

**Joel Latner is no longer with us. He passed away on 4 August 2016, aged 75.**

**This is what how he described therapy process on his website that no longer exists (<http://www.latner.net>):**

It's normal to have difficulties. Everyone has them, even if you don't see them, even if no one else sees them. They often accompany real accomplishments or are hidden in the appearance of success:

- unhappy and unfulfilling relationships, marriages and jobs
- being depressed, feeling dulled or as though you are walking through your life, or racing through it
- feeling rootless or rudderless
- dulling yourselves with drugs or electronica to the point that they are in the saddle
- being bereft and alone and poor in the midst of friends, activity or plenty
- the emptiness of your life.

From the point of view of your true self, these difficulties are a good thing. They are wake-up calls. They say that you are not satisfied with who you are, and that you are trying to improve your everyday life. Difficulties tell you that you have lost your way. We need our pain; it tells us that something is out of tune. It is the start of our search for awareness, self-knowledge, balance, attunement and wholeness.

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How does therapy work? You and I look at you and your life candidly, with honesty and kindness, and in terms of fostering your best, true, self. This may not be visible to you, but it is already there, if we look in the right places.

We are looking to see you and your life more fully. This is a skill you learn in therapy, "developing the observing ego", of knowing how to see yourself. Mostly it's just a matter of taking the time. We look all of you, what is present and what is absent, what is satisfying and what is not, what is loved and embraced, and what is ignored and rejected. We see you reflected in your relationships and in our relationship yours and mine. We work with your ideas and mine, your feelings and mine, and your perspectives and mine, looking at the whole of things, your mind and body, your outer life and your inner life.

The trend in my therapy is curative and healing. Things don't change overnight, but a few small changes alter the balance and re-shape your outlook. Change comes in its own time and it will come—that's the nature of the work I do.

Psychotherapy is a natural, chemical-free activity. Drugs only mislead you. The point of therapy is not to dull you, to leave you with less—that's what drugs do—but to return you to yourself, to give you all of you. You have what it takes to be yourself and live your life fully.

In point of fact, therapy is a great experience—it opens your eyes, your heart and your brain. Therapy's too good for just the mentally ill. And if you had a bad time in therapy before, please give me a call.

If you think you don't deserve therapy—well, that's also something we can talk about together.

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I work with people who are taking medicines and those who are not. I can help you to use them to your betterment, not to diminish yourself. They are not a barrier to therapy—in fact they can help you face yourself.

Drugs subdue what you don't like. Therapy is effective in recovering the abilities which drugs blunt:—clear thinking and depth of feeling—and in helping you befriend the feelings which medicines cannot obliterate. Those feelings stick around for a good reason—they speak about your deepest concerns.