

Welcome

Module 14

Learning Outcomes For Module 14
BY THE END OF THIS MODULE, YOU

Outcomes for Module 14

- Have an introductory understanding to the work of **Milton Erickson**
- Have an understanding of the use of metaphors within therapy

Introduction to Milton Erickson

- **Milton Erickson** used indirect suggestion, metaphors and story telling to change behaviour rather than direct suggestion.
- **“My Voice Will Go With You”** is a good book, again containing case histories and examples.
- **“Solution Oriented Hypnosis”** is written by a different author (William Hudson) who worked and trained with him, but is a good one that aims to explain some of the Erickson ideas in simpler terms.
- You can also see videos of his work on YouTube.

Erickson's work is as follows

- He always **validates the experience of the patient/client**, so that they **feel understood** and are then in a **better place to receive new information**.
- Helps the patient **change their perception of the problem** – and hence their **beliefs** – which then leads on to a **reduction or elimination of symptoms**.

Typically, he does this by:

- **Indirect Suggestion,**
- **Double Binds**
- **Use of Metaphor**

*“[In this personal memoir] ..Ernest Rossi [long-time colleague and Friend of Milton Erickson] emphasizes what he considers the least understood and most underappreciated aspect of Erickson’s hypnotherapy—the fact that his patients frequently experience **intense emotional experiences as they access and replay their traumas in a therapeutic manner.**”*

Abstract from “Gene Expression and Brain Plasticity in Stroke Rehabilitation: A Personal Memoire of Mind-Body Healing Dreams” by Ernest Lawrence Rossi

Milton Erickson's Double Binds

- Erickson claimed that he first learned the art of the **double binds** from his father. Who would frequently ask... ***“Do you want to feed the chickens first or the hogs, and then “do you want to fill the wood box or pump the water for the cows first.”***
- He gave him a choice of which chore to do first; however, Erickson was **not free** to leave the chores undone. Erickson admitted that he consented to do the chores primarily because he chose the order in which he did them.
- The secret of the **Double Bind** is that it provides an illusion of a free choice between **two possibilities**. Sometimes a client desires neither of the two choices, though both are to his benefit. (Also, known as the **Alternative Close**).

EXAMPLES: ALL the above examples are pre-supposing a certain outcome

“Are you going to buy the outfit you want before or after you lose weight?

“Will you stop smoking before or after you get over your resentment?”

“Will your spouse be the first person to notice how you changed, or will it be your best friend?”

More of Erickson's effective double and triple binds, used in relation to inductions:

*“Would you like to experience a light, medium or deep trance? “
(triple)*

“Would you like to go into a trance now or later?”

“Would you like to go into a trance standing up or sitting down?”

“Which of you would like to be the first in your group to experience a trance?”

“Do you want your eyes opened or closed when you experience your trance”

- ALL these examples **pre-suppose** a **certain outcome** – as soon as the client makes a choice they are moving towards, or **accepting** the **suggestion** of that outcome.
- On another level the client **unconsciously consents** to enter a trance.

STUDY TIP

1. Think about some **everyday life situations** and see if you can come up with some **double binds** of your own:

2. **Hint:** Think of a **desired outcome** and then think of two or three ways or means of when or how that outcome may come about.

Metaphors

Metaphor Definition: *“A figure of speech in which a term or phrase is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable in order to suggest a resemblance”.*

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A METAPHOR AND A SIMILE

Simile = “like” or “as”

“She was as fearless as a lioness”

“His handshake was like a wet dishcloth”

Metaphor = “is” or “was”

“She was a lioness.”

“His handshake was a wet dishcloth”

Hypnotherapy metaphors can be used in several different ways.

- As part of a **metaphorical story** or description.
- Turning problems into tangible metaphors (Creative Mind Method)

Metaphors as Part of a Metaphorical Story or Description

- Famous Example of a **Metaphorical Story**, *“There, once was an ugly duckling ...*
- Aim is to deliver a piece of information where the **client can identify with the subject** or **content** of the information in a **metaphorical way**, often in the form of a **story** or recollection.
- Within the **story**, there is a **learning** or **change process** that takes place, and the aim is for the client to identify with the **character or subject** of the information that does the learning or changing, so that the client can experience the same process or benefit. In effect, we are aiming to **indirectly suggest** a **solution** or **new idea** to the client, and so metaphors in this sense are a form of Indirect Suggestion.
- This is often associated very much with **Ericksonian Hypnosis**, but metaphors are really only part of the therapy he used.
- Although the **story** itself is **indirect suggestion**, **Erickson** would also embed direct bespoke suggestions to the client within the telling of the story. His idea was that these suggestions would be **consciously forgotten** but **unconsciously remembered** and acted upon.

Creative Mind Method

We can apply Metaphors to issues people come to us with by combining a number of techniques.

Once you have put a client into hypnosis and used a deepener you can ask the client:

- Describe in 3 words what it has felt like to be you lately? / What does it feel like to you be before you go to eat? / What does it feel like to you when you see cats?
- And ask them what it feels as if.....
- Give this feeling a metaphor - something tangible like a shape or colour

Keep reminding them no logic is needed, just encourage use of the imagination only.

Combining Metaphors with Regression

- Ask the client to forget what the metaphor represents for a moment and follow it back in time. As if that shape or colour had a timeline
- Remind the client they weren't born with this feeling, we all come into the world feeling safe, love and protected
- Then carry on a usual regression session, perhaps visiting a few times that feeling may have been in their life, resolving the issues using your toolkit.

Belief Checking

I have found this is the quickest way to find out limiting beliefs. Like a quick fire round as them to answer the following questions as quick as they can (without logic):

I am ...

Other people are ...

The world is ...

My Mother is ... therefore I am ...

My Father is ... therefore I am ...

You can adapt depending on the condition :

Food is ...

Sleep is ...

Home is ...

Love is ...

Relationships are ..

You will then be able to pinpoint very quickly (in less sessions) what areas need to be addressed.

Exercise:

- Groups of 2/3's
- Practice the Creative Mind Method using Metaphors
- Practice Belief Checking to see what areas need to be addressed