

UNLOCK MEMORIES TO SOOTHE EMOTIONAL PAIN

🕒 August 30, 2016 👤 [Deborah Sandella, Ph.D.](#)

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Have you ever felt overwhelmed with emotion?

We all have at one time or another.

The invisible and out-of-control nature of feelings can cause us to fear intense emotion and desire to push it away. For the last 40 years, I have helped clients work through emotional pain and trauma, which has led me to an important perspective on our mental health.

My experience has convinced me, and research has shown, that we are born with a reliable system for processing life's experiences of pain and doubt quickly and effectively. Our natural curiosity and joy can be felt more easily than we've realized. We just haven't understood how it works—until now.

SHAPE YOUR *Career*



My psychological technique is called the Regenerating Images in Memory (RIM®) Method; it introduces a new paradigm of how our emotional system works. I have turned away from the idea that painful experiences have to permanently damage us. I believe we have an emotional operating system that can help expand positive feelings and dissolve painful ones.

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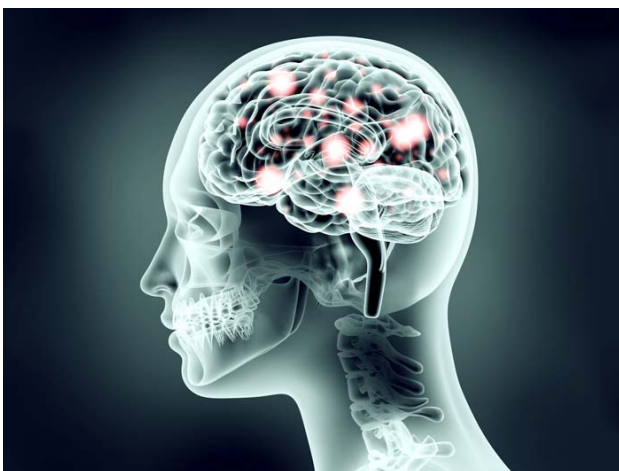
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Research into Memory

In 2000, a graduate student at College of William & Mary [discovered that recalling a memory](#) biochemically destabilizes it and creates a window of time in which the memory can be transformed.

It's kind of like how you unlock the icons on the screen of your smartphone. Push and hold a specific icon, and they all start to jiggle, allowing you to move or delete them before relocking the screen by clicking a button.

Similarly, we can mentally push on a memory, regenerate a new version and resave it. This isn't reliving the memory, but recalling a hidden sabotaging experience and emotionally changing it to one in which you have what you want.

When you engage in this process rather than merely talking about painful memories, remarkable results are possible. You can:

- Calm anxiety quickly with simple inner body sensing
- Resolve unfinished issues, even when the other person isn't available or willing to participate
- Interrupt repetitive, self-defeating behavior by finding the emotional root experience and regenerating it
- Allow uncomfortable emotions to expire naturally
- Defuse suicidal thoughts when the root experience is sensed and regenerated
- Diffuse relationship tension as each partner dissolves unconscious childhood rage by regenerating these experiences.

Victimizing experiences from your past can be regenerated to create a neurologically grounded memory of personal authority—the freedom to speak and move.



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Rewriting Emotional Pain

For example, consider Gina (client's name has been changed). Gina is in her early 30s when she comes in for a session. Although she is very successful in her career, she is not having luck with dating, but wants to marry and have children.

When I guide her to gently close her eyes and focus on her [breathing](#), she settles into her chair and relaxes. Turning attention to sensing her body, she dips deeper into inner awareness.

Gina's imagination brings up an image of her fifth grade school cafeteria. She sees herself standing in line, when a boy in her class tells her, "You're ugly." Humiliated, she swallows her tears and wants to crawl under a table to hide.

Now that she has unlocked this long-forgotten memory by recalling it, we can regenerate a new version. First we call in a virtual resource to bring safety, and an image of Gina's mom shows up beside her. Within the security of her mom's presence, Gina is free to say to her classmate what she's feeling: "You hurt my feelings. Why are you being so mean to me?"

I ask Gina to move her awareness into the boy, and try to sense what he might be feeling. She senses his answer: "I said it because I like you, and that's the way I talk to my guy friends, so I thought it would work with you."

Gina is shocked by this admission. Never had she imagined this boy might have liked her. In this critical moment of revelation, her self-esteem starts to regenerate as a female who is attractive to men. When she stands up to leave, her body posture is noticeably different from her shy entrance. She holds herself taller and walks with more feminine grace.

A few months later, Gina finally meets a man she likes, and they begin to date. A year later they are engaged—and now are married with two children.

Try It for Yourself

Try this technique the next time you are feeling stuck or troubled by feelings rooted in a painful experience from your past. You will find that your emotional operating system is smarter than you think; you have many more resources than you've imagined.

Now it's time to consciously use those inner resources to create your best life.

About the Author

Deborah Sandella, Ph.D., is a psychotherapist, university professor, and originator of the RIM Method, a heavily-backed neuroscience tool for reducing stress and improving quality of life. Her book [Self-Care for Massage Therapists](#) will be released September 1, 2016.

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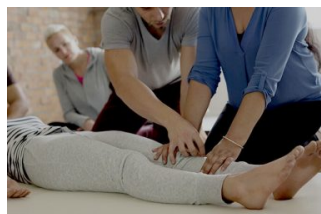


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