



## Psychoenergetic Reversals: The #1 Block to Therapy and How to Remove Them

Does this sound familiar?

- Either you or your clients says, “I know that doing ‘x’ is not good for me, yet somehow I feel drawn to it. I wish I could resist it, but for some reason I can’t.”
- My client starts to change for the better, but then hits some level and all forward momentum stops, or worse, it all falls apart.
- When my client talks about reaching her goals, she says she wants to change, but it is clear that she does not mean it.
- My client is engaged in self-defeating behavior and has little real motivation to change it, even though the consequences are obvious.
- My client can work on his goal for a while, but then he gets sidetracked, does what is not good for him, or just stops altogether.

Who or what is accountable?

We are all familiar with these phenomena. We see them in our clients, our friends, our families and, yes, even ourselves. What makes these things occur? And what can be done to correct them?

One problem with these self-defeating patterns is the issue of accountability. Many models of psychology and therapy presume that the individual is consciously or unconsciously responsible for his or her “resistances” or “self-defeating” patterns.

That is one way to look at it. But if someone has a physical illness that is not responding well to treatment, do we say, “that person is resisting treatment”?

What if, instead of blaming the client for having psychological blocks to treatment, we turn it around and say that there is “disorder” that is “infecting” the client and causing the client to have a block? And what if there was a way to rapidly treat this problem? Enter the idea of a “psycho-energetic reversal.”

### Signs of a Psycho-energetic Reversal

Treatment is working and then stops for no apparent reason

Client motivation starts high and then evaporates

Motivation is low, despite the obvious need to change

Client appears to be or admits to being “into” having the problem

Client engages in self-sabotage

The problem is resistant to change despite a great deal of time effort

## What is a psychoenergetic reversal?

A psychoenergetic reversal (PR) is a subtle energetic condition. It is best described as if the wiring of a battery was reversed. It is as if the positive wire was connected to the negative pole and the negative wire was connected to the positive pole. In this circumstance, activity either ceases or goes backwards.<sup>1</sup>

When this occurs, individuals are “attracted to” or “resonate with” the opposite of what usually is considered desirable and healthy. It is as if their consciousness has been hijacked and they don’t realize it.

Psychoenergetic reversals come in different sizes and shapes. Sometimes a PR can be amazingly specific. It will be associated with a certain context. For example, PRs are often involved with financial issues.

Let’s look at the case of a person working to increase their business. He or she does what is necessary to increase revenue, and it is working. But as soon as sales revenues hit \$25,000/month the psychoenergetic reversal is activated, and all of sudden the person does not do the next level of work. His or her motivation inexplicably vanishes.

A more standard point of view would say that there must be some dynamic or unconscious reason for this. No doubt when you talked with such a person you would find evidence to support this theory.

However, it turns out that when the psychoenergetic reversal is corrected (which can take as little as a couple of minutes – stay tuned) the effect of all of those dynamic/ unconscious reasons evaporates. So perhaps those dynamic reasons aren’t so important after all.

Psychoenergetic reversals are also significant factors with more severe problems. Dr. Roger Callahan, the psychologist who discovered this phenomenon, estimated that PRs were relevant in about 40% of cases.

If you have a client who is stuck on something specific or is stuck in a far more global sense, the odds are very high that they have psychoenergetic reversals. Stuckness and lack of motivation are major signs of PR.

## The big 5: possibility, safety, deservedness, identity and willingness

Not only do psychoenergetic reversals kick in within specific contexts, they tend to fall into one of five themes or types. The type is how the PR fits into consciousness patterns that are common to most of us. When we have a psychoenergetic reversal, it will usually be tied to one of the following ideas.

- It is not possible for me to achieve some goal or let go of some issue.
- It is not safe for me to achieve the goal/be free of some problem.
- I don’t deserve to achieve the goal/be free of some problem.
- I won’t know who I am if I achieve the goal/be free of some problem.
- I am not willing to achieve the goal/be free of some problem.

### The Big 5 Reversals

Possibility

Safety

Deservedness

Identity

Willingness

These types are also referred to as “criterion related reversals.” Most of these types fit into more standard ideas about resistance in psychotherapy. And that might make one suspect that there is “no news” here. But nothing could be further from the truth. Many problems, especially performance-based issues, can have reversals that make very little sense dynamically. For instance, a golfer might have a reversal that “it is not safe to putt better.”

More advanced students of energy psychology can use mind-body based methods to pinpoint both the exact type and the point at which the reverse is triggered. For example, one client might have a reversal that “she does deserve to make \$60,000 a year but does not deserve to make \$70,000 a year.”

## How to clear a psychoenergetic reversal

Psychoenergetic reversals are only one aspect of a comprehensive energy psychology approach. They will not solve everything. This technique is most useful when you know that your client is capable of solving the problem (because they have done it at least on some occasions) and yet, inexplicably, the person does not do it.

If you want to have a felt experience of this, here is a great example. Have you ever had this experience? You have a fight with your partner. You walk away to calm down and you reflect on the situation. You are really angry about what your partner has said or done. You think to yourself, “I really should let this go...I know better than this...s/he is doing the best that s/he knows how... We love each other... this is not worth it.” You know what to do, you’ve done it before. You apologize or make up or whatever.

BUT, then you feel this angry, resentful energy well up and you think, “Hell no! S/he should never have said that... How dare s/he.... And you abandon your plan to correct the situation. Does this sound familiar? If you pay very close attention to your experience, you will note that YOU ARE INTO IT! You are “locked into” feeling angry. That is the experiential hallmark of a psychoenergetic reversal.

This is the perfect situation for using the “simple protocol” to clear the reversal.

1. Tap the side of the hand point [see figure 1] with your other hand repeatedly while you tune in to your anger/resentment.
2. Say 3 times “Even though I am angry and resentful with [your partner’s name] I deeply and completely love and accept myself.”

That is the entire simple version of releasing a PR. It takes less than a minute. After completing this, you will probably notice the “lock” you felt dissolving. Your body relaxes, the resentment and anger soften, your motivation to repair the situation returns.

If you are not familiar with these approaches, this will probably seem strange at best, if not ridiculous. But suspend your disbelief for a bit and read on. There is a lot more going on than you realize.

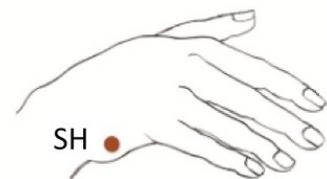


Figure 1

We are taking a psychoenergetic perspective or, if you prefer, a body-mind approach. Following the work of Dan Siegel, we see that the mind regulates the flow of information and energy over time. For our purposes, that means that the mind-body connection is a multi-directional flow. You can regulate consciousness with energy, and you can regulate energy with consciousness. When we clear a psychoenergetic reversal we are doing both at the same time. Here is how to do this:

1. Direct awareness by focusing on some aspect of a problem. This can include an aversive feeling such as anger or fear; a craving; or a block's trigger point, such as "lose more than 20 pounds" or "weigh less than 160 pounds."
2. Measure: Rate the intensity of the problem or goal from 0-10, with 0 being no problem and 10 being the most intense level of the problem. *In the above example the issue is: being angry with your partner.*
3. Clarify: Create a phrase about the target problem that appears to have a psychoenergetic reversal. *I am angry with [name of partner].*
4. Use mindfulness and self compassion by having the person state the following affirmation:  
*"Even though I am [insert the phrase about the target problem] \_\_\_\_\_  
I deeply and completely love and accept myself."*  
  
*"Even though I am angry and resentful with [partner's name] I deeply and completely love and accept myself."*
5. Activate the energy system along with a shift in conscious attention: while saying the affirmation three times, tap the acupuncture point on the side of the hand (SH in figure 1 on page 3).
6. Measure again: Repeat step 1. See if there has been any change. This can be measured using a 0-10 scale or as a change felt in the body, such as the sense of "unlocking" described earlier.

## Incorporating the different types for a more thorough approach

Earlier, we discussed the five major types of psychoenergetic reversals: possibility, safety, deservedness, identity and willingness. You may be wondering, "How do I include them?" or "How do I know which of these is relevant for a client at a given time?" The answer at this point is – it would be hard for you to know. There are assessment methods ACEP teaches, but that is beyond the scope of this piece. However, we do have a solution for you. Treat all of them, whether they are there or not. There is no negative effect for doing so. It is still very fast, and you will see results almost immediately.

### Comprehensive Reversal Correction to Clearing PR's

Even though I have this issue (insert brief description)  
and even if I don't deserve to get over this problem,  
and even if it's not possible for me to get over this problem,  
and even if it's not safe for me to get over this problem,  
and even if I'm not willing to get over this problem,  
and even if I would not know who I am if I get over this problem,  
I deeply and completely love and accept myself.

Instead of using the very simple phrase suggested above, use the comprehensive reversal correction phrasing that includes all of the potential problems as described in the box. The comprehensive correction is usually said just once, rather than three times.

## An Example: Meet Doris

Doris has been overweight for years. Despite working with her health care team and trying many approaches, she has not been able to maintain a healthy weight. Each time she tries, she is successful at first, but then the extra weight returns. She sometimes gains more weight afterwards and is left feeling exasperated and hopeless. Why is this?

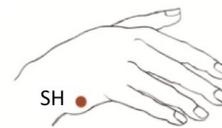
Despite her best conscious intentions and efforts, she may hold a conscious or unconscious belief that she does not fully deserve to maintain an ideal weight or that she does not think her ideal weight is a goal that is possible to achieve. Or, she may not feel it is safe to be at her ideal weight. She may have some confusion of identity, not knowing who she would be when she reaches her ideal weight. Even if Doris is aware of these objections or blocks to change in her mind, she may still be stuck because psychoenergetic reversals feed energy to her unconscious limiting beliefs. We can also say that there is a lack of congruence among her mind, body and energy. If these systems are not in agreement, she will continue to be blocked from achieving her desired weight goal.

### What is Doris to Do?

Even without knowing how to assess which specific reversals are relevant, a therapist can still help Doris by following the simple steps for clearing psychoenergetic reversals. In some situations, clearing PRs may be all that is needed to reach a desired goal. Once objections or blocks to change are cleared, the self-correcting system of the person takes over and establishes balance and harmony without the need for further intervention. Here are the steps.

1. When Doris thinks about trying to lose weight again, she breaks out in a sweat and feels angry. She rates her level of anger at a 7 out of possible 10 points. Doris says, "I can't keep off extra weight."
2. Doris gently taps the side of one hand with the fingers of her other hand (at the SH point in the diagram).
3. At the same time, Doris states:

"Even though I "can't keep off extra weight."  
and even if I don't deserve to keep off extra weight,  
and even if it's not possible for me to keep off extra weight,  
and even if it's not safe for me to keep off extra weight,  
and even if I'm not willing to g keep off extra weight,  
and even if I would not know who I am if keep off extra weight,  
**I deeply and completely love and accept myself."**



4. When Doris then thinks about losing weight she notices that she feels less angry, rating it a 3 out of 10 possible points. She also notices that she has stopped sweating and feels calmer.

## Next Steps

We hope this brief paper is helpful to you. This is just your first step into the world of psycho-energetic reversals. If this work resonates with you, there is much more to learn to help you maximize your effectiveness with clients, including multiple assessment methods and techniques for refining the identification and targeting of reversals.

Clearing psychoenergetic reversals is only one of six parts of the Essentials of Comprehensive Energy Psychology training program offered by ACEP. We offer stand-alone workshops as well as full certification. For more information visit [energypsych.org/cep](http://energypsych.org/cep)

Upcoming fall 2016 trainings will be held in Nashville (TN), Phoenix (AZ), St. Louis (MO) and Seattle (WA). Winter/Spring 2017 trainings are scheduled for San Diego (CA), Cherry Hill (NJ) and San Antonio (TX).

Energy psychology is a group of evidence-based mind-body methods with over 100 published studies, including 4 meta-analyses.

### ***We invite you to learn more and join in on the conversation***

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This brief guide is brought to you by the Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology (ACEP), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit professional organization for licensed healthcare providers and allied health disciplines that serves to organize and unify energy psychology methods, provides professional support and education, and establishes ethical guidance in practice.

<sup>1</sup> There is very interesting biological science to support this idea, but we do not have the space for it here.