

# HYPNOTISM AND CANCER

Heartland Hypnosis Conference 2023  
The Rev. C. Scot Giles, D.Min., BCC, DNGH, OB

# PRESENTATION AVAILABLE

[www.CSGiles.org](http://www.CSGiles.org)



MY PRACTICE

# MY BACKGROUND

- BA., MA, D.Min., BCC, DNGH, OB
- Trained in the Ericksonian Tradition
- Exceptional Cancer Patients Organization (ECaP)
- HeartMath Certified Coach
- NGH Certified HypnoCoach

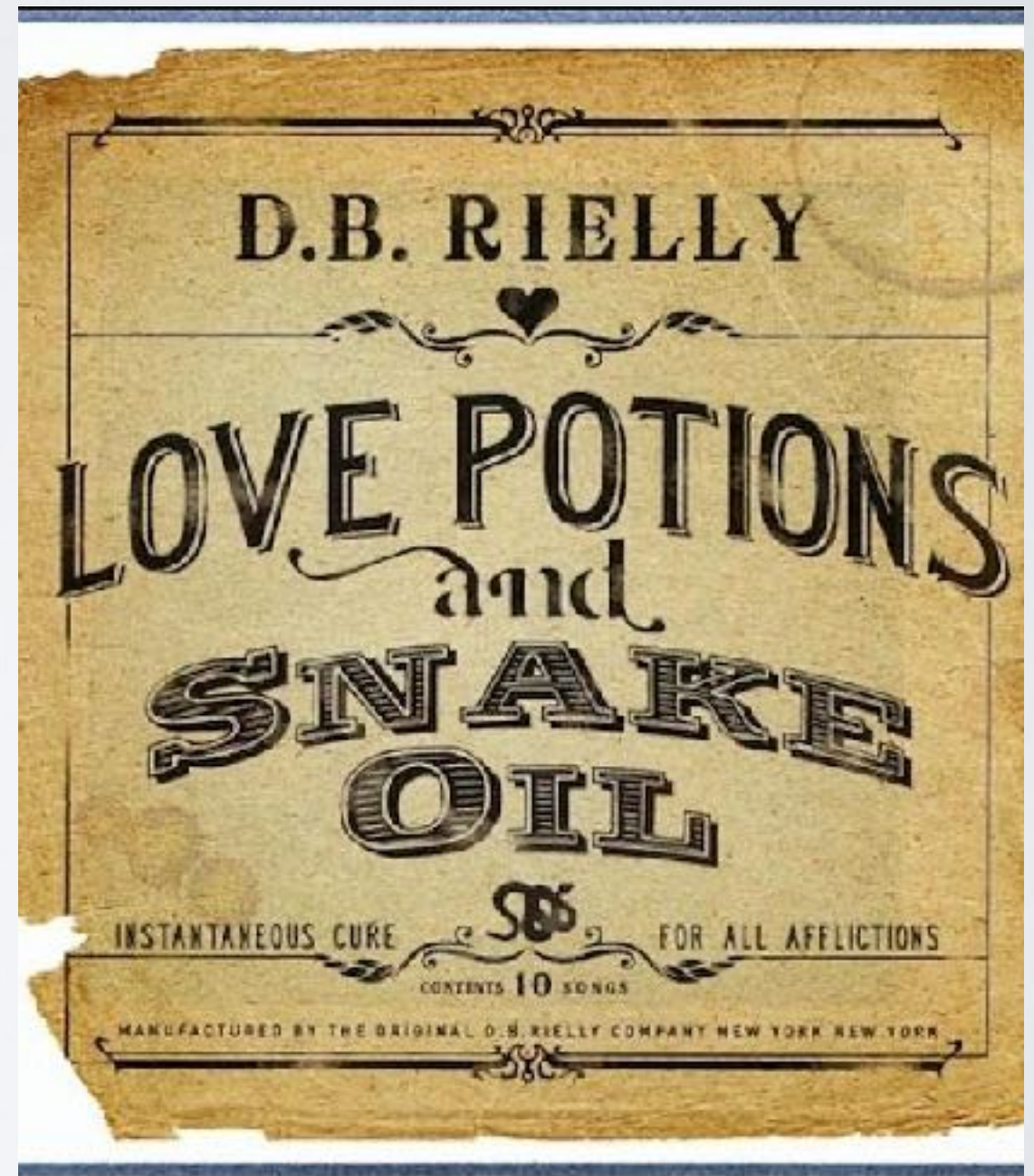
# VENUES

- In practice as a Consulting Hypnotist for 35 years, specializing in hypnotic motivational and health coaching.
- Free Clinics at Little Company of Mary Hospital, Wellness House and Wellness Beyond Walls
- Weekly Online MasterMind Group (formerly ICAN)
- Home Office: 15-20 private clients/week in semi-retirement



# HOW BAD IT WAS

- Decades ago, Consulting Hypnotists were a laughing stock in the medical world.
- Exaggerated and intemperate claims still abound and make us look like amateurs.



# DO NOT...

- Claim you can cure cancer.
- That you can do cancer work single-session. It's a very complex hypnotic project.
- Imply the unconscious mind of the client caused the cancer, or that the patient “needs” the cancer.

# RESEARCH

- Pettingale, K.W., “Mental Attitudes To Cancer,” *The Lancet* 1985.
- Spiegel, David, “The Effect of Psychosocial Treatment on Survival of Patients with Metastatic Breast Cancer,” *The Lancet* 1989.
- Goodwin, Pamela, “The Effect of Group Psychosocial Support on Survival in Metastatic Breast Cancer,” *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 2001.



HOW IT'S DONE

# PRELIMINARY

- Be a good hypnotist.
- Obey the Gold and Silver Rules.
- Learn something about cancer and treatment.
- Know the cancer culture.

# TO GET STARTED...

- Have a good basic grounding in hypnotism. There shouldn't be any glaring holes in your skill set.
- Don't set yourself up for failure. Keep your claims realistic and have data available.
- The Gold and Silver Rules

# THE CANCER CULTURE

- “Persons living with cancer (PLWC)”
- Complementary v Alternative care
- Anecdotal Evidence v Controlled Research
- Medical Pessimism and Hexing

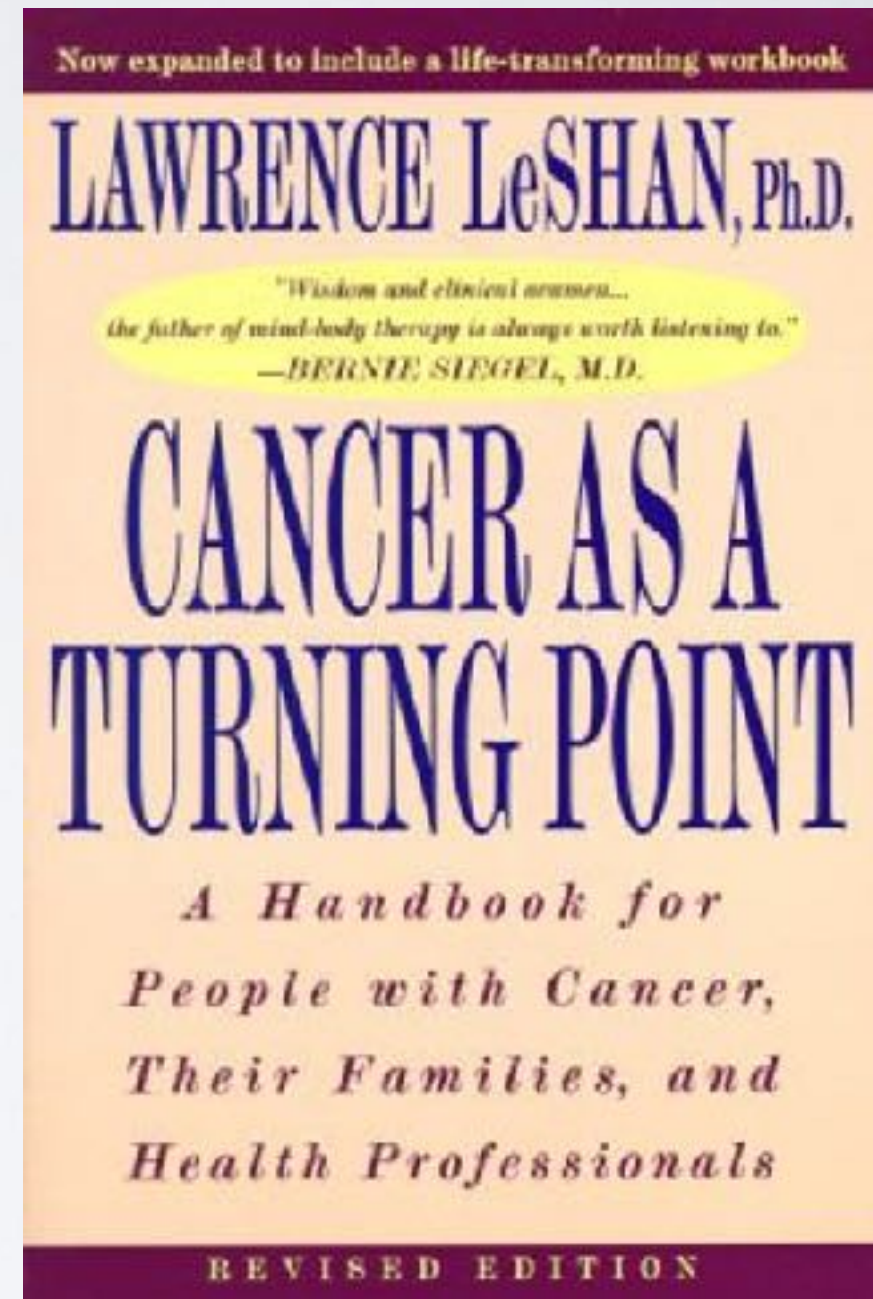


# THE CANCER PROFILE

- It is normal for a PLW/C to be sad and worried. That does not mean they are depressed and anxious.
- Chemotherapy crosses the blood-brain barrier leading to cognitive issues.
- PLW/C are an infirm constituency and the hypnotist must adjust for this.

# CANCER AS A TURNING POINT

- Lawrence LeShan
- 35 years of experience in cancer-related mental health

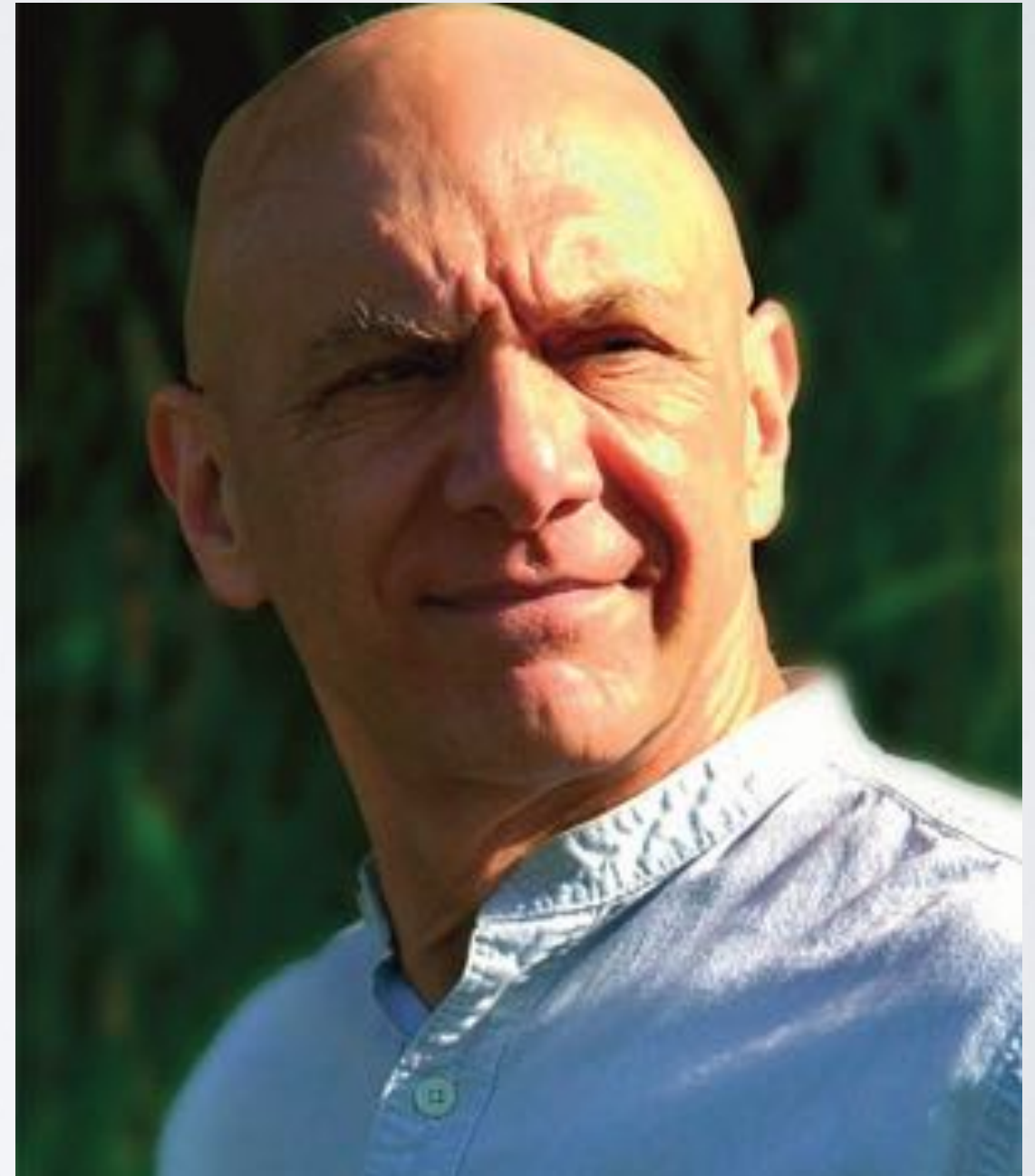


# THE CANCER PERSONALITY

- Tend to be the care-taking, over functioning members of their families who put everyone else first and themselves last.
- May not feel worthy of spending money on their care.
- Some may use cancer as the solution to a life problem.

# BERNIE SIEGEL, M.D.

- Studied PLWVC who beat the odds.
- They had personal characteristics in common and these could be taught.
- Hypnotism is a great way to do that teaching.





# COMMON FINDINGS

- PLWC tend to have common personality traits. These traits are learned, not innate.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences predisposes to a later diagnosis of cancer.
- Environmental Stress is a huge contributing factor in cancer onset, and the relief of that stress is a huge factor in resilience.

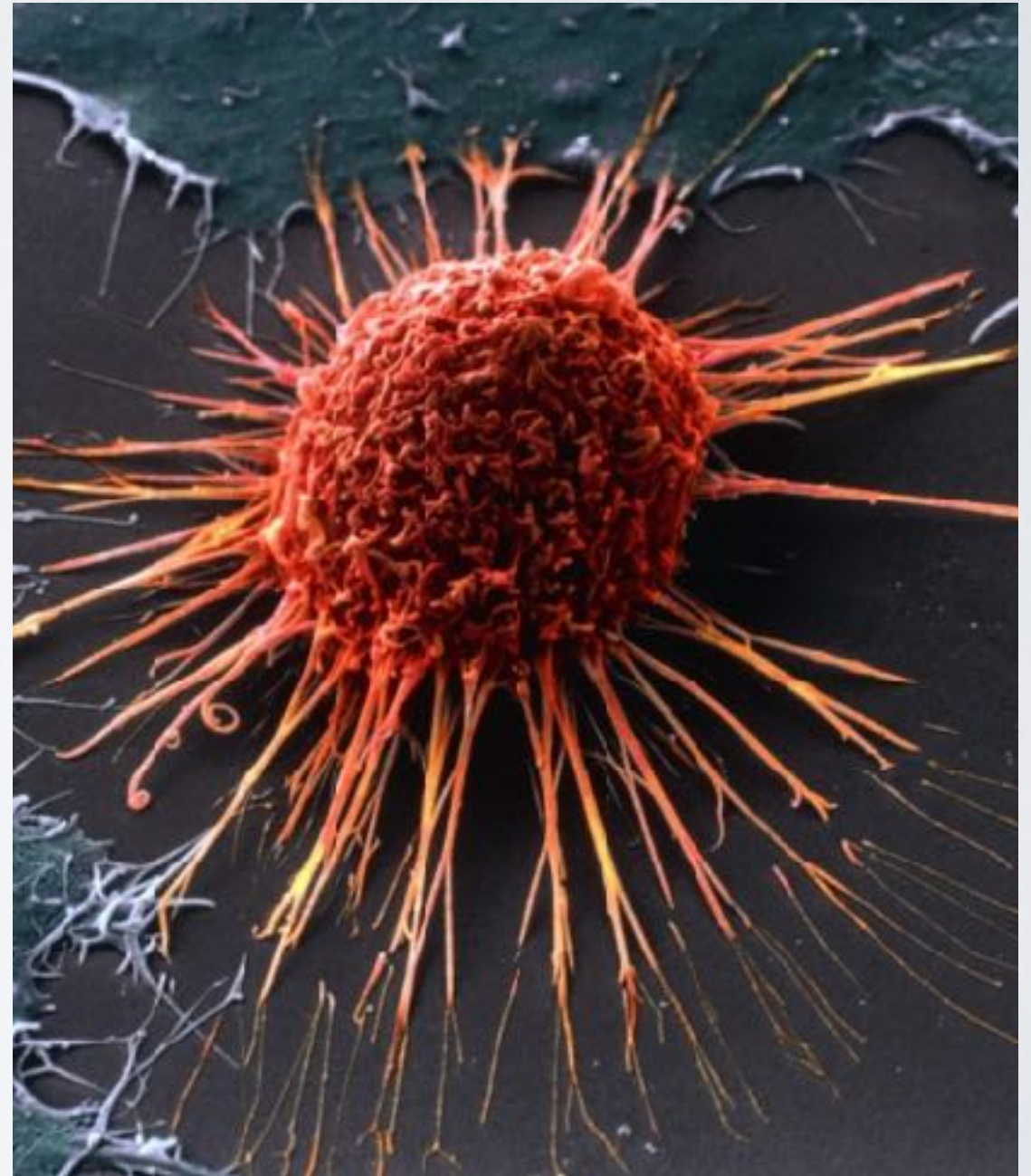
# UNDERSTANDING CANCER

# DEFINED BY

- **Site**- location where cancer first occurred
- **Stage**- degree of spread, if any (usually 4 stages with sub-stages)
- **Type**- Subclass of cancer; Some cancers are aggressive other are not.
- **Grade**- Degree of aggression of the cancer in a particular patient

# TREATED BY

- Prevention/Early Detection
- Surgery (only for early stages)
- Chemotherapy/  
Radiotherapy
- Immune Therapy





# AND BY

- Genetics
- Monoclonal Antibodies (immune stimulation)
- Vaccines (made from patient's own tumor cells)
- Antiangiogenesis (Thalidomide, Angiostatin, Endostatin)
- Hormone Suppression

# OUTCOMES

- Five Year Statistical Break Point
- Most people survive cancer at five years
  - Childhood Cancers- 70% response
  - Adults- 54% response

# THE ONCOGENIC THEORY

- Our body can control cancer unless inhibited.
- Hypnotists help client stop that inhibition.



# INHIBITION

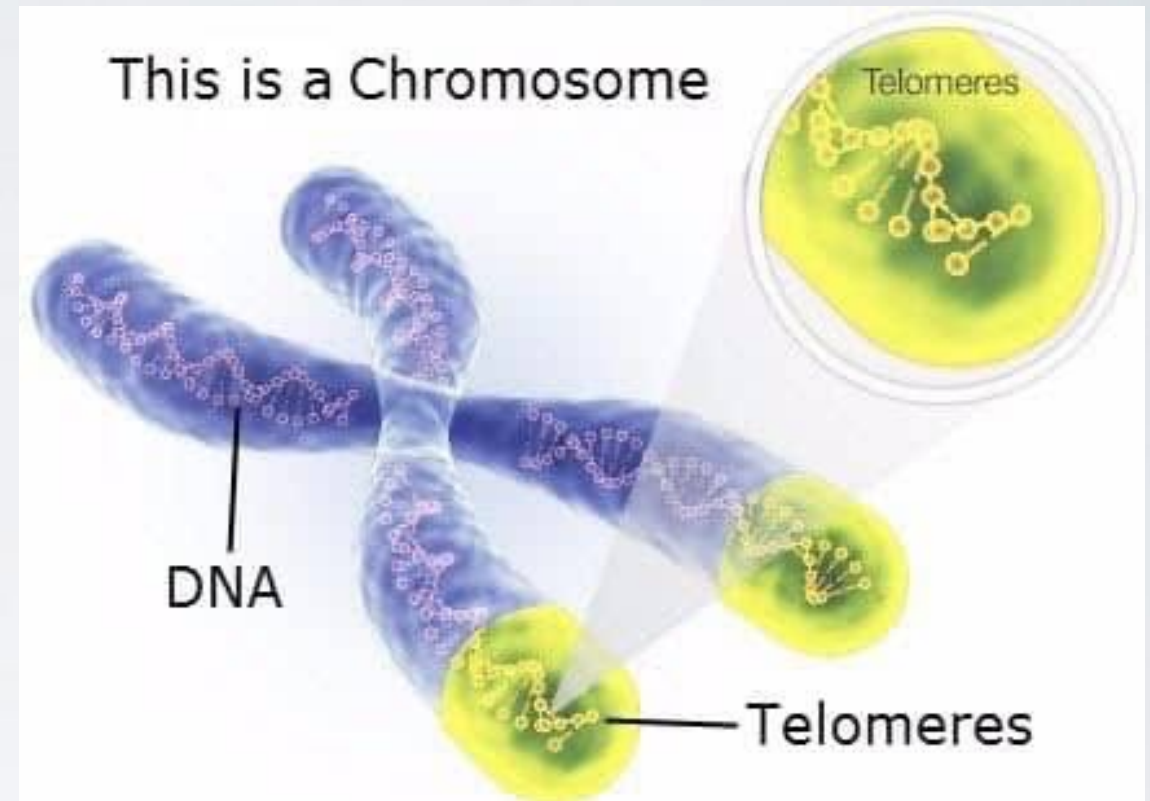
- Environmental Factors (pollution, etc.)
- Behavioral Factors (ACE factors)
- Genetic Factors (family history)
- Emotional Factors (affecting telomeres)



# TELOMERES

Important in resistance to inflammation.

Stress causes telomeres to shorten.



# POINT TO REMEMBER #1

- Self-Hypnotism, Mindfulness Meditation, Guided Imagery, etc. are all effective interventions for a PLWC.
- Anything that lowers stress will produce improved outcomes with cancer.

# THE ACE STUDY

# SOLID RESEARCH

- Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Investigators went to Kaiser Permanente in San Diego and sampled 17,000-plus individuals.

# ACE FACTORS

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [www.ACEstudy.org](http://www.ACEstudy.org)
- Correlation is not Causation. High scores can be mitigated by other people or circumstances.
- There are other sources of childhood trauma that are not tracked in the ACE Study.

# SURPRISING RESULTS

- The rates of child abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect) were 1 in 4. An incidence of 25%.
- A high ACE Score, more than any other factor, predicted problems with heart disease, mood, stroke, depression, drug abuse and suicide later in life.



# STRUCTURE

- There are 10 types of childhood trauma measured in the ACE Study. Of these, 5 are personal and 5 relate to family members.
- Each of the 10 questions counts as one point if answered YES.

# QUESTION 1 OF 10

- Before your 18th birthday, did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you?
- or, act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?

# QUESTION 2 OF 10

- Before your 18th birthday, did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often push, grab, slap, or throw something at you?
- or, ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?

# QUESTION 3 OF 10

- Before your 18th birthday, did an adult or person at least five years older than you ever touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way?
- or, attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?

# QUESTION 4 OF 10

- Before your eighteenth birthday, did you often or very often feel that no one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special?
- or, your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?



# QUESTION 5 OF 10

- Before your 18th birthday, did you often or very often feel that you didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you?
- or, your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?

# QUESTION 6 OF 10

- Before your 18th birthday, was a biological parent even lost to you through divorce, abandonment, or other reason?

# QUESTION 7 OF 10

- Before your 18th birthday, was your mother or stepmother often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her?
- or sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard?
- or, ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?

# QUESTION 8 OF 10

- Before your 18th birthday, did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?

# QUESTION 9 OF 10

- Before your 18th birthday, was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?



# QUESTION 10 OF 10

- Before your 18th birthday, did a household member go to prison?

# YOUR ACE SCORE

- If your score is 4 or more, then:
  - Likelihood of chronic pulmonary lung disease increases 390%.
  - Likelihood of hepatitis increases 240%.
  - Likelihood of depression increases 460%.
  - Likelihood of attempted suicide increases 1220%.

## BEHAVIOR



Lack of physical activity



Smoking



Alcoholism



Drug use



Missed work

## PHYSICAL & MENTAL HEALTH



Severe obesity



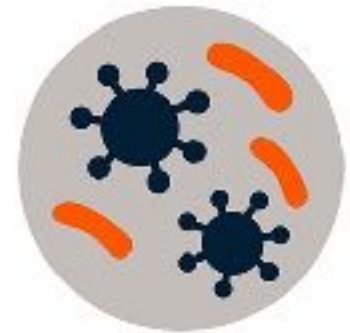
Diabetes



Depression



Suicide attempts



STDs



Heart disease



Cancer



Stroke



COPD



Broken bones

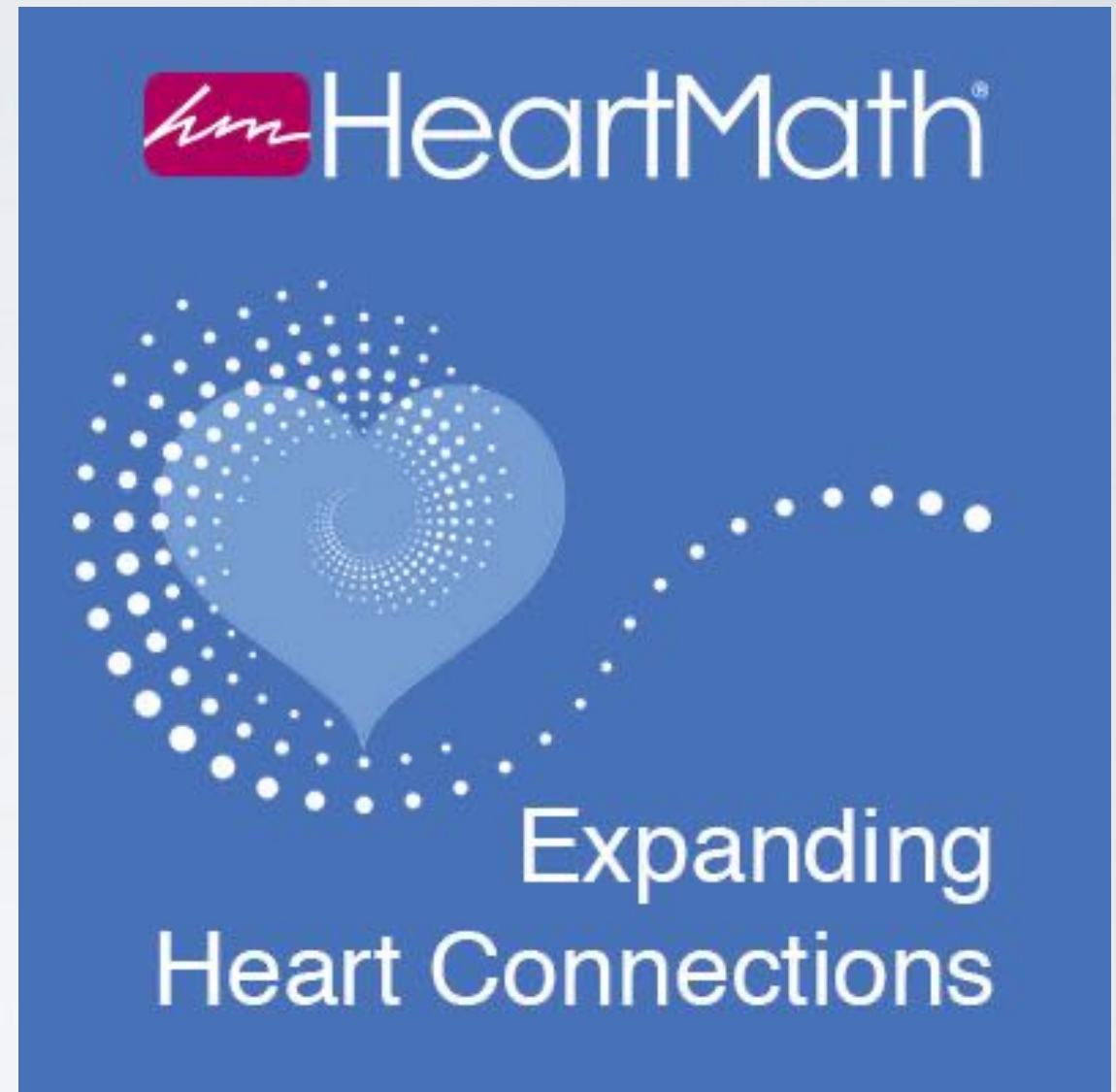
# POINT TO REMEMBER #2

- Childhood trauma increases vulnerability to any inflammatory condition.
- Likely contributes to telomere shortening, but other factors are also probable.
- Childhood trauma predisposes to behaviors that favor inflammation.
- Anything that helps a client make peace with their past will improve outcomes with cancer.

# RESILIENCE

[www.Heartmath.org](http://www.Heartmath.org)

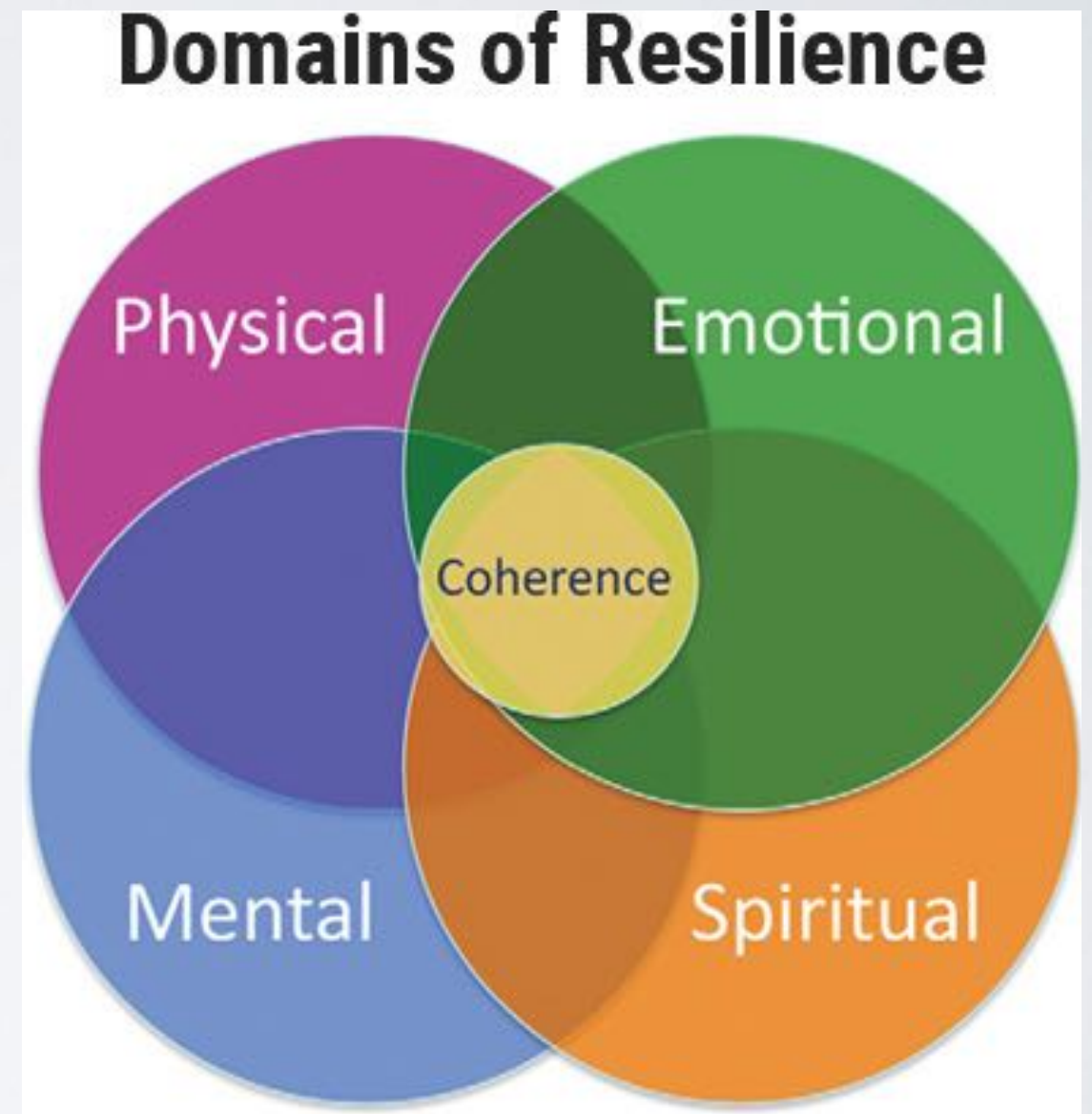
[www.Heartmath.com](http://www.Heartmath.com)





# DOMAINS OF RESILIENCE

- Physical
- Mental
- Emotional
- Spiritual
- Domains Interconnected



# THE BIG IDEA

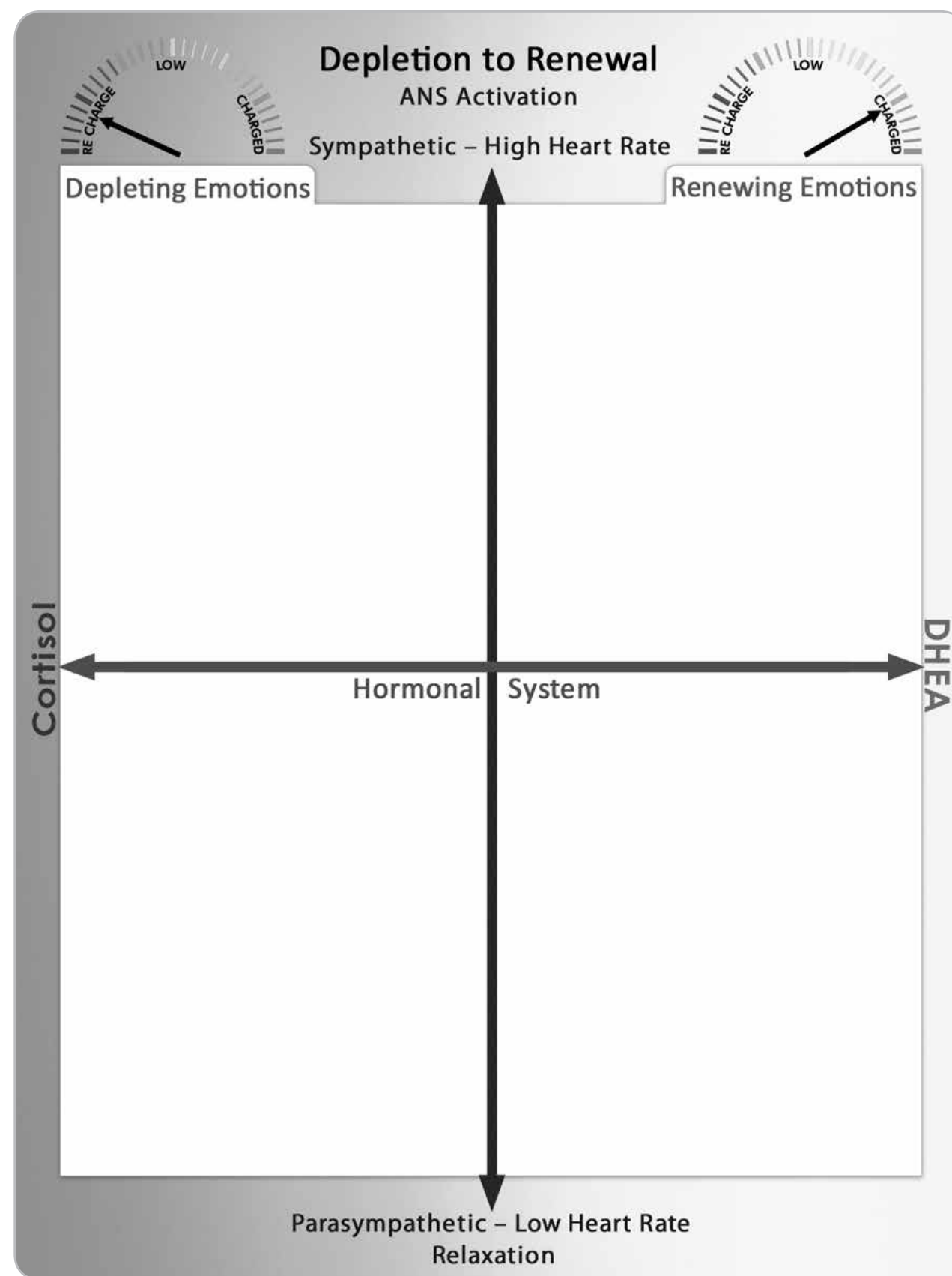
- You must stay mindful of where each client is with regard to their Four Domains of Resilience.
- Your goal is to improve resilience in any area of deficiency.
- You can improve resilience by hypnotism to boost a particular domain, or if a domain is very weak...
- ...You can strengthen other domains to compensate.

# EXAMPLES

- Improve memory and focus
- Improve morale and instill calm (mood elevation)
- Enhance philosophy/spirituality (blueprint)
- Control physical side effects (comp med)

# DEPLETION TO RENEWAL GRID

## Depletion to Renewal™ Grid



MEANING MAKING



# MEANING

- The mind creates meaning as a primary function.  
What meaning does the cancer have for the PLWC?
- You can correct or improve that meaning hypnotically and the client's body will respond.

# RELATIONSHIPS

- “I was so upset at my divorce that I got sick.”



# FAMILY TRADITIONS

- “Every man/woman in my family has died from cancer, so that’s how I am going to go too.”



# CARE-TAKING

- “I’ve been so busy taking care of \_\_\_\_\_ that I never had time to take care of myself.”



# HYPNOTIC APPROACH

- Work through issues of divorce, perhaps with forgiveness or insight work.
- Imagery of bonding to ancestors in a healthy way instead of via cancer.
- Use future-pacing to program good self-care habits.

# THE BLUEPRINT HYPOTHESIS



# BERNIE SIEGEL, MD

- Blueprint, True Will, Personal Legend, Daemon, etc.
- The unconscious mind contains a blueprint for who the patient was supposed to be.
- Encourage self-reinvention, large or small

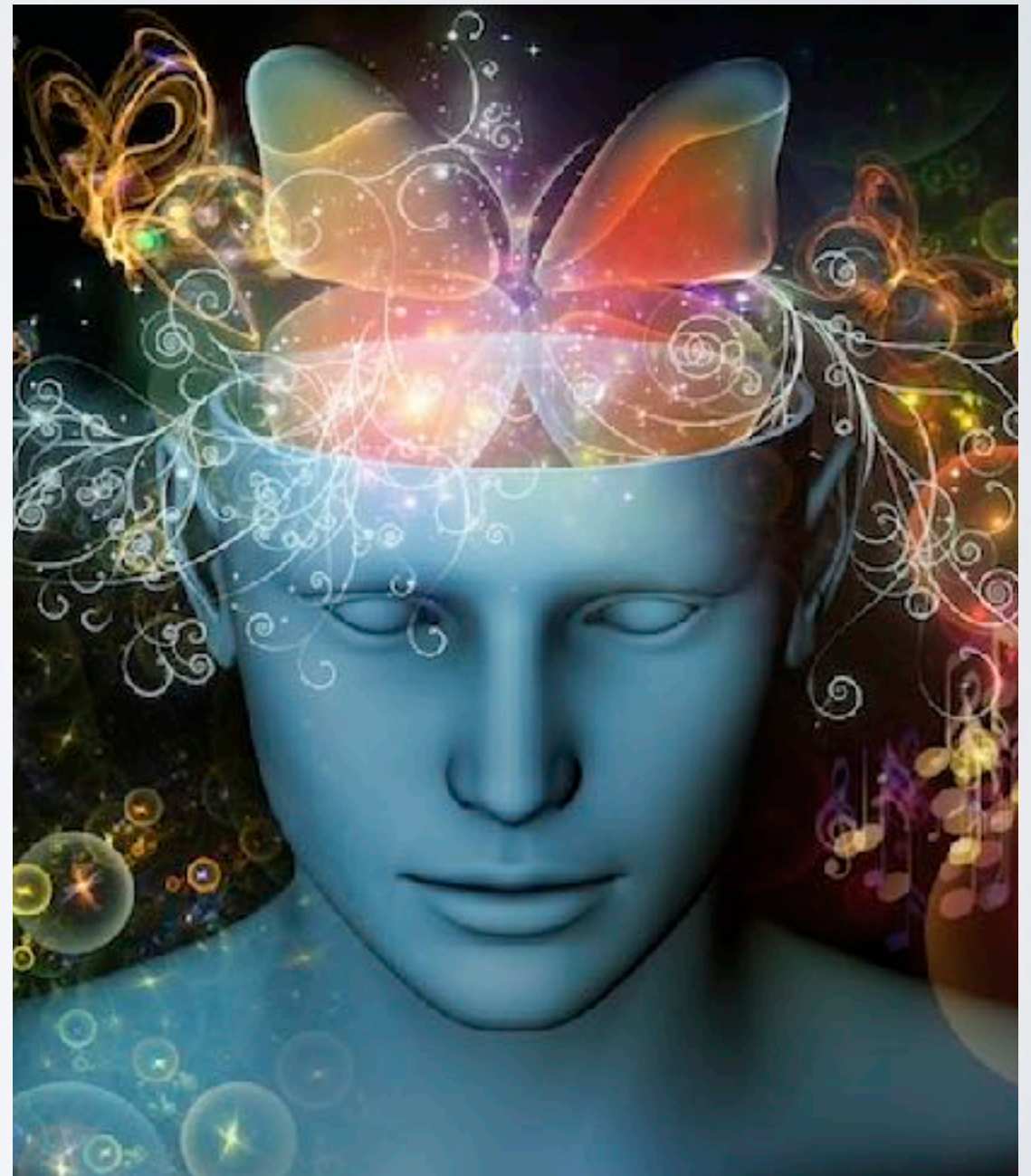


# DREAM ANALYSIS

The Natural Ally of the Consulting Hypnotist

# THE SAME BIOLOGY

- Dreams come from the same place trance comes from.
- Dream logic is the same as trance logic.







# THEIR VALUE

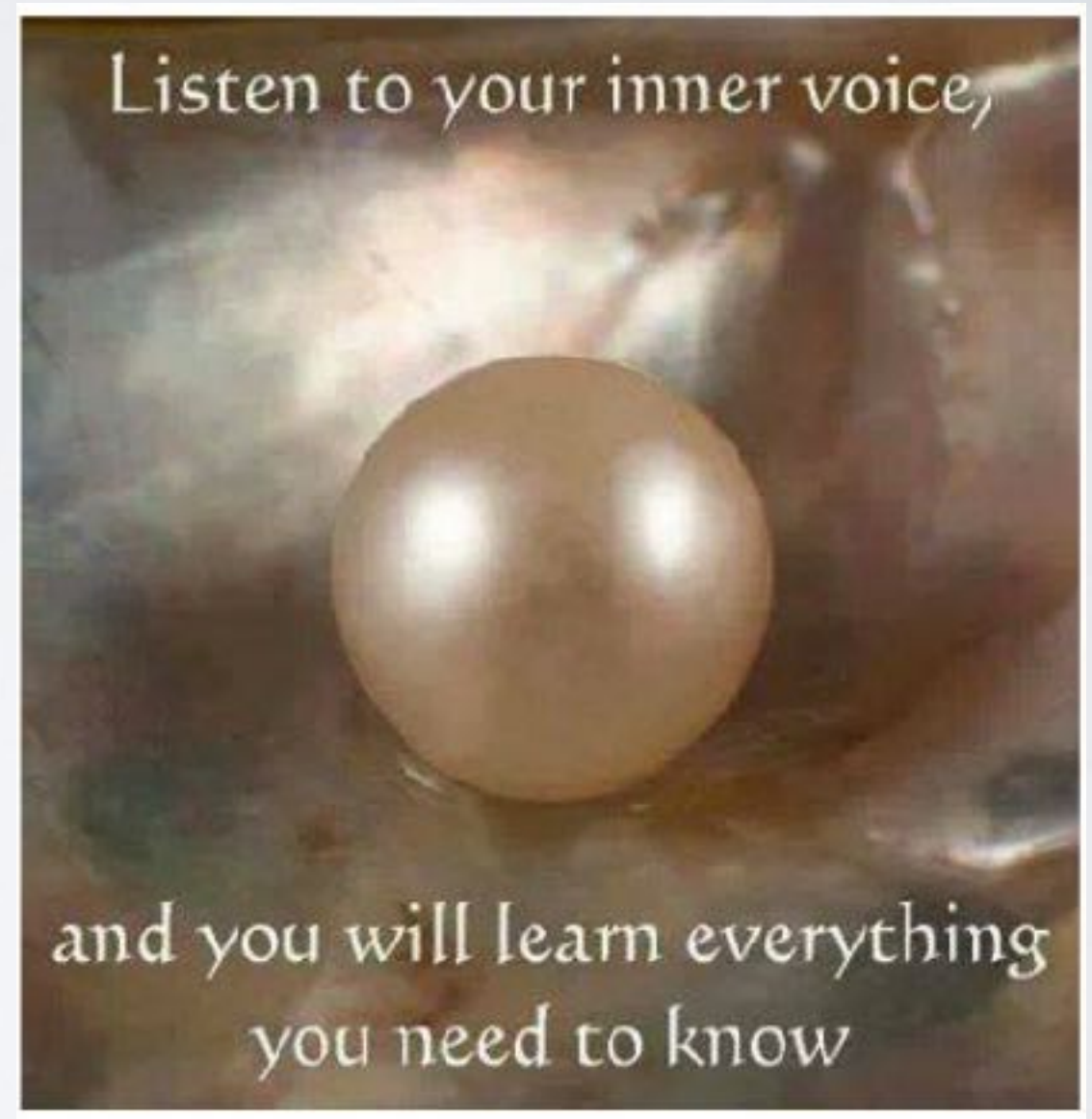
- The sum total of a client's dreams over time almost always points toward the client's blueprint.
- You hypnotically encourage the client to find a way to implement their blueprint. That is, to reinvent themselves.

# GUIDELINES

- Mostly we do not pay attention to our dreams
- Have recording method handy
- Never dismiss a dream as trivial
- Record as fully as possible
- Relate to events in previous day, if possible

# INTERPRETATION

- Always consider the literal meaning first.
- The feelings of the dream are always the feelings of the dream.





# COMMON DREAM THEMES

- The Lost Opportunity (final exam for a class you didn't attend)
- The Secret Saboteur (events conspire to thwart)
- Loss of Body Parts (often teeth)
- Houses/Buildings (revaluation)



# ASSEMBLING THE BLUEPRINT

- What are the common dream themes?
- What sort of dreams produce the most positive feelings?
- What images show up in the dreams?
- You have it right when the client agrees.

# ENHANCE THE BLUEPRINT

- Direct Suggestions/Encouragement
- Future Pacing/Time Line Work
- Affirmation/Visualizations

# WAKING HYPNOTISM

# TRANCE AND SUGGESTION

- Hypnotism is usually a combination of trance and suggestion.
- The goal of hypnotism is for the subject to comply with the suggestion or suggestions.
  - Suggestion can be direct or indirect.
- Waking hypnotism is suggestion without the use of trance.

# WORKS THE SAME WAY, BUT WITH CONVERSATION

- Build Rapport
- Create a Yes Set
- Direct Client's Attention
- Insert Suggestions



# HYPNOSIS AND CANCER CARE

- Makes extensive use of Waking Hypnosis.
- Allows work outside of consultation room (in a hospital/chemo room, with others present, etc.)
- Maximizes your effectiveness as you seek compliance with suggestion 100% of the time you are with a client.

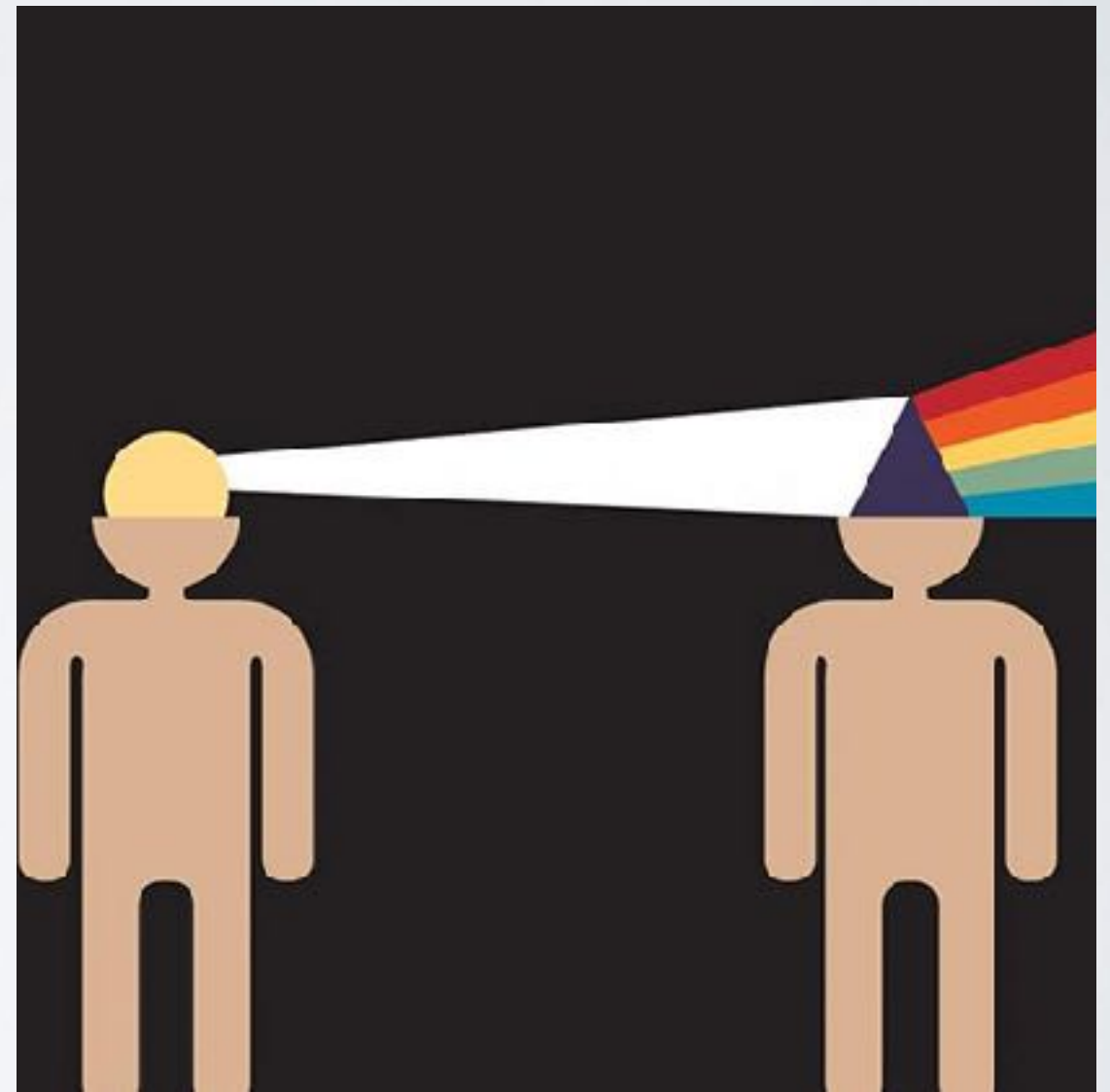


# CONTROL THE NARRATIVE

- Suggestion in service to building a Positive Expectancy.
  - Martin Seligman's Explanatory Style
- Encourage PLWC to explain the world to themselves in a positive way in all Domains of Resilience.

# EXAMPLES

- Victor Narrative
- Compassion Soak
- Future Pacing
- Boundary Setting
- Energetic Economy
- Absolute Yes and No Lists



# OPTATION

- Optation isn't Optimism. It means hopefulness.
- Encourage a decision to remain hopeful in an appropriate way. Always possible.
- Optation is a choice to tell the inner narrative in a certain way (Mastin Poem).

# TRANCE HYPNOTISM

# SIMONTON VISUALIZATIONS

- O. Carl Simonton, M.D.  
(1942-2009)
- Getting Well Again, 1992
- The Healing Journey, 2002
- General v. Specific



# NON-VISUAL IMAGERY

- Imagined Sensations
  - Intense heat is often felt as healing.
  - Cooling can be pain relieving.
- Remembered Wellness





# ILLNESS AS A METAPHOR

- Boundaries
- Blessing In Disguise
- Appropriate v Over Care





# PARTS WORK

- Our Personality has Parts, each of which has a job.
- Inner Family Dialogue
- Inner Voice Dialogue
- There can be a healing part and a sick part.



# FUTURE PACING

- The mirror image of regression hypnotism
- General success and effectiveness work can be framed for this purpose.



# TIME-LINE

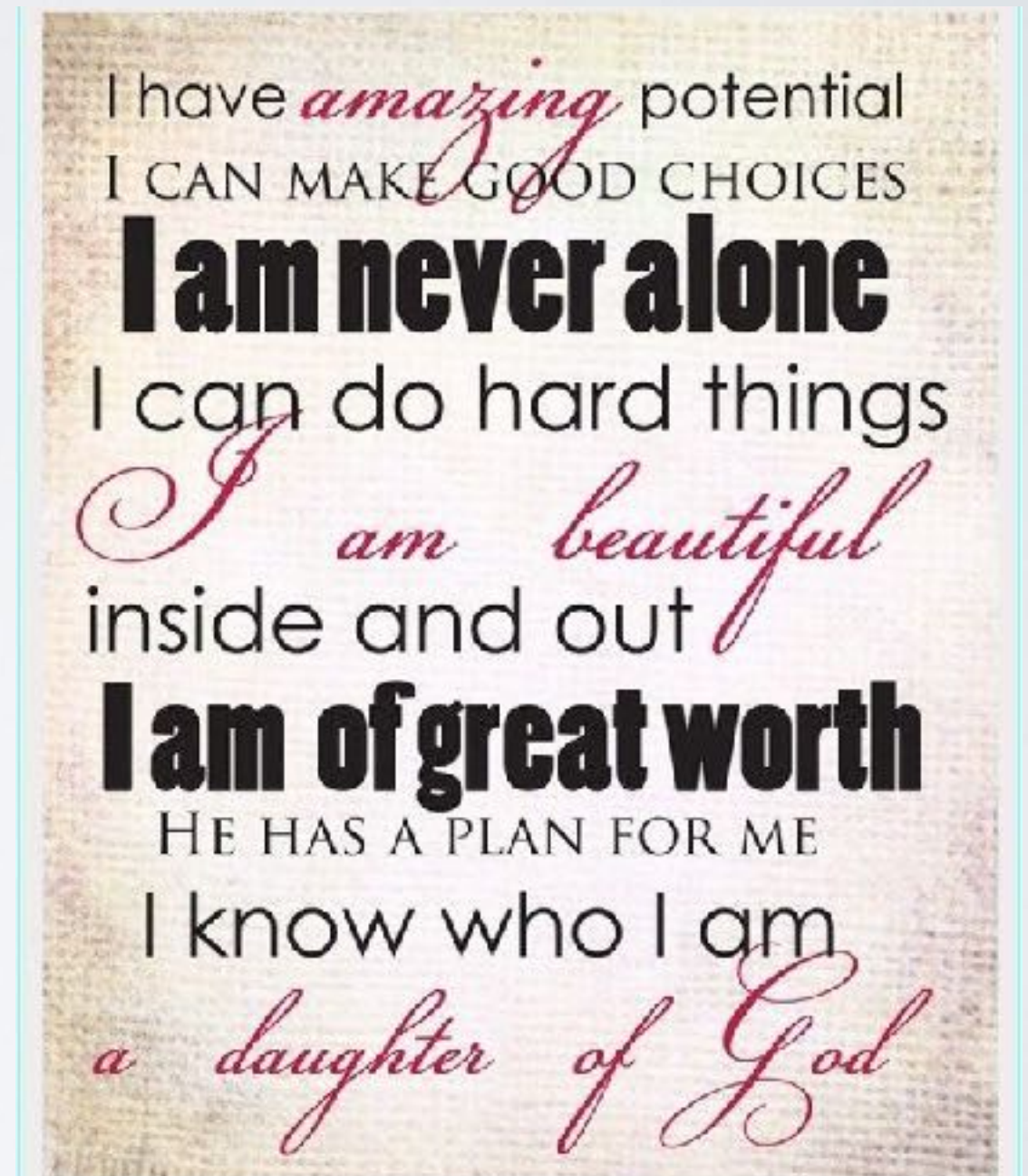
- Thadford James, 1990s
- Exploits the subconscious spacial metaphor for time.
- Overview of DX, TX and PX





# AFFIRMATIONS

- Simple, direct declarative statements expressed as if the desired result has already happened.
- The “Farsing” of NO. Keep Affirmations positive.



# OVERWRITE THE MEDICAL HEX

- Regress to time of PX
- Substitute your voice for the physician's
- Lay down positive expectation



# HYPNOSIS AND CANCER

- **Complement** to Allopathic Medicine
- Helps with **issues related to cancer**
- Goal is to build client **Resilience** in the **Four Domains of Resilience**, and
- To find **meaning** in the cancer journey

THANK YOU!