Hypnosis and Biofeedback for Parents and Children with Autism Spectrum and Other Developmental Differences.

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Abstract
Helping “neurodiverse” children—with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other developmental differences—to help themselves using hypnosis and biofeedback poses challenges and opportunities for parents and clinicians. Behind challenging behaviors and deficits are solutions rooted in their talents and motivations. Their parents struggle more than most both to help and to let their children go. Using clinical examples and role-play we will explore how Milton Erickson’s “utilization approach” applies to hypnosis with children with developmental “diffabilities.” We will discuss our research using hypnosis and biofeedback for children who have ASD. Finally, we will share our Parenting Effectiveness Program, a community-based group parenting program that helps parents of children with ASD help themselves. These are universal lessons. Bring your experiences.

Learning Objectives:
1. Provide three examples of how “symptoms are solutions” when using hypnosis in young people with neurodevelopmental differences.
2. Outline the autonomic dysregulation hypothesis of autism spectrum disorder and how this may be addressed using biofeedback.
3. Describe three values-driven self-hypnotic strategies for helping parents feel effective and competent.

Presentation Overview
1. Introduction (10 minutes)
2. Understanding autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and autonomic dysregulation (30 minutes)
   a. Clinical vignette
   b. Core characteristics of ASD
   c. Role of autonomic regulation in manifestations of core characteristics
   d. Evidence for autonomic dysregulation theory
3. Clinical experience and research using hypnosis and biofeedback in ASD (60 minutes)
   a. Restrictive repetitive behaviors as trance
      1. Examples
      2. Principles of application
3 Discussion
b. Autonomic regulation training
   1 Examples
   2 Principles of application
   3 Discussion
c. Integrative models
   1 The Minding Anxiety Project
   2 The Dynamic Feedback Signal Set (DyFSS)
   3 ART in ASD
   4 Discussion
d. Importance of the family system
   1 Parent training
   2 Parental self-regulation
   3 The Parent Effectiveness Program
e. Questions, discussion

4. Break (15 minutes)
5. Discussion and role-play of clinical examples on video and those provided by participants (40 minutes)
6. Future research directions (10 minutes)
7. Questions, discussion (15 minutes)

Selected References


