

THE LETTERS OF MILTON H. ERICKSON

Volume I

Edited by Jeffrey K. Zeig, Ph.D., & Brent B. Geary, Ph.D.

"The fascinating thing about Milton Erickson's work is that his originality is not contained in any attempt to differ from others, but simply is a matter of his own pursuit of the new, within his own work."

-- Margaret Mead



In these letters there are aspects of Erickson's life that have never before been revealed publicly. Herein, we are privy to Erickson, the man, in a way that provides new insights into his awesome power as a clinician, a researcher, a theorist, and an individual. As a reader, you will meet the luminaries with whom Erickson interacted, both in the field of psychiatry and in related disciplines. Sit in on Erickson as he consults on cases with renowned psychoanalysts, exchanges views with Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead, and discusses research issues with Stanley Milgram. Read firsthand Erickson's advice to patients, colleagues, and students. But these letters offer more than a fascinating slice of history, more than an intriguing bit of biography, more than a glimpse of a giant's legacy. Through these letters we have a portal to the future.

Erickson's contributions to psychology have been described as encompassing five main streams -- strategic psychotherapy, the Mental Research Institute, solution-focused therapy, the psychobiological approach of Ernest Rossi, and the Neo-Ericksonians, including Michael Yapko, Stephen Gilligan, and Carol and Stephen Lankton. The fields of individual, couples, and family psychotherapy continue to reverberate as a result of Erickson's influence.

Current heirs continue to refine, experiment, and extend the heritage. And the upcoming generation will reach beyond present thinking. In Volume I of The Erickson Letters, we gain access to the man and his work through his own words, unfiltered and unencumbered. The rich and vast intellect of a creative genius emerges -- not to show us up, but to show us out of the prison of mediocrity.

ISBN: 978-1-932462-91-3 / 6 x 9 / 422 pages / Softcover / \$39.95

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