NOTES FROM THE FOUNDATION

Staff Changes

John A. Moran, Ph.D., has resigned his position as Associate Director of the Erickson Foundation to enter full-time private practice in Phoenix. He served as Associate Director for one year, and his efforts on behalf of the Foundation are appreciated.

Dr. and Mrs. Moran are expecting their first child in August, 1985. The Board of Directors and the staff of the Erickson Foundation wish the best to Dr. Moran and his family.

Barbara Bellamy, Administrative Assistant of the Foundation resigned her position to move to Texas to join her family. Ms. Bellamy has worked for the Erickson Foundation on both a part time and full time basis since early 1980.

It is difficult to express the magnitude of appreciation we have for the extraordinary contributions that Ms. Bellamy has made to the Foundation. She shall be dearly missed and our warmest wishes go with her.

Benefit Workshops

Stephen R. Lankton, M.S.W., led a four-day workshop on "A Systems Approach to Ericksonian Hypnosis and Family Therapy" at the Erickson Foundation in February, 1985. The workshop was well attended and well received. Mr. Lankton conducted this workshop as a benefit for the Erickson Foundation, and other than a modest honoraria accepted by Mr. Lankton, all proceeds went to the Foundation.

Betty Alice Erickson Elliott and Roxanna Erickson Klein sponsored a workshop in clinical hypnosis with Dr. Stephen Gilligan and Dr. Paul Carter in April, 1985 in Dallas, Texas. All profits from the workshop, which reached its capacity of 75 paid registrants, are being donated to The Milton H. Erickson Foundation. Dr. Carter and Dr. Gilligan agreed to donate a percentage of their fees to the Foundation. Additionally, all organizational efforts and incidental expenses were donated by Roxanna and Betty Alice. The Foundation will receive a complete set of

A Special Thank You

The Foundation extends a special note of appreciation to J. Charles Theisen, J.D., who has been generous enough to donate numerous hours of legal consultations and support to the Foundation. We greatly appreciate this service and want to express our thanks to Mr. Theisen.

Bronze Bust of Milton H. Erickson, M.D.
Donated to the Erickson Foundation

The Milton H. Erickson Foundation is the proud recipient of an outstanding bronze bust of the late Milton H. Erickson donated by Elizabeth M. Erickson. The bust is a duplicate of a terra cotta bust owned by the Erickson family.

The bust depicts Dr. Erickson in a typical pose resting his chin on his right hand and elegantly captures Erickson’s focused

Editor’s Notes

Welcome again to the newsletter. I ask any of you who have short case examples, short articles, book reviews or other material for the newsletter to send it along to me for consideration. Thanks to all of you who wrote with congratulations on my marriage. We had a wonderful honeymoon on Barbados and a “family honeymoon” in Hawaii.

The next issue of the newsletter will be expanded in size and number of copies especially for the Evolution of Psychotherapy Conference.

Business Matters: Closing date for submissions to the next Newsletter is August 1, 1985. All business and money matters, including subscriptions, should be addressed to the Foundation’s offices in Phoenix.
The Evolution of Psychotherapy

PRESENTERS: Aaron Beck
Bruno Bettelheim
Murray Bowen
Albert Ellis
Viktor Frankl
Mary Goulding
Robert Goulding
Jay Haley
Ronald Laing

Arnold Lazarus
Cleo Madanes
Judd Marmor
James Masterson
Rollo May
Salvador Minuchin
Zerka Moreno
Erving Polster
Miriam Polster

Carl Rogers
Ernest Rossi
Virginia Satir
Thomas Szasz
Paul Watzlawick
Carl Whitaker
Lewis Wolberg
Joseph Wolpe
Jeffrey Zeig

*Provisional

FORMAT: Emphasis will be placed on interaction among the faculty.
Supervision Panels, Topical Panels, Invited Presentations,
Workshops, Demonstrations, and more!

WHEN: DECEMBER 11 - 15, 1985
WHERE: PHOENIX, ARIZONA
ELIGIBILITY: Doctoral degree or Masters degree in the health professions, or
graduate students in accredited programs.
APPROVED: The Milton H. Erickson Foundation is accredited by the
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TUITION: U.S. & Canadian
$300 U.S. ($200 for students*) for registrations postmarked on
or before August 31, 1985.
$350 U.S. ($250 for students*) for registrations postmarked on
or before November 20, 1985.
$400 U.S. ($300 for students*) for on-site registrations if space
is available.

Other Foreign
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CANCELLATION FEE: $25 if received in writing and postmarked by November 20,
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Enclosed is my registration fee of $ ____________________.

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Phoenix, Arizona 85016
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(602) 956-6186
DONATIONS

Since the Winter, 1985 issue of the Erickson Foundation's Newsletter, we have received $4,036.34 in donations. We wish to express our appreciation to the following people for their support.

David E. Mullen
Leon Krier, Ph.D.
Eric Larsen, M.A.
Carole P. Smith, Ph.D.
Curt T.R. Fielding, M.F.C.C.
Shirley E. Bliss
Donald Miskiman, Ph.D.
Jerry Amaya, M.A.
Lusijah Marx, M.S.N.
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Akira Otani, Ed.D.
Malcolm Hart, Ph.D.
Marcha R. Ortiz, D.N.S.C.

Dava L. Weinstein, M.S.W.

PATRONS OF THE MILTON H. ERICKSON FOUNDATION

Roxanna Erickson Klein, daughter of Dr. & Mrs. Milton H. Erickson, became a Patron of The Milton H. Erickson Foundation in August, 1984. We are very honored to have Ms. Klein as a patron and wish to express our gratitude for her contributions and support.

The Board of Directors is extremely grateful to Ms. Shirley E. Bliss of the U.S. Foreign Service for her large donation to the Erickson Foundation. Ms. Bliss has been a long-time Patron of the Foundation and attends our Seminars and Congresses when possible.

The Patron's plaque at the Erickson Foundation now reflects the names of Roxanna Erickson Klein as a new Patron and of Shirley E. Bliss as a continued Patron.
MEDIA OF INTEREST


CONTACT/EXCHANGE

Bill O'Hanlon will be in the British Isles from September 9 to September 22 (9/13-15 already booked). Anyone interested in arranging a talk, presentation, workshop or private sessions with him should contact The Therapeutic Learning Center, P.O. Box 24471, Omaha, NE 68124. Telephone number from outside U.S. (010) 402-391-4223.

Dr. Jan Swets, M.D., psychiatrist from the Netherlands, will be in the U.S. from June 15 to mid-July, 1985. He will be speaking to numerous organizations on topics such as:

1. Integration of hypnosis with other therapies.
2. Use of hypnosis with psychosomatic complaints.
3. Relapse prevention and motivating techniques for manic-depressive patients.
4. Language and trance: on phrasing of suggestions at symbolic level and symptom level.
5. Use of hypnosis in organic pain.

Dr. Swets is on the Board of Directors of the Netherlands Society of Hypnotherapy, directs their training program and supervises trainees. He heads the outpatient department of a large psychiatric hospital in Delft. His work includes individual therapy, systems therapy for couples and families, and an adolescent unit.

Anyone interested in having Dr. Swets address their group, please contact Dr. Kay Thompson, 24 Swallow Hill Rd., Carnegie, PA 15106, (412) 279-7265.

Ph.D. Counseling Psych. with MSW, ACSW, Clinical Member AAMFT, and three years practice, seeks paid, full-time position where family therapy and hypnotherapy skills can be used while completing post-doctoral hours. Willing to relocate. D. Miller, Ph.D., 5555 Lake Murray Blvd., #29, La Mesa, CA 92041, (619) 697-7708. Need to have a position by September at the latest.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Finnish Association of Mental Health is starting a new journal, The Finnish Journal of Family Therapy (Perhe Terapia). They are seeking papers on Ericksonian approaches and techniques, as well as other topics in family therapy. They are happy to accept papers which have previously been published in English in another journal as long as copyright questions are in order. Contact Ben Furman, M.D., Editor, Maskuntie 7 A1, 00280 Helsinki, Finland.

master therapists:

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THE WORKSHOPS

Ernest Rossi, Ph.D. • July 13-14
Integrating the work of Milton Erickson M.D. and Carl Jung M.D.

John Weakland, C.H.E. • July 16-17
Doing Therapy Briefly with Families and Individuals

Joseph Barber, Ph.D. • July 19-20
Psychological Approaches to the Management of Pain.

If you have any inquiries, or if you wish to register, please contact: Stephen H. Wolinsky, M.S., Individual Family Counseling 122 Dartmouth South East, Albuquerque New Mexico 87106 (505) 268-0607 / (505) 255-3770

REGISTRATION

The Registration Fee is: Before June 15, $425; after June 15, $475; Canadians $505. U.S. Please make checks payable to: Stephen H. Wolinsky, MS/Master Therapists Workshop Since the workshop has a limited participation, the first preference will be given to those who desire to attend the entire workshop series. $25 of the registration fee is a non-refundable processing fee.

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Clinical Hypnosis Inc. is in the process of interviewing therapists interested in either part-time or full-time positions on our staff in the Chicago area. Applicants should be familiar with Ericksonian approaches to hypnotherapy, psychotherapy, have at least a Masters degree and have training in psychodynamic theory. Resumes should include any information regarding training in both of these orientations. In addition, a 300-500 word essay regarding professional intent and goals should be included. Forward all of the above to: Molly E. Bey, Psy.D. Candidate, Clinical Hypnosis, Inc. 1375 Remington, Suite K, Schaumburg, IL 60195.

The Milton H. Erickson Institute of San Diego

Announces

THE EXPERIENTIAL METAPHOR

with

Michael D. Yapko, Ph.D., and Beverly Hershfield, M.A.

in

Maui, Hawaii

October 21-25, 1985

For information contact the Institute:
2525 Camino Del Rio So., Suite 225, San Diego, CA 92108 (619) 295-1010
NEWS OF INTEREST

The San Diego Conference on Hypnotic and Strategic Interventions, organized by Dr. Michael Yapko, took place February 8-10, 1985, and was well-received. The featured speakers were Zeig, Rossi and Carter. Papers, workshops and demonstrations were also given by 17 other faculty members. Planning is already underway for the next conference in March 1986.

R. Reid Wilson, Ph.D. recently presented a 3-hour workshop on “Ericksonian Hypnosis within Phobia Treatment” at the 5th Annual National Phobia Conference in Washington, D.C. All the proceedings of the Conference are available on audiotape. If any readers are interested in obtaining the 2-cassette set from Dr. Wilson’s workshop, they may send $18 to: Phobia Society of America, 5820 Hubbard Dr., Rockville, MD 20852.

The 11th Annual Workshops of the Southern California Society of Clinical Hypnosis included a panel discussion on Erickson’s work with presentations by Carol Erickson, Ernest Rossi, Len Bergantini, John Hedenberg and T.E.A. Von Dedemthoft. Tapes of the conference are available. Contact the SCSCH, 5301 Laurel Canyon Blvd., Suite 219, N. Hollywood, CA 91607.

Herb Lustig reports that he is preparing a book, co-authored with one of his patients, called Tea with Demons: A Personal Triumph. It is expected to be published by William Morrow and Company this August.

The University of Dayton is offering advanced and practicum courses in Ericksonian approaches. The courses, “Advanced Uncommon Counseling Techniques” and “Application of Uncommon Counseling Techniques” are taught by Thomas South, M.A.

Dr. Kay Thompson was elected Secretary of the PA Dental Association in May, 1984. Also that month, she participated in the European Hypnosis Congress in Padova, Italy. Dr. Thompson has presented courses during the past year for the Utah Society of Clinical Hypnosis, Ohio State University, the University of Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh, University of West Virginia, University of Minnesota and the Italian Medical Association for the Study of Hypnosis, where she received honorary membership.

**TRAINING PROGRAM AT THE FOUNDATION**

*A 2-Day Workshop with Bill O’Hanlon, M.S. on BRIEF THERAPY WITH COUPLES: A Directive Ericksonian Approach*

The workshop will be held at the Milton H. Erickson Foundation in Phoenix on Saturday and Sunday, August 24 and 25, 1985 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The workshop will offer a model for working with couples and marital problems using directive (non-hypnotic) Ericksonian and strategic methods.

Topics to be included: Assessment; How to avoid unproductive arguments in the session; Task assignment; Reframing; Metaphors for couples; Pattern intervention

Attendance at the workshop will be limited to 30 participants. The registration deadline is August 5, 1985.

Regular Registration Fee: $120.00

Student Registration Fee: $95.00

Bill O’Hanlon is the founding editor of the Erickson Foundation’s newsletter. He co-authored with James Wilk a volume entitled Shifting Contexts: The Generation of Effective Psychotherapy, (Guilford, in Press). He was the organizer of the 1983 Pre-Congress Institute, sponsored by the Erickson Foundation.

Eligibility: The workshop is open to professionals in health related fields including physicians, doctoral level psychologists and dentists who are qualified for membership in, or are members of, their respective professional organizations (e.g. AMA, APA, ADA). The program is also open to professionals with mental health related graduate degrees (e.g., MSW, MSN, MA or MS) from accredited institutions. Applications from full-time graduate students in accredited programs in the above fields will be accepted if they supply a letter certifying their student status.

The Milton H. Erickson Foundation does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin.

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Registration Deadline: AUGUST 5, 1985

There will be a $25.00 cancellation fee if received in writing on or before August 5, 1985. No refunds will be made after that date.

Stephen R. Lankton and Carol H. Lankton Present their Elaboration of An Ericksonian Approach to Therapy

This five-day training and experiential workshop highlights the Lanktons’ theory of the logic and principles behind Dr. Erickson’s systematic approach to diagnosis and treatment of individuals, and families. Stephen and Carol teach the diagnostic format they use in their Ericksonian work. They discuss, demonstrate and teach the use of resistance, confusion, consistent and accurate diagnosis, symptom prescription, paradoxical double binds and strategic interventions using complex embedded metaphors, hypnotizing and the strategic use of trance phenomena. The material in this workshop closely conforms to their text “The Answer Within: A Clinical Framework of Ericksonian Hypnotherapy.”

Workshop eligibility: Masters or Doctorate degree in the helping professions.

CE credits from University of West Florida are available for psychologists and clinical social workers.

Florida Dept. of Licensing approves this program for 3 CE credits in all Professional Categories

**OCT. 2-6, 1985**

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tuition: $350

For information write: CAROL LANKTON, M.A.

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K325 Hypnotic Language
Jeffrey K. Zeig, Ph.D.
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WORKSHOP CALENDAR

There is a $10.00 charge per entry on the Workshop Calendar. A brochure containing eligibility must be submitted for all workshop entries. The Erickson Foundation in no manner, shape or form endorses these workshops. The Workshop Calendar is meant only to inform our readers of available offerings.

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<th>DATE</th>
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CONTACT INFORMATION

1. Alice Jeffries, Southeast Institute, 103 Edwards Ridge, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. (919) 929-1171.
2. Therapeutic Learning Center, P.O. Box 24471, Omaha, NE 68124.
5. META, P.O. Box 2591, La Jolla, CA 92038, (619) 454-5638.
6. Centro per lo Studio della Personalita, Via Parco Margherita, 1 Int. 1, Naples 80121, Italy.
7. BMA, 200 Park Square South, New York, NY 10003, (212) 674-1900.
10. Deborah Ross, Ph.D., Los Gatos Institute, 19845 Skyline Blvd., Los Gatos, CA 95030, (408) 354-7738.
13. Carol Lankton, M.A., P.O. Box 958, Gulf Breeze, FL 32561.
18. Sabrina Menne and Peter Harn, Mohrstr 89, 8006 Zurich, Switzerland,(01) 3622479.
19. M.E.G., TAL 18, 8000 Munchen, West Germany, (089) 220224.
24. Oasis Center for Human Potential, 7463 North Sheridan Road, Chicago, IL 60626, (312) 274-6777.
25. Wolf Bunting, Zentrum fur Individual und Social Therapie, Zist 3, 5122 Pennberg, West Germany, (0 88 56) 51 92.
ERICKSON MONOGRAPHS

The first issue of the ERICKSONIAN MONOGRAPHS went to the publisher in early April and will be out in a few months. The theme is Elements and Dimensions of an Ericksonian Approach. Articles related to various therapy, theory, and medical applications are included. Readers should contact Brunner/Mazel for information about purchasing a standing order subscription.

Table of Contents of the First Issue:
Foreword by Kristina K. Erickson, M.D.
Certain Principles of Medical Hypnosis, by Milton H. Erickson, M.D.
Elements of an Ericksonian Approach, by Carol H. Lankton.
Hypnotic Suggestion for the Control of Bleeding in the Angiography Suite, by William O. Bank, M.D.
A States of Consciousness Model of Ericksonian Hypnosis by, Stephen R. Lankton.
A Cybernetic Model of Ericksonian Hypnotherapy: One Hand Draws the Other, by William J. Mattews, Ph.D.
An Instrument for Utilizing Client Interests and Individualizing Hypnosis, by Coydon Hammond, Ph.D.
Hypnotic and Strategic Approaches in the Treatment of Depression, by Michael D. Yapko, Ph.D.

The theme of the second issue of the MONOGRAPHS is Brief and Family Therapy. Several exciting articles have been received and the submission deadline has been set for October 1, 1985. Authors should contact Stephen R. Lankton, editor, at P.O. Box 958, Gulf Breeze, FL 32561 for Letter of Advice to Authors or to submit manuscripts. Manuscripts must conform to the format found in the Letter of Advice.

Electronic pre-submission of manuscripts and retrieval of edited copy or letters of advice may be arranged for authors equipped with electronic data transmission capability. Call Stephen Lankton at 904-932-6819 (voice) to obtain data phone number, system parameters, and security password.

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Videotapes of the 1984 Los Angeles Seminar
Demonstrations of Ericksonian Hypnosis and Therapy Available for Purchase

1. The First Therapeutic Treatment of Dr. B. Joseph Barber, Ph.D.
2. Unity, Complementarity and Multiplicity: Principles for Generating Personality in Ericksonian Hypnotherapy
   Stephen G. Gilligan, Ph.D.
3. Use of Multiple Embedded Metaphor for Psychological Reassociation
   Stephen R. Lankton, M.S.W. & Carol H. Lankton, M.A.

Prices: 1/2" Beta or VHS — $70.00 each; 3/4" U-Matic — $80.00 each*

Eligibility: These tapes are available for purchase by professionals in health related fields including physicians, doctoral level psychologists and dentists who are qualified for membership in, or are members of, their respective professional organizations (e.g., AMA, APA, ADA); also professionals with mental health related graduate degrees (e.g., MSW, MSN, MA or MS) from accredited institutions. Full-time graduate students in accredited programs in the above fields may purchase tapes if they supply a letter from their department certifying their student status.

Ordering Instructions: Circle the tapes desired. Indicate the tape format which is compatible with your equipment and mail to the Milton H. Erickson Foundation, Inc., 3606 North 24th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85016. Make checks payable to the Milton H. Erickson Foundation. Expect delivery in 4 to 6 weeks.

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*PAL copies of some programs are available at additional cost. Write to The Erickson Foundation for information.
The American Group of Psychotherapy Association's Second Summer Institute — July/August 1985

AGPA's Summer Institute, primarily designed for mental health professionals and other in graduate level training, offers unique, in-depth study opportunities with leading clinicians in the field of group psychotherapy, combined with a very special vacation. Each week-long program meets Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. until noon, with an opportunity for group discussions in the late afternoons.

There will be ample time to enjoy your selected locale's cultural and recreational facilities.

Also, join AGPA for the 1986 Annual Meeting (3rd Conference and 30th Institute), February 12-16, at the JW. Marriott in Washington, D.C.

For registration and further information, please contact: AGPA, 25 East 21st Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10010, Phone: (212) 477-2677.
The Teaching Tapes of Milton H. Erickson

THE 1952 U.C.L.A. SYMPOSIUM

More than 5 hours of Dr. Erickson's presentations on 4 cassettes including:

"Control of Physiological Functions by Hypnosis," a lecture on hypnotic phenomena including analgesia and anesthesia, blindness, deafness, breast development, and case discussion of phobias, delayed menstruation and childbirth.

"Hypnotic Approaches to Therapy," a lecture on the importance of protecting the patient and taking into account the patient's personality. Cases and techniques discussed include age regression, time distortion, amnesia, psychosomatic pain and asthma, and stuttering.

Brief discussions of the nature of rapport between the hypnotist and patient; and hypnosis and memory.

Two lengthy question and answer periods covering a wide range of topics and including more case examples.

Acknowledgements: The Milton H. Erickson Foundation is grateful to The American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis, Elizabeth Erickson and Ernest L. Rossi, Ph.D. for granting permission to distribute the audiotapes of Dr. Erickson's lectures at the 1952 UCLA symposium. The texts of "Control of Physiological Functions by Hypnosis" and "Hypnotic Approaches to Therapy" were originally published in the July 1977 issue of The American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis and then reproduced in The Collected Papers of Milton H. Erickson, Vols. II and IV (E. Rossi, Ed.), respectively. Except for these lectures, the material on these audiotapes has not been published previously. An edited and annotated transcript of the 1952 Los Angeles Symposium will be published in Mind/Body Connections in Hypnosis, which is Volume 3 of The Seminars, Workshops and Lectures of Milton H. Erickson, edited by Ernest L. Rossi and Margaret O. Ryan (New York: Irvington, in press).

THE 1960 CHICAGO SEMINAR

More than 4 hours of Dr. Erickson's presentations on 4 cassettes including lectures on:

"Resistance: A Demonstration and Discussion." Dr. Erickson elicits and discusses manifestations of resistance and does a reverse set induction to demonstrate breaking down negative sets. (Tape A; Side 1)

"Psychodynamics of Hypnosis." Dr. Erickson discusses hypnosis as an intrapersonal and interpersonal experience; 3 categories of human behavior and brain functioning and how they relate to suggestions; and the importance of indirect methods. (Tape A; Side 2)

"Advanced Techniques I: Permissive Language, Ordeal Therapy, Geometric Progressions." Dr. Erickson describes these techniques as applied in cases of sexual dysfunction, stuttering, aphasia, bed wetting, compulsive habits and acrophobia. (Tapes B and C)

"Advanced Techniques II: Double Binds." Dr. Erickson describes a variety of types and uses of double binds; case illustrations include patients with cancer, physical handicaps, childhood eating and speech disorders, and patients who are self-defeating. (Tape D)

The Milton H. Erickson Foundation wishes to express its appreciation to Marion R. Moore, M.D., who donated both sets of tapes from his collection to the Foundation Archives.

ELIGIBILITY: These tapes are available to professionals in health related fields including physicians, doctoral level psychologists and dentists who are qualified for membership in, or are members of, their respective professional organizations (e.g., AMA, APA, ADA); also to professionals with mental health related graduate degrees (e.g., MSW, MSN, MA or MS) from accredited institutions. Full-time graduate students in accredited programs in the above fields can purchase tapes if they supply a letter from their department certifying their student status.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Keys to Solution in Brief Therapy
by Steve de Shazer
$18.50, 188 pp., Norton, April 1985

Steve de Shazer’s second book (following Patterns of Brief Family Therapy, 1982) is a practical guidebook to doing brief therapy that contains some innovative conceptions about how to do therapy. It is firmly grounded in the work of Erickson, family therapy and interactional therapy, but goes beyond each of these approaches to provide a new framework for doing therapy.

The book contains both general conceptions of therapy and specific techniques. There are case examples aplenty for those who like that sort of thing. The case examples at times read like well-written detective stories, as Erickson’s often did, that seem delightfully simple and obvious after one learns the solution.

There are several startling new ideas in this book. Sure to be one of the most controversial is the emphasis on “skeleton-key” interventions, i.e., general intervention techniques that can be used with a wide variety of different problems. At first blush, this seems antithetical to Erickson’s individualized approach, but more careful consideration of these “invariant prescriptions” (which Selvini Palazzoli and Prata in Italy are now using as well) point out a new emphasis that is emerging from the brief/systemic approach. The emphasis is moving away from the nature of presenting problems and being focused more and more on the nature of solutions.

In fact, de Shazer told me recently that the book could be viewed as an attempt to reframe all of brief therapy as a variation on Erickson’s famous “crystal ball technique”, which involves getting people to generate their own solutions to problems by focusing on the desired result of therapy. De Shazer’s point here is that too much time and emphasis in the past has been put on the origin and maintenance of problems, when all that may be necessary is to find a solution that fits the situation.

The book is short and well-written. About the only thing I didn’t enjoy thoroughly was one very theoretical chapter about bunks and loops that I could hardly make heads or tails of. Otherwise, I’d recommend this to you highly as one of the best clinical books I’ve read in years.

Reviewed by Bill O’Hanlon

Self-Hypnosis, A Complete Manual for Health and Self-Change
by Brian M. Alman with Peter T. Lambrou

The book is divided into two sections. The first section deals with learning how to do self-hypnosis. In Section I, the authors offer first a general understanding of self-hypnosis dealing with common misconception and fears that the novice self-hypnotist might have. They contend that there are very few limitations for self-hypnosis. Curiously, they cite age regression as the one trance phenomena that is not accessible by self-hypnosis, when this reviewer has used self-hypnosis for that very purpose. After offering suggestions about relaxation, managing distractions, imagery, and post-hypnotic cues, Alman and Lambrou describe and give examples of seven methods of self-hypnosis. These techniques are progressively: relaxation; the indirect language method; the eye-fixation method; the Milton Erickson hand shake technique; and self-hypnosis with music.

The second section of Self-Hypnosis deals with using self-hypnosis for a wide variety of personal growth issues as well as the control of habits and physical symptoms. Growth issues cover such areas as decision making, stress management, assertiveness, fears, phobias, self-confidence and career success. The techniques for managing physical symptoms covered skin difficulties, asthma and allergies, jaw difficulties, and pain control. Habit control areas focus on smoking cessation and weight control. There were also chapters dealing with performance in sports, sex, and sleeping difficulties.

The book has a very clear writing style and there are useful summaries at the end of the chapters.

Dr. Erickson is frequently cited in the book and there seems to be a preference for indirect, personalized techniques. Dr. Erickson’s techniques with sleeping problems are somewhat misrepresented. For example, it was said that when the insomnia could not sleep he was to get up and do something he “really disliked” (p. 241). This is not exactly a self-hypnosis technique and would probably not be as effective if not arranged within an interpersonal setting. The emphasis on the “ordial” aspect is also unfortunate; positive tasks also can be used. Recall the story of the insomnia lawyer who had always wanted to read the classics. Dr. Erickson gave the task of reading the classics when he couldn’t sleep, a task the lawyer really liked. Also, Erickson’s handshake induction was not a self-hypnosis technique; it is not clear whether Erickson ever taught his patients self-hypnosis, as he maintained an interpersonal influence techniques, not teaching, for hypnosis and therapy.

I sometimes felt that there was an attempt to get two books into one: one for professional and teachers of self-hypnosis, and one for people who wanted to learn self-hypnosis for the first time. Dr. Erickson’s book is one I would recommend to people who are new to self-hypnosis, I suspect that having seven choices of ways to go into trance would seem like a novice cooking being told there are seven ways to scramble eggs. I would appreciate a brief retreat from the kitchen for all but the most courageous. As someone who has been teaching patients self-hypnosis for many years, I would not be eager to hand this to my patients, but I found it useful as a reminder of the many ways to utilize this technique with my patients.

Self-Hypnosis: A Complete Manual for Health and Self-Change can be ordered from International Health Publications, P.O. Box 17535, San Diego, CA 92117, for $19.95 (plus $2.50 shipping and handling).

Reviewed by Patricia Hudson, Ph.D., Omaha, NE