

## Transformational Hypnosis: Turning Problems into Opportunity



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## What does it Mean to be Transformational



Anne Isabella

*Give a Man a Fish, and You Feed Him for a Day. Teach a Man To Fish, and You Feed Him for a Lifetime.*

1885



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*"In every public health program the aim is not only to perform a given service but to teach the individual positive attitudes toward health which will benefit him throughout life."* (Public Health Nurse, 1945)

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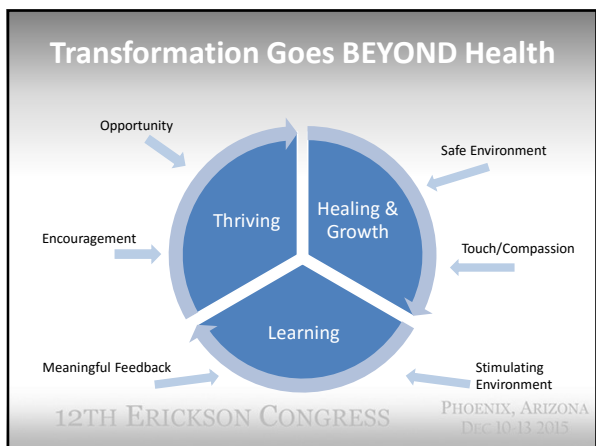
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### Going Beyond ... 1/3

<b>Curative Medicine</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Return to an earlier state of functionality "business as usual"</li><li>• Hypnosis is used for symptom removal</li><li>• Affirmation of existing beliefs and known capabilities</li></ul>	<b>Transformational Problem Solving</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased understanding of how to use one's own problem solving resources for continued growth &amp; happiness</li><li>• Hypnosis is used to catalyze creative learning at an unconscious level</li><li>• Discovery of new perspectives to make sense of life events and see unrealized capabilities</li></ul>
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### A Problem Solving Machine

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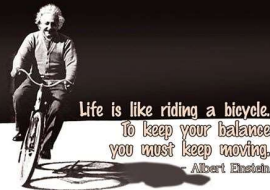
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**We Need Meaningful Problems**



Life is like riding a bicycle.  
To keep your balance  
you must keep moving.  
- Albert Einstein

- w/o problems there is no opportunity to:
  - Physically grow the brain (nursing home studies)
  - Experience joy from thriving (flow studies)
  - Unite diverse people as allies (research in prejudice)
  - Discover what we are capable of doing (research in the education of underperforming students)

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**Adult Neurogenesis**

- The probability of neurogenesis increases during problem solving
- More than a mere repair and replacement mechanism, neurogenesis in adults is necessary to the correct functioning of the brain—vital to learning & memory
  - Novel social interaction
  - Aerobic activity
  - Uncertain outcomes/emotionality

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**Specialized Problem Solving**

<p><b>Conscious Mind</b> Used for linear &amp; sequential events with predictable outcomes (<i>known solutions</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do I prepare my child for college?</li> <li>• How do I find a women's shelter?</li> <li>• How do I taper off my medication?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Unconscious Mind</b> Evolutionary: new possibilities are discovered as paradigms shift and intentions are reorganized (<i>creative solutions</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should I divorce?</li> <li>• How do I deal with the death of my child?</li> <li>• What reason do I have for living?</li> </ul>
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### An "Extraordinary" Journey



"Your conscious mind does not need to listen to me...  
it is not needed right now"

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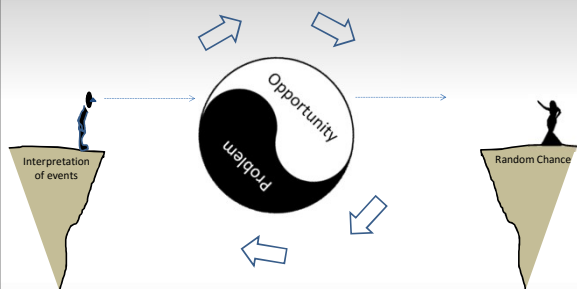
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### Paradigm Rotation



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### Five Paths to the Unconscious



- Creative Imagination
- Poignant Stories
- Automaticity
- Leap of Faith
- Ambiguity

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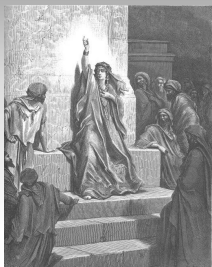
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## Poignant Stories



“The person who controls the stories of a culture also controls that culture’s values and emotional character— what a person is willing to live and die for.”

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## How do Stories Become the Unconscious Basis of Conscious Thought?

- We automatically frame our interpretation of experience, our emotional reactions, and the choices we make based on the stories we hold in long-term memory.

Luke Skywalker, “You killed my father!”  
Darth Vader, “No, Luke. I am your father!”



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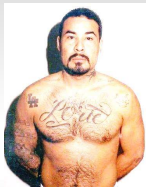
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## Transformational Stories

(to activate unconscious problem solving)

- It must suggest a novel reality
- It must produce emotional arousal



“Thanks Doc. After listening to what you have to say, I am now absolutely confident that I want to use the gun, in my car, to blow my fucking brains out!”

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### Transformational Stories

(to activate unconscious problem solving)

- There must be surprising outcomes that alter the frame of reference for the problem
- It must seem personally relevant to the client, "That could be me!" (the struggle within the story must parallel the client's core struggle)



"I would like to tell you about some surprising research. It involves menus and satisfaction with one's meal."

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"What do you see?"



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### Ambiguity



A novel social interaction combined with ambiguous stimuli can produce an extraordinary experience that extends knowledge beyond conscious limitations.

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### Transformational Ambiguity

(to activate unconscious problem solving)

- It must be the client, not the therapist, who reads the ink blots (e.g., Erickson used hallucinated crystal balls but it was the client who peered into the ambiguous stimuli)



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### Transformational Ambiguity

(to activate unconscious problem solving)

- Must co-occur with conscious consideration of the problem
- Must have a strong expectation that an answer will emerge automatically without conscious design, "sudden inspiration"



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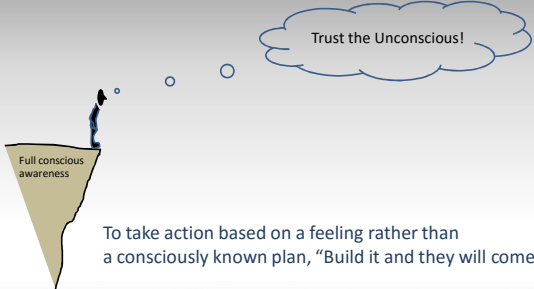
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### Leap of Faith



Full conscious awareness

To take action based on a feeling rather than a consciously known plan, "Build it and they will come."

Trust the Unconscious!

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### Transformational Faith

(to activate unconscious problem solving)

- There must be a concrete outcome known to conscious awareness, it is the process of getting there that is left up to the unconscious



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### Transformational Faith

(to activate unconscious problem solving)

- The faith must be supported by a relevant skill set, which can be automatically summoned as intuitive knowledge



*"I used to bullseye womp rats in my T-16 back home"*

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### Transformational Faith

(to activate unconscious problem solving)

- Must be willing to surrender old problem solving patterns in favor of new inspiration



*"Stop here!  
What we are doing is not working."*

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“I am not the kind of person who can be hypnotized. Besides, my Bipolar needs a medical solution.”



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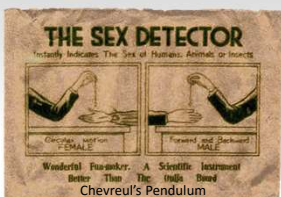
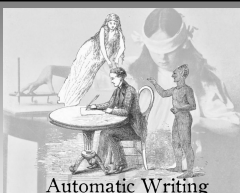
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### Automaticity

- “It just came to me.”
- Movement w/o volitional intent



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### Transformational Automaticity (to activate unconscious problem solving)

- The movement must be dissociated from conscious intention (surprising)



“Doc, the hypnosis did not work, I’ve got nothing!

Now my husband is going to die and it is going to be all my fault!”

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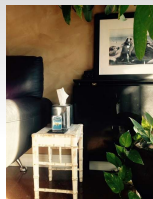
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### Transformational Automaticity

(to activate unconscious problem solving)

- The movement must have symbolic meaning or point to some end



"It was not until she got all the way home that she remembered what she forgot. That was when she came to the conclusion that it was something she no longer needed in her life."

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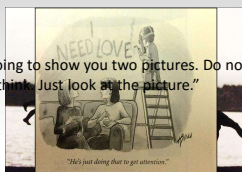
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### Transformational Automaticity

(to activate unconscious problem solving)

- Use process suggestion for automaticity so that the outcome clearly belongs to the client



"I am going to show you two pictures. Do not speak. Do not think. Just look at the picture."

"After I show you the second picture, you will learn something about yourself that you did not know."

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"Do you want your father to kill him?  
Or let him live?"



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### Creative Imagination



Pascual-Leone: *The exercise of imagination is a means of reorganizing brain structure.*

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### Transformational Imagination

(to activate unconscious problem solving)

- Must be liberating, allowing the person to gain the benefit of experiences that have been previously denied



“Well I don’t love you!”

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### Transformational Imagination

(to activate unconscious problem solving)

- Must be voluntary, an opportunity to exercise choice/self-determination (not dictated)



“What is your greatest desire?”

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## Transformational Imagination

(to activate unconscious problem solving)

- The client should feel encouraged following the exercise, never judged or shameful



"I suppose you could have said to your mom,  
'I think I am ready for my sex education talk...now!'"

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## Five Paths Summary

- Creative Imagination
- Automaticity
- Leap of Faith
- Ambiguity
- Poignant Stories



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Let's KEEP IN TOUCH! [www.iamdrshort.com](http://www.iamdrshort.com)



The screenshot shows the homepage of iamdrshort.com. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the site name and logo. Below this, there are several featured articles or news items with images and headlines. At the bottom of the page, there is a contact form with fields for name, email, and phone number, and a submit button. A red arrow points to the submit button.

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