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An Autobiographical Sketch

Timothy Thomason, Northern Arizona University

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Abstract

This paper provides an overview of my experiences related to psychology and psychotherapy. In this paper I describe my psychotherapy experiences as a client with Carl Rogers, Rollo May, and Albert Ellis, among others. I also describe my encounters with interesting people like Jay Haley, John Lilly, Will Schutz, and Stan Grof. These experiences helped form my current way of thinking about psychology and psychotherapy.

I grew up in a middle-class family in Nashville, Tennessee. I had an older brother and a younger sister, and my parents seemed to have a good relationship. While growing up I did not know anyone who was obviously “mentally ill” and no one in my immediate family got any professional counseling. My father provided counseling for people at church in his role as a minister. He had a master’s degree in education, and in midlife he became a certified school counselor and worked as a counselor for many years. I had good relationships with both of my parents and both of my siblings. When I was eleven years old, one of my uncles and his wife were killed in a car accident, and my parents volunteered to became the guardians for their two children, my cousins, and they came to live with us. As a family we took a couple of cross-country road trips to visit the national parks and camped along the way.

While I was in elementary school, I remember people being afraid of nuclear war with the Soviets, and we practiced how to “duck and cover” in case a bomb was dropped
nearby. A memory from childhood is seeing President John F. Kennedy in 1961, when I was nine years old, when he was making a speech. After he was assassinated in 1963 we sat around the television in the living room and watched the funeral. It seemed like the whole country was sad and shocked. As with many baby-boomers, the assassinations of JFK, Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King were memorable events in my life. Happier memories include playing with friends outdoors, riding my bicycle, sitting high in a tree reading a book, having a paper route, mowing lawns for pocket money, and building a collection of Beatles albums.

I have always been a voracious reader. As a youngster I read a lot of biographies, novels, and science fiction, and as a teenager I read widely in philosophy, religion, cultural anthropology, and literature. I especially loved my English literature courses in high school and college. I liked to write term papers, and I wrote poetry and short stories in my spare time. I published a few poems and short stories in school publications while I was in high school, and I took creative writing courses in college. I was also interested in the biological sciences, and enjoyed doing several science fair projects in high school. I won the grand prize two years in a row, plus awards from NASA and the Air Force. I considered science as a potential career, but in college I found that the sciences required extensive work in math, which was not one of my strengths.

In high school I heard about a national troop of singers called Up With People, and I joined their local group called Sing Out South in Nashville. This was not characteristic of me, since I’m not much of a singer, but it was fun to be part of the singing group and do shows at state fairs and other events. I had always been somewhat shy, so it was good for me to develop new friendships and become a little more extraverted.

My first real encounter with psychology came when I spent the summer of 1969 at a program in New York City called Shiloh. A group of about eight of us high school students were supervised by two college students. The purpose of the program was to work with underprivileged children in Manhattan, and we taught literacy courses, did tutoring, played basketball, and took the kids on outings to museums and the beach. Humanistic psychology and the human potential movement were quite popular at that time. We had regular “process groups” during which we talked about our feelings about
the work and each other. I learned the basics of group process and the importance of
direct and honest communication in these groups. The whole experience in New York
was fun and educational for me, and broadened my horizons.

In my first year of college I took a course in introductory psychology as an
elective. Although it was a large course, with over a hundred students in an auditorium,
the two instructors who taught the course as a team were excellent. They were
enthusiastic about the subject and often conducted entertaining demonstrations and
experiments. My interest in psychological and philosophical subjects intensified during
college. After a year at Lipscomb College I transferred to Memphis State University.
While I was majoring in psychology I worked as a research assistant in the laboratory
where I helped professors conduct experiments on learning in white rats. I learned how to
prepare the rats for stereotaxic surgery on their brains, and part of my job was to
decapitate the rats after they learned new tasks and remove their brains so they could be
sectioned with a microtome and examined under a microscope.

I felt bad about killing so many innocent rats, so after a while I left the lab and
began working with another professor, Dr. Prabha Khanna, who was researching various
methods of training health care professionals. A government report she and I co-authored
for the NIMH became my first professional publication. While in college I had several
part-time jobs to help pay tuition and living expenses, so I was always busy. In my spare
time I read a lot, took art courses in painting, sculpture, and ceramics, and I went to
concerts. I saw Led Zeppelin, Judy Collins, Bob Dylan, James Taylor, King Crimson, and
several other bands when they came through Nashville or Memphis. I shared a house off-
campus with two other college students, one of whom had dated Janis Joplin in high
school. My girlfriend at the time, who was Chinese-American, was an artist and
photographer and we stayed together until I finished college.

After graduating with a B.A. degree from Memphis State, I took a job as a
psychiatric technician on the forensic services ward at Central State Psychiatric Hospital
in Nashville. This was my first professional experience in psychology, and I learned first-
hand that the primary treatment for people with schizophrenia and similar disorders is
medication. The patients were severely mentally ill and had committed felonies, such as
rape and murder, and the ward was always locked. The patients were heavily medicated
and rarely received any psychotherapy. My job was more like being a prison guard than a psychotherapist. I had some interesting experiences with patients at the hospital, and I wrote a short story about them called *The Ghosts on Ward Nine*. This job taught me that I would have to continue my education by attending graduate school if I hoped to get a satisfying job in psychology.

I felt a need to explore the world a little before going to graduate school, so I applied for the Peace Corps, and was accepted. After a month of training in practical medicine and the treatment of tuberculosis and leprosy, I flew to Suwon, Korea, and had a month of intensive Korean language training. In my Peace Corps job I worked as a medical aide for the public health service. I traveled to rural villages and gave the local people blood tests so I could diagnose and then treat them if they had T.B. or leprosy. There are good medicines for these conditions, but I learned how challenging it can be to get people to comply with medical treatment. I loved living in Korea, learning the language, practicing rudimentary medicine, and learning to like pulgogi, kimchee, dried seaweed, and dried squid, which was a popular snack.

While in Korea I took up yoga and practiced every morning with a friend. I also took classes in traditional Korean calligraphy and Tae Kwon Do (a martial art that emphasizes kicks). I was interested in meditation, so I found a Zen monk who agreed to take me on as a student. I found Zen meditation to be fascinating but very difficult. I gave up the regular practice of zazen after leaving Korea but I still meditate occasionally, more for stress relief than anything else.

After returning to the U.S. I entered graduate school at George Peabody College in Nashville (Peabody was soon to merge with Vanderbilt University, which was across the street). One of my best teachers during my master’s program in counseling was Jules Seeman, who wrote the book *Personality Integration* and also an influential paper called “Toward a Model of Positive Health.” Seeman was a Rogerian, and he was a good personal friend of Carl Rogers. Rogers, of course, wrote the books *On Becoming a Person*, *Client Centered Therapy*, and *A Way of Being*, all of which I valued highly. At that time Rogers was living in La Jolla and traveling a lot to conduct training workshops all over the world. Rogers’ influence on counseling psychology is usually ranked with
that of Freud, Jung, and Adler, and he has had more influence on contemporary
counseling and psychotherapy than anyone else.

I was able to meet Carl Rogers in 1976 when he presented a seminar for the
counseling students at Peabody College. As part of the seminar he offered to conduct a
demonstration counseling session with a volunteer in front of the group. I raised my hand
and was selected, so Carl Rogers was my therapist (although for only one session). I
talked about an issue I had at the time regarding my father. Dr. Rogers had a very fatherly
persona, so I may have been feeling some transference with him. It impressed me that he
seemed to truly embody his approach to counseling and psychotherapy. Rogers believed
that the therapeutic relationship itself is the active ingredient in psychotherapy; he did not
believe that any particular techniques were helpful, and he did not use them. Many people
have tried to turn his approach into a set of techniques, such as “active listening,” and that
can be helpful for novice counselors, but he taught that the counselor should be a certain
way rather than do a certain thing. His emphasis was on creating a therapeutic
relationship that creates a healing space within which clients can choose to think, feel,
and act differently if they wish.

While at Peabody College I participated in a weekly non-directive therapy group
lead by Dr. Seeman, and I also attended many process groups, T-groups, and encounter
groups lead by local psychologists. At that time (1975-77) humanistic psychology was in
full flower, and it seemed like everyone was participating in personal growth groups. I
did a marathon group that lasted 48 hours (over a weekend), and another group at a
retreat center that lasted a week. I found the group work very powerful; it helped me
experiment with different ways of being. I became somewhat more extraverted and made
some good friends. All of these were “growth groups,” which were meant for regular
people who wanted to work toward achieving their potential, rather than for people with
mental disorders. But of course the line between normal and abnormal is somewhat
subjective and is often difficult to discern. I met several people in the group experiences
who became good friends, including a girl friend; she had a 280 Z, which impressed me,
since I had no car at the time (I rode my bicycle everywhere).

While in graduate school I had three practicum experiences; one was at the
Tennessee State Prison, where I conducted psychological evaluations of prisoners;
another was at a university-affiliated counseling center, where I did general counseling for the public; and another was at the John F. Kennedy Center, doing psychological evaluations of children. I also had a graduate fellowship in program administration and I worked as a graduate teaching assistant. I did a special training program in therapeutic hypnosis lead by Cuthbert Curry and got hypnosis certification. In my spare time I played tennis and worked at the college library.

While in graduate school I wrote some short stories and prose poems and edited the college literary magazine. I corresponded with some well-known writers, including Ray Bradbury, and I met Jesse Stuart and Richard Kostelanetz. One of my best friends in graduate school was Julie Webster, whose father, Nick Webster, lived in Los Angeles and directed episodes of popular television shows like The Waltons, Bonanza, Mannix, Get Smart, and In Search Of. Another good friend in graduate school, Suzanne Rapley, became a psychotherapist in Santa Barbara, CA.

One of my favorite members of the faculty at Peabody was Kenneth Anchor, who was a behaviorist and a specialist in biofeedback; he became the first editor of the American Journal of Biofeedback. I learned how to do biofeedback training from him and used it to treat clients who had stress-related physical disorders (such as headaches) at the university counseling center. My other favorite members of the faculty were Harris Gabel, Paul Dokecki, and Norman Buktenica, who was the co-creator of the Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration. I also learned a lot from Lawrence Wrightsman, J. R. Newbrough, and Jack Willers. The overall philosophy of the faculty was transactional ecological psychology, based on the philosophy of John Dewey and the new field of social constructionism.

Another well-known psychologist associated with Peabody was Leslie Phillips, who developed the Worcester interpretive system for the Rorschach. He was the head of the psychology department at Worcester State Hospital for 20 years, until 1966. His book Rorschach Interpretation: Advanced Techniques is still highly respected, and he created the Phillips Rating Scale of Pre-morbid Adjustment in Schizophrenia. I learned the Rorschach, the TAT, and other projective psychological tests at Peabody. Les Phillips was a psychodynamic psychotherapist, and I was interested in that form of therapy at the time, so I became his client in psychotherapy for several months. The therapy was for
general development and did not focus on specific symptoms, but I think it did me a lot of good. Like most of my experiences as a client in therapy, it often felt like hard work and was not always enjoyable, but it definitely felt like I was making some subtle but profound changes. The psychodynamic therapies are good for promoting a deep understanding of one’s values, motivations, and interpersonal relationships.

I feel fortunate that I was able to learn about several of the main models of psychotherapy while at Peabody. Dr. Anchor was a behaviorist, Dr. Seeman was humanistic, and Dr. Phillips was psychodynamic. It taught me first-hand that all of the major theories have something valuable to offer. I also learned that no one theoretical approach is adequate to help all clients. Each therapist has to develop their own style of therapy and be flexible enough to adapt to the needs of each client.

After graduating with the doctoral degree in counseling, I moved to Flagstaff, Arizona to take a full-time position at Northern Arizona University. It was 1977, and I was 25 years old. My job was split: one-half as tenure-track assistant professor in psychology, and one-half as assistant director of the Institute for Human Development. I taught two courses per semester in the psychology department, and at the Institute I supervised several grant-funded programs and a staff of psychologists and child development specialists. I wrote federal grant proposals and state contracts, managed the staff, and supervised psychology interns in counseling and vocational/psychological evaluation. We had a Navajo Evaluation program, a Veterans Counseling program, and several programs for pre-school age children with disabilities.

While at NAU I joined two therapy-related groups in the community, one focused on Gestalt therapy and one focused on journal writing as self-therapy. I kept a journal for several years and also a dream diary, and in the group meetings we shared what we learned with each other. I did a workshop on Gestalt therapy with Joseph Zinker, and another workshop on the DSM-III with Robert Spitzer. I attended a training program on Multimodal Therapy taught by Arnold Lazarus, who had a rather formal manner but was an excellent trainer.

I first became aware of Jay Haley when I read his book *Uncommon Therapy*, which introduced hypnotherapist Milton H. Erickson to the world. Erickson lived in Phoenix, and many of the case studies in the book were provocative and remarkable.
Haley taught Erickson’s methods and he refined them into his own approach called Problem-Solving Therapy. I attended several of Haley’s training programs and I really enjoyed them; he had many contrarian ideas about how to do therapy and a multitude of entertaining stories. He was not afraid of being controversial and challenging the sacred cows of the therapy business. He had worked at the Mental Research Institute and knew Gregory Bateson and the authors of the book *Tactics of Change*, which I liked a lot. Haley’s books include *Problem-Solving Therapy*, *Ordeal Therapy*, and *The Power Tactics of Jesus Christ*. I had several conversations with Haley, in which I tried to get him to clarify the limits of his approach. I wrote an article on him called Jay Haley and the Art of Strategic Therapy which is available on my web site.

For several months, in 1981-82, I hosted a radio call-in program on the NAU radio station. I had suggested the title “The Shrink Is In,” but they called it “Ask Dr. Thomason.” For each show I talked a little about a psychology topic of popular interest, and then people called in with their questions or problems, and I tried to provide helpful information. It was fun, but I’m not really well suited to be a media psychologist.

My interest in Gestalt therapy resulted from a trip to the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California. My first visit was for a week, but I returned over the years for month-long visits. The Institute is located on a cliff above the Pacific Ocean south of Monterey in Big Sur. The scenery is spectacular. There are cabins for guests, seminar rooms, a cafeteria, a garden, a small farm, and designated buildings for art therapy, movement therapy, meditation, etc. There are also outdoor baths to take advantage of the natural hot springs, and a swimming pool. You can sit in a steaming hot tub on the cliff edge and watch otters play in the ocean surf below, and sometimes a whale swims by. It is a beautiful, serene location, and most of the people are open and friendly. Many of the buildings are named for people who have had a big impact on Esalen, including Alan Watts, Aldous Huxley, Abraham Maslow, and Ida Rolf. Lots of well-known folk and rock musicians also visited Esalen; a concert film called *Celebration in Big Sur* was filmed there.

The Esalen Institute has an interesting history, and several books have been written about it (*Esalen*, by Kripal; *On the Edge of the Future* by Kripal & Shuck, and *The Upstart Spring*, by Anderson). Before Michael Murphy founded Esalen, the property
was known as Slate’s Hot Springs, and people went there for the baths. At that time, in 1961, Hunter S. Thompson was 22 and was working as the guard on the property (he had yet to become the originator of “gonzo journalism”). Alan Watts gave one of the first seminars when the property opened for business as the Big Sur Hot Springs resort. Watts had visited Carl Jung and lectured at the Jung Institute in Switzerland, and in addition to his books on Buddhism he wrote the influential book *Psychotherapy East and West*. The wonderful anthropologist/philosopher Gregory Bateson gave a seminar in 1962, and many well-known thinkers made the trip to Big Sur to conduct seminars, bathe in the hot springs, and participate in the varied educational programs on offer.

In 1964 the resort was renamed the Esalen Institute. Fritz Perls, originator of Gestalt Therapy, took up residence there and taught numerous seminars and conducted therapy with hundreds of clients. His controversial, confrontational approach put some people off, but there was no denying his prodigious skill as a therapist, and he took on the status of a therapy “guru.” Everybody who was anybody in the progressive culture of the 60’s visited Esalen, including Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert (who later renamed himself Ram Dass), Ken Kesey, and George Leonard. Visiting psychologists included Abraham Maslow, Rollo May, B. F. Skinner, and Virginia Satir. Ida Rolf moved there and both Rolfing and Esalen Massage became mainstays of the program.

Fritz Perls was treated as a patron saint at Esalen. He was no doubt one of the best psychotherapists ever, although he certainly had shortcomings as a human being. I had, of course, studied Gestalt Therapy in graduate school, and seen the famous videotape that Perls and Rogers and Ellis made with a client named Gloria (*Three Approaches to Psychotherapy I*). Perls’ books were essential reading, and were much more entertaining than most academic psychologists’ books. I especially liked *Gestalt Therapy Verbatim* and *In and Out of the Garbage Pail*.

Perls was well-known as a narcissist and a provocateur. When Abe Maslow was presenting a seminar that Perls attended, Perls thought that Maslow was being too intellectual, so Perls got down and crawled around on the floor like an infant, making whining noises. Maslow, the father of humanistic psychology, was furious and the meeting broke up in confusion. Many movie stars visited the rural beauty of Big Sur to get away from Los Angeles, and some went to Esalen. One party given by Jennifer Jones
in 1966 to support Esalen was attended by Jason Robards, Jr., Natalie Wood, Eddie Albert, and Rock Hudson. Others in attendance were Glenn Ford, Shirley MacLaine, Dennis Hopper, and James Coburn. Carl Rogers attended the party and showed a new documentary film, *Journey Into Self*, that showed him leading an encounter group.

Tuesday Weld tried Gestalt Therapy with Fritz Perls, but did not seem too impressed. While working with Natalie Wood, Perls called her a spoiled little brat, and then he put her over his lap and spanked her. Later Wood starred in the movie *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice*, which satirized a human potential center called ”the Institute.”

Stan and Christina Grof moved to Esalen in the late 1970’s. Grof has been called “the godfather of LSD,” and he wrote the book *LSD Psychotherapy*. LSD had been legal in Grof’s home country, Czechoslovakia, but after it was made illegal in the U. S. in 1966, Grof developed a non-drug way to access altered states of consciousness called Holotropic Breathwork. It involved hyperventilating while lying down and listening to pieces of loud, evocative music that were selected to drive the experience. The hyperventilation often produced vivid hallucinations and emotional catharsis. I experienced it several times and had interesting results, and I facilitated the experience for other people who were new to it.

Will Schutz was a social psychologist at Harvard before he moved to Esalen and invented encounter groups. He became one of the most important people at the Institute; he helped shape the culture of Esalen and was an incredibly skilled group leader. His seminal book *Joy: Expanding Human Awareness* was a best seller; his later books included *Elements of Encounter, The Human Element, The Truth Option* and *Profound Simplicity*. Schutz was a large bald man with a powerful personality and great charisma. He had some extreme ideas (for example, he thought that people should always tell the truth to each other), but he was expert at making people feel comfortable and willing to experiment with new ways of being in the context of the encounter group. Schutz became well known due to his work at Esalen and his book *Joy*. He was a guest on The Tonight Show and when Johnny Carson tried out a “trust fall” live, it was into Will’s arms that he fell.

Another seminar leader and occasional resident at Esalen was John Lilly, the human-dolphin interaction researcher. He worked on interspecies communication,
invented the sensory isolation flotation tank, and researched altered states of consciousness. The isolation tank was invented to see what would happen to a person in the absence of sensory stimulation. The tanks were lightproof and soundproof and half-filled with salt water kept at a warm 94 degrees; external visual, auditory, and tactile stimuli were reduced to near zero. You get in the tank and float in the water on your back in total darkness for an hour or so (although the sense of time becomes distorted after a while). Lilly found that without external stimulation, eventually the brain generates vivid hallucinations and waking dreams. Most people find the experience remarkable and feel refreshed when they leave the tank. I tried it several times, and always enjoyed it. I found that the tank experience provoked meditative awareness, colorful visions, and deep philosophical speculation. Each time I emerged from the tank the world seemed fresh, and every sight and sound and smell was especially vivid, at least for a few hours.

Lilly was also well known for his work with LSD, ketamine, and other hallucinogens, which he liked to take while spending hours in the isolation tank. He first did this in 1964, before the use of LSD was made illegal. The main characters in two popular movies, *The Day of the Dolphin* and *Altered States*, were based on Dr. Lilly. I liked his books *The Deep Self*, *The Scientist*, and *John Lilly So Far*. When I was at Esalen in 1981 Lilly was living at a house near Esalen, and I was able to visit him and have a few conversations. Mostly we talked about his isolation tank experiences. He said he had spent as long as eight hours in an isolation tank while on LSD, enabling him to communicate with extra-terrestrials. He also said he had taken ketamine for 100 consecutive days, which must be a record.

Some people questioned Lilly’s sanity, but in my talks with him he was always friendly and seemed eminently sane, though unconventional and creative. I asked him if he liked the movie *Altered States*, and he said yes, very much, although the tanks in the movie were vertical, while there were actually only horizontal ones in his research. He said he thought the hallucination scenes in the movie were well done. However, he said that out-of-body trips do not usually occur through using the isolation tank unless one also takes a psychedelic drug beforehand. Of course the use of illegal drugs at Esalen was forbidden. Transpersonal psychologists have always said that drugs are only one way to access altered states of consciousness. Altered states include dreaming, hypnosis,
meditation, mysticism, and of course intoxication, whether by alcohol, drugs, or other means. Every culture has sanctioned some methods for accessing altered states, and forbidden others. One of my interests has been how altered states are used to facilitate psychological healing, for example in traditional Native American rituals and ceremonies.

Esalen was a great place for psychologists to visit to get a taste of many different forms of psychotherapy. Many of the programs at Esalen had a “New Age” slant, and there were training programs in massage, body therapy, dance and movement, etc. Some of the programs were silly, such as those done by Jenny O’Connor and the Nine (a psychic and the nine nonhuman entities she claimed to channel from outer space). The people who programmed the seminars were open to just about anything, but what interested me were the psychologists who visited Esalen. When I moved to Arizona in 1977, Esalen had been the preeminent workshop center on psychotherapy and related topics in the country since the 1960s. I was not very interested in the New Age topics, but I was very interested in innovative approaches to psychotherapy. While at Esalen I always participated in as many seminars and activities as possible, and I was open to trying new approaches, no matter how strange they may have seemed. Sometimes psychotherapy can become too intellectual and rational, and the feeling and body-centered therapies can provide a nice counter-weight. Many of the human potential therapies are not based on scientific evidence, but some people find them helpful. People should be able to experiment with new therapies, assuming they are safe. Gradually, as more research is done, we will discover which therapies are the most effective for specific problems. Many of the methods taught at Esalen are in the human potential tradition, based on the idea that everyone should try to fulfill their potential as human beings, so the use of psychotherapy to treat specific symptoms and disorders is a separate issue.

I made my first visit to Esalen in 1980 and stayed a week, taking the Experiencing Esalen program, which included experiential workshops in Gestalt group therapy, Radix, Bioenergetics, Sensory Awareness, emotional release therapy, guided fantasy, energy awareness, Feldenkrais, and massage. Except for Gestalt, none of these approaches had been mentioned in my graduate school education in counseling psychology. Today the
Therapies related to maximizing the human potential are much less popular than the
cognitive and cognitive-behavioral approaches, but the positive psychology movement
has again placed the emphasis on helping people be the best they can, rather than only
focusing on the treatment of mental disorders.

The most powerful group experience I ever had was an encounter group lead by
Will Schutz at Esalen. He called his approach “open encounter.” Schutz’s groups were
very active; he used many activities to jumpstart group interaction, such as guided
visualization, telling secrets, and confronting each other on various issues. He also liked
to “physicalize” emotions, for example by having group members contact each other
through touch, arm-wrestling, or whatever. Some people think encounter groups can be
too confrontational, but of course they are voluntary, and no group member has to do
anything they do not want to do. If something makes you uncomfortable, it is your
responsibility to speak up, and you can leave at any time if you wish. Part of the rationale
for encounter is that people usually do not change unless they are provoked to do so.
Although my group experiences were sometimes uncomfortable, they were always
interesting, and were often very meaningful to me personally. Today group counseling
and group therapy are common, but encounter groups are no longer in fashion.

In 1981 I went back to Esalen and lived there for a month as a participant in the
work-scholar program. While there I experienced Feeling Process therapy with Janet
Zuckerman, art therapy with Betty Dingman, and Aikido with George Leonard. We had a
process group every evening, and I did workshops in movement therapy, Gestalt Dream
Analysis, Rolf Movement, and Psychodrama. I also joined a Wilderness Encounter
camping trip and participated in a Men’s Group. It was all both fun and educational.

Toward the end of my month at Esalen in July 1981, one day several movie stars
showed up: Natalie Wood, Cliff Robertson, and Louise Fletcher. They were doing some
background research on Stan Grof’s holotropic therapy in preparation for their movie
Brainstorm. Grof was a consultant on the movie. They stayed for two days and had their
meals in the dining room with everyone else. I was able to meet them and I had a nice
conversation with Natalie Wood. She asked about my experiences in holotropic therapy.
She was short, beautiful, stylishly dressed, and had movie-star charisma. She was very
friendly, and I was impressed with her sincere interest in psychotherapy. She had some
histrionic traits, which is natural and positive in an actress. As it turned out, she died just four months later when she accidentally drowned while staying on her boat with her husband R. J. (Robert Wagner) and their friend Christopher Walken, who co-starred with her in *Brainstorm*. No one knows exactly what happened, but she was probably intoxicated and fell in the water accidentally in the middle of the night. The movie *Brainstorm* is actually not bad; it was one of the first movies about the then-new technology of virtual reality. Stan Grof described his work on the movie in his book *When the Impossible Happens*.

While living in Flagstaff I learned a lot about working with Native American clients, and this became my major area of research. I had many Navajo and Hopi friends and visited the tribal areas often and participated in sweat lodge ceremonies, talking circles, and Pow Wows. I was able to observe a variety of tribal ceremonies, dances, and rituals. I also hiked into Havasupai Canyon (part of the Grand Canyon) several times to visit and work with members of the Supai tribe who live near the river.

I tried to attend as many psychotherapy training workshops as possible. I remember getting excellent training from trainers from the Mental Research Institute in Palo Alto and William O’Hanlon, founder of Possibility Therapy. I was interested in new developments in psychotherapy, and I read the early books about Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). I did a research study on the eye-movement hypothesis of NLP with two colleagues and published an article on it in *Perceptual and Motor Skills*. A lot of people were interested in it, and I got over a hundred requests for reprints, plus an interview with a writer for *Family Circle* magazine, strangely enough. As a new theory of interpersonal communication and therapy, there were several articles on NLP in the popular press.

In 1982, at the age of 30, I was feeling a little restless and I felt like a change. I resigned from my job at the university and used my retirement fund to take a five-month trip to Africa and Europe. I signed on with the adventure travel company Guerba for a cross-continental expedition traveling by Bedford truck. I met the group in London and from there we drove across Europe to Sicily, where we took the ferry to Tunis. From there we drove across Tunisia, Algeria, and Niger. We traveled slowly, stopping often to see the sights and meet the local people, and we camped every night. We slept in tents
and bought our food from the local markets, where there were any. We had a campfire every night to cook our dinner. We drove a little over 10,000 miles in a meandering path from Tunisia across the continent to Nairobi, Kenya.

Crossing the Sahara took a month, and was an amazing experience. I have never seen stars in the night sky like there. We traversed endless rocky plains, the Tasilli plateau, and vast sand seas. Often the truck got stuck in the sand and we had to wait for a day or two for a truck with a winch to come by to pull us out. The only book I have read that conveys the atmosphere of the Sahara as I experienced it is *The Sheltering Sky* by Paul Bowles (the Bertolucci movie based on the book is also good).

Leaving the Sahara, we entered the Sahel, and drove on through Niger and then Nigeria. One day we stopped for the day in a village called Roumsiki; the local people called themselves the Kapsiki. We watched a very colorful, joyous funeral ceremony, and that afternoon I visited a sorcerer who did divination using a small crab in a clay pot filled with sand and small tiles marked with symbols. We drove through the dense jungles of Cameroon, the Central African Republic, and then the Republic of Zaire (which is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo) in the very heart of Africa. We camped overnight with the Mbuti Pygmies, who live in the Ituri Forest in the Congo. They live in small bands and build domed huts covered with large leaves. We accompanied them on a successful hunt for duiker (a small antelope); they used spears and bows and arrows. The Mbuti believe that witches cause all sickness and death, and they use magic potions as medicine. I was told that when they find a witch they beat her.

We drove through Uganda and skirted Lake Victoria, seeing many elephants, hippos, and other wildlife. We had to be careful not to get too close to elephants since they will charge you, and it is important to avoid hippo paths when camping. There were many impala, buffalo, leopards, and large troops of baboons. One night an animal, probably a hyena or wart-hog, pawed at my tent, trying to get in, so I punched it in the snout with my fist and it retreated. The next morning there were two giraffes near our camp. We drove on across the big sky savannas of Tanzania, in east Africa. Near Mwanza we stopped at a rustic museum that had an interesting display of sacred healing objects the native healers use. I was able to speak to a healer through a translator; like other indigenous healers I have met, he attributed mental illness to spells, hexing,
witchcraft, and the breaking of tribal taboos. He gave me a healing stone, which is a disc carved from a soft white stone, with a hole in the middle with a leather thong threaded through the hole as a way to hold it.

We visited Ngorongoro Crater and had close-up encounters with giraffes, lions, rhino, and too many other animals to list. After visiting Arusha we drove on to Nairobi in Kenya, where the expedition ended. Feeling a need for some time to relax, I took the train from Nairobi to Mombasa, and then south to Diani beach, where I rented a cabana near the water for about a month. In addition to living the life of beach bum, I also visited the game parks nearby, where leopards, lions, elephants, sable antelopes, water buffaloes, bushbuck, and baboons were plentiful. When the monsoons were about to arrive I returned to Nairobi, flew to Moscow and then Athens, Greece, and toured Europe on my own for a month.

Back in the states I felt at loose ends. I felt that my life could take a variety of directions, but I had difficulty deciding what to do (I suppose my problem was having too many options). I returned to Esalen during the summer and lived there for two months, again as a work-scholar. I was in a regular encounter group with Will Schutz, and I participated in workshops on Gestalt therapy, Trager, and art therapy. I had several conversations with Stan Grof and took his experiential workshops. I met Michael Murphy, one of the founders of Esalen, and had a group with him. I visited John Lilly, and I met his daughter and dated her a few times that summer. Meeting so many creative people at Esalen helped open me up to new possibilities for how to do psychotherapy. I got acquainted with some good therapists like John Soper and David Schiffman. I developed a good relationship with a woman who managed the flower and vegetable gardens. I had a lot of deep tissue massages; had “psychic therapy” with Elizabeth Stratton, and got instruction in Insight meditation. I hiked in the rattlesnake-infested hills of the Los Padres National Forest and took long walks in the Ventana Wilderness Area.

When I left Esalen I moved to Berkeley for a month and then San Rafael, just north of San Francisco. While living there I realized that one of my favorite psychologists, Rollo May, lived nearby in Tiburon. I had read his books Love and Will and Existential Psychology several years before. His book The Art of Counseling was the first book on counseling published in America. May had studied psychoanalysis with
Alfred Adler in Vienna, and when he returned to America his mentor was Paul Tillich, who took an existential approach to theology. In his 40s May got a serious case of tuberculosis and almost died. While recovering he thought about death a lot and read the books of the existential philosophers and novelists. When he was healthy again May studied psychoanalysis at the White Institute, where he met Harry Stack Sullivan and Erich Fromm. He also completed a doctorate in clinical psychology at Columbia University. A book he co-edited, *Existence*, introduced existential psychology to America. May’s first book, *The Meaning of Anxiety*, reinterpreted neurotic anxiety from an existential point of view. He went on to develop his own approach to therapy based on the philosophy of existentialism. He has been called the most famous and influential theorist among the existential psychoanalysts. May spent most of his professional years in New York, where he practiced counseling and psychoanalysis, taught, and wrote his books. He spent the last years of his life in Tiburon, California.

When I realized that Dr. May lived just a few minutes away, I called him to see if he was accepting new clients. He was in his seventies, and semi-retired, but he still gave talks at professional conferences and saw some clients. We talked on the telephone, and he agreed to take me on as a client, so I was able to have several sessions of existential psychotherapy with Dr. May. It helped me sort out some issues I was dealing with then, mainly regarding what to do with my life. I was 31 and between jobs. I was having a difficult time deciding whether to try something completely new, like starting a small publishing company or a psychology magazine, or doing something more in line with my training, such as returning to teaching or going into the practice of psychotherapy full time. I was also single and had never been married, so the whole topic of relationships was an issue for me.

Rollo May was a pioneer in existential psychotherapy, but he was also an early proponent of what is today called narrative therapy. His approach, at least with me, was to help me construct the story of my life (within the context of psychotherapy) and to see it in terms of personal mythology. We talked about how each choice forecloses on other choices, and how each person has to have the courage to create a life, without knowing what the outcome will be. He described courage as facing your anxiety and rising above it. He quoted Kierkegaard: “Anxiety is the dizziness of freedom.”
As an expert on classical mythology Dr. May was able to use myths and stories and art to illuminate our talks. Myths are simply stories or “guiding narratives” that help us make sense of our lives. Some people base their lives on stories from the Bible, while others look to Horatio Alger, the fables of Aesop, the Greek and Roman myths, the characters of Shakespeare, or even movies like Casablanca or Star Wars. Many stories make poor myths upon which to base a life. Dr. May believed that we have to create our own values and our own myths (because there is no one historical myth that is a good guide for every person). We can create new myths that support our efforts to create a fulfilling life that satisfies us and provides a meaningful contribution to the lives of other people.

Dr. May’s idea was that each of us should see our life story as a personal myth. Through our choices we become the hero and author of our life story. Dr. May also emphasized that all people are connected to each other; we all share a common human experience and we all experience archetypal themes such as birth, death, rebirth, love, etc. When we construct our personal myth we connect with the universal myth, which helps us realize both our uniqueness and our wholeness. Dr. May had a wonderful, deep voice that made him seem very cultured and wise, and I very much enjoyed our talks.

Rollo May was very interested in the creative arts, and he was a painter. In my therapy he talked about creativity as being the highest stage to which we can aspire, even beyond self-actualization, since creativity transcends ego and the self. The creative person faces anxiety and acts with courage. I remembered reading about his concept of will in his book *Love and Will*: will is the ability to organize oneself in order to achieve one’s goals. I thought of myself as being fairly well organized, but the therapy helped me think through my values and goals, and Dr. May inspired me to pursue my career in psychology, rather than starting over in another field. I decided that I wanted to work as a psychotherapist, at least for the next few years.

I moved to Boulder, Colorado toward the end of 1983 and found a job as a licensed clinical psychologist at a private therapy center specializing in the treatment of patients with chronic pain. The director was Richard Stieg, M.D. and we had a staff of about 20 people. In my job I conducted comprehensive psychological evaluations on our patients (including the MMPI, Rorschach, TAT, and neuropsychological screening) and
conducted individual psychotherapy. Another part of my job was to direct a Headache Clinic. We had a full range of treatment options, including biofeedback, stress management, physical therapy, psychotherapy, and hypnosis. I also conducted many psychological evaluations for patients considering radical cosmetic facial surgery; I had to recommend whether the surgery should proceed based on the patient’s psychological condition and their reasons for wanting the surgery.

I enjoyed living in Boulder and took advantage of many training opportunities, including training in Neurolinguistic Programming with Steve Andreas. I also participated in a workshop with the poet Robert Bly on fairy tales and psychotherapy and had lunch with him. I have always liked Bly’s Jungian and mythological approach to imagery in his poetry. While living in Boulder I also took evening courses at the Colorado Center for Modern Psychoanalytic Studies, where I developed a much deeper understanding of both traditional and modern psychoanalysis. While in Boulder I saw Roger Ebert, Edward Abbey, and Hunter S. Thompson when they lectured at the University of Colorado. I took a course at the Naropa Institute on contemplative psychology.

After a couple of years in Boulder I heard about a new psychotherapy center opening soon in Phoenix. It was American Biodyne, the first psychological health maintenance organization in the country, founded by psychologist Nick Cummings, a past president of the American Psychological Association. He had founded the professional school movement, directed the Mental Research Institute, and done the original research on the cost offset effect of psychotherapy. It was exciting to be hired as a psychologist at Biodyne since it represented a new paradigm for the practice of psychology. I moved to Phoenix and those of us staffing the new center received intensive training in Focused Psychotherapy, Dr. Cummings’ model. The model had psychodynamics as the foundation, but it was tactical in application, so it was more like Strategic Therapy than anything else. Cummings had worked at the Mental Research Institute in Palo Alto and he knew Jay Haley, so in his model he put his own spin on the MRI approach. Our main textbooks for learning the model were Tactics of Change and Cummings’ book Focused Psychotherapy.
At Biodyne we offered free, unlimited psychotherapy to anyone with Blue Cross/Blue Shield insurance in Phoenix (Biodyne was funded by the insurance company). The rationale for the program was that if psychotherapy were available to high utilizers of medical care, they would see physicians less, get the help they really needed, and reduce the overall cost of their health care. Somaticizers (people who have physical pain and complaints that are caused by psychological conflict) tend to go to physicians rather than psychologists. But what they really need is psychotherapy to address the psychological issues that cause the somatic problems.

During my time at Biodyne I saw hundreds of clients in both individual and group psychotherapy. I usually saw five or six clients per day for therapy, and of course we had staff meetings and consultations with physicians. We also video-recorded many sessions and had peer-supervision meetings. I also lead many evening therapy groups, on addiction treatment, stress management, stopping smoking, and many other topics.

Today few people like HMOs, since they limit the amount of care people can get, but back in 1985 they were new, and Biodyne was different because there was no limit on the amount of psychotherapy clients could get. Biodyne was run by psychologists, not physicians, and we got intensive supervision, with frequent case conferences. I enjoyed the diversity of clientele, but working at Biodyne was very busy and intense, given the number of clients we had to see. A few years later Biodyne was sold to a national health insurance company and it became more like the typical HMOs we have today.

While living in Phoenix I attended several training workshops with well-known psychotherapists. I enjoyed getting training from Steve deShazar, who developed Solution-Oriented Therapy. He was not particularly charismatic as a trainer, but his ideas have had a great influence on psychotherapy. I highly recommend his books *Keys to Solution in Brief Therapy*, *Clues*, and *Words Were Originally Magic*. I also participated in a year-long training group with weekly evening meetings lead by John Moran, a strategic brief therapist in Scottsdale. At that time brief therapy models were new and exciting, and there was great interest in figuring out how to make therapy as effective and efficient as possible.

While living in Phoenix for recreation I got together with friends, did a lot of swimming, and played tennis with co-workers. I continued doing a lot of reading and
writing, and I took evening art classes. As a stress-management activity I used a sensory isolation tank built to John Lilly’s specifications at a center in Phoenix where you could float for an hour for a small fee.

In 1987 I attended the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association and met John McHolland, the president of the Illinois School of Professional Psychology. He seemed to like my experience with Biodyne, and he invited me to move to Chicago and work at ISPP. As a professional graduate school ISPP offered the Psy.D. degree and almost all of the faculty were also part-time practitioners. I was ready for a change, so I moved to Chicago and worked as the Director of the Masters Program in Clinical Psychology, and I was also a member of the Core Faculty. I taught several courses, including Thesis Seminar and Practicum in Clinical Psychology, and worked in administration and program development. I worked with some very good people at ISPP, including Marc Lubin, Robert J. Craig, and Jack Saporta. I also attended training workshops when possible, including a workshop on Solution-Oriented Therapy with Michele Weiner-Davis. Since I left ISPP it has become one graduate school among a national network of schools called the American Schools of Psychology.

I loved the many art galleries and museums in Chicago, and I took several night and weekend courses in design and drawing at the Art Institute of Chicago. My course in life drawing was taught at the former Playboy mansion, which still had knights of armor in the hallways and a swimming pool in the basement. Another interest I developed in Chicago was rap and hip hop music; at first I did not care for it, but after hearing it for a while I came to enjoy it. I still like Snoop Dogg, Warren G, and Jay-Z. My other favorites are the bands and musicians I listened to as a teenager: Led Zeppelin, Santana, King Crimson, and of course the Beatles. Since the 1990’s I’ve been a big Van Morrison fan.

Chicago has some very good music festivals in the summer, and it is also a literary city. One day I heard that J. G. Ballard was doing a reading at a bookstore downtown, so I took three of my rare books by him to the reading and he signed them. He was surprised that I had the first edition of one of his books. Many of Ballard’s early stories and books were psychologically surreal in a way that interested me.

Although I liked my job at ISPP well enough, after a couple of years I realized I was not enjoying daily life in Chicago (the expensive housing, the crowded commute on
the elevated train every day, the impossible parking, and the cold blustery weather). I became nostalgic for Flagstaff, so I started checking for job openings. When I saw a position advertised at NAU, I applied and visited for two days of interviews. I was offered the position and moved back to Flagstaff in 1989.

My new position was Director of Training at the American Indian Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (AIRRTC). I developed and conducted training workshops and conferences for counselors nationwide who worked with Native American clients. During this period I published several articles in professional journals, five book chapters in textbooks, one training videotape, five audio recordings of conference presentations, and 17 books, manuals, and reports published by the AIRRTC. I was director of the AIRRTC for one year (1990-91) but I did not really care for administration, which consisted of paper work, boring meetings, and trying to manage difficult personnel issues. I loved the training position because it had a lot of variety, including writing program materials, publishing manuals, and conducting training events nationwide.

Between 1990 and 2000 I made 175 trips as part of my job, going all over the country to lead training workshops and seminars. While sitting in the airport in Los Angeles in 1992 I saw Kurt Vonnegut, who was also waiting for a flight in the lounge. I introduced myself and told him I was a fan. He asked which of his books I liked the most, and I said *Slaughterhouse Five*. He said that was his favorite too. While in New York on a trip in 1993 I went to Michael’s Pub on a Monday night and saw Woody Allen play New Orleans-style jazz on his clarinet. During these years I attended many professional development seminars to further develop my psychotherapy skills. I also attended numerous training events and activities on the Navajo and Hopi tribal lands, including cultural training courses at the college in Tsaile and talking circles and various tribal ceremonies and events. I traveled throughout the country to conduct workshops, including trips to visit tribal communities in rural Alaska. On a trip to Kodiak Island in Alaska I went bear hunting with a colleague who used a bow and arrow (no bear was harmed on that hunt) and we also went sea kayaking.

By this time I had decided that my ideal career would be in academia. In 1997 I applied for and got a new position as Assistant Professor in the Educational Psychology department at NAU. This was a full-time nine-month tenure track position. As a
professor I could teach, see some therapy clients occasionally in the Practicum Lab, and
do writing and research. I also continued to seek out advanced training opportunities. For
example, I returned to the Esalen Institute often; I did a month-long work-scholar
program on the psychotherapy of Milton H. Erickson, taught by Paul Lounsberry. I also
did a week-long workshop with Michele Cassou on painting as therapy.

In 2000 I was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. I enjoyed teaching
courses, advising students, and serving on dissertation committees. During my 2003-04
sabbatical I did an in-depth study of Carl Jung, reading most of his books and studying
his technique of active imagination, which is a form of art therapy. I made numerous
drawings and paintings based on my study of Jung and wrote two articles for The Jung
Page (an online journal). One article was on Jung’s thoughts about Native Americans,
and another was on the medicine wheel as a symbol of Native American psychology.

I have always liked movies, and I’ve done some presentations at conferences (and
one article) on how psychotherapists are depicted in movies. I would like to write some
articles on psychological aspects of the films of my favorite directors, Andrei Tarkovsky,
David Lynch, and Stanley Kubrick. So much to do, so little time.

In 2004 I attended a training course on Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy at the
Albert Ellis Institute in New York City. It was a thrill to meet Ellis and have two therapy
sessions with him as part of the training. At that time he was the most prominent living
psychotherapist; an APS survey found that he was the second most influential
psychotherapist ever (behind Carl Rogers). Other teachers I had during the training
course included Ray DiGiuseppe and Michael Broder.

Albert Ellis and Aaron Beck independently created their own approaches to
cognitive therapy at around the same time. Beck’s model has been subjected to much
more empirical research, and it has become the dominant model of therapy in this
country. I really like Beck’s model (best described in the book Cognitive Behavior
Therapy: Basics and Beyond). In my own approach to therapy I am closer to Beck than
Ellis. But Beck does not have an especially engaging personality, whereas Albert Ellis
does; he had an interesting personal life and was an excellent raconteur. For outrageous
but interesting details on Ellis’s life read his autobiography All Out. For an understanding

By the time I met Ellis he had several severe health problems, including deafness and diabetes, and he used a cane, hearing aids and a personal assistant (who became his wife later) to help him get around. He was somewhat impatient with people sometimes in daily life. One day at the Institute I saw him bark at a trainee who was too slow to get off the elevator when Ellis wanted to use it: “What’s the hold up?” He had donated his very spacious building to the Ellis Institute and he lived on the top floor. His development of REBT and his amazing work ethic made him a role model for many young psychologists and counselors.

Ellis was a workaholic and even then, at age 90, he was still training therapists, seeing clients, writing books, and doing live demonstrations of REBT for the public. His mind seemed as sharp as ever when I knew him. However, his body was failing him and making his ability to communicate difficult. His work as a therapist in his sessions with me seemed too predictable and not very spontaneous. Of course, I was already familiar with REBT so I knew what to expect. I think that his approach to therapy was so ingrained in him that he hardly had to think about what he was doing as a therapist anymore. Even so, one has to respect his major contributions to the field of psychotherapy, and it was certainly a pleasure to meet him and spend some time with him. Ellis died in 2007 at age 93.

I continued to enjoy my work at NAU, and in 2008 I was promoted to Professor. In the past few years I have continued to study the literature on psychotherapy and seek out opportunities for training. I like trying out new therapies, although most of the new models do not impress me very much. After attending several training programs on “energy psychology” therapies I concluded that they have no more evidence of effectiveness than placebo treatments. They are based on the idea that humans have an invisible energy that follows meridians in the body, like the theory of *chi* in traditional Chinese medicine, which produced acupuncture. In energy psychology approaches (like Thought Field Therapy and Emotional Freedom Technique) the client is instructed to tap on meridian points to resolve mental disorders while humming a tune. This may distract a person from thinking about their problem, and thus reduce subjective distress somewhat,
but the same could be said about many techniques. I’m open-minded, but as Carl Sagan said, people should not be so open-minded that their brains fall out. I have published my ideas on experimental psychological techniques and “treatments to avoid” in a couple of articles. I also published an article on the future of psychotherapy that created some interest; I was interviewed by NPR reporters in Washington D. C. and Phoenix, and I received several invitations to present my ideas on this topic at international conferences.

I have been fortunate to be able to do a lot of traveling, some to present at professional conferences, but mostly for fun. So far I’ve been to 40 countries. Since my first international trip to South Korea in the Peace Corps, I’ve done several trips to Europe and the U.K. and four months in Africa, plus trips to Russia, Australia, Peru, Egypt, India, Thailand, and Nepal. In Japan I spent some time at the Naikan Institute in Nara to learn how the Japanese think about psychotherapy. In Peru and India I was able to visit with indigenous healers, and in the Amazon I observed healing ceremonies lead by local healers. I spent a month in China and visited with counselors and psychologists and wrote two articles with a Chinese co-author, Xiao Qiong. In 2006 I toured Chile, Patagonia, and went on an expedition to Antarctica. Traveling has probably been the most educational and fun thing I have done.

During the past few years I have enjoyed trying to develop my skills in arts and crafts. I have built quite a few electronic assemblages and exhibited them in local shows at the Coconino Center for the Arts. I continue to make collage books, paintings, box art, and various craft constructions. I do not do much canoeing anymore, but I like bicycling and walks in the woods. I enjoy reading, listening to music, watching movies, and playing games on my iPad. I have good friends and I love my cat.

Currently my approach to doing psychotherapy is eclectic and multimodal. I think every therapist needs a good foundational understanding of psychodynamics, personality theory, interpersonal influencing skills, and rhetoric. It is very important to be familiar with the common elements in all the major approaches to psychotherapy. The therapeutic relationship is the single most important determinant of therapy outcome, but specific techniques can be very helpful. I like humanistic and existential approaches as a basis for therapy, supplemented by techniques drawn from strategic therapy, solution-oriented therapy, and cognitive-behavioral therapy.
A large part of my life has been devoted to teaching, mostly at Northern Arizona University. I keep track of some figures about this. As of this writing (June 2012) I have taught a total of 142 courses, and a total of 2,301 students. These are not huge numbers, because I have only been teaching full time since 1998, and graduate school courses are small. Which specific courses have I taught most frequently? I have taught the Master’s Counseling Practicum 40 times; Vocational Counseling 22 times; Adult Psychology (Adult Development and Aging) 13 times, and less than 10 times each for 28 other courses. Currently my favorite courses to teach are the Master’s Counseling Practicum, Advanced Counseling and Psychotherapy, and Assessment and Diagnosis.

Over the past ten years or so I have devoted more attention to research and writing. I really enjoy researching ideas or problems I find interesting and writing to put my thoughts into a form that is (hopefully) coherent and adds a little bit to what we know about how people function. In the past few years my published articles have been on evidence-based psychotherapy, Ericksonian psychotherapy, and experimental psychotherapies. I wrote an article on Freud’s ideas about happiness, an article on time orientation and well-being, and an article on the paradoxical treatment of depression.

More than any other single topic, I have done research and writing on Native American counseling and psychotherapy. I am interested in studying how ritual and ceremony can heal people psychologically. During my 2011 sabbatical I conducted a national survey of counselors who work mainly with Native American clients, and I used the results to write and publish three articles on assessment and diagnosis; recommendations for counseling; and best practices in counseling Native Americans. As the original population of this continent, Native Americans deserve much more attention and respect from mainstream American psychology.

The details of my publication record are available in my vita and at my web site, but here are the numbers: 32 refereed journal articles; five book chapters; nine papers in books of conference proceedings; one professional training video; 17 books, manuals, and reports published by Northern Arizona University; seven professionally published audio recordings and MP3s of conference presentations; 12 grant proposals; and six newsletter articles. I have made 93 presentations at professional conferences,
conventions, and workshops since 1990 and I have attended 202 continuing education programs in my career. I hope to continue learning and working for many years to come.

To read the full text of many of my publications, visit my web site at

http://works.bepress.com/timothy_thomason/