

AUDIO REVIEW

Utilization Sobriety: Incorporating the Essence of Mind-Body Communication for Brief Individualized Substance Abuse Treatment

By Bart Walsh, MSW

Audio available at: www.erickson-foundation.org (click Store)

Reviewed by Roxanna Erickson-Klein, LCDC, PhD

BT 16SC10AUDIO
90 minutes

Bart Walsh opened this session with an overview on his work in Portland, Oregon, and said that he would be briefly talking about resolving accumulated emotions, gene expression, ideomotor signaling, and the parts model of ego state work as they pertain to treatment of substance abuse.

He then moved quickly into an experiential demonstration with the audience as a whole that illustrated a powerful, rapid non-invasive ideomotor technique. He invited audience members to self-explore, which was powerful, and gave rise to many questions, which Walsh then used as a platform to provide information and instructions. He calls this technique “goldfinger.” Successfully used, the goldfinger technique connects with the benefits of the addictive substance. The individual can then use that skill -- reconnecting at will to the pleasurable parts without the risks and difficulties associated with use.

After the demonstration, Walsh discussed how his use of ideomotor signaling and the suggestions made with the goldfinger technique are actually a naturalistic trance induction. His went on to engage additional hypnotic approaches -- connecting with different parts of the self. Ideomotor signals provide a potent tool that is broadly used to facilitate exploration of problematic symptoms and other factors that may be less evident.

Walsh’s considerable experience with both the technique and the target population provided resource illustrations relevant to the questions that arose from the

audience. He used an analogy of the unconscious mind as a library. Accessing unconscious resources is like getting a library card. He generously provided case examples, as if he was picking certain books within the library of knowledge.

Walsh described the sequence in which he works with people using a series of steps. Starting out with a manner often used at treatment centers, he begins with rapport building, history taking, and description of where the substance(s) fit into current daily life. He then goes into his own techniques of identifying the “best parts” of substance use, and engages the goldfinger technique to tap into the beneficial aspects.

He explained the use of the parts model, acknowledging, “Anxiety comes with the territory of addiction.” Walsh redirected the negative energy into a new “job” of information processing. He then explained how the different parts of an individual can express themselves. Individual parts can get the attention or time that is needed to work, so that individuals work in harmony. Specific instructions were given to facilitate the release of fear, to address internal needs of various parts of the self, and to elicit the concept of internal teamwork through creative reassignment of jobs.

Walsh connected these ideas with current research on gene expression, and described the process of using experiential work as a technique to activate or suppress the gene switches. Due to the potential for some of the mechanisms to become reactivated after an interval of time, Walsh recommends that his clients perform a daily self-check and he sometimes recommends ceremonies of rituals to mark the changes that occur.

Walsh’s folksy style and wealth of experience working in this area complemented his semi-structured manner of presentation. The quality of the recording download was excellent, and Walsh was careful to cover the topic in a way that one could clearly follow, even without the written materials from which the audience members benefited.

The overall process of turning off the addictive force can be useful for many different conditions. Walsh’s goldfinger technique is solidly based on research, and provides a quick, effective way to get to deep emotions. I was left with the feeling that Walsh has a lot to offer, and I look forward to learning even more about the methods that he has developed.

The Erickson Foundation Newsletter Archive is Online!
<http://erickson-foundation.org/newsletter/archive/>