

HYPNOSIS and Other Stories

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© June 21, 2022 M. G. Dahl

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CHAPTER 14 : Healer, Heal Thyself!

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What did YOU do over the summer?

A friend of thirty odd years joined me for my spring birthday and suggested,

“Do you think that maybe you have ignoring stops signs over the past two years? Really, two brushes with death, multiple breakage in your legs,¹⁰ having to relearn to walk three times . . .”

Her voice trailed off as her loving eyes assessed me, did I hear her?

Oh yeah, that. Yes. Of course. I am still on the green side of the sod. The past two years weren't just signs on the road to reduce my speed, I've passed mortality markers, and am the oldest living member of my birth family. There is likely more time in my past than in the future of this temple of my soul. Yes, I will die, too. I can't imagine entering death with the thought, “Gee, I wished I would have worked more.” Working through the hours of academia and post-doctoral supervision was not fun, it allowed me to meet external demands including four natural disasters, political action research, and divorce.

Since opening a private practice of hypnosis (1985), I have continually invested time in me so as to improve my fitness to serve. One of my favorite activities is some form of moving meditation. Perhaps a week noticing the sensations of the ground connecting with and disconnecting from my foot as I walk. Perhaps it is a week of color awareness in my environment; first a week of red, then orange . . . A lifelong practice of learning, awareness, entering sensory perceptions more fully, identifying and accessing flow states as needed, has allow me to develop and sustain a generalized level of relaxation. I feel that a relaxed, fit, aware body is my finest clinical tool.

¹⁰ Tendons rupturing and breaking.

The body has innate wisdom: there is the old brain of the gut, the compassion and understanding of the heart, and an outward mode of the soul through attention. My biggest life helpmate is the sensory based wisdom of this body. For best health, I listen to the voice of the body, sacred temple of my soul. I live best when I am open to the guidance of a divine spark I perceive to be indwelling this skin sack filled with swirling DNA soup. When my body is fit, and my eyes are soft with open heart and awareness, a rapid development of relaxation is possible for me and a client. We have mirror neurons, we reflect each other naturally, particularly when another person is doing something of interest or value to us.

From a relaxed state, any topic is open for observation, comment, discussion, insight, revelation, and transformation. Nothing has to be swept aside into some hidden, dark, tight place of the body when we can relax and ride through the rough parts of the rapids. Leaning into the issue, embracing the opportunity for learning, growth and development that will be culled from experience, come. Let us ride the curl of the lip of the cornucopia of abundance, ask for the healing we think we need, observe with open heart and soft eyes. What kinds of opportunities and solutions emerge? Are we ready to accept those options with gratitude, relaxed and ready to receive / perceive solutions and opportunities when they come flowing through awareness / possibilities? Let us build our own lives trusting our senses to know what we know, be what we know ourselves to be, honor and accept who what we are and do. Trust the senses, the body is wise. The abandoned, denied, rejected parts of self have a lot to offer, they hold the hidden knowledge, the banned / forbidden body wisdom. Let us ask for what we need. The basic hypnosis question for restoring human health is, "Is there any part of the body that needs to relax further?" The body knows, it keeps track of all of that stuff.

I heard my body voice, "If it's no fun, stop it. Get fit. You can do it."

Got it. Heard it. Understood it. Could I do it? Could I give myself the same love, attention, care and opportunities I give clients? I was fifty pounds over what this divine temple for my soul entered college with in 1995. Could I withdraw from the energetic demands of private sessions and redirect all that time for me? If I knew how much time I have left, and it was short, how would I live my life? Would it be different

from the way I am living now? Is there something deep within me that still needs expression? What is important to experience in the time remaining? Am I actually applying my time to things of meaning and value to me? If this life was cut short today, what would I regret leaving incomplete? Is there balance (external / internal pressures) in my life? Am I honoring myself in the things I am doing?

The IMDHA / IACT conference in Daytona Beach was the last professional activity prior to a planned summer off. On the drive home, in the afterglow of interacting with such a great group of professionals, I was thinking about the comments of colleagues who said my hypnosis strategies for veteran PTSD reduction / resolution won't work with the civilian population with PTSD. I am hopeful that one of those clinicians is inspired to offer us a presentation on what works best with the civilian PTSD population. With these thoughts in process, the cell phone rang, it was a psychologist referring a female with PTSD due to childhood abuse. I've now worked with two civilians with PTSD attributable to childhood abuse. My interventions worked fine, and yes, I observed differences.^{11,12} What I think I witnessed was:

attachment disorder (Fisher, 2014),
freeze / fold (Levine, 2010),
and traumatic brain injury aka concussion.

The attachment issues point to the inherent double bind of family / home being culturally idealized as a safe place in a harsh world, and in childhood abuse it is the site of most pressing danger. Developmentally, a person may learn to ignore innate warning indicators of imminent danger to the body in order to survive a childhood framed in the abuse of untrustworthy adults. Children who were subjected to assault, rape, and violence from people they needed to be able to trust for safety, love, nourishment and joy do not develop the same coping skills as children who are not abused (Branden, 1983; de Becker, 1999; Fisher, 2014; van der Kolk, 2014). Clinical

¹¹ <https://apn.com/resources/fight-flight-freeze-fawn-and-flop-responses-to-trauma/>

¹² Frothingham, M. B. (2021). <https://www.simplypsychology.org/fight-flight-freeze-fawn.html>

intervention with the adult with PTSD attributed to childhood abuse may need significantly more time for healing than the average military client with PTSD and no traumatic brain injury. Adults with a history of childhood abuse may require extended care in the same way that some veterans do with traumatic brain injury (mTBI) aka concussion. A person may need more time, patience, willingness to explore new behavior. It may feel a bit strange, and the person may experience other people trying to get them to change back to old, familiar behavior. One of the civilians I worked with quit drinking after her first session. She encountered a lot of pressure to have social drinks over the holiday from her Temple cohorts.

The biological fight / flight response stimulates the release of stress hormones and muscle activity intended to protect and defend. The freeze / fold is an innate biological response from an animal unable to escape a predator or dangerous situation, the frozen behavior is known as playing 'possum, or pretending dead. A healthy release from the freeze is observable in subtle, inarticulate movements seeking full release, or even a shaking / shivering which frees the stuckness, completing the normal release process of the stress hormones and survival actions (Levine, 1997 & 2010). Anyone who has done cathartic work with hypnotherapy has observed the therapeutic gains that come when frozen body memories are released.

The most startling difference I witnessed with civilian PTSD from child abuse was the speed with which the clients froze, went into a non-productive tailspin regarding career actions, folded physically and reported the emergence of a life challenging illness. What does all this mean? Let me concur with the clinicians who reported to me that civilian PTSD is a different animal from war trauma. Age of initial trauma, training in lethal force are two obvious differences, although children now have access to video games used by law enforcement and military personnel to improve performance skills in weapons use (Grossman & DeGaetano, 1999). Complex and developmental trauma does respond well to the same neurofeedback methods I used with military folks. The civilians with PTSD appeared to have more complex and developmental trauma from earlier in their lives.

Did I complete my summer as planned? Yes and no. An Asklepan health and fitness quest did not lead me to ancient Greek sleep temples and holy springs (Tick, 2010), this was a planned staycation. Living in a beautiful environment meant I only had to open myself to the existing opportunities. Membership in a waterfront club with a pool and gym expanded the pre-dawn / dusk 5.5 mile bike loop of the beach to include gym and swim. What exquisite sky colors are reflected in the ocean as sand from the Sahara dust storms fills our upper atmosphere during this hurricane season. The book (Kirk, 2015) planned for launch in March was delayed, I changed my mind about travel, went to Los Angeles for the July release, book signing and filmed author comments. It was fun.

What a fun summer filled with wonderful people, interesting conversations, food, music and film making, singing and dancing. I am more limber and slender than spring when size 18 was tight, now size 14 is loose. Taking the time to hardwire my brain for happiness (Hansen, 2013) means that taking time to savor beauty and pleasure, letting go of distractions (still working on that), letting things be as they are if they are irrelevant to a happy life is fun. An Oberon leather journal cover added to the kinesthetic and visual pleasure of journaling.

Now is the only time in which we have to live. Ideally, we show up, play our part, and live fully while we have the chance, right now. At 1am two nights ago, the full moon was bright in the sky when I heard the body voice, "You are retired until I tell you I am fine. No new clients until I'm fine." I'm ok with that. The wisdom of the body is fun.

Post Script

Through the EEGlistserv, I learned the word flouroquinoline toxicity. If someone had told me taking 3 Cipro antibiotics would create a hole in time and memories through my mid-fifties, I would not have taken them. After being a healthy, driven, high energy person, I became disabled with light and sound sensitivity, sweating, foggy brain, reduced executive functioning, fatigue, memory loss, loss of balance and the resulting falls, concussions and snapping tendons, neuropathy, skin infections, loss of sphincter control (bladder, bowel, belly button), and the resulting loss of interest in social activities and social life. I couldn't wear professional structured clothing due to the physical pain

in my abdomen. When I worked for an hour, I would have to retreat for an immediate 3 hour nap in fetal position.

The ongoing declining health caused me to give away the majority of my possessions, thinking it was time to close up my life.

In Spring of 2016, the doctor admitted I was the worst case of flouroquinoline toxicity he had ever seen. He recommended I get a dog to learn to walk again. I adopted a dog from the shelter, and fell a lot relearning to walk. Tendons in my lower legs got brittle, and snapped, another round of relearning to walk. I found a website¹³ that listed all the things that people have done in their struggle to recover from being “floxied”. I had done all but two: chelation and glutathione. Glutathione shots and drips gave me back a brain without fog, and a body that would walk without falling.

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Monica Geers Dhal est une figure emblématique de l'hypnose contemporaine aux USA.

Membre à vie de l'ACHE (American Council of Hypnotist Examiners) et de l'IACT/ IMDHA (International Association of Counselors and Therapists / International Medical & Dental Hypnotherapy Association) elle a écrit 4 ouvrages de référence, fondateurs de l'hypnose moderne sous la forme de cours d'enseignement : HYP 100 (Bases de l'hypnose), HYP 200 (Hypnothérapie), HYP 300 (Hypnothérapie avancée) et HYP 400 (Hypnoanalyse)

Elle découvre très jeune le pouvoir du subconscient par l'intermédiaire de sa mère, Eva Margaret, professeur d'université lorsque Jose da Silva vient sur le campus enseigner sa méthode d'auto hypnose aux étudiants , intitulée la méthode Silva.

En 1985, elle décide de se consacrer professionnellement à l'hypnose et étudie avec Jerry Kein et Jack Mason avec Omni Hypnosis.

Jerry Kein présente à Monica trois éducateurs qui vont déterminer le cours de sa carrière en hypnose : Gil Boyne (fondateur de l'ACHE), Irene Hickman (auteur de « Mind Probe Hypnosis »), et l'hypnose de Dave Elman (applications médicales).

Monica ouvre sa pratique libérale à Key West, en 1985.

En 1987, Monica participe à la première conférence ACHE de Gil Boyne et devient son assistante. Elle rencontre et travaille avec plusieurs des grands hypnotiseurs de cette époque notamment, Ormond McGill, et Charles Tebbets.

Lorsque Anne Spencer crée l'IMDHA, Monica participe également à cette association et devient membre à vie de l'IACT/IMDHA.

Le cours HYP 100 ici traduit est devenu le cours de Base pour la certification IMDHA que dispense Monica depuis 1994.

L'hypnose étant à la fois un art et une science, Monica Geers Dhal s'est approprié les trois grands courants de l'hypnose moderne : médicale, thérapeutique et spirituelle, pour délivrer une synthèse personnelle.