

How To Do A Session Of Experiential Psychotherapy

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Each experiential session is to achieve two goals. One is to enable the person to undergo a qualitative shift into being the transformed new person that the person can become. A second goal is for the qualitatively new person to be essentially free of the painful feeling and scene that were front and center for the person in the session. Each session proceeds through a sequence of steps, and each step is achieved by its own collection of working methods.

HOW TO DO A SESSION OF EXPERIENTIAL PSYCHOTHERAPY

Picture that each experiential session (a) is the beginning and ending of its own mini-therapy; (b) is designed to help bring about the same two distinctive aims or goals by the end of the session; and (c) follows the same sequence of in-session steps. The purpose of this article is to show you how to do a session of experiential psychotherapy by going through the in-session steps, achieving the distinctive aims and goals by the end of the session.

If this article raises further questions in the reader's mind about how and why to do an experiential session, if it brings up other issues, whether applied or conceptual, I hope that these matters can either be set aside momentarily or that the reader take a look at a volume on the conceptual foundations of this therapy (Mahrer, 1989), a volume about this therapy (Mahrer, 1996/2004), or a volume on having experiential sessions (Mahrer, 2002).

CHERISH THE TWO GOALS THAT EACH EXPERIENTIAL SESSION IS DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE

Each session is designed and developed to achieve two aims or goals. Being able to do an experiential session means that you cherish these two

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goals, embracing them as magnificent, no matter how similar or different they are in comparison with the goals of many other therapies.

One goal is to become the whole new person that you are capable of becoming. This change can be a radical shift, a wholesale, quantum, qualitative, transformational shift into the uniquely distinctive person you can become. The person who you were walked into the session. The qualitatively new person you can become is the one who leaves the session. The change is a dramatic shift in who and what you are, and in what you think and feel.

The second goal is that the qualitatively new person be essentially free of the painful situation and feeling that may have been front and center for the person who entered the session. If the person is caught in a painful feeling in a painful scene, becoming the whole new person means that the new person is free of the painful scene and feeling.

EACH SESSION IS ITS OWN "MINI-THERAPY"

Each session is like the beginning and the ending of work.

- (a) Each session begins with a fresh selection of what is to be front and center for the work of this session.
- (b) Each session unfolds over the same series of steps as all other sessions.
- (c) Each session aims at the same two goals or radical changes (even though there are specific goals for each session); therefore, each session can be judged as successful or unsuccessful in whether or not the goals were achieved.
- (d) A person can have subsequent sessions after short or long intervals, for whatever period of time the person wishes, including the rest of the person's life.
- (e) There is no program of sessions, with sessions featuring initial assessment and evaluation, intervening treatments, and characteristic termination.

Each of these characteristics applies to each experiential session. Accordingly, the initial sessions can be hard to distinguish from later sessions. Initial sessions look and "act" much the way later sessions do.

EXPERIENTIAL SESSIONS CAN BE FOR VIRTUALLY ANY PERSON, BUT ONLY FOR SELECTED THERAPISTS

For many psychotherapies, the appropriate questions to ask about them might be: For which kinds of mental illnesses and disorders is this treatment effective? For which patients is this therapy appropriate? Nei-

ther of these questions is especially relevant for experiential sessions because virtually anyone can have an experiential session provided the person is ready and willing to proceed through the concrete methods and steps of the session.

As long as the person is willing, experiential sessions can be for virtually anyone, including those who are frail, in poor physical shape, disabled, old (or very old); not the least bit psychologically minded or sophisticated; have “things on their minds” that are mild or powerful, mundane or utterly bizarre, pleasant or painful; friendly or fierce, personal and private, or public and on display; “crazy”, “out of their minds”, or psychotic. However, young children and those numbed by drugs or medications seem to have difficulty going through a session.

Although virtually anyone is a candidate for going through an experiential session, very few psychotherapists can be experiential psychotherapists. Most therapists are excluded because having a successful experiential session means

- (a) embracing the aims, purposes, or goals of an experiential session and what may be achieved in a session;
- (b) embracing the experiential way of making sense of who and what the person is, understanding the foundational structure of what a person is like, and how and why the person has good and bad feelings;
- (c) embracing the experiential way of making sense of transformational change, i.e. of what the person can become;
- (d) welcoming and accepting the in-session steps and the methods of helping to achieve the steps;
- (e) dedicating oneself to continuous skill training to achieve a progressively higher level of proficiency in the experiential methods.

SOME LOGISTICS OF AN EXPERIENTIAL SESSION

Picture an office that is soundproofed, furnished with two large, somewhat reclining chairs (placed quite close to one another and pointing in the same direction). This furniture will accommodate both therapist and client. Both can lean back and close their eyes throughout the entire session, which begins at a mutually agreed upon time and ends when they both agree that work for the day is done (usually after one-and-a-half to two hours or so).

When the session ends, if both the therapist and the person want to have another session, they agree on when it is to be. They are free to vary the length of time between sessions.

THE EXPERIENTIAL THERAPIST IS THE TEACHER-GUIDE OF THE PERSON WHO CARRIES OUT THE METHODS

The main role of the experiential therapist is that of the teacher-guide who is a master of the steps and methods used in each session, who shows the person what to do next, how and why to do it, who can modify and custom fit and model the method for the person, who joins with the person in carrying out the method, and who accompanies the person in undergoing the magnificent changes offered by the experiential session. Since neither the teacher nor the other person fulfill the traditional roles of therapist and client, it is hard to find an appropriate term for "the one who carries out the methods suggested by the teacher." Perhaps "practitioner" is a worthy term for the other person, but for now I will simply use person.

In general, it is the person who carries out the working methods. Since the methods carry forth the changes, and the teacher mainly shows the person what and how to work with the methods, it is the person who does the actual methods. Accordingly, the teacher instructs the person to close her eyes, put her attention on, for example, an object, her father's face, search for the instant when the feeling peaks, see the former times that come to mind, check where the bodily felt sensations mainly are happening, say the words with stronger feeling, and so on.

The teacher frequently checks to see if the other person is ready and willing to carry out the immediate method, is clear on what to do and how to do it. Accordingly, it is the other person who determines the pace, how quickly or how slowly to move ahead, whether or not to pause for a while, whether or not to do what the teacher suggests the person is to do, whether or not to continue or to bring the session to a close.

THE TEACHER AND PERSON MAINLY ATTEND TO A "THIRD THING"

In most therapies, the therapist and the person mainly attend to one another throughout the session. In contrast, throughout an experiential session, both teacher and the person attend mainly to a "third thing". Even when they address one another, their attention is mainly on some "third thing", such as the pushy sister, the silly puppy, the deadly cancer, or the overbearing supervisor at work.

HOW THE TEACHER LISTENS AND WHAT THE TEACHER LISTENS FOR

Throughout the session, the teacher's attention focuses mainly on what the person is attending to. The teacher is positioned so that what the

person says (and how it is said) comes in, from, and through the teacher. The teacher is a vehicle for what the other person is saying and doing. It is as if both the teacher and the person give voice to what the other person is saying and doing.

With the teacher attending to what the person is attending to, and with the teacher saying and doing what the person is saying and doing, the teacher is (a) living and being in the person's immediate scene, and (b) undergoing and feeling what the person is undergoing and feeling, even if the person does not know what these may be.

"Experiential listening" means that the teacher is (a) undergoing the feelings of the speaker and (b) seeing the pictures or images from the speaker's words. When the person says, "My mother doesn't listen to what I say," the teacher may have a feeling of complaining ("You don't listen to what I say!"), or a feeling of surprised disbelief ("She really doesn't listen to anything I say") or whatever feeling accompanies the words, and the teacher sees pictures or images of mother actively not listening to what the person says.

Accordingly, the experiential teacher departs from virtually all other therapists by *not* having a stream of private therapeutic thoughts, ideas, and inferences, for example, about the client, the client's reaction to the therapist's intervention, their relationship, the client's pathology, the mental state of the client.

IN EXPERIENTIAL SESSIONS THERE IS NO "RESISTANCE TO THERAPY"

In order to resist, there ought to be something to resist. In experiential sessions, it is hard to find something substantial to resist. (a) The experiential teacher simply is here to teach what to do and how to do it to the ready and willing person. The role does not include trying to get the person to be different, wanting the person to talk about this or that, having a way the therapist wants the person to be, judging the person in terms of the therapist-driven outcome, exerting pressure for the person to do this or that or be this or that. (b) The person is the one to carry out the methods, rather than the therapist being the one who applies the interventions on to the client, who treats the client or the client's mental disorder. (c) Largely because it is the person who carries out the methods in experiential sessions, the teacher relies on the person's moment-to-moment state of readiness to do the method. The pace is in the hands of the person. If the person is ready, he or she carries out the method. If not, the person may pause, can try again, or can bring the session to a close.

Other therapies may provide the right conditions for “resistance to therapy”, but experiential sessions do not.

DOES THE TEACHER TALK TO THE OLD PERSON OR TO THE NEW PERSON?

The session moves along a number of steps. If the person is ready and willing to undergo a momentous shift into being a qualitatively new person, the teacher shows the person what to do and how to do it. Once the magnificent, radical shift occurs, the qualitatively new person is invited to remain throughout the balance of the session. The teacher is helpful and accommodating, shifting right along with the person, talking directly to the qualitatively new person. If, however, the old person reappears before the end of the session, the teacher shifts back and talks to the old person.

THE TEACHER IS SKILLED IN THE STEPS AND METHODS OF AN EXPERIENTIAL SESSION

As indicated in the following chart, each experiential session proceeds through a sequence of steps, and each step includes a number of methods. Having a successful session means completing the four steps, and completing each step successfully is important in moving to the next step.

The teacher is skilled in the working methods, and is essentially “programmed” to follow the sequence of steps. Accordingly, in the hands of a proficient and seasoned teacher, movement along the steps typically is smooth and seamless, with room for easy and artistic flexibility in the selection and use of the methods.

WHAT IS MISSING IN EXPERIENTIAL SESSIONS?

Some taken-for-granted, almost-defining characteristics of most psychotherapies are essentially missing in experiential sessions. (a) There is no assessment or evaluation or diagnosis of the client’s mental disorder or of associated symptoms or problems. (b) There is no gathering of standardized case history background information. (c) The two people are not mainly attending to one another throughout the session. Accordingly, (d) the “therapeutic relationship” is not a major player in how and why change occurs. (e) The therapist does not have a stream of private thoughts about the client. (f) The therapist has no agenda or plan for the content that is to be covered in the session. (g) The therapist does not apply treatment methods or interventions onto the client.

**THE STEPS IN EACH SESSION OF EXPERIENTIAL
PSYCHOTHERAPY**

Step 1

**DISCOVER THE DEEPER POTENTIAL
FOR EXPERIENCING**

- Get into state of readiness for change.
- Find scene of strong feeling.
- Live and be in scene of strong feeling.
- Discover moment of peak feeling in scene of strong feeling.
- Discover deeper potential for experiencing in moment of peak feeling.

Step 2

**WELCOME AND ACCEPT DEEPER
POTENTIAL FOR EXPERIENCING**

- Name and describe deeper potential.
- Give positive and negative reactions to deeper potential for experiencing.
- Use other methods of welcoming and accepting deeper potential.

Step 3

**BEING THE DEEPER POTENTIAL FOR
EXPERIENCING IN PAST SCENES**

- Find past scenes.
- Be deeper potential for experiencing in past scenes.

Step 4

**BEING THE QUALITATIVELY NEW
PERSON IN THE QUALITATIVELY
NEW WORLD**

- Find and create unrealistic post-session scenes.
- Be qualitatively new person in unrealistic post-session scenes, including initial painful scene.
- Find and create realistic post-session scenes
- Be qualitatively new person in realistic post-session scenes.
- Modify and rehearse being qualitatively new person in post-session scenes.
- Be ready and committed to being qualitatively new person in qualitatively new world.
- Be qualitatively new person in qualitatively new world.

STEP 1. DISCOVER THE DEEPER POTENTIAL FOR EXPERIENCING

In the experiential picture (Mahrer, 1989), when we probe inside the person, we can find what may be called “possibilities or potentialities for

experiencing" (Mahrer, 1989). Think of each person as having a relatively distinctive set of possibilities for experiencing. Here are some examples of these possibilities: tenderness, gentleness, softness, playfulness, silliness, whimsy; violence, explosiveness, destructiveness; strength, firmness, toughness; mischievousness, devilishness, wickedness. There may be an experiencing of dominance, controlling, in charge; being close to, one with, intimate; cold, hard, metallic; delicate, brittle, fragile; provocative, stimulating, arousing; succoring, nurturing, caring for.

Some of these possibilities for experiencing are much deeper within the person, beyond that which the person knows, feels, undergoes, or is aware. These possibilities are almost from another world, deep within the person. Call these "deeper potentials for experiencing". The purpose of Step 1 is to discover a deeper potential for experiencing.

Get into a state of readiness for change

Both teacher and person close their eyes, the therapist explains that the aim of the session is to unlock the controls that usually lock the person into being the ordinary person. If the person is ready and willing, both therapist and the person spend the next minute or two taking deep breaths and exhaling with the utmost power and strength, volume, and noise. There are shrieks and bellows, high-pitched laughter and roars, hissings and gruntings, blasts and explosions, yelps and whelps, groans and moans, shouts and screams. Throughout the balance of the session, with eyes closed, both therapist and person speak with voices driven by heightened feelings.

Find a scene of strong feeling

The therapist shows the person how to find a time, some situation, or scene, when the feeling was relatively strong. The feeling may be of any kind, good and pleasant or bad and unpleasant. The scene or the feeling may be relatively new or may be carried over from a previous session.

The person may have a scene at front and center. Or it can take some looking around to find a scene, or perhaps there are two or three possibilities from which the person can select one to work on. The scene, and its feeling, may be one that the participant is willing to put on the table, or the person may be reluctant to put it forward, or may be embarrassed by or feel guilty or fearful about it. The scene and feeling may come from real life or from a dream; it may be dramatic or mundane, recent or from some time ago, manifest and public or private and unexpressed, fleeting or persistent. In any case, the work is to find a scene of strong feeling. "That's it! That's the time when feeling was strong. Oh yes."

Once a scene of strong feeling is found, give the person a chance to find a time when the feeling was even stronger and more powerful, and work with it. "That's when the same feeling was much bigger, more powerful. Oh yes." If no such time comes to mind, work with the initial scene.

Live and be in the scene of the strong feeling

Once the person selects a scene of strong feeling, the person is to live fully and be in that scene (rather than mainly being in the office talking about the scene.) The therapist shows the person what to do so that the person is wholly living and being in the alive, real, immediate, present scene. Essentially the teacher helps the person (a) detail and clarify the parts of the scene; (b) attend fully to the detailed and clarified parts; and (c) jump into living and being in the immediate, real, live scene.

Discover the moment of peak feeling in the scene of strong feeling

As the person is living and being in the scene of strong feeling, the person is to (a) slow the scene down, freeze the scene, dilate the scene. Then the person (b) actively searches in the scene, looks for the precise instant when the feeling peaks, and discovers the precise moment of peak feeling. (c) Finding the precise moment of peak feeling is almost always a genuine discovery, the culminating payoff of exploration, complete with a sense of surprise at finding something new, unknown, and hidden. Until it is actually found the person rarely knows the precise moment of peak feeling.

Discover the deeper potential for experiencing in the moment of peak feeling

By living and being in the moment of peak feeling, by holding this moment still and dilating it, the person is at the doorway to the inner, hidden world of deeper potentials for experiencing. These potentials are close by, within breathing distance, and the person can discover the deeper potential for experiencing by using one of the following methods until there is a sudden shift in what the person is feeling and experiencing (Mahrer, 2007).

(a) If the moment of peak feeling is sketchy, incomplete, or missing a critical piece, finding and filling in the missing piece can let the person shift to touching, or being touched by the deeper potential for experiencing. (b) Regardless of the nature of the experiencing, at the moment of peak feeling, keep intensifying the experiencing until there is a sudden shift and the person touches or is touched by a new, different deeper potential for experiencing. (c) When the moment of peak feeling is painful, hurtful, or awful, keep penetrating deeper and

deeper down into the awful feeling until the very core or heart of the feeling is reached, penetrated, opened up, released. In the sudden shift, the painful feeling is replaced with one that is much less painful, or even pleasurable, and the person touches (or is touched by) the deeper potential for experiencing. (d) When the moment of peak feeling includes a special other person or thing that is compelling or playing a central role, the person can assume the identity of that special other person or thing, undergo that special other's feeling or experiencing until the sudden shift occurs. And the person touches (or is touched by) the deeper potential for experiencing. (e) If the moment of peak feeling is unpleasant, bothersome, or bad, replace the bad feeling with feelings that are determinedly pleasant, happy, buoyant, enjoyable, and undergo these pleasant feelings until a sudden shift occurs and the person touches or is touched by a qualitatively new experiencing. This is the deeper potential for experiencing.

Step 1 has uncovered a deeper potential for experiencing. Sometimes this work can be quite pleasant, especially if the scene of strong feeling is exciting, happy, enjoyable. Often, discovering the deeper potential for experiencing can be accompanied with painful, grinding, anguished feelings. In any case, once the hard work of discovering the deeper potential is done, the rest of the session, steps 2 to 4, can be light, buoyant, exciting, exhilarating, and fun.

STEP 2. WELCOME AND ACCEPT THE DEEPER POTENTIAL FOR EXPERIENCING

This step enables the person to welcome and accept, feel good about, love and embrace the deeper potential that had been buried inside, without the person even realizing that it had been sealed off, hidden, feared and hated.

Name and describe the deeper potential for experiencing

In step 1, for a moment or so, the deeper potential for experiencing was right there, present, sensed, touched, felt. Both therapist and the person can name and describe what it was, with especial value on the words from the person. They arrive at a joint description of the experiencing: "Free, liberated, free of confinement, cut loose, no more constraints!"

Give positive and negative reactions to the deeper potential for experiencing

Both therapist and the person can enter into a context of experiencing that is fun, playful, exaggerated, perhaps accurate or wholesomely inaccurate, open, exuberant as they work together in celebrating all sorts of

positive and negative reactions to the deeper potential for experiencing as both a wonderful gift and a loathsome quality that ought to be cauterized.

Use other methods of welcoming and accepting the deeper potential for experiencing

Following no special order, the therapist-teacher shows the person how to use other methods. (a) Identify how the kind of person the person is, and the personal world the person lives in, essentially block, hide, deny, and disprove that potential for experiencing in the person. (b) Assemble evidence for the person to admit that there may be such a deep-seated quality hidden inside. (c) Challenge the person to find uncharacteristic and exceptional occasions, recent or long ago, when the person actually enjoyed undergoing that deeper potential for experiencing. (d) Invite the person to confess proudly to having effectively sealed off this deeper potential for experiencing, keeping it hidden. (e) Challenge the person to say out loud (or to sit still and hear the therapist say out loud) what the deeper potential might point its finger at, jump up and down about, and say to the person who imprisons it and seals it off from deeper potential for experiencing. (f) Identify people in the person's past and current life whom the person dislikes and criticizes, or envies and enjoys, because they embody the delightful, pleasant form of the person's own deeper potential for experiencing.

Occasionally, in the course of step 2, it is clear that the person does not welcome and accept what was discovered in step 1. If the deeper potential for experiencing is still seen as quite negative, rejected, feared and hated, the person is given free choice to tiptoe through steps 3 and 4, to try again, or to end the session.

STEP 3. BEING THE DEEPER POTENTIAL FOR EXPERIENCING IN PAST SCENES

The purpose of step 3 is for the person literally to "be" the radical new person who is the deeper potential for experiencing. For perhaps the first time in life, the person undergoes a complete metamorphosis, a shift out of the person who has been and into an altogether new, and radically different, deeper potential for experiencing. The shift is qualitative, radical, like a leap into the abyss. It is a complete disengagement from the person one has been and is, and is a switch into being a whole new person. Indeed, that which is now present is the alive, vibrant, deeper potential for experiencing with full-scale immediacy. The magical, magnificent transformation has occurred, and the person is the deeper potential for experiencing.

Find past scenes

Look for some past scene, incident, or time that can serve as a context for the person to switch into being the deeper potential for experiencing. Almost any past scene or situation will do. It does not have to be a special scene. The scene can be recent, from short while ago, a long time past, or early childhood. You can find a scene (a) by seeing what past scene comes to mind when you recite the general contours of the "scene of strong feeling", e.g., you are all by yourself, outdoors, and just walking along a path, or (b) by starting with the deeper potential for experiencing and seeing what past scene comes to mind, e.g., you're feeling a sense of risk, new territory, excitement of something new, what's going to happen.

Once you actually undergo the "transformational shift" into being the deeper potential for experiencing, look for a number, e.g., four to eight or so, past scenes for being the deeper experiencing. These can include past times when the person began to be the deeper experiencing or started to, when the person could (or should) have been the deeper experiencing, or when it would have been absolutely out of place to be the deeper experiencing; or past scenes and incidents that stand out as important in the person's past.

The transformational shift: be the deeper potential for experiencing in past scenes

The person is now ready for the magnificent transformational shift. Here are some guidelines for how to be the deeper potential for experiencing in the past scene: (a) Be quite clear about the specific nature and content of the deeper potential for experiencing, and of the explicit past scene. (b) The person who is the deeper potential for experiencing is not you. You are to step aside and be replaced with a whole new person who is the exaggerated pure form of the deeper potential for experiencing. (c) The replacement of you with the whole new person—who-is—the-deeper-potential-for-experiencing is to occur in a flash, an instantaneous switch "Three! Two! One! Go!". (d) The context is sheer unreality, wholesale fantasy, utmost absurdity, silliness, ridiculousness, comedy, slapstick, burlesque, zaniness, outrageousness. (e) The voice is to be the exaggerated voice of the deeper potential for experiencing, and not at all recognizable as your own voice. (f) The experiencing is to be powerful, pumped up, and saturating. (g) Keep going until the experiencing is quite real, until you are actually undergoing and being the deeper potential for experiencing. (h) The experiencing is to be accompanied with feelings of sheer joy, buoy-

ancy, excitement, happiness. (i) Once the switch occurs, the whole new person is to remain throughout all of the past scenes in step 3, and is to be here when step 3 ends.

Once the switch occurs, the old person becomes the transformed whole new person. What is more, the qualitatively new person is to remain present throughout the rest of the session, and even when the session is over. The qualitatively new person is here in the balance of step 3, in the course of step 4, when the session ends, and when the new person leaves the session.

STEP 4. BEING THE QUALITATIVELY NEW PERSON IN THE QUALITATIVELY NEW WORLD

In step 3, the person undertook the magnificent shift into being the deeper potential for experiencing, and continued as this new person throughout scenes from the past. In step 4, (a) the radically new person continues being present; (b) the scenes of the past are replaced by scenes from after the session and from tomorrow and beyond; and (c) what had been a deeper potential for experiencing is now an integral part of a transformed, qualitatively whole new person who leaves the session and lives and exists as the qualitatively whole new person in what can be a qualitatively whole new personal world.

Find and create unrealistic post-session scenes

Both the therapist and the new person look for scenes when the new person leaves the office, walking into the new personal world of the rest of the day, tonight, tomorrow, and beyond.

Just as in step 3, the context is wholesale unreality, absurd, playful, whimsical, foolish, fanciful, fantasy-filled, outrageous, silly, zany, cartoon-like, slapstick, make-believe, ridiculous. There are no constraints or restraints.

The scenes may be fitting, appropriate, and ideal for being the whole new person the scenes can include the general contours of the former person's world, or the scenes may boldly and refreshingly depart from the former person's world. The scenes can be mundane, from the little things of everyday life, or the scenes be highly dramatic, novel, big ones.

Be the qualitatively new person in the unrealistic post-session scenes including the initial painful scene.

As each post-session scene is identified, the radically new person is to live and be in each scene, and to do so with wholesomely unconstrained

enthusiasm and buoyant exuberance and joy. The context continues to be one of utmost fantasy and unreality, playfulness and zaniness, and it is the qualitatively new person who is alive and present.

Go from one scene to another, living and being in perhaps 3 to 7 of these post-session scenes, including a post-session occurrence of the initial painful scene that may have been at the front and center for the former person at the beginning of the session. The magnificent difference is that it is the qualitatively new person who is now living and being in what had been the initial painful scene, which now is almost certainly drained of painfulness.

Find and create realistically new post-session scenes

As the qualitatively new person is increasingly alive and present, find and create new post-session scenes that are injected with high doses of reality; that can actually be found in the post-session world. These can be whole new scenes that the qualitatively new person might revel in, love to be in, scenes that are custom-fitted for the whole new person. These can be scenes that arise out of or that are exceedingly bold departures from the former person's world. These can be scenes that are relatively small and safe, or they can be big, challenging, risky. They can be mundane, such as the way the person walks and talks, or they can be dramatic, such as where the person lives, people the whole new person is with.

The realistic new scenes are present from the time the session ends and the transformed new person leaves the session and enters into the qualitatively new world, from the rest of the day from tonight and tomorrow, and the next tomorrows.

Be the qualitatively new person in the realistic post-session scenes

The person continues as this qualitatively whole new person, but the created post-session scenes are somewhat less fantasy and wholesale unreality and are much more realistic.

Both the teacher and the transformed new person can suggest scenes, from the oncoming next days or so, with emphasis on those that are more realistic, may occur, or be helped to occur:

When I go to bed tonight, things are going to be different . . .

I leave here and go right to Caroline's place . . .

All right, mother, open the door . . .

And tomorrow, when my supervisor . . .

I always wanted to, so it's time that I . . .

The next time that he starts the criticism . . .

The party is on! I am going to arrange it myself . . .

I do believe I am going to do that for my sister!

It's reality time! . . .

It's the end of an era, so I am ready to begin my new life. I am going to . . .

Modify and rehearse being the qualitatively new person in post-session scenes.

It is try-out time toward the end of the actual session. The aim is to try out the qualitatively new person in selected post-session scenes, then to keep modifying and rehearsing what happens. Use bodily felt sensations as helpful gauges or tracking guides. Try out a suggested scene; check the bodily-felt sensations. Keep going until the bodily felt sensations are delightfully pleasant, and over much or most of the body.

If the bodily felt sensations are quite good ones, over much or most of the body, the person may be ready to be the qualitatively new person in the post-session scenes. If the bodily felt sensations are unpleasant, bad—or even neutral or equivocal—the mission can be aborted.

Give the former person (and other parts of the person) plenty of opportunity to give voice to reactions to this whole new person. In these post-session scenes, the therapist can take the lead in voicing what the former person might say: *Who do you think you are? You can't be that way! That's not the way you should be! . . . You are dangerous, bad, alien, weird, sick. I don't even know you. Go away! . . . You are rude and nasty. You have to think about how others would feel. . . If you really act like that, you will be in big trouble. You'll ruin everything!*

Allow for the real possibility that the whole new person will evaporate and be replaced by the former person who started the session. Allow for the alternative real possibility that the deeper potentiality, which was discovered in step 1, can become an integral new part of a whole, new person, a radical and qualitative new person, an utterly transformed person. Allow for the alternative possibility that the painful scene can no longer exist, can no longer be painful or include painful feelings in the qualitatively new world of the qualitatively new person.

Be ready and committed to being the qualitatively new person in the qualitative new world

The whole new person is given an opportunity to sign the contract of remaining alive and present, of fullscale readiness and commitment to remain being the qualitatively new person (a) when therapist and

person both open their eyes and the transformed new person ends the session, leaves the session and enters into the immediately post-session, qualitatively new world. Addressing the whole new person, the therapist says,

So when we open our eyes, I can see the whole new person, and this whole new you can leave the office, leave the building, and stay being this whole new you for maybe 15 minutes—or how about an hour or two, or maybe forever—or as long as you are ready to be you. Is this all right? Are you ready?

In addition (or perhaps alternatively) the whole new person agrees to the contract of being the whole new person (b) in the rehearsed scene an hour or so from now, or sometime later or perhaps tomorrow.

You're ready? You are going to be this whole new you tonight? You are going to go to your younger brother's place and, for the first time, ask about the small business he is so proud of, and, for the first time, really and truly listen? You'll say, 'I want to know, so please tell me how and why you got it started, and what it does, and how it's going.' You, the new you, are really and truly interested in him and that special business he started. You are going to do this for sure?

Who signs the contract? Who is ready to end the session? It can be the qualitatively new person: "Yes, I'm ready!" Or it may be the person who started the session in the first place, the old person who is here now. The choice belongs to the person who is ready to end the session.

Be a qualitatively new person in a qualitatively new world.

The experiential therapist's work is over when they open their eyes. However, the session is complete when one or both of two things happen. One is that the qualitatively new person leaves the office, and stays as the qualitatively new person for some minutes or hours or longer. The second is when the new person is present in the rehearsed scene, later that day, or soon after, and lives and behaves in the scene as the qualitatively new person in the qualitatively new scene. The work of the session is completed, and the session is over.

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