

Reboot your life with BrainWorking Recursive Therapy

Terence Watts



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Printed and bound in the UK by Charlesworth Press, Wakefield, West Yorkshire Dedicated to my amazing wife, the redoubtable Julie Watts, who patiently listened to all my ramblings about BWRT in the very beginning when it made hardly any sense.

Foreword

I have been a practicing clinical psychologist for 31 years at the date of writing this. During this time, I have spent ten years lecturing in the Department of Psychology, in the Faculty of Community and Health Sciences at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town. I had also spent some time lecturing at the Department of Medically Applied Psychology at the University of Natal in Durban, South Africa. I met Terence Watts guite by accident. I was doing a clinical hypnotherapy course and in the training manual were several scripts for enhancing deep relaxation. One script immediately looked and felt different. It stood out for me from the routine, boring old scripts I had become accustomed to and was still using in my daily work. I could tell that this was written by someone who was a very different thinker. I was struck by the clarity of thought, the beauty of expression and the crisp, logical flow of ideas. It was written by a person called Terence Watts. I googled him and came to a website called Hypnosense, which I discovered, at that time, was a treasure trove of books and DVDs for anyone doing psychotherapy. I became an excellent customer and bought several of his books!

It made an immediate difference in my clinical practice, and I found that I was able to help my patients faster and more effectively using Terence's techniques and methods. Then about two years later he advertised that he was doing an online course on a new therapeutic technique called BrainWorking Recursive Therapy (BWRT®). After having used Terence's work, I had high regard for his credibility. I signed up for it in October 2013 and the course blew my mind. His concepts and ideas challenged me like nothing had ever done before, forcing me to think differently. BWRT was like nothing I had learned or taught before.

I was excited and intrigued by what I was learning. I had a thriving clinical psychology practice and ran a therapy clinic for inpatient treatment. This clinic generally admitted patients suffering from depression, severe anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, sexual abuse, grief, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and other mental health conditions. I was excited to try this new therapy, with the patient's permission of course, in the safe and protected environment of the clinic. I was astounded by the unexpected rapidity and effectiveness of the treatment. It was then that I realised fully

that this therapy was going to revolutionise the world of psychotherapy. I then became Terence's research partner and helped to further develop BWRT into the amazing worldwide success that it has now become.

BWRT has absolutely changed the way I practice therapy as a clinical psychologist. I began to teach it to other psychologists, psychiatrists and clinical social workers in South Africa and they all had the same incredible experience with BWRT in their practices. It is now being used at university student counselling centres, some school psychological services, several departments of correctional services, prison psychological services, by several military psychologists and by the South African police psychological services.

This book has been a long time in the making, and its time has finally come. There has never been a more appropriate time for such a book to be written. We are still amid what seems to be an endless pandemic of COVID-19 where the mental health needs of ordinary people have been catapulted to centre stage. With this has come the realisation that there will never be enough experienced psychotherapists to deal with the explosion in mental health issues that have emerged because of the worldwide pandemic. This book, I believe, will go a long way to addressing that vital need. Terence has written a book about a complex therapy in a very simple way. He has made real self-help truly available to the ordinary man and woman who may not otherwise have access to specialised psychotherapeutic expertise. Of course, this book does not in any way promote itself as the answer to all mental health problems for everyone, but it does open the way for people who may not previously have considered getting help for a variety of reasons: such as fear of stigma, financial reasons, geographical location or the belief that therapy is long and complicated and exhausting. But now help is immediately available in this incredible book. Terence has made help easily accessible. There are hundreds of self-help books available all over the world, but this one is special.

It *will do* what it promises to do in simple, achievable steps that everyone can do, and the best part? In many cases almost immediate results are achievable.

In my years as a senior academic I was privileged to attend many conferences around the world and meet many of the most famous people in the field of psychology. People whose textbooks I'd read as a student, people whose textbooks I had prescribed to my undergraduate students at university, people whose work I had taught to my master's students in psychology.

In my opinion Terence Watts is right up there with the best of them, and in many ways, better. The man is, in a word, a genius. This book is going to transform the self-help industry the way that BWRT has transformed the world of psychotherapy.

Rafiq Lockhat, clinical psychologist Cape Town, South Africa

Acknowledgements

With much gratitude to Rafiq Lockhat, who became my research partner almost as soon as I had taught the process for the first time.

Thanks also to all the early pioneers of BWRT, whose unwavering support in the face of much initial scepticism was greatly valued.

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First, a disclaimer: BrainWorking Recursive Therapy (BWRT) was only taught for the first time in 2013 so is still, in therapy terms, very new. But from the beginning it has astounded all who have studied the training and as a result it has been eagerly adopted by thousands of clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, counsellors and other therapists worldwide, including professors of psychology. They are using it on an everyday basis, often in preference to any other therapy, to relieve suffering and, in many cases, save lives. It is also in use by some police and military because of its ability to rapidly resolve post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).¹

BWRT is a new process; it was initially met with scepticism, with therapists insisting there could be nothing in it that had not been taught before and that it could not possibly be as effective as was being claimed. It was first taught to a small group of professional therapists in October 2013, all of whom instantly recognised that it was something genuinely new and different and not just a rehash of one of the dozens – hundreds, probably – of other available therapies. They were impressed by the fact that BWRT is based strongly in science and evolutionary biology – and not only does it work, but, unlike the majority of other therapies, we also know exactly why it works. After that early beginning, the word spread quickly and now (in 2022) it is in worldwide use.

¹ See https://www.bwrt.org/ and https://bwrtsa.co.za/.

And now you have a chance to use this cutting-edge therapy in the comfort of your own home.

To the uninitiated, or untrained, it can seem that BWRT is just a quick fix that fades over time because unless you find the initial sensitising event (often referred to as the ISE) the presenting problem will always return. And that is absolutely correct – as far as standard therapy models are concerned. These older therapies trawl through conscious thought, sometimes childhood, looking for anything that causes discomfort and then working on it; but those things don't actually exist in the mind, only appearing there when something triggers them into existence. BWRT, though, simply disables them at source. To give a simple analogy, if uncomfortable symptoms were like water flowing from a hose, older therapies seek to make the stream less powerful whereas BWRT simply turns off the tap.

You'll discover more about the way BWRT works and how it does so in Chapter 1. But first it's important to recognise that as good as this self-help is, it doesn't pretend to be as effective as if you had a session with a registered BWRT practitioner. There's actually a very sound reason for this. When you attend a session as a client, the practitioner does most of the work and all you have to do is relax and follow what they're saying; it's really very easy to get a super result in only one or two sessions for even quite complicated problems. Most of the time you would only have to tell them how you feel about something and how you would like to feel instead and they can get straight to work - you don't even have to tell them about anything you'd rather keep to yourself, either. But with the self-help model, you have to become both therapist and client at the same time; your brain is tasked with thinking of two things at once or switching quickly between them. Having said that, the special procedures provided in this book mean you will, more often than not, be able to do what BWRT does best: enable your brain to completely overwrite whatever problem you're experiencing with new information. You'll discover exactly how to create the perfect replacement information from your own thoughts and, because it's your own idea, your brain will happily accept it.

The sequence of therapy used in this book is identical to that which the professional therapist uses, though they employ slightly different techniques to enhance concentration and focus. Essentially, though, the routine is based around the same concepts:

- Bring the problem vividly to mind.
- Disable it within seconds (that really can happen when you know how).
- Replace how it feels with how you want to feel.
- Create a high level of intensity to emphasise its importance.
- Show the brain a vivid future where the problem no longer exists.
- Create what's called a *recursive loop* to lock it all in place.
- Test and repeat if necessary.

There are several different life issues you can choose to work with, although you may, of course, decide to work on every single one of them. And it will get easier every time. You should always complete at least Chapters 1–6 before starting to work with any of the problems covered in the book, for two reasons: (1) you will gain a thorough understanding of how BWRT works; and (2) Chapters 4–6 in particular provide a solid framework upon which to base your new life. Also, at the end of Chapter 2, there's a special relaxing and stabilising routine you will need in order to finish each therapy procedure. It's called the Super Unwind and it's in two parts, each of which can be used separately.

Two ways to work

Just like the professional version of BWRT, what you're learning in this book will provide a completely personalised therapy that is customised specifically to the way your brain and mind works. In each procedure, there's a full technical description of the 'events' techniques that are employed. One way to work is to just read through them carefully, giving your full attention to each step, and where it says something like 'Repeat steps 3–6 five more times' then do so with complete concentration. But it's inestimably better to do a little more to create a self-help therapy most closely resembling that of a professional environment, which will give you the best mental healthcare possible with self-help. This simply involves recording the procedure for whatever you want to sort out, exactly as it's written down in the *text to record* scripts in the book. You only need to do this once for any problem you want to fix. These are no ordinary therapy scripts, for two reasons:

1. BWRT is no ordinary therapy and lends itself to a specific structure. The structure and design are shown in more detail in the *reading* version before you get to the written script material. You don't have to read the technical structure if you don't want to – you can just go directly to the *text to record* section and that will work perfectly.

2. The scripts are written in *speaking* style and personalised to fit your psyche and processes of thought exactly, making them ultra-effective. Always keep the volume normal, even where you're using emphasis, because loudness isn't necessary and doesn't actually work very well for BWRT.

Read the script into your mobile phone or digital recorder so that you can later sit back and follow along – ideally with your eyes closed to enhance concentration and imagination, just as you would within a professional setting. Everything is written up with clear instructions for you to follow, showing where you need emphasis and even explaining how to create the right atmosphere. You can change the wording a little if you need to make it sound more like the sort thing you might usually say (though it's not really necessary) – but if you decide to do that, be quite certain not to change the meaning, since the texts are carefully worded.

Quite often you'll be reading a series of statements five or six times, but it doesn't have to be word perfect, nor do you have to use a therapy-style voice - whatever your voice is like will be just fine (mistakes, stumbles, stutters and coughs included). Now, this might sound a bit strange since you'd expect it was important that everything was crystal clear, but it's not the words that do the job here - it's the concept behind them. You will have already primed a special part of the brain (discussed later in Chapter 1) with the concept while you were creating the procedure and the repetition of the words is just to reinforce the importance of it. When your alarm clock goes off, you don't think 'I'll just lie here for a few more minutes' or 'I must get up straight away today', even though you know that's what you're going to do. You're acting on the concept and that's exactly what will be happening with BWRT. It's another of the differences between this and other therapies, almost all of which rely on conscious understanding of what is being said. This is because they work through the higher part of the brain, while BWRT goes straight to the part that other therapies don't always reach.

Much more than you expect

Because BWRT is so efficient, it can often do in one chapter what might take an entire book with the more standard forms of therapy – hence there are far more opportunities within these pages to improve your life than you

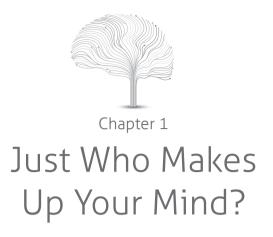
might expect. In the beginning, you'll discover the *how* and *why* and after an experiential exercise to whet your appetite you'll find out about the *what*, which includes:

- Defusing the subconscious stress attached to secrets in the darkest corners of your mind (everybody has an embarrassing secret; you can still keep the secret but lose the embarrassment).
- Super-tuning your immune system to keep your body as healthy as it can be so you can enjoy life to the full.
- Preparing to get the very best out of the major changes you're going to make.
- Boosting your self-worth; what you've been taught about yourself shapes what you think about yourself – but a lot of it is fake news.
- Dealing with the aftermath of problems created during your early years and preparing for major change.
- Understanding anxiety in all its different forms, why we have it and why we just don't need it most of the time.
- Banishing generalised anxiety disorder (GAD) for good this psychologically crippling disorder seems to find its way into everything.
- Getting a grip of free-floating anxiety and letting go of those anxious moments that seem to keep on popping up for no reason you can think of.
- Dealing with the simple phobia, even when it seems far from simple, and getting rid of it for good.
- The complex phobia conundrum it might not even be a true phobia but BWRT can still fix it.
- Performance enhancement harnessing the resources you thought you had but weren't sure how to find.
- Releasing mild to moderate depression via a two-step process that can amaze you with its ability to lift you out of the doldrums.
- Core identity issues covered in two chapters that show you how to let go of the you you're fed up with and adopt the perfect persona.
- Planning for the ideal future, now that light has been shone into the darkest corners of your mind and you can look where you're going.
- The daily maintenance plan; working with your inherited personality to make life even easier and how to find professional help if you need it.

There's a bit of ground to cover before you get to the process proper though, and a few exciting things to make sense of – so turn the page to Chapter 1 and let's get started.²

² For professional therapists

What you are reading in this book is based on the same process that the professional BWRT practitioner uses and achieves excellent results. But you will appreciate that it's been formulated specifically to get the best result within the boundaries of self-perception and the familiarity of one's own thought processes, voice patterns and cadences. For that reason it is highly recommended that you do not seek to use the material in this book as a therapist with a client, since the results are unpredictable. The professional routines work differently using material designed to entrain the processes of the deepest part of the client's psychology with an awareness of delivery from an authority source.



If you've skipped the introduction, please go back and read it – otherwise some of what you find here and later will make no sense at all!

Ever knocked something off a shelf with one hand and caught it with the other without thinking? Even if you weren't quite quick enough, that other hand probably still gave it a shot before you knew it. You don't think about it and don't even know you're going to do it – and although it might not make much sense at this stage, you've just read about the key to almost every psychological problem you will ever experience; a special part of your brain starts to do stuff before you know it.

Now, you might think we're talking here about that rather mysterious entity, the subconscious. Well, there's a very odd truth about the subconscious – it doesn't actually exist, so you can't send your thoughts to the part of you that so many self-help books and various therapies need you to work with. You can think of your nose or your left big toe (and probably just did) but as soon as you try to think about the subconscious, you end up with either a dark mysterious place full of secrets that you don't even know about or a shadowy version of you that's not too keen on letting you know what's going on there – and even less keen on making permanent change.

The term *subconscious* was coined in 1889 by the French psychologist Pierre Janet¹ – probably to refer to the fact that there is definitely something going on in the psyche, beneath the level of conscious thought. Over the last 130-odd years it has become almost a buzz word for anything to do with uncomfortable or unwanted behaviour or thoughts because there was nothing better to call it. It's used as a matter of course by psychiatrists, psychologists and just about anybody interested in or working with the human mind. Nonetheless, it's really nothing more than an idea – a concept – and certainly not a physical part of the body that we can send our thoughts to or try to manipulate; and manipulation is definitely needed if you want to make huge and fast changes to the way you function in the world.

So, if it's not the subconscious that does all that under-the-counter stuff, what is it? Well, it's almost certainly a truly physical part of the body – the lizard brain, sometimes referred to as the reptilian complex (which this book will do from now on). This ancient part of the brain came into being, as far as anyone knows, over 600 million years ago, in some of the earliest animals on Earth. It was actually the only brain they had and it had to do absolutely everything: looking after the vital processes like circulation, respiration, digestion, body repairs and everything else. Back then, of course, *everything else* was pretty much just feeding and breeding – and staying alive in order to do more of the other two.

You might now be wondering what on earth this has to do with catching a vase you've just knocked off a shelf. Well, a lot more than you might think. You see, those early animals were creatures of instinct and nothing more. They lived or died by the accuracy of those instincts – it was nothing to do with weighing up a situation and assessing the best response. There wasn't time for any of that and survival depended purely on an instinctive response to a threat: run like the devil or fight like a demon; try to escape the enemy or try to kill it before it kills you. That bit of the brain is a lot older than conscious thought and far, far quicker. It was the first responder to life and all there was for well over 550 million years, during the later part of which evolution had seen to it that some animals had developed a more sophisticated process capable of a wider range of emotional responses. And then, only around 3 million years ago, the biggest part of the brain – the cerebral cortex – appeared, purportedly in the early humans. But that

¹ K. Bühler and G. Heim, Pierre Janets Konzeption des Unterbewussten [Pierre Janet's Conception of the Subconscious]. *WÜrzburger medizinhistorische Mitteilungen* 27 (2008): 24–62. Available at: https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/19230366/.

reptilian complex still remains the first responder – it can't not, because evolution just doesn't dump anything that works, especially when it works as well as that early brain.

So, it's still there in all of us, checking our surroundings for threat 24/7 just as it always has done. But it does something else, too. It learns how we respond to repeated actions and creates an instinctive response that it will automatically trigger when it recognises the relevant pattern of events or circumstances. That response is activated immediately, just as it would have been with those early animals millions of years ago. But the brain doesn't work anywhere near as fast as you might imagine and we don't become aware of what's going on until about half a second later, by which time it's already happening and we've saved that vase from smashing to bits. Later, we refer to that half-second as the cognitive gap and it's there that we make changes.

Of course, if that bit of the brain has triggered anxiety (or any other unwanted response) for some reason, it will already be happening by the time we become aware of it – which is exactly why it can be so difficult to get control of. And as to why it would do that, it's because it recognised something that used to be a threat; it might not be so now, but nobody told the reptilian complex that. There are many other responses but they all come down to the same thing: that reptilian complex has spotted a pattern to which it has a response that must be activated because it's there.

What this means is that you don't have free will in the way you usually think of it. Just about everything in your conscious mind has been processed and acted upon before you're aware of it by that reptilian complex.

You don't have free will, but you do have *free won't*. What this means is that you can sometimes decide not to act on an instinctive reaction (so you decide not to eat that scrumptious-looking cream cake) but you can't stop the urge from occurring in the first place. The reptilian complex has learned that you love cream cakes and so the urge to eat it pops up immediately – and it might be swiftly followed by a determination not to because the reptilian complex has also learned that you don't want to respond to that first urge. And in case you're wondering, the first urge has to occur so that the second one, of determination, can arise because it has linked them together.

An engaging self-help guide to using BrainWorking Recursive Therapy: a psychological approach designed to tackle stress, anxiety, phobias and many other of life's challenges.

BWRT is a completely personalised therapy that is customised specifically to the way your brain and mind work, and is scripted in such a way as to enable you to overwrite any problem you're experiencing with new thinking. In this book, Terence Watts provides step-by-step guides to help you tackle a range of different challenges – including, but not limited to, the following:

- Getting the very best out of any major changes you're going to make in your life.
- Boosting your self-worth what you've been taught about yourself shapes what you think about yourself ... but a lot of it is fake news!
- Overcoming anxiety in all its different forms, why we have it and why we just don't need it most of the time.
- Dealing with simple phobias even when they seem far from simple, and getting rid of them for good.
- Enhancing performance harnessing the resources you thought you had but weren't sure how to find.

Suitable for anyone wanting to rewire their psychological responses to life's challenges.

If you want new ideas, get this book!

Roy Hunter, author and hypnosis instructor

BWRT is brilliant. All that awaits is your best life.

Kevin Hogan, author of The Psychology of Persuasion and The Science of Influence

With BWRT, Terence Watts has developed a method that can lead to significant brain change and well-being.

Åsa Hammar, Professor and Specialist in Clinical Neuropsychology, Faculty of Psychology, University of Bergen

Provides a brilliantly simple way to conceptualise the complex array of neural subsystems responsible for many of our problematic reactions, decisions and actions. Ronald A. Havens, PhD, Professor Emeritus in Psychology, University of Illinois Springfield

Imagine suddenly discovering that there's a user manual for your life – this is it! Sumedha Bhise, psychotherapist

The book truly contains the possibility to change your life in deep and profound ways. Dr Tony Fitzgerald, PhD, founder of Predicting Better

Terence Watts is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, and the only psychology related therapist to have been awarded the MCGI (Member of the City & Guilds Institute). Founder of the Essex Institute of Clinical Hypnosis, The Terence Watts BWRT Institute and The British BrainWorking Research Society, he is an international lecturer and trainer and runs popular online training seminars.



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