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Time Delay In Hypnotherapy And Biorythms

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Healing through the use of hypnotherapy is a known fact. The biological basis for this healing is a subject that continues to be explored. We are submitting the hypothesis that some cases of hypnotherapeutic healing show a time delay that is related to natural human biological rhythms which are known to exist in all cells, organs and body systems.

Three stories illustrate a time delay in completion of healing after hypnotherapy. Debbie Papadakis chooses three cases to illustrate this phenomenon. First is a case, among many similarly documented ones in her practice of hypnotherapy, of a person we will call Gwen, with clinically diagnosed depression. The time delay between her first hypnotherapeutic session and healing was approximately ten weeks. Progression in her healing was as follows: first three-hour therapy session, Gwen shows some relief; second session four weeks later, Gwen states she feels less depressed; third session at eight weeks, Gwen says she feels even less depression; last session ten weeks after beginning, Gwen asks, "What depression?" indicating that she now feels free of depression.

A second case is documented for Dr. Tee, who sought relief from irritable bowel syndrome. Papadakis asks Dr. Tee, during hypnosis, how long it will take to heal this disorder to which Dr. Tee replies, "Two months." Relief from the irritation occurs two months later, to the day. How the subconscious mind knows its own biorhythms to be able to gauge the time required for the healing process may be connected to the body's own innate knowledge of its own rhythmical functioning.

The third example is again one of many similarly documented cases and is of a woman called Jerri who wants to lose weight. After approximately eight weeks from her hypnotherapeutic session, Jerri's behavior "clicked in" to the decision that she wants to make the behavioral changes to lose weight, and thus she began to do so, eight weeks from the time of her first therapeutic session. The connection between hypnotherapy and timing when Jerri decides to lose weight illustrates yet another phenomenon of time delay between onset of therapy and result that the client wants.

These three examples illustrate a time delay in successful hypnotherapy. The patient is healed or allows healing to begin after the body relearns and assimilates new and/or changed information and responds in its own biological time. This time is the biological time that the body requires to effect biological adaptations and changes in cellular memory, including habits and conditioning that the body has accepted into its cellular genetics. Cellular patterns have a beginning point in one's individual chronology, and they become implanted, through repetition, into cellular "memory." The biological time that it takes to alter patterns and implant alternative "stories" or paradigms into the individual's genetics may be at least partly explainable by the zoological phenomenon of biorhythm.

Biological rhythms, or biorhythms, are known for all organic life including both plants and animals (see, for example, Luce 1971). The human body is made up of a variety of different cells. Originally, the embryo has three types of cells, the endoderm, mesoderm and ectoderm. As the embryo grows, these cells differentiate into different systems of the body. For example, primordial endoderm cells form the inner lining of the digestive tract; mesoderm makes most smooth muscle including the heart; ectoderm forms the outer layer of the skin and its derivatives such as hair and nails. In embryological development, there is a definite time during which differentiation occurs. Primordial cells have a known life span before they change and become another structure. The timing information is within each cell, and one can refer to it as cellular memory as well as genetic coding. The latter says that the genes tell the cell when to change; the former is another way of saying the same thing and using the word memory to stand for the term gene. The result is the same, which is the body's knowledge of the time that one structure exists before it changes into an alternative form of structure. The body also knows the duration of any given cell in the body because each cell has an average life span. These are examples of biorhythm. There are internal and external "synchronizers" that affect and determine biorhythms.

Each type of cell has a certain amount of time that it remains in one of its structural forms. Embryological germ cells, for example, divide and begin to differentiate according to a genetically timed chronology, so that by eight weeks the embryo begins to differentiate into organs and body parts. Every cell of the body after birth is regulated by the timing mechanisms in the body. Each cell "knows" in the sense of its genetic programming or "memory" how long to remain in one structural form before changing into another. Each cell also "knows" what its life span is, such as a human red blood cell that has the important job of carrying nutrients and thereby a great deal of information to somatic or body cells. Red blood cells live in the bloodstream from 100 to 120 days, a fact that may have tremendous implications for the time delay in healing and hypnotherapy.

On a larger scale, consider the reproductive system. In the female, all the eggs are present at birth, but it is not until puberty that one by one, singularly per lunar cycle, they begin to mature. The male gametes or spermatocytes do not begin to form until puberty, when germ cells in the testicles start to differentiate into what will become spermatocytes. The termination of the reproductive ability in females ends when the eggs are either used up or no longer able to mature, which occurs around thirty-five years after puberty at around the average age of fifty years in

the female life cycle. A similar but later occurring, more diminutive effect is seen in the quantitative production of spermatocytes in males late in their sixtieth decade. The general tendency at this age is for a lowered sperm count, although some males may be able to maintain fertility into their eightieth decade (Sigmon 1991).

These are all examples of biorhythms. Each cell, organ and body system has a life span during which it exists in one structural form. As the body interacts with its environment, it affects and is affected by the environment. Information is taken into the body through the senses, the skin, all body orifices and the nervous system. Any and all parts of the body are affected by the intake of stimuli from the environment. This environmental information is received as cues from the physical, mental, social and cultural environment and affects cells of the body. Cells receive and store information. We refer to this phenomenon as cell memory which, of course, is a metaphor for storage of information, and the genetics of the body is involved. It is thought that newly acquired information of one generation, although it may be stored in the genetic system of that individual, cannot be passed on in the gametic cells to the next generation, although there is evidence from the work of Steele (1981) that contradicts this idea, supporting the possibility of the inheritance of acquired characteristics.

Following the thoughts of scientists such as Bateson (1972), Mandel (1962), and Rossi (1986), the conscious mind cannot hold all the environmental information it is exposed to, and the subconscious mind stores what is not needed at a given conscious time. It is, of course, this storage place that hypnotherapists are addressing during their therapeutic sessions with clients. This storage area is subject to biological rules of the body and therefore, the subconscious mind follows the same biorhythmic patterns that are characteristic of the body as a whole, integrated unit. The fact that some hypnotherapeutic healing does not appear to follow this biological phenomenon, but rather occurs much faster, indicates that there is still a great deal that we have to learn about the mind/body interaction. Candace Pert's work on brain physiology and her book *Molecules of Emotion* may lead us in beginning to appreciate how the mind and thoughts affect the body's biology, and how the mind may be able to override "normal" biorhythmic patterns.

Biorhythms follow, and lead, our rhythm of life. There are patterns in our bodies and in our environment. There are repetitive occurrences in stimuli one receives from physical cues. For example, after a run or swim or other physical exercise, the body is relaxed and experiences a pleasant contentment. It remembers and wants to have that same satisfactory experience again, leaving in the body the memory which leads to wanting to do that exercise again. The result of the physical stimuli is stored in "body memory." From social interactions there are behavioral patterns and the body stores knowledge of these patterns as memory, which is experienced as expectations or other feelings. Mental stimulation/satisfaction is stored in the body memory and may be experienced as the excitement and satisfaction of learning, for example, and the body remembers these responses and seeks repetition of them because of the "reward" it knows it will get. Although I am emphasizing positive responses, it is a fact that negative and potentially harmful memories can also be stored by body cellular memory. It is this negative memory that the hypnotherapist and the client are working together to alter. Although it appears that altering the thought through hypnotherapy can change the negative memory immediately, it is a fact that the thought has to be integrated with the body biology. No matter what part of the body is involved in negative thought memory, it is to be expected normally that there will be a time delay in effecting body alterations in behavior or physiology that have been inculcated into body biological memory. An immediate relief may be noted by hypnotherapist and client, which is a behavioral change, and this change then must be recognized by the body cells which "handle" the body's biological response. The variable in time of alteration is related to the timing of the cell memory that is its natural biorhythm.

Biorhythm research has shown that we are different, physically, physiologically, behaviorally and mentally, at different times of a 24-day period. For example, our internal body temperature varies two to three degrees Celsius within a 24-hour day, and the variation is predictable. Our hunger urge follows a pattern. Our mental and physical keenness peaks at given times of the day. These patterns can change over one's life span, and that also follows a pattern. Humans can, artificially or through will, alter the patterns, although even when doing so, the body memory sets new patterns and these become predictable because the body has been retrained with new memory.

The relationship between biorhythms and hypnotherapy is one that deserves attention from both the hypnotherapist and the client. Time delay in healing is a natural consequence of the body's receiving new and different information from that which its cells have stored previously. The body's cells, organs and major systems need time to assimilate new, altered information, sometimes appearing as a changed story or a "stopping" of old patterns of thought, or a substitution of a new model of behavior, into its body memory, and this generally follows the timing of the natural biorhythmic patterns. ▼

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