



**Mark J. Hilsenroth, PhD**

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## CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

For Adelphi University’s Dr. Mark Hilsenroth, APA PsycTherapy® videos are a critical tool

### Psychotherapy session recordings: long recognized as an invaluable training and research tool

In the early 1940s, Carl Rogers, one of the pre-eminent American psychologists of the 20th century, began recording and transcribing psychotherapy sessions. Over time, the use of session recordings conducted by master practitioners has been widely adopted as a tool for training, research, and supervision. Today’s technology – which makes videos available through online streaming – is making this resource more widely accessible than ever before.

Dr. Mark Hilsenroth, Professor at the Gordon F. Derner School of Psychology at Adelphi University, has long advocated for the use of recorded psychotherapy sessions in both his teaching and research. His choice for video recordings? APA PsycTherapy®, an extensive digital video library from the American Psychological Association (APA).

### Why APA PsycTherapy? The broadest range of content available

“I have used other video banks over the years, but there’s really nothing that compares to APA PsycTherapy,” Dr. Hilsenroth says. “Across the board—whether it’s sessions on different types of disorders, the number of experts that are taped, or the approaches to treatment—it offers the greatest variety of content. And that content is of the highest quality.” APA PsycTherapy’s library covers well over 200 different psychotherapy topics, including addiction, anxiety, phobias, relationship issues, and depression. “With APA PsycTherapy, you can even find sessions on depression that stems from a variety of different issues and treated from a variety of approaches. The library is that extensive and complete.”



In addition to covering a wide range of topics, sessions provided by APA PsycTherapy demonstrate more than 100 different therapeutic approaches, such as cognitive behavior therapy and emotion-focused therapy. Over 100 widely-regarded therapists are featured in the APA PsycTherapy videos. The database is updated regularly, with 20-30 hours of video added each year. “As a resource, APA PsycTherapy is unparalleled,” notes Dr. Hilsenroth.

Leveraging APA PsycTherapy for teaching, research, and practice

One of the primary ways that Dr. Hilsenroth takes advantage of APA PsycTherapy is as a learning and training vehicle for his students in psychotherapy and clinical psychology. “The graduate students in my lab feel that it helps them do therapy better,” Dr. Hilsenroth says.

Dr. Hilsenroth sometimes deploys the APA videos for his tests, requiring students to observe a session and identify where certain techniques are used. For example, he may ask students to point out a relaxation technique, a reflection, an open or closed question. He also poses qualitative questions, asking students to identify which techniques they liked most and why (and which they liked least and why), encouraging students to evaluate techniques from a clinical perspective.

Graduate students report that the ability to observe experts in action, and to perform technique ratings, helps them develop their therapy skills and prepares them to be better therapists. “When they view the videos, my students learn how to do things well, to learn what models succeed,” says Dr. Hilsenroth. “Of equal importance, there’s a range of ability even from experienced people, so they get to see models that don’t work perfectly. It’s also useful to see various issues that patients deal with and disorders they are presenting. Overall, APA PsycTherapy provides an excellent learning experience for my students, and one that they’re really excited about.”

Dr. Hilsenroth also uses APA PsycTherapy in his research. In 2017, he co-authored a study published in the peer-reviewed *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* which analyzed how consistently master therapists with different theoretical orientations (cognitive behavioral and psychodynamic relational) deployed therapeutic techniques that are consistent with their stated orientation. The study was based on 34 APA PsycTherapy videos.

In addition to his academic and research work, Dr. Hilsenroth also maintains a private practice. “I find that being able to watch the sessions of experts who use a variety of different approaches has informed my practice.”

Online streaming makes APA PsycTherapy remotely accessible

Dr. Hilsenroth has been using APA-recorded-sessions since the 1990s, when the sessions were available as VHS tapes, through the introduction of DVDs in the aughts. “I was ecstatic when APA PsycTherapy was introduced online; as soon as it became available through the library I began using it,” he reports. “We used to have a handful of DVDs in the lab to use as a training protocol, and there were times when they were all checked out. Students would just look through the transcripts, which means they missed out on so much of what they could have learned from observing therapists in action.” Since APA PsycTherapy is available online, students can remotely access sessions from wherever they are, whenever they have time to view them. “Remote access also lets students and practitioners from all over the world readily use these incredible resources,” Dr. Hilsenroth added.

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APA PsycTherapy is available on APA PsycNet® and other platforms.



Client portrayed by actor





*"Whether you're a student, a professor, someone who trains therapists, a researcher, or a practitioner, [APA PsycTherapy] is an essential library resource."*

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## **APA PsycTherapy makes it easy for users to find what they're looking for**

Users can search the APA PsycTherapy library by topic, therapeutic approach, or therapist. The sessions are all tagged by APA experts, and the search function is also synchronized with full transcripts, ensuring that users quickly find the videos most relevant to them. When users are viewing a session, the transcript rolls alongside it. "This feature is great," Dr. Hilsenroth says. "You can watch and listen to the videos, and also look at the transcripts. You don't miss a thing." Transcripts also provide accessibility to people with hearing impairments.

Dr. Hilsenroth also values the fact that the sessions show pure psychotherapy. "I like that the sessions are unencumbered by wrap-around discussions. There's no need to fast forward through peripheral materials. You go right into the actual therapy."

## **A critical resource for students, professors, trainers, researchers, and practitioners**

"I'm very positive about APA PsycTherapy," says Dr. Hilsenroth. "Whether you're a student, a professor, someone who trains therapists, a researcher, or a practitioner, it's an essential library resource." Dr. Hilsenroth is often asked about training resources by colleagues, "I unreservedly suggest that they look no further than APA PsycTherapy. It's become such a critical tool for me that I'm confident others will benefit as well."

