

Ericksonian Approaches

The current issue of the *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis* (Vol. 48 (4), Oct 2000, pp. 418 - 436) contains an article titled "Ericksonian Approaches to Hypnosis and Therapy: Where Are We Now?" by William Matthews. This article is an overview of Matthews' perspectives on the status of Ericksonian approaches, as a recognized and accepted method of therapy. Following the article, two discussions explore some of the points Matthews identified as central to Ericksonian approaches.

In the first discussion, Joseph Barber challenges some of the central ideas presented by Matthews. Barber's critique reaches beyond the points raised by Matthews into the broader arena of Ericksonian approaches. He argues that "... confusion is heightened by a lack of understanding of the hypnotic processes among most Ericksonians, the consequence of misguided emphasis on 'naturalistic' technique." (p. 427). Barber concludes with an important clarification, because Ericksonian assumptions have achieved "credibility" largely through anecdotal evidence, they should be considered hypotheses until empirical evidence is found.

The second discussion – by Burkhard Peter and Dirk Revenstorf – questions the applicability of the research cited by Matthews and its relevance to the Ericksonian frame of reference. These two authors utilize an analogy in their reply to questions raised about the existence of a "wise" portion of the unconscious that artfully demonstrates the eloquence and power of their own way of using Ericksonian approaches. Peter and Revenstorf argue that "hypnosis is mainly skillful communication" and that both "hypnosis and the unconscious are entities, not constructs" (p. 436).

All four authors agree that further exploration and research is needed. The three articles discuss essentials of hypnosis, as well as what constitutes core elements of the Ericksonian method and its effectiveness.

Summary by:

Roxanna Klein RN, PhD.

Three Views of Traumatic Stress Applied Neuroscience and Clinical Practice

Bessel van der Kolk, MD
Stephen Porges, Ph.D., Robert Scaer, MD

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Presenters

Bessel van der Kolk, MD
Professor of Psychiatry
Boston University School of Medicine

Perhaps the single most important researcher and author in the field of traumatic stress and PTSD. Dr. van der Kolk is an exceptional speaker who excels in integrating scientific findings with the practical human realities of clinical practice.

Stephen Porges, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Human Development
University of Maryland, College Park, MD

Dr. Porges is one of the most innovative and respected researchers in physiological-developmental psychology. A clear, compelling speaker, Dr. Porges provides the physiological knowledge needed to understand how trauma clinicians engage mind, body and developmental processes in the healing of traumatic stress.

Robert Scaer, MD
Private Practice, Boulder, CO

Dr. Scaer works at the interface between neurology, pain management and modern traumatology, as highlighted in his upcoming book, *The Body Bears the Burden: Trauma, Dissociation and Disease*, (Haworth Press)

Topics

- What is state-of-the-art in treating PTSD and dissociative disorders?
- What does neuroimaging tell us about traumatized vs. normal brains and how treatments such as EMDR "reset" the brain?
- What is the impact of psychological trauma on personality development and how can we better heal the traumatized self?
- How can trauma mimic or induce learning disabilities such as ADHD that are typically attributed to genetics?
- How are heart-brain communication techniques creating breakthroughs for autism, conduct disorders and problems with attention?
- How does the emerging psychobiology of traumatic stress help us understand and treat aggressive or violent behavior?
- How can new stress measurement devices based on heart rate variability help us diagnose and treat traumatic stress disorders?