

Which medical treatment plan is best for you? Ask yourself that question!

Opinion

New evidence shows that emotional type can reveal which therapy will work best for you

Did you know that your personality type could help determine which type of therapy is best for you?

Some of us are “thick skinned” and some of us are “thin skinned”. The “skin” refers not to our external skin covering, but rather to an expression of our personality or psychological composition.

Thin-skinned folks are typically open-minded, sensitive, vulnerable, creative, and artistic. They usually cannot separate fantasy from reality. In addition, they tend to lose themselves when around others, due to a lack of separate identity.

Thick-skinned folks are opposite since they know they are separate from others. They like well-defined situations and are uncomfortable with vagueness. These terms, thick or thin-skinned, have been around for a long time.

Only recently, have some researchers determined that being thick or thin skinned can predict which alternative or complementary therapy might work best.

The book “Your Emotional Type: Key to the Therapies That Will Work for You” describes the process for determining what emotional boundary type you are. Furthermore, it shows how to match boundary type with a treatment method. For example, thin-skinned people with asthma might benefit best from hypnosis. Thick-skinned people with hypertension might best be helped by biofeedback.

This book describes a questionnaire method to determine boundary type. This subjective method, based on patient’s answers, is one method to determine emotional boundary type.

Standard biofeedback equipment could also be used, however, to determine emotional type in a scientific, objective, and empirical manner.

The reasoning behind this is that polygraphs, lie- detectors, and skin-conductance biofeedback devices all measure emotional response. These devices reveal the true emotional response to questions, despite the patient’s answers. For example, some people might answer questions to “save face” or “keep up a tough guy image”. The patient’s body might give a different answer than the patient’s conscious mind. The “body answer” is probably more near the truth.

If a person can be emotionally aroused easily, it makes sense they are thin-skinned. On the other hand, it must take a considerable amount of emotional stimuli to evoke an emotional response from thick-skinned people.

To test this theory, one could use a skin-conductance biofeedback device, such as those listed below, following these guidelines:

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1. Connect the biofeedback device to the patient according to the supplied instructions.
2. Evoke emotional response by showing patient emotional pictures, such as those in the Thematic Apperception Test.
3. Observe and track the emotional responses on the biofeedback device.
4. Compare the results above with standard Mind Boundary Questionnaire results. Include also common sense observations whether the patient seems thick or thin-skinned.
5. Develop a working testing modality for this new technique that at least equals the results of standard Mind Boundary Questionnaires. Refine as needed.
6. After proven, use this new technique since the results are objective and independent of how the patient thinks. In a way, the patient’s body answers the questions as to whether they are thick or thin-skinned.
7. Use the results from this new test method to determine the best therapy for the patient’s malady.
8. Advanced users could also use the computer to pre-test the receptivity of a treatment method on a patient using a computer and a biofeedback device. For example, the computer could determine the ability to hypnotize a patient based on skin-conductance.

Takeaways:

1. Each of us has an emotional type. This type determines the best therapy approach.
2. Questionnaires have been traditionally used to determine emotional type, subjectively.
3. Biofeedback devices, using skin conductance, could be used to determine emotional type in a scientific, objective, and empirical manner.¹⁻⁸

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Conflict of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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