

Ericksonian Trauma Work and Memory Reconsolidation

When asked about trauma therapy, Erickson taught that there is, “A need in human living to reexperience painful things within the context of a safe environment” (Erickson, 1964). This single statement defines much of what needs to be done for those who have become traumatized. First, the therapist must know how to create the subjective experience of safety. Second, gain access to memories that need to be reconsolidated and given new emotional meanings. Lastly, help develop a future orientation as imaginative and creative processes are utilized to increase the client’s capacity for hope, resiliency, and a strong sense of purpose. Those who have these skills do not become traumatized even under terrible conditions.

During this work shop, Dr. Short will speak from 25 years of clinical experience, with survivors of domestic violence & torture, emergency room nurses & doctors, and first responders, to both educate and encourage participants in this important work. Emerging science in memory reconsolidation and somatization fits perfectly with the core components of Ericksonian therapy. Because humor is so important, participants will have a fun learning environment with opportunity to practice and gain confidence using isolated skill sets. Demonstrations will be paired with a clear and concise discussion of the major principles. In addition to using slides and handouts, Dr. Short’s workshops are highly interactive so that every member of the audience has his or her questions answered.

Abstract (53 words):

Ericksonian trauma work utilizes the experience of the present to redefine the past, while remaining future oriented. Memory reconsolidation occurs as memories are physically altered and re-encoded with new emotional elements. More than symptom relief, the intentional use of imagination and creative problem solving ensures greater resiliency and joy while addressing future challenges.