commanding
- Powerful
- Active
- Suggestive
- Imperative
- Dynamic
- Calculating
- Future
- “Colorful”

Ericksonian Therapist
- Experiential
- Dramatic
- Active
- “Tour guide” – in charge
- Flexible
- Metaphoric – “oriented-towards”
- Utilizing
- Expectant
- Systemic
- Gift-wrapping

Conclusion

• “Therapists” do not exist. At least they should not exist. They are a construct of convenience used to describe a sub-phenomenology.
• By using heuristic processes flexibly in a way that is individualized to the patient, they can stimulate generative change.

A Phenomenological View

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Depression</th>
<th>Happiness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attention</td>
<td>Experiential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intensity</td>
<td>Dramatic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dissociation</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Etc.</td>
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On Line Resources

- Book on Milton Erickson from Sage Publishers:
  http://www.sagepub.co.uk London office
  http://www.sagepub.com USA office
- Books edited by Jeff Zeig including,
  “A Teaching Seminar with Milton Erickson”
  can be found at Taylor & Francis London or NYC
  http://www.taylorandfrancis.com
- Zeig Tucker & Theisen Publishers:  www.zeptucker.com
- Jeff Zeig’s Web Site:  www.zeig.com
- Erickson Foundation Listserv: www.topica.com/lists/EricksonList