



Exclusive Hypnotherapy
Clinical Hypnotherapy and Psychotherapy



Breaking the Vicious Circle Of Psychological Misery

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The Jewish Psychotherapist Victor Frankl, whilst imprisoned in a concentration camp during the Second World War tells the story of singing “*Zip-A-De-Doo-Dah*” to the face of the commandant of the camp. The commandant looked at him with astonishment, “how can you be happy in a place like this?” Frankl said “You can do anything you want to me; however, there is one thing you cannot do and that is change the way I think. I choose to be happy.”

Human beings can be affected by external events, but only we disturb ourselves in the present and perpetuate our misery.

This book is dedicated to all the sufferers of psychological problems throughout the world, my ex-clients, from whom I learnt so much. Myra Metcalfe my girlfriend who has been a constant source of encouragement and love.



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Preface

The purpose of the book is to help millions of people whose life has been dramatically, moderately or mildly been affected by psychological/cognitive/perceptual difficulties brought about by life events, our reaction to them, then perpetuated with fear, bewilderment and the complications of symptoms. It is a general, but hopefully specific book for those people afflicted by anxiety, panic attacks, stress, confidence problems, depression, phobias, self-worth issues, food, and smoking addictions. It is not just a self-help book but a common sense, up to date guide on how to understand and deal with life's difficulties. In short it hopefully encourages an attitude of independence and peace of mind.

My hope is that other therapists working with people in a variety of fields can also benefit from this book. It is designed to specifically guide sufferers and therapists through the complications of psychological problems and the resultant confusing symptoms. I hope I have achieved this.

It is not the answer to all of life's problems. I deal with issues affecting the psychology of an individual. Not psychiatric ones. If you have any doubts about any of the symptoms mentioned in this book, consult your medical practitioner.

Introduction

My motivation for writing this book stems from twelve years clinical practise as a fully qualified Hypnotherapist and Psychotherapist and having been a sufferer myself from psychological misery. I have over those years developed an easy to follow, common sense approach into tackling psychological problems. In my work as a hypnotherapist I have been dismayed and frustrated when using a therapy, which on paper “should” work, has not. In fact, in many instances traditional hypno-psychotherapy can actually hold the client back from recovery.

The hopes and anticipation that a person comes to the consulting room with have not been met. In my view, hypnotherapy and traditional psychotherapy have failed to produce effective, long-term results. After discussion and encouragement from my colleagues and clients, who have been successfully helped, I have decided to put my formula for better health into print and enlighten you, the reader, towards peace of mind.

My formula draws on other therapeutic approaches; my personal experiences and actually seeing this approach work in clinical practise. Over the years I have dealt with a variety of emotional and psychological difficulties including anxiety, panic attacks, depression, low self-confidence and low self-esteem, phobias, agoraphobia, eating disorders, weight loss, bereavement, sexual difficulties, sexual abuse, smoking, blushing, public speaking, anger, guilt, insomnia and psychosomatic problems.

The common denominator with all of these problems is irrational thinking. When a person indulges in this self-destructive mode of thought he risks, experiencing symptoms of being out of control, a perception of going mad, worrying too much as to what others think of him, commanding that other people treat the him in a way that is conducive to his needs, fear of embarrassment, failure, of making a fool of oneself, and ultimately fear of the debilitating symptoms that the original irrational demand has created. Whatever the cause or symptom, it is always irrational thinking that is the prime mover.

It therefore follows that this produces bewilderment, which in turn creates fear and ultimately even lower self-confidence.

When is a person ill? You may ask.

When they cannot get out of this rut.

The one thing a problem does is create another problem, then another, and that equals misery.

Only two therapists, the Australian Doctor Claire Weekes and the New York Clinical Psychologist Albert Ellis PhD, founder of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy and widely recognised as the world's greatest living therapist, have in my life impressed me. Combining their approaches, my experience and knowledge and common sense, I will now show you how to get better.

One of the most common questions asked of me is “for what reason did you become a therapist?” The answer: to find out about human nature and help people, and like it or not I found out about my own.

As child I was very shy and lacking in self-confidence, years later I suffered the debilitating symptoms of anxiety and depression. For a year I was ill and could not find a way towards health. Along the road to recovery I was given,(but did not take) anti-depressants, advice from GPs, hypnotherapy, Freudian therapy, positive thinking, prayer, change in diet, Neuro Linguistic Programming, and endless hours of ruminating. My life had been turned upside down from where I was to what I had become. The only success that came from those aforementioned therapies was short term. They were not addressing where I was and did little to give me permanent peace of mind. I could not accept only remission. By chance, I found a way out.

My problems had started one Sunday morning, when I woke up with a horrendous hangover. I foolishly went out to meet a friend in a pub, my throat was so dry from dehydration that I could not feel the liquid going down my throat, so I immediately panicked and thought that I had swallowed my tongue, when I realised I hadn't my reaction was to make sure other people in the pub had not seen me choke. In that instance I was catapulted into a state of severe anxiety that was to go on for months.

From that moment on I could not trust myself to swallow, water, saliva, or any liquids, whether on my own or in company. I was consumed with fear. I approached my doctor about this problem and he suggested hypnotherapy.

I attended, and was “cured” in one session. This cure lasted three days. Six months after the initial cause, the problem gradually resolved itself.

Two years later, I was made redundant from the job I was in. Having been impressed with the fast, albeit temporary alleviation of the symptoms, hypnotherapy would not leave my mind. I was fascinated with it and was determined to know how it worked. I looked for more information on the subject and found a reputable training organisation. I applied, was accepted and eventually completed it, qualifying four years later with a Practical distinction and an in house published dissertation entitled “An Evaluation of Cognitive Methodologies In the Treatment of Anxiety and Phobias.”

However in between my training disasters struck, during a hypnotic induction procedure used on me by one of my fellow students, I had a huge panic attack. This triggered a memory from the session I had with the professional hypnotherapist; who had “helped” me with the swallowing problem. However, he had used direct suggestion in the therapy session. This can be fine for smoking, but not for a psychosomatic problem. Since a person with such a problem holds a perception that he has lost control, the last thing needed is for someone else to assume control over “my problem” (my loss of control). Many therapists support the use of direct suggestion, but I wonder if you, the reader, were to tell one such therapist unequivocally that it does not work just how the therapist would react to your direct suggestion? With mild annoyance, or more perhaps?

As a result of this traumatic experience with my fellow student, I became abruptly aware that I was now having panic attacks in enclosed spaces, such as trains, cars, and even the training workshops. At this stage in my training, I was not fully aware as to what was happening to me. I soldiered on and completed that stage of my course, successfully passing the exam, with panic. Not easy.

At the end of my training in December, my sister died in tragic circumstances and by February I had contracted sinusitis. I was at my lowest ebb.

Throughout this time my body had been trembling with an inner vibration. It was as if I was waiting for an internal incendiary device to go off. This it duly did after driving in my car a short distance I had a full-blown panic attack. I was convinced I was going to die.

When I got home I gathered myself and looked out of the window to reflect on where my life, as it was, was heading. I then at that moment experienced the weirdest moment of my life. A moment that changed my life and propelled me into an anxiety state. The world, which I had looked out on so many times before, from that same bedroom window, looked bizarre, weird, different, and scary. I thought I was going mad.

I took to bed in the hope that rest and sleep would resolve this, although in my heart of hearts, I knew that what I had experienced would not go away quickly. It had made such an impression upon me that I was beside myself with terrible anxious

introspection. After two hours of fitful rest, I got up and returned to my new world. There was no return to normality, still the environment looked unreal. My body felt disassociated from my head. I wanted to die, rather than live a life of insanity. It felt that I was losing control of everything in my life that I had taken for granted. There was no panic, just a strange uneasy void. That void was I. Where there had been relative ease with my environment a few hours before, there was now the unreality of the reality of madness; or so it appeared.

In my life I had worked up on high buildings, played dangerous sports, driven motorcycles at one hundred and thirty miles per hour, had dates with women, got drunk, had bad hangovers, witnessed death, mourned death and failed exams. I had experienced a difficult relationship with my selfish, narcissistic father and endured a strict moral upbringing from my mother, but nothing, not even that, had created or prepared me for what I was now experiencing. Contributed to, yes, created and was PERPETUATING: NO.

That is the one of the first and most crucial mistakes that so many therapeutic approaches make. The almost obsessive tendency to uncover, associate and ultimately bring a cathartic understanding to the patient. Yet totally ignoring where he is now, with the irrational frame of reference and those symptoms. Oh those symptoms!

The endless superbly written therapeutic manuals, and relaxation cassette tapes brimming full with theories, symbolism, visual techniques, awareness exercises, love

thyselves rituals, love thy mother but you hated your father inferences, positive thinking, self-help for the soul, all designed with one ultimate goal in mind: pollyannish, paint by numbers, heal thyself and assertively self-actualise.

Was I angry? I was scared witless, so angry, probably. Did I have an underlying anger that needed to be addressed? Did I have a sexual difficulty that needed to be addressed? Did I have a guilty conscience? Did I have an inferiority complex? Was I a unique individual who needed understanding? Was I an overly sensitive person? Did I have self-defeating tendencies? Did I have poor discipline and low frustration tolerance? Was I a person that needed to be loved? Was I obsessive? Was I a depressive? Was I emotionally dependent? Did I deflect, introject, project, retroflect?

If the answer to any of those questions is yes, then the whole damned world should be in therapy too. I perceived myself as no different to any one else in the world before those problems started.

A few days after the bizarre experience started, I was sitting in front of a GP telling him only so much about what had been happening to me. I was scared to tell him everything for fear of incarceration in a psychiatric hospital. He looked at me in a way that only a doctor could, you know, that way that puts all the onus on the patient, whilst giving the doctor an air of superiority for getting it wrong, and said “Do you think people are out to get you.”

I replied that the only paranoia that I was aware of was my self-demanding suspicion and fear that I may not recover from anxiety. He said he would refer me to a clinical psychologist. From my limited experience of therapy I surmised that psychiatric services would be of little value. With my fear and failure to disclose the full extent of my bewildered soul, I declined. I said I would seek help from the private sector.

Then came the endless route of therapy, books and in depth consultations where I did “reveal all”. All to no avail. I felt that I was in a modern, progressive world looking for an answer that it could not deliver. I felt like a kid at his first day at school:

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THE BREAKTHROUGH.

One day whilst hopefully but aimlessly wandering through a local library, I reached up to a shelf for a book that, despite its protective brittle cellophane covering, was dog-eared, tired and lonely. It looked like an orphan sans orphanage. There was obvious self-identification. Dr Claire Weekes titled it “Simple Effective Treatment of Agoraphobia.” I wearily, yet quickly thumbed through it. To my complete surprise and astonishment she was talking my language. The only way I can describe it to the person reading this book without having experienced anxiety problems is akin to travelling around China and Russia looking for a native to speak perfect English and never quite finding an accent that you can understand. The good doctor was multi-lingual.

It was becoming clearer that I was suffering from derealization or in Dr Weekes' enlightening language, unreality, and "brought upon by too much anxious introspection". I was not mad. I took the book home and my learning started and so ultimately did my return to normality. Although I did not have agoraphobia, there was enough in the book that did match my circumstances.

Despite the excellent advice from Dr Weekes in her many books, there were still many areas needing addressed. Why did it occur? Why did other health professionals not know about this? What could stop its return in the future? I felt that Dr Weekes' theories needed modernising.

Importantly, more specific focus on an ever changing world and it's peoples' attitudes, demands and improving intelligence, to quickly decipher ways to understand the human psyche and to prevent other people having to endure a living hell were essential. I felt a concise, simple to understand and effective road map was required. I had been using a road map of Beirut and subsequently found out that other psychological schools of thought were merely cleverly justifying a reprint and production of more. This was being given to therapists, who as "tour guides" were showing the "sightseers" around ancient ruins of Greece. Through the remainder of my training and subsequent years in practise dealing with nigh on thousands of individuals, I will now fully explain and offer for you, clear, easy, understanding.

Chapter 1 -The Vicious Circle

The vicious circle has thirteen components, all of which are dark, frightening, no-go areas for many people, and this includes therapists, not just you.

Let me take you around them.

For too long you have been scared to turn the light on to see that it is a branch that has been hitting the window and not an intruder. This has been frightening you long enough.

Perception

Perception is the way we obtain knowledge through the senses. This can be obtained in a variety of ways, initially through our senses of sight, sound, feeling, smell, and taste. Most of us have these in-built abilities and cannot discriminate when we use them. They can be used to experience good events in our lives but are also always open to bad ones too. This is also the way memory works.

Cognitive therapists are keen to quote a Roman philosopher called Epictetus, who stated that “men are disturbed not by events but by their view of events.” This is logical, but does not take into account that we are capable of being influenced by the outside world in a way that we may not necessarily be aware of. If you are confined to repeated negative stimuli then, that is what you learn. As behaviourists would say, we come into the World “tabula rasa.” This means we are a clean slate and, since the

world is bigger and more powerful than we are, it therefore follows that we can be “written upon.”

So initially we can witness a disagreement straight away with cognitive therapists and behavioural therapists; remember these people are your “tour guides” yet already speaking different languages. Freudian therapists would try to discover the all-important life-changing event that altered your perception whilst paying little attention to your current perception. Confused...I was.

Gestalt therapists would try to “remove blocks from awareness” in an attempt for you to complete unfinished business to achieve homeostasis and live a life of awareness. Buddhism would teach you to be mindful and achieve the nothingness through meditation. Note all of these therapies are extremely efficient at one collective thing. Imposing their perception onto yours and believing that it should work. So before you have the chance to view the “ruins” they are telling you where to look. Why? Because they “know.” If you are multi-lingual you can decide for yourself: they all speak different languages...not yours though.

As a hypnotherapist, I view the unconscious mind as a bit like a literal eight-year-old child that is very protective of you. It allows you to do a series of complex tasks, such as walking across a busy road, riding a bike or driving a car, all of which you do not have to think about in detail. But you have to learn them in the first place. They have to be conscious at some stage.

Firstly we start with unconscious competence, we then learn through our conscious mind which usually results in conscious incompetence, however, we persist to learn hopefully, in a way that is ecologically effective and reach a stage of conscious competence. We are beginning to master the task albeit with a lot of concentration. Then finally we arrive at unconscious competence - that is when we can do the task automatically. Needless to say that if our perceptual filters have missed some important information we can learn in a biased way that was effective for us at the time but has become ineffective for us now.

Good hypnotherapy can access the unconscious “competence.” The fact that someone may have emotionally forced you to learn this behaviour against your will is not important now. Discovering this will not change the fact that it happened. We can be affected, but we disturb ourselves in the present with what we believe. We may however “believe” in a very non-rational emotional fashion. Also, so many people are unaware of their demands to compensate for this inadvertent learning; they are ‘un-blissfully’ unaware.

Whenever, we demand that a life event should not have happened, demand that it will never happen again, demand that you/we must spend the rest of your life making up for this by seeking approval, by being exceptionally clever, by achieving and never putting a foot out of place, you are definitely going to achieve one thing. You will make DAMNED SURE the perception never goes away. In short, the very emotion that was used to instil the problem is now being ignorantly used to keep it in

place! So how do you stop getting stung if you keep poking the wasps nest? Wise up to the demands.

Hopefully you will develop a different perception of the original perception. But this will be yours and not mine nor anyone else's, because common sense will prevail.

Demands

You may have noticed that I touched on demands in the last paragraph. Albert Ellis, age 90, founder of Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy states, "Most human disturbance is a form of demandingness." He is absolutely spot on.

If you have a perception that you dislike, you can be fairly confident that you will compensate for this by demanding that you must not have it. So the person falls into the trap of pouring petrol onto the "fire", then demanding that they must put it out. This concept may be glaringly simple, yet we all fall into this trap and it causes emotional problems. We are all born into the world with a natural perception of insecurity. This predisposition to think irrationally can be exacerbated by sociological factors, such as adults and inanimate objects being bigger than us, upbringing and how we relate to other siblings within the family constellation. Provoking a striving for a fictive goal of superiority.

In order to compensate and ignore the fact that we are and probably always will be highly inefficient mistake-making animals we create fiction and myths and then

become even more insecure when the goal is not attained thus demanding even more that we must achieve it.

To comprehend the way demands work this may be a useful exercise do. Imagine that I have approached you and in a polite, relaxed manner asking you to recall your telephone number. I would presume that you would be able to easily and effortlessly remember it. That is what we all wish in our life, effortless effectiveness.

Functioning this way, we can remember, be creative and to the best of our ability, enjoy our life. Our memory will improve, our immune system will function better and we will reduce the excessive adrenaline, which is one of the stress hormones, in our bodies. It therefore follows that we will be less stressed. Need convincing?

Ok. Now imagine a different scenario. Visualise that I have just walked up to you in an aggressive manner, and then suddenly produced a gun. I have pointed it at your head and shouted “You must recall your telephone number in five seconds and if not I will shoot you.”

Can you remember your telephone number now? I would presume that you would blanch, your heart rate would increase and your ability to communicate would be impaired. Does this remind you of any other situations in your life where you feel stressed? Check out the demands. They will always start with a SHOULD, an OUGHT, or a MUST. They, in my view, come from the conscience, the moral arbitrator of the psyche. They are society’s rules and introjected parental demands passed down to you. So what can we do to reduce this stress? Easy, shift the

SHOULD, the OUGHTS, and the MUST to preferences, wishes and hopes. There is very little value in just parroting or intellectually believing them. Preferences have to be worked at after the demands have been vigorously disputed. More later.

Try the same exercise again only this time see me wearing yellow Wellington boots, kilt, string vest, tattoos on my arms saying “I love mum” and “Scotland forever”, ginger wig and tartan hat saying “I prefer you to tell me your telephone number, and if not it’s ok. ”

You will notice the good effect humour has. It has been proved to assist in better immune system functioning. Psychoneuroimmunology It is hard to be stressed when happy. As a hypnotherapist I tell the unconscious jokes, remember it is like a literal eight-year-old child. The late Scottish comedian Chic Murray told a great one. “I was in London the other day and someone came up to me and said “Battersea’s dogs home?” I said I didn’t know it was missing. ”

It is worth adding to your map a key plan, which through my years of clinical practise, I have found to be astonishingly accurate.

People who demand that they MUST have approval can experience symptoms of anxiety, guilt, depression and shame.

People, who command that they SHOULD be treated fairly by others, can experience symptoms of anger and passive aggressiveness.

People who expect that the world in general MUST be the way that they want it to be can experience procrastination, self-pity, poor self-discipline, hopelessness and problems with addictions. At the end of these demands there is always the tag on part, the MAIN villain “and if not, it’s all my fault, someone else’s fault or the world in general’s fault.

Congratulations, we have just created more ego defence mechanisms and they arise when we rate ourselves as a result of our thoughts, feelings, or deeds. We all do that at some stage and it is part of the human condition. We do not separate these actions from ourselves, so consequently self-damn when our actions do not produce the results we expect. Imagine you’re child telling you that he achieved a good report from school.....you then told him how wonderful he was as a result.....What effect would telling him he was a failure have on him the next time he had a bad report?

Over a sustained period of damning, the child will blame self as whatever he does is not good enough and then view the world as a hostile environment and anxiously anticipate what may happen next. He cannot function on his terms because he has fallen into the trap that his self-worth is dependent on what someone else says.

When we demand that the world be the way that we want, and when of course it does not conform, we then experience ego discomfort disturbance. The pre-cursor of addictive behaviour, frustration and self-pity. We are defending ourselves from ourselves, someone else or an inanimate object. Then we experience a symptom.

Anxiety, anger or procrastination. Then convince ourselves of helplessness from this, our imagination takes it the rest of the way into failure.

These demands are known as dysfunctional core beliefs

In short, demanding, commanding and expecting. A good description of what creates depression comes from Dr Ellis, the person demands they get what they want and gets depressed when they get something else in return. See the connection with the literal eight-year-old unconscious mind?

Why do people get caught up in a cycle and resist giving up those demands, even when they are pointed out to them?

Because they mistakenly believe as a result of these beliefs they are not like other people. Uncover the motivating belief and you will find that they are mistakenly striving for superiority. In other words, because I'm an arse deep down, I'd better try like crazy not to be one. All they achieve is being a "successful" arse. How often have you thought, "everyone else is alright, but I'm not?" Then the self-esteem or egotism comes in, then the MUST, OUGHT TO keep up with the Jones'. Striving for wealth, purity, moral rightness, health, acceptability and "comfort". Striving for stress, heart attacks and cancer more to the point. What a cycle we are in now.

Enjoy this story;

A rich American industrialist visits a picturesque fishing village in Spain. He strikes up a conversation with a local fisherman and tells him that he has been watching him go out to fish every morning and notes that he comes back with twenty fish, and then takes them to the market. Why not get a bigger boat and catch fifty fish? Then get a bigger boat and catch one hundred fish? Then get a bigger boat and catch two hundred fish. Then buy a trawler with the profits and catch a thousand fish. Then, with the profits, buy a fish processing plant and cut out the middleman - even more profit. The fisherman then asks the rich Industrialist “What would I do with all that money”? He replies, “Buy a cottage by the sea and enjoy life” The fisherman replies that he already lives by the sea and enjoys his life.

Initial Symptom

Ever experienced that sharp intake of breath? The thought that all is not well with you? That insecure, vulnerable, self-doubting shiver through your body. A spasmodic impulse through your body. A discharge of electricity across your nerves. This feeling can be fleeting, intense and frightening. This is the autonomic nervous system, preparing for fight or flight. We humans have had this protection mechanism since the beginning of evolution. The difficulty with it is that it can be triggered at times when we don't need it. We get a fright and misinterpret it as calamitous.

If by this stage, we do not realise and understand that the danger is something we can cope with this then produces a “what if” which perpetuates and creates worse

symptoms. Dr Weekes calls it, second fear. It is vital that this is put under the microscope and understood. Let's do it.

Added Fear

“IF”, said Sir Winston Churchill “is the biggest word in the English dictionary.” Put a “what” in front of it and how big does it become now?

The “what if” sends fearful messages to the already tense body and it naturally reacts with more symptoms.

This, in my view, is the main area that perpetuates and maintains a dysfunctional perception, which in turn creates the demand and manufactures debilitating symptoms. The person is creating anxiety and bringing in the imagination, which can flash so many fearful visual images and create even more debilitating fearful symptoms. Negative visual imaging can create 90% of phobias. They perpetuate jealousy too. Gestalt therapy views anxiety as the gap between the now and the later, in other words the person is projecting themselves into no man's land. This is the crucial start of The Vicious Circle and if not fully understood will condemn the sufferer to a lifetime of misery. He will then be working from that perception from the past, which by now will be loaded with negative, fearful emotion and again start demanding (by way of compensation) in the present that they **MUST** not suffer, they **MUST** get better or whatever goal that has been set **MUST** be achieved.

Go back to what we were discussing regarding the gun at your head. When I demanded that you give me your telephone number or if not I'll shoot you. In a fleeting, out of all proportion nano-second, the demand that you created for yourself not to die created a "what if".

Who wouldn't? "What if I fail, make a fool of myself, mess up, collapse, and die?" This goes around the circle adds to provoke a perception that "I'm out of control", only this time the perception is even worse and is now gathering momentum. Intense, huge, frightening, momentum.

By now, with perception contaminated with demand symptom, "what if" and even more symptoms, and even more demands, the patient, even before entering the therapists office is then reluctant to "relinquish control", as he already is feeling out of control. Notice how the perception is protecting itself. So understandable when we now begin to understand how this cycle is developing. It is so much easier to see how this cycle is beginning to delude us. If you were to become more aware in situations that make you "feel" stressed and tune into your sub vocal voice, that is the voice that we think with, you may be amazed to discover how many "what ifs" are by now automatically being created by the protective literal eight year old child. Is this not becoming a conditioned response, a habit?

Imagine if you owned a dog, and every time the doorbell rang the dog barked. If the barking annoyed you, you would shout at the dog to keep quiet. You probably would only succeed in making him more excited and yourself uptight. The next time the

doorbell rang he would bark even louder and for longer. In short, not only does the dog have a conditioned response, but now you do too. How would you feel, out of control?

The child is hooking the adult into helplessness.

More Symptoms

At this stage the cycle is gathering pace, and what may occur next will only convince the sufferer from stress or anxiety that they really are losing control.

Note that at this stage I am reviewing the worst possible outcome for people intensely caught up at this level of the cycle. If you do not suffer from the intensity of the following stages of the cycle do not be scared. The more you know about your potential enemy the less fearful and more able you are to prevent problems occurring, and therefore you will be more able to speak the language of friends, colleagues and loved ones who are suffering. The purpose of this book is to encourage understanding of and clear away the mysteries and miseries of stress and the many forms it can take. It is an attitude that can be applied towards any of life's difficulties, thus encouraging you to have resolution to problems within you. Far better than a mind-altering drug don't you think?

Through my own personal experience and through clinical practise I have listened to my clients relay to me a vast array of symptoms. .

Palpitations, pounding heart, trembling, sweating, dry mouth, difficulty in breathing, feeling of tightness in the chest, feeling of choking, nausea or abdominal distress, dizziness, light-headedness, fear of losing control, derealization, depersonalisation, fear of dying, hot flushes or cold chills, numbness or tingling sensations. Mind going blank, difficulty swallowing, and easily startled, keyed up, insomnia, inability to cope.

Not everyone will experience all of these symptoms, and a judicious common sense approach is required to self-assess. As I stated at the start of the book, if in doubt consult your medical practitioner

For others it may be a proliferation of the symptoms that they dislike. Blushing, more cigarettes, more food, more anger, more procrastination, more guilt more fear.

The majority of you reading this will have heard of the fight or flight response. This is a mechanism that seems to have been developed from our prehistoric ancestors. When this strikes without apparent danger it is called a panic attack. As I will show later on in the book, a better name for it would be a “cannot be loved attack”.

These symptoms that are generated create more fear of inability to be loved (warmth, comfort, safety) and the person tries to prove to self that he must achieve it, because if not he will be rejected this equals major fear. See the loop? When dangerous messages from the mind are transferred to the body, the body reacts by the heart rate increasing and producing more adrenaline, which is a stress hormone. Other glands

in the body produce adrenaline and the stomach can break up stored food substances to send more energy to the extremities of the body to defend the organism from a perceived attack. Thus the person can complain of churning stomach.

Blood can drain from the head to protect the major organs such as the liver, heart and kidneys. The person can therefore feel giddy and faint.

In my view, this mechanism may best understood with this analogy, as a picture can say more than a thousand words.

Imagine if you will, a small man in your stomach with a shovel and a mound of adrenaline. To his right is a furnace and beside that are two light bulbs, one green, and the other red. When a person perceives danger, messages are sent to the red light bulb and it glows. The small man then shovels in one measure of adrenaline. The person's body experiences this and will react with more energy, and heightened awareness. The sense of smell, hearing improves and vision becomes more focused. In other words he is now ready for fight or flight.

Problems start when, over a short or long period of time those messages become so intense and are very quickly transmitted to the red light bulb, so that the small man dutifully responds by shovelling more adrenaline into the furnace. Because the person keeps getting these shots of adrenaline, he then starts to live his life on red alert. With a continuation of this, the slightest perceived danger can signal an activation of adrenaline. When that starts to occur in situations where there is no

danger the person then consciously but inadvertently adds “what if”, thus provoking even more red alerts. This, unabated, equals intense physical suffering. In short we are adding adrenaline to adrenaline, stress to stress. Thus perpetuating our misery.

How do we turn the light bulb to green instead of red? Read on.

Bewilderment.

At this stage in the cycle bewilderment is next. These symptoms are so alien to anything that a person has ever experienced that they are dumbfounded, shocked and, as ever, fearful. Who wouldn't be? When we experience anything we have never experienced before, particularly as adults, who SHOULD know better, we then start self-deprecating behaviour. It is not so simple to understand because when these symptoms are present within us, we do not have a frame of reference, to understand nor deal with them. Our natural tendency is to become bewildered? Then of course the Victorian attitude of “mental illness” now assumes “real proportions”. I fell into this trap of fearing incarceration in some dark, gloomy hospital ward akin to a Dickens novel. Because mental illness, still to this day is such a taboo subject, this only serves to provoke our imagination. “What ifs” We have seen how imagination can cripple us. So many therapies deal only with imagination and not the demand that provokes it. In one of Dr Weekes' books she states “Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise”.

In my view, because there has not been adequate understanding and definitive, accurate knowledge on these cycles, which we are now logically exploring, it is no

surprise, that ignorance has been bliss? Is it any wonder that the advice offered by friends and family has been so trite and useless? No matter how well intentioned it has been. Is it little wonder that the same advice, in effect, take the form of demands on the person caught up in this cycle? The very mandates that have been handed down to a person to create the original troublesome perception that has in turn, created a demand, that created the debilitating symptoms in the first place are being reconditioned by well meaning stronger characters than we currently are

The starting point for anyone caught in this circle is usually the General Practitioner. Does he have enough knowledge on this cycle? Does he have the time? How long does an appointment for psychiatric services take? What is the annual expenditure on mind-altering drugs? Who is reaping the benefit of this expenditure? Like most of my clients, a person at this stage is feeling so out of control that the thought of a mind-altering drug “taking control” of a person’s “stupidity” for losing control, surely must bewilder even more.

Anxious Introspection

So far, the person has been fighting the cycle with fear, now he really loads it on. He can see no way out of his difficulties. Can reach no understanding. No conclusion. No peace of mind. No respite. No adequate assistance, so that he must fall back on the one person he thought he could rely upon... himself.

The person then introverts constantly. Out comes the road map of Beirut again. There is nothing else, remember, but this map.

There are different languages, but still it is that map, that tried and well worn, gloomy, bewildering path again. But this time the pressure is greater, because, he hasn't made sense of it, so far. The demands to "shake yourself out of it", "pull yourself together" or "fight it" assume even greater and greater, frightening proportions. The restless, repetitive maudlin hours at night in bed come to haunt, the rehashing of those old frightening thoughts, the same body reacting in that debilitating, death like way. The same endless hours of inadvertent negative self-hypnosis kick in and prolong the cycle, and the failure to see the light at the end of the tunnel is tortuous.

The mind is caught up in a cycle all right; the body is caught up with this too. The prayers to god, the fearful childlike thinking. The grotesque and suicidal thoughts all impact like a shadow of darkness covering a twisted nest of vicious vipers, ready to bite, entangle and suffocate. This a few months ago, was a normal person, what a state he is now in. Different from the rest of the world that he was once an active part of. How he wishes he could turn back the clock. He would do anything. He might even consider, hypnosis, incarceration. ANYTHING just to turn back those unintelligible pages of time.

This person is normal and can recover.

Depletion / Fatigue

The body is exhausted, the arms, the legs are heavy. The head is sore; the back of the neck aches, the vision may be blurred. A tendency to stagger can occur. The

mind may feel like it is encased in glue. Thoughts may by this stage have slowed down. In a tired mind thoughts become intractable, the mind gets caught in a groove of fearful thinking, the ground has been very well prepared for phobias and obsessions to take hold. Tears, sadness, despair, an over reaction to life events and inner feelings make the sufferer feel even more helpless. What has been described is called Muscular, Mental, and Emotional Fatigue. The person, by this stage cannot believe that these disturbing feelings can be attributed to mere fatigue, but fatigue it is. Especially when complicated by feelings of unreality that convinces him that he really has gone mad or will never, never recover. He cannot break out of the seemingly cemented rut of paralysed fearful worry.

I have dealt with clients who as a result of extreme mental fatigue have been convinced that they are going mad. One man, who had not slept for days, confided that he was seeing images of himself in front of him and was absolutely convinced that he was “losing it”. I explained to him that this was a phenomenon known as Doppelgangers and that he was not “losing it”.

The mind and body have been through the ringer; it has been subjected to constant intense fear over a prolonged period of time. It is no surprise that he feels this way. As Dr Weekes states the body is following a natural pattern.

Intense, uncomfortable, but natural pattern.

Depression

Aaron Beck, who originated Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, describes depression as a cognitive triad. No hope for self, the world or the future. In my view, more tainted thinking from the foregoing cycle. Albert Ellis, remember, describes it as “demanding you get what you want and becoming depressed when you don’t get it”. Who wouldn’t be depressed? All the person wants at this stage is normality.

But in reality, that is still a far off, distant dream. The cycle still has more -yes more- to torture the sufferer with, and this, in the back of his mind, he knows.

Every night before he tries to sleep, he hopes and prays for a full recovery but by the morning it never comes. In fact he is even more depressed, given his inability to sleep. He lays awake like a victim, waiting for that awful moment that surely must come.

In the morning, everything is still as it was. In fact, he wakes with a start and is propelled into anxious introspection even before properly awake. Projection into the same weary, tiring, predictable day ahead starts. Before long the thought arrives, “what is the point of getting up?” Muzzy head, aching limbs, vibrating body, all are stark reminders of the futility and fear that is by now very real. Having been signed off by his General Practitioner, the empty day beckons like a black nothingness, the frustration of once again being held at gunpoint by a sneering hijacker.

Eventually, sufficient energy is aroused for the Herculean effort of movement towards the kidnapped day. A prisoner within his own body, a prisoner to a world turned upside down like a flip of a coin. He is wrestling with his demons all right. He is looking over the abyss and grimacing. A cauldron of slow, swirling blackness where the only pay off is death.

As the day progresses, once regimented personal hygiene falls by the wayside. Food is balked at and the possibility of a loved one timidly asking for a progress report is felt with trepidation. The thought that it would be easier to go back to bed strikes like a baseball bat. The sufferer having just got up out of bed becomes even more confused. Sitting down trying to watch television with the body vibrating adds to the desperate need to do something. Anything. He contemplates going out for a walk but after a burst of excitement to get ready, he arrives at the front and sees the world as daunting, scary and bizarre.

Back to bed for more anxious introspection.

Low Self-Confidence

Little wonder that the next part of the cycle is this.

The person now, is bereft of confidence and through desperate anxious thinking is extremely susceptible to the wrong thoughts and advice from others. His attention span for such advice is not good, but he will listen as best he can. “See the doctor

again; ask for different tablets, your Auntie Jean had similar problems, look how well she is now”.

He argues internally with the advice, because the doctor did listen and did offer reassurance. Self-help books bought by well meaning loved ones begin to appear. If only he had the energy and attention span to read them. Pages that he has read seem to be so positive in nature and so difficult to comprehend. Maybe he is some kind of freak. The self-deprecation gathers even more pace and the sufferer experiences more relentless dull bludgeoning. His head feels as if it could explode and the weird sensations from his body get worse. He starts to convince himself that what he is suffering from is not anxiety/stress/depression and is really some organic illness that has gone undetected by the doctor.

The imagination continues on overdrive and the body dutifully responds.

Sensitization

The body is flashing disturbing feelings with relentless venom. Funny and weird feelings predominate. Indiscriminately flashing, surging feelings course through the body like tidal waves of semi- tranquillised electric eels. The body is wound up like an eight-day clock and the sufferer is convinced the internal workings will burst. The nerves are sending fear flashes across reverberated circuits with alarming suddenness and frequency. What a misery this is. What a trickster imagination you are to have created these feelings. What a magician, what a bluffer you are, but how

real you are. We have reached the stage of reflexes within the body, albeit of the electrical kind.

The Russian Psycho physicist Pavlov conducted experiments with dogs. He noticed that when meat was presented to the dogs they started to salivate. Over a period of time, he would ring a bell and then present the meat. He then noticed that merely ringing the bell was enough to make the dogs salivate.

The American behaviourist Dr John Broadus Watson and his assistant Raynor, conducted experiments with an eleven-month-old infant named little Albert. Watson would present a white rat to Albert and noticed that the child would happily play with it. He then instructed Raynor to hammer on a steel bar situated behind Albert whenever Watson presented the rat to the child. The child got a fright and shied away from touching the rat. Soon the phobia generalised and little Albert became afraid of white beards, fur coats and any association to rats. Watson's motivation for doing this experiment was to prove that a person could be made to become fearful of objects through conditioned responses.

Note that he also had created a sensitised state. Where the phobia had become generalised. i.e. happening at the slightest indirect provocation of an associated link to the feared stimulus. In other words the child was now caught up in a cycle.

Memory

All the preceding cycles as you have seen have been feeding off one another. They have gathered great momentum and have grown in intensity and misery. They have almost come full circle. They now feed memory. Memory and perception are closely linked. In her book, Dr Weekes states that there is no drug for memory. Memory in my view is the inadvertent prime mover in this continuation of misery. Why? Because as Dr Weekes states “good memory works in just the same way as bad. ” Without a memory we would be zombies. Life would not be worth living. So it therefore follows that we need memory and unfortunately memory is absorbing bad feeling.

It has been in my view, the inadvertent goal of psychologists, psychotherapists and hypnotherapists to alter memory. There have been so many varied techniques devised to do just that. Some successful, some not. Mostly working on one or a few stages of the cycle. But are they really necessary when you understand these cycles and realise that dealing with one of those cycles in isolation will not be enough to affect the others? In my view, even Dr Weekes fell into this trap by not directly challenging the perception and demands.

In fairness, and out of great respect to Dr Weekes, I feel that her most significant contribution in the battle against nervous over reaction was in that one statement. “Good memory works just the same way as bad. ” In other words the person’s senses are constantly able to pick up stimuli from the environment using sight, sound, smell, feeling, and taste. These senses are reacting to what the environment

presents, whether that is in crossing the road, eating a meal, listening to music, walking past a restaurant or having sex. Let us assume that these previous memories have been good ones and that the person experiences satisfaction from them. They are also the templates to guide us towards happiness and unhappiness. For example, imagine a time when you crossed the road and nearly got run down, taste a time when food was bad, hear a time when the music was lousy, smell a time when the cooking was yuk, and feel a time when sex was not great. These experiences tell us to change what we do, in order to have more pleasurable times. The person at the extreme end of the scale in a stress/anxiety circle is constantly being bombarded with bad memories and does not know what to do to have more pleasurable times and therefore create good ones. Who would? Naturally, the person feels helpless.

Given what we now know about the cycle, it is hardly surprising. We carry memory with us wherever we go, it is always there to remind, and if, there is a plethora of bad ones, we will react accordingly. This then feeds perception and here we go again.

If that were understood, we would be able to dispense with an array of time-consuming therapeutic techniques that are futile in their ability to heal. Whether we like it or not memories will always be with us.

Freudian psychoanalysis through its uncovering, behaviourism through de-conditioning, Cognitive behavioural, through thought disputing techniques, Gestaltists, through closure of unfinished business, Rogerian, through self-actualisation, Rational Emotive Therapists, through disputing demands will never

claim the word cure (and they don't) because by their therapeutic procedures they only achieve with any certainty, one thing, re-activation of disturbing memory. Memory not properly understood or explained will always be waiting week's months, years down the line to restrict the person and make him believe that he is abnormal. Memory of the disturbed kind is not created or perpetuated by the unconscious; it is the conscience that does this, as will be described later.

I hope that by careful explanation of how memory has been inadvertently created and fed will be enough for the person to at this stage begin to understand and to be a little less fearful. My therapeutic techniques are yet to follow.

Memory serves as a reminder for good experiences and for bad ones. We have seen how it has been an unwitting accomplice from the foregoing cycles of misery because now, it feeds PERCEPTION and so the cycle continues on its merry way towards even more misery. This is what makes a problem so confusing, this is what makes a person perceive that he will never get better, and this is what encourages the person to think in an even more child like way. It is my experience that most of my clients can follow the cycle as I have explained it to you, and begin to find relief in knowing that they have been caught in a trap and that the cycle is reversible.

It is interesting to note that the client who has been experiencing the most intense symptoms is usually the one who recognises the simplicity of how their difficulties started and more importantly, how they are perpetuated. It takes time for the cycle to be reversed, but reversed it can be.

Chapter 2 - Understanding

As I stated at the start of this book my intention was to bring understanding to you. The road towards peace of mind is yet to come. Hopefully, you are now in a better position to navigate the road.

We have seen how a perception, from sociological conditions, an inherent pre-disposition to think irrationally, an excessively difficult childhood or life situations that have been irrationally misinterpreted have created the demand; this demand has then created the symptom, or a feeling that all is not well. This has provoked you into adding more fear “what if” (imagination) the imagining that you have done is probably linked to the original perception that X may happen. Thus creating even more symptoms. This has naturally created bewilderment and anxious introspection followed by possible depletion, fatigue, depression, low self- confidence, sensitisation and ultimately feeding memory.

“Even if everybody had had the most rational upbringing, virtually all humans would often irrationally escalate their individual and social preferences into absolutistic demands on (a) themselves (b) other people (c) the universe around them”, Dr Albert Ellis. Whilst agreeing with Dr Ellis, I also take the view that a person who experienced a childhood where fear, worry and doubts were prevalent, it is more likely for him to become a pessimist than an optimist.

Caught up in the cycle the person is going to be pessimistic about pessimism. In my view, most people at some stage in their life will be caught up in this cycle; the severity will vary from our perceptual predisposition to early life experiences. It does not, however follow, that uncovering those experiences will necessitate cure. Because demands have now become the order of the day. The demands save us from the perception and the symptoms save our self-esteem.

What is self-esteem?

How we should come across in front of others.

Is that not the original faulty perception itself?

If I think you are a crocodile, does that make you one?

Past experiences are rarely relevant now. In fact the person can spend so much time looking for an original cause that they live their life in the past and do not deal with the perception it created and the subsequent demands now. Dr Ellis views the past as largely unimportant, Dr Freud viewed the past as important. I think that they are both correct but Dr Ellis offers you a tangible, effective, long term way out. Not many therapists do. It is the emotional child like, perception from the past that creates the demand in the now. As a child what was then conscious, becomes an unconscious template and the conscience, as I will describe shortly, continues to keep that template in place, NOW.

Tanzan and Ekido, two Zen monks, were travelling companions on a muddy road during a storm. On their way they met a lovely girl in a silk kimono who was unable to cross the intersection. Tanzan lifted her in his arms and carried her over the mud putting her down on the other side. Many hours later in the lodging temple Ekido confronted Tanzan. He said “we monks are not meant to go near women. To carry such a young and lovely one was wrong. Why did you do that?” Tanzan replied; “I left the girl there. Are you still carrying her?”

The Way Forward To Health and Happiness.

Dealing with Perception and Demand

By now we have seen the effects of perception and demand and the debilitating effects it can produce. However, personal and clinical experience has taught me to delve further to understand and discover what inevitably prevents us from achieving contentment and peace of mind that we all crave. Read on; it is about to be explained as never before.

I state that what creates anxiety, depression, fear of failure, public speaking, agoraphobia, cigarette smoking, eating disorders, procrastination, anger, insomnia; panic attacks, sexual problems; prolonged grief; wars and any other psychological problem you can think of are created through a faulty perception of love and guilt. This is created through upbringing, social surroundings, and our predisposition to think irrationally. Even children who have had a good upbringing can still be

severely disturbed and present identical symptoms to someone who had a bad upbringing. I do not want to make excuses for the way that we are, however in my view, it is essential we understand rationally so that we can change this need to blame and hold onto anger. The very blame that can create demands then misery and then more blame and then the circle continues.

The Freudian concept would state that our first experience of life in any shape or form is in the womb. We experience warmth, security and comfort.

At birth, we are then projected into an atmosphere that is intimidating, hostile and cold in comparison to where we have just come from. We are tiny children surrounded by big external stimuli. We are immediately insecure but do we need to know something that we cannot remember? How does insecurity affect us and much more importantly, how do we maintain our disturbance now?

Alfred Adler, a social psychologist and contemporary of Freud, was more interested in how we react to the world; he stated that we, as human beings are inherently insecure. So with this predisposition, what can go wrong?

We have a predisposition for comfort, so we act childishly and strive for this comfort.

Why?

Because we yearn for unconditional love. Does love not fill you with comfortable feeling?

Love is the greatest, purest, most essential force that there is on earth. There have been wars; millions of deaths; countless cases - and I mean countless cases of ill health as a result of it. Do not take the word love at face value or its down valued expressions that are common currency in everyday life, nor indeed the pathetic moanings of a neurotic self-pitying singer that cannot get what he wants. We have all become engrossed in that emotional despairing mysticism when we try to figure out love through the “someone done me wrong” song. We end up, still no further forward as to how it works.

I mean LOVE. SECURITY, WARMTH AND COMFORT. BELONGING, FEELING GOOD AND HAPPY. Love is the greatest most essential force on earth; it therefore follows that when it is manipulated by authority figures against the learning child problems arise.

As we have seen, the learning child has one aim in mind, that is, to gain security, warmth and comfort. Authoritarian establishments such as governments, the media and worst of all, churches use it to manipulate and control us. That means children grow into adults, who, then in turn manipulate the child. Why? Because they really believe that they cannot get love.

I am a realist and a scientist and I have seen the love-guilt dilemma create and perpetuate psychological misery. I have seen the same manipulation, create different presenting symptoms every working day of my life. That is 365 days, twelve hours a day. That only includes the time I have spent as a therapist. I have seen this dilemma influence and adversely affect people in everyday life. On the streets, in pubs, restaurants, trains, churches. This man made dilemma comes in varying guises. This ultimately duped me into fear, unhappiness, misery and torment, BUT MAINTAINED BY US WITH THE BELIEF THAT WE MUST ALWAYS HAVE COMFORT. The reality of this demand is that all we ever get is more extreme discomfort. Short term gain long term pain Dr Ellis calls it overgeneralisation. We draw a conclusion from one situation, or a few, and apply it to all others. Then we magnify the small negative aspect and minimise the positive one. This is irrational. This is demandingness, this creates symptoms and misery.

Admittedly, on the face of it, my case may seem a fairly extreme example but it is one that is not dissimilar in genesis to millions of others. I have had to go to hell and back to understand this dilemma, and then help myself and other people to get peace of mind. I would bet the above named establishments of power throughout the world don't even fully know the formula for their success in controlling people.

As children we are literal, keen to please and motivated to learn. What then ruins the party? Adults, who have been brought up by manipulated love. They, then become other authority figures, who manipulate love.

“If you don’t do that, then you won’t get that”. How many times did you hear that as a child?

Let’s listen to the music behind the words, in light of what we now know, it means, if you don’t conform to what I want, you won’t be loved and if I cannot love you, then you have no chance. Ever heard as a kid, the expressions, you have made me unhappy, you are nasty, you won’t go to the party you cannot go out to play.

Threats, with a tag on part that has been going undetected for too long. That if you do not conform to what I want, you are unlovable, and this equals loss of comfort. This creates a need to get comfort and if we do not get it. Anxiety.

The conclusion of this literal child, “I am not loved, unless I please”. This creates uncertainty, insecurity, and discomfort. What is the definition of love..... ?

The child with these feelings of being out of “control” then compensates for this.

Who is the child’s role model? An adult, the very one who distributes love, with conditions. What part of the child’s personality has the adult influenced to get authority, respect and love? The moral arbiter of the child’s world...the conscience.

This is how we develop the shoulds, oughts, and musts, because if we don’t we are unloved.

So what does a child do? First of all he/she believes that the adult must be right, how could he not, he is insecurely primed for such manipulation, so then he self- develops a punitive parent within the psyche to harangue and chastise self for the perceived failure. In general, kids want to grow up quicker than they actually can. The easiest way to get some sort of control on their terms is to delude themselves into thinking that if “I CONDITIONALLY encourage self” to do better then I will be UNCONDITIONALLY LOVED.

In other words this rouse, this manipulation is kept emotionally in place by guilt, because if we are then unloved it is our fault and this prevents us from breaking out of the loop of conditionally demanding from ourselves, when this does not work, we then manipulate to get love. We are already small adults!

To quote Dr Ellis again “Most human disturbance is a form of demandingness. Demandingness as compensation that he cannot be loved. Anxiety is giving self-worth away to others to be loved. Anger is protection of love in case it’s taken away. Procrastination is giving up trying either.

The child, grows into an adult really, really believing this and does not even suspect this internal punitive parent’s existence. The demand NOW is similar to the original.

If he did, suspect it he would at least, be in a position to begin to be able to do something about it. Yet what are we drip-fed from external stimuli, when we experience difficulties? “Pull yourself together, get a grip, fight it, don’t take life so

seriously, have a laugh, calm down, therapy sucks All introjected rules with the inadvertent concealed threat or tag-on part that if you don't, you are unworthy/unlovable, no good because we are not conforming to what others do. That's conditional!

Then from our external punitive parent comes our internal punitive parent to reinforce this nonsense and manipulate and contaminate our essence.

I hear you say "but that is how society works". Ha, that is your own punitive parent defending its demand to be loved.

Do we need stress, anxiety, and wars?

Chapter 3 - Good Self-Talk

In speaking about self-hypnosis, which in my view is similar to the way we speak to ourselves in every day life, Milton H. Erickson says, “No way can you consciously instruct the unconscious...whenever you attempt self-hypnosis and you attempt to be consciously aware, then you are consciously aware. You ought to be aware of just one thing, that if you want to learn self-hypnosis your own unconscious mind knows it too, that your unconscious mind is aware of your desires to learn self-hypnosis. And you do not have to tell your own unconscious mind what to do because it knows what to do a great deal better than you do. Because consciously you behave in accord with the conscious universe, the conscious patterns of behaviour. Your unconscious mind behaves in accord with its own code of behaviour...” That is an interesting comment, but he forgot that you can affect your unconscious thoughts, feelings, and processes if you see your musts and demands and work on them very consciously. Erickson, who is held in great regard by hypnotherapists, was in my view hiding his head in the sand, because if we consciously behave in accord with the conscious universe, that is what we do. What follows is the unconscious behaving in accord with how we once saw the world. **THAT IS THE WHOLE PROBLEM.** That is why hypnotherapy in general can only achieve short term results. That is unscientific, that is the realm of imagination. This means accepting a magical process beyond our conscious control that will solve all our ailments. That is abrogating self-responsibility and heading for the comfort zone. That is the very problem in the first place.

We have to assume flexible control as adults on our inner child, for example, encouraging ourselves to change our demands. This means hard work, but I am reminded of the sign above the manager's door at Manchester United Football club. "Nothing without hard work". Sir Alex Ferguson's is the most successful manager in the club's history.

Let's do this exercise to prove my point. Imagine that you have a child and he/she is standing near you. Start to harangue him, call him names, and threaten that if he does not do what you want then you won't love him.

Is this not what we inadvertently tell ourselves to keep up with the Jones'? To stay in the "comfort" zone.

We aspire towards stress and misery.

Liken your self-worth as a precious crystal vase and give it to someone you don't even know and hope that they will not drop it. Does this make you anxious? It should, because you have just **CONDITIONALLY** handed over your very essence to someone else and naturally have doubts as to whether they will really look after it. Were you not hoping that someone else would give you comfort. Did you get it? Is this not what the media do to get us to aspire to some fictive goal of beauty and self-aggrandisement and subsequent glorious discomfort? They attempt to glamorously persuade you into keeping up with, models and "icons" then you conditionally believe your self-worth is "beautiful" in origin.

Are there not more and more cases of middle aged women caught in the trap of extreme dieting? Are there not children becoming more obsessed with their appearance and have anorexia as a result? Is anorexia not a need to avoid womanhood by holding on to a childish perception of how a body SHOULD appear? If the sufferer stays a “child” they stay spoilt and in control. Control over what?

Nature!

Are men not pre-occupied with their so-called self-esteem? Is this not opium for the masses? Is the media not the self-appointed guardian of Britain’s morals! Is all of this not sick?

Unconditional Self Acceptance is the answer. Charity begins at home. When you smile the whole world smiles with you. The rational adult has to free self from the child like irrational, “comfort” demanding imaging. We need to give FREE reign to our selves and trust our own problem solving abilities. Accept your self, if, for no other reason you are a human being and that the way you have tried just does not work effectively for you.

At this stage, let me clarify one thing. You will not become a psychopath by substantially quieting the demands within you. Do not let the conscience suck you into the belief that if you do, you will suddenly become immoral. This threat is restricting you and your life; don’t let it inhibit you more by blocking therapy now. Preferences are rational, demands irrational. Demands create anxiety, depression,

and anger. Preferences create concern, sadness annoyance. You can live with concern.

COGNITIVE CLICKING

Become aware of the situations where the feelings arise. Where will you be, what are you inferring about this situation?

Get in touch with the predominant feeling. Is it embarrassment, vulnerability, foolishness, helplessness? Bring those feelings into the present, what are you really telling yourself about them. Do they signify intense weakness on your part? What do you keep demanding must happen in that situation?

When it doesn't, you get the symptoms, anxious, depressed and angry. Then you demand that you don't have the symptoms, you are putting your child like heart and soul into the situation to be loved.

Now go back to that early childhood experience that set the template for the misery to follow. If you can find one great, if it helps you come away with a better perspective as to why you should change the demands now, if you don't find one it does not matter for you to change your perception of the demands now. In fact, you may be a person that for too long believed that past experiences are all important to you now. That is why you are still in the comfort zone. That is why you still feel helpless.

Now in that situation, what would a child that age have thought? Really associate into what they would think. Remember they are small, scared, confused, and insecure. Remember we need to view this as a child would, not as an adult. Get in touch with your irrationality. Were you hurt by someone, humiliated, degraded, screamed at, and made to feel even smaller than you were? Chastised for something you did not do? Failed at what was expected from you?

Let us now presume that you really believed it; you believed it because it was someone bigger than you? (Can anyone ever re-call being hurt by someone smaller than themselves when young?) You believed it and convinced yourself they were right because they should know better. You felt demoralised and out of control, so what did you then do? You tried to get back in control, and the only way that you knew how to do this was on a significant others terms, these were not on your terms, or conducive to your essence. The demanding conscience was born out of perceived necessity. Then you felt guilty for being out of control and that smart ass demand will not forgive you. Well it's time to fight back. Really fight back and not accept the demand and the guilt it brings. Albert Ellis directly showed your demandingness for what it is. Stop hiding your head in the sand, wise up and kick some ass. You don't have to keep believing all this contrived helplessness now.

You have been demanding and shouting, and in many ways replicating the original situation when you blamed yourself and still believing it now. You have inadvertently believed this, because when you strived to make up for the past perceived, but very believable weaknesses as a child of not being loved, you

temporarily made the situation better and kept that significant other happy. You learned to manipulate others and now when you cannot, you feel vulnerable and the world looks like a hostile place you adopted a demand that won't go away and now it keeps you unhappy. Short term gain, long term pain. Do you not in effect, hand your very existence to someone else?

Are you still not fearful of failure? Do you still think that you cannot be loved? Do you still not trust yourself? Do you not really think that if you go into that “dangerous situation” you will feel unloved, helpless and then guilty with yourself for feeling stupid?

This is anxiety, social phobia, agoraphobia, generalised anxiety, stress, addictive behaviour, stress.

The same feelings that you first experienced when this problem began have been compounded, up until now, by the irrational demand trying to seek peace, similar to the same authority figure that tried to seek peace over you in the first place. All it has really achieved is a reinforcement of memory, and in turn more misery. Is it not time to quit believing that you are guilty and try to understand yourself?

Is now not the time for the irrational demand to be shown for what it really is. You adopting a perverse way of “controlling” self. Is now not the time to stop measuring yourself in relation to others, thereby reducing the demand's belief of inadvertently acquiring conditional self worth and ironically perpetuating failure.

The above leads to a fictive goal that the person can only be loved if he is insecure.

This leads to problems as I have shown. Big problems. If you understand this, then you can do something about this.

If you do, then you can free yourself from inhibition, restriction, vulnerability, anger and then lose the symptoms of stress, fear, anxiety, depression and low feelings of self- worth. If after reading and understanding this, you do not, then you are doing it on purpose and that's different!

Chapter 4 - Continued Trust

Whist speaking to a well educated friend about a story in the news about child abuse, I offered the advice that we should try to understand such people and was cut off from what I was saying, with an angry retort that they are sick. Exactly, I said, that is why we need to understand them in order to get them better.

I then said that as a trainee therapist, our tutor told us that we may come across perpetrators of abuse and would have to make our own choice whether to treat such people, or whether we take the view that if we can help the person, then they may not abuse anyone else. “Well I don’t understand how we can stop them” said my friend angrily. My whole point. She feels helpless to do anything about this horrific menace in our society, therefore, blames herself and then defends this guilt with anger. It is so horrific and she wants to do something about it, but the media, and it’s deliberate avoidance of successful therapeutic interventions and an obsession to focus in on scandal, creates fear. This in turn renders the watching or reading audience helpless and provokes the irrational demand to raise its arms in despair and say “I told you so”. This is a self-fulfilling prophecy. This makes us fearful and guilty. This is ignorance. The cycle then continues.

Cognitive clicking means gaining insight into the false beliefs that we have been holding and in turn, the symptoms that we dislike. Many people resist this wonderful feeling of freedom that insight brings as they have become dependant on conditional love and the pay-off, “if it goes wrong it ain’t my fault”. Change is frightening, but

also liberating, unconditional self-acceptance renders the helpless hopeful but wary.

Why?

Over the years many therapists have written or spoken about ego defence mechanisms. These defence mechanisms are born and raised within people with a tendency to rate themselves as well as their thoughts, feelings and deeds. Therefore they create ego defence mechanisms. They are however perpetuated by Western rules and lazy thinking. “Keep a stiff upper lip” “Don’t let the side down” “Put a brave face on it” “You must fight this” “You must not fail”. Is this not the irrational demand at it again, trying to dictate to our essence how to behave in front of people?

This is folly, as our essence can turn food into hair, regulate body temperature, remember a series of complex tasks, such as walking, driving, crossing a busy road etc

Is this not akin to a snowflake telling the billions of grains of sand that form the Sahara desert to move out of it’s way, so that it can land safely? Yet, arrogantly ignoring the fact that it’s being melted by the sun in the process?

Is this not why man creates a god because he cannot dictate to self, what he wants and refuses to accept the fact that he might get it wrong? Is it not easier to hand self over to a man made entity? Is this not controlled loss of control? Who would not get it wrong? Is it not easy to become once again subservient when it suits?

Is this not at its most basic level crass manipulation of the soul. Is this not unchristian? Is our god not our unconscious mind? Do we not keep ignoring it because we are taught to not understand it? Is this not handing over oneself to the mercy of a stage hypnotist?

Is this not one of the reasons that you are still not better yet? Or still have that vague, yet formidable feeling that unhappiness is just around the corner? Does all of what I have written about, not add up to lack of trust in self? Is that not egotistically selfish, and self-harming? Is that not lazy and crazy? Is that why therapy is a taboo subject, because your friend's irrational demand will accuse you of weakness? If you believe him you perpetuate your own and his. Does this not mean that your self-worth is dependent on what others think? Is this not why you need therapy in the first place? Have we not become little Alberts?

Are we all not scared of death? Are we not all scared of being out of control? Is this not grandiosity at its best? Is this not killing you?

Self-esteem is a much talked about concept. The dictionary definition of esteem, is to think highly; favourable opinion; regard.

If the above definition were applied correctly then that would be great. However, is self-esteem not widely considered to be how we are conveying ourselves to the world? As I have explained, this becomes dependent on a higher self. A false sense of self. The irrational demand and its colleagues the moral arbiters.

I prefer self-worth, but people are seemingly more at ease in using self-esteem, probably because it is a concept that is vaunted throughout the media!

It then becomes apparent that our inner regard becomes dependent on how we SHOULD come across. Should's come from the conscience. The moral arbiter of the personality. For that read the punitive parent. See the same old destructive pattern developing again?

Imagine that you walk into a room full of people and you make a glaring mistake. How would you then feel? Embarrassed?

Why?

Because you're inner regard just went down in your estimation. Not at all, because you're inner regard went down in the eyes of others. You projected your mistake onto others and heard/felt their punitive parents berating you. Anxiety is the gap between the now and the later, remember. Then you hated your self and vowed it should never happen again. That is some loop that you have just created again. Do the same demands that you make on self not sound like the very same external punitive parent that you have been trying, for so long to free self from?

Dr Albert Ellis argues this point; self-esteem is no more than perfume for shouldhoods, and shouldhood equals shithood, and therefore self-esteem is no more than perfume for shithood.

“Don’t should on yourself”

Alfred Adler, the great social psychologist stated that; “As soon as the striving for significance gets the upper hand, it provokes increased psychological tension. In consequence, the goal of power and superiority becomes increasingly prominent for the individual, who pursues it with great intensity and violence, and lives his life in the expectation of great triumphs. Such an individual loses his sense of reality and loses sight of real life by always being preoccupied with the question of what other people think about him and with the impression that he makes on the world. His freedom of action is circumscribed to an extraordinary degree because of this life style, and his most obvious character trait is vanity. . . Taken too far, vanity leads an individual to all kinds of useless activity more concerned with appearance than essence, and makes him think constantly of himself, or of other people’s opinion of him. The greatest danger of vanity is that it disconnects the individual from reality.” Adler also believed that symptoms were face saving. Designed to keep the fictive goal of superiority in tact.

Vanity comes in all shapes and form. Always listen to the music behind the words.

Socrates told a man who was about to deliver a speech, wearing rags as clothes,
“Young man of Athens, your vanity peeps through every hole in your robes”.

Control, but as ever, at a price!

Chapter 5 - Limiting Of Self Creates Anxiety

Dr Claire Weekes in one of her audiotapes tells the story of a Canadian man who, suffering from agoraphobia, is treated by behaviourism. He is taught to gradually face his fears in a controlled manner. The Greek translation of Agoraphobia is a fear of the market place. Today we view it as a fear of open spaces. The man is taught a gradual exposure to feared stimuli in the outside world. He is encouraged to go as far as his front gate and if he feels any panic return home. The following day he is to go as far as the first lamp post and again, if feeling any panic return. The process was so “successful” that eventually he can holiday in America and go into places that he would have in the past avoided, trains, aeroplanes, restaurants etc. On returning to Canada he goes to his Bank and stands on the same spot and gives his passbook to the same teller as he had done so often in the past.

According to Dr Weekes, memory then strikes and brings back a full-blown panic attack. The man is then bewildered and Dr Weekes then correctly states that if the man had been taught to get used to, accept and to let go those debilitating symptoms of panic, then, after much practise, his right inner voice would have come to his rescue and way lay the bad memory of losing control through panic . Thus relegating the almost inevitable recurrence of present and future bad memory, therefore, eventually stopping it. In other words, countering out of control with, I can defeat panic by allowing it to occur and not adding “what if”.

Let us analyse that situation more specifically. Is it not interesting that this man's difficulties occur around people?

Does he not hold the perception that he cannot control people and therefore cannot control self? Is he not scared of the outside world because he feels vulnerable to it? The outside world for him is big and imposing, it is bigger than him. Are people not bigger than him? Is he not childlike in his view of the world? His symptoms arise as a result of failure to manipulate people to view him favourably. This is anti-social. This is striving for superiority.

Is he not putting his very existence into the hands of others and naturally making himself feel vulnerable? He handed his self-worth over a long time ago and does not know how to get it back. Would he feel guilty if he tried? Yes and he would feel “helpless” Does he not already? Yet still he persists on restricting and inhibiting self in order to be “seen to do the right thing. ”Is this not what a child does to get attention, to show off, to get excited, and then block the excitement with an external punitive parent’s demand to behave and then feel anxious.

Anxiety is excitement that has been inhibited. This is restriction of self. Is that not a phobia, agoraphobia or otherwise? Perceiving external stimuli as threats to ones “love.” That is being out of control when one fails to manipulate the impossible.

How can any external stimuli cause us to feel something inside of us unless it was a direct physical force impinging on us, and even then we would have a choice as to

how we react to it, i.e. Is it pain or pleasure? Our magical belief is just that.

Magical. Albert Ellis states scientifically, as far as we know there is no magic in the universe. People do not want to hear that. Why? Because their very foundation is rocked. What is their foundation? Jesus Christ? Santa Claus? Who created them? People, who wanted us to be manipulated to order. Look back to a difficult early life experience and who do you come up with? Can you hear the same internal demands now, you may find that you are replicating you're role model

Why are the British people viewed, and feel within themselves that they are sexually inhibited? Why are there more mind altering drugs prescribed in France (regarded as a sexually uninhibited nation) than anywhere else in the world?

Because the conscience restricts them.

In Britain, we have the Queen as head of state, we are obsessed with morals. In France they have the Roman Catholic Church. Vanity comes in different guises, remember. Why are alcohol, tobacco, and recreational drugs abused? People reach for manufactured substances to free themselves.

Why do they have to free themselves? Because they MUST aspire to be the best they can and if not they will have failed and then feel guilty. The hysterical outpouring of grief that followed the death of Princess Diana is indicative of affection towards an authority figure that has broken the mould, and shown people how to be themselves. Were the British public not hysterically guilty because she

had done something they had not? Is it not tragic that she allowed herself to become so messed up in the first place, before demanding never to be controlled again?

France is the world's capital for fatal road crashes. We all know how vain and fashion conscious the French are. The driver of Princess Diana car had been drinking alcohol and was on anti-depressant medication. Why were the paparazzi chasing her? Is vanity not responsible for road rage around the world? We aspire for the latest model of car and sit in it with glorious seclusion. King of our own castle, a house on wheels. Woe betides anyone who dares challenge our kingly rule.

Does the church not utilise hypnosis? Is a low, monotone repetitive voice not the norm at places of worship? In some, are urns not swung with hypnotic connotation? Does the church not preach hell and damnation to us at an early age? Is it not saying, be good or you have failed. Is this not love versus guilt God versus the devil? Can human beings be good all of the time? No, of course not. We can make mistakes without retribution or the threat of the devil.

Now, Africa is more overtly Christian than Europe. Where there is ignorance, the attitude of divide and conquer will prevail. Does the church not install a neurosis with the threat of hell and damnation, then, say, "come back to us and we will absolve and alleviate you of it"

Is this not a loop that they create for their own ends? All employed by a god who none of them have met! Is this not manipulation of basic human nature? Are they not playing the role of the womb?

We, as freethinking human beings have a choice as to what we believe in, if we can rid ourselves of this magical, child like, punitive parent and guilt enforced thinking.

We need rules, we need to know right from wrong, we need direction but we do not need artificial restriction on our essence to the extent that we are fearful of living.

Chapter 6 - Time for More Therapeutic Techniques

If you have followed the previous pages and done the exercise I suggested, you will have gained insight of this detrimental perception and demand.

Let us challenge the demand even more.

I would like you to write down on one side of a piece of paper all the advantages of maintaining the belief(s) that (1) I must be loved and if not it's all my fault (2) People should treat me well and if not it's all my fault (3) External world conditions in which I live must be the way that I want them to be and if not it's all my fault.

They will probably read;

More control	Loved
Happy/comfort	Gets things done

Now write down the disadvantages:

Out of control	Unloved
Procrastination	Anxiety
Depression	Discomfort
Sadness	Loneliness
Addictions	Fear
Misery	

Beginning to get the picture now?

Life can be like a fruit machine. Short term payoffs and longer term pain.

Excessive Weight and Addictions

In my view this is the psyche's way of burying its head in the sand. Failure to achieve, what it realistically cannot achieve anyway, prompts us to put a fat flesh screen or quite literally a smoke screen around us, which says, "Please don't give me a hard time because I am unloved and therefore helpless" and therefore should not show it. This attitude encourages us to head for the comfort zone and that is addictive and destructive.

That is why diets don't work. They are a binge starve cycle. All or nothing, the nothing takes us to that zone again and that means more food. Diets and contrived relaxation and meditation are DISRACTIONARY techniques that perpetuate false hopes and comfort, whilst the irrational belief escapes. "I can't lose weight because I could not handle the discomfort involved, so I therefore demand I have comfort (food)". Short term gain long term pain, again and again and again. More excuses.

The way to lose weight may seem devastatingly simple. Reduce your intake and exercise within your limitations.

In clinical experience, most of the smokers I deal with started because of peer pressure. What is that?

Putting your self worth into the hands of someone else because if you don't you will look uncool, not be loved, and feel discomfort. Who looks uncool and demands comfort now?

Is this not a cop-out? Failure to hit the comfort zone and to rationalise "failure". This is self-pity at its best. Self-pity in itself is addictive and destructive. It is a childlike way of appealing to ones parents and saying "You will not give me the nipple so I will get one of my own. I will create my comfort zone and I will be in charge of it and no one will take it away"

Scientifically we know that taken to extremes these addictions can kill us, yet we still persist with this, because we know better. At least we can go to that great big womb in the sky on "our" terms, because, when we are unloved, we are out of control, so death does not matter anyway. Better to face out of control, out of control.

Not until the wake up call comes from a doctor!

Why not give up the nipple now and do it on your terms. Understand where you have gone wrong; lose the perception that it is your fault and go for short term pain and long term gain. Uncover the guilt that attaches itself to your old out of date perception like a cancerous growth. Realise that unconditional self-acceptance and unconditional acceptance towards others will give you an authentic internal comfort zone.

Become independent from your perceived failures and stub out the internal shouldhood and repeat this song from Albert Ellis;

Let us suppose my goddamned mother filled me with pap.
I listened and let her smother-carry on her crap!
Let us suppose my father called me a shit
I heard it and let it bother-I still do my bit!
Sure my childhood was confining, full of lousy strokes.
Now I am still depressed and whining, far from my goddamned folks!
Though my past was rather stinking, I am free to roam.
So let me change my nutty thinking and leave the old folks at home!

I once treated a person whose hand was shaking uncontrollably. As ever I had to be satisfied that it was not organic in origin. I found out that at age 5 the person had been asked to write something on the blackboard by the teacher.

My client had dropped the chalk and the class laughed. 20 years later, every time the person had to lift a pen to write something in public the hand would shake uncontrollably. The client had consulted with a psychologist, a psychiatrist and a GP. All to no avail. Every one of these health professionals and my client included, had tried to directly stop the hand shaking. It had not worked.

I quickly isolated the dysfunctional core belief, “I must not let my hand shake because if I do people will see this and I will look foolish”

Because the other health professionals had directly tried so hard to stop it shaking, they were inadvertently sending out the message to the demand that the hand really, really MUST not shake, especially when these eminent health professionals have said it must not.

In other words the belief that this person had to be liked, the very one that had caused the problem in the first place, was being reinforced with another irrational belief that, “the health professionals (external punitive parents) will not like me if I fail to stop the hand shaking”.

I explained this very carefully and told him that the chemical adrenaline, which was activating muscles in the fingers and therefore making them shake, would be greatly reduced, if permission was given for the hand to shake, and for the person to realise that their very need for it not to shake was indeed making self look foolish. The very thing that was trying to be avoided.

This person was encouraged to give self, permission for the hand to shake and realise that self-worth was more important than what others thought. This was practised, but as ever the person wanted instant results. I said that a 100-metre sprinter could not stop one yard over the finishing line because he wanted to and that the same forces that had propelled him, had to be allowed to expend.

I also explained that if a sprinter who normally runs 100 metres in 10 seconds had contracted flu and then only ran a 12 second sprint, but could still only manage 12 seconds after recovering, would have induced self-doubts about his performance from a demand that said “I must not fail at any time”. Just because you were ill does not mean you have to believe that you still are.

My client’s perception/dislike of failure was making self-fail. Preferences worked.

Another client's presenting symptom was psychosomatic voice loss. Doctors had treated the person with anti-depressant drugs. Cameras had been put down the throat and a variety of techniques had been used. All, with no resolution. After a number of sessions of hypnotherapy with me the problem had still not been solved.

It took a vicious onslaught from me, on the internal punitive parent for it to release its grip from the throat. The punitive parent had been metaphorically strangling the person not to express displeasure towards the client's spouse. I did it for them in the consulting room, thus bypassing their punitive parents "need for control". The voice returned fully and the person vowed to give self, freedom of expression in the future. Bereft of a voice and desperate to speak, the punitive parent shut up and listened to me.

A woman with a public speaking phobia had been treated by other hypnotherapists. They had tried direct suggestion but with no effect. Age regression to past times in her life was used to uncover the problem, again to no avail. At the consultation with me I asked her if she felt loved. She then broke into tears and said that she had always been unsure as to whether her parents had loved her. I then decided to regress her to find happy times in her life. She remembered a time when both parents loved her. This altered her negative perception enormously. However, I knew that for her to find lasting peace she had to unconditionally accept herself and drop the demand that she must be loved by her audience. The demand was vigorously challenged and she became very good at setting behavioural assignments for herself to challenge the MUSTS and IF NOT'S. She said that there was no

bigger motivation for rescuing her self-worth than knowing that she wanted to be a loving role model to her children. Problem solved.

Interesting how the demand in her case was created from childlike logic. Perceived failure in getting love and the childish demand of approval created. When I was a child, I thought like a child, I acted like a child. Now that I am grown I put away the things of childhood.

A working class man had spent £200,000 on gambling. At the third session he eventually revealed that at age 5, his father had asked him to “pick six winners”. He didn’t and therefore set out to beat the bookies in order to get father’s approval. This belief was disputed vigorously and his private logic was freed from irrationality and the subsequent emotion holding it together. He was averted from his fictive goal. The goal of unconditional self-acceptance was a worthy and long overdue substitute.

A client lacking in energy and physical expression was freed from depression in much the same way. Later the person wrote to thank me saying, “That I probably did not realise fully, how much I had helped.”

“Oh no?” I thought.

Years after I had overcome my difficulties, I was looking at a French web site on the computer. Suddenly I was short of breath, dizzy, hot and experiencing tingling sensations. I thought that there was something seriously wrong then I did a quick

mental check of my symptoms and realised I was having a panic attack. I accepted the symptoms and did not demand that I must not die. A few minutes after my physiological state had returned to normality. I realised that I had been looking at a website for Restaurants.

Ten years ago I had contracted food poisoning in France and was very ill for 2 weeks.

This is an excellent example of how memory can bring back feeling and if not accepted, misery. If I did not know what I now do about anxiety, and wrongly evaluated the evidence for my “impending death” I could have been propelled into one hell of a state. My presenting problem may have been perceived by a future therapist as a computer phobia!

Insomnia that has psychological origins is no more than a person who has lost their ability to trust them selves.

When one loves self, it can be very difficult to love another. Maybe that is why 40 per cent of British marriages end in divorce. One thinks they have found a like-minded person, when in fact all they have is the perfect foil for their perceived weakness.

Takes one to know one. Takes a better one to judge

A therapist who gets results is one who has resolved and learned from his own difficulties the hard way. How could he be a therapist otherwise? The client, who thinks that therapists and doctors are super human, and then find out that is not the case, disillusionment follows. Irrational beliefs created from childhood and perpetuated by a magical need to be loved and healed by a significant other.

Ring any bells?

Try this exercise

Imagine a child you do not know standing close to you. He is around 5 years old. Take a really good, long look at him. What kind of clothes is he wearing? What is his facial expression? Try not to turn away from him, just observe him.

Now, tell him that he is no good, that what he does is always bad and that he cannot get anything right. Tell him that he is useless.

How do you feel, guilty with yourself for saying those things to someone so young and helpless? Ok, make him and yourself feel better, tell him that you apologise and that it was not his fault, how could it be, as he is a young child. Tell him that you will treat him with respect in the future and that you will teach him to unconditionally accept himself.

Now again, imagine that there is a child standing near you, but this time I want you to imagine that this child is you. How do you feel - less interested to look? How

would a child feel about you looking away with disinterest? Do you look away because you are ashamed, do you not like what you see? Can't you stand what you see?

How would a child react to you doing this? Happy, ecstatic, joyous, free, contented, peaceful? No. Then how do you feel? Sad, depressed, uptight, annoyed, anxious, fearful, restricted, inhibited? No wonder this is how you react to yourself. Congratulations on having been an excellent negative self-hypnotist.

What have you, in your role as the internal punitive demanding parent been telling your own child over the years?

That he is bad, not good enough, idiotic, stupid?

How have you felt over the years?

Bad, not good enough, idiotic, stupid?

What gives your internal punitive parent the right to harangue your inner child?

Maybe we should all go to social services and plead self-abuse.

We are not taught at school how to respect ourselves. I think there is a case for good therapy to be part of the curriculum. Prevention is better than cure. How much

would this save the National Health Service? Think how much quick fix; mind altering chemicals could be done away with?

The ability to respond is our responsibility. Your responsibility. Imagine your inner child and embrace him. Is it not long overdue? Tell him that you are sorry and that you will try to understand him. How do you feel now?

Just as our bad actions are not representative of self, neither are good ones. We mistakenly believe that people are wonderful because they achieve great things, but we are human, we all make mistakes

Still not convinced?

The cornerstone of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) is the ABC form. A stands for activating event, B stands for irrational beliefs and C stands for consequences.

There is also a D for Rational beliefs and an E for new consequences. A trite example of how this works would read as follows.

Imagine in the Activating event column that you are in your kitchen, getting ready to go out to meet a friend. You look out of the window and it's raining. Most people will then go directly to column C and feel down, because they have to stay in and postpone the meeting. Yet as stated earlier, external stimuli cannot cause us to feel

something inside of us. So how do we feel down? Let's look at what happened in the B column.

You told yourself that you would get wet and because you once got wet before and contracted the flu you would stay in. It is that belief that leads to you feeling down and your reaction to the memory of it. All you succeed in creating is another detrimental memory!

An REBT therapist would dispute this belief, because it is dysfunctional to you and restricts your life. The therapist and the client would discuss the ramifications of getting wet and the way memory has scared you now. In other words because you got wet before and contracted flu, does not mean you will contract it again. Your demand, that it must not happen again, scares you and keeps you indoors.

Whilst disputing this belief you would be asked to come up with a more practical beneficial alternative thought. Such as, I will take an umbrella. On realising that it will keep you dry, the meeting with your friend goes ahead and hopefully, a good time is had by all.

In this example the therapist would check that you are not avoiding meeting people because of any perceived inadequacy and that you did not demand that you had to meet your friend in case you let him down and felt guilty. REBT is a therapy that puts you back in your own driving seat and allows you to make decisions that work for you.

Rational beliefs lead to, at worst disappointment, sadness, regret, and annoyance.

Irrational beliefs lead to anxiety, depression, anger and unhappiness.

If I really m-u-s-t-e-r-b-a-t-e-d that I would have to have a million pounds, the tag on part would be and if not it's all my fault. I would anxiously run around my room looking for the money only to become depressed when I failed to find it. A self created perception of failure falsely depresses me. If I preferred to get a million pounds and if not I'm still an ok person, I would be disappointed for five minutes, then move on with my life.

In the irrational belief, it is that gun that is metaphorically levelled at your head that creates the "what ifs", and we have read what Sir Winston Churchill said about the word if.

When you feel bad you think badly and the imagination creates all sorts of flashing, frightening images. So much so that we can end up believing them. The consequences move into the activating event column and ultimately reinforce the belief that there really is something wrong with us. We are one-nil down before we start. Over time it is like an invisible smoke screen that stops us changing the irrational belief. This is what can be so confusing for client and therapist alike. Understanding of this process goes some way to reduce this cycle.

Fear of fear.

Imagine that you are in a swimming pool and that you have just pushed off from the shallow end. As you swim away you hear a noise, you look behind you and see a shark. You flap your arms and kick your legs wildly, so much so that after a while you just want to get out of the pool, as you are exhausted.

This time get into the pool and let the shark be there, accept him, yes accept. As you swim up the pool the shark, or the problem will disappear into the distance. You will have good days and then a recurrence of memory. This is no more than the shark snapping his jaws and scaring you. He cannot get near you remember. It is your reaction to frightening memory that has created this.

A good way to become more aware of your irrational demands and to replace them with rational preferences is to run a situation that you have been having difficulty with through the imagination. This can help gain perspective and reduce the misery, if appropriate, why not try this with a friend? After all, is it not a good idea to try to understand each other?

RATIONAL-EMOTIVE IMAGERY

Imagine one of the worst things that could happen to you, failing in a relationship, making a fool of self in front of others. Never getting better (notice how I said Imagine) whatever you fear the most...Really imagine this activating event and the initial feeling it brings. Then, intensely feel the disturbing symptoms that usually follow, they may be depression, anxiety, etc. Now feel what you usually feel, not

what you think you feel. Once you have it, hold onto it for several minutes. Really feel it.

Then imagine the feeling becoming a little less. Reduce it to a more functional feeling. You may wish to imagine using a remote control to alter the intensity, turn down the feeling. Move it from an irrational feeling of anger, anxiety, depression, to a rational one of displeasure, frustration, and sadness.

The activating event of visualising people laughing at you can now create the consequence of annoyance. You are now prescribing a rational feeling.

Always keep the activating event the same when you practise this. There is no point in changing the actual event. If that's what happens, that what happens. Changing what really happens to suit you is what you HAVE been trying to do.

How does REI work?

You rationally, from your point of view, see the Activating event and realise the harmful feelings YOU create. You then, can damn (if you have to) and chastise the other person's behaviour but not their beings. For example, they really did treat me badly, I wish they had not done that, but there is no reason why they MUST NOT. If that's what they do, that's what they do, tough I don't like it but I can hate their behaviour without completely damning them. I refuse to upset myself because of what they do.

To deal with self-blame that YOU ultimately created with the original irrational demand at them laughing at you, a helpful approach would be to imagine yourself vividly creating fury and anger and then spontaneously feel self-hate for a short while then change your self-talk to rational regret.

This way, you learn, rather than just mimicking a rational preference and hoping it works.

Give a person a fish; you feed him for a day. Teach him, how to fish they feed themselves for life.

Practise gets you closer to you. So practise at least once a day over a month. Give yourself penalties if do not and treats if you do. Force yourself to get closer to self. Get “significant others” out of the way.

Chapter 7 - Stress At Work

Since work related stress affects about 1 in 5 workers, 6.7 million working days are lost each year costing £4 billion, it would be reasonable to say that at the root of these statistics is a demand. I suspect that the demand that “I must not fail and if I do it will be all my fault” is created.

Private companies ruthlessness to promote figures of achievement and Government organisations to reflect the success of politicians, create a must not fail attitude. This in turns creates apathy, physical/ mental exhaustion, and resentment. All these symptoms actually create “failure”. If we accept this as being correct, we then have to ask ourselves the question “who wins?” Well, someone has to or it wouldn’t be happening.

This is yet again a gun that is placed at the head of employees for the ultimate satisfaction of an already well-heeled person.

Do bear in mind, I am speaking of stress. Demands create stress. So someone is demanding, not preferring to.

Using the road map of this book it does not take us very long to realise that when the “must not fail attitude” is placed under the microscope and emotionally measured, the same old perverse race to be first back in the womb(comfort) again is uncovered.

Countries require economic growth. People set goals, aspirations, are healthy. Musterbatory demands, shoulding on you and others creates stress. Stress equals loss of control and that creates fear/anxiety, and affects performance.

In 1783, David Dale, a textile merchant had the idea that well cared for workers would produce more. He built houses and schools for his workers in New Lanark, Scotland. His son-in-law Robert Owen developed this creativity further. New Lanark is renowned throughout the world for creating a civilised working environment. Owen's philosophy of "rational approach" encouraged kindness and no punishment.

Smart guy eh!

USE HUMOUR

Useful for phobias and stress at work

When appropriate, humour can make a substantial difference to a person's perception and therefore change the behaviour.

You think you have difficulty with your parents!

Mine never understood me at all.

They were Japanese.

Try this exercise. Sit down and make yourself comfortable. Close your eyes and block out distracting stimuli. See, way in the distance the screen of a television...dispassionately, imagine that there is a situation that you dislike appearing on it.... Do not make the scene too overwhelming. The purpose of this is to condition relaxation and humour into it. Getting uptight will only condition more into you. Imagine that you are calmly entering a room, a pub a venue where people will be looking at you.... As you enter, look out calmly at all the people... Notice at the very back of the venue that there is someone who upsets you, or has made you tense... Have a good long look at this person and observe their huge feet..... as you look up see that they have paw like hands... ... as you stare at their face notice that whiskers suddenly start to sprout.....they have a large black wet nose....huge ears....yes it's Mickey Mouse As you carefully observe, notice that he/she is wearing a top hat...now they have jumped up onto a table and are dancing waving their tail at you... Notice that there is a red rose in the person's mouth...and that now they are doing hand stands on the table ...and everyone else is looking at him/her...the person is doing cartwheels... and is tumbling around the room...

How do you feel now about that person? What is your reaction when you think about them? Tense or more relaxed? If you are still as tense, how did your shouldhood hold you back?

Imagining in productive ways is useful as it allows freedom for the unconscious mind so that in the future those situations that were a problem can be experienced differently. Success breed's success.

Chapter 8 - Applying

Let us now look in depth at a real case history.

How I recovered.

I would hope that by now it has become evident, that the quicker someone suffering from severe stress/anxiety is helped properly, the better. The longer the person is left untreated allows more time for imagination to create more symptoms and then move through the circle and create even more horrific memories. The shortness of the GP appointment and his apparent inability to understand the condition, added to lengthy waiting times to see a specialist is a poor show, to say the least.

I, through Dr Claire Weekes, was at last on the road to recovery and had a sympathetic GP who was prepared to give me as much time as required to get better.

The aspect of the Claire Weekes' concept that intrigued me most was her persistence in encouraging the sufferer to "build up the right inner voice". Stating that true confidence had to be earned and that could only be done through successful experience. Many people, she said were merely self-assertive. This brings hope because as you know, it is so easy to compare yourself to others and see how well they are doing. The sufferer, of course thinks that he is the only person in the world suffering the way he does. As I have shown, he is NOT.

For the best part of a year I practised Facing and Accepting, that is facing situations I had previously avoided, accepting as well as I could any nervous symptoms that may arise within me, floating when they did, and letting time pass. This was not easy, as my body was so sensitized and was in an almost constant state of electrical tremor. It was hard to accept that, but accept I needed to do, and accept I did. After all there was no other option; given the state that I was in I had exhausted the other options that were available.

Gradually, I noticed improvement, but it was slow, as I had become a very astute observer of myself and was constantly aware of the slightest feeling coming from my fatigued body. This is a common complaint for people at this end of the scale in nervous illness. It is like waiting for a bomb to go off. Hellish.

My day was made up of reading Claire Weekes' books; to begin with I could only take so much of what she was saying in, as I was blindingly aware of what was occurring within me. . The feelings of loneliness, isolation and fatigue were horrendous. The days dragged on and on. I went the usual route of praying to god at night and hoping that my illness would leave me by morning. All to no avail. My thought processes gradually became more scientific, becoming more expert as to how the physiology of my body was affecting me. I could not dispute the truth of the Claire Weekes' books.

Over time, I gradually engaged in activities that I had long forgotten about and had taken for granted. I walked the dog and accepted the hugeness of the world once

more, only this time I was seeing it and learning about it through the eyes of an adult. It seemed strange, imposing and I initially felt overwhelming feelings of vulnerability. I could identify with someone suffering from agoraphobia.

To some, phobias will seem nonsensical. Believe me; it seemed like that to me before I had this illness, and worst still it seemed like that when I was ill. Remember, months previous to the illness I was running 7 miles a day and living life to the full. Then this.

I thought, “if only I had a broken leg, I would recover quickly and people will understand it”

I wanted to wake up dead. The only problem was that I could not get to sleep!

The mental fatigue and unreality that accompanied my anxiety very slowly dissipated, when I began to lose my fear of it, the importance that it seemed to hold diminished also. I knew I was on the right track. Life however, is like a mountain railroad and the inclines were still steep I wondered and dreamed of having the right inner voice. “True confidence has to be earned” I began going into places that I had avoided and practised letting the panic come and accepting it. This I did. I became even more resolute to scientifically defeat child like thinking. I was beginning to regain myself slowly.

The chemical, adrenaline, stimulates an internal electrical discharge and the whole body becomes engulfed in fear. I had to accept utterly this fear and not add “what if” because that is what perpetuates the adrenaline, panic and in turn, reinforces memory, which is the inadvertent prime mover. I later realised that there was a more important one.

Demands.

With continued acceptance, the day eventually arrived where I was able to look down on panic, rise above it, and see it for what it was; this was an enlightening and marvellous feeling. Science was winning. I slowly progressed to where I would try to look for panic so I could practise this technique. What a turnaround. I was beginning to hunt panic instead of it hunting me.

I knew there was no stopping. This was incredible and yes Dr Weekes you were right, confidence building at its best. There was, however, one major obstacle in the way. I had avoided social situations where I would be around other people for a significant length of time. This was due to me believing and so do many other people, that I have since treated, that they are metaphorically walking about with a flashing neon sign above their head that says “totally screwed up, what will others think?” attributed, to all the reasons I have described.

Since the initial trigger to this state was due to me going to a pub extremely hung over, and badly choking when I tried to swallow a pint of beer, a pub was the last

place on earth that I wanted to visit. The experience that I have just described had convinced me that I could have swallowed my tongue. My mouth was so dry that it felt that my tongue was going down my throat and not the beer. Of course there was a lot more to it than just that. The choking may have been the obvious trigger but there were other connecting forces as I have stated. I had been sensitized for a great deal longer than I was aware of.

The situation with my father had nearly destroyed me, my self-confidence, and I was close to losing self-control. The pub incident was important, but nothing compared to a gradual erosion of self over many years. Stress is insidious. The person suffering is usually the last person to know. Now, I did not want to risk looking extremely foolish in public, yes, a re-run of the pub situation and being out of control. A re-run of my demands to please the unpleasable...

Recovery lies in the places you fear.

I am aware of how ridiculous this may seem to some reading this book, but at the time I really cared what others thought. If you too, still think it ridiculous, you will then think yourself ridiculous if you do something wrong, re-read the book now.

You have still not allowed your ego defence demands to relax, and get in touch with your-self.

One Friday night I was sitting reflecting as to how ill I had been and how much progress I had made. I was pleased with what I had learned and how I had practised.

I stress the word practise rather than test, because testing is pass or fail and that is a demand. I had, however, isolated myself. My friends had stopped phoning to ask me out a long time ago. I had always declined and gave them a brief explanation as to why I couldn't, but they did not understand.

That night I began to realise how the symptoms had bluffed me into submission and almost paralysed me. I surmised that I was a young man, who, previous to the illness was relatively successful at participating in life, was not crazy, and that the time had arrived to go the full nine yards.

Off to the pub.

On my way there, I heard the old out of date thoughts and "what ifs" protest and scream loudly to the bold action I was taking. I let them come, even laughed at them, I had allowed them for long enough to delude me.

I arrived at the door of the pub and trepidation struck. My body tensed itself violently, I felt numb and shaky, I was hot, my head sore. I entered the pub like a child on his first day at school. There were people everywhere. To recover, this is what I wanted. I felt like a man trying to follow Elvis after he had been on stage. I persevered toward the bar and ordered a pint. My whole body vibrated like a burst loud speaker. Elvis had definitely left the building. I was on my own. This situation, that is so difficult for so many people with social phobia, was in the here and now. I was part of society.

For eight long months I had descended to hell and fought so hard for normality. I had experienced panic attacks off and on everyday, depression, fatigue, and perception of madness, loneliness, and isolation. I felt like I had just landed on the planet Mars. Worse still, one part of me still felt that I had just travelled from Jupiter! In reality, I had just walked two miles from my home to a pub. At least I can laugh about it now.

I got my drink and stood over in a corner of the pub. I stood on my own and sipped my drink, trying not to choke and still aware of my tensed body. Five minutes passed, and my body started to relax. It was the last thing I expected, I immediately found this strange in a situation I believed to be so fearful. My whole body jumped with a start. I then thought “what if” people have seen that? It was a recurrence of the original scenario, although I certainly did not know that at the time.

I quickly put my glass down and left the pub, ashamed, and defeated again. I got half way towards home, and then suddenly stopped. To this day I am still amazed at what happened. My inner voice was saying “go back, stop running, face and accept”. It was the right inner voice. I went back towards the pub, ordered a half pint; I had to contend with the ‘I have just served you’ look on the barman’s face. I went straight back to the same spot where I had been standing and said to myself come on panic do your worst. It didn’t. I did my best.

As I was leaving the pub to go home I stopped and ordered a pint. Stayed and enjoyed it. Then left. Euphoric. I really had accepted 100 percent. Not 80 nor 99

but 100 percent. A therapy was working for someone at his worst. A person does not forget that, let alone a person who is a prospective therapist.

My confidence got better, I got better, and I hoped I was over the worst. There were however setbacks. Big setbacks to come.

Chapter 9 - On The Road To Overcoming Setbacks But More To Come

I went into more and more social situations. Still with reluctance, but with confidence too.

I decided to meet my friends whom I had not seen for months. What a strange feeling that was. Meeting people I knew well and seeing them in this fragmented state. How I wished to be able to turn the clock back. It was impossible; I knew this and had to accept it. This was my way out, and I had proved that. One night I had 5 bottles of beer. I viewed this as not a lot. I had a fairly good time and was still pleased with how I was progressing.

In the morning I felt bad. Slightly hung over and an increased nervousness from the alcohol. My body was still sensitized, even more so, as I was going into places I had avoided and insidiously become more uptight.

Later that morning I had an appointment with my GP. This was not good, as it would involve sitting in a waiting room full of people.

It was the summer, so I decided to walk to the surgery. All the way there I could feel that all was not well within me. I was internally jumpy and nervous. It was a different kind to what I had been used to. Anyone who has experienced a hangover will know what I mean. On arrival at the doctors the heat within my body built up as

a result of the walk. I felt lousy. I went into the reception area and had a huge panic attack. It was dreadful. What made it worse was that people passing really could see that there was something wrong with me. This added to it. I must have looked literally like a fish out of water as I gasped and panicked. What semblance of thought I had, was to hope that the GP would hurry up. I stood in the reception area cursing his sloth-like speed and noticed, by comparison, how calm and healthy the other patients looked.

After what seemed like a lifetime passed, the GP approached me and ushered me into the inner sanctum, I could not sit down. I wanted out of this enclosed space fast. If not faster. I told him that I had been doing well and despite what he was now seeing, I had been progressing well. He believed me and wanted to see me in a month.

On returning home I was still panicking and this continued for the best part of the day. How could this be happening to me? Especially since my successes. This is one of the most perplexing aspects of nervous illness. It is the one that will keep a person permanently ill and will cause therapists to speak only of remission. The answer; the body had re-sensitized itself. I knew from bitter experience that if I did not let panic have its head and continue to fight the feelings then I would be back to square one. I had already been there. I was going forward not back and that was the right inner voice again. Even although every sense and “rational thought” I had said ‘fight’, the inner voice said ‘no’. I had been down that road, I knew where it had taken me, and I was not going there again. The same dog doesn’t bite the smart person twice.

As therapists who practise Neuro Linguistic Programming say, there is no such thing as failure, only feedback. I personally found that one out. I realised where I had gone wrong. There was no consternation and no childlike thinking such as “why me?” Only quiet adult determination to be normal. I had tasted it; I was not going to starve myself to death now. Over the next month, I read more about the Claire Weekes’ method. I got to know it as well as I knew my own name. I went to the city centre, drove a car for the first time in months, went to bars, but was always aware of how much alcohol I consumed.

I didn’t, but I know that so many people suffering from phobias turn to alcohol as a prop to tranquilise. Again, the results are short-term gain but even longer-term pain. Face, don’t avoid. My appointment with the GP loomed on the horizon again. That would mean a return to the memory of past failure, suffering and misery. If I had not found out what I did about nervous illness, I would still to this day, be fearful of situations and probably a long time ago succumbed to mind-altering medication. Despite the horrendous experience the last time at the doctors, I was really looking forward to this visit to again put into practise what I had learnt.

The morning of the appointment came and with excitement instead of anxiety I awaited the consultation. I made my way to the practise. Stood at reception and gave my name, then went into the waiting room. The place was busy, but this time I thought “what the hell” I am going to stand. Stand I did, looking at the practise notices for meningitis and nappy rashes. I was losing my fear of what people thought. I even thought that I had been in a state few would understand and I got

myself better without medication, so why should I feel embarrassed. There was a long way still to be travelled, but I was starting to enjoy the journey.

The doctor was amazed at the difference from the last time and I was coherently able to explain what had happened. I noticed that he himself was becoming very interested with by blossoming knowledge of nervous illness and the discoveries I had made. He was impressed with the behavioural exercises that I had set myself and encouraged me.

A friend's mother was dying of cancer in a hospice. I knew her well. I visited her most days and was so impressed with her resolve and spirit. The human organism, despite its faults is truly amazing. Here was this lady close to death, telling me to be brave and not to worry about her. What a privilege it is to spend time with someone in that situation. When you are ill, physically or mentally, boundaries are exploded and allow perspective to grow. For my part, I discovered strengths that I did not know existed. Strength that would be there when my own mother died three years later. If I had not gone through what I did I would not have been able to be as strong for her on the days leading up to her death. "One day you will be glad that you experienced nervous illness", Dr Weekes said. When I read it I thought she was talking double Dutch. Now I know what she meant.

When you have not been in hell you don't know what heaven is.

If we look back at the example of me going to the pub it is maybe clinically better understood by using an ABC model.

At point A before leaving my house, I inferred that the pub would be problematic and uncomfortable. At point B I believed that I must not make a fool of myself in front of others by choking and if I did it was my entire fault. At point C I felt the symptoms of Anxiety, which brought back bad memories of the initial incident and subsequent failed attempts to overcome my difficulty. So that the very prospect of going to the pub aroused a negative inference in the A column. I had to accept the bad memories and not recondition them.

As you know, by the time I found help, the memories were huge. I had to apply knowledge, understanding, acceptance and practise to significantly reduce them before I even thought about going to the pub. This I did, but the original belief that had been exacerbated by my father was still there. Until, I decided that my life was not going to be restricted anymore by worrying as to what people thought about me. I was not going to “hand over my self-worth conditionally. I had to accept me. I had been unable to do this as a result of the symptoms that the original well-hidden belief had created. I could not fully understand or change the belief until now.

At the pub, I was doing well, until the very “strangeness” of normality frightened me. After rushing out of the pub the right inner voice that I had worked at, rescued me. All the things that I had worried about just did not matter anymore. In other words

my belief in the B column was I prefer not to make a fool of myself and If I do, so what.

If other people think I'm a crocodile, does that make me one!

As a result, the C column dramatically changed. The symptoms of worry and anxiety subsided.

Result; major insight.

For me, life had to move forward. I started up my business, completed my training and found that I could understand my clients' language. I was more motivated than at any other time in my life to help people and find answers to their problems. The hours were long and at times, grinding sessions would be involved as I lifted their spirits, hopes and answered questions. People need explanation. If we did not, we would be automatons. If you are a doctor reading this, please remember this. If you don't have the explanations, find them.

By comparison to the majority of other people you are paid handsomely. If you can, spend more time talking trying to understand rather than reaching for the prescription pad. Go for short-term pain to get long-term gain. To this day I still do not put strict time limits on my sessions. Why? Because I know, what you are going through.

Years in practise and dealing with problems that need direct, simple explanation have motivated me to write this book. Answers were still needed. I, through my own experience, went the very long, but necessary route to find them, I will now recap.

Chapter 10 - What Makes Our Thoughts?

We learn at an early age of our worldly existence that someone else has control over us. We are dependent on other tangible human beings for sustenance, comfort, cleanliness and warmth. We replicate speech patterns from significant others, receive food, clothes and love from them. Love is comfortable, warm and safe.

We are encouraged to walk, tie shoelaces and do a multitude of complex tasks; there are role models all around us. We receive positive encouragement for achievement and chastisement for failure. We leave mother to go to school where another authority figure takes over. We meet other children and learn camaraderie and to poke fun at the teacher. She/he is after all bigger than us and together we find security in a group of other likeminded people. This is how we make friends.

The group, as well as the teacher, come with conditions attached. If you are perceived as different from the group then you are a threat to their love. If you are not good at sport you may be isolated, if your clothes and accent are different, this is used as an excuse for bullying. Remember most children want to grow up quicker than they actually can, so that they do not have to be dependent on someone's love, because we learn that there are conditions to it. These conditions invariably carry a threat. How many bullies' parents give unconditional other acceptance, especially to their kids? Bullying, as are suicidal impulses, is a cry for help. To be understood, to be happy, to be loved.

We learn consciously that love has conditions. It becomes unconscious, as we grow a little older. Yet is still a prevalent conscious/unconscious desire. It becomes a need with conditions. It becomes a must when we experience a threat for this need. This demand is irrational. It is replicating the control parents/adults hold over us, and then we use it against our self. This is used to chastise and harangue us to do better. Better at what? Achievement, success, wealth, happiness. Fundamentally what are those? To be seen to be opulent? That is conditional. That is failure. This failure is perpetuated by the same old carrot and stick trick. This contrived inadequacy perpetuated by manipulative people who learn through this deception, that “love” equals power and control and opulence.

Opium for the masses.

We are all sucked into this trap of conditional self-aggrandisement. Then deny it with Miss World contrition that we really do want to save the planet and help people.

My ass.

As Ellis stated, human beings have predisposition to think irrationally. We are all fundamentally selfish for love. People over the years have likened being in love to a form of madness or taking leave of our senses. That is fine, but when feathers are fanned in a cavalier fashion by a human psyche, that is a form of manipulation to which every one of us can own up to. When it becomes a problem, is when the human being believes that they are not worthy of external love and damn themselves

with guilt. How does it become a problem? When society continually strives to get what it wants at all costs in the reckless pursuit of love.

A loop that we intelligent free thinking human beings keep getting force fed with.

Notice the Freudian slip there?

Governments, churches, the media, all feed us this baloney. Why do these institutions become so powerful?

Ignorance is bliss.

Well to quote Dr Weekes

“Where ignorance is bliss ‘tis folly to be wise”

We have a duty to wise up first and foremost to ourselves, and then this natural unconditional self acceptance will progress to others and the bullying will stop. Or man’s dislike of man, because he cannot essentially be loved by another. Well free yourself of the guilt, because guilt creates anxiety that provokes fearful imagination, which ultimately paralyzes us. This is a nonsensical loop. Where does that take us? Back to childlike thinking. Where does that take us? Back to manipulation. Where does that take us? Greed, anger, wars, death, destruction. Where does that take us? Church. Some comfort? All in the name of self-aggrandisement.

I am not speaking about the hippy, dope smoking, perception of love. Nor am I speaking of self-love. Because if you are in love with yourself then it is hard to have another loving relationship with someone else. I mean unconditional self-acceptance. Face your younger frightened, guilty, anxious, stressed out irrational demand and say hello in a friendly way. The way you would a naughty child with chocolate on his face, whilst denying he had eaten any. Then dispute it with tangible evidence. Allow freedom to grow

That is your essence. Your life force. That is as real as it gets. Trust self. 100 per cent.

Chapter 11 - Enhancing Hypnotherapy

The imagination is one of the main areas of the mind a hypnotherapist uses to help a person. I prefer the word utilise, because then you are working WITH the person, not directly influencing them. Despite the perception that is usually derived from watching stage hypnosis, that a person is told what to do and can be made to do anything the hypnotist wishes, the reality is there is really only one form of hypnosis and that is self- hypnosis. In other words the hypnotist is creating a framework for the person to voluntarily imagine experiences, events that are already within them. This in my view is good hypnotherapy as it is hopefully conducive to the persons needs.

Nobody knows you better than yourself. So why not utilise that in-built ability to resolve that difficulty that you are inadvertently creating?

Many people fear that they fall asleep or go unconscious during a hypnotic session. If that were the case, you would not hear anything that the therapist said, so what would be the point? An illusion used by the stage hypnotist. 20% of the general population can enter a deep trance state rapidly. This is known as somnambulism. The stage hypnotist, finds those people in the audience with a series of suggestibility tests, he lowers the tone of his voice and asks the people to imagine their hands sticking together with superglue. If they do, you are the one he wants to make his.

Call it enhancing hypnotherapy. A better description may be enjoying brilliant self-talk. Hypnosis is so effective because it quietens the irrational demand and takes the rational preference deeper down to see the damage that irrationality has done. He reemerges with an old but new view and feels at peace with self. Get the picture?

Some of the effects of hypnotherapy are short lasting for a number of reasons. Direct or authoritarian suggestions, similar to the ones received when I knew nothing about it merely replicate the internal punitive demanding parent. The very force that created the problem. There are hypnotherapists who will make all sorts of incredible claims. Again in my view akin to the external punitive parent bribing the child to fall into line with their expectations and if so something good will happen.

Again, conditional and short-term, in relation to your happiness. Yet still appealing for the child. Most patients go to the Dentist, Doctor or Therapist's office as children. That being the case, the child better bring their responsible adult. Better still, if the adult can be responsible and self-accepting, you may not need to go. Perhaps not as many times.

If you do this, your therapeutic progress is enhanced and if you are a therapist reading this, may I suggest, that if you want your self/client to flourish, get him to vigorously challenge the demand!

From my own clinical experience, when this happens, your client will achieve not only great trance states but also good therapeutic results. Preparation is an equally important aspect in hypnotherapy.

I recently received an enquiry from a person wishing to quit smoking. Although admitting that he still enjoyed cigarettes. He demanded that I give him a guarantee that my therapy would work. When I said that I could not and that a surgeon would not guarantee the outcome of an operation, he then stated that two other therapists had a 95 per cent success rate and that they would guarantee success within one to two sessions and if not continue until he quits. The interesting part of this is, that they advertise a 95 per cent success rate EVERY year, charge £250, and in my view trade on the clients child like perception and hope for an apathetic response from him if it does not work. I am one of the most experienced therapists in the city and my fees are a lot less. Does the client really believe that my therapeutic techniques are less than the other two therapists? No. He wants a quick fix and as ever, there are always people waiting in the wings to tell him what he wants to hear.

“Unfortunately even among those endeavouring to do scientific work, the attitude that hypnosis is miraculous and minimizes time requirements is still prevalent...The employment of hypnosis as a therapeutic agent or as a laboratory method of experimentation requires, for valid results, a training process extending over several hours” Milton H. Erickson, Psychiatrist and Hypnotherapist.

“Cut the crap and cut to the quick”. Robin W. Thorburn

Since it is the constant demanding-ness that is prevalent in problematic situations, as has been shown, it is the original perception that creates the demand. Thus compounding the perception and bluffing the person into believing it. This, also, will stop the hypnotherapeutic progress, unless this is isolated and vigorously disputed. Many people have been carrying their false perception and inadvertent demandingness with them for years. Indeed that person will have analysed, prayed, hoped and more than likely attended other forms of therapy and indulged in self-help books. As many hypnotherapists will know, we are often viewed as “the last card in the pack”. The usual perceptions of stage hypnotists and the nonsense he purveys are never that far from their thoughts. Hence this almost childlike expectation of “magic”.

The demands/pressure that the client brings with him will naturally stop a hypnotic state occurring. Because the client has tried everything else, they will be telling themselves that hypnotherapy MUST work for them and if not, I have failed and therefore it MUST be my fault. It’s hard to relax with a gun at your head.

It is hard to stay hot whilst standing in a fridge.

Hypnotherapy alone is like a sticking plaster. Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy is an antibiotic.

Unrealistic expectations and demands really need to be reduced. Since they are part and parcel of the problem anyway.

Some therapists would argue that a confusionary induction, might bypass conscious constraints on the unconscious. Yes, it might, but how many clients do you know of, that present themselves in a hypnotherapist's office, then enjoy being confused? Are they not confused enough? Surely we do not want to add to that. Are we fearful that if we avoid direct talking and concentrate on the "magic" that we might be disliked ourselves because we are not meeting the client's expectations?

Are we not making a rod for our own back and looking for short-term gain but long term pain? Is this not what the client has been doing for long enough? Is this not what you have been doing for long enough? Is that why you became a hypnotherapist in the first place? To be a good punitive parent?

The most effective form of disputing an irrational belief is to isolate the situation that causes the client a problem and then ask, and "what did you tell yourself" They will initially try to answer you on a rational level, if they do, you can ask, but how does that make you feel depressed? "I don't know will be the usual response" But adhering to the belief that they are telling themselves an irrational belief you can respond by saying "you do know, you are probably telling yourself an irrational belief right now that is blocking your thinking, like, "why is he asking me this when I expected the magic?"

Their very demand to get better is stopping that occurring. As usual the very thing they don't want, they get. Why? Because they would be a failure and it would be their entire fault and they would feel guilty!

One great big emotionally charged loop.

Their irrational demand is making him so fearful, scared, and uptight that their freedom to trust self has been nullified and won't allow them or you to progress. This is why in my view, the demands, symptoms, second fear, bewilderment, introspection, depletion, possible depression and, at this stage, sensitization needs to be addressed and that can only be done with knowledge, understanding and empathy. Putting the client in a chair and asking them to close their eyes and imagine a painting by numbers mental gymnastic technique that might work is like building your/their house on sand.

In a waking state provoke thought. In a hypnotic state provoke thought but don't allow their demands to direct the therapy session, and don't fall into the same loop yourself! As disputing continues you will become aware of what Dr Ellis calls 'the main villain'. The tag on part i.e. I must be liked and if not. . .

It is the "and if not" that can be crucially put under the microscope. Because this really means because "what if it's my fault"?

In my view presenting symptoms of anger, anxiety, depression will be used to irrationally protect the inner irrational demand.

It is like finding an 90 year old Japanese soldier and telling him the war is over, but he was told by the authorities and still believe, he MUST defend his countries honour at all costs, because if he doesn't it's his entire fault.

Who are you still carrying?

There is a wide array of hypnotherapeutic techniques. Automatic writing, hypno-pictography, where the client writes or draws in hypnosis what their problem is. Ideo-motor responses where the unconscious allegedly responds with finger movements in response to the therapist's questions. Age regression, to a time in their life when they experienced an event that affected them greatly, in the hope that a cathartic release can rid them of their demons. Future time progression, where the client can look back on his life to gain insight as to what he did to change his life in a productive way. Dream analysis, where the unconscious reveals the meaning of the dream.

All these techniques, and more, can be useful therapeutic tools to aid peace of mind. However, the unconscious is a huge depository for life experiences, so do bear in mind that because the client you will be dealing with, is usually desperate for relief, their imagination has already been flashing so many frightening thoughts and images, hopes and unrealistic expectations that this can hinder progress. Hypnosis is dependent on the imagination, so be careful. Prudence and diligence are required before the imagination is given more free reign in a bid to, yes; you guessed it, blame themselves or someone else once more.

The demanding, fearful inner child is so scared that it is ready to admit or blame anyone, when caught red-handed. The disputing techniques outlined above, focus and concentrate the mind in a way that is insightful, relevant and revealing of the internal punitive parent. In short, they put a halt to destructive child like lazy thinking.

When this is explained and understood by you and the client, hypnotherapy can let creativity abound.

The guilty cement can crack, old boundaries shattered and freedom experienced. Freedom, to think ourselves.

Don't do what you should do, do what the client can be helped with.

The most important ability a therapist can give to a client is empathy, and that, I do not think can be trained. It is a result of having had problems yourself. Then rather than letting them get, or keep you down, the smart person utilises them

Chapter 12 - Results

The very shoulds, oughts and musts that create the resistance can be shown to the sufferer quickly and allow him to move forward. Erickson did not leave a tangible therapeutic model to follow. Dr Albert Ellis has, and still explains it.

Why? Because his model gets results that ARE scientifically measurable Albert Ellis is your rational parent, understand him, you understand the child. .

As has been explained earlier when my illness struck, I was propelled overnight, or so I thought at the time into one hell of a state. The ground had certainly been prepared. A narcissistic father, who really hated himself, therefore projecting all his vitriol onto me. I was the easy target for manipulation and in turn suffered low-self worth.

A career change that in retrospect created a fear of failure. A sister who committed suicide attributed to postnatal depression. A vicious attack of sinusitis, which reduced my physical strengths significantly and in the background that damned swallowing problem. The aforementioned symptoms took me to the lowest depths that I have ever experienced in my life. Even now, I find it difficult to view the depths I physically and mentally reached.

Through the books, tapes and videos of Dr Claire Weekes I found recovery.

For this I will always view her and extol her virtues as the best.

I knew in the back of my mind that I had to become my own person. Perhaps, for the first time, save for 5 years of my early life.

The quest for truth and a therapy that really worked 100 per cent began.

I studied psychoanalysis, and put myself through it. Recalling early childhood memories and realising a lot of emotional discontents. The release of repressions did not help. They made me more determined to find an answer. Did I love my mother and hate my father yes, but it did not help.

Claire Weekes acceptance did more. A lot more. Acceptance is being flexible enough to let disturbing symptoms pass without adding second fear to them. The tightrope walker has to lose his balance to keep his balance. The motorcycle going around a corner must lean into it to get around it safely. The aeroplane plummeting to earth has to go further down to go up. The willow tree bends with the wind to survive. Acceptance is no demands, no rigidity no inflexibility. Afterwards the person learns that he can achieve peace within panic. Then review the demands that have been creating the symptoms that he despises.

Dr Weekes' explanation of how memory can affect person even years after recovering, and how it can very quickly take the sufferer all the way back to believing that they are still no further forward is vitally valuable. Because memory creates more demands. "If memory wants to go back let it. You don't have to go all the way back with it...separate memory from reality" For me to get better, I had to

accept memory and its emotional intensity. Not easy, but effective. Memory brings feelings and these feelings keep the person ill. The person adds “what if” which, as we have seen, provokes a reaction around the cycle and ultimately reinforces more bad memory and feeling and then the demand, thus perpetuating the vicious circle of psychological misery. This is absolutely crucial to understand.

Unless other therapies understand this and encourage an attitude of acceptance to memory. The client will not fully recover.

If not, this perpetuates perfectionism and that is remission, not cure.

I studied Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and applied it to myself; I personally found it to be excellent for evaluating the evidence and because it largely follows Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy. 10 years after Dr Ellis invented REBT in 1955 Aaron Beck, (originator of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy) started using aspects of it. I would not decry it or stop anyone trying it. It has good clinical success. I wrote about it in my dissertation and allied with the Claire Weekes approach used it to help many of my clients. It is a therapy that focuses in on your disruptive thoughts, which are called Negative Automatic Thoughts, or Automatic Negative Thoughts. Nats or Ants respectively.

I have read a story that accurately describes the difference between Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy.

If a client went to see a Cognitive or Rational Emotive therapist he would be acquainted with the ABC form and asked to use it for self-monitoring purposes.

One client, put in the A part of the form that he was in the city centre and saw his friend, who “ignored” him, in the C part of the form he wrote, “even more depressed”. When questioned by the CB therapist the client disclosed that in the B part of the form he had thought his friend did not like him.

When it was discussed and the evidence assimilated, the client accepted the fact that, given his friend was on the other side of the road from him and that there was busy traffic and it was dark. There was indeed the possibility his friend had not seen him.

This is an excellent way for assessing the evidence and teaching a person to check out what is really happening. However, a Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapist would cut to the quick and ask, “What’s this need to be liked”?

Albert Ellis’s approach is direct and very difficult to dispute on a rational level, and believe me, that is what a client needs and wants. Even although it can take time albeit a relatively short time to realise it. Ellis says it how it is.

That is refreshing.

He gets you thinking. In my view, he brings a very much needed clarity to the field of psychology. He unties a problem swiftly and skilfully. Of course some people will not like his directness. Why not? I would suspect that they would be better with

a pat on the head and a sugar lump. He challenges neurotic thinking as lazy and childlike and efficiently gets results. Some would say that he is forcing his rational way of thinking upon you. I would say that he is giving you a golden opportunity for you to think in a way that works. Can't be any worse than a way that doesn't.

Unless of course, you get a pay off for being ill. Such as the pathetic belief that at least you, or your punitive parent, is in control. Ha, some control.

So REBT helped me, I had to work at it, but so what. I was now aware that my very demand to get better quickly, had sabotaged me in the past. This way, made sense, from my experience as a clinical psychotherapist if it makes sense, then that counts for a very great deal. Common sense goes a long way.

As I helped myself with REBT, I became more and more aware of my demands that I had been placing on myself. It was a revelation. I felt I was freeing myself from inadvertent self-imposed restrictions. Everywhere I went, I became more aware of my old out of date demands and the resultant feelings they had caused. I was now able to challenge them vigorously by preferring not to look stupid and if not I was still an OK person. I had to take responsibility for myself and accept that any change came from me now. Blaming others is another form of helplessness and a manipulation of love. It serves no purpose other than to command love and generate distrust. The world is a frightening place when you view people as enemies. Who would not then feel more anxious? I realised that what motivated my lack of confidence was a rigidly held belief that people must like me. I was in a no win

situation, how could I get approval if I kept believing I could not get it by never believing I was worthy. I was not living on my terms but trying to live on others. My old out of date child like thinking had believed this nonsense. My fictive goal of overcoming inferiority by attaining superiority by trying to manipulate people to love me was just that, FICTIVE. I had been handing over my self-worth in the cause of trying to be above others and viewing them as a threat to my diminished self-worth. Some loop!

These AHA experiences and the disputing of them became good fun. A therapy that is fun. Whatever is this world coming to?

Don't tell the drugs companies that.

Dr Ellis freed off the punitive parent and taught him a thing or two. In my opinion two of the greatest ever therapists all basically said the same thing, Dr Claire Weekes "Accept" Dr Albert Ellis "Don't demand from yourself"

Get the message?

From my experiences I learned to trust myself by consciously challenging the utter nonsense that had been created by the demand that I must care what people think. This had to be done with knowledge understanding and acceptance. Acceptance, because I was so fearful and tired to fight. This worked. However, when this was reduced, it was time to fight, fight, fight the demand and its nonsense, I was then able

to free my self from the restriction of the punitive irrational demands that I had created. I learned humility towards self at last

As I stated at the start of this book, memory is the inadvertent prime mover. My understanding of memory is billions of brain cells, waiting to be manipulated. When memory is manipulated in a traumatic way, the punitive demand that it must not exist only serves to create and provoke more bad memories, thus, keeping the person in this cycle.

Hypnotherapy, and psychotherapy can either tranquillise memory short term or provoke more, therefore perpetuating the demand. This does not let memories fade. In short, we inadvertently try to exhume and understand memory, as we dislike it so much, but never allow the chance for the unconscious to bury its dead. Therapy can play the role of the punitive parent and succeed only in causing consternation.

Man's egotism will not rest.

The above reasons are what perpetuate a psychological problem. When Claire Weekes says, "Accept" and Albert Ellis says, "don't demand", the real message to the memory is "burying your dead".

By preferring not to look stupid and if I do, I am still an ok person, is working with the resistance of the demand and letting the intensity of it fade. To continually believe that I SHOULD never experience any symptoms whatsoever puts a rigid

inflexible restriction on my true expression. As long as we live we will ALL experience symptoms we dislike, but that does not mean that we SHOULD hate them and never have rational feelings of concern, annoyance or sadness. These rational feelings may be inconvenient, but they are not awful. Only we can amplify their intensity by awfulising their inconvenience to us by demanding they SHOULD not exist. In other words we can be unloved and it's ok. Don't should on yourself!

Result, cure.

Chapter 13 - Summary

It is my contention that for we as human beings, to break the vicious circle of psychological misery must look at where the circle begins.

In the foregoing chapters we have had to wade through the evidence and reverse the circle, we now come back to perception. Throughout the course of our day we move in and out of trance states. These states are no more than focused attention on one thing to the exclusion of other stimuli. In short we are focused. When the “circle” is broken it is our everyday occurring trance state that is broken. We move our relaxed effective attention onto irrelevant matters. We then lose our focus. As has been shown when love is manipulated we become distracted. Then because we get a fright we become mesmerised with irrelevant demands, because these irrelevancies are so emotionally charged (warmth, love and safety) we keep staring at them to see just how bad they can become, to the complete exclusion of everything else. We then make ourselves ill.

Trance states are reading a book, watching television, driving a car, etc. We concentrate consciously and then the unconscious does the rest i.e. absorb information or reproduce it. Since the unconscious mind regulates our breathing, our skin temperature, turns food into hair, into toenails allows us to do a multitude of complex tasks seemingly without thinking. It therefore follows that when some smart ass bastard, with a “position of authority” comes along and manipulates love (scares us) they succeed in breaking our everyday relaxed focus and disrupt our

psychological peace, therefore creating their vicious circle of psychological misery!

This paranoid Svengali has got you focused on their irrelevancies.

If there was a plank of wood a foot wide, lying on the floor stretching from one wall to the other, could you walk across it?

Most people say yes.

If there was a pit of snakes under the plank of wood could you still walk across it?

Most people then HESITATE.

Their focus of attention has just changed.

This does not prove anything other than there are “pits of snakes in this world” and that you have become focused in on them, then you hesitate, then think “what if,” then the adrenalin starts to flow. Familiar is it not?

Try this experiment; Re-call a fearful image, focus in on it. How does this make you feel?

Bad?

Now, focus in, really, really focus in on any object in your field of vision in the now, you will move from the “pit of snakes” to the plank of wood and feel indifferent.

What have you done correctly?

You have changed the image-yes but most important of all you changed your focus. The therapy Neuro Linguistic Programming spends time on changing the images, but as I said earlier, there will always be “pits of snakes in this world” it therefore follows that if you once looked at a “pit of snakes” and did not like them, all that proves is that you once looked at a “pit of snakes” and did not like them. Trying to change them will only make you think of them. Focus your attention on a relevant object IN THE HERE AND NOW, and your problem, which is no more than focused attention on irrelevancies will be broken. In other words; instead of continually focusing in on future or past negative trance states (and all traditional psychotherapy does is maintain them by discussing them) which will only succeed at looking into the past and future with trepidation and hesitancy, i.e. “the pit of snakes” you will then maintain two bad trance states at alternate times. One from the past which was irrelevant, and a future trance state that is irrelevant. Anxiety is the gap between the now and the later!

YOUR FUTURE AND YOUR PAST ARE IN YOUR CONTROL, BY LIVING IN THE PRESENT. The past and the future are illusions, therefore distracting us away from living now. If we live in the now we cannot be anxious, in short if we focus our attention on what is happening we effectively live, if we bring in demands, this will create “what ifs.” We ineffectively fixate on past and future perceived failures. We will always be/ feel ineffective!

Practise keeping your attention in this very moment present awareness and you will start to re-create your own natural, effective relevant trance state. If you focus in on what is really happening you CANNOT access irrelevant, spurious “what ifs.”

You are the circle of psychological contentment.

I truly hope that this book will furnish you with the hope, knowledge, and determination never to give up and to ultimately believe in yourself, because, no one else can be as good at it as you are.

Enjoy taking responsibility...now!

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