

Self-Healing Newsletter

For People Who Enjoy Helping Themselves

May 2007

IN THIS ISSUE

- ▶ **EMOTIONAL TRANSFORMATION THERAPY**
- ▶ **EXPERIMENTING WITH CHANGE**

HI EVERYBODY!

I hope you are having a chance to enjoy the warm weather that has finally arrived. In contrast to the beautiful weather with its promise of renewal, the news headlines have been filled with tragic events both at home and abroad. Several clients have reported how confused, overwhelmed, and helpless they have felt after watching news broadcasts. I have had to remind them that watching the news is not a mandatory activity. Some people might say that avoiding the news is tantamount to avoiding reality or putting one's head in the sand. I would counter that there is a big difference between keeping abreast of the headlines and immersing oneself in every gory detail of the news on a prolonged basis. Our ability to act in positive ways and to solve problems improves when we feel empowered and hopeful. By avoiding continual exposure to upsetting, highly graphic information, we have a better chance of staying energized and responding in positive, creative ways to challenges that arise in our own lives and in our communities.

A Typical Course of Counseling

In my last newsletter, I described how I helped a woman overcome Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, abuse, and alcoholism. After a colleague read the newsletter, he called to ask whether I only counsel people with severe difficulties. I explained that while a small percentage of my clients suffer from debilitating problems, I primarily work with high functioning people who want to improve specific aspects of their lives or relationships. After I got off the phone with him, I thought it might be helpful to clarify what a typical course of counseling might be like.

Clients usually progress through three overlapping stages during Emotional Transformation Therapy (ETT). When people first come to see me, their stressors have built up to a point where they feel some anxiety or depression, or they simply feel "stressed out." During the initial stage of counseling, I typically have them look at the colored lights while talking about their immediate concerns. This quickly reduces their symptoms or acute distress.

During the next stage of counseling, people often view the light while exploring the underlying issues and situations that have created their distress. Insights into marital situations, family problems, parenting challenges, job stressors, and many other issues are gained rapidly.

Once the problems that brought clients to counseling have been partially or fully resolved, they typically move on to the third stage of counseling which I call life enhancement. This stage might include things like finding a new job, starting a career, enhancing a marriage or romantic relationship, or improving creativity.

By combining traditional talk therapy with colored light therapy, I am usually able to assist clients in rapidly resolving difficulties, gaining new insights, adopting more functional behaviors, and enhancing their lives.

Cindy's Three Stages of Counseling

Cindy, a woman in her early forties, came to see me after her mother was hospitalized for a heart problem. Despite her mother's excellent prognosis, Cindy remained very anxious about her mother's situation. At first she attributed her high level of stress to the fact that she was the primary caregiver following her mother's discharge from the hospital. However, she soon developed sleep difficulties and felt constantly on edge even after her mother was well on her way to a full recovery.

During the first stage of counseling, I had Cindy view the colored lights to alleviate her feelings of stress and anxiety. She quickly realized that she had a thought in the back of her mind that her mother was in danger of imminent death. As she talked with me, she acknowledged that this thought was unrealistic and stemmed from the fact that someone else in the family had died a year ago from cardiac problems. Her realization led to immediate relief.

Once we had alleviated her initial stress reaction, Cindy began the second stage of counseling and explored issues underlying her fears. She began to discuss her concerns about her own aging and mortality. While viewing the colored lights, she was able to view aging from many different perspectives. The intensity of her fears diminished as more positive perspectives about aging replaced negative beliefs.

This led to the third stage of counseling. Cindy was ready to take actions to enhance her life. Since much of her stress and health concerns related to being overweight, she focused on that issue while viewing the colored lights. Over several sessions, she identified the emotional triggers of her overeating. These insights led to increased control and motivated Cindy to make other changes. With my encouragement, she consulted a nutritionist and hired a personal trainer. Cindy continues to see me occasionally when she experiences stress that interferes with her self-care.

Take Care of Yourself!

For those of you who have not yet experienced Emotional Transformation Therapy, it involves looking at colored lights that shine from a specialized light box while talking about one's concerns. This process creates a state of calm that neutralizes stress, anger, and anxiety, as well as many other negative emotions arising from abuse, illness, trauma, and unresolved loss. The positive emotional changes that occur are almost always long lasting and lead to improvements in many areas of a person's life.

With Emotional Transformation Therapy, difficult emotional concerns that used to require lengthy therapy now can be resolved in a relatively short period of time. There is no need to suffer! If you or someone you care about is struggling with any type of emotional upset or trauma, please call me at 630-960-2887 or email me at dlippmann@att.net to schedule an appointment. To learn more about Emotional Transformation Therapy, please visit my web site at www.wellness-innovations.com where you can download a free booklet on this innovative technique.

The newsletter topic for this month, written by my colleague, Tony, is entitled **Easy Changes**. It explains the importance of allowing ourselves to experiment and make changes in our lives.

EASY CHANGES

Therapy helps people to change.

Sometimes the changes people want to make take years to accomplish.

But, more often than you would imagine, the problem isn't with what they want to change but with the process of change itself.

Knowing that we CAN change is the first step.

We will get back to philosophizing about change at the end of this topic, but for now, let's toy with some ideas about things you can change easily.

See if you can come up with a couple of new ideas of your own in each section.

TIME

For at least one week:

Change the time your alarm goes off.
Move your shower from morning to night or vice versa.
Eat at entirely different times.
Change your work schedule.
Take definite breaks at work.
Do something different during your work breaks.
Surprise your friends by calling at time when they would not expect it.
Stop a hobby just to see what you will do with the extra time.
Purposely drive like a slowpoke if that is different for you!

PEOPLE

Call someone you have not talked to in years.
Start a conversation with a coworker you usually ignore.
Sit on the floor with a child or a pet just to see what happens.
Ask a clerk what they do for fun.
Change how much you talk about yourself with friends.

SURROUNDINGS

Rearrange your least-used rooms.
Radically change your most-used room.
Visit a park in the middle of the workday and stay for awhile.
Take a drive in the country (or the city).
Take a short vacation to a place you thought you would never want to visit.

ENERGY

Try a new type of exercise every day for a week.
Use less energy-boosting food (sugar, caffeine, chocolate, etc.)
Take brief naps.
Move when you are tired.
Rest when you are energetic.
Decide when to walk or drive, rather than just relying on habit.

ENTERTAINMENT

Throw a party for no reason.
Listen closely to music you usually do not like for thirty minutes.
Have breakfast at a restaurant instead of at home (or vice versa).
Watch a really stupid comedy or a deadly serious drama.
Go to a rock concert or an opera, whichever "isn't you."

FAMILY

Do adult things with kids.
Do kid things with adults.
"Be" your partner for a day and spend your time and energy the way they do.
Let household tasks pile up (or do not, if you usually do).

Have sex when you never do, where you never do, or how you never do.

WHY SHOULD WE DO SUCH THINGS?

There are at least four good reasons to mix things up like this.

The most obvious reason is for the enjoyment of it. Probably 95% of the things we do in a day are thoughtlessly routine and mind-numbingly boring. It can feel great to do things differently just because you can.

When we battle routine, we use our brains in ways we have not used them for a long time. Doing things differently on purpose shows us that we can experiment. And being able to experiment is one of life's most valuable skills.

Who know what permanent improvements you will discover just because you allowed yourself to experiment?

Most importantly, you will be proving to yourself that you CAN change. Then you will know that you can change just about anything.

If you are interested in making important life changes, gaining new perspectives, and enhancing your life, I can help. You deserve to enjoy life!

Best wishes,

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P.S. I want to thank all of you who have recently referred friends and family to me. If your friends would like more information on my services, have them visit my website at www.wellness-innovations.com. Please forward this newsletter to anyone who is experiencing stress or emotional upset.



Dan Lippmann has more than 25 years of individual and marital counseling experience. In addition to being licensed, he is a Board Certified Diplomate in Clinical Social Work. After facilitating his own recovery from a chronic pain condition in 1987, Mr. Lippmann began collaborating with experts in the field of mind-body health to develop innovative stress reduction and wellness techniques. He has been cited as a "Master Practitioner" in the book, Light Years Ahead, and in July 1999 his work on stress reduction was featured in the Chicago Tribune. He has also been interviewed about his work on radio and television. To receive this free monthly email newsletter, visit www.wellness-innovations.com.