

THE
DAVIS FOUNDATION
FOR PROVIDING
EMOTIONAL COMFORT

Letter of February 21, 2007

Dear Reader,

At a recent conference on hypnosis one of the speakers described the difficulty that practitioners have in convincing their professional colleagues of the efficacy of hypnosis. At one point we were shown a video of a woman having a Caesarian section using hypnosis as the sole means for providing anesthesia. The speaker told us that when he showed this video to some obstetricians they had difficulty accepting it and one of them angrily declared that it must be faked and stalked out of the room.

It is typical, and actually inevitable, that people will have difficulty accepting new ideas that require a shift in their underlying assumptions about themselves and their world. The Church could not accept Copernican theory or the discoveries of Galileo for hundreds of years, even though Galileo had Pope Paul V view his findings through his telescope, because they challenged the belief that the earth was the center of the universe. The greater the vested interest in an established system, the harder it is for a person to accept contradictory evidence.

When new stimuli are too disequilibrating to enter awareness the mental apparatus responds by generating a double mental pathway: in one arm the stimulus is registered out of awareness while in the other arm a *false solution*, such as denial, is experienced in awareness. Both the obstetrician and Pope Paul V experienced a false solution as they denied the evidence of their senses.

I have found that, in general, people are better able to accept my new theory and technique if they aren't already heavily invested in a different theory or world-view. Psychoanalysts and psychiatrists have spent many years and much effort learning the theories that underlie their work and mastering the practices that are derived there from. Indeed, I have, myself. While my new theory and technique do not contradict other psychoanalytic and psychiatric theories they are so different that they aren't easily correlated.

Some have suggested that the new technique might be economically threatening if it displaces current treatments. But the real problem lies in the huge difference and the resulting overstimulation that difference causes. Just as the obstetricians were not economically threatened by the prospect of doing Caesarian sections using hypnosis for analgesia so, too, mental health practitioners would not lose their incomes if they used the new self-hypnotic technique in their practices.

For some laypeople who have turned to spirituality to provide meaning for their lives the new theory is personally threatening because it seems contradictory to their world-view and their place in it. They don't understand that the new theory doesn't displace their experience. Their overstimulation derives not only from difference but



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from potential danger. Yet the technique of self-hypnosis appeals to them and they use it. They match a different false solution. Rather than merely denying the validity of the new theory they re-define it for themselves. They say to me, “You say an Inner Guide is only a part of my mind but I think it’s also a spiritual entity and that it has a connection to the cosmos/God/collective unconscious.” Fortunately if they have understood the definition of the Inner Guide and practice self-hypnosis it will help them regardless of their elaboration of its character.

A stimulus is a change. The greater the difference between one situation and another the greater the stimulation and, therefore, the more likely it is that the mental apparatus must match a false solution. Some false solutions are maladaptive, as when one denies an unpleasant reality that it would be better to deal with. This type of denial occurs as part of a habit pattern that has developed over time.

Yet the most common false solution, which is simple unawareness, often occurs when a new possibility arises. It may be a better way of working or perhaps a new kind of work altogether. It may entail shedding an unhelpful habit or a chronic fear. There are many ways that our lives can improve. We all employ false solutions as our minds protect us from the traumatic overstimulation of these exciting prospects. Sometimes we later become aware of them as their novelty wanes. But often they remain unknown and unrealized.

Our Inner Guides are aware of all the new possibilities for us and are working to bring them into our awareness so that we can fulfill them. And as we practice self-hypnosis we are providing our Inner Guides with the trance time they need to cause these changes to happen.

QUESTION:

Is there any difference between doing self-hypnosis twice in one day over a two-day span as opposed to doing it once each day over a two-day span?

ANSWER:

It would make no difference if the length of the sessions were the same. If you were to try it and discover that two-a-day yielded shorter sessions, that wouldn’t be as useful because it is the total amount of time in trance that is important.

I welcome your questions and comments, and will publish as many of them as possible. I look forward to hearing from you, either by post or at info@davis-foundation.org. If you would like to be anonymous, just let me know.

Cordially,

Judith M. Davis