

**POLSKI INSTYTUT ERICKSONOWSKI**

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**COUPLE THERAPY**

**A LETTER TO A PARTNER:  
"WONDERFUL TIME"**

**What do you want your partner to remember?**

(by Yvon Dolan, compiled by Katarzyna Szymańska)

What do you want your partner to remember best about your current relationship and the way you spend time together, e.g. in five years time

Write a letter from your partner's perspective depicting that period.

Notice: Those letters do not have to be written. You can use the technique in a conversation - a therapist may interview a couple (both of them individually), partners face each other.

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## **ERICKSONIAN COUPLE THERAPY**

(by Krzysztof Klajs)

I. Marital relationship is built with sequences of behaviours which are regulated by certain rules. Symptoms appear when a conflict of rules arises. (J. Haley)

II. Couple diagnosis.

We choose one or a few characteristic behaviours. We diagnose the space between the two partners, not the two individuals separately.

1. The family life cycle
2. The phase of marital relationship (by H.Hendrix)
3. Dominant trance phenomena
4. Characteristic sequences of behaviours
5. Relationship phase (symetric/ complementary )

III. The phase of marital relationship (by H.Hendrix)

1. Romantic phase
2. Power struggle
3. True love
4. Awakening
5. Recommitment
6. Transformation knowledge

IV. Four levels of marital needs (by Cloe Madanas)

1. The need to control
2. The need to be loved
3. The need to give love
4. The need to forgive and forget

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**CONTINUA OF THE TRANCE PHENOMENA\***

Age regression \_\_\_\_\_ Age progression  
Amnesia \_\_\_\_\_ Hypermnesia  
Anesthesia \_\_\_\_\_ Analgesia \_\_\_\_\_ Hypersensitivity  
Catalepsy \_\_\_\_\_ Flexibility/ movement  
Dissociation \_\_\_\_\_ Association  
Positive hallucination \_\_\_\_\_ Negative hallucination  
Time expansion \_\_\_\_\_ Time condensation  
Posthypnotic suggestion \_\_\_\_\_ Prehypnotic suggestion

\* according to Brent B. Geary "The Handbook of Ericksonian Psychotherapy"

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## HIPNOSIS IN COUPLE THERAPY ENTANGLED IN RELATIONSHIPS - SPATIAL TRANCE

(by Katarzyna Szymańska )

GOALS: Disengaging spouses from their families of origin  
Creating the third personality - WE (a map of couple's relationship)  
Building the vision of the relationship in the future

### WORK STRUCTURE:

1. Creating a genogram with stones for one of the spouses (with simultaneous hipnosis for the other spouse)  
In this method stones represent the members of the family of origin and are their symbols (see the system - dissociation)
2. Interview for the genogram:  
How was the parents' marriage like?  
Systemic traumas (hypothesis concerning the identification with sb from the past) - What happened in the family history?  
Symbiotic traumas (incorporated feelings from the families of origin) - Which feelings were dominant in the family?
  - I. Stones constellation of the marital relationship of the spouses and his/her family of origin (see the picture - dissociation)  
An interview on horizontal stressors - What has happened lately when a relationship problem arose?  
Structure analysis: triangulation, distance vs proximity
  - II. Adding the symbol of the couple's problem  
How do you feel when you are looking at it? (association with feelings)
  - III. Defining the solution : How will you know that your relationship is getting better?  
Specific: How will you know that the relationship is successful in the future? (the vision of the relationship and positive future).
  - IV. Retrieving resources: When it happened in the past.
  - V. The change of the stones spatial arrangement: What has changed in the stones arrangement when you're looking at it now? (presupposition)
  - VI. Future pacing: Utilize the experience when needed.

### Methods functions

- separating a new couple's system from the families of origin (creation of boundaries, dissociation):
- the ritual of leaving - e.g. a wife can say: "Dad, this is my husband, bless us.
- making the issues real (dealing with hallucinations - disengagement of the parents from the partner)
- positive connotation of the symptom e.g. - partner's anger indicates strength and increase of independence
- externalisation of the problem - looking at the external is a good training of observing how one functions in relationships
- working on an unconscious level - family made of stones is a metaphor
- suggestion for change - shifting from catalepsy to movement
- creation of the anticipation of positive future outcomes
- retrieving and utilising couple's resources

*Translation: A. Głusińska*