

Embodied ACT metaphors: How the bodily experience as a vehicle can contribute in the implementation of ACT

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Why the body experience?

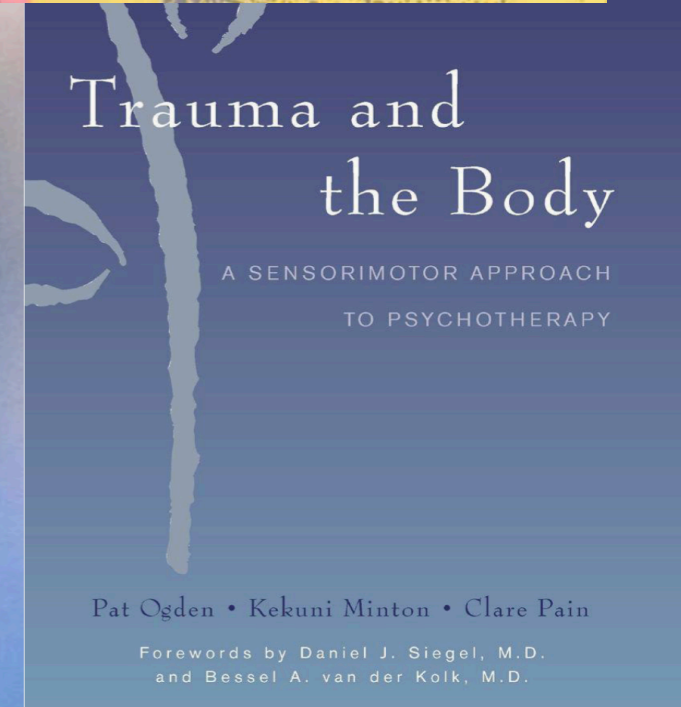
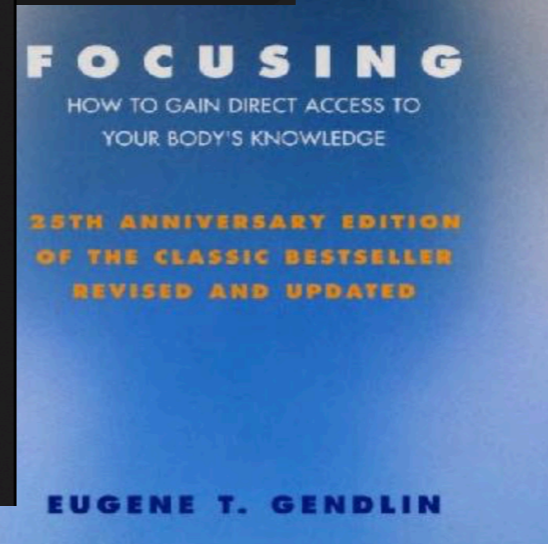
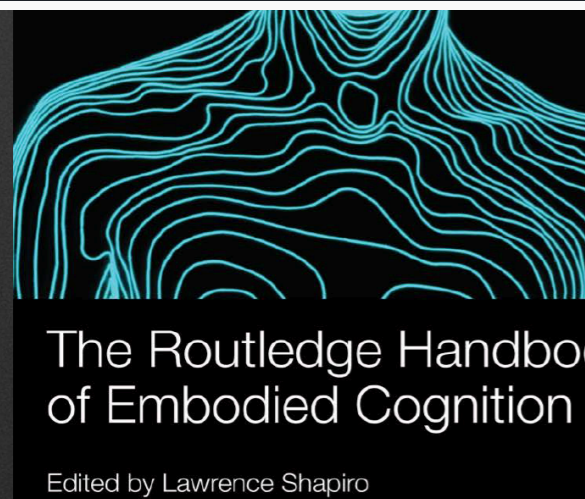
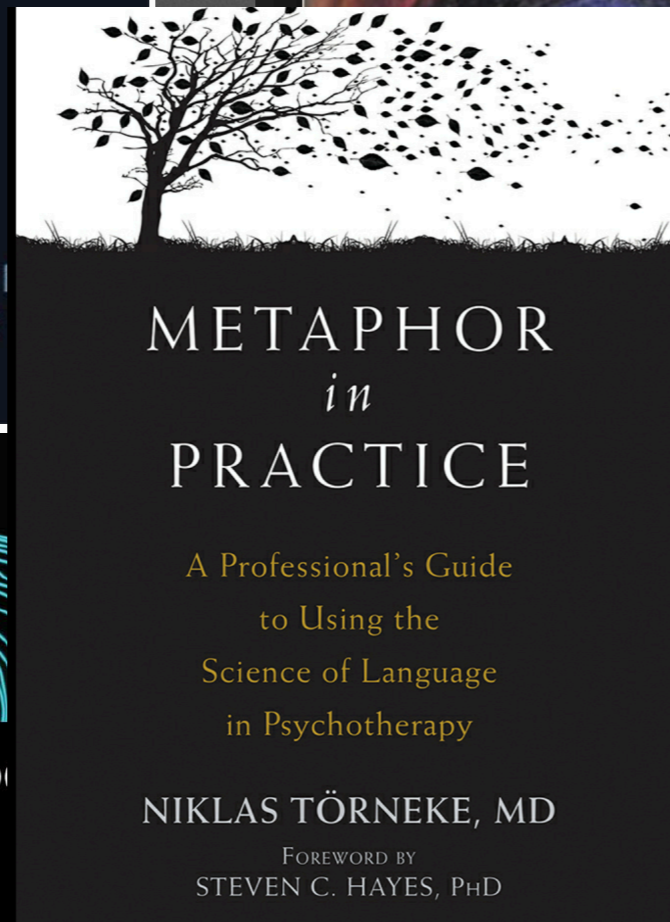
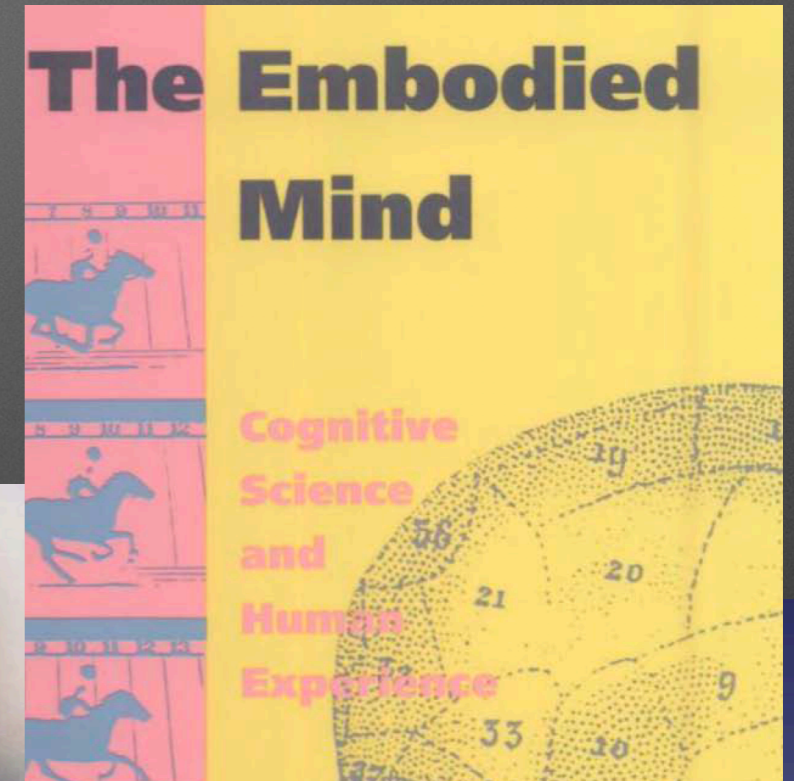
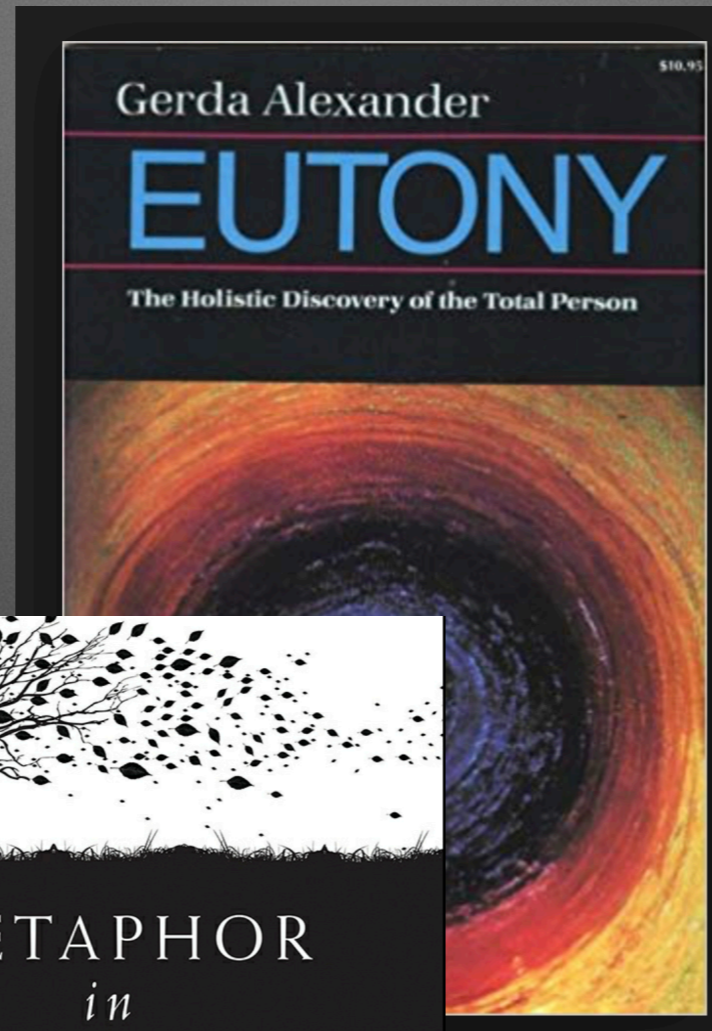
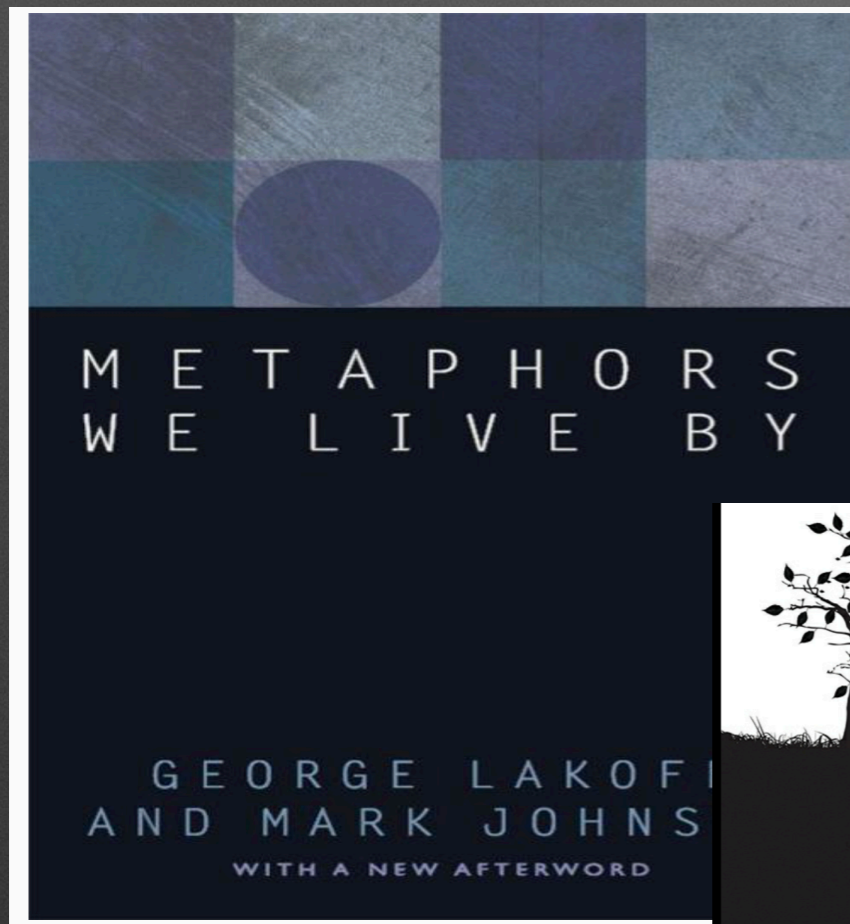
My personal journey

**“Sensations in the body are the
ground zero, the place where we directly
experience the entire play of life”**

Buda

The question...do you *live in* your
body or you just have a body?

Some influences



**From a theoretical point of
view**

“We have been shaped not only by our direct experience but also by how we have learned to relate the one to the other”

Acting on many of “self-rules” can be the result of practice over long periods of time, and we behave accordingly without being aware of the way certain rules influence my behavior



We end up trapped in a vicious circle in our interactions with our own responses

Inflexibility



Psychological flexibility

- It has to do about how we interact with our own responses.
- We are to train ourselves in the ability to frame our own responses in hierarchy with deictic I (Törneke et al., 2016) and thus increase the chances that the rest of our behavior will change (self awareness)



**What context can reinforce
psychological flexibility?**

Coming back to our senses

**Taking this repertoire narrowing events
with the body as a vehicle to learn to
behave more flexible in their presence**

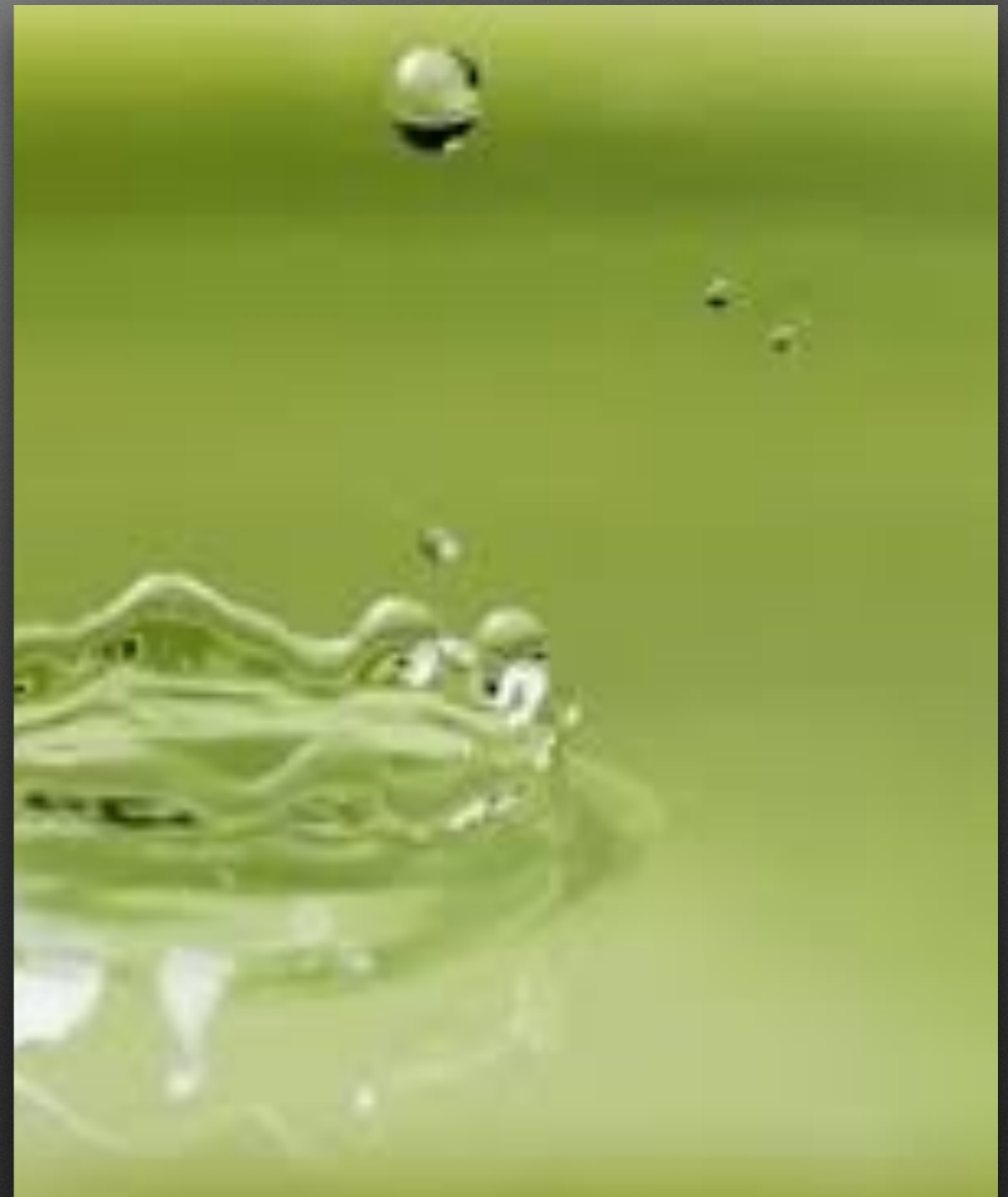
What do we propose?

- Use body experience to change context and transform functions
- Changing in that way what controls our behavior from more verbal contingencies to more direct ones.
- Generate experiences that facilitate behavioral variability and more flexible and free repertoires.

How to intervene in embodied and experiential ways that gently goes to the heart of inflexibility

So we emphasize experiential work

- In experiential exercises, the therapist suggests and carries out different types of concrete activities with the client that are hopefully beneficial to the therapeutic process
- Witness experience with curiosity.
- Increase abilities via direct learning while discouraging over reliance on verbal learning
- Work with attention, to encourage experimenting, to transform the impact of contingencies and to train flexibility



Metaphors

METAPHORS

- Metaphors can extend quickly knowledge.
- The goal is to evoke awareness of the situation, what can they do to move forward and what would be the consequences.
- Awareness and transformation of behavioral repertoires.
- They can produce radical changes
- In basic RFT research, Ruiz and Luciano (2015) found that analogies that share common physical properties are judged as more apt than purely relational ones. The inclusion of common physical properties as well as the specification of augmental functions improved the effect of the metaphor (Sierra, Ruiz, Flórez, Riaño-Hernández y Luciano, 2016).



Embodied metaphors



Dealing with pain



How do I relate



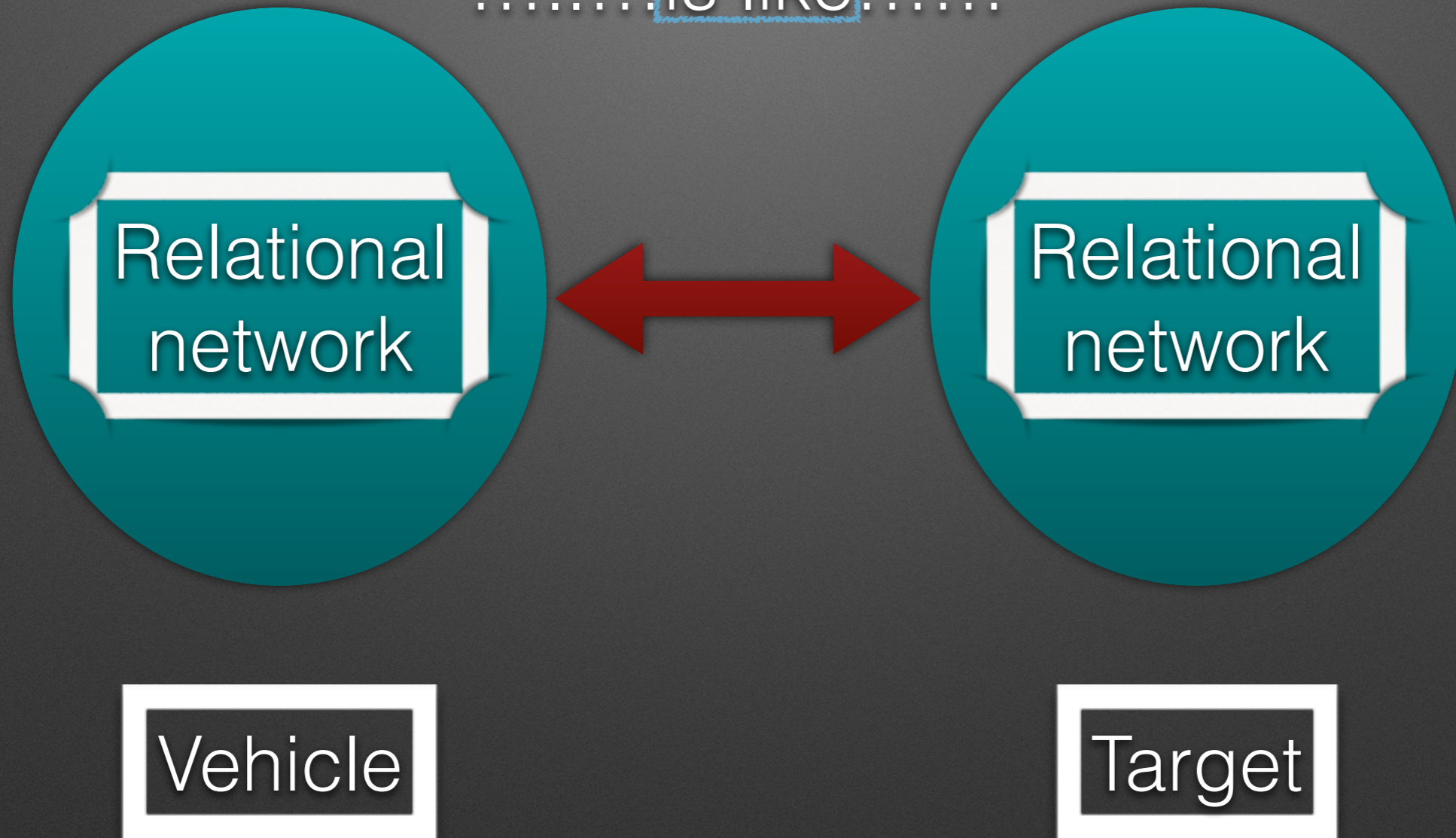
**“Open the door, remind them of
Variations of the situation when
the mind says there is no NON”**

Steve Hayes

We want to address a more FLEXIBLE behavioral repertoire. Create a context that can evoke flexible responding and sensitivity.

Arbitrary Crel for coordination

..... is like



“RFT for clinical use: The example of metaphor” JCBS

How to provide an experiential embodied metaphor

- Offer a vivid metaphor really dwelling into the felt landscape.
- Guide it in the here and now. What do you feel in this moment?
- Interweave target with vehicle while guiding
- Augment shared functions in target and vehicle
- Evoke awareness by using noticing and description and also tracking. What do you notice? How do you relate? What consequences does it have?
- Let the client use the metaphor in their own way and derive. Explore the relational network with them.

How to create embodied metaphors

- Choose an specific aspect of the clients situation. The therapist should first determine *functionally* what the client specific emotional/behavioral issue is (inflexibility).
- The metaphor's target must be a phenomenon that has an important function for the individual client
- The metaphor's vehicle must correspond to essential features of its target.
- The metaphor's vehicle must contain a property or function that is more salient there than it is in the metaphor's target.
- Choose an appropriate embodied vehicle. The vehicle network represents an alternative perspective on the client's situation. The closer the vehicle matches the target relationally (including the transformations of function, etc.), the better the metaphor will be.
- It is important to immerse clients in the felt sense of experience and continue to study particular aspects of its as it unfolds.

Conclusions

- This sampling of experiential interventions provides a number of possibilities that can be used where appropriate. Feel free to add to the list from your own creativity and connection with your clients.
- Embodied metaphors are useful to learn new responses in difficult emotional contexts
- Physical sensations are a privilege vehicle
- We instigate, model and support psychological flexibility.
- By using the body and present moment experience therapy takes a de-literalize quality: AWARE, OPEN AND ACTIVELY ENGAGE.
- The behaviors that get generalize are the ones that don't get people thinking.

