



**Integrative Psychotherapy
Connecting to
Mind, Body, and Spirit:
An East-West Approach
to Emotional Health, Self Acceptance
and Living a Balanced Life**

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We are all connected to life in its many forms: to nature, to others, and to ourselves. Life is in us and all around us, filled with creative possibilities. We simply need to see the larger picture of life unfolding, and tap into the available resources that are continuously being offered. Everything we need to sustain ourselves is within our reach, from sunlight down to our beating hearts. We are all naturally supported, within and without, to make the necessary changes to create new life. We only have to recognize its value, tap into it, and reach out--- like a deep taproot ready to receive nutrients from the soil that feeds it. In this way, when we realize what is available to us, we can then make the choices that will nourish us, and inspire us to grow into our potential. We are fed, and can produce the fruit we all desire-to live a healthy, happy and fulfilling life.

Integrative Psychotherapy opens the door to the larger picture. It is an approach which balances the whole Self in the context of living well. It bridges the connection to mind, body, and spirit. As an Integrative Psychotherapist, I believe that we all have within us the instinct to heal and the capacity to live in harmony with ourselves, others, and our environment. In working with my clients, I access this natural instinct to heal as a source of their empowerment. I encourage them very specifically and directly to listen and attend to their mind-body process, so that together we can create the many benefits to their health and well-being. Throughout the therapy session, I invite my clients to connect to their essential nature which is inherently a source of wholeness. I acknowledge two functioning.... and I recognize the importance of their direct and present experience. I strive to guide them into direct contact with their own true selves, and whatever may be blocking their free expression. I do this through facilitation their direct experience with their thought, feelings, and bodily sensation as they arise in the moment. I encourage these experiences as movement towards change, and I ask my clients to experience them with a quality of curiosity, and spaciousness, rather than judgment. In this unfolding process, I assist them to realize that their history and its influences are held within each thought, feeling, and bodily sensation. I use their exact language to reveal in their story,

the causes of their emotional pain. I guide them through healing images to resolve their inner conflicts. I assist them to contact parts of themselves which are disconnected from the whole, or in conflict, due to painful experiences and old traumas held from the past. I help them to understand that this disconnection is also the result of conditioned tendencies, habitual patterns, false beliefs about the self, and learned behaviors from their past. These have now become automatic responses, and blind their present awareness and healthy functioning.

One of the main approaches of Integrative Psychotherapy is to assist individuals in recognizing their automatic reactions to life. It encourages them to change themselves and how they respond, which improves their health, their well-being, and reduces their stress. It helps them to develop an understanding of these unconscious, automatic tendencies, which exist in them and everyone. It opens their awareness and ability to observe themselves from the place of a fair witness. It aids their healing, by increasing their ability to see within their own process. It shows them how these tendencies are operating, masking their true selves. It offers ways to change these conditioned influences. It helps them to be aware of the power of their core beliefs that unconsciously runs them, causing incongruence, fear, and misconception. It increases their understanding that these beliefs are often at the root of their depression and anxiety. It re-educates them in how to be congruent with their feelings. It teaches them how to develop awareness. It encourages them to take positive steps to change their automatic responses, so that their true emotions can emerge, no longer denied, bypassed, and unexpressed. It redirects their energy towards dissolving the barriers between their body and heart. It alerts their attention to the constant churnings of their mind, in endless storytelling. It connects them to what has heart and meaning, rather than living in disillusion from what is real. **The goal of Integrative Psychotherapy is to interrupt the pattern of disconnection.** It helps them to experience more ease and satisfaction in their connection to self and others. It helps them recognize and let go of destructive habits of mind and heart. It increases their sense of self worth and self acceptance. It mindfully and compassionately validates their efforts towards health and living a balanced life. It supports them in breaking old patterns. It promotes their inner harmony, which prevents illness, and re-aligns them with their spirit, which is their natural force to heal and balance. **Integrative Psychotherapy helps individuals to gain insight and make the necessary changes towards recovering their life purpose, authenticity, and balance. It reconnects them to the expression of their emotions and desires, and inspires their spirit, love, and passion for life. It focuses on empowering individuals in their striving towards wholeness through accepting themselves and life as it expresses itself in the moment.**

Drawing from both Eastern and Western Traditions, the Integrative Psychotherapist uses a blend of many techniques to cultivate awareness of this process of becoming clear and finding one's own inner balance. The therapist uses from the Eastern approach to the mind, many practices to quiet the mind and heighten awareness to conflict and resistance.

Some of these are:

Meditation- to still the mind, increase the capacity to be in the moment, reduce stress; **Loving Kindness Practice**- to increase compassion for self and others; **Breathwork**- to help focus concentration and achieve levels of calmness in the body/mind, spirit; **Body Centered Awareness**- to identify and observe bodily tensions and sensations as they occur; **Direct Experience of Feelings**- to enter into feelings without resistance and unconscious rejection; **Integrative Process**- to increase understanding about basic principles of doing self work and “owning” what needs to change, to accept what is blocked and cease resistance, to enter into feelings without judgment or blame, and to transform by moving towards internal catharsis and creative external change; **Yoga Principles**- to unite body and mind; **Guided Imagery/ Creative Visualization**- to use the imagination and imagery as a resource for healing; **Shamanism**- to draw upon cross cultural wisdom to heighten self growth and awareness; **Ritual**- to symbolically evoke homage to life, by prayerful intent and action, by representing a life transition or passage, extending gratitude, and cultivating the framework for change.

The Integrative Psychotherapist uses traditional Western psychological approaches to alleviate mental and emotional pain. Some of these are: **Client Centered Therapy** - to join and actively listen in the therapeutic relationship with positive, unconditional regard for the client; **Insight Therapy**- to elicit insight within the client which is a catalyst for change; **Reality Therapy**- to focus attention on what is real and use a direct style of communication as an intervention for change; **Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy**- to uncover the undermining beliefs and thoughts that affect behaviors negatively and stimulate change through a system of reinforcement to achieve desired behaviors and goals. **Psychodynamic/ Jungian Therapy**- to indentify the unconscious, establish the healthy structure of the ego, and develop the spiritual aspects of the soul; **Dreamwork**- to access the symbolic language of the soul and derive meaning in relation to one’s life experience; **Hypnotherapy**- to bring the unconscious to conscious awareness, alleviate the source of unconscious conflict, and facilitate change in unwanted patterns and behaviors; **EMDR- Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing**- to alleviate the traces of pain caused by emotional trauma; **Family Systems Therapy**- to value the client’s placement within their whole social structure and context of relationships; **Self Care** – to encourage a daily practice which incorporates journaling, exercise, balanced nutrition, using self help tools for healing from the East/ West traditions; to develop a balance of work and play, creating satisfying contacts with partners, family and friends, cultivation of the arts, dancing, listening to music, reading, and frequent walk in nature to enhance well being.

Integrative Psychotherapy uses a synthesis of the Eastern and Western approaches for a variety of applications to maximize health and benefit: depression, anxiety, chronic pain and illness, stress reduction, panic disorder, insomnia, psychosomatic issues, post traumatic stress disorder, grief, childhood issues, marital discord, phobias, addictive patterns, family violence, abuse, personality disorders, and aging issues to name a few. It is well suited for those who simple wish to improve their state of being through increased self awareness and experience more balance, joy, and harmony in their lives. It promotes

using natural resources from the plant world, body therapies, integrative medicine, and daily health practices to support the body/mind/spirit's instinct and ability to heal.

Wild Geese

**You do not have to be good
You do not have to walk on your knees
for a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.**

**Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscape,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.**

**Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
are heading home again.**

**Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting-
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.**

- Mary Oliver