



Celebrating 25 years of changing lives



South African Institute of Hypnotism

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WHAT IS PARTS THERAPY?

Parts Therapy is a hypnosis technique based on the concept that human personalities are made up of different parts, each with their own jobs or functions. Although these parts usually work for the person's benefit, they can sometimes have conflicting behaviours that create inner conflict and make it hard to achieve important goals.



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For instance, if you have failed to accomplish a goal, there is probably another part that is stopping you. Parts Therapy is designed to help resolve these inner conflicts, making it easier to realize your goals.

This approach is gentle and client-centered, empowering the client to identify their own solutions, which means that the change is authentic and therefore much easier integrated and will reflect in the client's thought patterns and behaviours.

SAIH is the only training academy on the continent authorized to teach Parts Therapy, based on the teachings of Charles Tebbetts.

[Here is a link to a live, real-time session on the SAIH YouTube channel.](#)



COMPASSION & HUMILITY

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Explanation by C. Roy Hunter, M.S.,

http://www.royhunter.com/articles/client_centered_parts_therapy.htm

Before answering the question in the title of this article, let me present another important question: how often do people experience inner conflicts that inhibit successful attainment of important goals?

Hypnotherapists often use proven techniques to help clients change undesired habits and/or to achieve desired personal and professional goals. Yet, in spite of the best efforts of both client and therapist, unresolved inner conflicts often inhibit clients from attaining their ideal empowerment. Parts therapy may provide the answer!



Charles Tebbetts is often given credit for originating parts therapy, yet he was a parts therapy pioneer who actually borrowed this technique from Paul Federn and modified it. While my late mentor openly gave credit to Federn, Tebbetts evolved parts therapy into a much more client-centered technique. I've updated Charlie's work over the years since his passing, but I consider my late mentor to be the grandfather of client-centered parts therapy.

Now let's explore the question first posed by providing a simple definition of parts therapy, followed by the explanation I give to clients.

The Simple Definition

Parts therapy is based on the concept that our personality is composed of a number of various parts. Our personality parts are aspects of the subconscious, each with their respective jobs or functions of the inner mind. In other words, we tend to wear many different hats as we walk through the path of life. I also give a simple definition to clients prior to employing parts therapy.

To reduce the risk of client discomfort, I use myself as an example. I tell clients about my inner child that desires to go to a movie at evening rates, while my inner "CPA" motivates me to consider an afternoon matinee or bargain show to pay less. While my conscious mind normally makes the decision, I am still aware of both conflicting desires originating from these two parts of myself.

Many dieters are aware of the desire to reduce, yet often feel temporarily overpowered by a conflicting desire to indulge in junk food. Smokers often make another promise to quit, only finding that one more promise literally goes up in smoke. I tell clients that we can be aware of our own conflicting desires, emanating from our personality parts, and can call them out in hypnosis. For example, I might tell a smoker before starting the hypnosis: "There is a part of you that wants to quit, or you would not be investing the time and money for these sessions. But there is another part of you that wants to keep on smoking, otherwise you would not need professional help, would you?"

We may invest only two or three minutes to provide the above explanation and examples, but this explanation will make a great difference in his/her comfort level if you choose to use parts therapy during the session.

My new parts therapy book from Crown House Publishing explores parts therapy in depth. For now, let's briefly discuss additional important information.

When Is Parts Therapy Appropriate?

The most obvious time to employ parts therapy or one of its variations is when there is an obvious inner conflict prevents a client from achieving an important goal, such as quitting smoking. For example, suppose a client says: "A part of me wants to quit smoking, but another part keeps sabotaging every effort I make to quit!" Such a comment during the pre-induction discussion would be a good clue to consider parts therapy. This inner conflict may also be evident if a client fails to respond to the positive suggestions and imagery I employ in the first two visits.

Note that I do NOT employ parts therapy during a client's first session. Rather, I use suggestion and imagery to provide an enjoyable first trance journey, and then wait until a subsequent session before employing any advanced hypnotic technique. I want my client's first trance trip with me to be enjoyable, as first impressions are lasting.

If it is not clear whether to choose parts therapy, then I use finger response questions to discover one or more subconscious causes. This is also explained in *The Art Of Hypnotherapy* (2nd Edition, Kendall/Hunt, 2000) as well as *Hypnosis for Inner Conflict Resolution: Introducing Parts Therapy* (Crown House Publishing, 2005).

Who Will Most Likely Respond?

My 22+ years of professional experience demonstrates that a deeply hypnotized client is more likely to respond to parts therapy. Someone experiencing little or no hypnosis may easily resist the entire process (or one of its variations), whether or not such resistance is apparent to the facilitator. Some therapists who use variations of parts therapy work with a client who is quite conscious. While many of their clients might respond with favorable results, a more analytical person might experience interference or resistance to the process, with some or most benefits being only temporary.

I myself have been on the receiving end of parts therapy more than once when the therapist failed to deepen me sufficiently, and my own analytical mind prevented the results from being permanent because of insufficient hypnotic depth.

In addition to guiding the client into deep hypnotic states, the best way to create a more permanent resolution is to practice what I call client-centered parts therapy. This means that the answers and solutions to the client's concerns emerge from the client's own mind rather than from the mind of the therapist.

Why Is Parts Therapy Effective?

Rather than the client giving away his or her power to someone else who implants the solutions in the form of suggestions, the client discovers the best resolution to an inner conflict, by answering questions asked by the facilitator at appropriate times. Even as the parts therapy process begins, I set the client-centered tone by allowing each part that emerges to disclose its name (or title) and primary purpose. My entire approach involves asking questions that motivate each part to disclose its purpose, and to find the resolution to the presenting problem. When facilitated in a client-centered manner, parts therapy empowers the client!

Several years ago, a psychologist asked me to use parts therapy to help her resolve an inner conflict. Upon emerging from hypnosis, her first words were, "That solution was so simple, I wish I'd thought of it myself!" I quickly reminded her that the resolution had indeed come from her own mind, and not mine.

She smiled and agreed, and acknowledged the value of parts therapy.

Client-centered parts therapy helps clients attain greater empowerment, because the power to change truly lies within the client, rather than in the therapist. Our job is to help the client discover those answers by asking the right questions. Then, when the answers come from the client's own inner mind (instead from someone else), the client often has greater confidence and greater self-esteem as side benefits to a successful resolution of the primary concern.

Variations

Therapists have employed variations of parts therapy for decades. Let me briefly discuss several of them, starting with my favorite variation: ego state therapy.

Pioneered by Dr. John Watkins and Helen Watkins, ego state therapy has gained popularity over the years. Gordon Emmerson, Ph.D., takes ego state therapy into the 21st Century at warp speed with his important book, *Ego State Therapy* (Crown House Publishing, 2003), which is now required reading for my hypnotherapy students. Emmerson believes that we use five to fifteen ego states throughout a normal week, and we have more available when needed. Emmerson also believes that hypnosis makes ego state therapy more powerful, providing further validation of the teachings of Charles Tebbetts.

Anyone seriously searching for new ways of working with the inner mind will discover books about voice dialogue, another variation of parts therapy (mentioned above). Voice dialogue is based on the work of Hal Stone, Ph.D., and Sidra Stone, Ph.D. They label the ego parts as selves or subpersonalities, and provide labels for the various other subpersonalities, such as the protector/controller, the pleaser, the perfectionist, etc. The client, in a manner that could compare with Gestalt therapy, plays the role of each part by changing chairs or positions (although changing chairs is optional). The therapist facilitates the dialogue and proceeds accordingly. My primary concern about voice dialogue is the absence of a formal induction into hypnosis. With little or no trance state, the conscious mind is more easily able to allow analytical resistance. One of my own ineffective sessions as client took place when another therapist thought he facilitated a successful voice dialogue session with me. The absence of trance resulted in the "resolution" lasting only a few weeks.

John Bradshaw practices his own version, although he praises the work of Hal and Sidra Stone. He facilitates a group exercise where he encourages his clients to meditate with inner imagery, and to love the inner child. He then takes his clients through all the "developmental stages" to find out whether the needs were met in each stage. Suggestions for positive change are given to each stage (or part of the inner child), and he gets results. You decide whether or not this is a variation of parts therapy.

John Rowan presented the concept of subpersonalities in his book, *Discover Your Subpersonalities* (Routledge, 1993). He supposes that our minds may be naturally divided into portions and phases, with earlier and later historical levels. Various zones and developmental strata might lead to many internal figures. Like most authors of similar books, he labels the various subpersonalities (or parts). Although somewhat analytical, his book is written for the novice. It is easy to read, with much useful information. It contains numerous exercises, along with some questionnaires for self-awareness.

Nancy J. Napier, a nationally known marriage and family therapist, also works with a variation of parts therapy. Her book, *Recreating Your SELF: Help for Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families* (Norton, 1990) also gives examples of the origins of various personality parts. She calls them "protector" parts and

"resource" parts, and provides some self-hypnosis scripts for identifying, cleansing and healing our various parts.

Some therapists use a variation of parts therapy called conference room therapy. Although similar to parts therapy in many ways, they use the imagery of a conference room. My concern here is that the imagery is directed by the therapist rather than by the client. What if the client was terminated or demoted, and received such news in a conference room? I advise my students to avoid the use of any imagery during parts therapy except when such imagery originates from the client. One person's peaceful place may be another person's phobia.

During a hypnosis convention some time ago, I spoke with a hypnotist who uses a variation that involves talking to physical parts. Clients roleplay (like Gestalt therapy) being the heart, the brain, the liver, the foot, the ear, etc. Apparently he gets results. David Quigley, founder of Alchemical Hypnotherapy Institute, teaches a variation of parts therapy that is similar to that of Charles Tebbetts, but he seeks out specific parts that do specific jobs. Our two approaches are both different and compatible. Also, Kevin Hogan, Ph.D., FAPHP, employs and teaches a variation of parts therapy that is similar to what I teach. He discusses this in his book, *The New Hypnotherapy Handbook* (Network 3000, 2001).

Although other variations of parts therapy may be effective for some people, I prefer to practice and teach this valuable hypnotherapeutic technique similar to the way Tebbetts taught it; but over my years of practice, I've updated my mentor's work to keep up with changing times.

If you currently employ parts therapy or any of its variations, you may wish to consider purchasing my new book from Crown House Publishing. If you are not yet trained in parts therapy or one of its variations, please consider referring a client with inner conflicts to someone who has received parts therapy training. You will be doing both the client and our profession a service by referring when appropriate.

by C. Roy Hunter, M.S., FAPHP