



# Connection

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## CRI-HELP'S BIO-FEEDBACK THERAPY: ON THE CUTTING EDGE

**Can you imagine getting real relief for anxiety, depression or sleeplessness through 10-20 relaxing, comfortable sessions? Drugs? Hypnosis? NO — EEG Biofeedback!**

EEG (electroencephalography) Biofeedback is a self-directed learning strategy that enables us to alter our own brain waves. Sometimes our brain gets into inappropriate states and it doesn't direct our emotions or actions efficiently. This may result in sleep disorders, depression, or learning disabilities. EEG biofeedback is a way to train the brain to be more efficient and effective – to be in the right gear for the task at hand. When information about our brain wave characteristics is available, we can learn to change them – teaching the brain to “fire” correctly. Think of it as exercise for the brain.



DON THEODORE

EEG Biofeedback has long proven effective for anxiety and pain management, sleep disorders, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and many other serious challenges and conditions. In recent years however, it has been discovered to have a positive synergistic effect with chemical dependency treatment, improving outcomes significantly. In a study\* involving more than a hundred Cri-Help clients, EEG Biofeedback increased treatment retention and concentration levels. And after a full year, 77% of those receiving EEG Biofeedback remained drug-free – compared to 44% of the control group.

Don Theodore, MFT has been running the EEG Biofeedback program at Cri-Help's Pflieger Center for over 16 years. From a modest office he conducts the EEG Biofeedback testing and training for clients and friends of Cri-Help, and for the general community. “EEG Biofeedback is directly effective for treating chemical dependency.” Don states. “But for some, its indirect benefits increase its value dramatically. Benefits like reducing anxiety, elevating mood and improving concentration can help someone in early recovery – or at any stage in recovery – participate more fully in counseling, 12-step meetings, or in living clean. EEG Biofeedback helps many in recovery resolve problems by helping them become more receptive, and more teachable.”

Interested in the experience of just what it's like, I asked to participate in the initial interview and testing. Don collected some information from me, and sat me in front of a computer

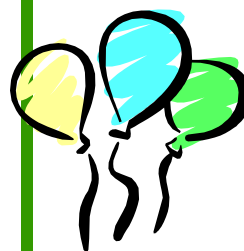
screen gently suggesting that I relax. “Don't try to think – just pay attention. Get comfortable...and relax.” I responded to a flashing beep on the screen for about 20 minutes, and my response time was tracked by a software program. I then sat with Don as he read the preliminary readout analyzing my testing session, and the insights were striking. He was able to tell me precisely how EEG Biofeedback might benefit me in measures of concentration, anxiety reduction and relief from discomfort. Of course, my example is specific to the information I gave him, and my demonstration.

Don describes the ultimate goal of EEG Biofeedback as “state management”, that is, unconsciously steering one's self to render its benefits without the equipment. It sounds like magic, but this is real. Once these new developmental skills are learned they eventually become automatic. Just as you always remember how to ride a bike, improvements made with EEG biofeedback usually stay with you.

EEG Biofeedback can typically cost as much as \$125 per session, but is available at very reasonable cost on a sliding scale through Cri-Help's treatment program. To find out how EEG Biofeedback might benefit you, make an appointment with Don Theodore at (818) 985-8323, or by email at [DonT@cri-help.org](mailto:DonT@cri-help.org).

\*To see the referenced study in its entirety, paste this internet address into your browser: [www.cri-help.org/biostudy.aspx](http://www.cri-help.org/biostudy.aspx).

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