



**International  
Association of  
Counseling  
Hypnotherapists**

**Fall 2008**

[www.hypnotherapyassociation.org](http://www.hypnotherapyassociation.org)

***the script***

**President's Letter  
Sheldon Bilsker**



Dear Members

Welcome to the IACH's Fall newsletter. I hope you've all had a great summer. Now that we are in a better position financially we have more options available to us to improve our association. The reason we are in this position is you, our members, and your executive would really like your comments about what we can do to promote and improve all aspects of the IACH. We are hovering around 50 members at this time and we might want to take a look at some online and/or paper advertising to increase that number. Our web site is constantly being improved and our referral database is on its way.

Welcome to Joanna Komorowska, PhD, CH who is our new Standards Committee Director. She has taken on a very important job, to enhance and detail our existing IACH Standards.

Once again I thank Diane Auld, the rest of the Executive and contributors for another great newsletter, let us know what you think.

I wish everyone the very best for the holiday season and a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year.

Sheldon Bilsker, HT,RCC  
President, IACH

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*December, I find it hard to believe. Yet, here it is. Our newsletter this month features a cultural feast of differences showing how alike we all really are.*



*We feature a research paper from Michael Maniotis on the power of hypnotic healing used by the !Kung of the Dobe in the Botswana region of Africa. Michael's fascinating paper shows how relationship is always the vehicle for healing, and how the mind's ability to heal is a wisdom drawn from the unconscious.*

*Our feature article is an inspiring tale of a journey into understanding the culture of the Nunivak in the context of training counsellors and mental health helpers. Joe Solanto PhD and his wife have lived with the Nunavik learning to see the world of mental health care providers from deep within a culture of small family villages. Joe's article is inspiring, humbling, and a valuable gift to those of us who have not had the honour of working deep within an aboriginal framework. As counsellors and hypnotherapists we seek to understand and see the world from our clients perspective, Joe's article provides us with more than a beginning towards that understanding.*

### *Diane's Ponderings*

*As some of you may know I love stories. This summer I had a chance have lunch with the executive and some members of the IACH. The wonderful thing about going to lunch with hypnotherapists is their ability to tell stories. Life is made up of stories, some we share and some we keep to ourselves. At our lunch I listened to a story of healing work with a client who had the ability to heal Cancer. How deep connection and rapport allowed the imagination of both therapist and client bring healing into many different ways of approaching health. Another story of children and how they have a brilliance that inspires and motivates us to connect with our childhood talents. Stories of immigrating to a new country and finding ways of coping and meeting kindred spirits. Stories the breath of life. As hypnotherapists we listen differently - stories are treasures we may find ourselves using organically at the most appropriate moment to help a client. Stories that come from the heart told at the right moment are always healing stories. So I thank my fellow hypnotherapists for their stories that inspired, comforted and moved me.*

***We live in a diverse world and I love how we all celebrate this time of year, so it is with a full heart that I wish everyone : A Merry Christmas, A Happy Hanukkah, A Happy Kwanzaa and a Happy Solstice . Thanks to everyone who has helped this year and I look forward to the coming year.***

***Happy New Year to all***

## ***A Peek into the mind & practice of: Melanie A. Baran Conley***

### ***Describe your training, experience and qualifications.***

Many of my knowings were founded through my work as a Zookeeper and in my study of breeding of endangered species in Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust (Jersey Isl. England). Through my work with Gorillas, Orang-utans, Leopards and reptiles etc .... I began to understand the depth of communication with animals and how they feel energy first and react to the energy we give off. Through my love and trust of the animals and how they seem to seek me out, I began to find me.

I have a Daily Practice and discipline in Meditation and I have followed a Metaphysical Healer for over twenty years incorporating the knowledge of the power in Mediation. I have partaken and practiced through the Infinite Way (Joel Goldsmith's writings); retreats with Teacher, Mary Hunt experiencing deep silence in Retreat houses throughout N. America in week or two week meditation and silence. Silence speaks.

I also embraced and was trained in Therapeutic Touch early on prior to its mainstream acceptance. It made sense to me as I found so many areas of sensitivity it was a beginning foundation that I still incorporate and utilize in healing even with my own hypnotherapy clients. This past



year, I have also incorporated CFQ Qigong.

I always have 'seen' others in spirit form and over the years simply pushed it away. It was not until 2003-2005 during a very intense, lengthy emotional period that I was told to validate my gifts and I knew that I would. I also knew it would be for healing....well low and behold here I am.

My training through Orca cemented as it were all the details in countless ways. Having Sheldon as an instructor was fortunate as I was able to behold his own intuitive practice hour by hour and I still remain close to him and his work. Going to 'school' had me concerned with recounting the class lecture but witnessing the freedom inherent in the channeling of such wisdom has taught me to such an infinite depth.

### ***How would you describe the work that you do?***

In my study of Erickson and his amazing work I have found that this provides a 'blueprint'. The synchronicity of unfoldment and other

spiritual aspect then unfold.

"Of my own self, I can do nothing." I silently start each session knowing that the inner word will unfold moment by moment. I find myself embraced with guidance and my sessions are most always intuitive having also this Ericksonian 'blueprint' knowledge and guidance' itself.

### ***Describe your work space.***

Currently I am working out of my home but look forward to an enlarged work space in a more business like setting.

### ***Tell us about your greatest challenge as a counseling hypnotherapist.***

When I began my practice I worried about things; in particular clients who wanted to become non-smokers, who could not give up the cigarettes and did not return for subsequent sessions. Now I know and am over that angst as they will be ready in their own time (which I knew at the beginning anyway...but forgot in my trying so hard -It is not up me anyway!)

### ***....and your greatest accomplishment.***

Learning to have confidence in myself and walk the inner process of validating my gifts and talents. My greatest accomplishment is living daily as a Mother of a child who is now five years old. It has been a journey and will continue to be but it is nice to loosen up and feel the joy on a daily basis. Parenting from the inside out and embrace the warmth of such a love, w h o i s

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closer to me than breathing, nearer to me than my hand and feet. As my little son grows and develops his own talents and gifts it has been my greatest joy to help him embrace his own psychic/spiritual knowings.

***What are your spiritual or religious beliefs? How do they impact upon your work?***

For many years, well over a decade, my beginning meditation time was with the acknowledgment of 'God is closer to me than breathing and nearer to me than hands and feet'. Today this can be switched to Spirit as the word God often evokes a religious connotation, as well as a male perspective - which is not where I am coming from.

- Omnipotence
- Omniscience
- Omnipresence
- One Power, One Presence

***How have you evolved spiritually and mentally since becoming a counselling hypnotherapist?***

Everything changes each season, each day it is only as I embrace the fullness, the richness of change, the ability to have a heart of gratitude and see that which I need to move into more clearly. I have evolved deeper and deeper in conscientious living and speaking from my center. I am so aware of the synchronicity of living life, of the harmony that is evident when we begin to see with a clearer vision. I love the fact that 'synchronicity' was termed by Jung so many years ago as "the consistency of a perfectly unfolding nature".

***What book do you find most helpful in your practice?***

"Ericksonian Approaches: A Comprehensive Manual" By Thomas L. South and Rubin Battino. I like its layout and find it an easy reference for Erickson's work.

***If you had to pick a favorite, what counseling hypnotherapy technique would you choose, and why?***

Progressive Relaxation and deepening through Fractionation

"Now let's check in with the body and use our breathing to come into a nice fully relaxed state. That's right making sure you are comfortable.... (I offer clients - particularly women -a couch blanket throw or hassock for their legs).... and as you become aware of sensations you perhaps have stored in your body throughout the day..... we can let feelings of tensions or tight muscle groups simply let go..... with each breath you take..... That's right as you move through your body perhaps starting with your feet or any part of your body you have chosen, breathing in..... releasing .....releasing any tensions in the area..... Moving slowly or at your own pace ..... as you see from the inside moving through all parts of your body..... As if you could see.....from the inside, the tightened muscle .....and with each breath you take loosening..... Loosening..... Alllllll the way.....That's right fully relaxed." (I would continue in this vein for a while moving

through the body) I then pay particular attention to the face and neck areas suggesting that "the ears become so relaxed that they may even feel as if they have drooped down fully relaxed and are open on the inside as if they can hear for the first time from the inside"..... Again paying particular attention to the eyes, "the muscles around the eyes becoming fully relaxed, no longer needing to hold them open and the eyes becoming so relaxed and seeing, seeing from the inside.....as one who has never really seen before."

Once the client is obviously fully relaxed and I have gently and slowly given time for this to come about utilizing appropriate pausing throughout, I could then utilize progressive relaxation into a Fractionation for greater depth. I then Change my distance by sitting erect in opposed to leaning forward and Change my voice to that of a non hypnotic tone. "Good" (I may depending on the client decide to use their name very lightly and quickly) "you can open your eyes now. Now that you are fully relaxed we can start the trance" (Client opens eyes with glazed eyes) and I say "perhaps we can go for a nice walk" and immediately I start trance work, second induction through metaphor/stories.

***What would you like to see change in the field of counselling hypnotherapy?***

Fuller status acceptance in main

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stream medicine.

***Who is your hero(ine)/mentor/guru and why?***

I have my age old mainstays such as Joel Goldsmith, Emmett Fox also Dr. Wayne Dyer and others of his ilk but I find that as I evolve whatever I need comes to me in either written form or find another intuitive individual and friend there guiding me.

***How do you unwind/rebalance?***

Through meditation, exercise and connecting with like minded friends.

***What did you dream last night and what did it mean to you?***

It seems that over the years I have only had dreams that are guiding me and so when all is well I tend to not consciously remember my dreams.

***What place real or imagined is most special to you?***

I am an experienced deep sea diver and have had many, many deep and rich experiences. One day the dive was to be with six Gill Sharks who had become familiar to me over a three month period. Gill sharks neither eat nor breed but 'come up' to waters around diving depth. I was in awe and still am shocked by the conscious attunement to these deep water dwellers. I felt such an ancient awareness from these creatures....I would have guessed it with Whales but was surprised how I was touched by a deep sense of their majesty and a powerful sense of their ancient presence. So diving

and embracing all of creation in so many ways whether that be on a walk through the park or simply a hug with a friend means a lot to me.

***What is your favourite quote?***

Keep your mind stayed on Thee and all other things will be added unto you.

***What is your greatest hope?***

My personal hope is to live fully in my own expression of love and joy, freely. As I unfold others too will be touched.

***...your greatest fear?***

...this would of course be life without my son.

***How do you want people to remember you?***

I cannot comment on other's remembrances of me other than my friendship and commitment to finding the right direction. Having stated this I do however know what I would like as an Elegy;

Do not stand at my grave and weep.  
I am not there. I do not sleep,  
I am a thousand winds that blow,  
I am the diamond's glint on snow.  
I am sunlight on ripened grain.  
I am the gentle autumn's rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush

I am the swift uplifting rush of quiet birds in circled flight.  
I am the soft stars that shine at night.

Do not stand at my grave and cry.

I am not there I did not die.  
Author Unknown

***Is there anything I haven't asked about that you'd like to share?***

I am currently offering two programs at the "Y".

***A Practice in Mindful Meditation***

Use the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress and personal challenges. Experience centering yourself; living from the inside out and connecting your knowing self with your intuitive self, while learning to release negative or unwanted energies which create stress and ill health. Discover tools for mindful meditations and daily practices that form the basis for inner connections and awareness, which fuel the power to follow your dreams. With each breath enter into a blissful state of openness through visualization and guided imagery.

"To strive, to succeed, to hope and pray – Yet the most important is to Embrace the Day. Each day is a moment of Infinite Eternity that has awesome capacity and energy to catapult us into hidden opportunity."

***Meditation Wellness***

Welcome this Spring with a deepening and nurturing of health from the inside. Re-

# Counselling on Mars

By Joe Solanto, Ph.D



It's late September and my wife, Lisa, and I are sitting in a little community (pop. 600) along the east coast of Hudson Bay, five hours flight north of Montreal. We're offering a

week on "Self-care for Helpers". I've been to this little northern village before, offering a total of six weeks of "training" to "frontline workers" who are coping with frequent crises, and who are providing on-going support for trauma survivors. Think of some of the most challenging conditions you have heard about or witnessed in First Nation's communities across Canada. In many ways these conditions are more severe. The social ills of poverty, illiteracy, inadequate housing, inaccessible health care, minimal education, unemployment, rampant addictions, frequent accidental deaths, homicides, and suicides are sometimes muted before the backdrop of the harsh Arctic environment and weather. Layer over this scene the palpable prejudices and systemic discrimination that the Inuit face when having to deal with, on an almost daily basis, government agencies and workers, and you can only marvel at how these people have managed to not only survive, but are beginning to thrive in many ways.

Over the past four years I have made almost monthly trips up here, providing training in a dozen different communities in Nunavik. The experience has been mostly humbling, as I encounter my own deep-seated personal and professional prejudices, my inadequacy in making the ideas and skills that are important to me, somehow important and relevant to them, while many of my "trainees" are in the trenches every day, coping with crises far beyond the magnitude that I've had to face in my life or work. It's been a regular

***I don't know where to begin explaining the challenges to making the standard theories of counseling "culturally appropriate", largely because it's taken me most of these years to realize how inappropriate some of these most treasured professional beliefs and approaches really are for Aboriginal People.***

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encounter with feelings of inadequacy, frustration, anger, sadness, and nagging concerns about whether or not I'm doing "any good" up here. When I've been tempted to quit, one of my colleagues up here reminds me that I'm in training in understanding the ways of Aboriginal People, and that these experiences can only make me a better teacher, and a better person. I can only hope this is true, as more of my work each year is among these people.

For now, let me try to explain some of the professional challenges I have faced, saving for a later time the stories of a more personal nature.

First, it's important to say who my "trainees" are. For the most part they are the communities natural helpers. Women (mostly) and men who have little or no formal training in any helping field, but have been selected for paid positions called counsellor, social worker, victims assistant, justice worker, school counsellor, addictions counsellor, etc. A

variety of factors including the lack of training, little or no organizational support (sometimes no organization at all), no supervision, inadequate funds, rapidly shifting community and government priorities, regular crises, professional burnout, all contribute to the short terms of employment and frequent staff turnover. In short, they tolerate

conditions that would never be permitted by professionals "down South". It's quite rare to find someone who identifies as having a "career" in a particular helping field- a health aide yesterday, an addictions counsellor today, a child development worker tomorrow, and who knows what next month, perhaps unemployed. Picture offering a training program in weekly segments over the course of several months, during which time the faces of the participants change, and the ones who remain constant now have different jobs than they held when the program began. Picture having to keep your "training" flexible each day because of unexpected blizzards with whiteout conditions, a funeral for an Elder, a suicide of a youth, the need for all men to join a rescue

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team to search for a hunter who hasn't returned as planned, an accidental drowning of a young child, the death of a family member of one of the participants, a call to the harbour to help unload the last cargo ship before the freeze up, the surprise beaching of a walrus to be killed, butchered and distributed, unexpected arrival of a caribou heard, delayed and cancelled flights, and you begin to get some idea of the teaching environment. I don't know where

to begin explaining the challenges to making the standard theories of counselling "culturally appropriate", largely because it's taken me most of these years to realize how inappropriate some of these most treasured professional beliefs and approaches really are for Aboriginal People. Perhaps one of the biggest gaps between the Aboriginal

perspective and that of non-Aboriginals centers around the focus on the individual and the importance of self-awareness, self-fulfillment, and personal growth that are the hallmarks of Western understanding. While this is a common observation when discussing or reading about "cross cultural" or "culturally sensitive" approaches, the realities of this need to "modify", I believe, require us to alter the very foundations of many of our approaches to counseling with Aboriginal People, who exist, not in an individual reality but rather in complex and dynamic relationships to all people and nature around them.

Let me give one small example of how this collective orientation differs

from mine. In using the tool "Creating a Safe Place", whether in imagery or through a combination of imagery and art work, I offer that, among it's other characteristics, this place does not have any other people there...just for you...a place where you can be alone... feeling perfectly safe and free from any harm....etc. My Aboriginal trainees rightfully

something like..."gather all of your friends and family.... see them in your safe place.... doing whatever it is that makes you all feel safe together"... or something like that? I submit that it's my difficulty in maintaining a "culturally appropriate" perspective, giving only lip service to the principles of "cross cultural counselling", and stubbornly holding onto the notion that our way is somehow "better", and they'll catch on to this eventually if they would just give it a try.

This leads me to the challenges of exploring the notion of "boundaries", personal or professional, with Aboriginal People. The idea that we need to set boundaries in our personal relationships, and must adhere to appropriate boundaries in our professional relationships with clients, and that this ensures healthy interactions, often mystifies my Aboriginal trainees. They exist in a world where "co-dependency" is not a disease, but rather a state of relationship to be aspired toward. Our notion of boundaries and empathy often sound like uncaring, arms-length ways of distancing from "the other".

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Further, our understandings of health, balance, and change are so individual-focused that they stand the risk of being rejected outright as not being consistent with the time-honoured values of these people. This comes back at me almost every day in my work here as I naturally assume a more Eurocentric (read "White Man") stance. Their profoundly collective orientation that places relationship first, for example, explains in part how someone is selected for a job in the community. Let's say a job is posted for an Early Childhood Worker at the day-care centre. In our world we would assume that this position would be filled by someone with some background, and at least some training in the field, perhaps a certificate or even a degree. Here the job is more likely to be offered to a close relative of the person in charge of hiring, and under the guidance of a family Elder or community leader. The person chosen may not have ever thought of doing work such as this, but the opportunity to work is now being made available, and it's not to be turned down lightly. The person is selected because he/she needs the job, rather than the job needs them. While we may hire based on the principle of "the best person for the job", up here the strategy would be to find the best job for this person. (I recently met an "addictions counsellor" who was the community radio announcer previously struggling with his own addictions. He improved greatly over time.) Sometimes the decision is based on sheer economic considerations. The person needs a job to support a family. But more often it's because this job will be good for this person in some way. It's assumed that training and competencies will be acquired along the way, or someone else will be assigned. The responsibility to do well in this position is far greater than merely achieving some personal goals, but rather to fulfill the family's plan, and to be a productive member of the family and the community. Now before you scream "nepotism", let me assure you that this system often works. The individual chosen is likely to work really hard, to take their job very seriously, perhaps even give up some prior addictions, to make this job work. Given that, it's especially sad to see them struggle with so little support, and minimal resources.

And yet to be among these caring, hard-working, unaffected, generous, light-hearted people is an honour, and a truly uplifting experience. They

have so much to teach us if we can take off our cultural filters for a time, and rather than judging them, make an effort to see the wisdom in their ways. So I keep going back.

### ***JOE SOLANTO, PH.D.***

*Before coming to B.C. in the early 90's Joe Solanto served as a School Psychologist in the public schools of New York for eighteen years. He then completed a doctorate in psychology, and for seven years was the Director of a multi-disciplinary outpatient treatment centre for addictions and trauma that utilized the services of over 20 professionals, treating the full range of mental health related problems.*

*Since coming to Canada, Joe has been teaching a wide variety of courses at the Justice Institute of B.C. focusing on trauma counselling, assessment and treatment, restorative justice, and adventure-based learning, as well as offering training in counselling-related topics at other post-secondary institutes. He has also served as a consultant for the Federal Department of Justice as well as for Corrections Services Canada. In the past few years he has been working in First Nations communities in B.C., the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories, as well as with the Inuit of Northern Quebec, assisting with the healing from residential school trauma, and training front-line staff to respond to the high incidence of violence, suicidal, addictive, and other self-harming behaviours within their communities. His work is featured in the DVD, *A Healing River*, available from Simon Fraser University's Department of Criminology.*

*Joe is also known for his work in the mid-90's as the Director and Expedition Leader for the Vancouver Ocean Challenge Society, which provided groups of at-risk youth challenging marine and wilderness adventures in a therapeutic milieu.*

*This program was nominated for the 1997 Violence Prevention Award.*



# Metaphors and Stories

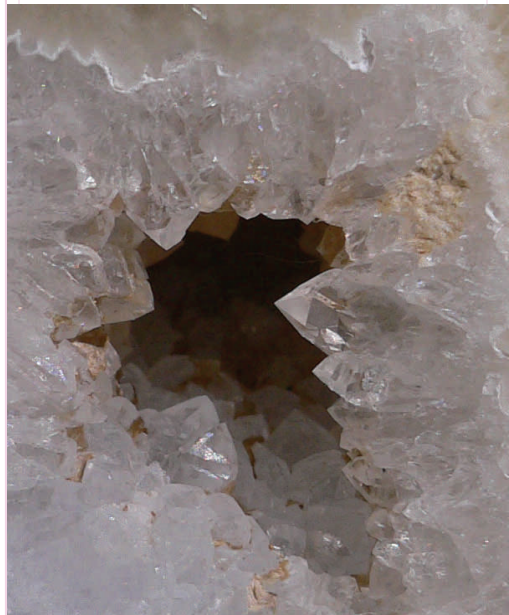
by Diane Auld

*This month I have a grand adventure of healing and exploration I wrote for a long time client who loves healing temples and crystals. Because of the experience this client has going into trance she goes quickly and deeply. We spent a few sessions working with her dreams and the week before we decided we had enough info to start putting the script together she had a powerful dream which gave us the needed focus. I love how the unconscious plays such an active partner in healing. I hope you enjoy seeing how I play with images through language.*

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Dreams and reality .....reality and dreams ..... She found herself thinking about her powerful relationship with her dreams..... and how dreams helped her to understand deeply..... Understand herself..... understand..... as she lay resting in comfort and relaxation..... In a dream..... in reality ..... The dream allowed her body to let go ..... to deeply sink into rest..... healing..... a healing calm ..... Something the unconscious knew exactly how to do.....the dream walked her in a forest..... a moment to deeply connect with .... Connect with ..... the power of nature..... wisdoms floated like clouds on a warm summer day..... floating calmly, gently ..... Wisdom clouds..... Floating in her mind..... nature had the power to rejuvenate..... heal..... support..... as she moved through the forest..... along a path the sun poked through the clouds and changed the forest. .... Colour .....colour everywhere..... Touching her senses..... colour heals..... each colour bringing

energy and light..... the healing power of colour..... as sound brought her closer and closer to something... Someone.... somewhere important.....Deeply con-



necting with the life of the forest.....her senses continued their healing journey...the scent of the forest.....and its aliveness..... Touched and invited her to relax.....to allow the peaceful unfoldment of the life of nature.... To unfold one step...one day.....one week.....one month...

one season at time.....allowing her to taste life afresh.....new ..... renewed.....Off in the distance her destination became evident.... A clearing....a place surrounded by rock in a circle of trees....and standing in the centre a figure....Her heart beat in recognition.... each step taking her closer to the clearing also brought a openness.....a curiosity.... A feeling of coming home.... a deep coming home to ...herself .....the path took her through a patch of crystals... Large quartz crystals.... A powerful and energetic invitation of welcome..... dear old friends... exciting new friends... clear quartz.....amethyst....rose quartz.... And she touched each one renewing a deep connection....Rutilated quartz....Smokey quartz..... Tourmalinated quartz...and Tibetan black quartz.... Each touch brought life to her being... as each stone shared their qualities with her....courage... an ability to give and receive love...strength.....an ability to trust herself...willpower.....the ways and means to face life joyfully and playfully...their wisdom deepening her wisdom.....brightening her light... her hand rested on the Tibetan Black quartz and she heard a voice say....they have been waiting for you.....these stones....they have a gift for you....the song they sing in

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their heart... healed...healed...healed...you have the power to jump out of the past...into the unlimitedness of the present.....which creates the future of your intention....creates..... unlimited creation.... Unlimited creativity..... and the figure from the clearing stood beside her.... Familiar and comforting..... a heart connection....I know you the woman said.....Yes.....you do... you know me deeply.....would you like to walk.....they moved out of the clearing.....walking as two friends..... familiar in each other's presence.....You are my unconscious..... and we are working together on this aren't we....Yes.....we are working together on this.....the man found himself taking in the unlimited potential of this moment.....having reached the centre of a deep valley.....she allowed her wisdom to guide.....to trust..... To trust..... trust.....her unconscious led her to the centre.....the centre of the healing temple.....to the spiral inward.....they walked the spiral to the centre of light..... as her unconscious shared the essence of this healing movement inward.....as I understand the spiral .....each stopping point ..... Point along the spiral.....we leave behind that which no longer serves us..... We lay down the old..... The old which no longer serves us..... Time to leave them behind..... Allowing them..... leaving them.....Creating a space for the new..... Walking the inward journey..... creating space..... space inside to be filled with a renewed awareness..... renewed awareness.....awareness of all the blessings .....all the blessings and wonders and gifts ..... we have.....we do have in our life.....allowing those gifts to support and heal our emotions and feelings.....giving us the strength and willpower to make the changes.....changes we desire..... seeing

things from a new perspective.....perspective and jumping into the new.....special meaning for her..... allowing her to move forward in her own unique way.....uniquely empowered.....each loop around inward spiral brought them finally to the centre.....standing on a foundation of strength.....health.....wisdom.....and Light.....aligning.....allowing ..... allowing her to be all she can be.....allowing her unconscious to have the space to integrate ..... to complete and integrate all..... Knowing that upon completion her unconscious would bring her back to this place and time..... allowing her to bring back anything she needed to bring back..... to continue working on an inner level..... coming back to here and now.....

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## *Peek into the Mind and Practice of*

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***Melanie Baran Conley is a Spiritual Intuitive, Resident Hypnotherapist, Qigong Healing Meditations and Therapeutic Touch Practitioner. You can reach Melanie by phone in Kelowna to book an appointment at: 250-870-3176***

# *A Cross Cultural Comparison of the !Kung Giraffe Dance and West- ern Strategic Therapy*

by

*Michael Maniotis  
November 27th 2008*

Evolution has, hundreds of thousands of years prior to ethno medicine and modern biomedicine, allowed the Central Nervous System and Peripheral Nervous System to regulate and heal itself through automatic processes, one of which we recognize as an ASC called hypnosis. (Hilgard, 1969) Hypnotic trance is both a natural aptitude and learned behavior (Spanos, 1999). Its neurological basis is yet to be clearly understood but especially involves the right brain hemisphere, corpus callosum and anterior cingulate cortex (Persinger, 1994). Generally speaking trance has neurobiological neuropsychological and socio-cognitive underpinnings (Gruzelier, 2000). It is through a socio-cognitive and the Western hypnotherapeutic perspective that I will endeavor to deconstruct the hypnotic !Kung Giraffe Dance.

Rock 'art' in caves of the Dobe indicate that some dance patterns of the regions hunter gatherers (Citation) date back to the Neolithic period. Although estimations of the !Kung's cultural practices date back approximately one thousand years (Lee, 2003), one can infer through the fossil records millennia of hominid living, hunting and dancing in this Botswana savannah. Dancing in the night around a fire to a monotonous rhythm, listening to wood on hollow wood the song embeds itself deep into the brain that carries the body

round and round and round, until the night receives the healer, his kin friends and foes. The women stand behind the men in a circle singing, the N'um is too powerful, too painful for them to bear, yet they know their integral part of the healing whole and create a surrounding protective womb. Hanging in midair, some transparent others solid, the Gangwasi demand satisfaction, once former relatives but now spirits bringing illness and discord seeking the life-force of the living. Young men have been taken by the Num and dance fearlessly and painlessly through the fire, the experienced older healers take hold of the besieged patient and dance together in a strong embrace, transferring the healing properties of the Num and using this power to see and remove illness- the arrows and pebbles while challenging the Gangwasi to release their victims.

A group of healers surround the patient rubbing sweat into his body massaging his skin to give up the foreign object(s),

***Of the most effective hypnotherapeutic approaches developed by M.H. Erickson in the mid fifties- the confusion technique in conjunction with the use of the therapeutic metaphor stands out as particularly relevant to this cross cultural comparison.***

and he reciprocates with loud cries and muscle spasms just as he has watched others time and time again. He too now sees the spirit of his dead father there drifting at a distance but he is changed, no longer a loving protector but a bitterness mindlessly attacking the innocent. As the power of the N'um begins to rise, he can feel it at the base of his spine as it takes hold of him rising up and growing in intensity, he is surprised by the sudden explosion of energy and sensation in his head and for the first time experiences a sense of relief and wellness, the Gangwasi has relented and for now he is safe in the bosom of the group and healing power of the N'um. The sun has risen and fallen many times over, but time, like an elastic band it has stretched and contracted so that a moment in time feels

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like an eternity and three days of dancing have passed almost without notice. Things are different when experiencing N'um. In sickness and in health the N'um is a faithful companion the doorway and pathway to a fuller and more complete reality and connectedness with life.

Western social psychology maintains that while personal traits determine the subjective experience, it is the real and imagined presence of others that overwhelmingly determines the bounds of who we can conceptualize ourselves to be and the bounds of our sanctioned behaviors in the form internalized cultural schemata and situational influences (Fehr, 2004). Self concept in collective cultures as well as one's thoughts and feelings have a propensity to be determined by one's relationship with and thoughts and feelings of others. When people find themselves in ambiguous situations self perception theory predicts people will infer their general reality orientation the interpretation of what they are perceiving and experiencing by observing their own behavior and situation, often looking at others' perceptions of us as determinants of our own self definition, the looking glass self.

The !Kung dance circle, embodies each of these elements. It sets the stage; the context; the boundary of acceptable reality, an anchor and buffer between the seen and the invisible. First and foremost for the trance experience to even happen the person must be experiencing a strong physical emotive and cognitive rapport with whomever is offering assistance. They need to feel they're safe and protected as they transition into the dangerous unknown and ambiguity of trance. He must trust the healer whom he knows can endure the

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pain and physical demands of the process as well as mediate with or engage the Gangwasi. He recognizes the healing schema and scripts which inform him on how to interpret his experience and what behaviors are acceptable, an integral part of trance training ( Gilligan, 1987). It primes the patient for what is coming creating salience by the mere exposure effect. The song, the drumming, the memories of previous healings especially the presence of those around him create an irresistible reality and expectation. In all likelihood the experience of a light level of trance began with the first thought and perception of a trace related person or object.

The Giraffe Dance's normative and informational social influences refer to a person's need for social acceptance as well as accuracy in understanding the world within and around them (Fehr, 2004). Some extreme and disturbing examples of the power of these two influences as determinants have been identified and used to explain the bizarre behavior of the death voyages by Solar Temple members who incinerated themselves; Jim Jones' poisoning of almost a thousand willing and unwilling members including their children as well as the routine military actions resulting in 'collateral damage' a euphemism for killing innocent humans who happen to be in the same proximity of a military target as perpetrated by Jihadi suicide bombers and USAF drone operators. These social influences within the model of social impact theory will be used to deconstruct the Giraffe Dance, a complex and multilayered social psychological phenomenon.

Modern strategic psychotherapy uses a methodical approach to identifying, engaging and changing the context and interpretation of a person's maladaptive tactic(s), used as a possible solution(s) to their problem. In the terminology of Milton H. Erickson's brief hypnother-

apy : Creating rapport by meeting the client on their own 'turf', otherwise known as unconditional positive regard-through a process called pacing. In talk therapy pacing takes the form of active listening and reflecting back to the client what you are hearing them say without making or including evaluations; in other words showing empathy. The client experiences, often for the first time that someone is actually listening to them. The effect is frequently the acceptance of the therapist as confederate and helper against the problem. It's also a ritualized form of the looking glass self phenomenon mentioned ear-

***The !Kung describe n'um as something which resides in one's stomach, and is heated and begins to boil during dancing. There are many descriptions of how the n'um travels up the spine and rests at the base of the skull, during which time the healer begins to shake under the influence of it. Check out the following website for more information on the !Kung.***

***<http://www.mamiwata.com/kung.html>***

lier as a way for us to understand who we are and therefore creating a form of dissonance reduction which arises from our perception of a discrepancy between who we think we are( good, healthy, sane etc...) and what we are experiencing in the moment. In a word we are creating a rapport with the client which will serve as our starting point in therapy. This is also considered therapeutically as the framing stage of the healing process. The indirect approach (non-directive) to hypnotherapy uses pacing not only of the client's words and sentiments but also their non-verbal communications. For example using similar language styles, body posture and body movements; such as, matching the client's breathing and body shifts. This is done as an indirect way of communicat-

ing with the client's unconscious 'mind' that you are in synch with it and is often used in the initial trance induction stage.

The next stage is known as depotentiating rigid conscious sets and is comparable to the concept of liminal in rites of passage. Of the most effective hypnotherapeutic approaches developed by M.H. Erickson in the mid fifties- the confusion technique in conjunction with the use of the therapeutic metaphor stand out as particularly relevant to this cross cultural comparison. Confusion can be used with clients experiencing an especially difficult time entering trance as well as in the disruption of 'normal reality' and making a transition into 'hypnotic reality' where everything becomes possible. The technique is only encouraged under the aforementioned conditions and only if the therapist has established strong rapport, since the client experience of disorientation can cause resentment and a backing away from the therapeutic relationship.

Confusion forms can be: shock, surprise, distraction, time and spatial disorientation. For example if I approach you and put out my hand as if to shake yours and withdraw it unexpectedly you will experience a moment of disorientation, if I do this in front of a crowd of a couple of hundred people the magnitude of the experience will increase significantly. The natural inclination is to escape the dissonance caused by the discrepancy of the expected from the actual and is utilized by the therapist by making a suggestion to enter trance, this is properly known as a the handshake induction. The point of course is that when disorientated people will look to others to determine what is real and are open to what we have referred to Continued on page 13

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previously as informational social influence. The suggestions both verbal and non-verbal by the therapist for the client to enter trance, or if in trance already to, engage in a therapeutic exercise is often promptly accepted. Usually once trance has been affected, the therapist will communicate directly with the unconscious mind dissociated from 'normal conscious processing'. Often the therapists will themselves enter an uptime trance, in which their unconscious mind will work directly with the client's unconscious mind. It is not unusual for both therapist and client to develop a spontaneous amnesia of the session upon exiting trance. During this liminal phase, the therapist in an uptime trance or not, will engage in a process of utilization. That is, pacing the client's symptoms (by acknowledging them) and then

through metaphor or direct communication reframing the symptom. A simple example of this would be to view the symptom, e.g. depression, as a way for one's self to deal with a problem. By experiencing depression the unconscious mind can be sending a message that 'hey I'm unhappy here at this job or relationship etc...'. The objective of the therapist would be, while the client is in an altered state, to help the unconscious mind come up with creative and acceptable solutions without playing the role of 'expert' but rather guide. This would be considered a very person centered approach to therapy. The range of options and the force of the hypnotic reality experienced by the client can be a powerful experience in any cultural context. Unlike our conscious state, a person in trance can see and feel the suggested or spontaneously occurring hypnotic reality, so much so that physiological and neurological changes will accompany the experience.

Some examples of hypnotic phenomenon are positive and negative hallucinations, dissociation where the body has a 'mind of its own', age regression, hypermnesia, control of the PNS, time distortion, catatonic

state, etc... In a word, any conceivable idea can become 'real'. The unlimited options available to both therapist and client are obviously significant assets in the healing and reframing process.

Now that I have outlined the western perspective from within the field of social psychology and Ericksonian hypnotherapy I will make some connections and comparisons with the !Kung hypnotherapeutic trance dance. Three elements of Informational social influence is: ambiguity of the situation; perceived crisis situation and an expert or guide capable of disambiguating the situation. The !Kung healer promises no certain results, only a means of effectively engaging and mediating the spiritual and physical realities affecting the problem.

***A fascinating aspect of !Kung life is the strong belief in the // gangwasi. These spirits of recently deceased Ju/'hoansi are considered to be responsible for illness and misfortune. In addition to the // gangwasi, there are two other gods: // gangwan!an!a, a big god and // gangwa matse, a small god. There is a contradiction amongst the !Kung, while some believe that // gangwan!an!a is responsible for good and the other evil, and others believe exactly the opposite.***

***For more information check out the following website: <http://drleannawolfe.com/kung.html>***

There is a sense of danger and unpredictability when dealing with the Gangwasi. Either can win the contest for the patient's life and health. The close relationship between patient and healer serves as the basis for rapport and trust, it feels safer to enter trance than to resist it. The !Kung dancing in unison and embrace of healer and patient is a most striking and wonderful expression of our concept of pacing. There is a synchronization of body movement and breathing. The rhythm and music's melody promote an associative process that activates previous unconscious learnings and I expect brings both

healer and patient both dancers, drummers and of course female singers into a deep trance state. Although the !Kung profess only men can handle the N'um, there are no significant reasons for females not to be experiencing trance, since, if there is a gender bias for the trait of hypnotizability, women seem to have a greater natural aptitude, it is hypothesized due to differences in brain lateralization. It is rather the cultural demand characteristics of the !Kung that provide the frame/context of acceptable female hypnotic behavior. The healer(s) weaken the patient's resistance both psychological and physical through the extended dancing. The healer's observation of spirits and

communications with those spirits provide the material and metaphor upon which the patient's unconscious mind will work to find a solution. Objects removed from his body can be seen also by the entranced. The symbolic removal of the pebbles and arrows are not symbolic to the patient, they are as real as poisoned arrows used to hunt the Giraffe, providing the unconscious mind with a powerful subjective experience of ejecting the illness. The brain's belief it is healing can act as a powerful force in the body's own recuperation, pain management and affect transformation.

The conditions for a powerful normative social influence are: the strength of relationships with those in the group healing context; the physical proximity of those around the pa-

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tient and the actual number of participants. The need to be loved and accepted necessitates the patient adopt previously mentioned culturally determined ritual demand characteristics which enhance the stability of the hypnotic reality. In fact this reality for all intents and purposes is inescapable. It is also the awaiting bosom for both healer(s) and patient, as they complete the ritual healing and come out of trance.

The Giraffe dance and other 'techniques' from the perspective of the !Kung, provide a theory and means to utilize natural and spiritual realities for the benefit of the group. The frequency of the trance dance for healing and social cohesion of the group also demonstrates its usefulness. The idea that other forms of N'um like antibiotics and the selective incorporation of cross cultural influences of their neighbors attests to its flexibility and adaptive nature. Unfortunately for the !Kung the 'modernization' and acculturating pressures of western ideology stress the dominance of 'rational' thought and acceptable limits of reality, thus exercising its own normative social influence on competing realities. The !Kung are not the exception but the rule. The very recent 'cold war' demonstrates the lengths westerners will go to, to defeat opposing views of what is. In the words of an American general during the Vietnam War,

"we had to kill them [civilians], in order to save them [from communism]". Fortunately for all of us, during the last twenty years of research into our implicit mental processes, interest and awareness of the efficacy and unavoidable reality of the 'nonconscious' is being considered as the next great frontier for neuropsychological investigation of the human brain.

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As I end this essay, I'm left with the feeling that I have left many areas of this cross cultural comparison untouched. Still It has provided me with a deeper understanding of the universality of some social and psychological processes involved in the healing of both the brain and its body and

***Michael can be reached by e-mail or phone for hypnotherapy sessions.***

***E-mail: michaelmaniotis@yahoo.ca***

***Phone: 778-865-9779***

helped me depotentiate some of my own rigid mental constructs of what is possible and 'acceptable' practice.

***Michael Maniotis is a Counselling Hypnotherapist(c) and runs the Orca Institute hypnotherapy study groups. Michael is currently completing his Masters degree in Counselling Psychology at the Adler School of Professional Psychology.***



## *the script*

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