

**Shoma Morita “Morita therapy and the true nature of anxiety-based disorders (shinkeishitsu)”**

p. xv The goal of medical science is to cure illness and enhance the quality of life.

p. xvi I think the reality of clients’ actual daily life requires assessment.

p. xvii four consecutive phases that are designed to create paradoxes for the client to experience and endure.

**p. xviii It is difficult to be anxious or depressed *while* attending to life as that which falls outside the self.**

p.xxii If constructive activity were presented as a central goal of treatment, then a person could become attached to activity – which runs counter to Zen.

p. xxvii One client’s journal:

The spider in the garden worked all night to build her web and the dog ran through it; the next morning the web was there again. She did not deliberate about how unfair life is, or what this disaster means, or who will comfort me – she just built her web. And when I saw the dew drops sitting on her web the next morning, that was all there was.

p.3 Nerimo esmè: Shiso-no-mujun – defines opposing tension between one’s desire that life and a sense of self be a certain way, and the facts about how life is and who one is. Shiso-no-mujun is directly translated as “the contradiction by ideas”.

p.7 *Satori* involves the subjective experience of being one with the state of impermanence. **When compared to beliefs that are acquired through experience, knowledge and ideas that are imposed arbitrarily are rarely effective and worthy.**

p.8 Taking a right-or-wrong judgment in the middle of mental confusion is also unreliable.

p.10 No real or fixed body of “the mind” exists. Just as burning wood cannot maintain a constant form, so the mind is always active and changing.

**p.13 A person cannot deliberately forget. Forgetting occurs in a split second. Not being able to understand when and how one forgets is comparable to not being able to remember when and how one falls asleep. Therefore, if one tries to forget something, to fall asleep in a hurry, or to suppress psychological activities, such attempts increase psychological conflict and disrupt the flow of consciousness.**

p.14 True courage occurs when one is not aware of her or his own braveness.

**p.15 When people are fully mindless, absolutely committed, and become one with the present moment, they can no longer be aware of their one states. (Išėjimas iš savęs ir pergyvenimų).**

There are two ways of freeing oneself from uncomfortable feelings. One way is to completely become the pain or the suffering itself. When one is purely subjective state, one is entirely beyond evaluations due to dualistic or „subject versus object“ ways of thinking.

The other way to free oneself from uncomfortable feelings is to focus attention on the pain, and to observe, describe, and evaluate it, without attempting to eliminate the discomfort or to distract oneself.

p.16 The reason that clients with *shinkeishitsu* constantly complain about their symptoms to family members is because they want others to acknowledge their suffering and give sympathy and special care to them. Paradoxically, this practice of complaining increases clients' suffering.

**p.17 I advise my clients to use a thought as a guide while acknowledging its limited caliber for choosing action. This is comparable to using a mirror only to identify a certain spot on the face while relying on a natural hand movement to guide the razor.**

p.18 **The prevalence of contradiction by ideas among people seems to be caused by the following processes: (1) a person forms an idea that is incongruent with reality; (2) s/he objectifies such ideas; (3) s/he projects these objectified ideas onto the external world; and (4) s/he expands the boundaries of her or his projected ideas. The perpetuation of these processes leads a person's mind astray and leads her or him farther away from reality. This sequence is known as *akuchi* (misplaced intellect) in Zen.**

p.22 Obedience to nature is the subjective attitude to be developed and fostered in clients through therapy.

p.24 Emotion is subjective reality, while intellect leads one to assess objective reality.

**p.25 Subjective and experiential understanding are free from doubt and confusion. Whereas objective observation is accompanied by doubt.**

Lao-tzu stated that, "The principle of universal truth should be called 'nothingness' or 'namelessness'. However, once it is named 'nameless', it loses its original identity." This passage represents the "subjectivity" to which I refer. When something is named, it becomes objective knowledge.

**p.27 *Shinkeishitsu* is an intellectual and anticipatory fear.**

p.28 I believe that the therapy for these symptoms must include an attempt to recover the peripheral feature of consciousness through increasing a client's spontaneous mental activity. For example, the work stages in my therapy are designed to guide clients to spontaneous activity **and to concentrate on the goals of the work so that they have no time to make self-observations.**

p.29 We tend to be disturbed by external sounds (such as the sound of a carpenter hitting a tin plate), while we are not bothered by the same sound if we produce it ourselves (despite the fact that the self-imposed sound is closer to our ears). **If we voluntarily focus our attention on the noise from outdoors, our mind will soon be harmonized with the sound.**

**p.30 The more harmonized the stimulus from the external environment and our attention becomes, the less aware we are of the stimulus. In contrast, the more we oppose the stimulus, the more intensely we feel it.**

**Those with *shinkeishitsu* continuously resist external stimuli because of a morbid fear and their struggle to eliminate the stimulus.**

p.31 My therapy promotes spontaneous activity in the client's mind, directs her or his attention toward external circumstances, and removes narrowly focused attention.

### **Guiding principles of emotions**

1. When emotion is left to flow naturally, it assumes a parabolic course. It flares up, reaches a climax, then lessens and disappears.
2. Emotion rapidly decreases and disappears when impulses are satisfied.
3. Emotion becomes dulled and less worrisome when it is repeatedly stimulated by the same sensation.

(The purpose of placing the clients with *shinkeishitsu* in cold baths is to train them to endure the sensation of discomfort. If client learns to endure discomfort, their exaggerated sense of pain will diminish.)

4. Emotion is intensified when the stimulus is incessantly given and when attention is focused on the emotion or stimulus.
5. Emotions are learned through new experiences and cultivated by repetition.

p.34 My therapy does nothing other than provide experiences that educate clients about nature and their lives, behaviors, emotions, and mental attitudes.

### **I rest stage**

Clients are placed in complete isolation and told to maintain a resting or prone state, except during use of toilet and bath. Any activities that provide ways of distracting themselves are prohibited.

"Although you suffer from unpleasant illusions or anxieties, do not attempt to divert your mind or try to escape the pain".

In order to be relieved from suffering, it is better to endure discomfort rather than suppress it with the power of reason or thought.

Anxiety and suffering originate primarily from a person's mental denial or suppression of desire for the fulfillment of what s/he wants to attain or perform, specifically when the desire is inimical to the self or goes against conventional social values.

Clients double the pain when they focus on their constant anticipation of fear. Moreover, their suffering is tripled because they struggle anxiously not to experience the fear or pain.

**As a saying in Zen teaches: "If one tries to eliminate a wave with another wave, one will invite numerous waves".**

Iš pradžių PAIN, paskui pereina į BOREDOM.

The first stage usually lasts four to seven days.

**Sleep occurs in people when mental activities cease and they are free from all ideas and thoughts; this state renders them totally oblivious.** Consequently, one cannot fall asleep when they try hard to sleep because their minds are alert to their goal. In addition, such clients often try various tricks to induce sleep, only to find that their minds become more active.

## **II stadija – light occupational work**

During the first two phases, any actions that use extensive muscles, including looking up at the sky, climbing stairs, or sweeping with a broom are prohibited.

The purpose of the activity stage is to let the client calmly endure her or his distressful symptoms and to stimulate spontaneous activities and desires for action by driving the client to experience mental and physical boredom.

People with extravagant eating habits do not realize the pleasure of a simple meal; a single bowl of rice with a slice of radish is very tasty.

The boredom induced by my second stage of therapy prompts clients to readily carry out activity that may have seemed useless to them in the past.

The desire to attain perfection is stimulated easily in clients with *shinkeishitsu*. In fact, it is from this desire for perfection that obsessive disorders often develop.

If a large task is imposed on the client (such as cleaning the entire yard), s/he will think about completing the task because of her or his perfectionist tendencies. The client will become overwhelmed by the anticipatory desire for success, begin to think about the difficulty of the task, and focus on the fear of failure. In response to this process, the client becomes incapable of starting the task. Those with *shinkeishitsu* tend to spend considerable amount of work involved. They exaggerate the difficulty of carrying out the work, feel burdened and troubled, and become irritated.

Therapists are advised to keep this process in mind and to guide clients to begin their work immediately without allowing time for contemplation.

Health in the true sense can be achieved only when one is free from the sensations of comfort and discomfort. The stomach is healthy only when one has no feeling in the stomach.

## **III Intensive occupational work**

**Since clients with *shinkeishitsu* are likely to have a strong desire to attain exceedingly high evaluation for their work, they harbor intense anticipatory feelings about their activities. The high sense of dignity and concern for vain appearance in these clients can be broken down by having them do work they think is below them, such as changing *geta* (Japanese clog) straps or cleaning excrement from toilets.**

When a person regards a task with reluctance and considers work as troublesome, quite voluntarily s/he makes an attempt to do the work more easily, quickly and effectively. When Thomas Edison was working as a postal clerk, he invented a simple cart because he did not want to carry heavy packages.

**In contrast, people who are idealistic think that they should try hard and persevere, that they should always like what they do, and that their lives should be trouble free. Consequently, their**

**mental energy is wasted by their impossible attempts to avoid feelings of displeasure or boredom, and they fail to advance their self-development.**

If person tries to mold the self to the ideal that one should love everybody and hate no one, conflict between one's natural feelings and one's ideal images occurs.

“Where there is great doubt, there is great enlightenment”.

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p.63 Paroxysmal neurosis – this is a term I assigned tentatively to various paroxysmal (sudden attack or outburst) symptoms derived from fears that occur in people with *shinkeishitsu*.

p.66 In therapy, just showing the client point of approach is sufficient.

When a person makes assumptions by an ideology and disregards life circumstances, s/he generates the “contradiction by ideas”.

p.74 A plunge to fear is possible only when the client is supported, encouraged, and directed by a therapist who has a strong sense of conviction.

Once the plunge into fear has been taken, the client has burned the bridges and is able to experience egolessness; in this way s/he comprehends an absolute obedience to nature.

p.76 Treatment begins with the least threatening obsessive thoughts; when appropriate, therapy proceeds to plunge them into the fear from which they suffer most intensely.

p.77 If clients begin with theory and force their minds to fit the theory, then contradiction by ideas and “incorrect” ideation results. In contrast, by beginning with one's own actual experience, or what I call the “pure mind”, an eventual correct description and review of the condition lead to “correct” ideation.

p.78 “Positive or negative judgments, as long as they are made in a dream, are unreliable and are akin to those made while in a state of mental confusion”.

**p.79 One can find true peace of mind only when one accepts the fact that human life is transient and unstable.**

p.86 Most clients with *shinkeishitsu* constantly complain, “I alone suffer while others are highly spirited and enjoy life”.

p.87 Obsessive disorders usually develop from attachment. Attachment occurs when a person views only one aspect of something with the mind fixated and ignores the panorama. For example, the mind becomes attached when one believes life is all suffering; s/he loses sight of the fact that life is alternately bitter and sweet.

Obsessive ideas that accompany the fear of reading books is frequently found in people who make excellent marks in school.

p.88 PERFECT

Once there is natural flow of mind, attachments will diminish spontaneously as one's mind changes in response to stimuli from the external world.

Through **obedience to the flow of the mind, one can find primary human nature. In this situation, joy is just joy and sorrow is just sorrow.**

p.89 The barking dog will lunge at a person's leg the instant an intent to flee is shown. Even if the person breaks into a run, human speed can be no match for a running dog. In contrast, if a person holds a dog's gaze and moves closer, then the dog will hold back.

**p.91 The Buddha attained spiritual enlightenment and peace of mind by realizing some of the most difficult facts of life: nothing is permanent, all things pass away, and all living things die.**

p.92 Frequent complaints by clients with *shinkeishitsu* (such as, "Life doesn't seem worth living") result from an excessive desire for immortality.

p.94 Those with *shinkeishitsu* are continually hypersensitive to their subjective symptoms.

**p.95 People develop overwhelming fears associated with the four inevitable events in human life: suffering, aging, becoming ill and dying.**

p.96 Superstition and religion are like twins; they sprout from the same seed; one becomes a maze of branches, while the other becomes a road to spiritual enlightenment. Superstition is self-deception; deception occurs when one does not face the four inevitable events in human life (suffering, aging, becoming ill and dying); whereas, true faith represents the transcendence of ego.

p.98 Treatment requires active training methods and means to improve mental as well as physical health.

p.99 Morita contends that by compartmentalizing mental structures, mental disorder is more likely to occur. In fact, mind=body; and from a Zen perspective, the conventional self is stained or enslaved by ego.

p.100 Ego is not to be strengthened; rather, the ego is to be transcended. Morita therapy is designed as a four-stage treatment in order to de-slave a person from ego since ego forms (and is the core of) the false self.

True emotional state stands alone as its own fact, without the need for intellectual manipulation or interpretation.

Morita did not advocate the dismissal of feelings; rather, he encouraged his clients to fully experience the spontaneous nature and variety of their feelings.

p.101 Morita regards any fear of death and disability as a natural happening because fear indicates a human desire for life.

If one wants to use the mind=body fully, one must extend the mind=body in all directions without attachment to a single focus. This does not imply a scattered mind, but rather complete alertness and aliveness.

p.103 It is the intention of Morita therapy to dismantle this contradiction by ideas and foster acceptance of facts as facts.

Morita therapy attempts to decrease the client's critical judgement and analysis of her or his actual experience, as if one is a third-party observer of the self; the goal is to return the client to the state of experience before the moment of criticism.

As consistent with Zen Buddhist rendering, Morita considered the cause of suffering to be the person's desire and attachment to illusion. One fact of the human condition is that all existence involves suffering.

p.104 When a "contradiction between ideas and reality" is operating, the gap between experiential embodied understanding and intellectual understanding is great. It is this gap that increases the human struggle, and it is this gap that Morita therapy attempts to close.

p.106 Hysteria is found in extraverts, *shinkeishitsu* is found in introverts.

p.107 The introvert is very self-conscious and highly concerned with the details of her or his own physical and mental discomforts, abnormalities, and morbid sensations.

A clear and active mind finds harmony between mental introversion and extroversion.

The experience of "worrying" is a natural response to living and often reflects one's desire for continued existence.

p.116 Just as starving person rarely feeds others, those with anxiety-based disorders have no room to care for others because they feel overwhelmed by their own suffering and fear.

p.120 When we catch a ball, we concentrate on the ball more than our hands. When we are about to hit something, our mind is focused in that direction alone, and we are not aware of the movement of our hands.

p.122 Dreams seem real because no attention is focused on the external environment during sleep, and one's consciousness is extremely narrowed.

p.126 The therapist fixes his attention solely on the client's presenting symptoms rather than assessing the client's tendency or process (*orientuoti j procesa*).

p.131 A deficient personality refers to a person's limited ability to adapt to changes in human and environmental relationships and life circumstances and an inability to think without distortion.

Healthy individuals have a wide range of abilities for meeting the demands of daily living; they adapt themselves readily to change, develop themselves, and respond to other people. Health is

not based on a single characteristic, such as having a sound body, good memory, or vivid imagination.

p.136 Kraepelin (1914) regarded hysteria as a type of mental underdevelopment. The emotionally hypersensitive character of hysteria is likened to child's emotional hypersensitivity.