Second Evolution Meeting Scheduled

It is recognized that the 1985 Evolution of Psychotherapy Conference was a "landmark" event.


Almost all of the speakers from the 1985 meeting will present at the 1990 event, and some new experts have been added. The presenters for the 1990 meeting are Aaron Beck, Bruno Bettelheim, Murray Bowen, James Bugental, Albert Ellis, William Glasser, Mary Goulding, Robert Goulding, Jay Haley, Helen Singer Kaplan, Arnold Lazarus, Alexander Lowen, Cloé Madanes, Salvador Minuchin, Judd Marmor, James Mastenrose, Rollo May, Mara Selvini Palazzoli, Erving Polster, Miriam Polster, Ernest Rossi, Thomas Szasz, Paul Watzlawick, Carl Whitaker, Joseph Wolpe and Jeffrey Zeig. Viktor Frankl has provisionally accepted.

"We have considerable interest already," said Zeig, who organized the first conference and is making final the many details of the second event. "We are excited about this second Evolution Conference; bringing people together from so many schools of psychotherapy is an important step in bridging gaps between those models." The Conference is designed to provide an opportunity for leaders in the field to present and interact on the topic of "The Evolution of Psychotherapy" by discussing their approaches to psychotherapy and the evolution in the field in general. Attendees will increase their therapeutic skills by learning the basic principles and techniques of contemporary schools of psychotherapy; the commonalities underlying successful clinical work; and the historical development of psychotherapeutic disciplines.

In addition to the program, The Erickson Foundation has arranged with Disneyland Park to hold a private party Thursday, December 13, 1990. Each registrant will receive one complimentary ticket. Only attendees and their guests will be in the park that evening. Other special activities also are being arranged. A registration form is in this issue of The Newsletter (see advertisement, page 3).

For information and additional registration materials, contact The Milton H. Erickson Foundation, Inc., 3606 N. 24th Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85016 U.S.A.; (602) 956-6986.

Foundation Celebrates Ten Years

by Brent B. Geary, M.S.

Celebrating the occasion of The Milton H. Erickson Foundation's Tenth Anniversary made way for one of the most successful events sponsored by the organization.

The Tenth Anniversary Seminar, modeled after the Foundation's Pre-Congress Institute in 1983, was held in Phoenix November 2-5, 1989. Some 450 professionals from around the world attended. According to organizers, registrants said they were quite pleased with the format of the meeting.

"We gave attendees an opportunity to be exposed to demonstrations and lectures, then have a chance to practice in supervised small groups," said Jeffrey K. Zeig, Ph.D., the organizer of the meeting. Zeig also served on the faculty at the meeting, along with Joseph Barber, Stephen Gilligan, Stephen Lankton, Bill O'Hanlon and Ernest Rossi. The meeting's educational format was well received. Informal comments from attendees at the meeting indicated that they were able to learn a great deal. Zeig said...

Interview

An Interview with Albert Ellis, Ph.D.

by Michael D. Yapko, Ph.D.

If you are thin-skinned about your profession or theoretical orientation, don't read this interview with Albert Ellis. He doesn't want any negative mail, and neither do I. If, on the other hand, you relish the candid opinions of one of the most influential psychologists of all time, then savor each provocative statement.

Albert Ellis is Executive Director of the Institute for Rational-Emotive Therapy in New York. Ellis has authored or edited approximately 50 books and monographs, and more than 500 papers and chapters in psychological, psychiatric and sociological publications. His prolific writing is nearly legendary, and his range of topics and influence are extraordinary. Ellis is well known for his unabashed earthy and candid style, which he shared in abundance in this interview with Michael D. Yapko conducted at the Fourth International Congress on Ericksonian Approaches to Hypnosis in San Francisco in December 1988.

Incidentally, Ellis will be the keynote speaker at the San Diego Erickson Institute's annual conference in March. The conference theme is "The Rational and Irrational in Psychotherapy".

Y — I'd like to start by getting some personal information: Please talk a bit about when you were born, where you were born, what went on in your early childhood, and what led you to psychology.

E — I was born in Pittsburgh and escaped...

Lankton Named AAMFT Supervisor

Stephen Lankton, M.S.W., editor of The Ericksonian Monographs has been accepted as an approved Supervisor for the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT).

As an approved supervisor, Lankton can work with therapists wishing to earn the designation. The designation signifies achievement of clinical skills, special training and experience in supervision of marriage and family therapy required by the Commission on Supervision of AAMFT.

For information about supervision, contact Lankton, P.O. Box 958, Gulf Breeze, Fl. 32562.
Notes from
The Foundation

A new year; a new decade. We hope this new era brings all things good to you.

The Foundation celebrated its tenth anniversary with a four-day seminar last November. The seminar featured Basic, Intermediate and Advanced Tracks and small group supervised practice sessions. Some 450 professionals from around the world attended the event held in Phoenix, Arizona. The meeting was well-received by attendees. In fact, it was one of the most highly rated training events ever organized by The Foundation.

I would especially like to thank the faculty for making the meeting such a success. The six main presenters, Joseph Barber, Stephen Gilligan, Stephen Lankton, Bill O’Hanlon, Ernest Rossi and Jeffrey Zeig, have been instrumental in making The Foundation what it is today. We also appreciate the small group leaders and their participation.

We now look forward to the next ten years. The first decade of The Foundation was an important time in initiating the Ericksonian movement; the next ten will be a critical time of consolidating the contributions of this school of psychotherapy.

* * *

The next phase of our development is to make final plans for the second Evolution of Psychotherapy Conference. The meeting is scheduled for December 12-16, 1990, in Anaheim, California.

We encourage you to register early; the first meeting, held in Phoenix in 1985, was sold out before Labor Day. There is a registration form on page 3 of this issue.

* * *

We hope your holidays were happy and the new year (and decade) are memorable.

We appreciate your support and continuing interest in the endeavors of The Milton H. Erickson Foundation.

Institute News

The Institute of Ericksonian Hypnotherapy of Buenos Aires will publish a journal, Rapport.

Silvia and Edgar Etkin, directors of the Buenos Aires Institute, are interested in publishing only articles from other Erickson Institutes around the world.

The Etkins have suggested the following guidelines:

1. Manuscripts should be typewritten and in Spanish, with a brief summary in English.
2. Maximum length can be 10 pages.
3. Name and address of each author must be included.

For additional information, write The Instituto de Hipnoterapia Ericksoniana (89 As.), Sanchez de Bustamante 1945 P.B. 1 (1425), Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Notes from
The Editor

Welcome to this first issue of The Newsletter of 1990. We’re at the beginning of a new decade, in more ways than one: 1990 opens the last decade of the twentieth century, and 1990 marks the second decade of The Milton H. Erickson Foundation. The Tenth Anniversary Seminar in Phoenix in November was a wonderful celebration of the Foundation’s first ten years of achievement, and now we look ahead to all that is to come.

The Newsletter continues to be the primary vehicle for maintaining contact among professionals interested in Ericksonian approaches. I’ve made my desires known for input from you, the reader, in previous issues of The Newsletter, and I want to reiterate the need for your feedback. As you know, things Ericksonian are shaped by the feedback it gets. If you like what you read in each issue, reinforce that with affirming letters. If you would like things to evolve, offer ideas for how that may be accomplished.

I’d like to thank all of you who have contributed and made my role as newsletter editor a challenging and enlightening one. I look forward to the future and the changes it will bring.

— Michael D. Yapko, Ph.D.

Newsletter Business

The Newsletter is published three times per year. The closing dates are April 15, August 15, and December 15. This means all items to be included must be received by those dates. The Newsletter is posted approximately six to eight weeks later. As always, send all advertising directly to The Foundation in Phoenix. Training events, announcements and other information should be sent directly to me at the San Diego address on the front page.

Media of Note

Newsletter Editor Michael Yapko has had two books come out recently, both published by Brunner/Mazel. One is Brief Therapy Approaches to Trauma and Depression, and the other is a revised edition of Trancework: An Introduction to the Practice of Clinical Hypnosis.

Also, Michael has released a two-hour videotape of a trance session with a terminal cancer patient. The tape also is available from Brunner/Mazel.

* * *

Two articles, one by Stephen Gilligan and one by Yvonne Doian, highlight the Winter 1989 Special Issue of the Journal of Strategic and Systemic Therapy concerning childhood sexual abuse. This special issue’s guest editor is Christopher Wheeler, M.S.W., a Toronto therapist specializing in the treatment of sexual abuse and the Ericksonian approach to psychotherapy.

Extrapolations
(ERICSON MONOGRAPHS NUMBER 6)

The audio- and videotapes are available from The Milton H. Erickson Foundation.

* Joseph Barber, 1984
  First Session with Dr. B
  Audio 99.50 VHS/Beta 790*

* Stephen Gilligan, 1912
  Accessing Unconscious Processes
  Audio 99.50 VHS/Beta 790*

* Stephen Lankton, 1918
  Motivating Action with Hypnosis for
  a Client with a History of Early Violence
  Audio 99.50 VHS/Beta 790*

* Bill O’Hanlon, 1988
  Solution-Oriented Hypnosis
  Audio 99.50 VHS/Beta 790*

* Ernest Rossi, 1985
  Facilitating “Creative Moments” in
  Hypnotherapy
  Audio 99.50 VHS/Beta 790*

* Jeffrey Zieg, 1984
  Using Metaphor and the Intersessional
  Technique
  Audio 99.50 VHS/Beta 790*

The presenters at The Tenth Anniversary of Ericksonian Approaches to Hypnosis and Psychotherapy collaborated on the Erickson Monographs. These transcripts and commentaries are based on information from past Erickson Foundation-sponsored meetings from which these tapes were made.

* U-Matic slightly higher. Also available in PAL format.
† These are special prices available for a limited time. Add 5¢ for all orders over $20.00.

To order your copy of Extrapolations (Monographs Number 6), write Brunner/Mazel Publishers, Inc., 19 Union Square, New York, NY 10003.

Name__________________________ Degree____________
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in SAN DIEGO

March 2-4, 1990

featuring an outstanding faculty, including:

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Andre M. Weitzenhoffer, Ph.D.
Stephen G. Gilligan, Ph.D.
Jeffrey K. Zeig, Ph.D.
Joseph Barber, Ph.D.
Michael D. Yapko, Ph.D.

Eligibility: A minimum of a Master’s degree in health related fields is required. Also, full-time graduate students in accredited programs are eligible.

For information, contact: The Milton H. Erickson Institute of San Diego 2525 Camino del Rio South, Suite 265 San Diego, CA 92108 Call (619) 295-1010
PRESENTERS:
Aaron Beck, M.D.  
Bruno Bettelheim, Ph.D.  
Murray Bowen, M.D.  
James Bugental, Ph.D.  
Albert Ellis, Ph.D.  
Viktor Frankl, M.D., Ph.D.*  
William Glasser, M.D.  
Mary Goulding, M.S.W.  
Robert Goulding, M.D.  
* Provisional

Jay Haley, M.A.  
James Hillman, Ph.D.  
Helen Singer Kaplan, M.D., Ph.D.  
Arnold Lazarus, Ph.D.  
Alexander Lowen, M.D.  
Cléo Madanes, Lic.  
Judd Marmor, M.D.  
James Masterson, M.D.  
Rollo May, Ph.D.  
Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D.  
Salvador Minuchin, M.D.  
Mara Selvini Palazzoli, M.D.  
Erving Polster, Ph.D.  
Miryam Polster, Ph.D.  
Ernest Rossi, Ph.D.  
Thomas Szasz, M.D.  
Paul Watzlawick, Ph.D.  
Carl Whitaker, M.D.  
Joseph Wolpe, M.D.  
Jeffrey Zeig, Ph.D.

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

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WHERE:
Anaheim, California U.S.A.

ELIGIBILITY:
Health professionals with doctoral or master’s degrees, or full-time graduate students in accredited programs.

APPROVED:
Continuing education credits offered for physicians, psychologists and other health professionals.

INFORMATION:

SPECIAL NIGHT AT DISNEYLAND PARK!
Registrants will receive one complimentary ticket to a Private Party Thursday, Dec. 13, 1990, at Disneyland Park.

REGISTRATION FEES
Checks should be payable in U.S. Currency, drawn on an American Bank and made payable to THE EVOLUTION OF PSYCHOTHERAPY.

U.S. & Canadian Registration Fees:*
$325 U.S. ($225 for graduate students*) for registrations postmarked on or before April 30, 1990.
$375 U.S. ($275 for graduate students*) for registrations postmarked on or before August 31, 1990.
$425 U.S. ($325 for graduate students*) for registrations postmarked on or before November 16, 1990.
$500 U.S. ($400 for graduate students*) for on-site registrations if space is available.

*Students must provide a certifying letter from their school or department on letterhead stationery indicating proof of full-time student status as of December 1990.

MEALS AND EVENTS
• Lunchenue package — $75. Includes lunchenue, tax and gratuities for four days (Wednesday through Saturday, December 12-15). Vegetarian available.
• Banquet tickets — $40 per person. Includes dinner, wine, tax and gratuities and entertainment. December 3. Vegetarian available.
• Banquet tickets are $50 per person. Includes dinner, wine, tax and gratuities and entertainment. December 3. Vegetarian available.
• Registrants will receive one complimentary ticket to Disneyland Park for the private party Thursday, December 13. Additional private party tickets are $30 per person (child or adult). Please purchase when registering.

REGISTRATION FORM

☐ Enclosed is my registration fee of $__________
☐ Enclosed is my luncheon reservation payment. ($75) Vegetarian, please check here
☐ Enclosed is my banquet reservation payment. ($40) Vegetarian, please check here
☐ Enclosed is my banquet reservation payment. ($40) Vegetarian, please check here
☐ I am interested in more information. Please send the conference program. Available in June automatically sent to registrants.

Checks should be payable In U.S. Currency, drawn on an American Bank and made payable to THE EVOLUTION OF PSYCHOTHERAPY.

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Registration Deadline is November 16, 1990.

RETURN TO: THE EVOLUTION OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

3606 N. 24th Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85016 U.S.A. (602) 956-6196

Cancellation Fee: $35.00 if received in writing and postmarked by November 16, 1990.

NOTE: Conference information packet including hotel registration forms and travel information will automatically be sent later this year to those people who remit registration fees.

☐ I am not interested in attending the Conference but please enter my name in the drawing.
The Practice of Hypnotism, Volume I: Traditional and Semi-Traditional Phenomenology
by Andre Weitzenhoffer
Published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1989, New York

Andre Weitzenhoffer, Ph.D., is one of the great figures in contemporary hypnosis, and he is nobody’s man: He is not doctrinaire in regard to practice, theory, or research. Rather, he is an iconoclast willing to meticulously investigate phenomena that interest him. Fortunately, Weitzenhoffer is curious about the nature of hypnosis. In his magnum opus, The Practice of Hypnotism, Weitzenhoffer calls it as he sees it. And, with his piercing, scientific intellect, and encyclopedic knowledge of hypnosis, he creates a refreshing perspective.

For example, on the first page of Volume I he states, “I have not found that laboratory data has added very much of anything to my ability to utilize hypnotism effectively. Nor can I find that research data and ‘scientific theories’ regarding hypnosis have had much of an impact on its practice.” These are forcefully blunt words from someone who is more known as a researcher and theorist than a clinician. Weitzenhoffer goes on to carefully and critically examine the work of almost all of the great names in the field of hypnosis during the last 200 years, including Erickson, Hilgard, T.X. Barber, Braid, Liebault, and Charcot, describing and documenting errors, specious speculations, and lapses of clarity.

The Practice of Hypnotism is actually a two-volume set. Volume II is subtitled, Applications of Traditional and Semi-Traditional Hypnotism: Non-Traditional Hypnotism. And, it is probably more relevant to the readers of this Newsletter who are mostly clinicians. Because of the scope and importance of Weitzenhoffer’s work, Volume II will be reviewed separately in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Volume I is divided into nine chapters which describe the nature of traditional hypnosis, induction and depth, hypnotic phenomena, and self-hypnosis. Weitzenhoffer’s organization and prose are linear and clear. He presents general information then follows with amplification, historical background and scientific support. Thereby, the novice can find basic material and the expert can seek out details.

Weitzenhoffer is at his best when he describes how theory and elucidates its scientific side of the problem. His scope on the hypnosis literature is impressive: Contained in the books is a stunning overview of the development of ideas within the field of hypnotism. Conversant with the original literature, Weitzenhoffer describes the positions of the old masters, such as Bernheim and Liebault, and clearly elucidates their contributions.

This book is “one-stop shopping”: Weitzenhoffer “downloads” his prodigious knowledge of hypnosis and provides a text that will be read, studied, and considered a standard reference in the field. Clinicians will enjoy Weitzenhoffer’s exemplification of the semi-traditional approach, which is described as being transitional between the traditional and the Ericksonian approach. Researchers will find many avenues to investigate. In fact, graduate students will be grateful to Weitzenhoffer because he provides so many ideas that can be scientifically studied. Historians will thank Weitzenhoffer because, being multilingual, he describes the original work of the 18th and 19th century European investigators. Moreover, having worked closely with Erickson and Hilgard, he comments with firsthand knowledge.

There are a number of points of disagreement, most of which are relatively minor: Weitzenhoffer expresses the position that ideodynamic action is much more clearly exhibited by traditional techniques. Rather, I think that the ideodynamic effect was central to Erickson’s work.

Also, Weitzenhoffer extends himself and tries to address researchers, theorists, and clinicians. He tries to present all things to all people. This creates a work of imposing size, which, unfortunately, might prevent it from getting the careful examination it deserves. Moreover, at times Weitzenhoffer qualifies his position and seems so concerned about being correct that there is a precision of details and questions. Therefore, occasionally, this reader became unclear about where Weitzenhoffer stood on central propositions.

There are three additional points of disagreement. One, Weitzenhoffer states on page 206, “If one plans to converse with the subject, it is necessary to facilitate this process by telling him he can speak even though hypnotized, and by instructing him to talk louder and more clearly.” Erickson’s interactive trances were quite different: They were conversations. Erickson expected the patient to talk, and the patient complied. The idea that a hypnotized patient cannot speak seems to be more of a demand characteristic than a central facet of hypnotism. Two, Weitzenhoffer concedes that “The induction is a one-way process (only one member of the interacting pair becomes hypnotized) (p. 314).” Rather, I agree with Stephen Gilligan’s position that the hypnotist is customarily in an externally-focused trance. Three, Weitzenhoffer is unwilling to concede that Ericksonian methods superseded traditional techniques. Because Weitzenhoffer’s description of Ericksonian techniques is taken up in Volume II, his perspective on these methods will be discussed more fully in the forthcoming review of that book.

In all, The Practice of Hypnotism is an important contribution. This book should be required reading for all serious students of hypnotism.

— Jeffrey K. Zeig, Ph.D., Director
The Milton H. Erickson Foundation

I believe that patients and students should do things. They learn better, remember better.

(Erickson in Zeig, 1980, p. 72)
The February Man
by Milton H. Erickman, M.D. and Ernest L. Rossi, Ph.D.
Published by Brunner/Mazel Inc., 1989

The February Man is a fascinating case study illustrating the use of age regression in the treatment of a 19-year-old student nurse who suffered from chronic depression as well as a severe water phobia. Erickson assumes the supportive role of the “February Man,” “visiting” the woman many times during the course of four long hypnotherapeutic age regression sessions.

This volume is especially valuable since it is the only complete record of an entire hypnotherapeutic case dating from the middle of Erickson’s career. The sessions were recorded verbatim in stenographic notation in 1945. Then, in 1979, Ernest Rossi explored these sessions in great detail with Milton Erickson, recording 15 hours of commentaries and completing the manuscript between the Spring and Fall of 1979, the year before Erickson’s death. The volume was to be the fourth co-authored by Erickson and Rossi. But following Erickson’s death in 1980, the manuscript was never completed. Finally, in 1987, Rossi returned to the project, noting in his introduction his realization that “this volume could be an important corrective to those who describe Erickson’s work as being entirely intuitive and idioccentric.”

This statement by Rossi alludes to the question sometimes raised as to whether or not Erickson indeed planned in advance his therapeutic interventions or if he worked altogether intuitively. Rossi wisely includes in his introduction an interview with Jerome Fink, M.D., Erickson’s student at the time, who states that although Erickson was extremely intuitive, “he couldn’t have consciously figured out all the psychodynamics at the time. He had never met the subject before the first long session.” And thus, one of the limitations of The February Man is pointed out. It is a post hoc analysis, and there is no way of knowing to what degree the work can be understood cognitively after the fact.

According to Erickson, intuition can be defined as an “unconscious response to minimal cues” (p. 18). If we assume that the unconscious is trainable then we may look upon post hoc analysis as an important part of a learning feedback loop. That is to say, unconscious responses happen, are later interpreted cognitively, their therapeutic effectiveness noted, and they become learned behaviors, incorporated into the unconscious, available for retrieval at some appropriate later date. I believe Erickson is correct when he says there are no “pure” right or left hemisphere brain functions. But he says, “Something may be on the right side before it is completely perceived” (p. 82). Perhaps if we both “study” and “experience” Erickson we might ourselves become more intuitive.

Looking at The February Man from this perspective, I consider it a wonderful model for learning. I have read it and re-read it and will probably read it many times more, for here is an extraordinary example of wisdom and patience, caring observation and supportive guidance. Erickson carefully induces trance, focusing the subject’s attention, deponenting habitual mental sets through the use of a variety of confusion techniques, all of which Rossi points out as he describes the microdynamics of trance induction applied by Erickson. Then, Erickson begins to establish the identity of the “February Man” and we see the patience with which Erickson effects an age regression “visiting” the subject in various times in her childhood, discovering the repressed traumatic incidents. Erickson speaks to the subject as a very supportive, caring parental figure until the subject herself labels him the “February Man.” During this time Erickson utilizes a variety of techniques including dissociation, metaphors, reframing, folk language and many others to establish a “yes set”, facilitate certainty, until finally the subject states “absolutely” that she wants a cure. Only then does Erickson go on to take the subject through the traumatic memories, having already de potentiated resistance and fear.

Erickson brings the unconscious experience into conscious awareness so that the subject acquires insight, but she does not stop there. Through the use of symptom prescription, hypnotic suggestion, reframing of resistance, confusion in time orientation pseudo-orientation to future time, and a variety of other techniques, Erickson makes sure that the subject overcomes her water phobia and evidences her cure by going into the water and enjoying it.

The commentaries by Erickson and Rossi, albeit post hoc, are interesting and valuable as they reveal how far Milton Erickson advanced the art of psychotherapy by getting the subject to utilize his/her own processes.

—Marian J. Richetta, M.A.
San Diego, CA

Erickson Center Closes

The Milton H. Erickson Foundation Board of Directors has announced the temporary closure of the Erickson Center for Hypnosis and Psychotherapy. It is expected that the clinic and training facility will reopen in 1991.

A two-week Intensive Training program will be held in March under the auspices of the Milton H. Erickson Foundation. Referrals for psychotherapy will also be accepted. Persons may call The Erickson Foundation (602) 956-6996.

The Foundation continues operations from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Mountain Standard Time) Monday through Friday. The Foundation is located at 3606 N. 24th Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85016. For information about the training programs, write or call The Erickson Foundation.

What your patient does and what he learns must be learned from within himself. There is nothing you can force into the patient.

(Erickson in Haley, 1967, p. 335)

Book Review Rejoinder

The following is a reactivation to the book review by Jeffrey Zeig appearing in the previous issue of ‘The Newsletter’.

We are concerned about the implications of many of the comments made by Jeffrey K. Zeig, Ph.D., in his review of our recent book, Hypnotherapy Scripts: A Neo-Ericksonian Approach to Persuasive Healing (cf. Zeig, The Milton H. Erickson Foundation Newsletter, Fall, 1989).

The apparent implication here is that everyone should be instructed to do things just as Erickson did them. In effect, it is a statement that the “good Ericksonian therapist” will ritualistically adopt all the minuetta of Dr. Erickson’s work. Such a posture merely exposes those who do not have Erickson’s experience and expertise to unnecessary complications and pitfalls. It seems obvious to us that novice hypnotherapists would be well advised to avoid doing many of the things Erickson attempted and could benefit from help that Erickson did not need. Hence, in our book we note that a recliner in a quiet room may simplify matters for everyone, point out that some types of clients are more difficult to work with than others and even provide examples of hypnotherapy scripts which readers can use to guide their own creative efforts. Erickson did not have scripts available to guide him. He had to create his own from scratch. However, this does not suggest to us that everyone else should have to do so as well. In fact, it is hard to imagine the field evolving and expanding at all unless we are willing to make such concessions to reality and to modify Erickson’s style to suit our own unique situations.

As one might expect, we agree with the viewpoint expressed by Morris in the Summer, 1989, issue of ‘The Newsletter’. Like him, we believe it is time to “…allow the spirit of Milton Erickson to evolve as new options are built utilizing some of his genius.” Other movements have failed to evolve. Instead of growing larger and stronger by embracing diversity they have disintegrated into internecine squabbles over ownership, membership and access to ultimate truth. As Ericksonians, we genuinely hope that this is not what the future holds in store. In order to avoid such a outcome, however, we need to resist the temptation to apply litmus tests of purity to those with whom we disagree. It seems to us that the Ericksonian umbrella is large enough to encompass many things — even recidivists.

—Ronald A. Havens, Ph.D.
—Catherine Walters, M.A., M.S.W.

A person seeking therapy comes in and tells you one story that is believed fully at the conscious level and in nonverbal language can give you a story that is entirely different.

(Erickson, Rossi & Rossi, 1976, p. 68)

JOYCE C. MILLS, Ph.D., co-author of the award-winning book, THERAPEUTIC METAPHORS FOR CHILDREN & THE CHILD WITHIN

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Integrating Native American philosophies with Ericksonian Hypnotherapy PAID ADVERTISEMENT
Interview continued from page 1

comic verse, poetry and so forth, until I decided I wasn’t the greatest novelist in the world. So I started to write nonfiction and picked several subjects in which I was interested: organization, politics, and revolution. Then, I hit on sex, love, and marriage, and started to do real research. I read thousands of books and pamphlets, but mainly books, on sex, love and marriage. But, they were all repetitive. I used to get ten books a day at the New York Public Library and other libraries as well.

Then my friends and relatives found out I was an authority on sex, love and marriage and they started asking me questions about their problems. Most marriages seem impotence, lack of orgasm, and the like. I had most of the answers to quickly show them what to do; they got a lot of benefit, and I enjoyed it. I said, “Heck, I might as well be a sex therapist, or a marriage and family therapist,” but there was no such thing in those days. You couldn’t get a degree in it — even a master’s degree. You could get one in the sociology of marriage, but not in clinical marriage counseling, and certainly not in sex therapy — not that they’re that far apart.

I picked the closest degree to it, which was clinical psychology. I went to Columbia University and got my Ph.D in clinical psychology and still did marriage, family and sex therapy in a pioneer way in the 1940’s. I got my master’s degree in 1943, and have been practicing (sex therapy) ever since. At the same time, I got into psychotherapy, I got myself analyzed, as I stupidly thought that psychoanalytic therapy was more intense than other therapy. Instead, I discovered it intensely goes into every irrelevancy under the sun, and misses every relevancy, just as Ericksonian therapy (does). Almost all therapies do the same thing.

They haven’t the foggiest notion of what really disturbs people and how to do away with this disturbance. They go for this utter crap about the unconscious. Freud believed it; I was surprised Erickson went along with this. Freud said it, and it was such nonsense, (although) it’s not as if there isn’t any unconscious thinking. I never heard such crap in all my life. They were inventors; Freud was a great inventor; Erickson was a great inventor, Fritz Pearl was a great inventor, but they hadn’t the foggiest notion of why humans really are disturbed and how to undisturb them. They just accidentally did things which partly worked.

Anyway, I became analyzed, and I practiced classical psychoanalysis and analytically oriented therapy for several years. It was very ineffective. As I frequently say, Freud had a gene for in-efficiency. I think Erickson did, too, and that practically all of the (theorists) do. I happen to have a gene for efficiency, so I don’t like inefficiency.

In 1953, I did a survey of all the various psychotherapies. Even in those days, there were many different kinds. I wrote a monograph in 1955 on New Approaches to Psychotherapy Techniques, and out of that material I garnered Rational-Emotive Therapy (RET). RET was the first combination of philosophy (which happens to be my hobby) plus behavior therapy which I used on myself before I was a therapist, and then I added the evocative, dramatic and emotive elements.

Y — In the interview you did with Psychology Today the survey that was done of APA members listed you as the most influential therapist behind Carl Rogers.

E — Yes, I was the second most influential, and Freud was third.

Y — How did you feel about that?

E — I thought that was accurate but also not too accurate. It’s true if you really find out what people do today, you’ll find practically all schools of therapy, including the Freudians, the Gestalt therapists, and the Ericksonians, get in a great deal of the cognitive, emotive and behavioral therapy which I put together originally. So they do some of it, but they louse it up with a lot of other crap, unfortunately. But they do some of RET, and therefore, if they’re honest about it and they respond to anonymous surveys, such as the APA survey, then they show it.

Incidentally, many marriage and family therapists thought the only systems therapist who placed among the leading therapists was Virginia Satir. But, Carl Rogers, Sigmund Freud, and I were the most influential, also among the marriage and family therapists. So, it’s true, (I’m a large influence), but on the other hand, that doesn’t mean that people mainly do RET. So, in that sense it’s false — they mix it in with a lot of other stuff.

Y — You said that, in essence, other therapies besides RET are inefficient.

E — Not only inefficient, most of them are iatrogenic — they cause more disturbance.

They do more harm than good. Most of this Ericksonian stuff that I heard today and yesterday is horse. It leads people up the garden path away from what they better do, which is see how they really cause it — not consciously, but not quite consciously of it either. When you show them how they cause it, then you can show them what they can do to act against it, to feel against it, and to think against it.

Now, we are not the only therapy (but we are the most practiced), because fortunately cognitive behavior therapy on the whole, I think, is practiced by more therapists than any other form of therapy today. So, I’m not the only one who does it, and I’m very happy that it has become so prevalent. When I first taught RET in 1955, the only ones who were doing anything like it were the Adlerians.

continued on page 7

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Alfred Adler was a real pioneer, and really plowed through the Freudian nonsense and the terrible dribble Freidians have. You might as well take that whole Freudian kit and caboodle and throw it out. But I'm very happy to see that my basic stuff (has led to the popularity of) cognitive behavior therapy mainly because of my influence.

**Y — Are you saying the biggest influence on you has been Adler?**

**E — No, I'd say the biggest influence on me were the philosophers. The biggest influences on me were Epitatus, Marcus Aurelius, Baruch Spinoza, John Dewey, and Bertrand Russell, and then Adler who also took from (them) and a few others who were very sensible. In the late 1800's psychotherapists were really largely cognitive. Unfortunately, Freud sidetracked them and got lost in the "shmahrence-transference" nonsense, and all kinds of relationship nonsense, which he probably needed with his clients and which most therapists (seem to) need. Most therapists are highly disturbed individuals who need to relate to their clients. They're just as sick or sicker than their clients in many respects. Therefore, they read into it not the client's desire, which is correct, but they go along with the client's need for approval, need for love, etc., etc. and thereby help make patients sicker and sicker. Clients may feel better, but they don't get better; they frequently get worse as a result of psychotherapy.

**Y — You made a specific point of pok-**

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Ten Years continued from page 1

the meeting was the highest rated in the history of The Foundation. “We heard from a number of people that they wanted more of this type of meeting,” Zeig said. “I think this is an excellent way for people to learn and practice.”

The seminar offered comprehensive, structured training in Ericksonian hypnosis and psychotherapy in basic, intermediate and advanced tracks. Each segment built a foundation for the seminars to follow. The seminar offered a “practical, hands-on” experience rather than a theoretical “didactic” approach.

Erickson Center staff members who served as small-group practice leaders were Gordon Cuddey, Cari Ellis, Larry Eutkin, Brent Geary, Michael Liebman, Frank Noble, Rebecca Rubin, Mark Treegoob, Neil Weiner, Mirta Ghiorzi Velez, Gary Lovey, Peter Rennick, Andrea Scott and Marti Waller. Other special invited small-group leaders were John Hancock, Betty Alice Erickson-Elliott, Linda Epstein-Graval, Cheryl Gadsby, John J. Koriath, Chris Monaco and Michael Yako.

In addition to the educational portion of the program, the Erickson Foundation hosted a tenth birthday party for participants. Attendees were able to meet and network with others during the hospitality event.

Special awards were presented at the meeting. Mrs. Elizabeth M. Erickson, the widow of Milton H. Erickson, M.D., was given The Erickson Foundation’s Lifetime Achievement Award. Special recognition awards also were presented to the Erickson family and individually to Kristina K. Erickson, M.D., vice-president of the Board of Directors.

Family members who were present at the meeting were Mrs. Erickson, Dr. Kristina Erickson, Betty Alice Erickson-Elliott, Roxanna Erickson Klein and Robert Erickson.

The meeting elicited positive responses from attendees. As one participant said, “It means a lot that The Erickson Foundation keeps the work of Dr. Erickson alive. This seminar accomplished the goal as well as any seminar I have attended.”

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The Phoenix Society of Clinical Hypnosis (PSCH) is sponsoring a two-day workshop with Andre Weitzenhoffer, Ph.D., March 17 and 18, 1990.

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For additional information, contact Tye Hunter, c/o The Phoenix Society of Clinical Hypnosis, P.O. Box 16923, Phoenix, Arizona 85014.

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*Therapy results from an inner resynthesis of the patient's behavior achieved by the patient himself. [948]*

(In Erickson, 1980, Vol. IV, chap. 4, p. 38) 

*(Erickson, 1980, Vol. IV, p. 148)*
The Ericksonian Monographs

The six featured faculty members at the Tenth Anniversary Seminar of the Milton H. Erickson Foundation have contributed case transcripts to the Monograph, Number 6, edited by Stephen Lankton and Jeffrey Zeig. The faculty members were Joe Barber, Ph.D., Stephen Gilligan, Ph.D., Bill O'Hanlon, M.S., Stephen Lankton, M.S.W., Ernest Rossi, Ph.D., and Jeffrey Zeig, Ph.D. Each therapist commented on the case, briefly discussing their rationale, thoughts, and concerns. In addition, each case was discussed by one other faculty member. The result is a verbatim interview session which allows for analysis, comparisons, and in-depth examinations by six leading hypnotherapists. Monograph Number 6 was available in Nov. 1989. Audio- and videotapes from which the transcripts were derived are available from the Foundation.

Monograph, Number 7, The Issue of Broader Implications or Ericksonian Therapy, Edited by Stephen Lankton, is being released in early 1990. It contains a dialogue between experts in the form of a position taken by Richard Fish, M.D., and several rejoinders. The contents are as follows:

Richard Fish, M.D., "The Broader Implications of Milton H. Erickson's Work."
Steve DeShazer, M.S.W., "A Rejoinder to Fish."
Stephen Gilligan, Ph.D., "Commentary on Richard Fish's Paper."

Obituaries

Arlene R. Wolberg, M.S.S.
Arlene Wolberg, 83, an internationally recognized psychoanalyst, educator and author, died December 1, 1989. Mrs. Wolberg was a Trustee and Co-founder with her late husband, Lewis R. Wolberg, M.D., of the Postgraduate Center for Mental Health in New York City, one of the country's largest free-standing community mental health treatment and training centers.

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Interview continued from page 7

by accident, this man met a Protestant minister, not a priest, who exercised his demon, and then he gave up the transsexualism. Now, once in a while that (sort of thing is) going to happen, but how often is that going to happen? But, if you can’t get anywhere with effective, usual, direct, empirical, and scientific techniques, then you better face it — you’re not going to get anywhere at all. Then you can use any kind of mumbo-jumbo channeling, which is just sheer rot of the worst sort, or you can use a lot of the so-called more psychotherapeutic techniques, which I think are about equal rot. (These approaches are) devout nonsense with practically no experimental validity behind them — no empiricism. And, when they do work, they work for different reasons than people think. So, most of those techniques which dramatically work in the semi-fictional things we write in the literature only illustrate the cases that work, or (else they) invent cases. I think Erickson invented a good many of his stories and his successes, and forgot the thousands and thousands of failures of his kinds of techniques. So, I say when they do work, these other techniques, it’s because almost invariably, and it’s not merely not, a hidden philosophical element to them was changed. People (change when they) change their philosophy, like this guy who was exorcised. He changed his attitude — for nutty reasons, but he did it. So, I think that’s what is going on underneath, and that’s unconscious and we try to make that conscious. It’s not above the surface of consciousness, but it is not repressed or deeply hidden. If you show people what they are probably telling themselves, then they come out saying, “Hey, that’s right; that’s exactly it!” And it took them two minutes to get to acknowledge it, and not years and years of therapy until you get to the “deep repression.”

Y — You’re raising a good point about how we as therapists have generally gone about dealing with people’s emotions. The oldest cliche in therapy is “You need to get in touch with your feelings; you need to get in touch with your anger.”

What you’re saying is that you can tell someone to get in touch with their anger and they’ll come back a month later and now all they are is angry and nothing else has really changed in terms of what makes them angry.

E — What you’re saying is quite true, but I’d go further. It just so happens that there are about 40 rage demonstrations, not by us, but by social psychologists and clinical psychologists, which show that whenever people feel very angry and acknowledge it, the more they acknowledge and feel the anger, the angrier they become.

Let’s take the famous case of pounding the pillows. The people who are angry are told to talk about the pounding; nobody asked the people what they are telling themselves when they pound the pillow. The answer is, usually, the pillow represents someone’s head — an enemy — and they’re saying “That lousy s-, they shouldn’t have done that to me.” So, they become angrier in these experiments. So, now they feel great momentarily; anyone who screams and yells even without therapy will feel great temporarily. Besides, anger gives you a one-up position, because you’re damming another human, and consequently, you’re one-up on that human. But I say, you not only don’t get better, or else you get better temporarily, but most of the time you get psychologically worse. You’re now more ready to get angry next time!

Y — It seems apparent that therapists would know that’s true if they’d just look at that resulting increase in anger. Why aren’t therapists noticing that that happens?

E — Because therapists are devout and stupid and disturbed. The vast majority of what we call regular therapists, such as MSW’s, Ph.D.’s, psychiatrists, etc., are devout, stupid and disturbed. They’re mainly anti-scientific; the true scientists in psychology usually go into experimental psychology and other branches of psychology and do not become therapists. Those who become therapists very frequently are seriously disturbed to begin with — that’s why they get into the field!

They bring their disturbances into it and they get hooked on this Freudian dribble and the Ericksonian dribble and the other dribble because they’re not that good and they’re really anti-scientific. For example, Freud mentions science about every other word, yet he was the most anti-scientific individual ever; He was a dogmatist of the worst sort; he did no research whatsoever, and did not encourage anyone to do research to back up their theories. He just devoutly mixed up all kinds of things in Oedipus Complex and things like that. Now, if you’re a crooked thinker, which most psychotherapists are, you don’t think things through; so you devoutly follow stuff like that. Only a minority become RET’ers, cognitive behavior therapists, etc.

Y — You’re saying it’s the unpalatable way that therapists will get so loyal to a theory as to miss what’s happening in front of their eyes?

E — That’s right. They get loyal to a theory, but they also pick the wrong theory. Most therapists are really anti-scientists who refuse to think straightforwardly about practically anything and they bring their devotion into their theory. So, most therapists, but I don’t say all, are devout. It’s bad, but that’s the way they are. Hopefully, we’re gradually killing that with experimentation. The Freudians have done practically zero in all these years. The Ericksonians have done practically nothing in all these years. We must have about 500 people in Neuro-Linguistic Programming, all of which show it doesn’t work, and you’d better know that anyway if you simply read the stuff — it’s just bullshit — from beginning to end. The Gestalt therapists have done absolutely no research of any kind, or else they use caution when they do it. I often wonder where they do it, and why they don’t publish it. So, we’re gradually killing (of such methods, but), it’s going to take us hundreds of years to get this nonsense out. I have faith that “truth” probably will (win out). Three or four hundred years from now when they read about Freudian and Ericksonian Therapy and all this continued on page 12

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Volunteer Coordinator

As efforts progress toward the second Evolution of Psychotherapy Conference, a person to serve as volunteer coordinator is sought. The Conference will be held December 12-15 in Anaheim, California.

The temporary paid position will give the successful candidate the opportunity to set up all volunteer activity for the Evolution Conference.

The volunteer coordinator will schedule graduate-student volunteers, as well asmake assignments based on the needs of the faculty and staff. The coordinator will be able to work in Phoenix, Arizona, prior to the Conference in December, as well as for a week in Anaheim, California.

In addition to the paid position, The Erickson Foundation needs student volunteers for the Conference. Full-time graduate students in accredited institutions in mental health fields are invited to apply as volunteers.

The volunteer positions are in exchange for a waiver of registration fees. Persons interested in serving in a volunteer capacity should send a letter to that effect to The Milton H. Erickson Foundation, 3606 N. 24th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85016. A letter from the university department head, indicating full-time student status also should be enclosed.

Selected volunteers will be asked to send a $50 deposit which will be fully refunded after completing their participation in the meeting. A $2500 administrative fee will be made for volunteer cancellations.

Donations

The Milton H. Erickson Foundation has received a total of $4,874.95 in charitable contributions since the last newsletter.

Special thanks go to Elizabeth M. Erickson, Raymond J.M. Atkinson, Fred G. Hartman, Jr., Earl Kole, Robert Schwarz, Charles Stern, and Gunars Veres.

We would especially like to thank Ethan Milton Klein, Olivia Marie Klein and Hayley Francis Klein, children of Alan and Roxanna Erickson Klein, and grandchildren of Mrs. Elizabeth M. Erickson and the late Milton H. Erickson.

We are grateful for these contributions and appreciate the thoughtfulness behind each gift.

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Interview continued from page 11

mystical clap trap, they’ll vomit, not only because it is existed, but that therapists believed it! Therapists may be bright and highly trained people, but it just proves my thesis that people are innately disturbed and are innate crooked thinkers as well. Incidentally, they also have the other tendency — to actualize themselves — and both are quite contradictory, but they both exist on a biological basis — in everyone.

Y — You said that you had faith how people would look at therapy in 300 years. What do you have faith in about human nature?

E — Well, I have faith that the self-actualizing part, the reasoning, logical and skeptical part (of a person) can overcome most of the errant, irrational and devout religiosity, dogma, and prejudice. They’re both innate, but I have faith that the self-actualizing, rational, skeptical and scientific tendencies will win out. But, I could be wrong, so I’m not devout on that thesis.

Y — To date, what has been the high point of your career?

E — Well, the American Psychological Association after, I wouldn’t say hating my guts but neglecting me for many years, gave me the highest award for professional contribution to knowledge. And a couple of years ago, the American Association of Counseling and Development gave me its professional award; and then another award that I like is the one I got in 1972 from the American Humanists Association. That is not the Association of Humanistic Psychology, which I’m almost the founder of, because their transpersonal horse is all over the place — they’re really nauseating, most of the AHP people. The AHA, a peculiar humanist society, gave me the “Humanist of the Year Award” in 1972.

So, those kinds of things I enjoy.

Y — What are the myths about Albert Ellis?

E — Well, there are a good many myths. I used to collect many rumors; I stopped collecting them recently, but the one biggest myth is that I’m very harsh with my clients. This is not true; nor with my supervisors, for that matter. The reason is that when people ask me what I think, I tell them! Since people ask me about various forms of therapy and I say in plain English what I think, they assume I’m equally harsh with my clients. That’s not true. I listen carefully to my clients and although I don’t put them on the head or love them dearly, I give them what we call unconditional acceptance whether or not they do the right thing, including whether they resist therapy. I show them all the time how to accept themselves. So, people in therapy see me quite differently; I’m not exactly a “Carl Rogers” in that respect, because I’m largely teaching them while accepting them; but the myth is that because I’m harsh in some of my public announcements or even in my writings, that I do the same thing to my clients, which is not true. Y — I’ll make this the last question. Can you talk a little bit about the times that RET for you personally in your own application of it, where it doesn’t work?

E — Oh, yes. I have a pioneer chapter in Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy, which was published in 1962, on the limitations of all psychotherapy, including RET. There are very few books on therapy that include limitations. RET frequently doesn’t work. It’s because I or the other therapists are not good enough educators and persuaders, etc., and/or because the public likes magic and they’re misled a lot by the other kinds of therapy. They think there’s some magical solution or that the light will light up inside of them and they’ll get better. So, it frequently doesn’t work. I think it works more often, more completely with some clients than any other kind of therapy. But, people do resist, for good or bad reasons. So, RET doesn’t always work. When it doesn’t work, I always think did I do something wrong? Maybe I did, because sometimes I make errors. If not then let’s see what the client did to resist, to lead him or her astray. I did a research study on my own clients, an actual research study on 50 failures versus 50 successes. Of the clients who significantly fail after they’ve been in therapy a year or so, most have an abysmally low frustration tolerance. They can’t stand doing things the hard way and they also are more severely disturbed: they are borderline cases and other kinds of severely disturbed people who hold their ideas more rigidly. It isn’t that they necessarily have different ideas than other people, they just hold them more rigidly. Y — There are a million more things I’d like to ask you, but I guess it’s too greedy to take up any more of your time. Thank you for the interview, Al.

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