

PSYCHOSPIRITUAL THERAPY PRACTICE

Specialized Training:

EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing)

TFT (Thought Field Therapy)

NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming)

Hypnosis

Yoga Psychology

Integrated Kabbalistic Healing

The Work of Return

Certified White Belt Nia Instructor (My Nia Story)

Specialist in treatment of Eating Disorders, Anxiety Disorders, Depression and Trauma

Psychodynamic Training & The Relaxation Response

My very first job, as a beginning therapist in 1983, was at the Washington Hospital Center in Washington, D.C., on one of the first eating disorder units in the county. The term “bulimia” was about 15 years old and no one had any experience in how to treat these most difficult and deeply entrenched disorders. We were given a protocol for alcoholism and told to use it with this new population. Although alcoholism and eating disorders frequently overlap, we knew we were dealing with a potentially lethal condition without a road map.

This challenging population turned out to be my very best teachers. Not only did I have to become an expert in anorexia, bulimia and compulsive overeating; I needed to know about drug, alcohol and sexual abuse, depression, anxiety disorders, trauma, bipolar disorder, dissociative identity disorder, attention-deficit-disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, psychopharmacology, and family systems. I learned very quickly that, as a group, the young women I was working with were bright and creative, but highly resistant to change. I realized that in order to be successful in helping them (and I passionately wanted to be successful), I needed to “get below the neck” - to their feeling centers, as opposed to only their minds. At the time, I didn't quite know how to access these centers, but my own experience in a yoga class began to give me the clues. The five minutes at the end of each yoga class - when we were guided to the pose “shavasana,” or “corpse pose” held the key. I knew that an eating disorder was an anxiety disorder and this time of relaxation was different than anything I had ever experienced. Dr. Bernard Siegel of Harvard Medical School coined the term “relaxation response,.” When we are able to initiate this response, the sympathetic nervous system (which is in charge of the “fight or flight” response) relaxes and the parasympathetic nervous system takes over and tells the adrenalin to stop pumping and the muscles to let go. I thought if I could assist my patients in achieving that state of relaxation, they would have no need to use the myriad of addictive symptoms they created to attempt to achieve the same state.

In the 21st Century, this may not be a radical thought, but twenty-three years ago, my attraction to alternative solutions had to be couched in some other language. But I was now on the quest to learn how to put my traditional psychodynamic training together with something that had, as yet, no name.

Divine Law

As “coincidence” would have it, I came across a book called Yoga and Therapy, by Charles Bates (a disciple of Swami Rama of the Himalayan Institute). Charles became my first spiritual teacher and the interweaving of my personal and professional journey took flight. As I learned and experienced deeper and deeper insights and healing of my own body/mind, I would immediately bring the concepts into my practice. I found that the expansion of my view of psychotherapy, was having profound effects on my clients. By combining Spiritual or Universal principles (sometimes called “Divine Law”) and the body (as an integral part of the emotional network), with sound developmental psychological theory, people were getting well. This is not a “quick-fix” approach. But it is efficient, compassionate, and life altering.

The Life-Altering Toolbox

As with any work, a craftsman needs tools. Following the core question of “how do people really change at an elemental level?” I have accumulated a number of skill-based techniques. There is a consistent thread to the trainings I have been drawn to take. They are all experiential in nature and bypass the conscious mind. Lasting change occurs in the unconscious mind and I wanted desperately to know how to work at that level. Over the years, I have studied hypnosis, Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR), Thought Field Therapy (TFT), Yoga Psychology, along with the work of Jason Shulman (described below) and Barbara deAngelis. They are all part of my toolbox and especially effective in areas that have previously been treatment resistant (such as trauma).

I believe my role as a practitioner is to teach my clients to be self-sufficient. With this in mind, coping skills are of paramount importance. So my work tends to be very grounded and practical in nature. Learning to navigate one’s way through obstacles, in a nonjudgmental and compassionate manner, is the foundation of all emotional and spiritual work.

Integrated Kabbalistic Healings: Nondual Consciousness

Nine years ago, I began to study with an internationally known spiritual teacher by the name of Jason Shulman. He is a modern kabbalist (a scholar of the Jewish mystical path) and a Buddhist teacher who has received Dharma transmission...” Through my association with Jason and the school he founded, A Society of Souls, I have continued to expand my knowledge and skill. All of the programs offered through the school have a similar theme, though different in approach. Integrated Kabbalistic Healing, Impersonal Movement and the Work of Return are designed to lead the practitioner to a “unitive or nondual state of

consciousness, integrating the healthy human ego into its proper relationship with transcendent reality.” In less abstract terms it means that the ego (or the part of us that wants to protect us from pain and keep the status quo) is in harmony with the higher self.

Specifically, in Integrated Kabbalistic Healing, I use the ancient path of the Kabbalah as a template to heal. A typical session includes a period of talking, not dissimilar in experience to a traditional therapy session; except the I am listening with somewhat different ears in order to make a diagnosis. In the diagnostic process, I am looking for the imbalances that are evident on the “Tree of Life,” which is the symbolic representation that is used as the basis for understanding man and his relationship to the Universe.. Once the diagnosis is determined, I choose a healing to rectify those imbalances.

The Work of Return, also developed by Jason Shulman, is a gentle, yet profoundly transformative practice for healing. It works directly with symptoms; though it does not analyze them. Through a certain type of movement, a certain pattern of using the voice and specific way of breathing, The Work of Return leads one deeper and deeper into the self so that the symptom no longer has symbolic or historical value. In other words, it brings us into the present or the “now.” From this place we are no longer slaves to our past.

As a current student of Barbara deAngelis, I am continuing with my philosophy that every great teacher is a student of a master. I have been privileged to work with generous teachers whose goal is to pass on the wisdom they have accumulated. You will be the benefit of such mastery.

The style in which I work is guided by the somatic understanding that feelings are energy and energy has movement. It is this movement of energy that heals and transforms us. We learn to become expert observers of our internal processes (no longer strangers to ourselves), and masterful at redirecting the “wild mind” to be our friend and ally.