

HYPNOSIS AS AN INNER JOURNEY

« Let's talk about hypnosis from the viewpoint of the patient communicating with himself. For what is hypnosis if not the discovery of a new kind of dialogue with parts of ourselves that we had thought mute, unless we were simply totally unaware of their existence?

We can go on ad infinitum about different types of hypnotic trance or about the various controversies that have marked and continue to mark the history of its practice. From the miracle remedy to pure fairground charlatanism, from witchcraft to medical prescription, hypnosis is rarely detached from emotional connotations. Perhaps precisely because in everyday life we speak about hypnosis with that very part of the brain – the logical, critical and defensive part - which is short-circuited by trance. To speak about hypnosis without being in a trance, is a bit like describing the scent of a flower that you can only see depicted on a postcard. The terms induction, suggestion, trance, strategy, vigilance, focus and many other more or less technical notions nevertheless all share one common feature: they concern communication (in the first phase) and the process of change (as the ultimate goal). Hypnosis, therefore, is a lot more than a technique. It takes on the guise of an adventure, a voyage to within our unconscious. Not the « garbage-can unconscious» where all we find piled up is what we have repressed, but that of an ocean of resources and solutions that we can learn to discover within ourselves.

One way of understanding this approach would be to imagine that our personality - formed by the experiences of life and vital for integration into family and social life - is at the same time a tight-fitting lid. This lid prevents us from accessing other parts of ourselves such as our unconscious, with its language that's full of images, symbols, and intuitive and solution-generating power. So our personality is at the same time what allows us to live our daily lives and the thing that stops us from progressing! In order to keep the balance we have acquired in life, we have developed the habit of clinging to what we know, to what we control, for fear of losing our feeling of mastery over ourselves and our environment. And yet, the experience of an Ericksonian trance teaches us that something within ourselves is prepared to accept an alternative vision of life, to offer non-Cartesian ways of solving problems and, much more importantly, to have confidence in the unknown, in the mysteries of life and of our hidden resources. With the help of this technique, therefore, patients and therapists make their way together to discover an unknown inner world, little by little opening up to a process of change. Let go of your dogmas and prejudices - these are just so many brakes on progress - and enter the dynamic of change needed to heal the mind ...and the heart. »

Dr Bertrand Piccard

Publication Fondation LING