



# The Therapeutic Use of Metaphor - Trauma Resolution

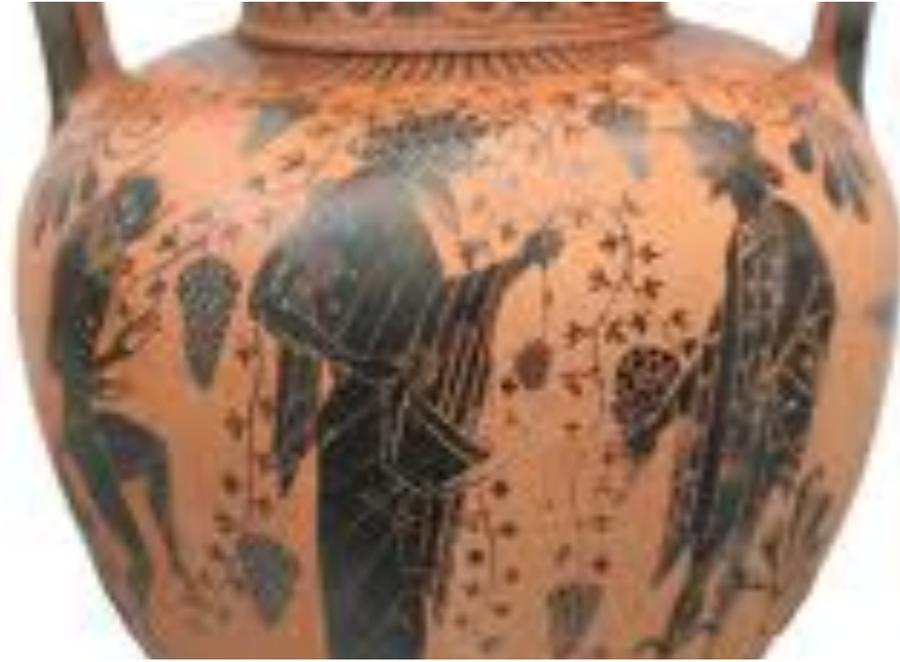
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# Metaphor - A definition

Greek word *metapherein*, to transfer.

Metaphor is defined in Costello (1991, p.52) as the “application of a word or phrase to an object or concept it does not literally denote, suggesting comparison to that object or concept”. *Meta* - above/over, *phorien* - to carry from one place to another.



# Metaphor - A definition

Root in Greek word *amphora*, a container used to carry precious oils and spices from one place to another.

# Landscape

Group  
feedback on  
use of  
metaphor

<b>Client Generated Metaphor</b>	<b>Therapist Generated Metaphor</b>
<b>Conversational</b>	Conversational
<b>Embodied</b>	Generic
<b>Novel</b>	Bespoke
<b>Deep</b>	Deep



# Warning

Not the universal answer

Some clients don't get it - AS/BPD

Time is needed in the session & before you consider working this way?

Can't be forced on clients, needs to fall on 'fertile ground'.

Best if it is the clients metaphor?

However...can be very positive

& flexible in terms of usage

# van der Kolk

Van der Kolk (1994;2003) embraces new therapies that incorporate action rather than words. These include: Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR), somatic therapies, movement therapies, theatre groups and martial arts.

Whilst controversial, he believes that the less language oriented are appropriate as the body stores traumatic memories and verbal therapies will not release the victim from this condition..

# Research

- The results of a large study conducted among Southern Sudanese refugees in Cairo, Egypt. “Illness talk” and body metaphors are the focus...The use of embodied metaphors to understand and cope with their current and past traumatic experiences was echoed in narratives that were non-illness related. Understanding the role that the body plays in experience and communication within a given cultural context is crucial for physicians and others assisting refugees.” Cocker (2004, p.15).

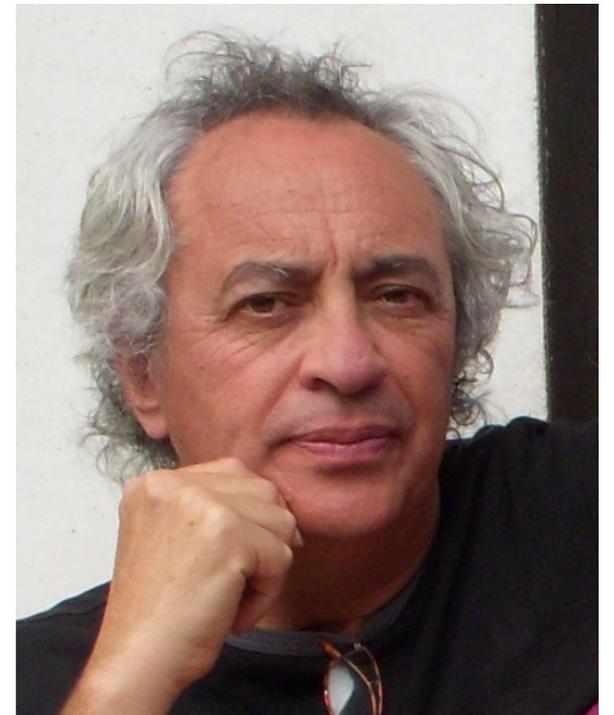
He states that talking through the traumatic memory is essential for those who were too young to understand, those who weren't believed or those who want to make sense of what happened.

Neuroimaging scans reveal that when someone remembers a traumatic event the left frontal cortex shuts down and areas of the RH which are responsible for emotion and danger light up, (Solomon & Heide, 2005).

Therefore the person has trouble thinking and speaking. This links to Lee & Dapretto (2006) and the engagement of the RH with metaphor.

# David Grove

- The late New Zealand Counselling Psychologist
- Pioneered the use of metaphor specifically in counselling and psychotherapy in the 1980's, particularly for working with clients who have suffered a trauma. Child abuse - Vietnam vets.
- Found that his clients often used personal embodied metaphors to describe their painful emotional states and traumatic memories (knots in stomach etc).
- Discovered that the metaphors had form and structure that had a consistent internal logic.



*"There is more  
wisdom in your  
body than the  
deepest  
philosophy"*

Nietzsche

GROVIAN MODEL OF  
TRAUMA RESOLUTION  
- DVD & DISCUSSION

BREAK

# Clean Language

- Clean Language offers a template for questions that are as free as possible of the questioner's inferences.
- Clean Language also is the basis of symbolic modelling, a stand-alone method and process for psychotherapy and coaching, which was developed by James Lawley and Penny Tompkins. - Clean Workshop

# Clean Questions

- Is there anything else about that?
- What kind of ....is that?
- Where is.....?
- Is it on the inside or the outside?
- What happens next?
- What's happening now?

# Experiential - Metaphor

## "Light"

- In pairs - asking clean questions
- "What would you like to have happen?"
- Identify & develop the metaphor.
- Confess it's strength.
- Externalise (if possible.)
- 'Client' "I feel strange", Clean reply "where do you feel strange" or "Strange like what?"

# CASE STUDIES - finding your own way

- Examples - (see handout)
- *Knife in Chest*
- *Monster inside*
- Cults
- **Tanks**



The "Monster"

# Richard Kopp's Metaphor Therapy

- See case study handout, "live case study".
- Kopp listens for the metaphors the client relates about their lives and suggests they can change their metaphor to get what they want.
- 6 Step process:-

# Richard Kopp's Metaphor Therapy

- 1 - Notice client's metaphors.
- 2 a - Therapist invites the client to explore the metaphoric image. "Could you describe the .."
- 2 b - If they don't understand or describe literally the therapist might ask "If I were seeing you hitting your head against the wall as you see it in your minds eye, what would I see?" Or therapist report the image that they see. Gets the client seeing (or feeling) it.

# Richard Kopp's Metaphor Therapy

- Step 3 - The therapist invites the client to explore the metaphor as a sensory image. Setting/environment, action/inaction. "What else is going on, &/or what happens next?"  
VAKOG.
- Step 4 - The therapist explores the client's feeling or experience associated with the metaphor. "What is your experience of?"  
Therapist leads client through the experience using non-leading questions, clean language and none of their own metaphors.

# Richard Kopp's Metaphor Therapy

- Step 5a - metaphoric transformation, "if you could change the image in any way how would you change it?"
- Step 5b -the therapist may suggest a change, e.g. "What if there was a bridge across that river, what would that look like?"
- Step 6 - the therapist invites client to bridge back to original problem. "What parallels do you see between (the metaphor) and the (original situation)?" E.g. Bridge = online job applications. You may not need to do this, the clients usually do this themselves.
- There is a simplified version in Battino (2004, p.170-6)

Questions?

# Case Study Early Memory Metaphors (Kopp)

"The Coach"

# Early Memory Metaphors (Kopp)

- Early recollections can be used as a transformative metaphor.
- Looking for personal memories about particular episodes in one's life, not autobiographical facts (with no accompanying imagery) or generic personal memory (not relating to a specific moment)

# Early Memory Metaphors (Kopp)

- ER's can function as metaphors for life situations, or current problems.
- An ER that is recalled when a client is feeling strong feelings or symptoms in relation to a problem is likely to be a metaphor for that problem.
- Kopp's 7 stage process to elicit this experience.

# Early Memory Metaphors (Kopp)

- Step One - Therapist asks "Where in this are you most stuck?" "Which part of this is the biggest problem to you?"
- Step 2 - "Can you remember a recent time when you felt this way?" "Form an image in your mind so that you begin to feel now in your body the way that you felt then." "Are you feeling those feelings, where in your body?" Encourage them into embodied feelings.

# Early Memory Metaphors (Kopp)

- Step 3a - "What is the first early childhood memory that comes to mind right now? Something specific that happened only once, preferably before the age of 7 or 8 years old." ( I may not refer to the age.)
- 3b - if the client offers a report rather than a memory the therapist may ask "can you remember one time that this occurred?"
- 3c - If nothing "take your time, something will come"  
- 30 seconds "something later in your childhood?"  
30 seconds more "that's ok sometimes it is difficult to recall early memories perhaps in one of our future sessions....."

# Early Memory Metaphors (Kopp)

- Step 4 - therapist writes down the words of the ER (I may not do this) take them through it using clean language ("what happened next?") until memory is complete.
- Step 5 - After the ER has been described the therapist may ask "What stands out most vividly in that memory?" Identifies the core memory image. (this may be obvious to both of you.)
- Step 6a - "How did you feel at that moment, the one that stands out most?"

# Early Memory Metaphors (Kopp)

- Step 6b - "Why did you feel that way" or "Why did you have that reaction?"
- Step 7 - "If you could change the memory in any way - how would you change it?" - "Describe what you would have liked to have happened instead?" (You may get resistance - "I can't change the past" - or idealised ERs - which is a metaphor for how life 'should' be.)

# Early Memory Metaphors (Kopp)

- Step 8a - The therapist repeats the ER and the changed ER and asks "what parallels do you see between the memory and/or changed memory and the current situation?" (again you may not need to do this - the client may spontaneously do this) or..
- Step 8b - "I would like to tell you the connections that I see, let me see which ones fit for you".

Any Questions?

Any Questions?

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*"Good name"*



ANY QUESTIONS?