The Body’s Mind: The Role of Relationship in Integrating Body and Mind in People with Psychophysiologic Disorders

(David Alter, PhD, ABPH)
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Bibliography/Reference List


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Shining the Light on Pattern Shifts

An Interactive Exercise

Specific patterns persist only to the extend that each element cooperates (conspires?) with every other element in the overall pattern's array. So, too, with psychophysiological symptoms. When perceived as a repeating (often unconsciously memorized and repeated) pattern, an interesting opportunity arises, which this exercise is designed to elicit: change one feature of a pattern and the old pattern has given rise to something new and different.

- Inquire about a client's experience with kaleidoscopes. Explore their experience in a way that embodies the remembered experience.
- Avoid explicitly linking or associating the discussion with their presenting concern.
- Discuss the elements that go into the experience of looking through a kaleidoscope. After the client has exhausted the list, with a little help from you, focus on the one element that powers the experience - the individual's turning of the kaleidoscope's barrel.
- Transition into kneading, wondering, and wandering as the client begins to apply the active metaphor to their life experience (person-centered) and not their presenting concern (problem-centered). Examples:
  - If you were to rotate the elements of your current life circumstances in one or another direction, what might you find?
  - I notice that as I ask that question, you ________. What was happening for you?
  - I wonder how much of a turning or the elements of your current circumstances would be needed for you to begin to notice something new and different, and helpful?
  - It appears to be challenging to turn your focus to different things in new ways. That can bring all sorts of things to light in different ways, right? What is that like, right now?

- Continue to oscillate between the kaleidoscopic elements and the elements of their in-the-moment life experience, as they discover what changes when the old pattern gives way to a new alignment of elements that gives rise to a new and different experience.

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