EVOCATION: THE FOUNDATION OF ERICKSONIAN HYPNOSIS AND THERAPY

BILL O’HANLON
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MA LEARNS TO READ
0.1 Traditional: Deficit assumption

Clients are:
- Damaged (genetically, neurologically, developmentally, emotionally, relationally)
- Missing skills
- Missing information
- Missing insight
- Missing motivation

0.2 Evocative: Resource assumption

Clients have:
- Resources
- Abilities
- Skills
- Strengths
- Solutions
- Knowledge
- Motivation

0.3 Traditional: Role of the Therapist

Therapist is:
- Expert in what is wrong
- Knows what is normal and what is not
- Has a model of mental health that explains what's wrong and how to correct it
- Adding information or new beliefs

0.4 Evocative: Role of the Therapist

Therapist is expert in:
- Change process
- helping access client's abilities, resources, skills, strengths, solutions
- knowledge and motivation
- Client is expert in:
- His or her complaints, suffering, longings, and perceptions of and responses to therapy
- His or her own life/values, preferences, longings
- What works and doesn't
1.1 Evocative Method 1
How to Use Evocative Methods
Find an ability, value or some knowledge:
At work
In hobbies or interests
In the past
In the present

1.2 Evocative Method 1
How to Use Evocative Methods
Evoke that ability through:
Questions
Therapist response
Noticing and highlighting it
Storytelling
In-session or between-session task
Hypnotic phenomena
1.3 Evocative Method 1

Link/help transfer that ability through:
- Questions
- Linking words (when, the next time, if, then)
- Change verb tenses (problem in past; solution in present or future)
- Task assignment
- Presupposition
- Post-hypnotic suggestion

2.1 Evocative Method 2

Transform a liability/problem into a resource/solution:
- Value that experience, trait, problem
- Think of a context in which it could lead the client toward their longings and goals

THE AFRICAN VIOLET QUEEN

I UNDERSTAND YOU HAVE EXPERIENCE AS A CARPENTER
3.1 Evocative Method 3

How to Use Evocative Methods

Notice and highlight what works
Evoke contexts of competence
Evoke contexts for helpful experiences

4.1 Evocative Method 4

How to Use Evocative Methods

Tell a story/use metaphor
Use art (music, poetry, visual arts, dance, film, novels, plays, etc.)
THE BRICK WALL STORIES

5.1 Evocative Method 5

How to Use Evocative Methods

Presuppose

“I DON’T KNOW HOW YOU WILL CHANGE”
6.1 Evocative Method 6

Give the client something ambiguous on which to project meaning and positive change.

- Ambiguous task assignments
- Empty words and phrases

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7.1 Evocative Method 7

Give the client something to resist that can lead in a positive direction.

- Noxious tasks
- Insults
“MAY HE DROWN IN HIS OWN SPIT”

A UNIQUE APPROACH TO INSOMNIA

FOR ME, SHIFTING TO THE EVOCATION ORIENTATION WAS A REVOLUTION

- LESS WORK
- LESS DEEP DIVING/SPECULATING TO FIND THE “TRUE CAUSES” OR “ISSUES”
- MORE CONFIDENCE
- LESS WORRY ABOUT IMPOSING MY VALUES OR IDEAS
- MORE PARTNERSHIP AND EMPOWERMENT

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