

holographic re patterning medicine or mumbo jumbo?

Beating drums, chanting incantations and gazing into crystals are just some of the methods of Holographic Repatterning, a new complementary therapy which claims to help change behaviour patterns and lives. Would it work for you? Lorraine Pace investigates.

Time and again you're passed over for promotion. You put in massive effort and take on assignments that no one else will touch. Then the promotion you thought was yours goes to someone else. Why?

Time and again you choose the wrong man. At first he seems promising and to possess qualities that matter to you. Then you discover that he's abusive, unfaithful or commitment-shy. There were hints, of course, but your romantic pattern is to believe the best — but not get it.

And then there's money. You earn well, but somehow you seem incapable of saving a penny. You invest in unit trusts, only to sell them when a sale catches your eye. After all, you can always "catch up later". Come the end of the month, you're broke — again.

How do you effectively change behaviour patterns that keep you stuck in the role of office underdog, disappointed lover or spendthrift? How can you become more assertive, positive

and in control of your life? The answer, according to the latest trend, may be Holographic Repatterning, a complementary therapy that's fast attracting adherents and controversy. Holographic Repatterning claims to go beyond conventional treatments like psychotherapy as, with no prior knowledge of

coloured crystal torches, it can also be an unusual and enjoyable experience.

If all this sounds a little too New Age-faddish, think again. Holographic Repatterning is rooted in the Quantum premise that anything that has a structure has a frequency wave pattern which corresponds to sound,

A practitioner is able to diagnose
emotional and other problems.

a client's history, practitioners diagnose and tackle behavioural problems.

Holographic Repatterning works on the premise that our physical bodies consist of energy or light frequencies, which we perceive as "holographs" or three-dimensional images. By changing energy frequencies, practitioners claim that they can reshape behaviour patterns and identities. And, because it makes use of self-healing techniques like dance, music, drums and

shape and colour. In fact, centuries ago, mathematician-philosopher Pythagoras described rocks as frozen music. Recent experiments have proven the existence of the body's bio-energy system, and electro-magnetic (EMG) wave recordings have confirmed the existence of the chakras described by philosophies like yoga — energy points within the body which release vitality. (The "third eye", associated with spirituality, is a chakra).

► photograph: Focus Point

Recent scientific experiment has also found that sound frequencies can be translated into physical shapes. If, for example, an unharmonious sound is beamed into a bowl of sand, the sand moves into a shape that collapses like a too-high sand-dune. In the same way, according to systems like Buddhism and Yoga, certain frequencies and

answer "no" in an attempt to hide embarrassment, but your body will give an accurate and subconscious "yes" indicator by failing to meet the therapist's touch. Your body, effectively, talks for you. Answers are checked until they get a "yes" response.

In a session (which lasts about one-and-a-half hours) practitioners scan about 50 pages

therapy to Europe, North and South America, the East, as well as bringing it to South Africa. Books on the subject are currently being translated into French, German and Swedish.

"Some people use affirmations — a positive declaration of something you want, like 'I am a better person', and if affirmations are repeated enough, they may reprogramme the subconscious," she says. "But if you don't 'resonate' with affirmations, nothing really changes. Holographic Repatterning begins by finding out what is negative. Then we work on substituting the negative with the positive. Since each person is unique, requirements vary. You may need Bach Flower remedies one session or a crystal in another. You might not arrive immediately from there, but you're on your way."

natasche Heine, one of South Africa's first reflexologists and aromatherapists, has practised Holographic Repatterning for two years. Her clientele ranges from children with learning disabilities to doctors, psychologists, scientists and business-people. Men and women, she says, are equally attracted to the therapy.

"It's not just about finding a solution for problems like alcoholism or bad relationships, it's also about attracting the good, like earning more money or a promotion," says Heine. "I'm not a healer or psychotherapist; I work with frequencies. Healing is a side-effect of transformed frequencies."

Like a dissonant note of music, a dissonant frequency could cause limiting behaviour patterns. The theory is that you can change a dissonant frequency, by using the healing harmonic sound "om", for example, or simply listening to a tuning fork or certain music. Because this action is believed to transform or heal a frequency, you're now able to release a limiting behaviour pattern.

"When our frequencies are very low or excessively high we are unable to resolve problems," explains Wordsworth. "We can improve our reality simply by changing the frequency wave patterns, which in turn changes responses and belief patterns. Once frequencies normalise, we are naturally better able to resolve issues."

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chants affect the physical body and its energy field. For example, if a piece of music gives you a high, chances are that it resonates at a frequency that is healing to you in some way.

The gradual acceptance of complementary medicine in South Africa has resulted in some medical aids paying for treatments like homeopathy, and medical practitioners often combine their approach with alternative treatments, resulting in the emergence of a new generation of complementary health therapies. Most of these focus on the body's bio-energy flow, releasing blockages through different techniques. Holographic Repatterning is the newcomer to this group.

although a young treatment, Holographic Repatterning is based on ancient healing traditions. You could call it a shopping basket of complementary therapies from which you select the most applicable. And judging by its international popularity, it's the new trend.

It's difficult to describe exactly what happens in a typical Repatterning session since each is totally individual. What is certain is that you'll first be asked to lie down and relax. The first thing Holographic Repatterning does is establish why you are there. Muscle checking, done by the therapist pressing against the client's arm, establishes whether there is a weak or strong response to stimuli. So if you're asked: "Is it a family problem — is it your mother?" your muscular response provides the answer. You could

of information. They check your muscles to see whether an experience such as retrenchment was physically and emotionally strengthening or weakening. What happens after that is anyone's guess.

As part of the treatment, you might be asked to sing, bounce up and down, sit quietly and gaze into a garden, look at a crystal or smell aromatherapy essences. Because the therapy is built around subconscious impressions, it is determined by physical, rather than verbal and cognitive responses.

Chloe Wordsworth, the originator of Holographic Repatterning, is an English-woman currently based in America. She travels the world, teaching Holographic Repatterning. "I wanted something that worked, something that gave tangible, immediate, positive results," she says.

Wordsworth — no relation to the poet — became a healer "by mistake". While working at a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre, she started exploring alternative health treatments. This led to a study of complementary therapies and she soon found that, while one would work well for one person, it didn't help another. "I asked: 'what's the common denominator, what encourages healing?' And I started to uncover common unconscious patterns that shaped behaviour and expectations."

After experimenting for 25 years, Wordsworth developed Holographic Repatterning three years ago. The treatment is still being revised as information is updated, she says. Word of mouth, meanwhile, has taken the

Holographic Repatterning is also based on the belief that behaviour is a manifestation of perceptions. Explains Heine: "We create our own realities based on what we're told and believe. For example, a parent may tell a child, 'You're clumsy.' The next time you bump into something you think 'I'm clumsy' and a negative perception is reinforced, becoming a behaviour-shaping belief pattern. Holographic Repatterning allows you to see and grow beyond limiting belief patterns — simply by helping you become aware of them."

The theory is that the body, which remembers all of our experiences at a cellular level, contains information that the brain has registered as frequency wave patterns. Says Heine, "If you are abused, you resonate with abuse and unconsciously trigger the same behaviour, perpetuating abuse. You can't change life events, but you can change your responses to them. Holographic Repatterning changes the resonance and frequency of the experience, transmuting it, so that we don't keep repeating negative patterns."

The system also identifies negative patterns without the client having to re-experience the pain of the past. "It works at a pace and intensity that clients are able to handle," says Heine. "It's a voyage of self-discovery. I'm only able to work with what the body-mind is willing to release. Some things aren't deep-rooted and can be transformed in a single session, while others significantly distort frequency patterns. It may take longer to work through all the facets of that problem and to normalise the frequencies."

But, since recurrences of old negative states are likely, Holographic Repatterning is not a quick-fix solution, notes homeopath Dr Laura Nordling. "It's like tuning a radio to receive a broadcast clearly," she explains. "Sometimes, static interferes. But every time you work on a problem, the overall 'static' lessens until you consistently function at a healthy level."

Erica recalls the experience that led her to Holographic Repatterning. "Stefan, the man I fell in love with, was kind, warm, funny and charming, but he became the ugliest and most painful experience of my life. He drank very heavily, behaved violently and disappeared overnight, after

which I found him with another woman."

The experience left Erica feeling abused and afraid to trust her judgement or men. "Holographic Repatterning helped me recover without having to disclose every gory detail and relive the horrible experience, which is what happens in conventional psychology.

"The treatment accurately diagnosed several underlying problems, such as a latent belief that I didn't deserve love. The therapy's been wonderfully weird and fun.

I was asked to listen to music and say an affirmation for a few days. I recently measured my progress by saying 'no' to someone who'd behaved badly. A few months ago, I would have probably just forgotten, forgiven and made excuses."

Anne, a homemaker currently studying homeopathy, says that there was no specific problem in her life that she wanted to resolve when she tried Holographic Repatterning. "A friend recommended it and I went out of curiosity, but the results were good. I was

wouldn't even look at a picture of a snake. She had a Holographic Repatterning session, and this fear came up. She laughed at the treatments she was asked to do, like dance and drum. But, three days after the session, the fear had gone. She went on a school field trip where she actually stroked a snake — an astonishing and fundamental change."

Nicholas, also a medical doctor, agrees. "Doctors don't really have very much available to treat emotional problems. Anti-depressants can have side effects and some people are wary of them. Conventional medicine is really grappling with alternative health treatments. The medical profession tends to demand proof, trials and evidence, but Holographic Repatterning worked for me, and it's worked for my patients."

So is Holographic Repatterning the therapy of the future? Time will tell. A six-year-old child, watching a video on Holographic Repatterning, was fascinated. "Do you understand it?" asked his father as he clicked the replay button. "No," the child said, "but it's right."

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Holographic Repatterning finds out what is negative, then works on substituting the negative with the positive.

FACT BOX:

- The price of a Holographic Repatterning session: R150.
- Who to contact? The South African Holographic Repatterning Association, tel 088 161 3222, will put you in contact with practitioners in your area.
- For an introduction to the concept: Dr Laura Nordling will speak on Holographic Repatterning at the Festival of Body, Mind and Spirit at the Johannesburg College of Education, Parktown, Johannesburg, on February 21 and 22, 1998. Entrance to the event is R10; the lecture is free. For more information regarding the Festival, phone 088 161 3222.