



Newsletter April 2004

The Tribrain and Trauma Therapy

By Jef Gazley, M.S.

When someone experiences a trauma they go into immediate shock. This is very similar to hypnosis. Under hypnosis a person is more suggestible and tends to remember everything that occurred while in that state, even if it is on a subconscious level. Because of this a person, when abused, will remember vividly everything about what it was to feel like a victim and they will also remember everything about what it is like to be an abuser.

When an event is traumatic and confusing enough, we tend to internalize it in a futile attempt to control or master it. In some cases a victim will subconsciously embrace the victims' role and will tend to be drawn towards abusers and feel sorry for them. Others embrace the abusers role and then act it out on others. Some people do a bit of both.

This tendency is the origin of Freud's repetition compulsion. It is a misguided attempt at the concept of mastery. When we cannot master a task we become obsessed with the task until we figure out what we have done wrong and thereby solve the problem. Concept of mastery is one of the major ways that human beings learn.

A repetition compulsion however, is simply doing the same thing over and over again. A person who has been abused often feels at fault for the abuse and therefore subconsciously chooses abusers even when consciously trying to pick a kind and healthy person. This is healthy learning gone awry.

To understand the dynamics of trauma and post traumatic stress disorder one has to understand how the three brains and the body work. The Cerebrum and Prefrontal Cortex are the human part of the brain and operate by rational thought. This brain is linear and causal and therefore if something is explained to this part of the brain and a person agrees then they will follow those directions voluntarily. It is the conscious part of our brain. This is the part of our brain that traditional psychotherapy or talk therapy is aimed at. The Limbic system is an older part of the brain that is similar to all mammals' brains. It is made up mostly of chemicals called Neurotransmitters that help us think and feel, but not necessarily on a logical basis.

The third brain is the Medulla Oblongata and is located at the base of the skull. It is a brain which we share with all Reptiles. It deals with instincts and unconscious processes. It is definitely not rational in the way it thinks.

All the cells in the body are connected and are capable of body memory and therefore are all minute brains. Candice Pert, the discoverer of Endorphins and the Enkephalin System, postulates that our feelings are in some way yet to be understood, involved with the Enkephalin System that is located in every cell of our body. She believes that this web of endorphins/feelings constitute a highly evolved, yet

intricate brain system. In a real sense each cell is composed of a primary primitive brain. Often these brains work quicker than the others that I have mentioned.

All the brains, except the Human one, work on the basis of Pavlov's dog or conditioning. If something is repeated enough or is so powerful in its effect that learning gets imprinted it becomes very hard to dislodge it even when situations change.

That is why feelings or habits change so slowly after the unconscious thoughts have already changed. Without some kind of intervention to change or block the stimulus/response dynamic, those more primitive brains and the body often will lag 2-5 years behind the Cerebrum and at times will remain active indefinitely. This is why people find it so hard to change and are often confused and frustrated by their inability to do so. This can make people who are quite intelligent unable to fix a problem and they therefore conclude that they must be stupid or lazy. That is not the case.

There are three major ways to effect change quicker and less painfully than traditional psychotherapy, which works for the most part only with the human brain.

The first technique is Hypnosis. Since people are more sensitive and suggestible under hypnosis this is often an effective way to cut the stimulus/response patterns. A clinician can ask the client to experience the past painful experience with a greater sense of calm or with more effective skills than they had as a child. This alters the experience of the original trauma itself. Hypnosis can be quite beneficial, but does not seem to be as helpful as some of the newer techniques listed below. It appears that the newer models of therapy often produce more congruence and longer lasting change than I have found with hypnosis. It also takes longer and is less versatile.

The second way is EMDR, which is an effective and quick way to deal with trauma and is widely practiced. It is a new therapy that is fast and relatively painless. It is based on the theory that REM or rapid eye movements, which occur during dreaming, is the way that our brain shifts short-term memory to long-term memory. Long-term memory doesn't have much emotion or immediacy connected to it. Clients hold the most salient aspect of the trauma in their mind as the therapist moves a couple of fingers of their hand in front of their face to induce rapid eye movements. This seems to recreate the trauma and cause a mini abreaction. After just a few sessions clients usually report remembering the trauma without the emotion.

The third and fourth way are sister therapies, but NET™ is by far the more sophisticated, versatile, and effective. Neuro Emotional Techniques™ or NET™ was originally practiced by chiropractors and only later taught to mental health therapists. It is still very difficult to find a counselor proficient in this technique as yet. It is based on Chinese medicine and the Acupuncture and Meridian Systems. It allows a clinician to follow the body's own present traumas and feelings and discover whether these feelings might be related to past traumas. It then enables a clinician to tap lightly on a few points of the body around the spine and the toxic memory is released. This allows the affected person to be more fully in the present adult mode where effective action and change is easier to initiate. If a person's adult abandonment feelings are complicated by feeling the abandonment they felt when they were 10 years old, a person will be less competent in the present situation. NET™ releases old and present traumas residing in the body quickly and effectively.

TFT, or Thought Field Therapy, which is also based on the Meridian System, is another quick and painless therapy and more clinicians are trained in this technique. It is not as versatile as NET™ and its diagnostic abilities are limited in my opinion, but it relieves some fears and phobias quite effectively by tapping on various acupuncture points.

All of these "power therapies" seem to work to effect change on levels other than the conscious plane. They are often quicker and more effective than traditional forms of therapy. This is because they focus on the more primitive brains, which are not usually reached by older therapy models. I believe fully that

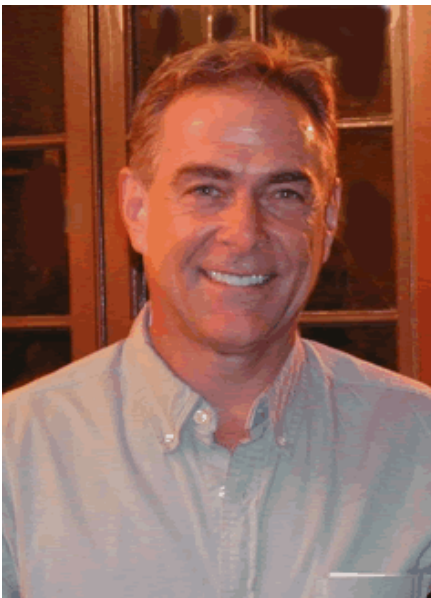
insight is important and this is often provided by traditional counseling, but change is not as quick or complete without accessing the more fundamental brains. This is done most efficiently by the newer therapies.

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Featured Specialist: Gerrie Kalaidjian

Gerrie Kalaidjian

**Life Transition Coach,
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developmental stage who are in a period of life transition. For example:

- Adult men and women who want more out of life, including finding more meaningful expressions in their work and their personal relationships.
- Teenagers who need help sorting through the emerging challenges of adulthood, including career and school choices, parental problems, and issues of sexuality.
- Military Veterans, especially current Iraq War Veterans (and their spouses), returning home and adjusting to civilian life and, in particular, the sometimes-difficult task of reintegration into American family life.
- Immigrants to the US: the complexities of learning and adjusting to the American way of life and learning to cope with "missing home."

December Contest Winner

Congratulations to Doug. He is our April 2004 winner. Enjoy.

Featured Mental Health DVD

Parenting DVD

Take the stress out of parenting! This self-help video describes the basic principles of effective parenting in a simple and straight forward format. Competent and caring parenting is essential for the well being of any child and a prerequisite for effective adult mental health when the child grows up. However, most parents are not taught the essential building blocks of effective parenting and often put too much stress on themselves. This actually decreases good parenting creates undo stress for the whole family. Learn the secrets of parenting now with this self help video! Also check out our Library for different suggestions (books, movies, and music) regarding parenting and other subjects. Jef Gazley, M.S. ©2002

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Special Note

Be sure to utilize our **free** discussion boards. These chat rooms are formatted by the following special topics- Hypnosis, Chemical Dependence, Co-Dependence, Parenting, Post-Traumatic-Stress-Disorder, Medical Issues, Dysfunctional Families, Attention Deficit Disorder, Relationships, Veterinary Concerns, and Depression.

As you are probably aware asktheinternettherapist offers online individual paid appointment times for in depth assistance with any of our professionals. Our discussion groups however are visited from time to time by our staff and their comments to discussions or questions are provided free of charge. This is an added benefit in addition to client self-help that makes up the bulk of the discussion group traffic. Visit soon.

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*We believe better health
begins with better Mental Health.*

Jef Gazley M.S.

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