



Hypnotherapy Training

A U S T R A L I A

The Marilyn Newman Method

Body Psychotherapy

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What is Body Psychotherapy?

Body psychotherapy, also called body-oriented psychotherapy, is an approach to psychotherapy which applies basic principles of somatic psychology. It originated in the work of Pierre Janet, Sigmund Freud and particularly Wilhelm Reich who developed it as vegetotherapy.

Body Armour

Wilhelm Reich and the post-Reichians are considered the central element of body psychotherapy. From the 1930s Reich became known for the idea that muscular tension reflected repressed emotions, what he called 'body armour', and developed a way to use pressure to produce emotional release in his clients. Reich was expelled from the psychoanalytic mainstream and his work found a home in the 'growth movement' of the 1960s and 1970s and in the countercultural project of 'liberating the body'. Perhaps as a result, body psychotherapy was marginalised within mainstream psychology and was seen in the 1980s and 1990s as 'the radical fringe of psychotherapy'. Body psychotherapy's marginal position may be connected with the tendency for charismatic leaders to emerge within it, from Reich onwards.

Gestalt Influences

Alexander Lowen in his Bioenergetic analysis and John Pierrakos in Core energetics extended Reich's finding of the segmented nature of body armour: "The muscular armour has a segmented arrangement...always transverse to the torso, never along it". Lowen claimed that "No words are so clear as the language of body expression". Subsequently the Chiron approach added influences from Gestalt therapy.

The Body Mind

The early 2000s saw a 'renaissance of body psychotherapy' which was part of a broader increased interest in the body and embodiment in psychology and other disciplines including philosophy, sociology, anthropology and cultural studies. Object relations theory has arguably opened the way more recently for a fuller consideration of the body-mind in psychotherapy.

Versions of Body Psychotherapy

There are numerous branches of body psychotherapy, often tracing their origins to particular individuals: for example, 'Bioenergetic analysis' to the work of Lowen and Pierrakos; 'Radix' to the work of Chuck Kelley; Organismic Psychotherapy to the work of Malcolm and Katherine Brown; 'Biosynthesis' to the work of David Boadella; 'Biodynamic Psychology' to that of Gerda Boyesen; 'Rubenfeld Synergy' to Ilana Rubenfeld's work; 'Body-Mind Centering' to Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen's work, and 'Body-mind Psychotherapy' to Susan Aposhyan.

Many of these contributors to body psychotherapy were influenced by the work of Wilhelm Reich, while adding and incorporating a variety of other influences. Syntheses of these approaches are also becoming accepted and recognised in their own right (e.g. The Chiron Approach: Chiron Association of Body Psychotherapists).

Somatic Unconscious

Alongside the body psychotherapies built directly on the work of Reich, there is a branch of post-Jungian body psychotherapies, developed from Jung's idea of the 'somatic unconscious'. While many post-Jungians dismiss Reich and do not work with the body, contributors to Jungian derived body psychotherapy include Arnold Mindell with his concept of the 'dreambody' and the development of process oriented psychology. Process oriented psychology is known for its focus on the body and movement.

Body psychotherapy and dance movement therapy have developed separately and are professionally distinguished, however they have significant common ground and shared principles including the importance of non-verbal therapeutic techniques and the development of body-focused awareness.

Source: [wikipedia.org](https://www.wikipedia.org)

A Consciousness of It's Own

There is a belief that the body holds it's own consciousness, and that we can heal our body of illnesses if we:

- A. Listen to it
- B. Validate it
- C. Talk to it

Repressed memories and trauma may be held in the body, unawares to the conscious mind. Through Body Psychotherapy, we can locate the trauma, give it a voice, which allows the client to heal it, then release it.

The Location Is A Clue

Where the illness or dis-ease is located, can be a clue to what the underlying cause is. Trauma stored in our bodies are our bodies response to an event/trauma.

For example, in my own practise, I have found that women who have in their history suppressed sexual abuse, rape, DV will often present with cervical, vaginal, ovarian diseases such as cancer, cysts, miscarriages, tumours, STD's, hormone issues. I usually know immediately that there is sexual trauma. This is a very delicate issue and MUST be handled with great gentleness and respect.

Kidneys – Fear

Diabetes – A need for sweetness or romance (love)

Cancer – Resentment

Liver – Anger

Heart – Grief

Throat – Loss of voice to an authority figure/needing to speak up

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There is a quite reliable comprehensive list of the correlation to body and illness in the book by Louise L Hay, You Can Heal Your Life

The Treatment for Body Based Trauma

Starting with your provided script for Body Psychotherapy, then completing with Desensitisation, and finishing with anchoring of a positive, happy memory.

Please check in with your client that they are not feeling 'half baked'. This can result in re-traumatisation. If you have performed this correctly and have been client centred, they should be exhausted, but feeling much lighter. This is an exhaustive process for the client, as the body can finally let go.