



# **Transformational Healing through the Integration of Self: A Simple Approach for Problem Solving that Inspires Brilliance**

*Dorothy Bohntinsky*

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What would you do if you discovered a simple approach that guided you in identifying thoughts, feelings, and emotions that arise from loss or disappointment and then reframing them to create inspiring goals and effective strategies that promote resilience? Would you share it? This is what was asked of speech language pathologist Dorothy Bohntinsky. Transformational Healing through the Integration of Self (THIS) is her reply. Using the style of personal story, she shares her inspiration, creation, refinement, and validation of this approach as well as additional strategies and tools. The first four parts of THIS lay the foundation for the workbook by interweaving Bohntinsky's personal and professional stories, wisdom teachings (from the world's great religions to business), and speech language pathology theories and practices. The fifth part covers the research design, justifications, and results. It includes the rationale for 12-year-olds assessing the workbook and the results from teaching it to staff at a homeless shelter. The inspiration for THIS arose from *The Healing Room: Discovering Joy through the Journal* (2002). Bohntinsky published her poignant, heart-felt, and self-disclosing writings that significantly helped her family and friends cope during her 14-year-old daughter's illness and subsequent death. Her journal demonstrated a process for internal communication that generates optimum solutions when astute observation of events, feelings, and emotions are integrated with critical thinking. People coming to The Healing Room book signings at Borders Bookstores in 2003 began asking her to write a workbook to help them manage emotions arising from loss. However, this was not within the scope of practice of an SLP. Bohntinsky pursued a Doctorate of Ministry (D.Min.) in wisdom spirituality from Wisdom University in San Francisco and interfaith ordination through The Chaplaincy Institute in Berkeley, CA in order to create and validate such a workbook. Appendix One is the guidebook, *Night Gliding to Inland Harbors*. It teaches THIS through the metaphor of a pilot learning to fly a glider during times of turbulence in order to simplify and explain key concepts as using the breath to launch a glider, "walking" a finger labyrinth as a simulator for reflection, and filling out a Captain's Log afterwards. Feelings are measured according to a Turbulence Assessment Scale. While the dissertation ends before she received her D.Min. and was ordained as an interfaith minister in 2006, Bohntinsky continued validating THIS in a variety of clinical settings for a decade after its approval. She also taught the approach to other SLPs in workshops, including the California State and American Speech Language and Hearing Association conventions. Now, she is confident that the time is ripe to make THIS more widely available. The year 2016 marks her fortieth year as an SLP and forty-five years of a healthy marriage. Yet, the motivation to publish THIS came from the 2016 book by Andrew Newberg, M.D. and Mark Robert Waldman: *How Enlightenment Changes the Brain*. It explains current scientific data that shows how the brain's neural connections physically evolve when one is engaged in positive self-reflection. THIS offers a how for using emotions to engage in self-reflection. It prepares children and adults to use loss or disappointment as an opportunity to evaluate beliefs about an event (including the ability to make changes), how to identify and reframe perceptions about feelings and emotions, and how to create and activate a plan for when a similar situation reoccurs. Bohntinsky continues to use THIS to help others gain insight into feelings, emotions, and engage in critical thinking in a way that enhances problem solving and promotes a sense of well-being by improving self-confidence. THIS is aligned with the exciting new evidence regarding how such thinking restructures the brain and its capacity for creative problem solving.

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