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## Self-Healing Newsletter

### For People Who Enjoy Helping Themselves

#### April 2006

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### IN THIS ISSUE

#### HEALING FROM TRAUMA

#### Hi Everybody!

I hope you are enjoying the warmer weather and increased daylight. I often remind clients that life does not have to be stressful and should even be enjoyed! Spring reminds me to pay attention to my own words, so I have been spending more time outside appreciating nature and participating in activities, such as bike riding and walking, that are fun and relaxing. I hope you will care for yourself by having some fun this season.

This past month several of my clients have experienced profound emotional healing of past traumas through Emotional Transformation Therapy. One of these clients suggested that I write about how effective Emotional Transformation Therapy is for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. For those of you who have not yet experienced Emotional Transformation Therapy, it combines viewing colored light that is emitted from a specialized light box with 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.

#### Healing from Trauma

A surprising number of people suffer needlessly from undiagnosed Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PTSD often results when someone is exposed to a dangerous or violent situation, such as a car accident, violent crime, war experience, or physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. When people encounter situations that remind them of the trauma, they experience fear, upsetting memories, involuntary flashbacks, and symptoms such as insomnia, hyper-vigilance, and irritability. Most forms of therapy take months or even years to treat PTSD and are often only partially successful.

With Emotional Transformation Therapy, long term treatment for PTSD is often no longer necessary! Imagine my surprise when I realized that **all** the clients I had treated for PTSD during the last thirteen years were completely relieved of their symptoms, provided they had finished the course of treatment. Clients whose traumas were limited to one or two incidents became symptom free in only two to five sessions, while clients who had more complex traumas usually experienced significant relief in six to ten sessions. Helping people recover from serious trauma has been the most satisfying work of my career.

#### Cindy's Healing Story

Cindy is a thirty-five year old woman who came to see me due to heightened anxiety and difficulty falling asleep. In her first session, she revealed that she had experienced several forms of sexual abuse. She had been abused by her uncle several times at age six. During junior high, she had been hugged and fondled by her male basketball coach. In high school, she was sexually pressured by boyfriends and experienced a near date rape. As a young adult, she often felt uneasy around men and would become easily irritated with male bosses. At the time she came to see me, she was experiencing anxiety at night and was having difficulty falling

asleep. Upon my questioning, she realized that she was having brief flashbacks to these abuse incidents while lying in bed.

Cindy's openness about her abuse made it possible to use Emotional Transformation Therapy to quickly treat the specific abuse incidents. While looking at the colored light, she realized that her increased anxiety was related to her daughter recently turning six. She noted that she was more preoccupied than usual with her daughter's safety. At this point, I had her focus on the abuse that took place with her uncle at age six, and we used special eye movement techniques to alleviate her fear and shame over what took place. At the second session, Cindy reported that she was sleeping better and that her memories were much less upsetting. In sessions two and three, we continued using eye movement techniques combined with discussion to alleviate her shame and anger at her coach and past boyfriends. Although Cindy continued therapy with me for two more months to work on marital issues, her PTSD was completely gone after three sessions. She was delighted to be able to leave this aspect of her past behind.

### **Self-Help for Stress**

Whether you are experiencing stress from PTSD or for any other reason, there are effective self-help techniques that can provide short-term relief. Ten scientifically proven techniques are described in the excellent book, ***Stress Free for Good*** by Dr. Fred Luskin and Dr. Kenneth R. Pelletier. Starting in May, I will feature one stress reduction technique a month on my website. I will use the following criteria for choosing a technique: it can be learned in ten minutes, practiced in less than a minute, and work in less than ten seconds!

### **Take Care of Yourself!**

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 are experiencing emotional upset. If you or someone you care about is struggling with post-traumatic stress or other difficulties, please call me at 630-960-2887 or email me at [dlippmann@att.net](mailto:dlippmann@att.net) to schedule an appointment. To learn more about Emotional Transformation Therapy, please visit my web site at [www.wellness-innovations.com](http://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 ***Sexual Abuse in Childhood***. It describes how childhood sexual abuse affects adult life experience. If you or someone you know has experienced abuse or some other trauma, please give me a call.

## **SEXUAL ABUSE IN CHILDHOOD**

### **AN APOLOGY TO MALE SURVIVORS**

I will be using female pronouns throughout this article. I will, however, make my statements and examples generic enough so you can easily understand what I am saying by simply changing the pronoun.

### **WHAT IS SEXUAL ABUSE?**

Sexual abuse is **unwanted sexual contact**.

The age of the person involved must be taken into account when defining the word "unwanted."

**For children, ALL sexual contact that is not simply "exploration among equals" is unwanted and abusive.**

(Even inappropriate "leering" by an adult – without touch – is sexually abusive to the child.)

### **THE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCE**

A child who has to deal with sex is OVERWHELMED by it.

Children do not have the bodies or the minds to cope with intense sexual energy.

Making a child deal with sex is like demanding that they: "Learn calculus or die!"  
Since it is impossible for them to handle sex, they often just "wait to die."

## **ABOUT “SPLITTING”**

The feeling of being “overwhelmed” as a child usually leads to “splitting.” It is as if the child **breaks into two pieces** mentally. Half of her has one “life” and the other half has another “life.” What she is robbed of is a WHOLE life.

## **THE MIND/BODY SPLIT**

The child EITHER knows what she thinks OR what she feels, but NEVER BOTH at the same time. She usually focuses on what she thinks because the feelings are just too much to handle for a child. Each time the feelings break through she feels abused all over again – just by the intensity of all that accumulated and unexpressed terror, anger, and sadness.

## **THE ADULT EXPERIENCE**

If the childhood abuse was “overwhelming” and the child had to “split” to survive, the ONLY way the adult will ever know about her childhood abuse is through FLASHBACKS.

## **WHAT IS A FLASHBACK?**

A flashback is a MOMENTARY SPLIT-SECOND RECOLLECTION of the abuse. Sometimes this split second awareness is visual: SEEING something mentally that seems like a dream but feels SO real. At other times it is auditory: HEARING something that was heard during the abuse. Often it is kinesthetic: FEELING something that was felt during the abuse.

### **A Flashback is “Triggered” by Ordinary Events in Adult Life**

The most common example is when an adult is having sex and her partner moves in a way which reminds her of the abuser’s movements. But these “triggers” are very unique to each person, and they can be either one-of-a-kind events (like a scene from a movie) or very frequent occurrences (like walking past a certain building).

### **Triggers Cannot Be Avoided! They Are Too Commonplace**

A person can ignore the SIGNIFICANCE of triggers for a while (by saying they “mean nothing”), but the triggers will continue to haunt her until the memories that prompted them are faced.

### **The Terrorized Inner Child Will Not Be Ignored For Long**

Once a woman notices that she has grown into a powerful enough person to begin to protect herself, that inner little girl will keep telling the grown-up self over and over about her memories – until she finally gets the safety and protection she has needed for so long!

## **THERAPY FOR SEXUAL ABUSE**

If you know you were sexually abused, GET PROFESSIONAL HELP! For something this complicated, there is only so much you can hope to do on your own. Even when you are receiving excellent help from a therapist, there will be a LOT you will need to do on your own.

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It is never too late to get help for traumas you have experienced. Please give me a call if you would like to experience significant relief from trauma through Emotional Transformation Therapy. You deserve to enjoy peace of mind and healing.

Wishing you a peaceful spring,

**Dan Lippmann, LCSW, BCD, Director**

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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](http://www.wellness-innovations.com). Please forward this newsletter to your friends and associates who may be experiencing traumatic stress.

*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](http://www.wellness-innovations.com).*