

Synergy Seminars

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After receiving my Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology, and after completing a year working at a domestic violence shelter, I knew I had to add more than the traditional therapeutic skills to my counseling interventions. While “talk” therapy is excellent and extremely beneficial in helping clients, there were times that I knew I needed to go deeper with my clients, but I seemed to be lacking that perfect “something” to do it safely and effectively.

I had been hearing other students talk about Guided Imagery and its effectiveness with clients. After completing my research on Guided Imagery and determining this approach was a very helpful intervention, I began looking for a program to gain certification. I decided to attend Synergy Seminars. It is registered with the California Department of Consumer Affairs, Board of Behavioral Sciences, which is the licensing and regulatory body for Marriage and Family Therapists, as well as other health professionals. Synergy Seminars is also located in Palm Springs, California, close to my home.

Throughout my college career, I have been blessed with exceptional professors, and attending the certification program at Synergy Seminars was no exception. Dr. Leviton, and his wife Patti Leviton, are articulate, well-informed and highly organized. More importantly, they each bring to the certification process a warmth and understanding for each student, and a passion for teaching Guided Imagery that is welcoming and immediately felt by all attendees.

Charles D. Leviton, EdD is a retired professor at Orange Coast College,

where he taught Intro to Guided Imagery and Marriage & Family Life. A licensed Marriage & Family Therapist and certified hypnotherapist, Dr. Leviton has been successfully using Imagery for over 40 years in his teaching and private practice. Dr. Leviton is past president and a current board member of the American Association for the Study of Mental Imagery and is also a diplomat of the American Psychotherapy Association.

Patti Leviton, M.A., CHT, has 20 years experience with Guided Imagery. A former stockbroker and trader, Patti had a miraculous healing from cancer over fifteen years ago and now devotes herself full time as a Certified Hypnotherapist, working with numerous cancer groups, women’s support groups and weekend seminars. She is a board member of The American Holistic Health Association, and runs ongoing Guided Imagery groups for Hoag Hospital in Newport Beach, CA.

The Intrapersonal Guided Imagery Certification Program consists of attending three intensive weekends plus one day of training. No previous experience is necessary to attend the certification program that consists of a total of 131 hours of training as follows:

- 69 hours of personal training by Dr. Charles Leviton and Patti Leviton, MA
- 25 hours devoted to personal journaling of 13 experiential Imageries
- 32 hours of take-home tests on the two texts
- 5 hours of creating three original Imageries

Each student receives a 500-page syllabus on Guided Imagery. Weekend one, weekend two and the one-day seminar can be attended singularly by anyone desiring information and experience in Guided Imagery. One does not have to commit to the full certification program.

Because I want to do justice to the program, I am going to briefly describe each weekend:

Weekend One: This begins the journey to understanding Intra Personal Imagery, and is entitled “An Introduction to Intra Personal Imagery – The Journey Into Self”. The weekend includes 21 hours of “class” in the form of fourteen 90-minute sessions. Seven 90-minute lectures are on history and various uses of Imagery; covering its relationship to dreams, mythology and symbols, as well as how Imagery is used for breaking old habits and patterns, removal of prior trauma, self understanding, symptom removal, personal growth, stress reduction and pain control. The other seven 90-minute sessions are the actual experience of seven different Imageries with interpretation and class discussion. Most of the training is the personal experience of imagery and its therapeutic impact on the participant, who can then apply these principles in the healing and counseling of others.

Weekend Two: This is an intensive experiential weekend in two parts. Part One includes 3 Imageries covering Symptoms as Metaphor, Healing the Body, Healing the Mind. We are taught that symptoms are messages,

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sent from the body to the conscious mind, to advise us that something is “wrong” and needs help or correction. These symptoms can be as mild as a runny nose or a headache, or as severe as a major illness, such as cancer. Part Two provides 3 Imageries on Healing & Reparenting the Wounded Child. Of late, it is becoming apparent that our adult “weaknesses” or “problems”, such as anger, insecurity, fear of intimacy, the need to control, etc., are really expressions of a wounded child within. The last segment of the workshop is a transformational Imagery to bring the weekend together in a final healing.

One-Day Seminar: This one-day workshop is a comprehensive, point by point outline of how to approach both group Imageries and one-on-one individual sessions. Presentation includes tools to help: separate the presenting problems from the real issue during an Imagery session; goals and intent of the therapist and the client; structure vs. an open approach; moving the Imagery forward while following the client, and much more.

Weekend Three: This is a hands-on training weekend. Structure, purpose and the creation of Imagery are dis-

cussed, and include live demonstrations by Dr. and Patti Leviton. Each participant is required to create and present an original Guided Imagery to the group, as well as facilitate a one-on-one Imagery session.

Since taking the certification program, my business partner, H. Mickey Wilson and I have opened our own Guided Imagery company in Newport Beach. It is called Trilogy Guided Imagery for Healing.

My education through Synergy Seminars, and in particular, the exceptional teaching skills and passion of Dr. and Patti Leviton, have forged in me the same passion and dedication to this wonderful emotional and physical healing intervention called Guided Imagery.

Once you graduate from Synergy Seminars, that does not mean you lose your connection to the teachings of Dr. Leviton and Patti. They continue to stay in touch with each student, always “checking up” on them and encouraging their growth in Guided Imagery. Since opening my own office, I have called them often with questions about a client, and they are always, without hesitation, willing to offer their suggestions and wisdom to guide me.

The bottom line is that this is an exceptional program to become a certified Guided Imagery therapist. The education is excellent, the professors are experts and the information is always up-to-date. The classroom atmosphere is welcoming and nurturing. Patti even furnishes homemade breakfasts and lunches to each attendee!

While the path to becoming a certified Guided Imagery therapist was intensive, it was perfectly balanced by the gifted and enlightening presence and teachings of Dr. Charles D. Leviton and his wife, Patti Leviton. I am blessed to have found Synergy Seminars for my education in Guided Imagery.

Linda is a former corporate world employee with over 30 years experience. Knowing that she wanted to be a marriage and family therapist, she embarked upon a personal journey 25 years ago to finish her college education. Upon completing her Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology, she went on to become a Certified Guided Imagery Therapist. Her personal, professional and educational experiences are invaluable resources in assisting her clients in finding balance, harmony, and ultimately, healing in their life.

Linda’s passion to help others also extends to her work with cancer patients by using guided imagery. Linda is developing her own expertise in the treatment of post traumatic stress.



Albert Schweitzer:

Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to evaporate.