

What is Bioenergetic Analysis?

Bioenergetic Analysis is a psychodynamic psychotherapy which combines work with the body and the mind to help reduce psychological problems. It is a form of psychotherapy that has a psycho-developmental basis. Things that happened to one as a child greatly affect one's adult self-perception and one's behavior towards others. That is, traumas that happen in childhood affect one's way of interacting in their current life and relationships. Bioenergetic analysis sees these traumas as affecting one's thought processes as well as one's body.

Bioenergetic psychotherapists believe that there is a correlation between the mind and the body. The individual is viewed as a psychosomatic unity. What affects the body affects the mind; and what affects the mind affects the body. The psychological defenses one uses to handle pain and the stress of life - rationalizations, denials, and suppressions, are also anchored in the body. They appear in the body as unique muscular patterns that inhibit self-expression. These patterns can be identified and understood by a bioenergetic psychotherapist who knows how to look at the structure, movement and breathing patterns in a person's body.

Bioenergetic psychotherapists, unlike other psychotherapists, focus special attention on the muscular patterns in a person's body. They are interested in these patterns and their relationship to movement, breath, posture and emotional expression. Every physical expression of the body has meaning; the quality of a handshake, the posture, the look in the eyes, the tone of the voice, the way of moving, the amount of energy, etc. If these expressions are fixed and habitual, they tell a story of past experience.

The bioenergetic psychotherapist studies these muscular patterns and introduces the client to physical expressions or exercises to help them experience in present time these patterns of constriction in their body. The therapist explores with the client what it would feel like to begin to release these patterns and recover some of the feelings they have repressed during childhood and continue to repress in their adult life. The bioenergetic psychotherapist also helps their clients come to understand how and why their patterns of constriction developed; how these very defenses that are hindering their life today, allowed them to survive in an early environment that was not supportive of their being.

As these repressed emotions emerge, clients begin to realize that these patterns inhibit their capacity for spontaneity and creativity in self-expression. They begin to understand that as these defenses became chronic, so have the muscular patterns in their body. These somatic defenses affect their emotional well-being by decreasing energy level and restricting the capacity for genuine self-expression in relationships; they are not free enough in their body to feel joy, happiness, love, sadness, fear, sensuality and anger. As clients progress in bioenergetic psychotherapy, old, ineffective patterns which block connection, pleasure, spontaneity and joy slowly dissolve. Through the physical and emotional release of body work and the experience of a safe, healthy, supportive connection with a therapist, the bioenergetic client relates to his/her self and others in new, more satisfying ways...

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Seen in the IIBA' s website