

# *The Method of Levels*

## *How to do Psychotherapy Without Getting in the Way*

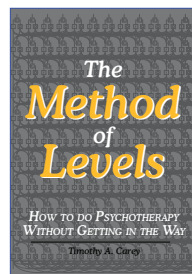
### Reviews from the web

I've just finished the Method of Levels, and I'm astonished, delighted, and inspired. I was a psychotherapist for many years, using a variety of approaches (predominantly Gestalt Therapy, several versions of family therapy, and more recently Psychology of Mind), and while my clients were often happy with the results, I frequently wasn't. My fundamental dissatisfaction arose from the fact that I never knew WHY we were successful when we were, and what had gone wrong or failed to go right when we weren't. Now I think maybe at last I know.

Timothy Carey must be a delightful person. He's clear, enthusiastic without being overwhelming, and passionate about the promise of Perceptual Control Theory and the Method of Levels without sounding in the least like a True Believer. He says essentially that he'd drop it all in a minute if something demonstrably better came along, and I believe him. His book is a remarkable synthesis of scientifically based, rigorous thinking on the one-hand and human caring, openness, wonder, and plain common sense on the other.

I found the book entrancing as I was led effortlessly from step to deeper step in my understanding—well, effortlessly except for the chapter in which Carey delves most deeply into the Perceptual Control Theoretical underpinnings of the Method, which should come with a sign indicating how different it is from all the chapters which precede and follow it (“Warning! Swamp ahead! Enter at your own risk, and be prepared for some tougher slogging for a ways. But you'll probably find it's worth it!”) In fact, once I recalibrated for the extra density of the prose, I found that chapter, too, clear and easy to follow, and helpful in understanding the rest of the book. But it WAS a bit of a shock at first, and made the transparent lucidity of the rest of the book even more impressive by contrast.

Anyhow, there's a lot to like in this book: a truly revolutionary approach to and understanding of the psychotherapeutic process, a lot of terrific examples of what a MOL therapist might say (and clear explanations of why the specific words or moves don't matter but the underlying attitude the therapist takes matters decisively), quick examples of the kinds of issues clients might raise (I like Tim's use of a huge variety of people's names to keep the examples multiculturally human), superb summaries and intriguing “coming attractions.”



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*By Timothy A. Carey*

I'll be very interested to see how openly experienced therapists of various persuasions receive this work. In particular, I'll be interested to see whether it's just “engineering types” like Powers, Carey - and ME! - who are drawn to the rigor of this approach. (My wife was very turned off by the connotations of the very word “control” that lies at the base of the theory. Maybe others will be too?) I HOPE it's embraced far and wide: the human race is likely to be much the better for it.

Thanks and kudos to Dag Forssell, Bruce Nevin, and of course Tim Carey for the labor of love that obviously lies behind this wonderful book!

*Kalen Hammann, 2006*

In this provocative yet inspirational book Dr Timothy Carey presents a new point of view regarding the practice of helping people overcome their psychological problems.

In this method of psychotherapy(MOL), based on a scientific explanation of human behaviour(PCT), the author highlights that it is the clients who get themselves better when receiving help for their psychological distress and shows the therapist how to facilitate and not get in the way of this process.

This is ground-breaking material which challenges current widespread beliefs about psychological problems and so-called mental illness and their current treatment.

It is easy reading and I found the author's matter of fact and enthusiastic style quite delightful.

I for one share Dr Carey's excitement that “With PCT as its bedrock, psychology might well become the most noble science of all.”

*June Myatt, Brisbane, Australia, 2008*

I want to encourage everyone who is interested in PCT to purchase a copy of *The Method of Levels* by Tim Carey. I just received my copy yesterday and read nearly all of it yesterday afternoon. This is the book on PCT applications that I have long hoped would be written.

Everything about it is wonderful: the writing is excellent, the discussion of PCT is lucid and at exactly the right level for the presumed audience, the tone is just right and the discussion of the method of levels itself is authoritative (since Tim and others have actually been using it), appropriately skeptical and clearly (and correctly) based on PCT. Tim's discussion of several background issues—particularly his discussion of how MOL is an attempt to get at what makes psychotherapy work when it does work—is masterful.

I believe that *The Method of Levels* is a must not only for everyone who is already a fan of PCT (whether their interest is in research or application; this book makes the distinction irrelevant, as I always thought it should be) but also for everyone who is doing counseling or psychotherapy.

*The Method of Levels* has restored my faith in the (immediate) future of PCT (I have no doubt that PCT will eventually prevail in the behavioral and life sciences). I believe this book will be of considerable interest to people in the helping professions and this will bring PCT (and the self-critical PCT orientation to getting at the truth, which is also described so well in MOL) to the attention of a new and large audience.

*Richard S. Marken, 2006*

If you are interested in what makes people tick—wonder how we can help people solve their problems - or are an expert in psychology with a truly open mind—BUY THIS BOOK! You will probably wonder why it has never been written before and why everyone doesn't know about it already. There are so many varieties of psychotherapy these days and, as we know, most of them have some merit and work for some people. What we may not know is what happens when they do work. Voila, here we have the kernel—the theory of what happens and a practice which simply addresses the problem without additional frills. It's easy to read and makes such sense.

*C. Spratt*

Carey's remarkably original book on the application of PCT to psychological problems proposes the simple idea that our perceptions are the only reality we can know, and that the purpose of all our actions is to control the state of this perceived world. Psychological distress results when there is a conflict between desired perceptions. In psychotherapy, people improve by becoming aware of this conflict and experiencing a process described as reorganisation. This notion represents a break from traditional interpretations of human behavior and radically differs from the principles that underlie current psychological treatment approaches. In this regard, the book brings a new perspective to a well-travelled literature, with Carey's challenges to conventional and received wisdom being both serious and entertaining. A highly readable and thought-provoking book that would be of value to any psychologist or therapist working with people with psychological problems.

*Lars Madsen*

I find Dr. Carey's book of the *Method of Levels* an invaluable resource that I consult regularly. It is a remarkable document of one individual's quest to apply the principles of Perceptual Control Theory to the practice of helping others with distressing problems. It provides me with the opportunity to reflect regularly on my own practice without instructing me and has enabled me to be clearer about my role as a psychotherapist. It has truly opened my eyes to psychological distress from the perspective of the patient and it serves as a constant reminder that it is patients who get themselves better.

I could never say it is easy reading in that it has resulted in my questioning of fundamental principles regarding psychological problems and human functioning, but I have never looked back as I feel I am becoming a more competent and understanding therapist. I am now more clear about my role in helping people. I would like to thank Dr. Carey for his relentless search to answer some of the most important questions about the psychological treatment of humans who are having problems in living and for passing them on in such an inspirational style.

*Richard Mullan*

This book describes an approach to psychotherapy which if properly applied can enable the client to regain control of their lives.

Proper application, as set out in the book, is deceptively straight-forward as follows: “MOL has two basic steps: [a] Ask about foreground thoughts and [b]when a disruption occurs, ask about that.” It really is that simple, yet the results for the client, can be amazing.

To find out why this is so effective—read the book.

If you are a practitioner looking for an approach which clears away all the mystification of technique and theory to concentrate only on the client and their distress—then this is the book you’ve been waiting for.

If you are someone generally interested in human behaviour, this book presents a radical and illuminating model which can change your understanding for ever.

Well worth the effort and the money.

*Cheery, 2009*

This is a great book for those looking at person centred approaches. It makes sense and T Carey writes very well, highly recommend you look at his published academic papers

*Amazon Customer, 2012*