

ASCH

2026

**ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC
MEETINGS & WORKSHOPS**

New Frontiers in Hypnosis:
Human Ingenuity, AI Innovation,
and Ethical Boundaries

 **VIRTUAL**

March 20–22, 2026

Advanced Workshop TOPIC:

Hypnotic Biohacking: Therapeutic Utilization of Embodied Communication for Enhancing Vitality and Longevity

Presenters' Names

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Disclosures

ASCH and ASCH-ERF jointly provided this program.

No staff or committee members involved in the development, planning or execution of educational content have any financial relationships or conflicts of interest to disclose.

We have no significant financial relationships or conflicts of interest to disclose.

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Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Examine hypnotic, embodied communication—verbal and non-verbal—as a biohacking technology of transformation and as a living therapeutic tradition;
2. Delineate the role of mindful communication in hypnosis and self-hypnosis for healing, transformative (re)learning, (self-)regulation, resilience, individuation, healthspan, and joyspan; and
3. Provide mental health practitioners with holistic linguistic options and strategies, biopsychosocial-spiritual awareness in ethical decision-making and viable linguistic practices and resources for enhancing vitality and longevity.

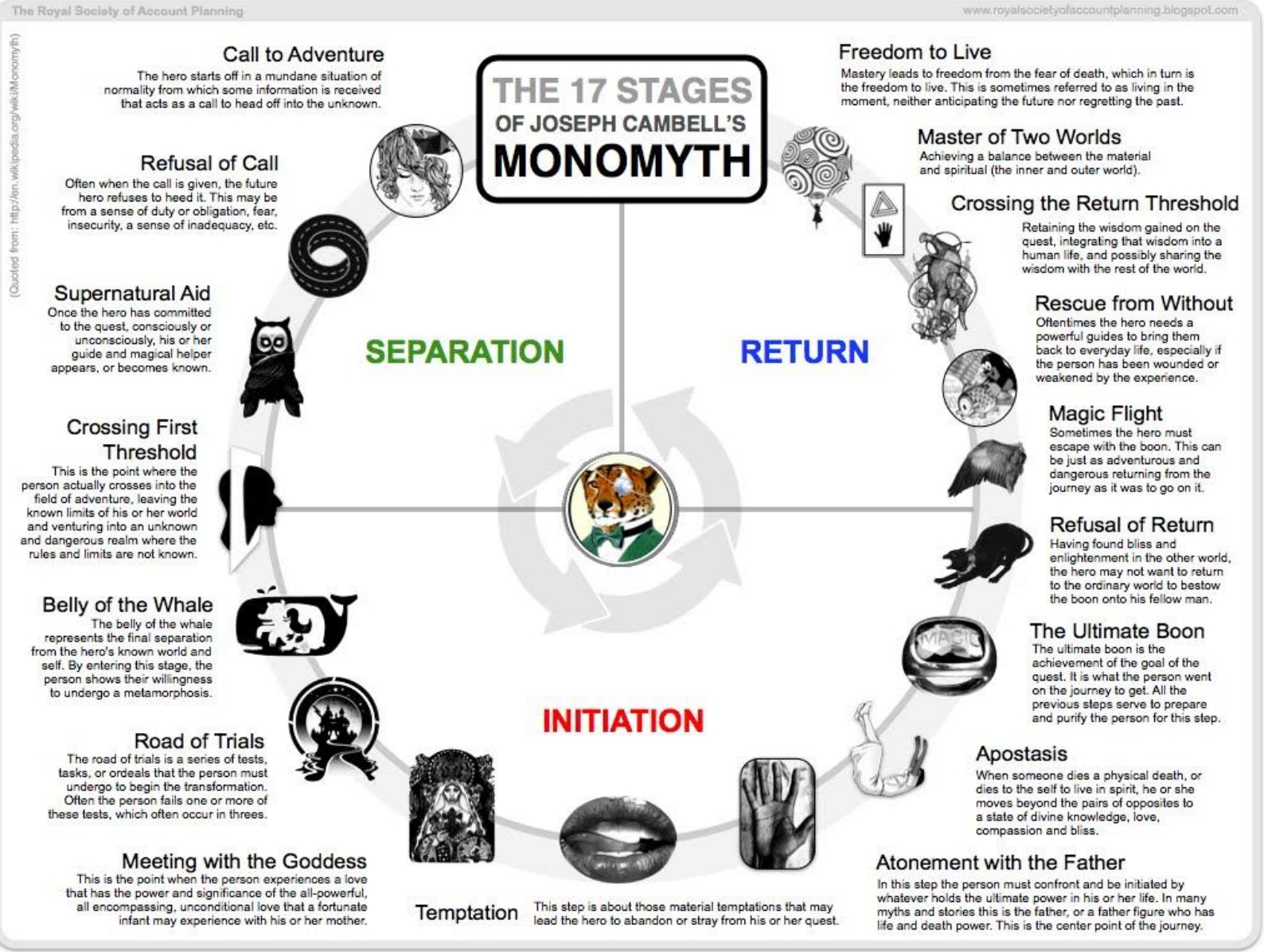
Framing the Experience: Hero's/Heroine's/Heroic Journey (Joseph Campbell's legacy)

1. SEPARATION from the ordinary, conservative (biomedical) approach to holistic health, well-being, and health care. **[In Jeff Zeig's language, this is ORIENTING]**

2. INITIATION into the traditional and contemporary healing knowledge and practices (the biopsychosocial-spiritual cultural approach) that harness the therapeutic and *holotropic* ("moving-toward-wholeness") potentials of expanded/hypnotic states of consciousness and of *the imaginal*. **[Following Jeff Zeig's understanding, this is EXPERIENCING]**

Imag·i·nal (from Merriam-Webster Dictionary online): **of or relating to imagination, images, or imagery; First Known Use: 1647**

3. RETURN (with a BOON) transformed by the experience and equipped with empowering knowledge, skills, and practices that optimize health, healing, and a sense of well-being. **The boon is for sharing! ☺ [For Jeff Zeig, this is REALIZING]**



Section I:

**Hypnotic communication as a biohacking
technology of transformation and as a living
therapeutic tradition**

- * “Hypnotherapy, as a form of intervention combining suggestion techniques and therapeutic language, offers a new space to understand the body and mind as a field of social and symbolic interaction. ... [as] a subconscious communication-based approach [it] offers a more personalized healing opportunity” (Tarsani, 2025, p. 1);
- * “In a society where verbal expression is deeply intertwined with with emotional processing, the strategic use of language becomes a therapeutic tool” (Tarsani, 2025, p.2);
- * “Hypnotherapy not only taps into unconscious patterns but also empowers clients **renegotiate [and regenerate]** their internal dialogues” (Tarsani, 2025, p. 2);
- * Hypnotic “communication is not merely a tool for therapy, but **a space for the co-construction of meaning essential in the healing process**” (Tarsani, 2025, p. 3).

KEY APPLICATIONS

- **Optimizing human consciousness, inner resources, & habits: Client Empowerment, Ego-Strengthening, Transformation, & Integration**
- **Stress-Management & Prevention**
- **Enhancing Self-Efficacy for Health & Well-Being Promoting Behaviors**
- **Epigenetic Optimizations**
- **Gene Expression Modulation**
- **Holistic Healing (biopsychosocial-spiritual, ancestral, and cultural)**
- **Holistic Health (biopsychosocial-spiritual, ancestral, and cultural)**
- **Holistic Well-Being**
- **Mind-Body Medicine**
- **Lifestyle Medicine**
- **Personalized Medicine**
- **Regenerative Practices toward Enhanced Vitality and Vibrant Longevity**

“It has become increasingly evident that bidirectional (“top-down and bottom-up”) interactions between the brain and peripheral tissues, including the cardiovascular and immune systems, contribute to both mental and physical health. Therapies directed toward addressing functional links between mind/brain and body [or “top-down” approaches and mechanisms to healing] may be particularly effective in treating the range of symptoms associated with many chronic diseases. . . .

Indeed, *mind-body therapies* (including hypnosis, mental imagery, biofeedback, progressive muscle relaxation, yoga, meditation, and Tai Chi) have been found effective for reducing depression, insomnia, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), nausea, and acute and chronic pain, and for managing impaired circulation, diabetes, and hypertension. Furthermore, controlled experimental studies have demonstrated physiological changes during

and following mind-body interventions, including enhanced cardiac-vagal tone and cardiovascular function; improved glucose tolerance and lipid profiles; and modulation of neuroendocrine responses, immune responses, and inflammatory responses. These changes are consistent with the idea that these therapies promote *homeostasis*, or the maintenance of optimal physiological conditions.” (Taylor, Goehler, Galper, Innes, & Bourguignon, 2010, para 1-2).

“To begin with, **a gene** is simply a part of the total length of DNA which tells the body how to manufacture particular proteins. Simplistic notion often ignore the complex turning on and off of genes in relation to internal and external environmental factors. **Except for blood type, very few traits are displayed by genes without a complex input and interaction with the environment.** Striking examples exist in nature such as a butterfly (*Bicyclus anyana*) which is brightly

coloured if born in the rainy season, but grey if born in the dry season. The advantage of this tight coupling with the environment is that **it offers a means of protection**. Environmental couplings may also promote health and well-being” (Ray, 2007, p. 226).

“Hypnotizability [and hypnosis application] is associated with an ability to reduce the experience of pain [Holroyd, 1996], to modulate the immune system

[Kiecolt-Glaser et al., 2001], and to achieve greater benefits of psychosocial therapies [Kirsch et al., 1995].” (Ray, 2008, p. 238).

This would suggest that the hypnotic experience has its roots in processes which initially evolved to protect the organism in a variety of both internal and external situations.

Rossi (2009) informed, “Many people still believe that genes are active only during biological reproduction and physiological activities. We now know, however, that special classes of genes called **‘activity-dependent’** (or **‘experience dependent’**) are activated or ‘turned on’ by many normal, creative, stressful life experiences (e.g. PTSD), and associated psychiatric conditions such as major depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia (Couzin, 2008; Lin et al., 2008).

The psychological level can turn on the biological activity of gene expression and activity-dependent brain plasticity in our physical brain. This is the essence of psychosocial genomics and top-down mind-body therapy!” (Rossi, 2009, p. 289).

Bioinformatics of Therapeutic Hypnosis

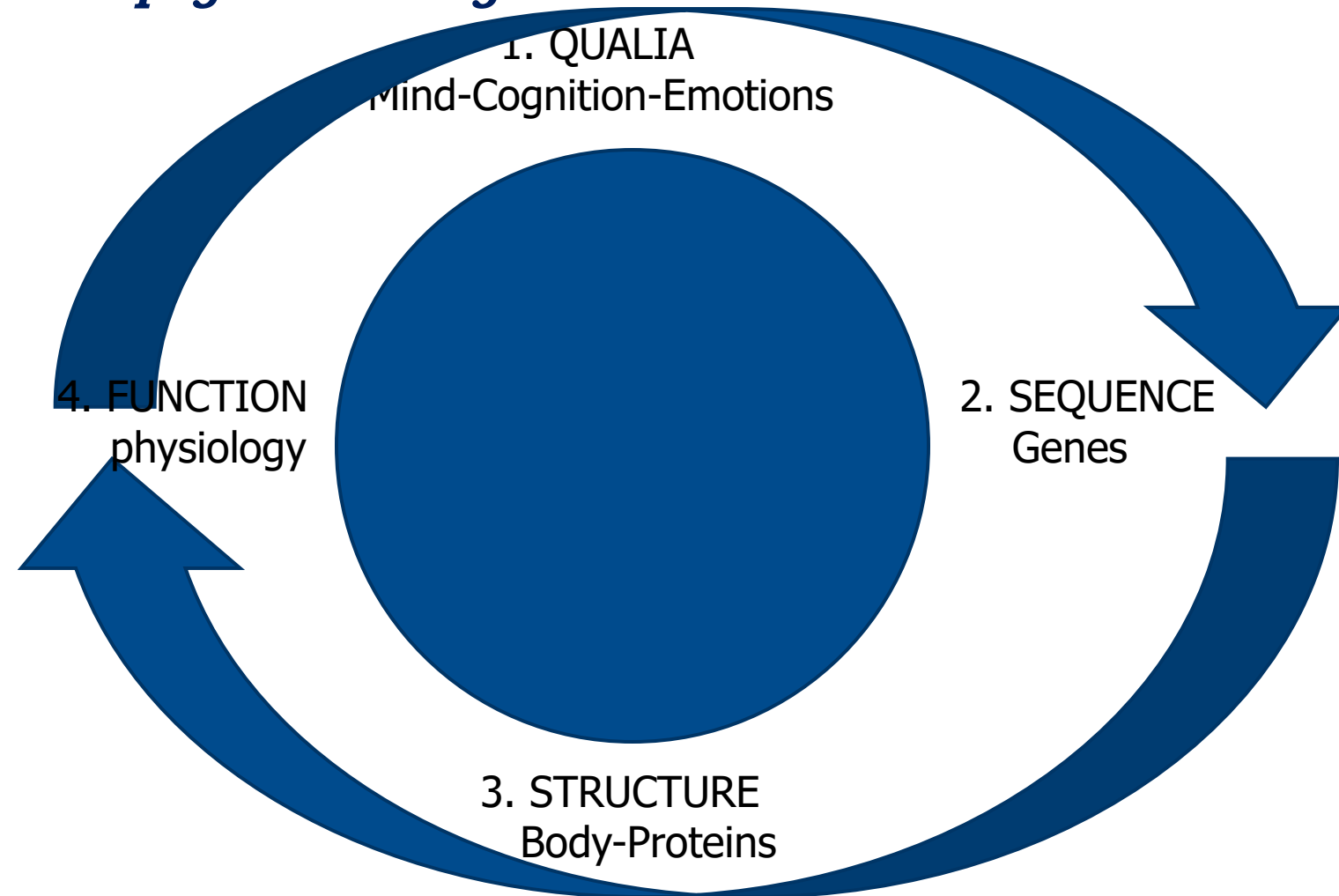
In 1953, Watson and Crick offered the so-called “the basic dogma of molecular biology” or a linear, molecular-genomic view that may be expressed as follows:

“(1) the linear DNA code of nucleotides that make up the **sequence** of our genes generates and (2) the **structure** of the proteins of our body, which in turn generates (3) all the physiological **functions** of the body and mind” (Rossi, 2009).

Thus

- (1) Sequence of genes →
- (2) Structure of protein →
- (3) Function of physiology

Rossi (2009) added to Watson and Crick's linear paradigm qualia of consciousness and psychological/mind experiences, transforming the paradigm into a circular process of mind-body communication. Rossi (2009) referred to this expanded cartography of mind-body communication process as ***psychosocial genomics***:



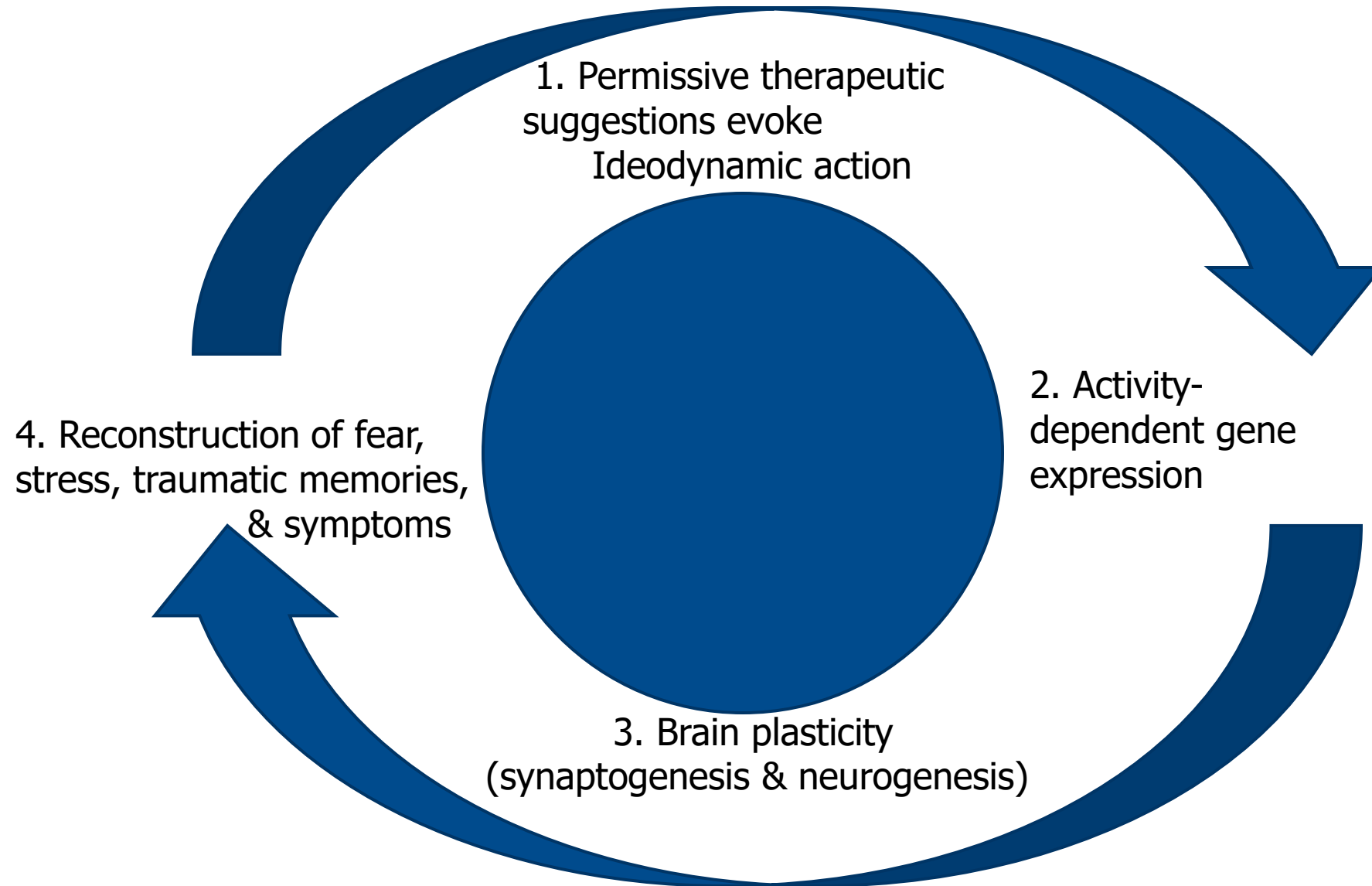
Rossi (2009) informed that three particular types of behavior modulate activity-dependent gene expression and brain plasticity:

**novelty,
enrichment, and
physical and mental exercise.**

Rossi (2009) explained, “***Think of it as the patient having a novel and numinous emotional experience narrating her story and getting some new insights about her life during therapeutic hypnosis.***”

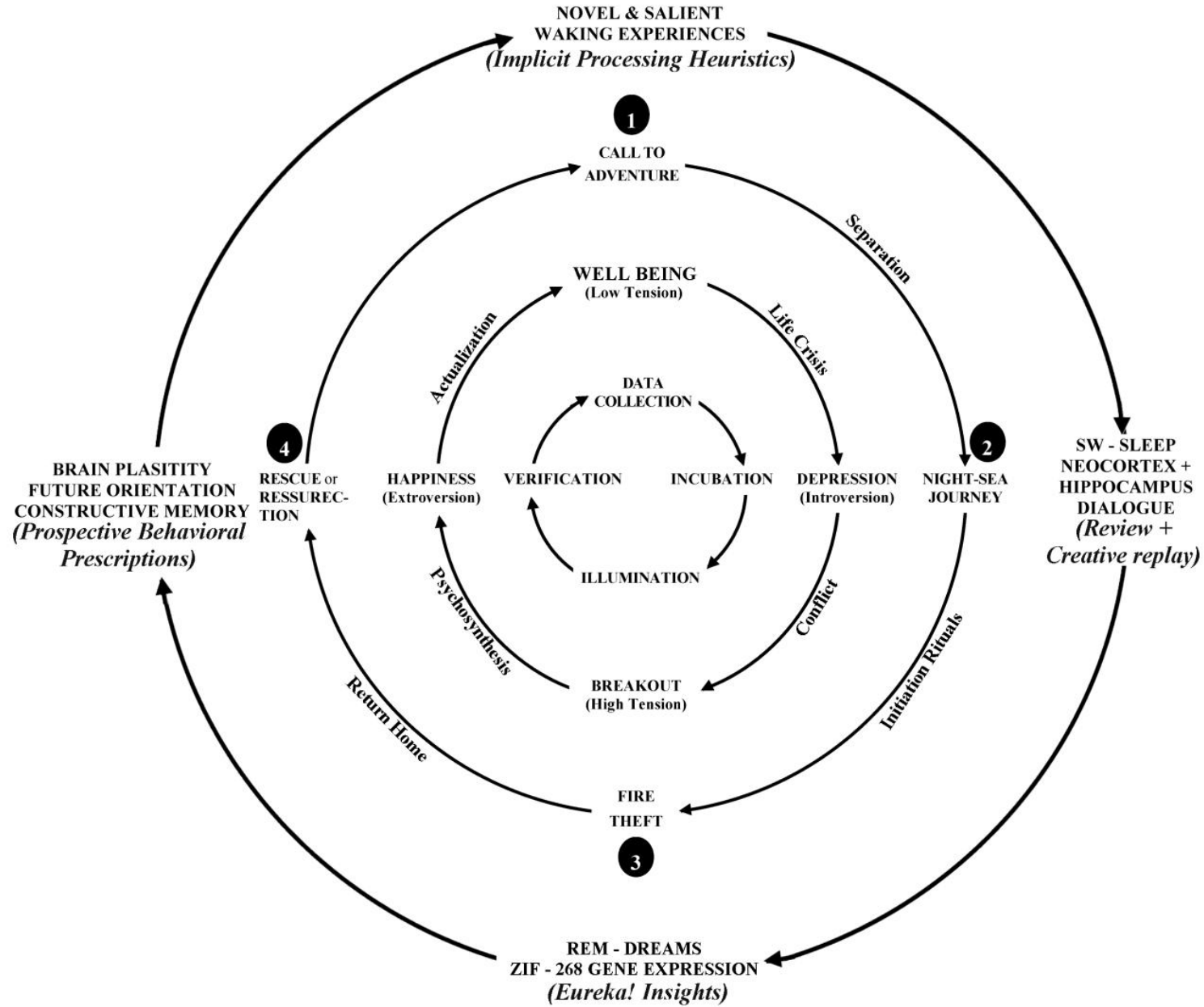
Later during sleep the hippocampus repeatedly replays this novel experienced to the cortex during slow wave sleep (SWS), which stimulates the cortex to ‘turn on’ ‘activity-dependent’ gene expression and brain plasticity’ to update the brain/mind in an evolutionary adaptive manner during rapid eye movement (REM dream) sleep. . . This of it as a post-hypnotic process of how the brain/mind utilizes the therapist’s **permissive suggestions** (which I now call ‘implicit processing heuristics’) to facilitate mind/body healing” (p. 290).

Adaptation of Rossi's (2009) diagram:



The following algorithm comes from the article “An Evolutionary RNA/DNA Psychogenomic Theory of the Transformations of Consciousness: The Quest for Therapeutic Mind/Gene Search Algorithms” (Rossi & Rossi, 2013).

It invites a healing of the dualistic Cartesian split between the mind and the body:



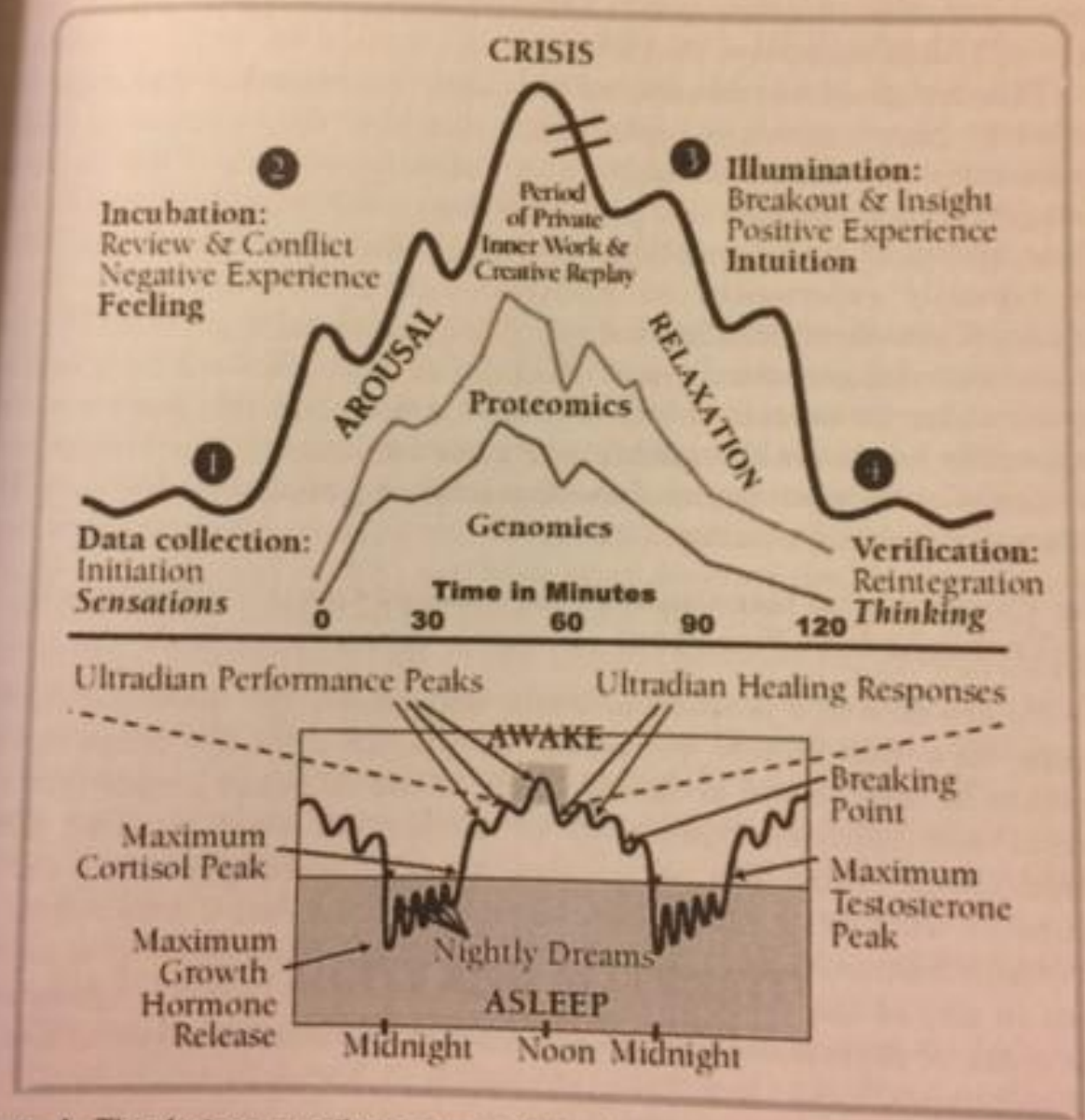
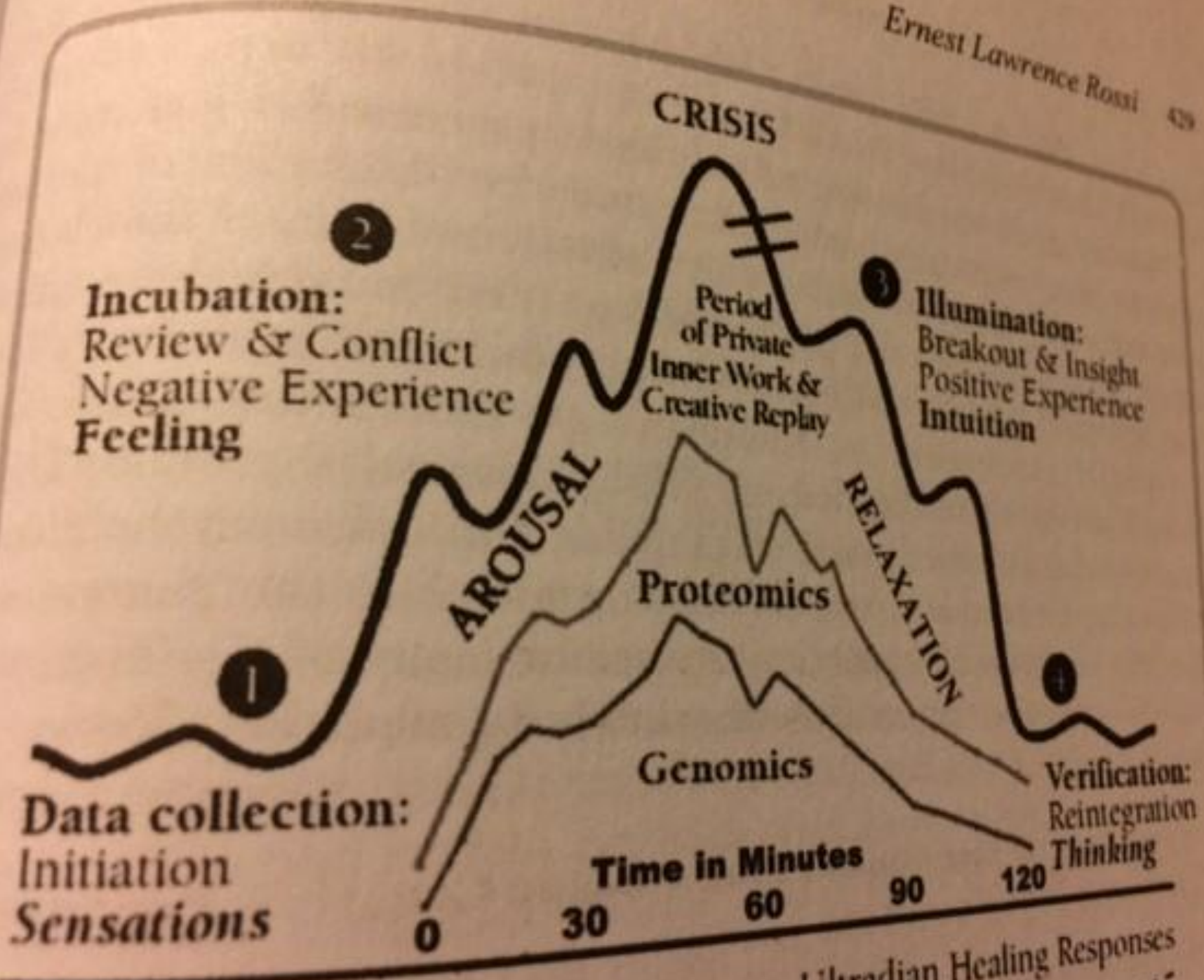
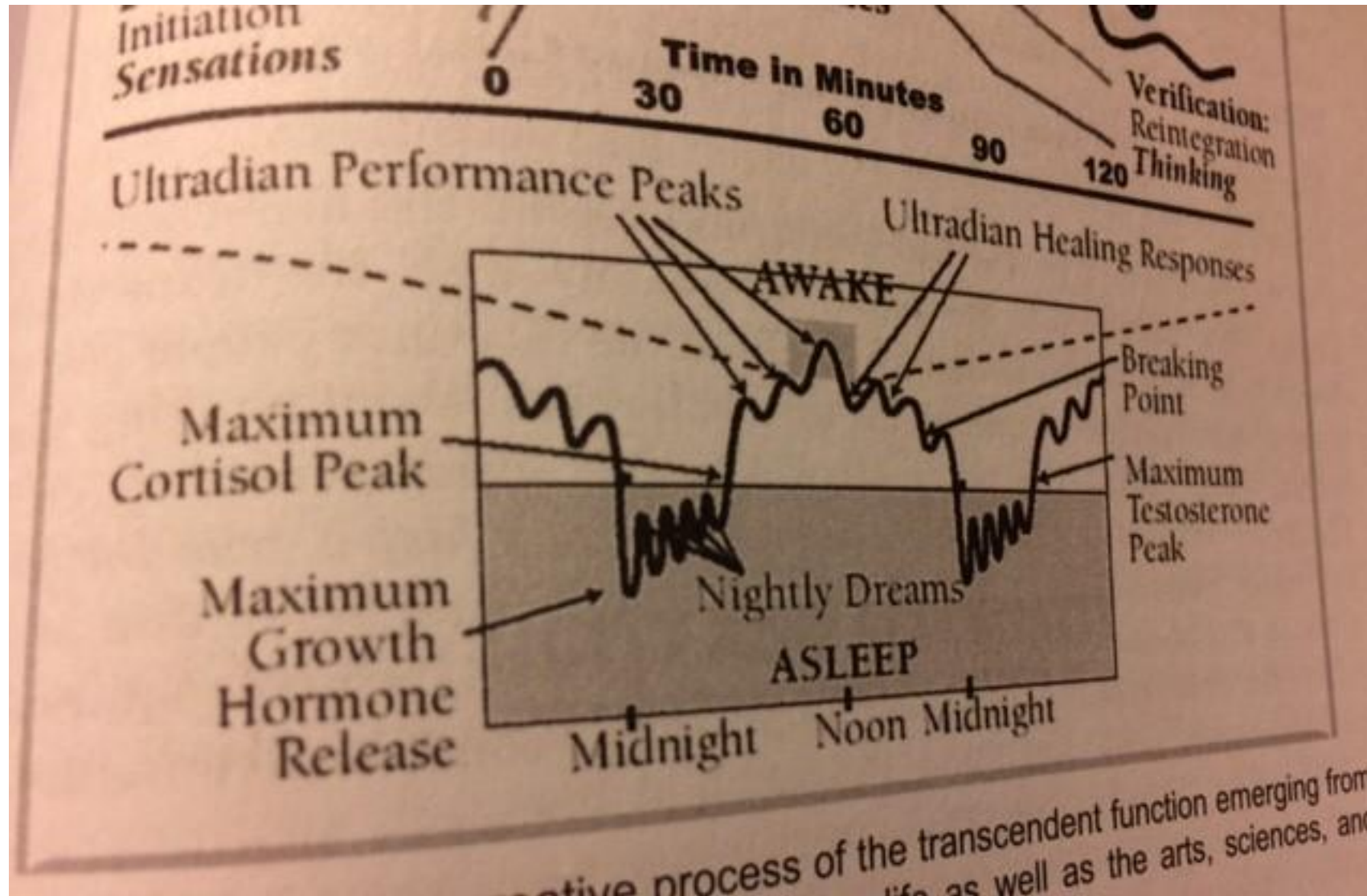


Figure 4: The 4-stage creative process of the transcendent function emerging from genomic and proteomic levels in everyday life as well as the arts, sciences, and psychotherapy.





“Research indicates that the ideo-plastic process of **therapeutic hypnosis** may be associated with

- (1)** the heightening of a molecular-genomic signature for the up-regulation (heightened activity) of activity-dependent genes characteristic of stem cell Growth;
- (2)** a reduction in cellular oxidative stress; &
- (3)** a reduction in chronic inflammation associated with psychosocial stress” (Rossi, Schirmer, & Rossi, 2010, p. 9).

Rossi, Iannotti, Cazzolino, Castiglione, Cicatelli, & Rossi (2008) completed a pilot study and reported, “We extend the use of microarrays to explore the use of a new psychotherapeutic protocol The Creative Psychosocial Genomic Healing Experience, an easy-to-learn approach to facilitating therapeutic hypnosis, psychotherapy rehabilitation, meditation, and pastoral counseling. This pilot study assessed the hypothesis that a top-down creatively oriented positive human experience can modulate gene expression at the molecular level.

A DNA microarray data analysis of the white blood cells of three human subjects was performed immediately before, one hour after, and 24 hours after the Creative Psychosocial Genomic Healing Experience.

We documented changes in the expression of 15 early expression genes within one hour that apparently initiated a further cascade of 77 genes 24 hours later. This could provide the mind/molecular genomic foundation of new therapeutic models for optimizing human consciousness, health, and well being via therapeutic hypnosis,

psychotherapy, pastoral counseling, and psychiatry. This proof-of-principle pilot study now requires cross-validation with more subjects and a variety of diagnostic classifications to document the validity and reliability of using DNA microarrays to access our new creative psychosocial genomic therapeutic protocol in a variety of cultures” (p. 39).

With respect to the cascade of gene expression discovered in subjects 24 hours after the therapeutic hypnosis intervention ,

Rossi et al. (2008) asserted, “This unexpected finding may have important implications for the role of time and posthypnotic suggestion in therapeutic hypnosis and many other psychological experiences (p. 42).

“It was historically thought that the human brain was structurally mature by the end of early childhood (Mann, 1984) and the nature versus nurture debate that dominated the mid-20th century posited unidirectional models of child development that assigned varying degrees of influence independently to genes and environment (Meaney, 2010). It is now thought that **a complex interplay of genetic inheritance and environmental experience, mediated by epigenetic processes, shapes the brain from the womb to adulthood.** The epigenome is a set of chemical compounds, which, **in response to environmental stimuli such as nutrition, toxins, or traumatic experiences, directly alter the expression of one’s genes, muting some and activating others**” (Goldenring-Fine and Sung, 2014).

“With the rapid emergence of the field of epigenetics, it is now understood that the genes affecting behavior are switched on or off through complex interconnections and feedback among the body, behavior, and the environment (Gottlieb, 2000). In brief, gene expression shapes behavior and behavior shapes gene expression. Emotions are particularly strong purveyors of signals to genes (Isles & Wilkinson, 2008; Stuffrein-Roberts, Joyce, & Kennedy, 2008), but virtually any experience may have an impact, including perceiving, thinking, moving, nurturing, being nurtured, or facing stress” (Feinstein & Church, 2010, p. 284-285).

In their article “Neuroscience of Child and Adolescent Health Development,” Goldenring-Fine and Sung (2014) noted, “**The concept of resilience** and its associated evidence suggest several implications for prevention and intervention. A key idea is that **interventions may need to focus on developing assets and resources for children [and adolescents] exposed to risk** (Yates, Egeland, & Sroufe, 2003), *instead of the more traditional approach of focusing on risk amelioration*. The usual practice is to list deficits that predispose, enable, and reinforce some negative behaviors. **A resilience approach, however, emphasizes assets and resources as the focus for change**” (p. 524).

Furthermore, Goldenring-Fine and Sung (2014) emphasized,

“Internal assets that may be particularly critical to develop include social skills for relating to peers, self-efficacy for health promoting behavior, academic skills, and participation in extracurricular and community activities”
(p. 524).

Feinstein and Church (2010) remarked, “Mapping the relationship between gene expression and psychopathology is proving to be among the most promising new frontiers for advancing the understanding, treatment, and prevention of mental disorders. Each cell in the human body contains some 23,688 genes, yet only a tiny fraction of a cell’s genes are active or “expressed” at any given moment. The interactions of biochemical, psychological, and environmental factors influencing gene expression are complex yet relatively accessible technologies for assessing gene expression have allowed the identification of specific genes implicated in a range of psychiatric disorders, including depression, anxiety, and schizophrenia. Moreover, successful psychotherapeutic interventions have been shown to shift patterns of gene expression” (p. 283).

WHAT SHALL WE KEEP IN MIND IN FACILITATING OUR EXPERIENCES AND THAT OF CLIENTS? CULTIVATING/PROMOTING/UTIIZING:

- (1) Novelty of biopsychosocial-spiritual experiences (including numinous experiences)**
- (2) Multifaceted enrichment**
- (3) Physical and mental exercise**
- (4) Rossi's (2007) 4-stage creative process of the transcendent function emerging from genomic and proteomic levels of everyday life as well as the arts, sciences, and psychotherapy [1. Data Collection (sensation); 2. Incubation (feeling); 3. Illumination (intuition); and 4. Verification (thinking)].**



APPROACHES

- (1) To meet and address the complexities of human needs and preferences, contemporary “social environment necessitates quality collaboration for all health care delivery using interprofessional team-based approaches” (Lieberman & Dick, 2022, p. 142 ;see also Craig et al., 2020); Example: Story Emotion Social Therapy (SEST) as an interdisciplinary collaboration between Speech-Language Pathologists and Clinical Social Workers (to strengthen client’s language and social-emotional development);
- (2) Engage and collaborate with, as well as refer as needed to interdisciplinary professionals;
- (3) Utilizing hypnotic approaches to (a) reduce cognitive distortions that limit their vitality and longevity and (b) empower the clients to enhance their hypnotic biohacking in optimizing their vitality and vibrant longevity (examples of cognitive distortions to address: including polarized thinking, catastrophizing, filtering, looking for evidence, over-generalization);

APPROACHES

- (4) Cultivate EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE—“as a bidirectional flow between intelligence and emotions, ... “not a personality trait or characteristic, but the intersection of intelligence and emotions,” and “the ability to use emotions to enhance reasoning and use reasoning with emotions” (Lieberman & Dick, 2022, p. 148);
- (5) Engage various modes of CULTURALLY SENSITIVE PSYCHOEDUCATION in psychoeducational reach—biopsychosocial-spiritual, didactic, visual, narrative, poetic, metaphorical, strength-based, hope-base (see Feng et al., 2024, and Lieberman & Dick, 2022);
- (6) Closely consider engaging “the ERICKSONIAN approach, which emphasizes indirect, metaphorical, and empathy-based communication, [which] is more effective than conventional methods in building trust, reducing resistance, and facilitating healing” (see Tarsani, 2025);
- (7) Capitalize upon RESTORATIVE LIVING, social support, and self-leadership approaches;

APPROACHES

- (8) “Leave space for the individual’s choice, with mindfulness, acceptance, and warmth” (Lieberman & Dick, 2022, p. 247);
- (9) Celebrating progress rather than perfection; &
- (10) Practice the attitude of gratitude: What 3 things are you grateful for today (and each day)?

Section II:

**Hypnotic communication for healing,
transformative (re)learning, (self-)regulation,
resilience, individuation, healthspan, &
joyspan**

Introduction to Hypnotic Communication

- Hypnosis as a therapeutic communication process
 - Legacy vs. Conversational
 - Hypnosis vs. Trance
- Engages focused and absorbed attention and "imagination"
- Facilitates access to unconscious learning processes
- Accesses skills, abilities, resources (Age Regression)
- Widely used in clinical, health, and performance settings

Hypnosis for Healing

- Supports mind and body interaction
- Reduces stress and physiological arousal
 - Hypnosis is anti-inflammatory
- Enhances recovery and coping (Age Progression, Ego Strengthening, Suggestions)
- Used in pain management and medical settings
 - Burn and wound clinics
 - Emergency Rooms
 - Birthing Clinics

Key Elements of Hypnotic Communication

- Establish effective rapport/therapeutic alliance
- Engage focused attention
- Suggestion and expectancy
- "Imagination" and sensory experience:
 - "Imagine you are . . ."
 - "See yourself there now . . . What do you see?"

Transformative (Re)Learning

- Updating outdated emotional and behavioral patterns
- Creating new adaptive responses (age regression)
- Experiential learning through imagery and suggestion
- Neuroplasticity and memory reconsolidation
 - Continues through the day and during sleep
 - Emphasize during re-alerting (a most under-utilized hypnotic intervention)

Self-Regulation

- Regulation of emotional responses
- Autonomic nervous system balance
 - Activates Parasympathetic responses
- Improved attention and focus
- Reduction of anxiety and stress
- Learning to “shift” their trance with self-hypnosis

Teaching Self-Hypnosis Hypnotically



Building Psychological Resilience

- Strengthening coping resources
 - Age regression with "quiet time"
- Enhancing stress tolerance
- Future-oriented mental rehearsal
- Developing adaptive perspectives
 - Create the conflict and the resolution

Individuation and Personal Development

- Exploration of identity and meaning
- Integration of conscious and unconscious processes
- Alignment with personal values
- Encouraging self-discovery and growth
- Reinforce/encourage self-hypnosis and rapid trance-transitioning

Healthspan

- Extending years of healthy functioning
- Stress reduction and behavioral change
- Improving sleep and wellbeing
- Supporting healthy lifestyle habits
 - “Helping Hands” Technique

Joyspan

- Cultivating positive emotion and well-being
- Include humor in the session when feasible
 - “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to an Induction”
- Enhancing life satisfaction
- Encouraging creativity and engagement
- Promoting meaning and purpose

Applications Across the Lifespan

- Children and adolescents
- Adults and workplace wellbeing
- Aging populations: Suggestions for increased activity
 - See Patterson & Mendoza (2024) *Clinical Hypnosis for Pain Control*
- Integrative healthcare

Conclusion for Section II

- Hypnotic communication can support healing and growth
- Facilitates transformative learning and resilience
- Promotes both healthspan and joyspan
- Valuable tool in therapeutic and wellbeing practices

Section III:

Holistic options/strategies, ethical decision-making awareness, and viable practices/resources for enhancing vitality and longevity.

Overview

- Clinical hypnosis as an integrative therapeutic approach
- Supports psychological and physiological well-being
- Can be incorporated into holistic healthcare models
- Emphasizes ethical practice and client-centered care

Foundations of Clinical Hypnosis

- Focused attention and heightened suggestibility
- Therapeutic use of imagery, metaphor, and suggestion
- Collaboration between clinician and client
- Evidence-based applications in behavioral medicine
 - See Milling (2023) *Evidence-based Practice in Clinical Hypnosis*

Holistic Hypnosis Strategies

- Mind-body integration
- Stress reduction and relaxation training
- Visualization for healing and wellbeing
- Lifestyle and behavioral change support
- Consider hypnosis as:
 - “A set of skills utilized by a clinician to modify dysfunctional trance experiences into therapeutic trance experiences that enhance productivity in life.”

Supporting Vitality

- Stress management
 - Consider the use of anchors and self-hypnosis
- Improving sleep quality: increased REM and deep sleep experiences
- Increasing motivation for healthy habits
- Enhancing emotional balance and resilience
 - Mindful Hypnosis: See Otani (2024). Mindfulness meditation and hypnosis in clinical practice: An integrated approach. *Routledge International Handbook of Clinical Hypnosis*

Promoting Longevity

- Behavioral health change (exercise, nutrition)
 - Have them see it, feel it, do it (Like the Nike commercials)
- Reduction of chronic stress
- Pain and physical symptom management
- Supporting adaptive coping and well-being

Ethical Decision-Making

- Informed consent:
 - Voluntary, Competence (the right to make bad decisions), Knowing (benefits, risks, alternative options)
- Scope of practice: Know your limitations
- Using hypnosis to treat conditions you otherwise would not treat. Should you?
 - DID? Pain management? Phagaphobia (see Reid, 2015 *AJCH*)
- Evidence-based treatment
- Respect for client autonomy and cultural context
 - Be mindful of how you use your anchors!

Professional Ethical Awareness

- Confidentiality and professional boundaries
- Avoiding false memory suggestion
- Transparency about hypnosis capabilities and limitations
 - Past lives, birthing trauma, single session expectations (e.g., the 60-year smoker)
- Adherence to professional ethical codes
 - <https://asch.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/ASCH-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

Clinical Applications

- Seemingly endless and bound only to one's imagination?
- Anxiety and stress disorders
- Pain management: Acute, Chronic, Procedural
- Habit change and behavioral health
- Medical conditions (e.g., cancer, pre/post surgery)
- Performance (e.g., athletes, actors)

Resources for Practitioners

- Professional training programs
- Clinical hypnosis literature
 - *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*
 - *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*
- Professional organizations: ASCH and component societies, SCEH, ISH
- Consultation from an ASCH Approved Consultant
- Continuing education opportunities
 - ASCH, SCEH Webinars, Hypnotic Idea Exchange

Integrative Healthcare Context

- Collaboration with medical professionals
- Complementary therapies
- Behavioral medicine integration
- Patient-centered holistic care

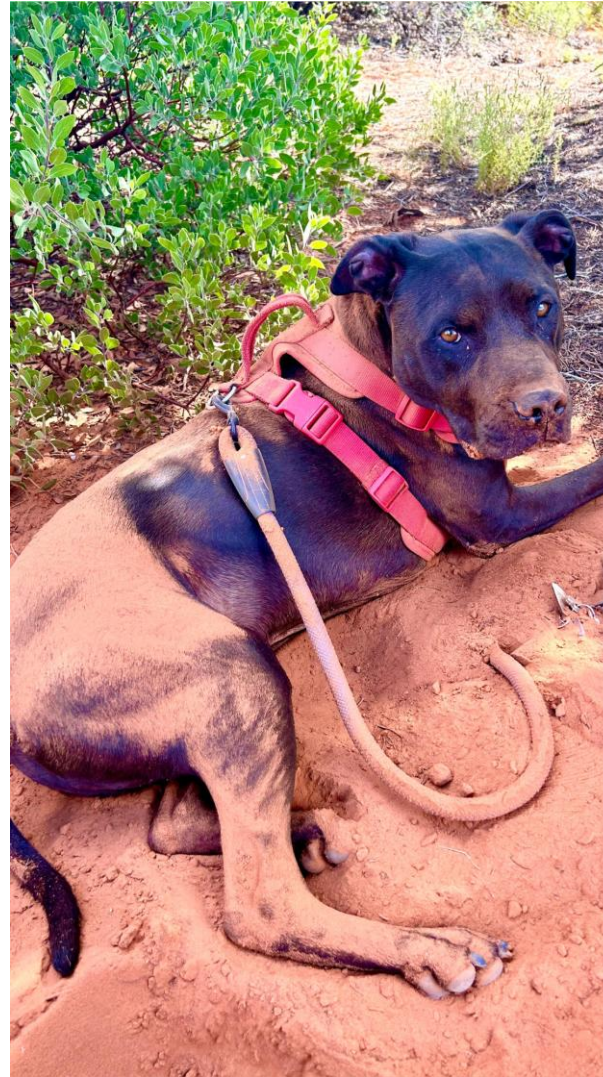
Conclusion for Section III

- Clinical hypnosis offers holistic therapeutic strategies: Enhancing performance in life
- Supports vitality, resilience, and healthy aging
- Requires ethical awareness and professional competence
- Valuable tool in integrative health and wellness practice

**FINDING YOUR “WHY”
(dig deeper for what truly
matters to you),
YOUR “WHY NOW,”
and YOUR “HOW”...**

Keep finding your “How”:

- (1) Earthing? Earthing!**
- (2) Daily walks outside? Yes!**
- (3) Catching the morning sun?
Indeed!**
- (4) Healthier meals? Please!**
- (5) Improved sleep? Sure!**
- (6) Cultivating joyful
connections? Yes!**
- (7) Attitude of Gratitude?
Precisely!**







**Let us environ by Hypnotic Wisdom,
Vitality, Vibrant Longevity, &
Regenerative Living!**

Q & A

An icon depicting two stylized human figures in white. The figure on the right has a speech bubble above it containing a question mark, symbolizing a question and answer session.

Contact Information



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