

FREE

HEALTHY LIVING HEALTHY PLANET

natural awakenings



SEASONAL CITRUS
Fresh and Zesty Recipes for the Holidays

BYRON KATIE
Answers BuxMont's Questions

MAKING PEACE
Handling Conflicts in a Healthy and Transformative Way

Moving from the Head to the Heart

Beth Herman's Integrative Psychotherapy



What is your experience as a mental health professional?

I began my career in community mental health while I was still a graduate student, working with chronically and seriously mentally ill populations, doing both individual psychotherapy and co-facilitating groups.

In 2007, I opened my practice in Doylestown where I continue to practice today. My clients range from folks I refer to as from the "worried well", to people struggling with mental illnesses, including Employee Assistance Program work.

When and why did you start to incorporate hypnotherapy into your work with patients?

I began incorporating hypnosis into my work during the summer of 2016. I'd noticed over the years that, although my clients benefited in some way from our time together, they were not necessarily healing from their issues. The other thing I noticed was that people were seeking a more holistic approach and a less diagnostic approach. People wanted to talk about their spiritual lives and other experiences without the fear of being given a "diagnosis".

I began to tiptoe into the spiritual lives of my clients and the sessions took on a whole new vibration. Our work together was opening up. I wondered how I could go deeper in the work and in what other ways I might help people truly heal from their pain.

How does Heart-Centered Hypnotherapy differ from traditional hypnotherapy?

Let's start with what traditional hypnotherapy is—hypnosis is simply an altered state of consciousness where an individual can become more susceptible to suggestion.

The altered state works by allowing us to bypass the conscious mind and get into the subconscious where about 90 percent of the mind's activities are. Bypassing the conscious mind allows me to access the places within, where the deep pain resides.

Heart-Centered Hypnotherapy produces an altered state of deep calm and relaxation and the ability to experience things generally beyond their capacity while in a "wake-state". But it goes beyond traditional hypnotherapy by integrating other proven, clinically effective modalities,

such as Gestalt, by offering a deep experience in the present moment; cognitive behavioral therapy, by identifying those damaging thoughts, self-beliefs and behaviors; and inner child work, where we really get to address that part of us that begs for nurturing, acknowledgment and love.

How does this approach differ from traditional talk therapy, and how do the two complement each other?

In traditional talk therapy we are generally only working with the conscious mind where only a small part of the material is what we're working on. It can take a much longer time to access the information needed to begin to heal. People are generally more defended in talk therapy as the ego is busy keeping the upsetting material deeply hidden and out of sight.

Doing Heart-Centered Hypnotherapy with a client has a much different vibration. There is a deeper connection and intimacy with clients due to the nature of the experience and also that I am sitting physically closer to my clients as I guide them through the process.

Yet, Heart-Centered Hypnotherapy absolutely complements the talk therapy sessions with my clients. After a hypnosis session, I usually take the next session to "talk" and process the experience.

What do you say to people that may have some fears about hypnotherapy?

I acknowledge their fears because there is so much misinformation out there about this work. In addition, there are "hypnotists" that do not have a clinical mental health background, so people often ask about things they have seen that would be considered "stage hypnosis". I explain the difference and reassure clients that in this process they wouldn't do anything they don't want to and that they have full control during their session. I answer all of their questions and discuss the Heart-Centered Hypnotherapy process. I also share my own experience of my personal hypnosis sessions that I participate in.

Beth Herman Counseling is located at the The Farm at Doylestown, 605 Farm Lane, Doylestown. For more information, visit BethHermanCounseling.com or call 215-348-8900. See ad, page 8.