

## BOOK PREVIEW

### Just be yourself

You might have been given the advice many times to *just be yourself* or, more recently, have experienced some well-meaning individual saying you just have to be *authentic* and the world will be yours. Well, there's a big problem there, in that those who tell you those things are themselves not being themselves or authentic. It's just a soundbite. It somehow sounds and feels right but laws, social requirements and moral codes make it impossible. If you were to be authentic you would follow your instincts and urges and needs as they arose (we all have them) and ignore those social, legal and moral restrictions, no matter where you were – and you can probably work out what sort of outrage that would cause from time to time.

It is a fact that even when they would not be out of bounds, your instincts might not necessarily be good instincts. The reptilian complex just learns behaviour patterns that are often repeated, and in that part of your brain the notion of *good* and *bad* or *better* and *best* just doesn't exist. It's just data with no emotion or value judgement of any sort. That part of the brain doesn't think or reason; it just recognises a pattern and responds with what it did before. That's all. After all, if what it did led to survival, which it clearly did because you're still here, then just do the same again to survive some more and never mind the consequences. Here are some instincts that do little to improve the lives of those who have them (we're ignoring where they might have come from here):

- Men with beards are dangerous (pogonophobia).
- Spiders are massively frightening (arachnophobia).
- I'm inferior to most people.
- Everybody thinks I'm odd or weird.
- I'm jinxed – everything goes wrong.
- I am better than everyone else.
- I can do what I like – nobody should tell me what to do.

So, if your reptilian complex has learned that social situations are the source of excruciating embarrassment, for example, then it will create anxiety every time you even think about dinner parties (or anything similar) so



# BWRT®

Reboot your life with  
BrainWorking Recursive Therapy



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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). His latest book is an engaging self-help guide to using BWRT: a new 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.

More information is available at <https://www.crownhouse.co.uk/bwrt>

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that you develop social phobia. On the other hand, if it has learned that you can't function very well on your own, you might develop separation anxiety and become a rather clingy individual. The reptilian complex doesn't question anything – if it encounters something new, it will store it along with any reaction. If you see a spider when you're very small, you might just be curious – and that's the response that will be filed. But if, later, you see a spider and an adult runs from it screaming blue murder, the caveat *life threatening* will be added to the stimulus *spider*, completely overriding *curious* on the grounds that it's a threat to survival.

Just about everything you know is like that, based on some experience or another not necessarily personal; you know crocodiles are dangerous, and would probably panic if you found yourself in the water with one, but the only experience of that situation is almost certainly just what you've been told. You can imagine what it would be like to be so rich you could have everything you want but only because you've been told about it, perhaps in a film. Most of what you know therefore is based on what somebody else has told you of their own experience. The reptilian complex cares not one jot about that and the more times you hear/see it, the stronger the belief is that it must be so. This is the basis upon which you learn every single thing in life. It's why, if you come up against something you just don't recognise, you stop for a moment while you try to find out more about it. Maybe only for a fraction of a second, but you still stop. And that stop is vitally important to BWRT, as you will shortly see. Before we get to that though, there's something else to get your head around – and it might be something of a surprise.

## A simple bit of kit

Everybody knows the brain is the most complex thing in the entire universe, right? Physically, that's definitely the case. It has around 86 billion neurons, over 80 per cent of which are in that reptilian complex. That means that around 69 billion neurons are making the decision about what the other 17 billion should be doing, and only some of those 17 billion (nobody knows how many for sure) are involved in conscious awareness. But those 69 billion are doing only one of three things with every impulse that comes in from the outside world:

- It's safe: continue.
- It's unsafe: take avoiding action.
- Unknown: wait to find out more.

That third one, the 'Unknown: wait to find out more' is the freeze response which tends to happen in any emergency when we just don't know what to do. It's probable that there is no stored response that fits, hence the brain can do nothing until there's more information, and all it can do is wait. So, we have fight, flight or freeze, and that is all that part of the brain does – routing the response, when there is one, to a part of the far more complicated cerebral cortex for action. It is doing that very same thing in response to every split second of every experience we have, just as it did for those most ancient ancestors of ours 600-plus million years ago. And it is the very same process that we use in BWRT to make rapid change.

## What BWRT does

BWRT is probably the only psychological therapy model that is designed to work directly in that cognitive gap between the reptilian complex responding to a trigger and you becoming aware of what's happening. It's not actually the original response itself that you feel but the result of the response. Assuming for a moment that an anxiety trigger event occurs, the unsafe pattern is recognised by the reptilian complex which then sends a message to a much later (evolutionarily speaking) part of the brain, the amygdala, to generate feelings of anxiety in an attempt to get you to take some sort of action to keep you safe. And then another process takes place that reinforces it: you act on the feeling in some way that confirms to the reptilian complex it's doing the right thing, so it does it some more. And now a self-cycling feedback loop has been created. Because of this, the stronger or more frequent the message and the stronger the feedback, the more profound the anxiety response becomes; all the way up to terror, when there is a perception that life itself is threatened. That's all well and good when the threat is real, but not so good when it's not – as in the case of a phobia of spiders, for instance. Or crane flies. Or maybe vomiting (that's called emetophobia and is much more common than some people realise). As you read earlier, that part of the brain doesn't rationalise things or try to work anything out. It doesn't think – it just instantly responds. Effectively, a button was pushed and so the bell rang.

It might seem to you that the half-second cognitive gap is a very small window in which to work – and of course, you are absolutely right. So, we use a simple method to create a bit more time in which to create the needed change and the safe response to activate it – therefore, we use totally natural brainwork to fix the problem and what you will learn here



can easily make amazing changes to a great many uncomfortable processes and situations.

There's one other thing to be aware of before continuing: although BWRT is a very fast therapy, this doesn't mean it's just a quick fix that wears off – far from it. It doesn't wear off because it doesn't add anything new into your brain to wear off, using only the thought processes and mental abilities you used to acquire the problem in the first place. It is fair to say, though, that as with all forms of self-help you might need to reinforce the results by repetition sometimes – but the procedures are very logical and once they have been used once, they are easy to repeat. However, this is another situation in which BWRT is different; unlike other therapies, after only two or three repeats you'll usually have a permanent fix.

## Experiential Exercise: Stop the Clock

We're not going to do anything very spectacular for this first exercise – just something that will whet your appetite for more and build some confidence that the process will work for you. Of course, if you're very lucky it might result in completely resolving your problem (such as anxiety or uncertainty), since it's a kind of blanket technique that is not aimed at any situation in particular, so you can choose any problem you want to work on. Choose something fairly simple for this one, though – something that makes you uncomfortable, but doesn't have you running around screaming your head off.

Just follow the steps – it works best if you can learn it and then do it with your eyes closed (you probably won't need to record this one):

1. Imagine how you might look from the outside if the problem had simply gone away, and make it as vivid in your thoughts as you can. Don't worry if it seems daft or unlikely, or what anybody else might think or say if they knew – just imagine it anyway in the privacy of your mind and store that image of the different self anywhere in your thoughts. This step is the hardest part of the exercise.
2. Now think of a clock with an hour hand, a minute hand and a hand that shows the seconds so that you can see the clock is working. Make that vivid in your mind, too. (You don't have to think of both this image and the first one at the same time.)
3. Next, think of a time when you were experiencing the problem and try to find the uncomfortable feeling. It doesn't matter if you can't

find it; just trying to find it will send the right message back to the reptilian complex. Imagine how you might look from the outside at the time and make that vivid too.

4. As soon as you can find the feeling, or try your hardest to find the feeling, just imagine you can stop time somehow so that image is now locked tight in the past and you can see that the clock has stopped (or stop it in your mind if it hasn't already). In fact, everything has stopped – except you. You can just walk out of that locked scene and adopt the different self you created in step 1.
5. Now zoom right in to feel as if you actually become that different self so that it's as if you're on the inside looking out on the world, and notice how good that feels as you realise the clock has started again.
6. Repeat steps 3–5 at least three times and notice how it gets easier each time. Stop when you're happy with how you feel, or after six repeats (which is about the maximum useful number).

That exercise is an excellent first aid for all sorts of things, though it's very far from the full BWRT experience. Having said that, it produces a permanent result for some people (while others need to repeat it from time to time) and you can use it as often as you want or need to.

So here we are at the end of Chapter 1 and you're hopefully eager to discover more.

**We hoped you enjoyed reading an extract from this upcoming publication!**

*BWRT: Reboot your life with Brain Working Recursive Therapy* by Terence Watts (Crown House Publishing, 2022) is available to purchase directly from the publisher. Please visit their website [www.crownhouse.co.uk/bwrt](http://www.crownhouse.co.uk/bwrt)