

ED GUTFREUND

951 West North Bend Road A-3
Cincinnati, OH 45224
ph: (513) 319-4432

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The world of therapy is plagued by lots of terms and jargon. The meaning is not always clear. Here I have included little reflections of how I understand these terms and answer these questions. All this is to help you understand my approach to this synthesis I call Somatic Soul Care. You can email if you have other questions not considered here. You can scroll down or click on the questions which interest you.

How do I know if this is for me?

This is always a difficult question to answer from a web site, or printed page. Keep reading here on the web site. When you think or feel inclined to find out if you could benefit from this therapy you are welcome to come to test out your experience with me. We can talk and work a little so you know what it is like, and decide then if you want to pursue it. You can ask questions. It doesn't cost anything to come for a half hour consultation except our time. We can meet each other and find out if we can work together and then choose. You are very welcome to call.

What is Integrative Therapy?

Integrative therapy refers to two things. One is the joining of theories, processes and procedures from diverse disciplines. In my version of integrating I draw on the wisdom of psychotherapeutic theory and practice, body psychology, medical massage, movement, somatic education, learning theory, and a variety of spiritual wisdoms. Integrative therapy also refers to joining the separated parts of your experience into some new relationship. Your joy and your sorrow, your dreams and your sense of limitation, the wounded inner child and the wise adult, and other subtle conflicts that may, at times, not be apparent enough to do something about. All this attempts to lead to becoming a whole person. Integrative has to do with having these parts in complimentary relationships. How do you connect your thought, your emotions, your body sensation, your health habits, your relationship style, your work experience, your spiritual practice or ideas, your world-view. Recognizing conflicts and bringing them into relationship, recognizing old wounds and bringing them into relationship with current experience, noticing dreams for the future and integrating them into current experience, noticing what you had for lunch today and how it fits into your life scheme--all these have to do with integration and an integrated approach to healing. An integrative approach believes everything is connected to everything else.

What is body-oriented therapy?

In a body-oriented approach you are invited to pay attention to what is happening in your body in the moment of a thought or feeling. You will often be surprised at what the body reveals to you and how your body can be a resource in situations you face such as boundary situations, taking initiative, accessing courage, staying connected. Freud said dreams are the royal road to the unconscious. Pat Ogden, originator of Sensorimotor Psychotherapy says the body is the royal road to the unconscious. I believe that paying close attention to what is happening and what wants to happen in the body reveal immense wisdom about your heart's desire. It is also what heals the wounds of the past or fears about the future.

What is Experiential Therapy?

Ron Kurtz, originator of Hakomi Therapy once said, "Therapy ought to be about having experiences, not just talking about them." Experiential therapy, with its roots in Existential, Gestalt, Person-centered and most body therapies, offers the opportunity to be mindful and in the present with what happens when you have a thought, a memory, a wish, an impulse to move, a gesture, a feeling. You will study these experiences in great depth in this work in order to know the changes you seek. Being able to be mindful of your reactions and responses often opens doors to unconscious dimensions of habit, behavior or thinking patterns which diminish freedom or keep you anxious, depressed, or separated from what is really going on at the moment. We all dissociate at times and it is a helpful component of consciousness. To recognize and to actually experience consciously what takes you out of the present into distraction, denial, compulsion, fear, addiction, avoidance--or the many ways we get away from the discomfort of life--can start a new way of being and doing.

What is Depth Psychotherapy?

Depth psychotherapy attempts to understand the nature of inner systems. These include developmental belief patterns, emotional patterns, strengths and wounds at the core. This work is designed to befriend the unconscious, befriend the body and uncover the wisdom within that is trying to express itself. This therapy seeks to know the causes of difficulties as well as the symptoms. It wants to understand splits and conflicts that often hinder healthy activity that is full of life. It wants to uncover resources often overlooked that have power to strengthen and heal. Depth psychotherapy works to reveal solutions that may be buried as deeply as the source of the problem you experience. This therapy can help you to cultivate what is ready to come to life.

How is this different?

I have gone to a lot of counseling and talked a long time. Clients tell me regularly that feeling physical sensations related to ideas or emotions brings them to a new knowing of themselves, even though it takes a little getting used to. Clients

say they know both their grief and their power at profound levels. They frequently find that what they think about something cognitively is different from what their body has to say about it. This recognition leads to the joining of parts--integration. They appreciate walking out of the office in a new "body" of experience. Awareness expands, you notice things differently in yourself and the closely related people of your life. This is practice in the best of intimacy--within and with those you care most about. This is different from rehashing stories. You--the storyteller--are more important than the stories constructed in your fantasy and imagination. Somatic Soul Care, an experiential therapy, allows you to feel yourself differently; as well as to imagine or think about yourself becoming different. New experience, especially missing experience, has a powerful impact toward change.

What does a session look like?

When you arrive you decide what is important to work on for the day. I will help you become more mindful of present responses so you can know how past or future events are influencing now. As you deepen into your experience I will suggest experiments to help you get more information. Sometimes a few words, sometimes a movement, sometimes touch; often asking what do you notice and what happens when you notice what is happening at the moment. All these options are your choice and any option can be modified or stopped at any moment you wish. The process follows your lead and discovery as you work toward transformation and integration of new experiences. You will have ample time to know your experience and to take advantage of insights, the movement of feeling and the activity of sensation, in a way that respects your pace and ability to strengthen your resources and digest difficult experience.

My trauma history is really scary to look at. Can this help?

This therapy works to help you regulate and balance your response to traumatic activation. It helps you modulate your nervous system, allowing it to calm down; and it helps you rediscover safety in moments that activation may arrive during a session. It helps you digest the power of the overwhelming experience and its memories at your own pace. There is never a hurry to go faster than you can. It is also designed to help you integrate all of those experiences into your life now--toward health and a restored and renewed sense of yourself. Few people want to re-experience overwhelming events. Our inner psychological system has ways to protect us from such pain. I would never ask you to explore something that is too scary to look at unless you want to. What this therapy can do is allow you to better know how you protect yourself and what resources you have or can develop to change your relationship to the impact of your trauma. Dissociation and so-called resistance are important powers to understand. If, however, they have outgrown their usefulness you can discover how to be with those experiences with awareness. In the experience of safety you may be able allow recognition of the feelings which remain and stop resisting yourself.

Will healing and integration take the rest of my life to accomplish?

Probably, but that doesn't mean you will have to be in therapy forever. Significant change in personality or character usually requires time and commitment to change. Habits that are as familiar as the inside of your skin don't melt away in a moment. But a moment of awareness allows the will to change to get activated and make moves that create new ways of being in relationships, or doing your work or knowing yourself. Therapy is a little like any ongoing practice. You do your practice, something changes for a while, and you come back to it again and again. Little by little changes become an integrated part of your life, and you know you are different. Whether you do this in therapy or sitting in meditation, or writing in your journal, or talking with the closest person in your life, by traveling far and wide, or by making meals with care over and over, it does take and make a life time. That is the value I see in all this.

What does it mean to integrate spirituality? Is this religious?

Many, if not most people have some sense of the non-material, the other-worldly, the spiritual. Some refer to this as God/Goddess, Life, Chi, Higher Power, the Tao, the Transcendent, Love. Many are members of the world's great religious traditions. If this is part of your experience and prompts practices of prayer, devotions, meditation, creativity, your sense of destiny or the future it is welcome in the process of therapy because it is part of how you organize your experience. I want to respect your beliefs, practices and hopes, and know how they influence how you are and what you do. These mysteries are always bigger than we think. How or if you bring your spiritual experience into therapy is completely your choice. It will be honored.

What kind of Massage do you practice?

During the last 20 years I have studied a many styles of massage therapy Swedish, Neuromuscular, Craniosacral, Myoneural, Myo-Kinesiology, British Sports Medicine, Muscle Energy, Myofascial and Rhythmical Massage. Each has something to offer. Believing that there is an inherent impulse to health, I have adopted a kind of Osteopathic medical model of self-correction possibilities. While I draw on many of these approaches, I regularly rely on two approaches: Myofascial Therapy and Rhythmical Massage. My intention is to study your condition with you for clear understanding, and to work with the tissue and movement systems of the body to support best recovery or management of conditions. When needed or appropriate, depending on the condition and the impact or reaction to emotional health, this hands-on care can be combined with psychotherapy for an integrative approach. Below are explanations of some of my preferred modalities.

What is Myofascial therapy?

Myofascial Therapy works with muscle and connective tissue (fascia), recognizing the complex interconnections of fascia. In the gentle stretching and lengthening techniques muscles loosen and movement becomes freer.

Connections to other parts of the body influenced by painful muscles are also be cared for. This helps movement patterns become more effective, and helps diminish stress put into the body by compensation to pain or injury. Myofascial therapy can be light or firm depending on the condition.

What is Rhythmical Massage?

Rhythmical Massage comes from the work of Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophical medicine. It recognizes the complex nature of the human being. It uses archetypal forms of circles, spirals, waves, and lemniscates to move the body's fluid system. This effects balance in the polarities of health and illness. Rhythm is seen to mediate between the dense, cold, contracting and hardening tendencies, and the loose, warm, expansive, and diffusing tendencies. When there is no balance, there is illness. Rhythm contributes to keeping the dynamic relationship of these opposites, rather than neutralizing them. Each part of the polarity contributes to the whole. Rhythmical Massage is gentle, yet it works deeply into a person, both relaxing and strengthening the constitution.

Is touch part of psychotherapy?

Touch has been very controversial in psychotherapy in recent years. There is a long history of beneficial use of touch, especially in body-oriented therapies. There is, unfortunately, history of unethical use of touch which has caused severe harm. Because I believe in the value of carefully chosen use of touch I keep it as an option, and also offer massage procedures along with and sometimes as part of psychotherapy. All use of touch is for the purpose of your healing and is used to help you know your experience better. It is always your choice if offered, and will always be adjusted or ended as you wish. In this way both you and I can discover and properly implement a valuable therapeutic tool that is at the very core of human need and expression. It is used with careful discernment.

What does this have to do with your Presence Practice workshops?

Both Mark Delmar Davis and I believe that living in the present makes a huge difference. The here and now is all that truly is; even though the past and future feel like they have power over us at times. We do, in fact, live in time. Things pass and come toward us. Being in the present or being mindful enhances freedom and authenticity, it allows for honest response to what is, it allows for acceptance of differences, it feels the tension of opposites and the dynamic relationship that also exists in those opposites or polarities. They are the stuff of life. Presence allows us to be with all of it with awareness, recognition and more freedom. There is the rhythm of going away and coming back, going asleep and waking up. This is part of life as well. Getting more able to notice when it is happening is what this is all about. It is a component of my therapeutic work. In the workshops we teach it provides practice for the hardest task given to human beings: staying awake and present to life.

Therapy for therapists?

In the course of my practice I have worked with or collaborated with many professionals: Psychologists, Counselors, Social Workers, Massage Therapists, P.T.s , O.T.s, Nurses, Doctors. Besides working with their personal healing and development, professionals often find new ways to think about their own work as a result of this experience. Collaborations have often arisen out of these experiences that benefit their clients or patients by introducing them to this therapy as a compliment to what they receive. Experience of Somatic Soul Care can be a way to refresh your professional life and get care for burnout or compassion fatigue.