

THE GARDENING CONTINUES

by Robert F. Otto, C.Ht.

After receiving my last issue of Subconsciously Speaking, as is my custom, I read the issue from cover to cover. There are far too many new ideas and concepts contained within those pages to not make this a standard practice. As the old saying goes, “When you’re green you grow, and when you’re ripe you’re rotten”. And quite frankly, I enjoy those growth spurts!



Speaking of growing, while reading the last issue of SS, my attention was drawn to an article written by Peter Blum, entitled “Hypnotherapist as a Master Gardener”. I delighted in the article simply because during my 20 plus years of doing public seminars, I dubbed a metaphor entitled ‘The Flower Pots of Life’. Peter’s article parallels my own beliefs and brought forth the next few paragraphs I wish to share with our readers. There’s more than one way to cultivate a garden!

As we all know, a good pre-talk before an actual hypnotic induction is probably one of the most effective tools we can have in our hypnotic ‘tool box’ when dealing with a new client or patient. I have always tried to abide by the KISS philosophy. (Keep It Simple & Straight Forward) By abiding by this philosophy, I have found that the client or patient receives a simple yet effective explanation of hypnosis without bogging them down with all the intricate technicalities or psychobabble of the fundamentals of hypnosis. At the end of my pre-talk I like to share my “Flower Pots of Life” analogy and make these my last spoken words just prior to leading a group induction. Here goes...

“If we were to take two little, red, clay pots from a gardening stand and fill them both equally with the same amount of dirt, you would probably agree with me that what we put in the dirt we would probably reap. (Get your audience to nod their heads in agreement) Dirt is an inert matter; it doesn’t care what we implant in its bed. Dirt cannot think, reason, judge, analyze, criticize or reject. Dirt is just a fertile ground for planting. Isn’t that correct? (Get your audience to nod in agreement) You never saw the dirt in a garbage land fill spit out any unwanted material that it receives, did you? (Joke). Can you imagine a landfill spitting out its unwanted garbage? That’s a ridiculous idea, isn’t it? (Get your audience to nod in agreement). So you agree with me that the dirt must accept anything that is implanted, correct? (Get you audience to nod in agreement)

Well, your subconscious mind is just as inert as the dirt we put in those pots. Your subconscious mind is just as inert as the dirt in the landfill. It doesn’t care what we implant into it. And it takes just as much effort to produce a good, beneficial, positive result or to continue to produce ill-effective, negative results. It must accept and yield whatever is implanted.

Let's take some rose seeds and implant them into one of the clay pots and in the other implant poison seeds. Think of the seeds as your positive and negative behaviors and think of the dirt as your subconscious, fertile, accepting mind. If you give each pot equally the same amount of water, nutrients and sunlight, you would probably agree with me that in the poison pot we will yield poison and in the rose pot we will yield a beautiful rose. (Get your audience to nod in agreement).

But, what would happen if you put the beautiful rose seeds, the ones you say you want, out in the desert, where they never gets any rain or nutrients, would you agree with me that they would probably die? (Get the audience to nod in agreement) And if you took the pot that has the poison seeds in it, I know you don't want those poison seeds, but water them anyway. And water it daily with good water that was filled with nourishment and warm sunshine. Would you agree with me that the poison seeds would probably grow? (Get the audience to nod in agreement).

The poison represents the unwanted or negative behavior that you are trying to alter. And the rose represents the good, positive habits you wish to attain. Perhaps the problem is that you've just been watering the WRONG idea, concept or seed. Therefore reaping the reward that you say you wish to be rid of.

What we will do during this session is to switch the seeds! We will take the poison seed or the unwanted, negative habit; the one you say that you don't want, the one that you've been inadvertently watering since the inception of this unwanted, negative behavior, and put it in the desert of your mind where it will never get any water or nourishment. Then we will take the rose seed, the good, positive idea, thought or concept; the one you say that you do want, and put it in the forefront of your subconscious mind. On your window sill of life. Where it will get lots of nourishment and attention. My job as your hypnotherapist is to switch the seeds. Your job is to water the good seeds after I implant them. It's that simple.

During our session I will be incorporating a post hypnotic suggestion. A post hypnotic suggestion is anything that can be used as a triggering mechanism and carried out after the session is over.

Let me explain this a little further. If I were to say to you "Plop, plop, fizz, fizz..." what would automatically be brought to the forefront of your mind? The rest of the phrase, right? (Get your audience to nod in agreement). If I were to say to you "You deserve a break today..." you can automatically finish the phrase without blinking an eye. Do you know why? It's because the television media has hypnotized or conditioned your subconscious mind, to associate these words or phrases with a product! It's really quite simple. And this is how simple your 'key word' or post hypnotic suggestion will work for you after the session has ended. It is a tool for you to use after you leave this session. Think of this 'key word' or post hypnotic suggestion as your watering can. I want you to 'water' or re-enforce the positive seeds or positive suggestions implanted during the hypnosis session with your 'key word' watering can. The more you use it, the easier and faster it will be for you to harvest the new ideas implanted during our session.

Some people ask how long does the positive effects of hypnosis and post hypnotic suggestions last and I like to answer that question by simply asking, "If you were on a healthy vitamin regimen because they made you feel good, gave you lots of energy, are good for you, and balanced your body chemistry.... How long would you continue to take those vitamins?" "You would continue to take the vitamins for as long as you needed to do so, to maintain the good beneficial results you are getting from them, isn't that correct? (Get your audience to nod in agreement) Well, the same applies with the post hypnotic suggestion given during your hypnosis session. Use it for as long as you feel the need to use it. Only you can determine when that time will be. Allow some time for your mind and body to become synchronized and be your guide."

By choosing to simplify the explanation of the phenomenon we call hypnosis to the new client or patient does not necessarily mean that we are in any way simplifying the treatment of the client or patient. This is just a tool that can be used to help the client alleviate some of the associated fears and misconceptions that come along with them as added baggage when they come to you for the first time.

In closing, I wish to leave you with a famous quote that seems appropriate to the topic discussed above.

"Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant."
-Robert Louis Stevenson