MINDSHIFT

A Brief History of Mind and Behavior
and
The Psychology of Awakening

PLUS
Both Sides of The Story
AIS Review of New App
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Chaired by Dr. Michel Woodbury-Farina, the role of this board is to develop initiatives and communications to serve the stress management needs of all people.

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This month we are excited to be able to share a chapter from Dr. William Eidelman's latest work, MINDSHIFT: A Brief History of The Study of Mind and Behavior and The Psychology of Awakening, which will be highlighted over the next two editions of CONTENTMENT, along with editorial responses from members of the AIS Daily Life Stress Board. In our regular feature, Both Sides of The Issue, we ask the question, "Is Awakening Enough to Manage Stress, and share responses gathered from our clients and colleagues.

Dr. Eidelman reminds us that we are not our thoughts, and that thinking itself is not necessarily conscious. These unconscious, often survival based neural firings can be quite protective in times of danger, yet in our overly connected, chronically stressed environment they have a tendency to take a significant toll on our mental energy. Mindfulness studies have demonstrated that we can better manage our brainpower by training the brain to acknowledge these thoughts and let them pass through our mind without judgment, creating awareness without attachment, and minimizing the impact of those thoughts that don't serve us.

In order to experience psychological awakening, Dr. Eidelman calls us to bring awareness to our "running commentary," the ever present internal narrator that is grounded in both our conscious and unconscious, often times repeating the same dialogue over and over again without us knowing. Becoming aware of this personal story is a key step in gaining insight into our minds. All behaviors of habit come with a story that supports its continued use; therefore rewriting our stories is a critical shift that can move us in the direction of our goals. With intention and attention we can then use our inner knowing to guide us rather than wandering along aimlessly driven by our unconscious, automatic pilot thought process. This enables us to bring the body and mind back into harmony, decreasing unnecessary stress and improving our energy across all dimensions: physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.

"Watching yourself, being mindful, is the most important mental exercise."

William Eidelman, MD, FAIS
GET INSIDE OUR HEAD

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What is truth? Our culture is abundant with images of seeking the truth from a mountain top guru to the tenacious detective who bravely faces danger in the unwavering pursuit of truth. The practical search for truth, whether in the context of an individual or team, remains a valuable journey that meanders through the mind yielding drama, insightful intersections and tangible take-aways. The truth is often tangled up over time and embedded within old habits that are rooted in the unconscious. Awareness, whether brought to
us on a mountain top or in the midst of a facilitator, is often the key to changing behaviors that will lead to better outcomes in life, business and relationships. So, what is the truth and how do we awaken or shift our mindset to find it?

A variety of methods for finding the truth is within the theories and therapies outlined in MINDSHIFT: A Brief History of The Study of Mind and Behavior and The Psychology of Awakening by William S. Eidelman, MD, FAIS. In this refreshing review of multiple therapies used to unlock the tangled truth of our unconscious minds are the practical tools used by those of us who walk beside others during their search for peace and performance.

Archeology of Truth

Robert and I sat in a modern appointed boardroom of his corporate headquarters, surrounded by large glass walls, cool stainless steel chairs enveloped the senses with their luxurious high leather backs as we had the cat bird view of two floors of bustling employees attending to the needs of the rapidly expanding North American franchise. I have been brought in to create learning programs to assist franchise owners and their teams to establish best practice behaviors that will lead to peak performance. Robert’s quick wit, deep knowledge of his content and genuine caring for his organization mirrors my image of a young successful entrepreneur. He speaks, I listen. Occasionally the conversation drops and I ask a relevant question that spurs Robert’s passion to another exploration of a passionate topic.

Dr. Eidelman proposes in Mindshift, “there is an awakening of consciousness which creates a dramatic change in our perception of life and the world, of people in the world and of our relationships to ourselves and others.” I’ve found even the smallest shifts in perspective to be both dramatic and purposeful. The practical approach of creating a safe space for Robert to explore his own perceptions of his company and the needs of over 185 franchise owners illustrated the power of a shift in mindset. I asked questions of curiosity that challenged some of his own assumptions about behavior; he suddenly sat up and declared “We’ve always said, ’Be yourself.’ Yet, I don’t think this loose style is working. What we really should be saying is ‘Bring your talents to model for your success.’ We’ve always said ’Be yourself’ but we see that leads to adult day-care, so we’re giving them the wrong message all along. Wow!”

Tools to Untangle Your Truth

I employ a wide variety of style coaching techniques that lead to changes that stick. I encourage self reflection and examination of assumptions as this practical approach often reveals the unspoken concepts that are being protected by unproductive behaviors. Robert saved valuable time, resources and frustration by allowing his own deep knowledge of his franchise owner’s needs to emerge. Creating this atmosphere, even in the initial conversations prior to training creates value and leads to more effective programs. Robert’s breakthrough and his actions that follow also reflect on the practical process of The Behaviorist model discussed in Mindshift. Dr. Eidelman notes that this school of thought emphasizes
a more scientific process in that changes in behavior lead to measurable modifications in behavior. Objective outcomes, such as Robert’s internal surveys, fiscal analysis of franchise owner’s performance and topics of their call center help line can be measured to guide effective performance. Robert experienced, as Dr. Eidelman writes, “a change in consciousness, which then permits a change in behavior.” I completely concur with Dr. Eidelman when he notes in Mindshift, “If you allow it (unconscious mind) to communicate, it will!”

A Little Shift in Truth Goes a Long Way
Robert’s little shift in mindset has started a transformation that will effect hundreds of lives. His commitment to excellence and a renewed sense of mission will affect the daily operations of his own life, the franchise owners, their employees and the customers they serve.

MINDSHIFT: A Brief History of The Study of Mind and Behavior and The Psychology of Awakening by William S. Eidelman, MD, FAIS outlines a variety of therapeutic schools of thought that we may all use as foundations for assisting others in the practical journey towards achieving peace and peak performance.

'If your problem persists your perspective needs to shift'
Top 10 Tips For Untangling Your Truth

Challenge assumptions. Be naturally curious and ask clarifying questions for patients or clients to explore where their truth may conflict or reinforce with values and established behaviors.

Design experiences that breakthrough to truth in all your client encounters. This will yield added value, while showcasing the style of work and your commitment to their progress.

Ask participants to explore how they best learn: visual, kinetic or auditory. Then design programs for them to better understand their obstacles and find hidden solutions with specific action plans.

Focus on being fully present with an individual or group instead of needing to do something. Active listening opens the mind and it’s potential.

Hold the space. Creating and maintaining a safe and productive space for individuals and groups to explore and grow takes tremendous energy. Model leadership behaviors for the group’s focus, energy and commitment to being fully present.

Assist others in understanding what they want out of all this. Establish clearly stated measurable goals.

Identify their obstacles to improvement and the choices they may have within the challenge.

Create an experience for them to explore their own power and confidence. They often discover hidden talents and areas of potential resources that have gone unnoticed.

Use stories, metaphors and images to create movement. Teams are often frozen in their track, see, I just used an image that we all understand. Dr. Eidelman discusses Carl Jung’s Collective Unconsciousness and how we all genetically predisposed to share reactions to symbols and images. Use them. Top teams have shared experiences and will shift when a member has a breakthrough with a strong image, metaphor or story. Through their business networking, they will share the shift!

Find out what’s at stake and their commitment to achieving their goals. What are you willing to change or give up now to succeed?

Have a practical purpose. Stay grounded in the important measurable matters that will demonstrate the usefulness of exploring untapped regions of our minds, while encouraging the liberating shifts from awareness to outcome to continuously evolve.
There is little you can say about "stress" that applies to everyone because it is different for each of us. Things like a steep roller coaster ride or bungee jumping are very distressful for some people but an exhilarating thrill for others. We also respond to the same stressor in diverse ways ranging from headache and low back pain to gastrointestinal and dermatologic complaints or palpitations.

Similarly, no stress reduction strategy is a panacea. Jogging, meditation, yoga, progressive muscular relaxation, cognitive-behavioral restructuring, visual imagery or listening to music may be very effective for some, but prove dull, stressful and boring when arbitrarily imposed on others. You have to find out what works for you so that you adhere to it because you want to, rather than comply with a recommendation that someone else is promoting for personal reasons rather than proof of efficacy.

There are over 50 stress reduction apps for smart phones and other mobile devices that promise to reduce stress by teaching you to breathe correctly, meditate, promote muscle relaxation, restful sleep, or even simply listening to music or playing games. These may provide transient placebo benefits, since, as Celsus noted over 2,000 years ago, "Part of the cure is the wish to be cured." However, they are unlikely to furnish sustained relief.

So, how can you determine if your symptoms are stress related, how much stress you are experiencing or whether an app or any other stress reduction intervention is really helping you?

Popular devices that measure electrodermal (GSR or Galvanic Skin Response) and thermal (Mood Rings) activities are notoriously inaccurate. Muscle tension (EMG), fingertip temperature and EEG feedback are superior for specific symptoms but are time consuming and expensive. The best barometer for assessing stress levels and monitoring their response to treatment is real time HRV (Heart Rate Variability) feedback. As also explained in previous Newsletters, this research, which was pioneered by HeartMath, culminated with the development of their handheld emWave device. Having just finished testing their recently introduced Inner Balance app based on this technology, I suspect it will also be a stunning success for the following reasons:
• Ease of Use And Superb Support – As can be seen to the left, the attractive multicolored screen displays your HRV level and other information. The device also monitors, records and saves each session so that you can easily review your progress. To start, simply connect the earpiece sensor to the fleshy part of your earlobe and tap in the space below the breath pacer to start your session. A finger sensor is also available. Follow the pacer and the prompts that appear, which teach you how to adjust your breathing pattern to obtain optimal results. This is very much like having a built in personal coach who provides constant guidance. Helpful books are available but there are also a host of free webinars at www.heartmathwebinar.com that allow you to zero in on specific topics such as depression, anxiety, insomnia, how to meditate, get into the "zone," and most importantly, promote psychophysiological coherence.

• A state of coherence is associated with a feeling of deep relaxation and inner calm but also increased focus and awareness due to synchronization between heart rate variability, breathing and brain wave patterns. One screen features a brightly colored circle that pulses at the best breathing pace for you to attain optimal benefits. Another has a soothing photo of a waterfall that you can replace with anything you choose and you can also select music to listen to during your sessions. You also determine the length of each session, which usually varies from three to ten minutes depending on how rapidly you learn. In that regard, you can increase the level of difficulty for each session to improve your skills. At the conclusion of each session, you will get a report on how you did, including an overall score measured as "coherence points."

• Inner Balance™ is the only technology I am aware of that measures HRV coherence, which could explain why, in its prelaunch debut at the 2013 Consumer Electronic Show, it earned two accolades in the top 25 apps for both the App Showdown award and the prestigious Last Gadget Standing award. Another reason may be that the Inner Balance iOS sensor for Apple's mobile operating system allows it to be used on an iPad, iPod Touch as well as iPhones. All these features are built in to the Inner Balance app so there is no need to access a computer to see your results or track your progress. This is a bargain at 99 cents, especially since technical assistance is readily available. An Android version should be available soon.
"Man is the only animal that blushes - and the only animal that needs to!"

As far as we know humans are the only animals able to think about how they think. And we just might want to do that more often if we want to experience less stress. We are often plagued by our automatic tendency to believe in and act on our thoughts, even when they are completely distorted by our programming! We operate on an autopilot programmed by our unconscious emotions and drivers, beliefs, and stories and identities we form about who we are in the world. In this unaware mode we repress much of what does not fit into our programming, setting us up for discontent, distress, and disease.

Solid research is showing the positive impact of mindfulness practices on our brains, our health, and our experience of the inevitable challenges of everyday living. Yet among patients and clients, there is a lot of confusion about what mindfulness really means, what healthy meditation entails, and the scientific history of these practices. In this chapter from MindShift, Dr. Eidelman eloquently provides the background for the study of mind and behavior and the evolving Psychology of Awakening.

Please enjoy, and may this help you in your journey to awareness, love, and health!

Cynthia Ackrill, MD, FAIS
Chairwoman, AIS Workplace Stress Board
MINDSHIFT: A Brief History of The Study of Mind and Behavior and The Psychology of Awakening

William S. Eidelman, MD, FAIS
Los Angeles, California

MINDSHIFT can be understood through the Psychology of Awakening, an emerging view of consciousness and of the human mind. Although its roots (an ancient lineage) have been in the East, Western psychology has evolved to the point where it can easily merge with the Eastern approach. I will trace that evolution.

Until now, Western psychology has accepted the basic Freudian proposition that mankind is primarily unconscious. Many approaches to understanding unconsciousness have arisen, resulting in many schools of thought. However, while they all believe parts of the unconscious mind can be brought into the conscious mind, none of them propose that we can wake up to a whole new level of consciousness.

The Psychology of Awakening, however, does propose that there is an awakening of consciousness which creates a dramatic change in our perception of life and the world, of people in the world, and of our relationships to ourselves and to others. This awakening is a series of quantum leaps in consciousness, in which we are transformed from being neurotic, as was described by Freud, to being mentally healthy, as was described by Abraham Maslow. The final transformation leaves one beyond neurosis, luminous and awakened, as has been described by Buddha and Jesus. This is the ultimate MIND-SHIFT.

Freud's Theory of the Unconscious

When Freud first proposed his theory that we are primarily unconscious, he himself wrote that this idea would appear absurd. It goes against the very definition of being conscious. It was and is difficult to imagine how one can be conscious and unconscious at the same time. They seem to be opposites.

However, Freud gave convincing arguments to support his hypothesis. He provided a detailed map of the unconscious mind. He described unconscious defense mechanisms such as repression, denial, projection, transference, reaction formation, abreaction, etc., which acted to keep the inner psyche in balance.

Freud realized that the unconscious mind stored much information symbolically. These symbols could be expressed in dreams, which he said were created in total by the unconscious mind. Thus he called dreams "the royal road to the unconscious."

Freud also showed that unconscious symbols could be expressed through thoughts, statements, feelings, and behaviors in waking life. The famous "Freudian slip" is an example – we are trying to say one thing, and something else accidentally comes out. This something else is a statement from the uncon-
conscious mind.

When we are not aware that a particular expression is symbolic of something else, we can say that it is unconscious. This is one of many ways in which we are almost constantly unconscious.

No Concept of Awakening

The remainder of Freud's map is much more controversial. He divided the mind into three parts -- the id, the ego, and the super-ego. He saw the id as the collection of primitive instinctual urges, drives, and desires that are the result of our evolutionary heritage. The id is basically uncivilized, according to Freud's concept. He described the ego as the organization of mental processes. It serves as a mechanism for controlling the id, so that society can exist (even if we are not yet truly civilized). The super-ego is the idealized ego, usually as the voices of parental figures and perhaps religious figures, that further controls ego and id.

Freud proposed that most of this goes on at a level outside of our conscious awareness.

Using the process of "free association," in which his patients spoke whatever came into their minds, Freud tried to fill in the details of the unconscious mind. When he first proposed the etiology of hysteria in 1896, he reported that in his psychoanalysis of twelve hysterics (six men and six women), all had been sexually abused. Freud, a young doctor at the time, was shocked to have this emerge in the analysis of each of these patients, since none had remembered the abuse at the beginning. The emergence of the memory was a surprise to the patients, too.

This also came as a great shock to the Viennese intelligentsia. As European psychoanalyst Alice Miller points out in her 1986 book, Thou Shalt Not Be Aware, although Viennese society was highly cultured, what happened behind closed bedroom doors was considered private. What they did with their children behind those closed doors was their right and choice as parents, and none of anyone else's business.

Freud Shifts Spotlight From Reality To Fantasy

Unable to bear the stunned disapproval of his peers, Freud rapidly shifted the spotlight. In 1897, he proposed his theory of psychosexual development. He said that the child goes through the oral, anal, and phallic phases, in which the child's instinctual drives are focused on those orifices. In the first two years, a baby's attention is obviously centered on the mouth. In the second two years, the anus is the focus of psychic attention, with toilet training occupying an important position. In the phallic phase, according to Freud, the four year old boy unconsciously wants to make love with his mother and kill his father. Girls at four years old want to make love with
According to Freud, these phases are actuallyphysiologically powered drives which run the child's life. Freud further proposed that the mental life resulting from these unconscious id drives is fantasy. He also proposed that the child's fantasy life was more important in shaping psychological life than real events, including sexual abuse or other forms of abuse. He said, in an addendum written in 1924 to his Aetiology of Hysteria, Freud wrote, “All this is true [he is referring to sexual abuse of children]; but it must be remembered that at the time I wrote it I had not yet freed myself from my over-valuation of reality, and my low valuation of fantasy.”

**No Concept of Awakening**

In creating this theory, Freud deflected attention from embarrassing (and to us, criminal) child rearing practices in the community. He was able to protect his career from being destroyed by a community that was not prepared to hear his radical discovery.

Freud also protected his own unconscious from having to deal with his own experience of having been abused in his childhood by his father. For more details on Freud's life and the history of the psychosocial phenomenon of sexual abuse and abusive child-rearing, please read Alice Miller's books.

Freud's theory of psychosexual development became a dominating force in psychiatry. Although today there are fewer people who accept what emerged as Freud's dogma of infantile sexuality, nobody has raised a serious challenge to his general concept that the bulk of our mental processes are unconscious. Most people accept that something like the ego exists, although definitions and attributes differ widely.

In Freud's model, one could analyze the unconscious mind, and thereby gain insights that would improve or strengthen the ego. But there was no concept of awakening of consciousness.

**Jung Declares East Can't Meet West**

Freud’s senior student was Carl G. Jung. Jung split with Freud for a number of reasons. Jung saw that Freud's own unconscious was interfering with his observations of his patients and with the unfolding of the understanding of the mind. Freud, however, refused to undergo psychoanalysis with any of his own students. And, he wanted to tightly control the development of psychoanalytical theory. Jung, whose theories of the mind were different from Freud's, was unwilling to submit to his teacher. He was forced to go his own way.

Jung appreciated the significance of the spiritual dimensions of life. He said that all mental problems in people over the age of 42 were primarily spiritual in nature.

Jung's study of human symbols was ex-
tensive. Unlike Freud, who gave sexual overtones to almost any symbol, Jung's symbology resonated with the spiritual overtones and undertones that permeate the collective unconscious of humanity.

But Jung stopped short of awakening.

**The Collective Unconscious**

Perhaps Jung's greatest contribution was his proposal of a commonality of people's unconscious minds, which he called the "collective unconscious." This collective mind is built into the genes through evolution. Everyone, having the same genetic heritage, has the same basic unconscious mind. The same symbols and the same tendencies of reaction are genetically structured into the unconscious.

Because Jung did not know about the body's natural electromagnetism, he could not postulate that the collective unconscious mind also must operate through the collective electromagnetic field created by everyone's minds. However, it seems likely that the collective energy field does affect the collective unconscious mind in each of us.

**Unconscious Armor of the Bodymind**

The only student of Freud's to propose something akin to awakening was Wilhelm Reich. Reich believed there was energy flowing in the body. He called it "orgone energy." Reich theorized that this energy could become blocked in the body. The blocked energy then would be stored as armor in the muscles. The energy field was thus encoded with the memory of the event which triggered the armor to be created. This memory then became part of the bodymind. When the unconscious block was released, through various, usually intense breathing processes, the armor relaxed and the energy which had been repressed then flowed and became vitality.

Whereas Freud's id was acceptable to the populace, Reich's orgone energy was unacceptable. First, Reich was talking about actual flows of energy, which scientists believed did not and could not exist. Second, the animal desires of
Freud’s id were more or less controllable or repressible by the ego and super-ego. On the other hand, Reich’s orgone energy, when released from the muscular armoring, stimulated a highly charged sexual energy. Reich was very positive towards sexuality, particularly the orgasm, as a healthy, necessary human function. One of his books was called *The Function Of The Orgasm*. Reich believed that the ability to achieve orgasm was essential to mental health. Failure to achieve orgasm was the cause of neurosis. Reich was against repression of sexual energy, a position that was far ahead of its time.

Reichian Therapy for releasing the armor was rejected by mainstream psychiatry and medicine. Nevertheless, Reichian and Neo-Reichian therapies can still be found. They are similar to some ancient Eastern practices. These therapies are very powerful stimulants for a MINDSHIFT.

**Just Stimulus-Response Mechanisms?**

As psychoanalysis became the cornerstone of psychiatry and psychology, Freud’s theories were widely accepted. Although there were many variations for approaching the unconscious mind -- as many ways as there were psychoanalysts -- nearly everyone agreed that the unconscious played a major role in the psyche.

Then along came the behaviorist school of psychology, which postulated that we are simply the result of conditioned reactions. Behaviorism is the ultimate clockwork psychology. It proposes that we are stimulus-response machines, as mechanical as robots. Many behaviorists even say that the unconscious is a meaningless idea. They say that because we can't directly observe or measure the unconscious, we should ignore it, and put our attention on concrete phenomena such as behavior. Some radical behaviorists even say that because we can't measure the unconscious, it doesn't exist!

Behaviorists studied behavior, and were satisfied that their way was more scientific than psychoanalysis, because behaviors were objective and could be measured. Much of behavior psychology research took place with dogs, rats, and pigeons. However, research in humans has shown that consciously knowing that you are being conditioned inhibits the conditioned learning. This certainly calls into question the relevance of much of behaviorist research with lower animals.

Behavior therapies try to change people through having them modify their behavior. Such modification is almost never classical conditioning. It is almost always an intervention of consciousness. For example, the assignment to eat one’s food with awareness is a common behavior therapy tool. The client with overeating problems is to eat more slowly, taking one bite at a time, chewing it well, swallowing it, and then only to move towards the next bite. When someone eats in this way, they are likely to eat less (and enjoy it more). Thus, this form of behavior therapy works. But the mechanism of success, from my perspective, is the person bringing conscious attention, mindfulness, to the act of eating.

When we examine or consider thoughts and behaviors as they are happening, we are bringing consciousness to the behavior or pattern of behaviors. Then, instead of doing them automatically, unconsciously, we are carrying them out more consciously, mindfully. This mindfulness, this change of consciousness permeates the behavior. In fact, what had been unconscious becomes conscious. When behavior therapy works, this is probably the
most important mechanism. It has come to be called Mindfulness Therapy. It is one of the central mechanisms of all successful therapies -- more on this later.

**Cognitive Therapy**

One enduring movement in psychiatry and psychology has been the development of Cognitive Therapy, begun over forty years ago by Aaron Beck, M.D. The word "cognition" comes from the Latin word for "thinking." Beck proposes that distortions in thinking patterns cause our mental problems.

According to Beck's analysis, most of our psychological problems arise from twisted thinking, with distorted symbolic meanings, illogical reasoning, and erroneous interpretations. Most of our perceptions about the world, about other people and our relationships to them, are based on cues and signals that are often unclear. People often say one thing and actually communicate something else through facial and bodily expressions, and through behaviors. We then make our interpretation and assume our interpretation is correct.

Beck says, "The degree to which we believe that we are correct...is not related to the actual accuracy of our belief." In other words, we may be absolutely certain that our interpretation of a situation is correct, but we may be totally wrong.

Beck is describing the functioning of the unconscious mind, but from the angle of the conscious mind. All of this twisted thinking is actually done by the unconscious mind. Cognitive Therapy emphasizes the identification and observation of these unconscious, automatically triggered thoughts and emotions. Then, we are to check them out, to see if our thoughts, perceptions, and conclusions are actually correct interpretations of reality or are faulty. Although Beck rarely mentions the unconscious mind, his therapy expands the conscious into the unconscious, so that there is less unconscious.

**All In the Family**

A major breakthrough in understanding human psychology was the realization that each family is a dynamic system, and that each family member is part of that system. If an individual was experiencing emotional or psychiatric difficulties, the difficulty can best be treated by engaging the entire family system in therapy. One person who helped popularize the Family Therapy movement was Virginia Satir.

Observations of family therapy sessions make it enormously clear that the family is a single system, and that each person participates unconsciously. For example, if the family includes a one-year-old child, when the parents reach issues in therapy which are painful, the child, who had been playing quietly on the floor, will suddenly start screaming or engaging in some other behavior that distracts the parents from dealing with the relevant issues.

With older children, the dynamics are, of course, more complicated, but family members are always acting unconsciously to maintain the psychological structure of the family system, no matter how unhealthy that structure may be. If the family structure is unhealthy, one person within the structure may express this unhealthiness more publicly. He or she is the "identified patient," although the entire family system is disturbed. In such a situation, if the family disturbance is not changed, and the "identified patient" is successfully treated individually,
another family member will likely adopt the abandoned role in the family's psychopathology. Or, the successfully-treated patient might be driven into a relapse.

**Gestalt Therapy & Transactional Analysis**

Two other important approaches to therapy occurred together in the late sixties in San Francisco. Transactional Analysis was created by Eric Berne, M.D., while Gestalt Therapy was created by Fritz Perls, M.D. These two different approaches combine together synergistically.

Eric Berne's approach, as the name implies, was analytical. He saw the ego, the mental organization of the psyche, as having three general categories -- the child ego state, the adult ego state, and the parent ego state. Each person had these ego states, and these "sub-personalities" could interact with each other, as well as with the ego states of others.

Each ego state has its own positive and negative aspects -- the nurturing parent, the critical parent, the rebellious child, the creative child, the playful child. In Berne's analysis, the adult is simply the adult -- rational and logical, with common sense. By analyzing the psyche in this way, people could understand their lives and their relationships, and through this understanding many of their problems were easily solvable or evaporated.

Especially when the therapist also employed the process approach of Fritz Perls.

**Express It Totally, Here and Now**

Whereas almost all psychotherapies, excluding Reich's, were analytical, Fritz Perls' Gestalt Therapy was very here-now experiential. Perls understood that material which had been repressed into the unconscious is flowing here at this moment. Rather than try to understand the past history of unconscious material, Perls wanted it brought forth into consciousness now.

Perls encouraged people to express their feelings, to be spontaneous as they allowed the unconscious to pour forth. For example, if someone was repressing anger, Perls encouraged the person to bang pillows to move the repressed emotion, which helped to reach other material resonating with the anger in the unconscious.

Whereas some part of the psyche is re-
pressed because we disown it, Perls guided people into owning the repressed parts. Almost by definition, we are not aware of unconscious patterns. So, when confronted by one, we deny it. Or we deflect it, transfer it, project it. But we don't "own" it.

One owns it by taking responsibility for it. Once one takes responsibility, one can consciously process the feeling, and then can consciously release it if the feeling is no longer appropriate. Perls discovered this could occur without any analysis whatsoever of the repressed item. The primary therapeutic factor was in totally experiencing and communicating the feeling, in an atmosphere of acceptance.

Perls encouraged dialogue between intrapsychic parts or with our projections of other people, for which he invented the two-chair method. The patient or group member would sit in one chair, and speak to an intrapsychic projection, which is assigned to the other chair. When the first statement is complete, the person switches to the other chair and speaks back.

The other chair can represent or symbolize a real person, often a parent or a mate. Or it can symbolize aspects of the unconscious mind. This method was used successfully for discussions between the ego states of Transactional Analysis. Highly educational and transformative dialogues arose from this two-chair technique, which remains a powerful therapeutic tool.

**Trust the Unconscious**

It's a long way from Freud to Perls, from 1900 Vienna to San Francisco in the 1960's and 70's. However, both Freud and Perls depended on the same quality of the unconscious mind -- if you allow it to communicate, it will! If you don't allow it to communicate, the bottled up energy will still try to express itself. It will express itself in dreams, thoughts, statements, postures, movements, and behaviors. It can express itself though aches, pains, and even illness.

Freud's method for accessing the unconscious was free association. The analyst -- the person being analyzed -- while laying on a couch, simply said whatever popped into his or her mind. Contents of the unconscious are continually resonating through the mind field, always waiting for an opportunity for expression. The process of free association allowed the beginning of such expression.

Freud's error, however, was in believing that he could impose his own preconceived interpretations on everyone. Even those followers who disagreed with his psychosexual approach usually had their own theories through which they attempted to analyze their patients. The problem arose that the analysis often told more about the analyst or the analyst's school than about the person being analyzed.

When the unconscious is attempting to communicate something, if the analyst makes a misinterpretation, the unconscious communication the person was trying to make is frustrated. The patient of course will feel frustrated and perhaps even betrayed, for the analyst's job is to facilitate the communication, not to thwart it.

Perls, on the other hand, had few preconceived notions. In working with patients, he allowed them to go in whatever direction they needed to go. Perls observed that if you give the unconscious mind an opportunity to express itself, it
will communicate its truth. Perls’ genius was his ability to encourage people to delve into their own unconscious minds and to allow the natural intelligence of the unconscious to do its work.

Both Freud and Perls assumed that if you brought the repressed conflicts to the surface, that a natural mental healing process would occur. The more total and spontaneous expressions of the unconscious allowed by Perls, in fact, brought more to the surface faster and the natural mental healing process seemed to work effectively.

**The Crystal Clear Brain**

Just what is the unconscious mind? Freud saw it as the repository of rejected drives, urges, feelings, memories, fantasies, and internalized interpretations of outer voices. The conflicting unconscious processes fight with each other, and the result is neurosis. To Freud, the unconscious mind is so much larger and more powerful than the conscious, we are almost helpless to stop this unconscious process.

Although the unconscious mind certainly is a repository of repressed material, it is much more. If you look at it closely, the unconscious mind is an amazing and wondrous mechanism. It controls all life functions, such as breathing, heartbeat, blood pressure, digestion, hunger and satiety, water conservation, cell production, self-defense, and on and on.

If you look at small children, whose conscious and unconscious minds have not yet "divided," the primary subjective state is one of universal love and joy. This state is natural to the unconscious mind.

Everyone resonates positively to this state. Who can resist the joy of an infant or a small child before that energy is turned off or dampened, or twisted?

The brain is a liquid crystal, literally a humming network of semi-conducting electric currents and their resultant electromagnetic fields. In a small child, the brain is like a pure crystal, clear as the purest water. The crystal becomes cloudy as the child's energy field takes on the resonances of the parents' own patterns of repression and stored trauma, and as the child develops his or her own repressions and reactions to trauma. (Parents learned their patterns from their parents. The patterns really belong to society.)

As adults, if we release ourselves from the grip of unconscious repressions, the cloudy resonance of our unconscious minds can return to the state of crystal clarity. In this state of clarity, our intelligence and our creativity function at a maximum, and we are full of consciousness, love, and bliss. We can feel the same joy of the small child as our own natural state.

Of course, we will discover our natural intelligence amid layers and layers of habits, repressions, and conditioned reactions in the unconscious.

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*Part 2 of Mindshift will appear in the July issue of Contentment magazine.*
Both Sides of the Issue
By Elizabeth Scott, MS, DAIS

At AIS we know that many of the issues you face in your daily life have two sides. Here we explore both sides of an issue that impacts your Daily Life balance.

Is "Awakening" Enough to Reduce Stress?

Awakening psychology, as discussed in this month's feature story, promises to change the way we think of our stressors, the therapeutic process, and even life itself—a pretty significant aim! Most people would agree with the basis of this theory: that our unconscious mind holds many thought patterns that are not necessarily healthy or based in reality, patterns that we are not generally aware of, patterns that cause us stress. We hold prejudices, we have limitations in our concepts of ourselves, we constantly and harshly judge. We automatically react with unexamined, knee-jerk responses that may not match what we would say or do if we really thought about each situation with truly fresh eyes.

Using the tool of meditation, awakening psychology asserts, we can learn to discard the unconscious mind itself and operate from authenticity and consciousness—from awakened awareness. Certainly meditation is nothing new, and the concept of ‘awakening’ has been in existence for quite a while as well. However, in the past, these have often been seen more as spiritual concepts than as psychological ones.

Research on meditation has become standardized and popularized in relatively recent years, most notably within the framework of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) programs. It is in large part because of the study of these standardized mindfulness programs we recognize that meditation, particularly regularly practiced meditation, can carry many benefits over time, including lowered blood pressure and other physiological changes, freedom from rumination, increased feelings of well-being and contentment, and decreased reactivity to stress.

Acceptance of meditation as a tool for stress management has accelerated greatly in recent years, but meditation itself and awakening as a concept have not yet become widely accepted as primary therapeutic tools that could replace the need for other techniques, including medication. Further, many people find it difficult to begin or maintain a regular meditation practice, and some find that it’s difficult to achieve the type of relief from negative emotions that they would like from meditation alone. Arguably, meditation and awakened awareness come more easily to some than others, and are possible for virtually everyone; however, some people have a difficult time getting past the initial challenge and making meditation a habit.
What do you think about awakening psychology (as discussed here and in other areas of this newsletter)? Do you think that meditation and mindfulness practices can and should replace most or all other interventions for those facing anxiety, depression, and heavy loads of stress? Or do you believe that approaches that examine the roots of our patterns, approaches that create behavior changes that can alter how we think and feel about ourselves, and other types of approaches are at least as effective? Is the process of becoming aware of the existence of our thought patterns and choosing to operate from an awakened state of being, in itself, perhaps the most powerful path to stress relief? We opened up the discussion, and here are some responses we’ve received so far:

‘Yes, through meditation and awakening experiences, I have completely transformed who I am and how I operate with the world. I’ve had to make many changes, but I am now living in the present moment, I know what is important in life, and I no longer believe that presenting an “image of success” makes me worthwhile.’

‘I tried meditation and it just wasn’t for me. I think I need something like this—I can get caught up in rumination pretty easily. However, when I’ve tried meditation, I just haven’t been able to get the hang of it. Other techniques seem to work better for me for stress management. Meditation makes me stressed!’

‘Practicing mindfulness changed my life. Once I learned to become more “present” I was able to shrug off a lot of the stress that had plagued me.’

‘Mindfulness can be a great tool, I’ve found. It can be used anywhere at any time. I’m not sure if it would be enough just on its own, though. What about communication techniques, strategies for following dreams, and all the great techniques from the field of positive psychology that can bring us a greater experience of joy? I’m not knocking awakening psychology, I just think it doesn’t need to replace other things that also work.’

We asked this question via Facebook and Twitter, and would love to hear from you!

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