

Psychotherapy Guidebook

VIDEOTHERAPY

H. C. Tien

Videotherapy

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Table of Contents

[DEFINITION](#)

[HISTORY](#)

[TECHNIQUE](#)

[APPLICATIONS](#)

Videotherapy

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DEFINITION

Videotherapy is the practice of psychotherapy with television techniques as an integral process of videology. A videologist, like a radiologist, is a physician who uses technology (video) extensively in diagnosing, treating, and preventing diseases. Videology is the science and art of using medical television for the evaluation and diagnosis of diseases, for the treatment and prevention of disorders and for the education and promotion of physical and mental health. A videotherapist may be a videologist or any qualified member of the mental health profession who uses videotechniques.

HISTORY

On June 27, 1923, John Baird published the following notice (which no one answered) in the London Times:

Seeing by wireless-inventor of apparatus to hear from someone who will assist (not financially) in making a model.

Since that day, television technology has advanced by leaps and bounds

and has been spreading to the private practice of psychiatry, to the teaching of medicine in medical schools, and to the medical centers throughout the country. Because of the capacity for immediate feedback of the video image, Videotherapy naturally began with confrontation psychotherapy as used by Berger (1965), Alger (1967), and other pioneers (Berger, 1970), echoing the spirit of the Scottish poet Robert Burns:

*O wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ithers see us!*

In 1969, this writer (H.D. Tien, 1970) presented the first unified theory of Videotherapy at the International Congress of Cybernetics, London, England. I formulated a scientific model, the TV-Cybernetic System of Psychotherapy, for the practice of Videotherapy. Berger (1970) edited the first book on videotechniques in 1970. The rapid advancement of Videotherapy culminated in the publication of the American Journal of Videotherapy and the founding of the American Society of Videotherapy in 1977.

TECHNIQUE

In Videotherapy, the psychocybernetic techniques may be used in individual, marital, family, or group therapy. Regardless of any specific type of Videotherapy, the techniques are based on the PERF model. The PERF model

(an acronym for Program — Erase — Reprogram — Feedback) is a psychotherapeutic guide for communication and personality development. Theoretically, the PERF model can be represented as follows:

$$E_i (E_S) \rightarrow E_o$$

E_i = input of the video image; E_S = stored video image on magnetic pattern;

E_o = output of video image on the TV monitor.

APPLICATIONS

The following clinical situations will serve as excellent examples of the application of Videotherapy:

1. Medical histories can be standardized and effectively applied with the use of videot techniques. Videotaped histories, of course, have high medico-legal value.
2. Initial visits to the physician can be easily recorded for progress and follow-up.
3. Videot techniques can be used for initial family history or mental status examination that can be saved for accurate reference as occasions require in objective documentation.
4. A physician can instruct patients personally, through his own video image, in order to offer his special therapeutic programs or instructions. For example, a physician on video can tirelessly and carefully explain the same procedures regarding diets,

contraceptive techniques, etc.

5. Video programs that are pretaped by the physician himself tend to be more persuasive in the instructions of his patients.
6. The use of videotapes can resolve time conflicts in scheduling of appointments or family conferences, such as medical diagnostic review that can later be shown to the absent family member.
7. Videotechniques can be used for preoperative demonstration before the patient is hospitalized, in order to prepare the patient physically and psychologically for the procedure.
8. Video programs can offer either preoperative instructions or post operative exercises, so that the patient can be active in his own recovery, for example, in physiotherapy.
9. The use of videotechniques to record informed consent and to satisfy medicolegal requirements should be obvious to any practicing physician.
10. The patient's videotape serves as a part of his medical record, like his written history and physical examination, laboratory and X-ray reports, and are protected by the same professional confidentiality in the traditional doctor-patient relationship.

The above list is only a brief introduction to the various applications of Videotherapy and videotechniques as they can be applied to the practice of medicine, psychiatry, and psychotherapy.

