

The Option Method Institute

Education based on the teachings of Bruce Di Marsico

www.ChooseHappiness.net

The Client is the Expert

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Outline

- Not everything people call unhappiness is really unhappiness.
- The Option Method practitioner does not tell people when they're unhappy.
- The Option Method practitioner helps somebody with the unhappiness that they want to deal with.
- No one needs ever point out to anybody what they're unhappy about.
- The Option Method practitioner helps people help themselves.
- Psychological hypochondriacs
- The Option Method doesn't call for repeat business.

Introduction

In this lecture, Bruce Di Marsico discusses that clients are experts on their own unhappiness. Option Method practitioners, are not.

His primary theme is that the practitioner helps somebody with the unhappiness that *they* want to deal with. Furthermore, something is only unhappiness if the *client* considers the feeling something they don't like. In particular, trying to help the client more than they want to be helped is generally counterproductive.

READINGS

The Client is the Expert

We do not know more than the client about their unhappiness

Not everything you call unhappiness is unhappiness. And not everything you call happiness is happiness. And not everything that you say isn't unhappiness, isn't unhappiness. In other words, diagnosis is not a human being's strong point, especially self diagnosis and self analysis. Usually, that's the problem. You're analyzing and diagnosing, and giving connotations to that.

Take something that you have heard is happiness, like say, uncontrollable laughter. No one faults uncontrollable laughter. Well, there are times when that's a symptom of a very frightened person. And they're not happy, although, they don't mind being counted among the happy. There are lots of symptoms that are controversial and up for dispute and people think is a matter of opinion.

Ultimately, there is only one opinion that really matters. If, in other words, an unhappy person is trying to tell you that they're not unhappy, and you clearly see it as something you would call unhappy; the consensus is: you leave them with their own judgment, with their own opinion. And your opinion? Too bad. Because you're not here, if you're going to try to help somebody with the Option Method, to tell them that what they're feeling is something that could be fixed.

It could be something that they're proud of. For instance, they're really feeling mournful, they're sorrowful over the death of a loved one. You happen to meet them the day that's happening. They don't necessarily want to be tampered with and so an Option Method practitioner would always respect that. We do not tell people when they're unhappy. First of all, it's too presumptuous. You just simply don't know that well. If you've been doing it for a long, long time and you have some kind of psychic abilities; you might be able to make an honest guess. But, in either case, it's none of your business.

So that even if you could sense it and you could feel it and you guessed that they're feeling a lump in their throat right now and they're feeling tightness in their stomach . . . so you're very sensitive. Shut up. That doesn't help people.

You see, all the other kinds of ways of telling people where they're at, and where they could be at, doesn't help people. Never did. In all of the accepted forms of therapy there's the one-third, one-third, one-third proposition. All people

who go for help: one-third get worse, one-third get better and one-third stay the same. And all psychology students are taught that in early years.

You don't learn it in psych 101 but you certainly learn it in personality theory or in abnormal psychology. And those are statistics that are drawn from every mental hospital in the country and every private practice that subscribes to certain organizations and is a member. Are talk therapies better than behavioral therapies? One-third, one-third, one-third. Is medicine better than the talking therapies? One-third, one-third, one-third. And it just keeps coming out that way. Could there be some beliefs involved? I don't know. I wouldn't say.

So unhappiness is a very subjective thing. It often means something that someone no longer wants to feel and doesn't want to feel any longer. It doesn't mean a bad feeling that they feel proud of or a bad feeling that they have always respected in themselves. What we do in the Option Method is we help somebody with the unhappiness that they, themselves, right now want to deal with. Just that and that alone. No matter how small--you may think that it's not important. I don't care if they're sitting there chewing off their toes. We help somebody with the unhappiness that they want to deal with.

All we're helping them deal with is what they say makes them unhappy. And if they are not ready to work with it, then it's none of our business. You know why they're not ready to work with it? Because they're not, because for them there's nothing to work with. Now as they stop being unhappy about something they may notice the other unhappiness that you noticed. And it may even just simply go away the moment they notice it. Or they may look at it and say, "Oh, gee. I've been unhappy about that." And with a flick of the eye it's gone. They no longer are unhappy.

No one needs ever point out to anybody what they're unhappy about. Because what you're pointing out is not worth pointing out. If the person, themselves, doesn't identify it as unhappiness, that they hope they could feel less unhappy about, then there's no need to deal with it. But I would think that people, once they start to know how they can use the Option Method and what an Option Method session is; every time that they think that they're unhappy they think, "that's something I'll bring up in my session." And that's something that they'll want to stop being as unhappy about or less unhappy about.

But they will find out that in God's world, in the real world that exists, when they get to their session, they'll forget that and deal with what really counts. They'll bring up, only if they know themselves, what they're feeling then and there. And what they're unhappy about then and there. They don't ever have to keep a

notebook. We don't ever ask our clients to keep a notebook in any way. We never tell our clients that they're unhappy about anything. We can't.

And besides that, that's not what the Option Method is about. Remember the Option Method is to help people to not need help, to help themselves, to be less unhappy about what they want to be less unhappy about. And so maybe after they deal with a certain unhappiness and they're no longer unhappy about that and then they're no longer unhappy about another thing, all things about their lives—maybe then they're willing to deal with their homicidal rage, and why they occasionally get these desires to murder the therapist. But we can't tell them that that is something for them to deal with. Because it just won't work.

Why won't it work? Because that's not what works. It just doesn't work. That's not the way they create their emotions. It's not the way emotions work. It has to be an emotion that a person actually starts experiencing as being uncomfortable for them. They wish they didn't shed a tear every time that they went to this kind of movie or that. They wish they didn't get angry so much. Or they wish they weren't so subject to somebody's insults. You know, things like that, little things that real people get unhappy about.

The Option Method doesn't call for repeat business

So we don't want to ever run the risk of running a school for psychological hypochondriacs. “Okay, see you next week. Okay, see you next week.” We want to run a clinic, a self help program for people to learn how to be their own best helpers. So they can use the same tool that I use to help them to not be unhappy. That's all. And that's it. Not to go through every unhappiness they may have for the rest of their life and help them not be unhappy about it. Because they don't need the Option Method for that.

Remember I said the Option Method is only to introduce you to the fact that unhappiness is not a mystery. It doesn't fall out of the sky. And it's not your fault. And you have to understand both things. As soon as people start believing unhappiness is their fault--that's the danger with the Option Method--then they are only believing what they've always believed. That unhappiness is their fault. Sometimes it used to be the other persons unhappiness. Now it's their unhappiness. But all people have believed, in one way or another, that unhappiness was their fault, too. So that's not new. That's not a special danger of the Option Method. At least, practitioners who learn from me know never to indulge in that.

If a person thinks unhappiness is their fault, well, then we'd have to ask them why they see this as something to be unhappy about. In other words, if I

discovered that I give myself that knot in my stomach, I don't really need to know whether I'm unhappy or not. I only need to know that it's true that I give myself that knot in my stomach. And if I want to know how I do that, it may be because that's what I've always done when this kind of thing happened. And it's just a physical response.

I give myself a knot in my stomach. And if I'm not unhappy about that symptom; I'm not unhappy at all. And then so once I've discovered I give myself a knot in my stomach, I no longer give myself a knot in my stomach. But, if I discover that it's my fault that I give myself a knot in my stomach and make that equivalent to making myself unhappy--now I know where you're going to spend your money. But you see the Option Method doesn't call for repeat business. It's a particular problem we have, those of us who want to devote our lives to trying to help people to be less unhappy.

We don't want to engender that constant need for help. It's just the opposite. And so we hope that grateful clients will send other people, who they hope will be helped.

Two ideas: There's nothing in learning that we cause our unhappiness that can, in and of itself, be depressing or can, in and of itself cause unhappiness. That's a cause for joy. We now know it's not a great mystery and it's not falling down on our head from the heavens. To discover that we're doing it to ourselves is a great joy.

It's like when the stammerer or the stutterer discovers that they're just doing that because they're trying too hard. Oh, is that all? Yeah. If you don't try so hard you won't stutter. You're just trying to do something that you don't normally do. Whereas, speaking is something you can normally do. If you understand that speaking is natural to you; you won't be a stammerer or a stutterer. Because you think that all of a sudden, your talking needs some special attention from your brain or your tongue--not unless you've had a stroke or something like that. That's usually really the only case.

And that's what we're finding out about ourselves--that we create movements in our body, muscular movements, some of which we call unhappiness and some of which we call happiness. The one that makes us want to throw up, we usually call unhappiness. but not always. We mistakenly make all the unhappiness.

Questions for Reflection

Not everything people call unhappiness is really unhappiness.

What are some reasons that people act cheerful while being unhappy (for example, they believe that all good people show a smile to the world)?

If you see someone manifesting aggressiveness (for example, in a competitive sport) can you tell whether they are also angry (aggressive and feeling bad?)

If you see someone manifesting grief (for example, at a funeral) can you tell whether they are also sad (grieving and feeling bad?)

If you see someone manifesting avoidance behavior (for example, escaping from a dangerous situation) can you tell whether they are also fearful (avoiding and feeling bad?)

We do not tell people when they're unhappy.

For a while today, in conversation, notice whenever someone makes a statement about how you feel or perceive things. “That must feel good.” “You are being too careful.” Notice if the other person’s statement about how you feel or perceive is accurate. How do you feel when you hear people make inaccurate statements about how you feel or perceive?

Fault vs. Cause

When people discover that they are causing their own unhappiness, often they believe they are at fault. For example, if you walked around a corner and bumped into a person, you would know that you were the cause of them falling down, but you wouldn’t necessarily view yourself as at fault for their falling down. Fault is considering that you were *wrong* to be the cause.

Make a list of actions that you have taken that had unforeseen consequences you didn’t want (these could be as trivial as turning on a faucet and have it spurt into your face). You were certainly the cause of them. Since the consequences were unforeseen, were you at fault?

Now make a list of actions that you regret in your life. Did you foresee the consequences of these actions at the time? Were you at fault?

Meditation for the Week

- To tell people that they are unhappy doesn't help them.