

HYPNOSIS and Other Stories

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CHAPTER 8 : Emotions

Chapter 9 - Emotions

If 80% (or more) of all illness is stress mediated, any method that teaches a person how to relax is going to have a positive impact on overall health and recuperative powers. What an amazingly wonderful sense of well-being when the body relaxes thoroughly.

Sometimes relaxation is insufficient for achieving the relaxed state of well-being we are striving for. Sometimes we need insight, skill training, goal setting. Psychoeducational or psychotherapeutic strategies may be needed to uncover and address emergent mental and emotional stuff that has powerful meaning for the person. Seeking transformation can reveal secondary gain, perhaps the person has a habit of responding in a certain way, and hasn't yet allowed the emergence of more effective strategies. Some folks are "stuck", still dancing with the old devil, the familiar devil instead of any possible new ones.

In 1987, I got to spend a month with Mark Gilboyne studying his dynamic strategies for human growth and development. He was a student of Fritz Perls, and demonstrated a highly effective Gestalt approach incorporating kinesthetic communication to direct a session, "Is there any part of the body that needs to relax still further?" Residual tension is the big arrow saying, "Look here!" Residual tension indicates unresolved "stuff" (that's the technical word). Emotions are the stuff that makes life meaningful and painful.

The goal of our sessions is to gain as much relaxation in the body / mind / spirit as possible. As we focus on the relaxing, there is a wonderful sense of well-being that occurs when the body relaxes. We let go of that "stuff". Gilboyne based his hypnotherapy uncovering work on the idea that all problems have a foundation in the fear of being unloved or unlovable. When the client starts talking about feeling unloved or unlovable, we are at the core of their wound.

Our goal is to cultivate self-love sufficient for discerning what is meaningful and valuable, supports healthy love of other and living more joyfully right now.

Loving / accepting self can make it more pleasant / acceptable to relax and accept life with all its challenges. Allowing self to relax right now, perhaps slow down and accept life right now, has the potential to engage the senses more fully

in observing / perceiving. Changes in perception, slowing of observing, can help pace the person for wise / prudent decisions that are more congruent with internal values and external demands.

Our goal is to be fully present right now, in this moment.

We can practice imagining the infinity loop; with one wing the past, the other wing the future, the X at the center the moment of now. Where on that infinity loop does the "bead" representing "I am here" exist for that person, on the right, left, or in the center? We strive for the center, create visual imageries of being in the center, in the moment of NOW. We slide the bead, like a bead on an abacus, to the X at the center of the infinity loop. We strive for a relaxed state RIGHT NOW

Inside you is a knowing. It knows everything about you and it knows that it knows. It has a core of love, light, truth, warmth, bliss, peace, humor, forgiveness, and a perfect blueprint of health. This is your true gift of life, your inner wisdom, stable and ever present center of creative intelligence. Emotions are energy in motion in the body, and an excellent map to the center of your Being

The first things that can pull or knock you off your center are shame and guilt. Shame is related to something you think you are. Guilt is related to something you do or have done. Shame and guilt leave you "stuck" in that time frame in which you made a decision somewhere in the past. Guilt can be a useful tool during decision making times, but it is a terrible drain on energy when indulged in daily. Shame and guilt are both false information that people use to control and manipulate themselves and others. In our society, some of the most common shame and guilt is related to being sexual human beings. Although advertisers use the lustful urges to stimulate the subconscious, our society can have a remarkable double standard about it being unacceptable to discuss positive sexuality openly. This is an amazingly pervasive incongruent message of our society.

After accumulating internalized messages intended to instill shame and guilt as control mechanisms, there can accumulate a layer of sadness, sorrow, grieving and pain. These things can be temporary situations or habitual thought patterns. In the case

of temporary states of being, these states contain large doses of change and learning. In the case of habitual thought patterns, they may be inappropriate feelings for the experience at hand, but have been automated through repetition. If sustained over time, the accumulated sadness, sorry, grieving and pain become inappropriate states that trigger fear.

Unless there is a gun in my face, or an animal approaching with the intent to eat me, fear is largely based on past pain and the concern that it will happen, again, in the future. Appropriate fear is based on a presence of authentic danger. Inappropriate fear is based on something other than now, instead of an actual response to the real issues at hand.

When you have been sufficiently provoked, or frightened long enough, you will respond with a desire to protect yourself. This can be observed in the hard shell of anger that emerges in response to a perceived threat. Behind all expressions of anger is some form of fear.

If you are successful at hiding from your feelings and you pretend that you do not experience shame, guilt, sadness, sorrow, grieving, pain, fear and anger; chaos and confusion will set in. Chaos and confusion are the result of conflicting messages, decisions and actions. The inner message is "I can't, or won't, decide."

If you are successful at avoiding decision making, you may find yourself in denial, numb to the discomfort of chaos and confusion. Numbness and pretending leads to the idea that "Nothing is wrong; Everything is ok."

Pretending nothing is wrong and living with a numbness eventually leads to the experience of the walking dead.

With angry clients, I will ask:

What thoughts do you have that precede the feeling of anger?

What are you most afraid of?

What kind of fears are beneath the hard shell of anger?

What kinds of sadness / sorrow / grieving / pain is beneath the fear?

Is it a present situation, or memories of the past, concerns about the future?

What kind of shame / guilt is beneath the sadness / sorrow / grieving / pain?

Would it be ok to practice forgiveness? Right now? For within the forgiveness is the seed of love

Anger is a great tool, it protects us, and is the emotional version of the physical tension in the body that is such a useful tool saying, "LOOK HERE!" Anger is a sign of the hard edge above the soft underbelly of something feared or fearful.

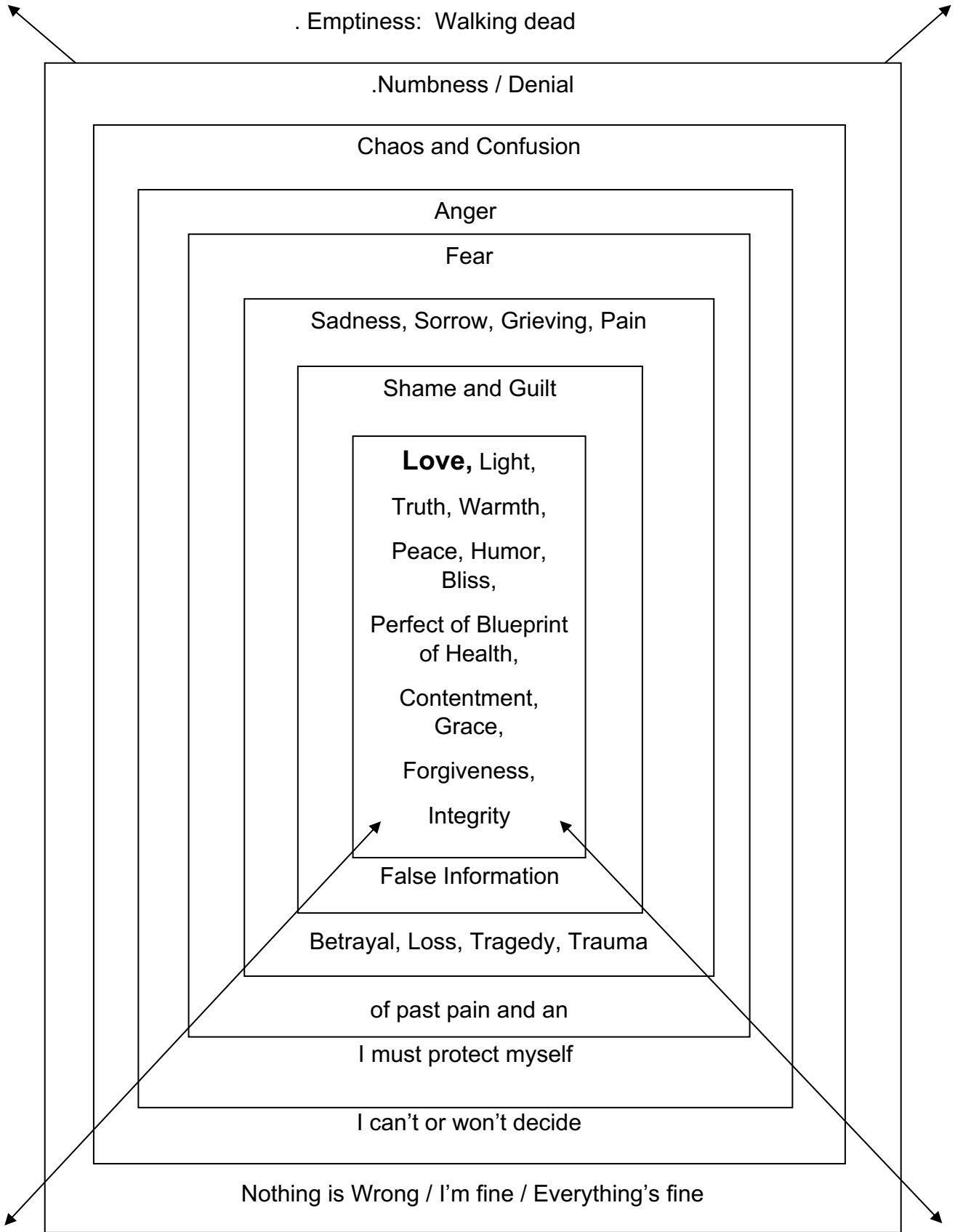
With angry clients who are upset that they are stuck, not changing fast enough, I use myself as an example, "I'm stubborn. My change process can be rapid, but most often it's slow and deliberate because I'm stubborn. I want to know everything about everything as I change. How about you? Are you normally fast and quick in your decision making and change strategies, intuitive and impulsive, or are you methodical, slow and stubborn?" Most angry folks will say, "I'm stubborn." This is when we discuss perfectionism (does it have to be 100% or can it be 93%, an A?), patience and impatience (are you the kid who can persist or the one who has to have it right now?). We discuss goal setting, how to set the mind like a bow, and the thoughts / goals like arrows. We notch the arrow onto the bow string, aim truly, and left fly, "in the long run we only hit what we aim at" (Thoreau).

The emotional diagram³ of this article is intended to provide a visual imagery of the layers of emotions that can help steer the process of hypnotherapy toward a healthy recentering in love, forgiveness, humor, peace of mind, endearment. The goal of this approach is to live at the center of the loving self.

The following Emotional Diagram initially developed in her own therapy, and has evolved over time. All psychological theorists tend to build their theories based on their own issues and subjective experiences. If you want to "peel your own onion," draw a circle and write, "LOVE," in the center. Build out the layers of your own onion with what you encounter that pull you away from your loving. It took Dahl months to get a draft that worked for her. Dahl added "contentment" in the fall of 2020, in response to a hypnosis student asking where it would fit in Dahl's onion.

³ © 1990 Monica Geers Dahl, Emotional Diagram, pp. 224, Hypnotherapy: Vol. II

. Emptiness: Walking dead



References

Dahl, M.G. (1994). *Hypnotherapy, Vol. 2: Hypnotherapy*. Key West, FL: Author.

Available on Amazon.

IMDHA Resources

<https://www.hypnosisalliance.com/imdha/>



The International Medical and Dental Hypnotherapy Association can help you find hypnosis practitioners, training in hypnosis, events, a virtual library and an online store.

There are four types of membership providing access to tens of thousands of hypnosis and other articles for human health and well-being: associate, student, certified, and educator.

“The International Medical and Dental Hypnotherapy Association is a Referral Service dedicated to providing the community with excellently trained Certified Hypnotherapists. IMDHA Practitioners work harmoniously with allied healthcare professionals to aid individuals in dealing with specific challenges and procedures.

Our objective is to help create a sense of peace and harmony within the individual so that the current challenge can be met and dealt with in a positive manner, thus making the journey toward wellness and peace of mind less traumatic.

Our goal is to reduce the stress the individual is experiencing as a hospital patient and / or surgical patient, etc. Less stress allows the body to focus attention on its natural course of healing. The method to be used is hypnosis.

In addition to medical challenges, all IMDHA members assist persons in dealing effectively with non-medical problems. Finding solutions to self-sabotaging habits leads to peace of mind and control of unwanted, negative behavior. Self Empowerment is the goal.

The International Medical and Dental Hypnotherapy Association: Dedicated to Healing: Body, Mind and Spirit.”

M.G. Dahl has classes scheduled through 2026

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Her training manuals are available on Amazon.

Hypnotherapy, Vol. 1: Basic Hypnosis.

Hypnotherapy, Vol. 2: Hypnotherapy

Hypnotherapy, Vol. 3: Electives

Her chapters (Chapter 10, 1st ed.; Chapter 13, 2nd ed.) regarding the use of neurofeedback for reducing the adverse impact of PTSD and mTBI are found in *Restoring the Brain*, edited by Hanno Kirk. Both editions are available on Amazon.

She is co-author of an article with Hanno Kirk that is in press, 2022.