


Foundations for Integrating Hypnosis into Your Therapies for Treating Anxiety, Depression, and Pain

with
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Webinar Section 10 of 12



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Stress Generation Patterns

- ❖ Bad choices that make matters worse
- ❖ Stressful consequences further compound depression
- ❖ Co-morbid conditions compound the problem
- ❖ Reflects poorer problem-solving skills
- ❖ Do not occur only during depression
- ❖ Reflects higher rates of parent pathology and early onset of their own disorders

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Depressed and Anxious Individuals Tend to *Underestimate* Their Personal Power...

Thus, passivity seems like a reasonable response

Ruminative Responses

- ❖ Expressing to others how badly one feels
- ❖ Pondering on why one feels badly
- ❖ Thinking about the possible consequences of one's symptoms

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Key Discrimination:
 When is it *useful analysis*... and
 when is it *useless rumination*?

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5

Common Characteristics of Ruminators

Ruminators typically:

- believe they're gaining insight through it
- more often have a history of trauma
- perceive they face chronic, uncontrollable stressors
- exhibit personality characteristics such as perfectionism and excessive relational focus

Nolen-Hoeksema, *Monitor on Psychology*,
Nov.,2005, 36(10), p.39

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6

Rumination Effects

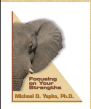
Rumination leads to:

- More negative, biased interpretations of events
- Greater recall of negative autobiographical memories and events
- Impaired problem-solving
- Reduced willingness to participate in pleasant activities

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Action Oriented vs. Ruminative Coping Styles

It is no coincidence that the therapies with the greatest empirical support all emphasize **ACTION** in treatment; clients may *feel* better in merely supportive therapy, but they will *do* better in active treatment with direction.



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It may seem counterintuitive, especially to those invested in “deep” psychotherapies, but there is a potential danger *in thinking too much...*

Communicating the need for action is critical in treating depression well

How do you communicate your expectation that the client will be active in treatment?

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Remember the "African Violet Lady of Milwaukee?"

This was a case Erickson reported in *A Teaching Seminar with Milton Erickson*, (Jeff Zeig, 1980)

Erickson treated a 52-year old spinster who lived alone in a big house. She was deeply depressed and terribly isolated. Her nephew, a physician who knew Erickson, asked him to see her on an upcoming trip to town...

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Erickson encouraged her to *actively engage* on a variety of levels:

- **Behavioral activation:** Grow African violets in large enough quantities to share generously
- **Cognitive activation:** Pay attention to others' celebrations and identify their significance
- **Social activation:** Engage with others and selflessly contribute to their lives
- **Emotional activation:** Focus on and amplify the feelings of warmth, compassion and generosity

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Case Example: Treating David

- Target: Internal orientation (“I know how women will react”)
- Target: Past orientation (“My past prevents me from having a future”)
- Target: Passivity fueled by a stable attribution (“Why bother to try?”)
- Hypnosis: **Metaphors** with the theme of people assuming they knew something to be true that turned out to be wrong
- **Task:** Conduct a survey and “reality test”

I encouraged David to *actively engage* on a variety of levels:

- **Behavioral activation:** Go to the mall and carry out a behavioral experiment
- **Cognitive activation:** Compartmentalize anxiety; Pay attention to others’ responses and consider their significance and contradiction to his views
- **Social activation:** Engage with others and evolve skills in asking questions, listening and contributing
- **Emotional activation:** Focus on and amplify the feelings of curiosity, acceptance and enjoyment

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One of the most valuable ways to employ hypnosis is to “seed” homework assignments, and one of the best ways to do this is through the use of metaphor

Behavioral Activation(BA) Therapy

An empirically supported approach to improving mood that emphasizes an increase in the frequency of behaviors and activities that the client finds pleasurable and rewarding

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Hypnotically Catalyzing Action:
Focusing on Behavioral Activation

- **Orient to hypnosis**
- **Induction**
- **Response set** re: behavior as **inevitable**, can be **intentional** (*doing* this session, calling a friend, paying a bill, fixing a sandwich, etc.)
- **Theme #1** : The merits of passivity in *some* contexts (e.g., metaphors regarding avoiding risks, some situations resolve themselves eventually, avoid responsibility and blame for outcomes, etc.)

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Hypnotically Catalyzing Action:
Focusing on Behavioral Activation

- **Theme #2**: The merits of action in some contexts (e.g., attaining results and making a difference, feeling in charge of aspects of one's life, evolving self-trust, earning respect of others, etc.)
- **Theme #3**: Defining and ordering steps, developing resources (e.g., evolving sensible and motivating goals, evolving curiosity and a willingness to experiment, evolving frustration tolerance, etc.)

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Hypnotically Catalyzing Action: Focusing on Behavioral Activation

Theme #4: Taking the next steps (e.g., being pulled forward by the force of your growing ambition, evolving a growing power to choose your course based on goals, growing a future orientation, etc.)

PHS: "The best way to predict the future is to create it" (i.e., the future hasn't happened yet, and your actions will shape it)

Closure

Disengagement

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19

The idea isn't action merely for action's sake...

The idea is to take sensible, timely,
problem-solving action.

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20

Thanks for your kind attention!

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21
