

Health

Erasing self-limiting beliefs



Kathryn Borg

immediately overcome any negative influences, or debilitating ideas or situations. Although his methods have not been subjected to scientific scrutiny, the sheer weight of the anecdotal evidence from thousands of patients and a number of therapists who have used or adapted his techniques, is significant.

Williams also uses brain integration techniques to promote 'cross-talk' between the brain's hemispheres.

Since 1981, when Roger Sperry at Caltech won a Nobel Prize for his discovery of the different roles of the brain, researchers have been investigating the different sides of the brain. While it is true that only

one side may be dominant during certain activities, later research has discovered that both sides continually work in tandem.

Many new forms of energy psychology have experimented with using techniques that re-pattern the neural connections.

Re-patterning the brain essentially means that, when a person thinks a particular thought, the brain is stimulated in a different way to 'retrain' the associations of that thought.

Many neurologists have found that certain body techniques can retrain the brain to change its neural pathways, similar to creating a detour off a train track. Usually, re-patterning

requires the use of simple exercises and stretches, along with gazing in a particular direction, and creating a system of muscle feedback so that the patient is aware of the changes as the information is being processed differently.

Certain parallels can be drawn between Psych-K and eye-movement desensitisation and reprocessing (EMDR), developed by psychologist Francine Shapiro, which seeks to 'erase' upsetting memories and negative self-beliefs, and substitute them with positive beliefs.

While Psych-K has not been scientifically tested, an abundance of scientific evidence attests to EMDR's effectiveness across a

wide range of psychological traumas such as post-traumatic distress syndrome, as well as problem behaviours, phobias, panic disorders and addictions. EMDR has also been proven to be an effective tool to erase self-limiting beliefs, thereby improving performance at work, in the arts and in competitive sports.

EMDR is proof of the feasibility of using physical techniques to erase emotional and psychic wounds.

The foundation of all these techniques is the will to turn a negative into a positive. What is needed now is true scientific evidence to back up Psych-K's spectacular claims.

kathryn@maltanet.net

At a conference in 1990, Rob Williams, developer of the Psych-K counselling technique, claimed his therapy could change people's long-standing and limiting beliefs – such as 'I am not good at running/mathematics/painting' – in a matter of minutes.

To prove his claim, he invited a shy woman on stage. As she was escorted onto the stage she turned bright red and spoke *sotto voce*. Yet after he had worked with her for only 10 minutes, she suddenly relaxed and commanded the stage.

Williams developed the technique in 1988 as an alternative to ordinary counselling, which he found to be labour-intensive and limited. With this system he claims to quickly and permanently 'erase the tape' of past limiting beliefs.

Basically, Psych-K is a hybrid of two tried and tested energy-psychology techniques. The first is behavioural kinesiology, developed by psychiatrist and holistic healer John Diamond, who was inspired by George Goodheart, the creator of applied kinesiology, which tests the effects of substances on the body.

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Goodheart developed 'muscle testing', now a standard feature of applied kinesiology. He would ask a patient to stand facing him while holding her left arm out, parallel to the floor. After placing his left arm on the patient's shoulder to steady her, he then asked her to resist with all her strength while he pushed on her arm.

In most cases the arm would spring back and resist the force of the push. However, when Goodheart exposed that person to noxious substances, such as food additives or allergens, the patient's left arm would be unable to resist the pressure of Goodheart's push and was easily overcome.

Diamond's contribution was to be the first to apply this muscle testing to 'toxic' thoughts. When a person was exposed to any unpleasant thought, the 'indicator muscle' would test weak. Diamond dubbed it 'behavioural kinesiology', and has tested it on thousands of people over many years.

Diamond has experimented with a variety of thoughts that can

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