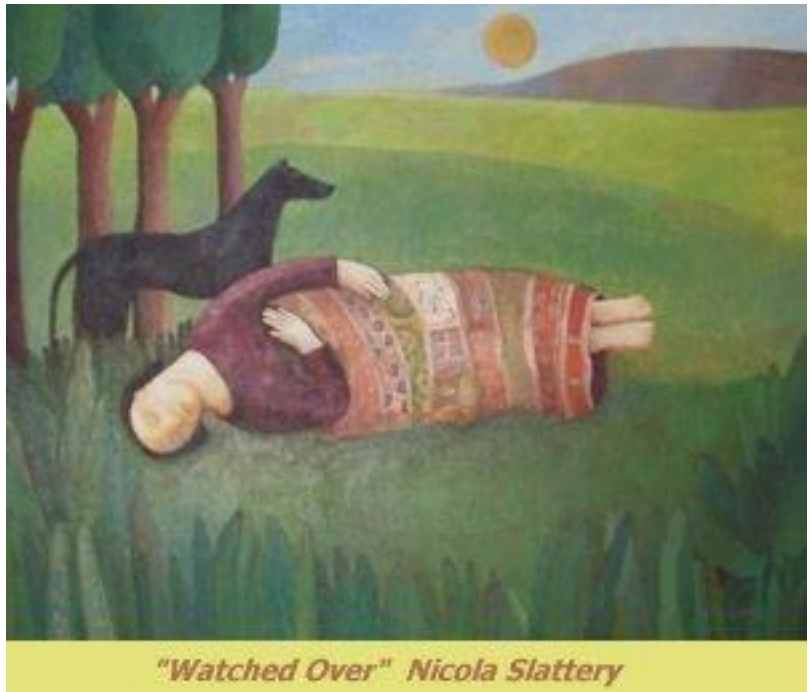


IS THERAPY EXPENSIVE?

Just how does one measure the value of therapy? How *do* you quality the value of some of the comments I've heard over the years, as my clients prepare to end their therapy: "I'm not depressed any more, *that's* for sure." Or "I can breathe now! No more panic when I have to talk to the boss." Or "I *like* listening to my wife, now. We keep doing that exercise you gave us; we *enjoy* it!" or "I actually looked forward to seeing my dad over the holidays. I really 'get it' that I can't control whether he drinks, but I can take care of *myself*."



Suppose we look at these comments a little more closely. Real people, ordinary situations with outcomes that are very typical of the type of growth that can happen when you work with a seasoned psychotherapist:

"I'm not depressed anymore," has meant:

Being able to loose that extra weight.

Not *wanting* those extra drinks you've been having most nights.

Feeling closer to your partner, and hearing from him or her "It's *great* to hear you laugh again like you used to!"

Finally getting a good night's sleep!

Having more energy to be with your kids. "I can't believe how detached I used to feel..."

Feeling good about your work... and about *yourself*.

Starting a new relationship –finally. And thinking "I'm not feeling insecure anymore; I *want* to be taking this next step." and

Enrolling in those classes you've always been interested in, rather than making one excuse after another.

"I can breathe now! No more panic when I have to talk to the boss." has meant:

No longer being in danger of losing your job.

Feeling calmer inside and knowing yourself much better than you did before.

Being able to recognize why you get so triggered and being able to manage those difficult feelings so that you don't put them onto other people who really don't deserve them;

Feeling much more patient at home, too, with your partner and the kids.

No longer having high blood pressure. Or that ulcer tendency. Or back pain.

Feeling more connected to *yourself*.

One more: "I *like* listening to my wife, now" has meant:

No longer feeling misunderstood, and resentful.

No longer feeling the need to speak in ways you *know* are disrespectful, because you no longer feel so hurt and misunderstood by your partner.

Working more effectively on your job, because you're no longer being a workaholic just to; not feel the pain you used to feel at home.

Discovering that it's getting easier to love and to feel loved, too.

Here's another way to think of it: Consider the cost of NOT getting therapy:

Days missed from work for depression cost the national economy about \$40-\$53 billion per year. How much has depression cost you? Or your family?



"Weathering the Storm" Nicola Slattery

Divorce, while not inherently the right or wrong choice can cost the entire family in years of adjustment, particularly if inadequately grieved. When couples bravely try couples therapy, their relationship wounds have the potential to be healed, preventing a divorce that turns out would have been unnecessary.

In addition, *staying in an unhealthy relationship* typically results in lower self-esteem for both partners and perhaps the kids. Often there is the accompanying depression or anxiety, and sometimes increased drinking in an attempt to cope, all of which tend to get worse the longer one stays. If there are children, tolerating abusive behavior often results in teaching by example to the children that abusive behaviors are acceptable, maybe *expected*, thus giving fuel for them to repeat the cycle.

Unchecked substance abuse increases the likelihood of an early death by about 30%, not to mention increasing the chance of hurting others, emotionally or physically, by a good 80%.

Avoiding treatment for anxiety, or ignoring signs of living a "disengaged and unfulfilling life" can cost years of a general malaise that develop into bitterness, isolation, and unkind treatment toward oneself, and possibly others, both at home and in the workplace.

The cost of weekly therapy for six months, if you don't use insurance: about \$1,800-2,600; every other week: \$900-\$1,300. The value of healthy, honest and fulfilling relationships, saved relationships, enjoyment of one's career, having a healthy body, fresh enthusiasm for learning to trust and to love, living a more meaningful life, and living with joy? *Priceless*



"Summer Sky" Nicola Slattery

Take a moment to think about the places your money has gone in the last 6 months in an attempt to make your life feel better: "retail therapy" --clothes, eating out, "StarBucks therapy", the liquor bill, impulsive online purchases. Consider how well these outlets worked.

If you phone me we will talk about options for payment, including my sliding fee scale, payment plans, and insurance. Whether you believe it now or not, **YOU ARE WORTH IT!**

Adapted from an article written by a friend and colleague, Beth Strong, MA, LP, in Denver CO