

FOREWORD TO THE 3RD EDITION BY STEVEN JAY LYNN

I attended my first hypnosis workshop more than 30 years ago, and it shines vividly in my memory. While learning the rudiments of clinical hypnosis, I was privileged to witness Dr. Erika Fromm conduct fascinating demonstrations of hypnotic phenomena including analgesia, time distortion, and age regression. At the time, there was only a modest empirical foundation for the use of hypnosis in psychotherapy and, in the public eye, and even in some professional circles, hypnosis was as much linked with hocus pocus, flummery, charlatanism, and the like, as it was associated with bona fide clinical practice. Nevertheless, I had an immediate sense that hypnosis would play an important role in my professional life, and not long after, I decided to be a serious student of hypnosis. I now believe that virtually every clinical practitioner can benefit from being a student of hypnosis, and I am delighted to introduce Michael Yapko's superb sourcebook on clinical hypnosis: *Trancework: An Introduction to the Practice of Clinical Hypnosis*.

Why use hypnosis as an adjunctive procedure in the first place? Over the years I have learned that hypnosis can instigate profound transformations in the way people think, feel, and act. Fundamental to the practice of hypnosis is the idea that deep and enduring change is possible when people are fortified by the belief that they can change and are able to integrate new ideas, perspectives, and growth-oriented experiences into their lives. When clinicians introduce hypnosis into the therapeutic relationship, it is a dramatic indication of their intention to be helpful, as well as of their professional expertise and readiness to employ efficient techniques to assist clients create themselves anew. I have often observed how the mere expectancy of pain relief for the hurting, the balm of relaxation for the anxious, and a rosier worldview for the depressed can engender hope and forge a positive therapeutic alliance and mental set toward treatment in general. Practitioners of hypnosis are likely to be attuned to the helpful as well as the harmful effects of words and nonverbal communications, and are trained to devise therapeutic suggestions that can target the cognitive and behavioral underpinnings of diverse psychological disorders and medical conditions with exquisite precision. A suggestive approach, at its best, involves an intimate collaboration with the client geared toward determining some combination of effective strategies and techniques. It is to Michael Yapko's credit that he has captured and made explicit in this volume many of the details and fine points of how effective therapy can occur when hypnosis is used as a core component of the intervention. In this way, the author achieves one of his central goals: to convey the "artistry" of hypnosis to the reader.

An emerging body of research supports the idea that hypnosis can be an effective catalyst to therapies ranging from cognitive-behavioral to psychodynamic (Barber, 1985; Lynn, Kirsch, Barabasz, Cardeña, & Patterson, 2000). Nevertheless, newcomers to hypnosis are often chary about learning hypnosis given the cultural myths that have surrounded it from the time of Mesmer, and are intimidated by the prospect of crafting inductions and suggestions and of not “doing hypnosis right.” If you are such a newcomer, *Trancework* is an authoritative primer that will start you on your way. In a step-wise, logical sequence, you will learn the nuts and bolts of how to: (a) establish rapport and demystify hypnosis, (b) create an hypnotic induction and devise a plethora of useful therapeutic suggestions, (c) assess responsiveness to suggestions, and (d) minimize untoward reactions to hypnotic procedures.

Readers already familiar with hypnotic procedures will appreciate the nuanced and engaging discussions of influential hypnosis theories, the role of informed consent in treatment, recent developments in cognitive neuroscience in understanding hypnosis, the pros and cons of formal versus informal hypnotic suggestibility assessment, and the advantages and disadvantages of different types of hypnotic suggestions (e.g., direct, indirect, permissive, authoritative) and manualized versus individualized treatment approaches. Novice and seasoned readers alike will appreciate the humor and wit, good advice, anecdotes, and rich case material that is the author’s stock-in-trade. I found myself flipping through the pages like I was reading compelling nonfiction, and like some of the novels I treasure, I was disappointed when the book ended.

The title, which features the controversial term “trance,” might dissuade some readers from perusing the book. That would be a mistake. As the author explains, the title is a vestige of previous editions of the book, and was retained in this thoroughly updated revised edition in order to identify it with its two immensely successful predecessors. Although Yapko acknowledges that the term “trance” is obsolete, there is nothing obsolete about the contents of the book. In fact, *Trancework* brims with virtually up-to-the-minute references to research, contemporary hypnosis theories, clinical issues and techniques, and intellectually stimulating controversies and theoretical debates. The author’s presentation of controversies regarding the nature of hypnosis and the role of hypnosis in creating false memories is fair to different theoretical perspectives, faithful to the empirical literature, and accessible to a wide audience.

It is evident that writing this book was a labor of love for Michael Yapko. He speaks with the authority of many years of clinical experience, shared in this and his many other excellent books. But he is also a knowledgeable, clear, and compassionate teacher who takes seriously the challenge of

making the skills of hypnosis accessible to a broad audience. I heartily recommend Michael Yapko's *Trancework* to what I hope will be a growing legion of students of hypnosis around the world.

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