

# Informed Consent for Bioenergetic Analysis

## What is Bioenergetic Analysis?

Bioenergetic Analysis is a holistic form of psychotherapy that works with the physical, emotional and mental patterns of the bodymind, to reduce emotional stress and help with the problems of living. It is a way of understanding personality in terms of the body and its energetic processes.

Bioenergetic theory is based on the premise that there is no fundamental separation between the mind and the body; that psychological states reflect and create what is happening physically; and physical/somatic events both reflect and create mental and emotional states. Emotional stress from many areas--relationships, family crises, jobs, health, et cetera---produces tension in the body. Contractions in the muscular system are often the result of carrying unresolved emotional tension. These contractions can have a direct effect on the energy level of the individual, on the capacity for spontaneous and creative self-expression, and on feelings of well being.

Bioenergetic Analysis seeks to bring about the conscious integration of mind and body. Therefore, the focus is on both the psychological issues presented and the manifestation of these issues as shown in the individual's body, energy, and movement. Patterns of muscular tension reflect an individual's emotional history and include such things as early childhood relationships with caregivers, physical and emotional traumatic experiences, and the degree to which self-development was possible.

By addressing conflicts at a cognitive, emotional, and physical level, Bioenergetic Analysis seeks to help the individual gain greater understanding and awareness of old patterns of action and reaction; enlarge the capacity to tolerate and resolve old pain, and increase the ability to experience joy and pleasure. In addition to cognitive and emotional processing, Bioenergetics includes four major types of bodywork interventions to achieve the goals of your therapy:

### 1. Awareness Experiences

Body awareness interventions are designed to assist you in attending to your experience of your body. The focus is on areas of muscular tension, posture, breathing patterns, and the ways in which physical and emotional tensions, behavioral patterns, and mental states are related. Methods of increasing body awareness may be suggested and encouraged.

### 2. Physical Interventions

Physical interventions are used to help bring more aliveness and movement to your body. These movement experiences may focus on areas of your body that have chronic muscular tensions, poor circulation, low levels of awareness, or restricted movement abilities. They may include stretching exercises to enhance the tone of your muscles, breathing skills to charge the body or create states of relaxation, or stress-reduction tools to expand the range of states you are able to experience. The purpose of these interventions is to increase energy, charge, and feeling by reducing chronic muscular tension and increasing the capacity for movement and self-expression.

### **3. Directed Expression**

Difficult or traumatic material from your past is sometimes the focus of therapeutic work, and the release and understanding of these feelings through procedures that facilitate emotional expression can be a therapeutic goal. To assist you in moving toward this goal, your therapist may suggest directed experiences for emotional expression to deepen it and help you clarify your feelings. In turn, these experiences are designed to support an expanded range of feelings and a deepening of emotional awareness.

### **4. Touch**

In Bioenergetic Analysis, touch is sometimes used to help you bring awareness to your body, to release the tension in chronically held muscle groups, to support you during the release of past-traumatic material, or to assist you in making new movements outside your usual restricted range of motion. The guidelines for use of touch include asking your permission when touch is involved, respecting your personal boundaries and preferences in the use of touch, and staying within the guidelines for the use of touch designated by your therapist's licensing board and professional association. Under no circumstances will the use of touch in therapy involve sexual areas of the body.

Therapists trained in Bioenergetic Analysis have been certified to utilize the procedures described above. The purpose of the somatic interventions or movement experiences should be clearly explained by the therapist to your satisfaction, and at no time should your willful participation in the experiences be compromised.

### **Some things to be aware of in the four areas described above:**

The effects of utilizing bodywork as part of your therapeutic approach are very individual and will depend on which procedures you choose to use and the nature of the therapeutic problem you are attempting to solve.

- A. Like other forms of therapy, Bioenergetic Analysis can heighten awareness of the past and present. These procedures can serve to bring up memories, images, and sensations that have been previously unconscious. They can also intensify feelings or emotional experiences that are connected to past traumas. Bodywork can also bring existing muscular tension patterns and physical limitations to your attention. Although the goal of such increased awareness is to help resolve emotional conflicts, there may be times during treatment, as in other forms of psychotherapy, when the feelings may be uncomfortable or intense. As your therapist, I will work with you to understand these experiences and help you to focus and integrate them.
- B. Bioenergetic Analysis can result in the intensification of feelings toward friends, relatives, or the therapist. These feelings can either be positive or negative, and relate to established patterns of emotional connection and bonding as well as what is an important part of Bioenergetic Analysis. By attending to the interpersonal part of the process as it emerges in therapeutic work, painful and constricting patterns of relating can be better understood and new, more satisfying ways of relating can be achieved.
- C. Bioenergetic Analysis involves the exploration of the established boundaries around the self experience—the boundaries of the physical body that are felt if touch is applied, the boundaries of the emotional self that are stimulated when contact is made with others, and the interpersonal boundaries that are affected when deep

emotional issues are shared with others. The goals of Bionenergetic Analysis include an exploration of the way these boundaries create and maintain the patterns in the experience of the self and in relationships. Out of this exploration, changes can be facilitated to promote greater self-development and well being.

**Client Agreement:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have carefully read the above description of the purposes and risks involved in participating in Bioenergetic Analysis and I choose to participate in this form of psychotherapeutic work. I understand that my participation will involve working with my body; dressing appropriately for physical activity; engaging in physical movements and stances; engaging in somatic interventions that may involve emotional expressions; and participating in movements that may involve being touched by the therapist or involve my touching her during a particular experience, or for a specific purpose. I understand that under no circumstances is such touch to involve sexual areas of the body, or violate the standards of practice set by the licensing board of the therapist. I understand that any request on my part not to be touched will be honored by my therapist.

Since I am the person who, on a day to day basis, is most aware of my physical condition, I will be responsible for informing my therapist of any concerns or considerations I have regarding my participation in any activity that involves the use of my body. I understand that I have the right and responsibility to refuse to participate in any activity at any point in the therapy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Client

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Therapist

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date