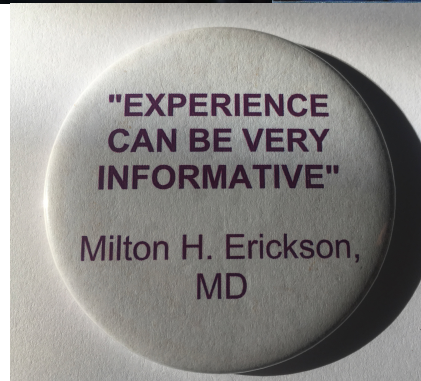
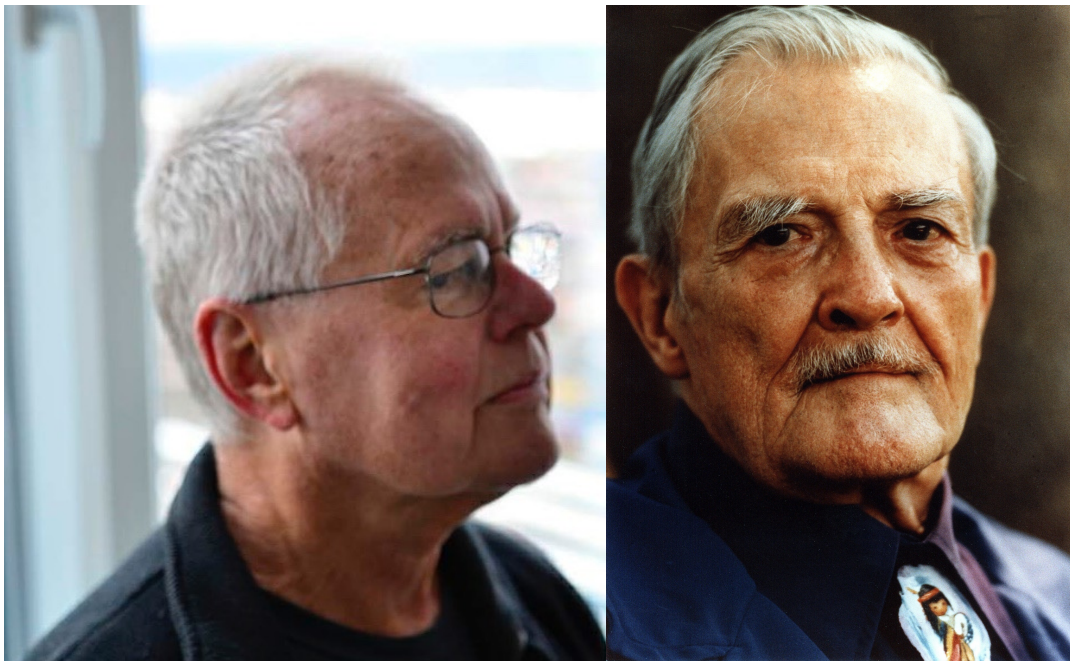


experiencing hypnosis

a clinical casebook

with Rob McNeilly



dedication

To my family, near and far,
and all the animals down through these decades
with gratitude for their gift of being part of my life.

Also to Milton H Erickson MD

for the privilege of continuing his heritage into the
future.

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foreword by Dr John Lentz

It is an honor to write a forward for this book by Rob McNeilly. Not only has he outdone himself with this book, but that alone is also outstanding because a previous video version was so helpful and demonstrated his genius, that I still refer people to it. He helped a young woman with Encopresis that also had a phobia of dogs and was not getting along with her parents well, to reverse all those issues with one session. So, for this one to be even better is quite an achievement. McNeilly has such amazing talent that as you read this book, you will recognize things that you can do differently and be more successful with the people you see. He offers you techniques that are reproducible and understandable, as well as efficient and practical.

You get both a video version and a transcript of his work with real people. One of the things that comes through plainly is how transparent that McNeilly is in his work. As a part of that one thing that so impressed me is that he lets you see how that he must work to figure things out as he goes along. That is part of how come you will learn so much from this work. The material is presented in a believable way that you will be able to replicate. You can sense his ongoing assessment of the issues involved and ways to empower the person to be able to do what they do not believe they can. Not only is that honest, but it is also demonstrating the most effective ways to deal with people because no one can anticipate all responses. So, to model this in an open way he is offering us ways for all of us to feel better about ourselves. He is also giving us a gift of his genius as he probably won't acknowledge that what he does simplifies hypnosis, and psychotherapy. It does but he is too humble to acknowledge that .

Another aspect of McNeilly's work that impresses me is that he treats his clients with such respect that you can easily see and almost feel the positive regard that he works with toward his clients. That attitude presented will be in the work you will get to see. Even the interventions he uses are respectful and imply that the person can do things that they do not yet believe that they can do. After he works with them then they can. It is as simple as that. He is really that talented doing a style of psychotherapy that he has developed.

Yes, he says that he got part of it from Milton H. Erickson, and for that he deserves to receive honor as well as recognition, because no one else got what he got from Erickson. However, he has developed his own version of what Erickson taught him and you will become able to use his style easily and effectively after experiencing this book.

Sincerely,

Dr. John D. Lentz LMFT

Book Review Editor

Milton H. Erickson Foundation.

Dr. Lentz is the author of over 15

Books dealing with Psychotherapy and
a columnist for the Foundation Newsletter,
IN THE SPIRIT.

Hypnosis with kids

utilisation made easy

"In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's there are few".

Shunryu Suzuki-Roshi

Kids still have their "beginner's mind". They are still free with their imagination unlike us grownups who have learnt through decades of socialisation to "get real", "stop daydreaming" and "get with the programme" and to be "expert" at knowing what "reality" is really real, what's not a dream, what the right programme is. Kids move seamlessly back and forth between their inner realities and the external shared social "reality" in a mood of play, curiosity and wonder. This is in contrast to the way we adults are wary or even frightened of the uncertain, not knowing, and prefer to suffer than soften our rigidly held patterns of knowing and behaving.

Lao Tzu wrote in Chapter 76 of Tao Te Ching

"A man is born gentle and weak.

At his death he is hard and stiff.

Green plants are tender and filled with sap.

At their death they are withered and dry.

Therefore the stiff and unbending is the disciple of death.

The gentle and yielding is the disciple of life.

Thus an army without flexibility never wins a battle.

A tree that is unbending is easily broken.

The hard and strong will fall.

The soft and weak will overcome."

The whole area around hypnosis has been shrouded in superstition and weirdness even though it has been shown to be unusually effective in helping many of our human dilemmas, large and small.

I like to approach this subject by giving a description of what we see when we say "This is hypnosis" rather than try to tie it down to some precise definition. I like, as a place to begin to observe from, that

*"hypnosis as an experience, involving focus, and absorption,
that is mutually agreed to be hypnosis"*

Since this provides an easy link between many everyday experiences such as reading a book, watching a movie, walking in nature and what we can then say is hypnosis.

Even well informed adults can start by being wary of hypnosis as something magical or scary; involving loss of control and unconsciousness. These reluctances can be traced to the company that hypnosis has kept down through the ages - with magic where "The magician will do something to you", or sorcery where "These words that I read out will do something to you" or more recently anaesthetics where "The anaesthetic will put you under, out to it, and make you go to sleep". All of these worries have some legitimacy in

relation to the older, traditional forms of hypnosis, where the hypnotist suggests powerfully or instructs a client [like a magician] or reads hypnotic scripts [like sorcery] or speaks of sleep and unconsciousness.

Milton Erickson started a revolutionary approach to hypnosis by emphasising the client as the prime focus of their experience, resources and authority. He assumed that problems are learnt limitations, and that solutions are always ready at hand to be discovered at any time for no good reason.

Joseph Barber PhD mentioned in a workshop in the 1980s that he thought of hypnosis as “believed in imagination”, and when it come to imagination, kids are natural hypnotic players.

A sweet little nine year old girl had been having nightmares for several months after seeing “Jaws” - a horror movie about a vengeful shark. She would wake, terrified from a dream that a shark was going to eat her, then she would climb into her parents’ bed for the rest of the night.

I asked her what she liked to do, and she told me she was reading “Harry Potter”. I asked her if it would be OK to play an imaginal game together, and she readily agreed. I offered the idea that she could imagine that she was Harry Potter’s sister, and like him, she could be a wizard, not a muggle like his uncle. She smiled at the idea and closed her eyes. I then asked her if she would take out her wand and cast a magic spell so the sharks couldn’t get to her. She had a beautiful smile on her face, and when I asked her about this, she said that she had just surrounded herself with a white light. When I expressed my doubts about the effectiveness of this, she deliberately brought the sharks into her imagined experience, and her smile widened even more. She then told me that the sharks were getting annoyed, then they were getting bored and swimming away. She opened her eyes and looked very pleased with herself. I cautioned her that if she were to be swimming really, and there were sharks, she should get out of the water, and not surround herself with a white light. She look disdainfully at me and told me very clearly that she knew that!! After that ten minute conversation, she only climbed into her parents’ bed occasionally, and never because of nightmares.

Another of Erickson’s innovations was his repeated use of early learnings as a way of connecting people with their innate flexibility and self-trust. He frequently spoke about the process of learning to walk, learn the letters of the alphabet, write your name, ride a bicycle ... as a process which happened over time, was different for each individual, and as well, and I want to emphasise this here ... it happened at an earlier age, at a time when we were more open to learning, less rigid in our way, less certain about how things are and how they should be. I saw his use of early learning as a subtle age regression, so that an adult, being reminded of their childhood flexibilities, reconnecting with these individual childhood learnings, could experience greater flexibility in their present circumstance, and learn what might be helpful for them to move on in their life.

The wonderful benefit of working with kids is that we don’t need to do anything. They are already flexible, open to a world of playful opportunities. Recognising this has been so helpful to many people who have been in workshops with me. They may have begun by thinking that adults can be tricky enough, but children ... they would be too difficult to even contemplate. Seeing kids’ flexibilities has opened the eyes and possibilities to many therapist who now enjoy bringing hypnosis into their conversations with kids.

A colleague saw a woman with her nine year old son for help because he was chronically constipated and soiling his pants. My colleague noticed he had a toy gun, and when she asked him about it, he became animated and said it was a special ray gun that fired missiles into space. My colleague then asked him if he might also be interested to fire missiles out of his bottom into the toilet, and he loved the idea, with immediate and lasting results.

10 year old “pushing buttons”



A ten year old boy was brought by his mother after he had been behaving aggressively at school. He had threatened a teacher and was kicking rubbish bins. His mother said that people were “pushing his buttons” and he nodded. I asked him what he liked doing, and he spoke enthusiastically about his “Bionical” - a toy that could change shape and could be controlled remotely. We had a mutually absorbing conversation where we both imagined this “Bionical” in front of us, with various buttons which controlled its actions. We also played with the idea that there might also be buttons which prevented the other buttons being pushed.

He was engrossed in the conversation, and showed all the signs of trance although there had been no formal invitation into hypnosis.

He was then easily able to translate this experience into his own responses, and readily accepted the idea that he had ways of not having his buttons available to be pushed.

This led to a return to normal ten year old behaviour with no special angry outbursts.

Rob: Well, thanks for being willing to come along and be part of this. I appreciate it, the both of you. We are all learning here, learning how to work with kids, to help them to get out of some troubles and be more the way they want to be, stuff like that. So, I appreciate your willingness to come along and help us with that and let's hope that we can do something that might be useful for you.

C:: Yip.

Rob: What have you been doing lately that's been fun?

C:: Nothing much.

Rob: Nothing much? What sort of things are fun when you get to it, what sorts of things?

C:: I don't know.

Rob: Don't know. How old are you?

C:: I'm 11.

Rob: Are you? What grade are you in school?

C:: Four.

Rob: Are you? How's it going?

C:: Good.

Rob: What do you like about it? Have you got some subjects that you... some bits of it that you like better than others?

C:: Reading.

Rob: Yeah? Oh, okay. What do you like reading?

C:: All kinds of books.

Rob: Oh, yeah. Are you reading something at the moment?

C:: I was reading Harry Potter.

Rob: Oh, wow. Which book are you up to?

C:: The Goblet of Fire.

Rob: Okay. You have to refresh my memory. I haven't read that for a while. Which book is that? Is that the last one or the second last?

C:: The second last.

Rob: Second last, okay. So, are you reading that, or you've read it? You've started it?

C:: I've read, but mum took it off me.

Rob: Did she? Oh, fair enough. So, you might be looking forward to getting it back some time, I guess.

C:: Yip. I've, got a few pages to go.

Rob: Only a few? Okay. And you haven't read the last book?

C:: I haven't read the last book because I haven't got it.

Rob: Okay. You must be looking forward to that too.

C:: Yip.

Rob: So, how would you get the last book?

C:: Get it for my birthday, C:tmaz.

Rob: Okay. Someone might give it to you?

C:: Yeah, or I get it from the library.

Rob: Are you? Oh, you've got a number of options there. That's good. What do you like about Harry Potter?

C:: I don't know.

Rob: He's pretty cool, isn't he?

C:: It's interesting.

Rob: He is interesting. He gets up to some stuff, gets up to some things. So, if we could do something here that would be useful for you, would be helpful to you, what would that be?

C:: What was it again?

Rob: I don't know. Just give me a run...

C:: Behaving, in a way, wanting to behave in a way, stop like...

Rob: Some behaviour that you're getting into trouble or something?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: Oh, yeah. What sort of things have you been doing that's been getting you into trouble? I just want to check and see whether you're doing the same things at your age that I did when I was your age.

C:: Before I went to school, I was going to, I did some things to a teacher.

Rob: What did you do to the teacher?

C:: They say that I threatened to punch her and raised a chair.

Rob: Okay. You threatened to.

C:: Mm.

Rob: But you didn't do it?

C:: But I didn't do it.

Rob: Okay. How did you stop? What was it that you must have felt like doing it? They say that you threatened her, but what stopped you actually doing it?

C:: I don't know.

Rob: It's nice to know that you can feel like doing some things and you don't have to do them. I wonder what other things. You feel like reading in Harry Potter and you're not doing that. There are a lot of things we feel like doing and we don't get to do straight away anyhow. Something we have to wait for a bit. So, if you weren't getting into trouble with that kind of behaviour, what would be different?

If we did something here, if we had something happen so that things were more the way you want them, what would be going on? If you didn't have the bad behaviour and you didn't have the behaviour that gets you into trouble, if you had some behaviour that was okay for you and for others, what would that be like?

C:: Being good.

Rob: Good. Sounds a bit boring. What does good mean?

C:: Being nice and stuff.

Rob: Nice, okay. Well, okay. How about if instead of being good all the time and nice all the time, you were just kind of good enough and nice enough so that you didn't get into trouble because, I don't know about you, but most people, in fact, I think any person I've ever met, hasn't been totally good. They haven't been totally nice. I'm not going to bore you with all the things that I've done that are not good and totally nice, but you know, we've all done some stuff that's not good and nice. You know that we all do it.

But you'd prefer it if you were good more of the time, or nice more of the time. And when you are good and you're not getting into trouble and you are kind of behaving nicely, how do you do that? What's different than when you... What are you up to when that's going on?

C:: Probably happy.

Rob: Okay. And when you're happy, what's going on? What are you thinking, what are you doing, what are you saying?

C:: Having fun.

Rob: Oh, okay. Now this brings me where we came in. What do you like doing for fun? You like reading Harry Potter. What else do you like doing?

C:: Playing Bionicles, Lego.

Rob: Playing?

C:: Bionicles.

Rob: I don't know what that is.

C:: Sort of a Lego thing and they move and...

Rob: Oh, okay. How do they move? Is it with a machine?

C:: Well, you make a thing and there's a little thing that's...

Rob: Oh, like a motor?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: And you wind it up?

C:: Yeah, you... No, you don't wind it up. You just do that to a little man, or its hands will move, or its feet move.

Rob: Oh, okay. Like a robot or something?

C:: Yeah, in a way.

Rob: How big is this?

C:: Can be that, can be that. Can be that.

Rob: Oh yeah and can you put it together?

Rob: Okay. Do you put it together?

C:: Yip.

Rob: Oh, okay. You put it together and somehow when you do that, that makes hands and things move?

C:: Yeah. Hands can move, hold weapons, or the feet move to make them run.

Rob: Okay.

C:: Yeah.

Rob: Sounds great. What's it called again?

C:: A Bionicle.

Rob: Bionicle.

C:: Yeah.

Rob: Okay, Bionicle.

C:: And Lego. I like playing Lego.

Rob: What do you like doing with Lego? What do you like making there?

C:: Building things. Star Wars Lego. I like Star Wars.

Rob: Star Wars?

C:: Yeah, and Harry Potter.

Rob: Okay.

C:: I haven't got any Harry Potter Lego.

Rob: Okay. With Star Wars, what do you build with that? Do you build spaceships?

C:: Yes. Spaceships and bases and things like that.

Rob: Do you have weapons and stuff like that there? Like ray guns and...

C:: Yeah, like that.

Rob: Okay. All right. And you like reading.

C:: Yeah. Reading's my favourite subject.

Rob: Reading is your favourite? All right. Well, when you read something and you like it, it's your favourite, do you find that when you read it, it's like you can really get into the story, almost like you're there? Do you like doing that?

C:: You don't know [inaudible 08:03]

Rob: You don't know, no.

C:: You're just reading, and reading, and reading and reading.

Rob: You're just reading, and reading and reading. Have you ever had it where you're sitting and reading, and reading and time goes and you don't know how? You've been there for a while.

C:: Mm.

Rob: Yeah. I think you sound like someone who can really get absorbed with things. Yeah, you can really get into it.

C:: Mm.

Rob: Does the same happen with Bionics? Have I got the wrong word?

C:: Bionicles.

Rob: Bionicles. So, like when you're doing the Bionicles today, can you again, get in there and spend quite a bit of time doing that?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah, okay.

C:: It depends what I'm doing with them.

Rob: Yeah. So, when you get into doing things with them that's fun, that you like doing, what's the best things that you do with the Bionicles?

C:: How they move and stuff. It's good how they move and stuff.

Rob: Oh, you really like that.

C:: Yeah. It's easier that way.

Rob: Yeah, and I guess it's more fun too. You can kind of do things with them and have some say over what they do and don't do, yeah?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. All right. Could we play a game using your imagination? Would that be agreeable? Just say yes. Don't be difficult for me.

C:: Yes.

Rob: Thank you. It's the middle of the afternoon. I've been working hard all day. You've got to make it easy for old people, you know. But what I was hoping you might do is imagine that we could have a story that you were reading, maybe something like Harry Potter. And if you could just imagine that there's something going on and can you imagine what it would be like if someone's trying to make Harry Potter do something he doesn't want to do, or trying to get him to be like someone he's not.

C:: But he, in a way, can't.

Rob: Well, he's a wizard. So, wizards can do stuff that other people can't, which is always good. Can we make up a story together about how Harry Potter is in a situation?

C:: He lives with a Muggle family because they aren't magical.

Rob: Okay. So, he's in a Muggle family. He's under the stairs.

C:: Not all the time.

Rob: Not all the time. Not all the time.

C:: He goes to a spare bedroom of Dudley's.

Rob: Goes to Dudley's room, okay. And just imagine, can we pretend that Dudley is trying to get him to do something that he doesn't want to do, trying to annoy him and what about, what's Dudley's father's name? It doesn't matter. You know the bloke I mean.

C:: Yeah

Rob: You know how he always tries to annoy Harry, tries to get Harry to... He says, "Don't you behave badly. None of that wizardry stuff around here. You've got to behave properly." Yeah?

C:: He can't help it.

Rob: He can't help it, but Harry somehow learnt that if he does... Except for that time where he gave Dudley a tail, he lost it that time. Do you remember that? That was in one of the earlier books.

C:: That was Hagrid.

Rob: Oh, was it?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: Oh, okay. Oh, Hagrid did that?

C:: He put a snake on Dudley.

Rob: Okay. All right.

C:: He made the glass disappear and then a snake went on him.

Rob: Okay. So, can you imagine that either Dudley or Dudley's father is trying to get Harry to behave in a way that he doesn't want to behave? We're just pretending here. Would that be all right? Can you imagine that? Don't like this very much? Does it sound silly or does it sound okay?

C:: Weird.

Rob: A bit weird. Bit weird, okay? I mean Harry Potter's weird. So, that's all right.

C:: Not weird.

Rob: He's not weird?

C:: He's not weird.

Rob: Okay, all right. You must be pretty weird if you don't think Harry Potter's weird. He does pretty weird things. He gets in cars that fly. He gets in through a train what's the name of that platform.

C:: A brick barrier. Nine and three quarters.

Rob: Nine and three quarters. I mean and that's not weird? I think that's weird. But anyhow. So, if you were reading a story about Harry Potter where someone is trying to get him to behave badly and he doesn't want to behave badly because he doesn't want to get into trouble, and he's not going to behave perfectly because he's a kid. Kids are not allowed to be perfect, or they wouldn't be kids. But someone's trying to make him do something that he doesn't want to do and he doesn't want to get into trouble. So, what could Harry do so that he doesn't just do what other people want, but he doesn't get into trouble either?

C:: Try to do it.

Rob: Okay. So, let's just imagine that that's there in the book somehow and we put that aside. If you were to make a Bionicle and you're going to make this Bionicle that has... It's got weapons?

C:: Yeah. It has swords.

Rob: Swords and he's got feet that can run and you can make the Bionicle so that you can make his hands go, make his arms go, make the sword do things.

C:: Swords.

Rob: Swords?

C:: They usually have too.

Rob: Okay. So, you can make those swords do something and you can make them do something, or you can not make them do something. And you can make the Bionicle so that it can fly with swords or it can run. Can you imagine that? So, could we pretend that we've got a Bionicle that you have made? Maybe it's even a Bionicle that you could make in a particular way, a special way that you could bring in even a bit of wizardry. So, we could have a Bionicle that was somehow part of the Harry Potter story, only the Bionicle is being made so that the Bionicle wants to use his swords, and fight and cause trouble, but you've got a way by turning that...

C:: Knob.

Rob: That knob, or maybe you could imagine you could use some wizardry. You could do it somehow at a distance, but you could make that Bionicle either hit something with his sword, or not. Could you imagine that?

C:: In a way.

Rob: All right.

C:: Use remote control.

Rob: Okay, use remote control. Very good. So, how big is this Bionicle? All right. Is there anything that you can do to imagine that you could make that Bionicle bigger? Just imagine.

C:: It unfolds itself.

Rob: Just imagine that it can unfold itself and it gets bigger, and then it gets bigger, until it's the same size as you. Just imagine having a Bionicle that size, how would that be? That you can control...

C:: Cool.

Rob: Yeah, with using remote control, yeah. And you could control that Bionicle and you could make it either hit things and fight with a sword, or not. Maybe you could even...

C:: Climb up things.

Rob: Climb up things, yeah. He could run. He could even put his swords down and shake someone's hand.

C:: Really, in a way they can't. They put their swords in, they've got these like hand things and they hold their [inaudible 16:28].

Rob: Oh, okay. But he could put his swords in somehow, so that they weren't dangerous and then he could shake someone's... And you could make him bring his swords out, or put his swords back because it's remote controlled and you're controlling him, yeah? Now, if you've got a remote control, can you imagine that on that remote control there are some buttons that you can push and some switches maybe?

C:: Mm. Turn it off and on.

Rob: Turn it off and on. And there are buttons that you can press that will make him stick his swords out and another that you can press to make him pull his swords back.

C:: And walk forwards, and walks backwards and walk side to side.

Rob: All those things. And there might be another button that you can press that would make him run and another button would make him sit down.

C:: Or duck.

Rob: Or duck, okay. All right. So, imagine you've got this Bionicle and you've got the remote control and you make him do all those things, can you imagine that?

C:: In a way.

Rob: In a way. Well, we're not doing it really. We're just imagining it in a way. It's just a way of imagining it. So, let's say that this Bionicle because we've made it the size that we've made it, and we're just imagining it in our own way. And let's imagine that this Bionicle looks not so much like a robot, not so, much like an ordinary Bionicle, but it actually looks like a boy. In fact, because we're imagining this, we can make it look any way we want, it's going to look like you. And we might even call him C:.

So, we've got C:, the Bionicle, and C: the remote controller, yeah? And I don't know whether this is okay, but what I'd like to do is for you to imagine that you're invisible. You could make yourself invisible. You can use some wizardry. You are invisible. You've got the remote control. That's invisible. And C: is there, but you're controlling him. And people don't see you because you're invisible. They just see the Bionicle and it looks just like you and they think it's you.

It looks like you, but you've got the remote control and you can make that Bionicle do anything you want. So, just imagine that Bionicle goes up to the teacher and you've got the remote control. So, you can make that Bionicle we're going to call C:, threaten the teacher and talk about breaking the chair. Can you imagine that?

C:: Mm-hm.

Rob: Okay. Now, have a look at your remote control. No one else can see it and imagine that you have C: go up to that teacher and be nice to that teacher, say something nice to the teacher, maybe shake the teacher on the hand. You know, something like this. You can imagine shaking hands like that. Yeah. You could shake hands. How would I shake hands? Just like that? Okay. So, he could shake hands like that. So, can you imagine you've got this Bionicle called C:. He goes up to the teacher, shakes the teacher by the hand, he's nice to the teacher and the teacher says something nice to him. What does the teacher say to him?

C:: Hello. How are you doing?

Rob: Hello. How are you doing? Okay. And what does C: the Bionicle say?

C:: Good.

Rob: Oh, good. Now when C: is finished talking to the teacher, let's take him to some other situation where he could get into trouble, then you can have a look at your remote control and you can know that there are things that you can do to press this button, or that button, this switch, or that switch to make him do different things. Can you imagine that? Okay. So, you've got a remote control. So, press the button so that C: now is going to behave what you mean like nice and good. He's going to behave...

C:: Nice.

Rob: You watch him do that. How's that look? Does it look all right?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah, looks alright. And now, let him do something and press the button so that you make him do something so that he gets into trouble.

C:: What?

Rob: Yeah? Okay. Now press the buttons to make him do something so that his behaviour is good and he gets rewards. Okay. Now, I want you to get the feeling, get to know where these buttons are and to know that you can make him do anything you want. Yeah?

C:: Mm.

Rob: Okay. And the good thing about this is that anytime this Bionicle, C:, who looks just like you, anytime he's behaving too well, too good, he's too nice, you know how to press the buttons a little bit and make him just a little bit naughty because it's important for him to be just a little bit naughty, at least sometimes. You don't want him to be perfect. He'd be boring, wouldn't he? I reckon. You've got to do some things that are a bit off sometimes. Yeah?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. So, you're pressing these buttons, you've got the remote control and the Bionicle called C: looks just like you, and people probably even think it is you, he's behaving really well. Does his mum give him the Harry Potter book back?

C:: Maybe.

Rob: Maybe? What do you think?

C:: Probably.

Rob: Probably, okay. Let's see what happens if you press all of the buttons so that it behaves badly. Does he get the Harry Potter book back?

C:: No.

Rob: No. Certainly not. So, if he wants that Harry Potter book back, you know which buttons to press, which switches to flick so that he won't get it back definitely and you know which ones to press so that he's more likely to get it back. Not certain, but more likely. Now, did you know, you probably did, but did you know that you actually have got those buttons and switches in your brain? We've all got them.

Mostly, we don't know that we've got them, but we've all got them and everyone has all those buttons and switches inside them. And a lot of people don't know that they've got them and even when they discover that they've got them, they don't know exactly where they are. So, it takes a little bit of practice. Takes a little bit of time learning where the buttons are and what happens with this button and what happens with that button. Like when you first started making the Bionicle, you had to learn how to put it together.

C:: Usually instructions or...

Rob: Yeah. You have to kind of find where... It takes a little while. You had to put it together and to...

C:: It depends. It depends what sort.

Rob: Yeah. Okay. Sometimes it happens very quickly?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: Very easily?

C:: Sometimes.

Rob: Sometimes and sometimes it takes sort of a bit of time.

C:: Once I got one, I could hardly build it.

Rob: Okay. So, you don't know until you start to put it together, whether it's going to be easy or whether you think you won't be able to. and you thought you could hardly build it, but did you build it or not?

C:: Yeah, I got to in the end.

Rob: You did? How did you feel when you got to it in the end?

C:: Exhausted.

Rob: Exhausted? It was hard work?

C:: Mm.

Rob: Was it worth it?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah, sometimes things are hard work and sometimes it's pretty exhausting and it can be worth it, but sometimes they're easier than you think. Now, if you were to find that putting this Bionicle together, this one called C:, the one that's right here so that you could learn the buttons and switches. If that happened easily, would that be okay?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: And would it be okay, would you be willing to enjoy playing with that and learning how to use the buttons, learning how to do the switches, learning how to... because I'm just talking in a way to... How can I say? Sort of let you know that you probably know more about how to get into trouble and how to behave well than you know that you do. If I said to you, "Could you behave badly tomorrow and you get yourself into deep trouble?" you could probably manage it

C:: I could.

Rob: Yeah, we all could.

C:: It'd be easy.

Rob: We all could. It would be easy for all of us. And also, you know more about how to behave nicely and good in a way that you know can keep you out of trouble. You probably know how to do that pretty well too. And sometimes it takes just a bit of practice just learning how to do this one or that one and a bit of practice can be exhausting, but sometimes it can be easy. Now, if it were to be easy, would that be okay?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: I'd hate to make this too easy for you. If you were to go away from here and discover that you can behave well and nicely, good and nicely, or badly and bad behaviour, get into trouble any time you want. You just need to know which buttons to press and you know, you're kind of pretty cluey about that. You pretty well know. If after this, you could just go and behave as well as you wanted and as badly as you wanted any time and it was easy, would that be okay?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: So, what do you think? What's different now for you as we're talking than when you arrived? What are you learning here?

C:: Things.

Rob: Yeah, it's a bit hard to kind of put it into words exactly what it is, but the things that you're learning, in some ways, you already knew that. So, what you're learning, I'm just somehow kind of reminding you of some stuff that you knew that you didn't really know that you knew. And I think you've got a very good imagination, very. And I think you are pretty good at learning things when you want to. If you're anything like me, I'm bad at learning things that I'm not interested in, but if I'm interested in something, I can really concentrate on it and learn it pretty well and I think you can do that too.

C:: Depends what it is.

Rob: It does depend, exactly that. If it's something you want to learn, then it's going to be a lot easier than something you don't want to learn. And you do want to learn how to find the right buttons to press I think because you want to learn how to get the benefits of that rather than the punishment, I think.

C:: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah? If you're like most of us, I think that's the case. Now, how do you think it will be for your mum if, as a result of this, you start behaving really well?

C:: Good.

Rob: Do you think she'll be able to cope?

Penny: Yes, please.

Rob: Do you think she'll be able to cope?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: She says please. She thinks she'd like that, but do you think it will be all right for her? She won't have any problem with you if you start behaving pretty well all the time.

C:: Yeah.

Rob: I think it's really important, Penny, that you know you have a son and anyone who has sons will tell you, they're not perfect. And if they were, you'd be in deep trouble because most of us human beings are just a little smidgen less than perfect.

Penny: Yes.

Rob: We've all got a little touch of humanity somewhere and this guy's got one.

Penny: All good guys.

Rob: And I hope he keeps it because he'd be a pain to live with if he was perfect. We can't stand perfect people. They are really painful. But he's going to play with this. So, I think he's got better access to those buttons now and switches, better access than you realise. He's kind of got a sense where they are and probably knows a bit about them actually better than he realises. He's always known about them, but didn't quite know how to put his finger on it, so to speak, but I think now he knows more about how to do that.

Penny: He's always when he's being good, he's being good and when he's been awful, he's being very awful, so it's just been...

Rob: Yeah, there's a nursing rhyme about that. He's got a little curl down the middle of his forehead too. I used to have one of those. Do you know what I did with mine?

C:: What?

Rob: I shouldn't tell your mother this. I cut it off. I got into awful trouble one time. I was a lot younger than you. So, I didn't know how to behave well, but I had a curl there and I was so embarrassed about it and I got to the scissors and cut it off because I thought I looked like a sissy or something. And I cut it off and I got into trouble about that. You've got a bit of a curl there, but so you know how to be good and I'm glad to hear that you know how to be horrid because if we don't know how to behave badly, we don't really have a choice. And knowing that you can behave badly and get into trouble and you can behave well and get the rewards, then you've got the choice.

So, how long do you reckon this fella should behave well enough before he gets Harry Potter back? I don't think you should give it back to him today. You probably think you should get it back today, do you? Given what's been going on, how long

do you think he should behave like you were saying nicely and good before your mother gives that book back? What do you think would be a fair thing?

C:: Until Monday.

Rob: Until Monday. What do you think mother? So, how can you make sure that you behave the way you want to between now and Monday? What's today, Tuesday?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: No, yes. Tuesday.

Penny: Tuesday.

Rob: Tuesday. My goodness, you've got to behave really well for six days. That's a big ask. Do you think you should be allowed any bad behaviour in six days?

C:: In a way.

Rob: In a way.

C:: Maybe a little.

Penny: Perhaps minor, minor discrepancies.

Rob: Minor discrepancies. So, what would be acceptable? What do you reckon your mum will say, "Oh, that will pass. That's okay." But you know what's going too far because you've got the remote control. You know which buttons and things and how hard to press them. Can you work that out between you?

Penny: He was pushing my buttons trying to make me angry before we came in just see Gabrielle last week.

Rob: All right. So, if you were pushing your mother's buttons and she gets angry, then that probably makes it a bit less likely you'll get Harry Potter back, hey? Do you think?

C:: I was doing it for the fun of it.

Rob: Fun of it? Well, you can have your fun by pressing your mother's buttons, or you can have the fun of reading Harry Potter. I guess the choice is yours then.

C:: Mm.

Rob: Yeah. So, what do you think? Would it be worthwhile not pressing your mother's buttons and learning how to press your right buttons, your good buttons, so then you get Harry Potter? Do you think that's worth it, or not?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. Well, how about you give it a try? I don't know whether six days is a bit much. I'll leave that for the two of you to work out. If he only makes five and three quarters or five and a half, you know, that might be near enough.

Penny: Okay.

Rob: Now, what do you reckon about this last Harry Potter book? When's your birthday?

C:: It's already been.

Rob: Oh, yeah?

C:: It's September the 20th.

Rob: September the 20th, okay. So, you're just 11. Yes. So, I mean you're 11, but you're kind of not really settled into being 11. You're just a new 11-year-old. It can take a while to kind of get used to being a grown-up 11-year-old. So, you've only been that for less than a month now. So, it might take another month for you to get really used to being a grown-up 11-year-old. So, maybe by Christmas, do you reckon?

C:: Mm. I've got some friends who maybe will get me the Harry Potter. They got me them.

Rob: Yeah?

Penny: He got them for his birthday. The set up until the one was... I had taken it off him.

Rob: So, what do you reckon? How did you cope then? Which button did you press then?

C:: I don't know.

Rob: The snarly button. It's good to know that you can do that. Do it again. Give us that button and give us that snarly one. It went something like this... Go on. Is that where the button there is? You got it in one. It's fun to play with that, isn't he? And I don't know whether the two of you can have fun.

C:: No. She never has fun.

Rob: No. See? No, can't.

C:: She never has fun.

Rob: You know, people... Are you ticklish?

C:: Yes, but she and I am.

Rob: Are you ticklish?

C:: She didn't say so.

Rob: Oh, he's got some buttons. Where are you ticklish? He's got buttons.

C:: I'm ticklish all over.

Rob: So, instead of you getting annoyed by him, if he tries to push your buttons, instead of getting annoyed, you might want to play by tickling him. And I don't know whether that's too cruel, but that might be a terrible punishment. Instead of saying, "You can't do this and you can't do that," to tickle. That is a cruel punishment. My brother used to do that to me. I hated it.

C:: I don't hate it.

Rob: You don't hate it? Do you like it?

C:: I know how to get away from it.

Rob: Oh, yeah.

C:: But I don't like it and I don't hate it.

Rob: Do you think that he can get away from you?

Penny: He can certainly try.

Rob: He can.

C:: I have one [inaudible 34:25]

Rob: I wonder what would happen if you were to lie on the floor and I had to get your mother to sit on you, do you think you'd be able to get away?

C:: No.

Rob: Don't like your chances. What do you reckon Penny? If you were to sit on him.

Penny: He isn't going anywhere

Rob: Then he'd be captive. Then you could tickle him. I better be careful what I say. I nearly said something I shouldn't say, but she could tickle you. You could tickle him, yeah? But you're not going to do that. I hope. Oh, your mother's wondering about this. She's wondering whether instead of punishing you, she might sit on you and tickle you.

C:: If she sits on me, I'll be crushed.

Penny: Instead of punishing him, maybe I'll even spray him with water.

Rob: Oh.

Penny: We have friends who were trying to [inaudible 35:11]

Rob: So, there's a bit of fun going on here. You've got some buttons here and some things you can press too.

Penny: Sorry, but he's not real keen on it.

Rob: Oh, good.

C:: No, I don't like water.

Rob: Well, there's no good in trying to punish you with something he likes. That's not punishing.

Penny: No.

Rob: No.

C:: I hate water. It's annoying.

Rob: I reckon that's good. So, squirting him with water, tickling him. We've got some other things that you can do that can be fun. He can get the message, but it doesn't have to be too heavy to bear. All right. So, you've got some buttons now and your mothers got some. And you know how to press hers and she's finding out how to press yours and you are finding out how to press your own/ That's the main thing. You're finding out where your buttons are. That's the important thing because when you've got the buttons and you're pressing your buttons, you are in charge of your experience instead of someone else doing it. It feels better, doesn't it? You don't know?

C:: I don't know.

Rob: Well, is it worth trying?

C:: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah, I think it might be. I think once you find out that you're in charge of your buttons and not anyone else, I think you're going to feel better about that. And I think there's going to be something in that last Harry Potter book that you're going to find very helpful. It's going to be really good for you.

C:: You've read it, haven't you?

Rob: Yeah, but I've got a bad memory. I can't remember the details, but I think there's going to be something really good in it. I think you're going to enjoy it. Anyhow, is there anything more that you would like me to say, or anything more that would be helpful for us to talk about? You don't know?

I don't know either, but I do know that I'm glad to have met you, and I think you're a very bright fellow and I think you're very willing to learn some stuff. And I think when you realise just how much you are in charge of your own buttons and no one else, I think that's going to put you back in charge of your own experience. It's going to be easier for you than I think. So, how about we leave it at that? Do you want to shake my hand? I'm glad to have met you.

14 year old with alopecia

A fourteen year old boy was brought for help by his father because of increasingly large patches of baldness over a number of weeks.

He was a keen golfer, and took the game very seriously, practicing regularly including imagining a variety of strokes. He said he would sit in a chair, close his eyes, and imagine that he was about to tee off, or play a difficult shot on the fairway, or even putting. He could review each shot in slow motion and replay it as often as he wanted. He told me that this was very helpful in increasing his results.

I asked him if it would be OK for him to continue sitting in the chair in my office, to close his eyes, and imagine that his hair was growing again, to see it happen in slow motion, and replay the process as often as he wanted. He liked the idea and already felt some tingling in his scalp. He was keen to continue practicing at home, and his hair grew back perfectly within a few weeks.

Two years later, he returned with worries about lack of concentration on his studies at school. He readily adapted the golf and hair-growing process so he could imagine sitting at his desk at home, easily focusing on his learning, enjoying the whole experience, and feeling the satisfaction of knowing that he had learnt what he needed. He only needed to practice this a few times at home, since as he began to enjoy his studying, it developed its own momentum, and became an easy learning for him.

A session with an 11 year old girl overcoming her fear of dogs.



R: Helen, how old are you?

H: 11.

R 11, oh right. OK What grade are you in in school?

H 5.

R Oh right. What do you like about it?

H Mm - everything.

R Everything! Really. Wow. Is there anything that you like specially? Anything that you like even more than everything?

H Maths and sport.

R Maths and sport. That's an interesting combination. What sport do you like?

H Umm ... Running and games.

R Oh yeh. Are you a fast runner?

H Mmm .. sort of.

R Sort of. Do you like running short distances or long distances?

H Long.

R Ah ha. What sort of long distances do you like?

H 800 metres.

R Oh really? My goodness. When I was your age I could run 100 meters, but 800 meters? Don't you get tired towards the end of it?

H Yes.

R How do you keep going?

H Mmm. I just do

R You just do.

H Start off slowly at the start.

R Start off slowly and then ...

H Keep going slowly.

R You keep going slowly. And how do you go running with other people? Do you ever win races or do you ...?

H We usually time each other.

R Oh yeh. So you're really trying to run against your time. Not trying to compete with someone else.

H [nods]

R Isn't that fantastic? Great. And your mum said that you'd like to be less frightened of dogs than you are, yeh?

H [nods]

R How come? How come it's a problem to you?

H I don't know, they're just scary.

R They scare you? Cats OK?

H Yep.

R You don't mind cats?

H Uh huh.

R Kangaroos?

H I like them.

R Wallabies?

H Yep.

R Wombats?

H Yep?

R Emus?

H Yep.

R You like emus? I'm scared of emus. After we've helped you with dogs, maybe you can help me with emus. I'm very scared of them. Have you ever been near an emu and they

kind of look at you like that?

H Mm [smiles]

R They give you such a funny look. So - how long have you been scared of dogs?

H For ever.

R For ever. All right, so you don't have a dog?

H [shakes her head]

R Any neighbours have dogs?

H Mm yes.

R Yes, so you keep away from them, I guess. So what do you think would be different if you weren't so scared of dogs? What would be different for you?

H I don't know, I'd just be able to pat them, but I don't like them.

R Don't like what?

H Patting them, being near them.

R No. There's something you do't like about that. What is it?

H I don't know, I just feel like they are going to hurt me.

R Oh ... so it would be nice to be able to pat them like you pat a cat or ... have you ever patted a wallaby or a kangaroo?

H Don't think so.

R They're very soft to pat. They've got softer fur even than a cat. They are fun to pat. if you get a chance to, that would be really nice. And um ... what do you know about hypnosis, because you probably know that your mum is learning about hypnosis?

H I don't know much.

R Well, a lot of people say a lot of silly things about hypnosis, but it's a bit like, you know when you were reading your book out there, you can ... er ... get really interested in reading, and you could even imagine that the things you are reading about are actually happening. You kind of get into the story, and there may be some other things that can go on around you, like there may be some cars outside, some kids next door, or the wind might blow or something, and you don't pay attention to that because you're enjoying the book; you're reading the book; you're concentrating on it. Do you know what I mean?

H [nods]

R Well hypnosis is a bit like that. It's a bit like just finding a way of concentrating on something ... and then when you concentrate on that, after a while you ... start to ... not need to think about other things, you don't need to be concerned about other noises or other people around. Probably when you were reading, you knew that she was over in the other part of the room, but some of the time you didn't pay attention to that ... because you were so busy reading. And often when someone starts to go into hypnosis, they begin to feel ... rather pleasantly comfortable ... be kind of relaxed ... and ... do you know what it's like when you pat a cat, and sometimes you pat the cat and it kind of settles and it looks like it ... looks really cozy?

H Mmm.

R Well for some people going into hypnosis, it feels a bit like that. They can settle into something and feel safe and cozy. Do you know what I mean?

H Mmm.

R And I wonder if you can begin to feel anything like that beginning to happening to you now.

H Yes

R Good. So ... you could just let that continue. There's nothing you need to do really. You don't need to really listen to me; you don't need to give any particular attention to what I'm saying; if you wanted to, you could even close your eyes.

H [closes eyes]

R And just let your mind think about something pleasant, something you could enjoy. Maybe remembering what it was like reading that book. And you're reading "Pigs could Fly"?

H [nods]

R What was happening when you were reading that book? When you ... can you just leave your eyes closed for a while and tell me ... what you are reading about; what's going on in that book.

H She's in the wrong land.

R She's in the wrong land. Oh dear. And is that funny, or is that scary, or what is that ... what is that?

H She wants to get back home and is looking for a way back home.

R Ah, right. And do you think she's going to find a way back home?

H Yes.

R Uh huh, and now that she's in the wrong land, what's her name?

H Rachael

R Rachael. Now that Rachael is in the wrong land how is she feeling? Is she feeling sad or scared, or ...

H scared.

R Scared. Oh right. OK. So, how do you think she is going to get back into the right land, get back home?

H Somebody else has been there. They call them outsiders.

R Oh yes.

H And she's trying to go back into how that boy got back into his time.

R All right, so she's going to follow that somehow?

H Yes.

R Like a path through time?

H Yes.

R And you haven't read how she's going to do that yet. But you can enjoy knowing that she's going to find a way back and she'll find a path and she'll get back home and she'll feel ... How do you think she'll feel when she's got back home?

H Happy.

R Happy. Yes. Now I wonder if we could, if you could imagine ... that we could have another story ... and this story won't be about Rachael. This story is going to be about someone called Helen. Could you go along with me and pretend that we're going to have a story about someone called Helen? And Helen lives normally in a place where there are cats and kangaroos and wallabies and ... er ... wombats, and all kinds of lovely furry things that she'd love to pat. And she's got into um the wrong land. She's got into the wrong place. And she's scared where she is ... because she doesn't want to be there. She wants to come back home. And when she gets back home, she's going to feel really happy to be back home. And something interesting is going to be there when she gets back home. Something that she didn't know that she was going to like, because when she was in the land she was in that was the wrong land - she was scared. But when she gets back home, she's going to feel happy. Now she hasn't got back to that happy place that she knows is home yet. She's got to find her way there. And what's going to be really interesting for this girl called Helen is that when she gets back there, there's going to be a dog there. And that dog is going to be very friendly. And it will seem strange to Helen in the wrong land because she's scared there, but when she gets back home, that dog is going to be ... friendly, and it's going to have fur like a cat. It's going to have fur like a kangaroo; like a wallaby, and it's going to be very friendly and she's going to be happy to see it. Now she hasn't got back there yet. What do you think about that idea?

H Exciting.

R Huh? Exciting. Yes. So she's in the wrong land, and when she gets back to that place, she's going to be happy, she going to be excited. Now it's not going to be a 100 metres to get back. It's going to be something more like 800 metres. And she might want to run back home, but she doesn't have to be in a hurry, does she? She can start off slowly. Can you imagine that Helen is starting to head back home and when she gets home she's going to be happy and excited and that dog is going to be there? I wonder what it's going to look like. What do you think that dog is going to look like? We can tell this story because we are writing it as we go along, making it up as we go along. What do you think that dog is going to look like?

H Brown and shaggy.

R Brown and shaggy. Yes. Is it going to be a big dog or a little dog?

H A big one.

R A big one. OK. And do you know what that dog's name is going to be?

H No.

R No. Do you want me to tell you?

H Yep.

R I don't know. How about we make up a name together ... 'cos we want it to be a name that when Helen sees it she's going to think "Oh! What a lovely dog!"; that she's going to really like this dog; she's going to really know that it's friendly. I wonder whether we could call the dog Brown shaggy friendly or we could call it Friendly shaggy brown, or we could call it Shaggy friendly brown. I don't know. Something like that. what do you think? Will we call it friendly, or will we call it all those names?

H All of them.

R OK. So we've got all of those names. And we're going to have Shaggy friendly brown, and Brown friendly shaggy, and Friendly shaggy brown, all of those different names. It's going to be the same dog, and it's going to be large and brown and friendly ... and Helen's going to get back there and be excited and be happy to be back there. So can you watch her as she starts along that 800 metres .. as she starts on that ...?

H Nods

R OK. And just let her start slowly. There's no hurry is there? She doesn't have to rush. How is she doing?

H Good.

R Yeh, good. Pretty soon she'll start to leave that scary feeling behind her back in the wrong land and as she gets closer and closer to home, she can feel that happiness and that excitement. I don't know when she'll start to feel the happiness and the excitement and when she'll stop feeling the fear and the scary feeling. [Pause] How far along the 800 meters has she gone so far?

H Almost half way.

R Almost half way. Right. She's really a fast runner, isn't she? Make sure she doesn't go too quickly because we want her to really look forward to getting home and seeing that friendly shaggy brown ... that big beautiful lovely dog that's going to be there. And as she's continuing, is she starting to feel a bit of that excitement yet? Mm hum. Is she starting to feel some of that happiness yet? OK. So how far along the 800 metres is she now?

H She's half way.

R She's half way. Wow! That's fantastic. So she can just take her time, she doesn't have to hurry ... and I wonder what she's feeling thinking that she's left that scary feeling back in that wrong land. What's it feel for Helen to think "Oh, that scary feeling is back there."? ... What's it like for her?

H Um ... good.

R Mmm. It is good, isn't it? OK. So let her continue running and let me know when she's got to the $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way home. Must be coming up to $\frac{3}{4}$. Mmm? Is she getting close to that?

H [nods]

R Uh huh. And what's she doing now?

H She's still there.

R Yeh. Still there. Yeh. And I wonder if when she gets back home, if you could imagine, just imagine, that you are Helen and pretend that you are Helen. Could you do that? And pretend that when Helen gets home that you are going to be able to feel what it's like for her to feel so happy and so excited about that big brown shaggy dog, and it might even be that when you get back, when she gets back, you could open your eyes and imagine that there's a dog there. Would that be fun to do?

H [nods]

R OK. So is she nearly, nearly back home yet?

H [nods]

R How close to home is she?

H $\frac{3}{4}$

R $\frac{3}{4}$ already. Wow. She's really moving along, isn't she? Only 200 metres to go. Do you know what $\frac{7}{8}$ of that will be? I know that you like maths. Have you done ...

H Fractions.

R Fractions?

H Mmm

R What would $\frac{7}{8}$ be?

H [pause] 100

R Yeh. 100 to go. Exactly. So let me know when she gets to $\frac{7}{8}$... when she's only got 100 to go.

H [pause] She's there.

R She's there. Wow. And as she looks to that last 100 metres, maybe she can see a little dog. And that little dog .. it's actually not a little dog but from 100 meters it looks small. Is she starting to feel happy about that and excited about that? OK. And let me know when she's got to 50 metres to go ... cos as she's traveling that last little while, the dog looks bigger and she's feeling even happier and even more excited. Has she got just 50 meters to go yet? Let me know when she's got 25 meters to go. She's getting pretty close to the finish, isn't she? How's she feeling? Pretty excited about getting back home out of that wrong land and back, back home with all the lovely furry creatures and that dog. OK so let me know when she gets to the end of the 800 meters. [pause] Is she nearly there?

H She's there.

R Mmm?

H She's there.

R She's there. And just imagine that you are now Helen, and just imagine that you're going to open your eyes and that you can imagine that there's a dog there. You can pat it. How's that going to feel?

H Good.

R Yeh. And what happens when you do that? Is that dog excited to see you?

H Yes.

R Is the dog happy to see you?

H Yes

R Yes. And you're happy to see the dog? And you're happy to feel happy?

H Yes.

R Isn't that beautiful? [pause] Mmm. And what is it like for you to know that that is what happened to Helen? What would it be like for you to know that that could also happen to you? Would that be fun?

H Yes.

R Yes. Do you know that sometimes dogs get very excited? Some dogs get so excited that they jump on you and they knock you over and ... they're a nuisance sometimes, dogs. Do

your friends ever do that kind of thing? Do you have friends that get so excited that they jump on you and knock you over?

H No.

R You don't? I've got friends that do that to me sometimes. They get very playful, and my kids do that to me sometimes too. They jump on me, knock me over. But it's important to know that some dogs get a bit excited and they want to lick you on the face. You just need to know that some dogs will lick you on the face and lick you on the toes or something ... dogs do that kind of thing. You don't have to let them lick you if you don't want to. But they get excited and want to do that sort of thing sometimes. Is that OK for them to want to do that? So, what do think's happened since we've been talking?

H Changes.

R Changes. Yeh. And are those changes OK? And how do you know that the changes that we've been imagining are actually going to really happen to you?

H I feel different

R You feel different. Can you tell me something about that feeling? How you feel different?

H Feels like there's a thing, a blanket waved over the top of me.

R Oh, right. That sounds very nice. And it might even be that that blanket can be just like a magic carpet and all of the worries and the fears and the scary things can just get - jump back onto the magic carpet and go back to the wrong land cos you don't need those scary things now, do you? So when you see a dog, I hope you're not going to be too happy and too excited. You're not going to go rushing up to every dog you see, are you? You're not going to be difficult, your mother is not going to have to bring you back here and say "I need some help with Helen, because every time she sees a dog she rushes up to it and pats it and wants to take it home. We've got 17 dogs at home and she's got another 50 god that she want to bring and she love dogs so much that she's driving me crazy. Please give her that scary feeling back.". You don't think it's going to be like that?

H [shakes her head - no]

R You're going to be able to manage that? Well ... I want to thank you for being willing to play along with me like that. It's nice to have a conversation with you, come back from the wrong land and see you looking forward to having a good time with dogs, and to know that sometimes they get a bit jumpy and you might need to push them. Do you know what I mean? But you don't need to be scared of them do you? They might need to be scared of you. Do you think? You might push them. You're not going to lick dogs on the face, though are you?

H [shakes her head - no]

R Good. If they want to lick you on the face, you just push them down ... Is there anything else that you want to, that you might want me to say before you open your eyes and ... [sighs] ... Are you ready to let your eyes open?

H [opens eyes]

R Do you know that's what we call hypnosis? It's a silly thing to call it, isn't it. I mean you're just using your imagination, having a good time. You've got a very good imagination.

Mmm. And it's good to know that you can use your imagination in ways that are helpful for you. I know that sometimes we get scared and we imagine that things are there and are going to scare us, but we can also use our imagination in a way that's helpful. It's great to know that you can have that choice. All right.

This is a letter she sent to me several weeks after our session. I had asked her opinion about getting a dog myself as a way of increasing her authority and self trust. Ten years later, this little girl, now a young woman still loves her dog.



3 more sessions with kids



In thinking about introducing this series of sessions with think the question, “What’s different about hypnosis with kids?” Why do we need to do anything special about kids? And I’ve noticed that people in training programs often have a, even after they feel very confident in using hypnosis with adults. So, they think, “Oh children. I don’t know about using hypnosis with children. I don’t know how to do that. What, what.” There’s some uncertainty expressed about that.

I personally find working with children really quite inspiring and would recommend anyone working with adults, even if they’re not intending to use hypnosis with kids, or our skills by exploring this particular group of people that we can work with. And what I notice as a general background is that an important part of Erickson's work was the idea that children are a lot more flexible, a lot more willing to let go of something and move on. In fact, he would speak about an early learning process where when you first learn to walk, or write your name, or ride a bicycle, what a skill had been learnt, once when you learnt that, there were certain approaches, certain moods, certain events that happened.

And by inviting adults to remember what it was like when they as children first learnt to explore these areas, there’s something about the regressiveness, something about the

flexibility and the playfulness that goes with that is very relevant to adults. Erickson spoke about and quoted a Wordsworth poem *Ode to Immortality* and liked to say that quote, [*“Heaven lies about us in our infancy. Shades of the prison-house begin to close upon the growing Boy,”*] something like that. And so, when we’re working with adults, we have to deal – first of all, we can get to the issue of learning, and flexibility and letting go of problems. With adults. So, often we have to help them to get past their self-consciousness, their rationalized behaviour, where, “Oh, you can’t do that or you shouldn’t do that. We have to behave properly.

Erickson said to me one day, in talking with him individually, he said, “Leave your manners outside, they not welcome here. Now, clearly manners have a place, [inaudible 02:59] they’re always ready to play. A kid comes into a room and will look around. What can you do here that’s playful? What can you do here that’s fun? And so, kids are already ready to explore, ready to do what’s going to be new, and useful and [will] learn. And with imagination, kids are spectacular in the way that they’re still in touch with their imagination. And their imaginations are available to them in such a way that they don’t make an important distinction usually between reality and imagination. So, there’s a lot of flexibility there.

We can ask a kid to imagine something and when we’re asking an adult to imagine something, we need to be very careful and say, “Well, you’re imagining this and you and I both know you’re imagining it and it’s not really true, not really real. We’re just making this up together,” but with kids, we can get into the experience. Into the, what Watzlawick Weakland and Fisch called the “Lived As If Reality” and just talked about imagine hypnosis as being imagined as if it were real.

So, kids have got this great flexibility, their willingness to play and that mood of lightness and interest [inaudible 04:27]. They haven’t learnt the rigidities that us grownups have, of course, had to take on board for very good reasons, but nevertheless, not necessarily helpful when it comes to change and learning. And kids also are dissociating naturally. Dissociating is a crucial part in any hypnotic experience and any parent or teacher will complain about the way kids dissociate. Teachers have trouble, kids look out of a window, they’re daydreaming.

Teachers have to say to kids, “Pay attention.” They have to bring them back into the room because they are naturally willing to explore on their own internal experiences. And parents can say to kids, “Dinner’s ready.” And kids don’t hear it. The kids are there, but they are so absorbed into what they are doing. So, into their experience, they’re dissociated from so many external stimuli, which of course, is exactly what we’re wanting to produce with hypnosis. So, working hypnotically with kids, “I’d like to just close your eyes and play a game with your imagination.” Most kids will say yes and off we go.

Or we can say, “What’s your favourite television program? Would you like to close your eyes and watch that? Tell me what’s happening and then you can just keep watching that while I’m talking with you.” Working hypnotically with [them], we don’t need to be formal. We don’t need to have some kind of formal transition in ‘let’s do hypnosis now’. We can begin to, and you will see this in sessions further on in this DVD, we can engage someone in some imagined experience and as we become more absorbed with the child in their experience, they naturally in that state of absorption, it’s that that will allow the externals to just fade into the background.

So, children I would say are natural hypnotic subjects in a way that can be problematic to them, and to adults sometimes and for us to [connect with them] and get them to connect with us. So, the bad news is that kids are good at hypnosis, but when we're working hypnotically with them, that's also the good news. And I guess that's why I find such a delight and joy in working with children. They are so ready to engage and we meet them at their level and begin to get into their experience, begin to treat them, not as equals, like equal to us, but when we allow ourselves to be equal to them or equal with them, we can play together and things can move on very nicely and very effectively.

So, in watching these sessions, whether you're interested in working with kids or not, I invite you to look and see what it is that can be helpful to you and useful to you if you are learning in whatever way that you're using hypnosis.

“Bedwetting”

In this session, the work happens with an eight-year-old boy with a bed-wetting problem and I've noticed that very often, it's around the age of eight or nine that we see kids with this problem. Maybe it's at an age where they're starting to want to sleep over with friends or they go on school camps, but often around the age of eight or nine, boys and girls seem to reach a time, reach a stage where they're ready to do something about this, or perhaps their parents are.

One of the things I found helpful is to always remember and even mention this to the child, particular in the presence of a parent, that some time over the next 10 or 15 years, this problem is going to go anyhow. So, it's just a matter of instead of it taking 10 or 15 years, can we take 10 or 15 months, 10 or 15 weeks, 10 or 15 days? So, I like to set up the idea of expectancy that this problem is temporary and that the solution is inevitable.

I've also found it helpful in general to invite the family to make a change in their language. Instead of talking about wet beds, or beds that are not wet, simply to change their way of speaking into dry beds and beds that are not dry often has quite a subtle but dramatically result. So, often people will talk about wet beds and this wet bed, wet bed, wet bed. The whole room is full of them. And just to change the direction to dry beds can be pretty nice for everybody. It takes the pressure off.

This particular family with multiple issues and very much not trivial, there's quite a lot of disturbance going back over quite a number of years in the family that are enough to upset anyone. He was a charming little fellow and very easily engaged, and I found it easy to get on with him. After their session, he was wetting his bed pretty well every day still. So, I'm not sure that the session made a significant difference to him.

He was dry on a holiday. He was dry on other occasions on holidays too. So, I'm not sure whether this session turned out to be helpful to him or not. Firstly, I'm confident that we did know how. There was a nice relationship between he and I, which I think we'll set up and I think at the very least, we formed the basis for future work for his local hypnotherapist.

It would be nice to be able to report that after this session he was dry, but hypnosis doesn't work miracles, it just provides opportunities and, who knows, it may be that something that happened in this session can form the basis of some learning for him, or maybe not.

Rob: Probably after you are eight and a half, maybe by the time you're eight and three quarters, but certainly by the time you're nine, I reckon you'll have this one [inaudible 12:48]. But just to help that, I'm wondering whether it would be okay if we could imagine something. Are you good at using your imagination? I bet you are.

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. Could you imagine that you and I are going to have a game of dodgeball, kind of a particular game of dodgeball?

Child 1: Just you and me?

Rob: Yeah, but we're not going to draw a line and throw balls at each other, just to pretend, just to imagine something in your mind. Would that be okay?

Child 1: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Okay. How about you close your eyes and just imagine that you're going to have a game of dodgeball and on one side of the line, there's your wees and on the other side of the line is the bed.

Child 1: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Now, I don't know how you can imagine this, but just imagine you've got two teams. You've got your wees on one side that's one team and you've got the bed on the other side, okay. That's another team and there's a line down the middle. And the wees is going to try and get the bed. They're going to try and get the other team. It's going to try and get the ball across and get someone out. And the bed is going to try and get the wees. Okay. So, just imagine this game of dodgeball, can you imagine that? I don't quite know how you can have wees on one side and the bed on the other a different team, but you can imagine things.

Child 1: Mm-hmm.

Rob: All right. So, now the bed is going to try and get the wees with the ball so that it can't get out, so that the bed will stay dry. Yeah? And the wees is going to try and get the bed. It's going to try and get out because it's going to try and wet the bed. Yeah?

Child 1: Mm-hmm.

Rob: So, just imagine – how many people on each team?

Child 1: I don't know.

Rob: Well, let's have a guess. Let's say there's...

Child 1: Ten.

Rob: Ten? All right, let's have 10. Ten people each side. Okay, now at first the wees team is going to win.

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: They're going to get that bed every time. Nearly every time that they get the bed team and they get out, the bed's wet, yeah? But as this bed team is practicing, they're getting better at it and they're going to throw that ball. They're going to get the wees team and pretty soon the bed team starts to win.

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: And they get every now and again for a while, the wees team is going to get the bed. So, you're going to get a wet bed, but more and more this bed team is going to get the wees. So, it's going to be a dry bed. So, just imagine – can you imagine you watching this game?

Child 1: Mm-hmm.

Rob: So first of all, the wees team is winning all the time. So, there's all this wet bed, and a wet bed, another wet bed, another wet bed. Have all these wet beds there. Then the bed team starts to win. You've got a dry bed and you're looking on and you're feeling happy about that?

Child 1: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Are you? Okay, and here comes the bed team again and they win this time. In fact, they get so good that the bed team learns how to dodge the ball every time and they manage to get the wees team every time, so that each time they play, the bed team gets better. They get better at dodging the ball and they get better at getting the wees team. So, after a little while with practice, this bed team really, they're going to win every match. They're going to become champions.

They're going to be so good that the wees team is going to give up and they'll think, "Oh, there's no point in playing here because every time we try, the bed team wins." We get a dry bed every morning and that happens every time. And that's a game that I think might be fun if you play it when you went to sleep at night. Maybe when you get into bed before you go to sleep, you could just imagine that bed team is going to get plenty of practice. Now, just imagine time goes by and next year I come back down here and your mum happens to bring you along here just to say hello to me.

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: And I say, "How old are you?" And you say, "I can't remember." And then when I ask your mum where you gradually remember something and you say that you're nine, and then I ask you when your birthday is because I probably will have forgotten it's the 13th of May and you tell me it's the 13th of May. And it's 12 months' time and we talk about when your birthday was and the fact that in a month's time, you're going to be nine and a half and in four months' time you're going to be nine and three quarters and in six months' time you're going to be 10. In any case, you're nine and a half. Just imagine a whole year has gone by and you and I maybe have a talk. Can you imagine that?

Child 1: Mm-hmm.

Rob: And I say to you, "Do you remember only a year ago, you and I had a conversation? We talked about that dodgeball." And I say to you, "How are you doing with your dry beds?" What do you say to me?

Child 1: Oh, good.

Rob: Good? When was the last time you had a wet bed?

Child 1: Last year.

Rob: Last year. Can you remember whether it was on a Thursday, or a Friday or a Saturday? I bet you can't remember. Yeah. And if you can't remember when it was then you don't need to remember because you don't even need to remember how old you are because you are as old as you are. So, all that time ago, you stopped having beds that weren't dry and the beds have been dry ever since. How do you feel about that?

Child 1: Pretty good.

Rob: I reckon and that's pretty neat. Last year was the last time you had a bed that wasn't dry. You've had dry beds ever since. How did you do that? How did you manage to have all those dry beds? How did you learn to have dry beds? How did you do that?

Child 1: Good advice.

Rob: Okay. And I can remind you maybe that the first time you learnt to play dodgeball, you didn't quite know how to do it, or dodge the ball or how to hit the other person, but as you practiced it, you learnt how to have pretty good aim and you learnt how to dodge the ball. And the more you practiced it, the better you got at it. That's how we learn a lot of things, I guess. So, my advice to you is to get plenty of practice at that game before you go to sleep at night and then look forward to looking back at all those dry beds that you've had once you learn it thoroughly. Now, I want to ask you something. I want to ask a favour.

Child 1: Mm-hmm.

Rob: You don't have to say yes, but I'm going to ask you anyhow. You know, when it's your birthday, people normally give you birthday cards, birthday presents?

Child 1: Mm-hmm.

Rob: I've got a favour to ask you. Would you send me a card on your ninth birthday?

Child 1: Maybe.

Rob: Well, I'm just asking. You don't have to do it, but I'd like you to send me a card on your ninth birthday telling me how happy you are that you're always having dry beds now. Would that be all right?

Child 1: Mm-hmm.

Rob: And you might not remember and that's okay. Your mum might remind you and she might forget, and that's okay, but I'm just asking you if that would be okay when you're nine. Don't send me one when you're 10 because you will have forgotten all about this by then. But when you're nine, you might be able to remember back to when your beds weren't dry and send me a card telling me about how happy you feel now that your beds are dry. Would that be agreeable?

Child 1: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Yeah. Do you want to shake on that? Okay. So, is there anything else that you and I could talk about that would be helpful?

Child 1: No.

Rob: Well, I have to tell you, I'm very impressed with how good you are at using your imagination. I'm very impressed with how you're going to be able to use that to get those dry beds and you don't have to wait until you're nine. You can have an early birthday present, maybe when you're eight and three quarters. Wouldn't it be nice to get an early birthday present?

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. I'm reckoning it's going to be around when you're eight and three quarters. I think that's going to be the time. That's my guess. I don't think... I don't know whether I told you, my name's Rob. Did Gabrielle say that? I can't remember.

Child 1: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Yeah, and you couldn't remember how old you were. Can you remember to remember yet?

Child 1: I think I'm eight.

Rob: You think you're eight? Okay, or somewhere around eight anyhow. More than seven less than nine. More than six, less than 10. What have you been up to?

Child 1: Not much.

Rob: What grade are you in school?

Child 1: Grade 2.

Rob: Two, and what do you like doing at school? What sorts of things are fun for you there?

Child 1: Lots of things.

Rob: All right. What in particular? For example, do you like drawing, or do you like sums, or do you like playing sport?

Child 1: Well, I like playing sport.

Rob: Oh, yeah. What sport do you like?

Child 1: Dodgeball.

Rob: What was that? Dodgeball?

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: What's that? How do you play that?

Child 1: Well, there's two teams. There's a line in the middle. You have two balls and you have to try and hit people to get them out.

Rob: Mm-hmm. And when you hit someone with a ball, with two balls?

Child 1: Yeah. One to each team.

Rob: Oh, okay. And do the people in one team try and hit people in the other team with their ball and they have to stay on their own side of the line?

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: Oh, yeah. And this team is trying to hit people on that side of the line with the ball and these people are trying to hit people on that side. And if you hit someone with the ball, they go out?

Child 1: They're out. Yeah.

Rob: Okay.

Child 1: And the last person in is the winner.

Rob: Okay. Well, that seems pretty good. And what sort of ball do you use, a tennis ball or a...?

Child 1: Little soft ball.

Rob: Oh, yeah, so it doesn't hurt too much when it hits you?

Child 1: No.

Rob: Do some people hit people softly, or hard. Have you ever got a bruise from it?

Child 1: No.

Rob: Oh, okay. So, it's not that bad. That's pretty good. Now, if we could do something here that would be useful, what would that be? If you and I could talk about something, or help you in some way. What would be a helpful thing to do here?

Child 1: I don't know.

Rob: Mm-hmm. Do you know why your mum suggested that you come along here? Have any clue about that? We can always ask her.

Child 1: You can ask her.

Rob: Okay. So, if we could do something here, what would be useful?

Mum: What would be really useful is helping him stop bedwetting.

Rob: Okay.

Mum: Which is why we're here today.

Rob: So, your eight and this is a time when it's going to be helpful for you to learn how to have dry beds more often.

Child 1: Mm-hmm

Rob: You go to camps, I guess. School camps?

Child 1: No.

Rob: No. Do you stay with friends?

Child 1: Sometimes.

Rob: Sometimes, yeah. It might be nice if you could, and learning how to have more dry beds would be pretty useful for that, I think.

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. How do you go when you have dry beds, how often does that happen?

Child 1: Not much.

Rob: Not much, and when it does happen, what's different about that time? When you manage to get a dry bed, do you...?

Child 1: I'm happy.

Rob: Oh, okay. And have you noticed anything about that? Is there something that happens that helps you to have a dry bed? Is it when you stay up late, or go to bed early?

Child 1: When I drink a lot.

Rob: When you drink a lot, it helps you have a dry bed?

Child 1: No.

Rob: Oh, okay. So, when you don't drink a lot, it helps you have a dry bed and when you drink a lot, the bed's not so dry, less likely to be dry, Okay. Well, that's interesting. And you know some time between now and some time over the next 20 years, you're going to have dry beds every morning, eh?

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. So, it's going to happen. Sooner or later, that's going to happen. It happens to all of us and it's just a matter of what you can do to have it happen a bit sooner. I'm just trying to think how old I was when I stopped wetting the bed. I think I was about eight, a bit more than eight. I was still wetting the bed when I was about eight. So, you and I are buddies like that.

Child 1: Mm-hmm.

Rob: When's your birthday?

Child 1: May the 13th.

Rob: May the 13th. So, you're actually coming up for eight and a half.

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah, May the 13th.

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: So, do you know when you'll be eight and a half?

Child 1: No.

Rob: Well, I reckon you're going to be eight and a half on November the 13th.

Child 1: Okay

Rob: And that's about, I don't know how far away that is, about three or four weeks, I think. Now, I would be very surprised if you had total dry beds in the next four weeks. It's possible.

Child 1: Yeah

Rob: But I don't know. It might take a little bit longer than that. Instead of eight and a half, it might be when you're eight and three quarters.

Child 1: Probably.

Rob: Yeah. Do you know when you'll be eight and three quarters?

Child 1: No.

Rob: Neither do I, but it will be three months after the 13th of November. So, it will be what? December, 13th of February, you'll be eight and three quarters.

Child 1: Okay.

Rob: I reckon that by the time you're nine, the chance of you managing to have wet beds when you're nine are pretty skinny. I don't think that's likely to happen.

Child 1: Okay.

Rob: I reckon sometime between now... You're going to make it between eight and a half. You might. You're pretty keen at this stuff and you might learn it fast enough and perhaps if you practice it enough you might, but I'm plumbing for eight and three quarters.

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: But by nine that will be well and truly in the past, yeah. Yeah? Do you think? So do I. Okay. Well, how about we leave it at that today?

Child 1: Okay.

Rob: Thank you for coming along and letting us be part of your success.

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: It's pretty neat. What are you doing today? What are you doing now? Going to school?

Child 1: No.

Rob: No? You got the day off? It's not holidays, is it?

Child 1: No.

Rob: No. You've just got the day off?

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: Oh, okay. Anything planned? You're just going to hang around home, or are you going out somewhere?

Child 1: I don't know

Rob: Oh, we better ask your mum, eh?

Child 1: Yeah.

Rob: Yes. See, it's good to ask things, and she knows a lot, your mum. Whatever you don't know, we can just ask her and she's got some good answers for us. Got something planned for today?

Mum: Well, I've got to go to work but I think we might only go to work for a short time. I think we might go and do something else.

Rob: Well, I think there's something here worth celebrating.

Mum: Well, I think there is too. I thought we might go and, I don't know. We'll go and do something.

Rob: Something that you would like to do maybe.

Mum: Something different.

Rob: Something you would like. What would you like? If you could just go anywhere, where would you like to go? And don't say Disneyland.

Child 1: The movies.

Rob: The movies? Hello. What would you like to see? Your mother doesn't have to do what you want by the way, but we can ask.

Child 1: I don't know.

Rob: You don't know. Well, maybe you can have a word with your mum and work out something about some movies that you might go and see and see if you can work out something there. Would that be all right?

Child 1: Okay.

Rob: Okay. All right. Well, thank you for coming along and thank you. And is it okay, we've had that videotape running. Is it okay with both of you to have taped this? I'll give you a copy of it.

Child 1: Yeah. Okay.

Rob: It might be something fun for you to look back on and show your... And if you have a son and he's about eight, and he's taking a little while to learn how to have dry beds, you might want to show him. This might make him feel better.

Child 1: Okay.

Rob: Yeah. I'm glad to be reminded too that I used to wet my bed when I was your age. My mother gave up on me. She thought I was going to be wetting the bed forever, but some time before I was nine, it stopped. We can learn this stuff.

Okay. Thank you.

“fighting twins”

In this session with two nine-year-old boys, twins, their mother brought them along because they were fighting and one of them had been stealing at school. The mother had been OCD. There was very, very significant family turmoil with written, unspeakable actions happening and there were so many issues, a lot of disturbance here.

After the session, several months afterwards, the mother reported that there had been a very obvious improvement [in their behaviour], a general improvement. Things were much smoother at home, they'd had a nice Christmas and the fighting had subsided to a normal level in any family. So, I think that this session turned out to be quite useful to them. And what's such a joy to me is to think that somehow in being part of these two boys needing to get on better with each other and each with themselves that it's possible that this is going to make a difference to their growing up and their other relationships within themselves.

So, it's a joy to have an opportunity and privilege to being there early on in a situation, so that instead of it escalating to become very serious, to think that at least there's a possibility here of escalating the peace, and escalating the acceptance and getting along with each other. And it's a pleasure for me to be part of that.

Rob: Okay, now you're Steven?

S: Yeah.

Rob: And you're James?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. Can you remember what my name is?

S: Rob?

Rob: Eh, well done, Rob. So, we've got some of this organised. So, what are you expecting to have happen here? What do you think we could do here that would be useful? If we could do something here that would be helpful to the two of you, what do you reckon that would be? We could always ask your mum. That's always an option. What do you think?

S: Yeah, okay.

Rob: Do you think that would be good?

J: Yeah.

S: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. Which of you should ask your mum, or shall I ask her?

S: Him.

Rob: Him? What's his name?

S: James.

Rob: Okay.

J: What would be good?

Mum: What do you think? What happened this morning? What was going on?

S: He scratched me.

Rob: James scratched you?

S: Yeah, really bad.

Rob: Oh, really? Okay. Whereabouts?

S: On the stomach.

Rob: Okay. Oh, well we won't ask you to show us because that might be a bit embarrassing. So, he scratched you on the stomach?

S: Yeah, while we were fighting.

Rob: Oh. So, the two of you do a bit of fighting do you?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Oh, yeah. How old are you?

S: Nine.

J: Nine.

Rob: You're both nine?

S: Yip.

Rob: When's your birthday?

S: July the seventh.

J: July the seventh.

Rob: July the seventh. Okay. So, you are nine and a quarter. So, you're actually more than nine. July the seventh, you were nine and a quarter on the seventh of October. What grade are you in in at school?

J: Three

S: Three. I'm in Grade 2-3.

Rob: You're in Grade 2-3?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Is it just you in Grade 3-2?

S: Three-four.

J: Three-four

Rob: Three-four. You're in three-four and you're in two three. So, both of you are in Grade 3.

S: Yeah.

Rob: You're in Grade 3-2 and you're in Grade 3-4?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. So, you are two-three, you're three-four, four-three, three-two. It's very confusing. Are you in different classes?

S: Yeah, separate.

Rob: Separate? Oh, yeah, what do you like about school?

S: Playing.

Rob: What do you like to play?

S: I don't know, just playing

Rob: Oh, playing. Okay, but in the classroom or outside?

S: Outside and all that.

Rob: Okay and you, James? What do you like to do?

J: I like art.

Rob: Oh, yeah. Okay, what sort of art do you like to do?

J: Drawing, making a collage.

Rob: And you draw with what? Pencils or crayons?

J: Crayon and pencils.

Rob: Crayon, pastel?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Do you ever use paint brushes?

J: Yeah.

S: Yeah. We're working on colours at the moment at school.

Rob: Colours?

J: Colours.

Rob: Colours?

S: Yeah.

J: No, I don't know what I'm working on.

Rob: Do you like collage?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah, okay. Do you like art too?

S: Yeah.

Rob: And you like playing too?

J: Yeah.

Rob: When you say playing, do you mean like chasing, or just playing whatever you play? What sort of things do you play?

S: Just playing.

Rob: Playing what?

S: Just like doing stuff and all that.

Rob: What's doing stuff and all that? How am I supposed to understand what that means? Doing stuff and all that.

J: We like playing dodgeball.

Rob: Dodgeball.

S: Yeah.

J: Cricket.

Rob: Okay, I know of that dodgeball. There are two teams and you have one team on one side of the line, another team on the other side of the line and everybody has to throw a ball at everyone and they're going to have to dodge it and if they get them, they're out. Yeah?

J: Yeah.

S: Yeah.

Rob: I know all...

S: I like playing jokes on people.

Rob: You like playing... Okay. Are you good at it?

S: Yeah.

Rob: I'll bet. I'll bet you are. Do you like playing jokes on people?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Not so much, yeah?

S: My main target is him.

Rob: Well, that's why you have a brother. There's always someone close by that you can have a joke...

S: And I've got a little brother too that they're working better on.

Rob: Okay. How old is he? How old is your little brother?

S: Five.

Rob: Okay. So, am I hearing right that it would be good for the two of you, it would be useful if you somehow didn't fight as much, or do we want to get it so that James doesn't scratch you on the stomach, he scratches you on the back, or that you scratched him on the stomach? What do you think would be useful?

S: He always scratches me, not much.

Rob: No? So, scratching's not the thing you want to stop. It's the fighting, yeah?

S: Yeah.

Rob: How long have you been fighting?

S: A long time.

Rob: A long time, okay.

J: Yeah.

Rob: So, you must be pretty good at it?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Eh? Who starts it? You start it?

S: Yeah. And most of the time, I always bash him up.

Rob: Okay. So, if you wanted to get your brother to fight you, how would you go about that? If you said, "Oh, things have been a bit too quiet lately, things have been a bit too peaceful." You haven't been doing much fighting, what could you do to play a trick on him?

J: Annoy him.

Rob: Yeah, how would you do that? I bet you know a lot of ways of annoying him, eh? Are you easy to annoy?

J: No, he easily annoys me.

Rob: Oh, I bet. You know exactly how to annoy him.

S: And my little brother got a little secret weapon.

Rob: Oh, yeah? He's got one?

S: Yeah. He pinches me on the bottom.

Rob: Oh, okay. And that's his secret weapon?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. All right, so you know how to play a trick on your brother so that he will fight you?

J: Yeah.

S: And I know a way to find out...

Rob: And you know how to get him to fight you. You know you've got tricks to...

S: Yeah. And I know how to annoy him.

Rob: You do?

S: Yeah.

J: He does this...

S: I do this.

Rob: Oh, is that annoying?

J: Yeah. Sometimes it does even though when he does it too many times.

Rob: So, what do you have to do?

S: This, or this.

J: Oh.

Rob: Like that. Oh, that's disgusting. How do you do it?

S: I don't really know. He passed it onto me.

Rob: I'm not very good at it. Did you learn it from him?

J: No.

Rob: Can you do it?

S: No. He made me learn it.

Rob: Oh, very good.

S: So, can [inaudible 40:11].

Rob: I can't do it. I can only pretend. I'm not very good at it.

S: My little brother can do it.

Rob: Oh, okay.

J: But he never stops doing it once he does it.

Rob: But that one, is that enough to get your brother to fight you?

S: It's enough to make him mad though.

Rob: Okay. So, if he gets mad, how do you...

S: I've got one other way.

J: Oh, I've got another way.

S: When we're playing the computer, when I want a turn, "Okay, get off. It's my turn," and then he just keeps on playing.

Rob: You're very good at annoying each other, but how do you find how to get the other person to fight you because I bet there are times when you annoy your brother and you don't get a fight out of him. They get annoyed but they won't fight you. How do you get that next thing?

S: I know how. It's the same thing that I was talking about, like when I keep yelling at him, eventually I just push him off the chair, get on the chair, then he starts punching me. And then I have to punch him back.

Rob: Okay.

S: Until someone cries.

Rob: All right. So, what do you think would be helpful for the two of you?

J: To get along?

Rob: Yeah. What would be helpful for you to get along?

S: If we punch each other, we could punch ourselves in the head?

Rob: Okay. So, if you punch your brother, you punch yourself?

J: Or I could rub my hand around your wrist and pull [inaudible 41:29]...

Rob: Yeah?

J: Try to whack him.

Rob: Yeah. Every time you scratch your brother, you have to scratch yourself?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Every time you push your brother off the chair, you have to push yourself off the chair.

J: You push yourself off the chair.

Rob: That would be one way of doing it. So, you've been fighting for a while. You really know how to fight, the two of you.

S: Ever since we were five or six.

Rob: What did you do before then?

S: We just used to punch each other and, well, now I grab him and throw him.

Rob: Yeah, but before you started fighting and annoying each other when you were five or six, what did you do?

S: We were playing.

J: We used to fight over pieces of paper.

Rob: Well, you'd fight over something, but when you were getting on better then, what did you do differently than that you're doing now?

S: What did we do?

J: I don't know.

S: Just I would do something stupid, then he would laugh. Then he would do something stupid and I would laugh. Then we'd both laugh.

Rob: Okay. So, somehow you didn't annoy each other, but you made each other laugh?

S: Yeah.

J: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. And now, instead of making each other laugh, you annoy each other and fight.

S: Yeah.

Rob: It's good to have that option. You can either make someone laugh because you need to know how to really get to someone to make them laugh. You can't just make anyone laugh. You've got to know what to do to make them laugh. It's a bit tricky. In the same way, if you want someone to fight with, you've got to know how to annoy them. Yeah? All right. So, when you used to make each other laugh, what did you do differently then? Let's just say now, instead of annoying each other, you decided you wanted to make each other laugh. How could you do that?

S: Well, I could close my eyes and run into a wall.

Rob: Yes. That's one thing you could do. You could stand on your head.

S: And fall over.

Rob: Yeah. So, you could run into a wall and what, fall over backwards and that would be funny?

S: I'd do a humongous burp.

Rob: Do a humongous burp. If you did a humongous burp, how could you get him to laugh rather than to get annoyed and fight you?

S: Like when we're drinking soft drinks in our bed.

Rob: Fizzy stuff, yeah.

S: And I drink a really, really, really lot of it and I do a really, really, really large burp.

Rob: Yeah, you're good at burping, but we know that. But how could you get James to laugh instead of get annoyed and fight? That's the thing I'm curious about. What do you think, James? What could you...?

S: I've got a way.

Rob: You've got a way. What have you got, James?

J: I like when he plays tricks on me. It's really funny, but then it makes me mad.

Rob: Okay. So, how if instead of making you getting mad, you were to laugh, how could you do that? And what would you know, if you were to laugh, instead of getting mad, it would make your brother very, very mad because he's trying to make you mad and all you're doing is laughing. If you started to get on together, I don't know who'd get madder. I think your mum would be surprised.

J: Mum.

S: Gasp.

Rob: Huh?

S: Gasp.

Rob: Who? What did you say there? Gasp?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. What does that mean? Oh, gasp. All right. So, you know how to get on, you know how to make each other laugh, you know how to make each other fight, you know how to annoy each other, you know how to do all this stuff. You're good at it. You've been doing it for years.

You've been making each other laugh for nine years. You've been making each other fight for four or five years. You're pretty good at it, both of you. So, I'm wondering how we can organize this. If you were to leave here and suddenly start to get on and never ever have another fight together, who in the family is going to be the most surprised would you say?

J: Mum.

S: She's going to give us an award next Tuesday if we don't fight for a week.

Rob: Oh really? What if instead of fighting you were to start to make each other laugh? She might start to get annoyed at the fact that you're laughing all the time. You know, if you start to get on all the time and you're laughing together all the time, don't you think your mum might have a bit of a problem?

J: Because everything's too loud.

Rob: Too loud, yeah. She might get annoyed because you're laughing too loud.

J: Well, she doesn't like us being loud anyway.

Rob: Oh, well, I've got some ideas about that. We can play with that in a minute, but what do the two of you like to do together? Apart from annoy each other, and laugh together and have a good time together, what else do you like doing together? You're in separate classes at school, but what games do you play together or what do you like to do the two of you?

J: Soccer.

Rob: Yeah?

S: We like scavenging.

Rob: You like what?

S: For you know what. You know? You know what the you know what is.

Rob: Yeah, yeah. We know you know that you know that we know what is, but I don't know that you know that I don't know what the you know what is that you know what the you know what is. So, don't tell him that he knows that you know what because I don't know the you know what.

J: I don't know what.

Rob: Oh. So, tell me about the soccer. He's pointing. He's giving you a clue, but I've got no clue and he knows that.

J: Pockets.

Rob: You guys tell me about soccer. When you're playing soccer together and you're having a good time, can you both play on the same team?

J: Not always.

S: Yeah. Not always but most of the time.

Rob: You can play on the same team?

J: Yeah.

Rob: So, when you're on the same team and you playing soccer together, how do you do that?

S: Mostly whenever I have the ball, I always have to pass it. He passes back to me, he passes back, I pass it back to him, then eventually one of us gets a goal.

J: And so on.

Rob: What were you expecting to have happen here today? Did anyone tell you?

S: No.

J: No.

Rob: No? It seems a bit weird for you to be coming along here and sitting in a chair with these strange people that you haven't met before, having these funny conversations. I can imagine if I'd done that, I'd think, "What's going on here?" I'm wondering, since you both like drawing and playing and things like that. Are you good at computer games?

J: Yeah.

S: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. What sort of computer games do you play?

J: Arcade games.

Rob: Do you play car games, like racing, or fighting?

S: No, we don't

Rob: Have you played Streetfighter?

S: No.

J: No. We've got spiderman though.

Rob: Oh, yeah.

S: We've got Inner Space. It's funny

Rob: Inner Space? Could we imagine that we're going to play a computer game now? There are a couple of games that I wonder if you're interested to play with. Let's see what we can do. I don't know whether it will be – how easy or strange it will seem, but can we pretend something new? Would that be agreeable?

S: Yeah.

J: Yeah.

Rob: So, I don't know if you can do this piece with your eyes open or eyes closed, but just imagine that you're both sitting in front of a computer and it might be like a PlayStation, I don't know. And you've both got the controls. You've both got a keyboard each and you're playing a game. And I'm wondering a kind of game where you can both be on the same side. It may even be a game of soccer. Could you imagine a game of soccer on a computer game? Would that be a...?

S: Sometimes we're on the same team and we blow each other up.

Rob: Yeah, I know you can do that, but can you imagine a game where you could blow each other up where you could play soccer?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Does that seem a bit strange or could you do that?

S: Yeah, we could do that.

Rob: Can you do that?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. Now can you imagine doing that with your eyes open, or do you want to close your eyes? I'll leave that up to you. And just imagine the screen is there and you've both got a way of controlling where you go on the game and you've got a way of controlling the soccer ball.

J: Yeah.

Rob: Okay, and you're both on the same team. So, let's have a game first of all, where you're going to blow each other up. And you're going to trip each other up, and you're going to make each other as mad as you can and make each other fight. You're both on the same team, yeah?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Imagine you're on the same team and you're playing this game. So, who's going to trip the other one up and what are you going to do to the other person so that they're going to get really mad? You're on the same team, but you want to really annoy your brother.

S: Yeah, I've got it.

Rob: What are you going to do?

S: First, I would push him to the ground, then put my arms around his... I mean, my legs around his shoulders, and then I'll make sure he can't move, then I'll punch him in the back to death.

Rob: Okay, very good. Fantastic. Now, what are you going to do? You've got to do something to really annoy him and really fight with him. What can you do?

J: I usually hold him by the feet and then by the arms, and then start punching him in the chest.

S: I'm going to give you a never-ending kick.

J: Are you?

Rob: Okay. All right. So, the two of you are pretty good at that. What's happening to the game of soccer by the way, while that's happening. Where's the soccer ball? Oops.

S: Well, the other team's got it.

Rob: Oh, boy. Forgot. All right. So, let's have another game. Can we do that?

S: Yeah.

J: Yeah.

Rob: How are you doing with that microphone? Stick it up here a bit. Can you pull it? That's it. Excellent. So, this time, can you imagine that you are going to play soccer and you're on the same team and this time you want to win. Instead of annoying the other person, instead of annoying your brother, you're going to play soccer and you're going to win. Okay. So, what's happening? You're out on the field there.

S: Running.

Rob: You're running. You've got the ball?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Okay, what are you going to do with that ball?

J: Going to pass it to Steven.

Rob: Okay, pass to Steven. Are you going to pass it back to James?

S: Yeah, and he passes back to me.

Rob: Passes back to you.

J: Then I pass it to another player and then the player passes back to Steven.

S: Then I kick him in the grass.

Rob: And you're cooperating. You're doing this. You're playing this game and you're kicking it back towards each other.

J: Yeah.

Rob: To each other. He gives it to you, you give it to him, you give it to another player, he gives it back to you.

J: Yeah.

Rob: Who's going to score the goal?

S: Me.

J: Yeah.

Rob: Do you want to score the goal?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. All right. So, Steven scores this goal. So, here we go again. Where are we now? So, we go back to the middle of the ground?

S: Yeah.

Rob: I can't remember what happens after you score a goal. What happens?

S: I think the goalie gets it and he kicks it out.

Rob: Goalie gets it, okay. Goalie gets it out. So, it's down the middle of the field. Now, the two of you, can you get the ball again? This time we want James to get the goal. Yeah? You got the last one. We're going to get him to get this one.

S: Okay.

Rob: It's your job to make sure he gets it.

J: Maybe a couple players get it first and then we get it.

Rob: Okay, a couple players there and what about the other team trying to get the ball off you?

S: He bumps me and then he bashes me up.

Rob: Who does? The other bloke?

J: Yeah.

Rob: But the other bloke is going to bash you and then bash you up, but what are you going to do with this other bloke because he's on the team and Steven's on your... Yeah.

J: Okay. I'll bash him up.

Rob: Yeah. You bash him up so that you can look out for this fellow.

J: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. So, now where is the ball now? Is anyone near the goal again?

J: No.

S: No. It's in the middle. So, the all the team's fighting.

Rob: Oh, the team's fighting. So, the team's fighting and now the two of you have got to get this ball up near the goal so that you can get a goal this time, James.

S: So, we have to escape.

Rob: Yeah. Okay. So, how are you going to escape?

S: Easy. We just crawl out.

Rob: You just crawl out. Okay, because you know what those little kids do. Those little kids fight all the time. It's what little kids do. Fight, fight, fight.

J: They think they're so strong.

Rob: Little kids, yeah, because they don't know how strong they are, they think they've got to fight to prove something. When you get a bit grown up, you know that you don't have to fight. You can just play the game. So, you got out from underneath those little kids fighting. You got out from underneath those little kids fighting?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. So, the two of you are behaving like more grown up kids now and you leave those immature little kids fighting. And you got out from underneath that and you've got the ball. Who's got the ball?

J: Me.

Rob: You've got the ball? Oaky. So, is it just the two of you? Are the rest of those little kids fighting?

S: No. Then another man comes and pushes you over and you quickly pass it to me, then another player from my team comes and gets him. Then I pass back to James, then he gets a goal.

Rob: Okay. And then what's that like for you two to get the goals, while those little kids are back there fighting? They are doing all there fighting stuff and you guys are kicking the goals?

S: Yeah. So, it's easy. You just go, kick, I got a goal. Kick, I got a goal.

Rob: Yeah. It's easy to kick a goal and work together when you're not fighting. Those other kids don't know that. They're perhaps not old enough to know that yet. How come they think they've got to fight and you two know that kicking goals is more fun? How come they don't know that?

J: They're younger.

Rob: Okay.

S: And they're stupid.

Rob: They're younger and stupid. Well, we were all young and stupid. We've all been young and stupid at some time. So, that happens. So, let's just imagine some time goes by and you're not – oh, I've forgotten already how old you are. Did you say you were eight?

J: Nine.

S: Nine.

Rob: Let's just imagine you're 14, okay. And you're out having a real game of soccer again this time and you're on the same team. Can we just pretend this?

J: Yeah.

Rob: You're 14, you're on the same team and you're having a good game, kicking to each other.

J: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. And you see these other kids down there, they're 14 too. There are two people on the same team and they're fighting.

S: Because they want the ball.

Rob: What are these kids doing fighting?

S: On the same team.

Rob: They're on the same team and they're fighting. Why are they fighting?

S: I know.

Rob: Tell me.

S: Because they want to be the best server and just get the ball and take it.

Rob: They want to be the best, but they're fighting each other. What are they doing that for?

S: Because I think they just want...

Rob: How come, they're 14 and they're still fighting each other.

S: I think because they just want to kick all the goals and always have the ball and never let anyone else have it.

Rob: Oh. So, they haven't learnt how to cooperate with each other.

J: That happens at school too. People on our team always take the ball off the person on their team.

Rob: Oh, yeah. So, what would be better?

J: To cooperate?

S: Cooperate

Rob: So, how would they do that? The two of you are cooperating.

J: Yeah.

Rob: In this game. You're 14 and the two of you are cooperating and these little kids here, they're 14 too, but they haven't learnt that. What would be helpful for them to learn how to cooperate. How do they learn to do that?

J: Help them.

S: No, okay. Break it up you stupid kids.

Rob: Hang on. Let's let James tell us. What do you to help them?

J: Teach them.

Rob: What would you teach them? They want to fight and you want to teach them to cooperate. How do you teach them to cooperate instead of fighting? What sort of things are you going to teach them? A bit tough, isn't it? You could show them.

J: Show them how to cooperate.

Rob: How do you show kids how to cooperate?

J: You cooperate with them and they start cooperating with you.

Rob: Okay.

S: I've got an idea.

Rob: Fair enough. What have you got? What idea have you got?

S: You could go to the people that are fighting and tell them to break it up and then say, "This is how you really play." And then you show them.

Rob: Okay, that sounds pretty good. I've got a couple of things I want to ask the two of you to do and I don't know whether you'd be willing to do this or not, but one is an exercise, like kind of a game. So, can I show you the game and see whether you'd be... You're going to have to stand up to do it. Is that all right?

S: Yeah. I hope we don't have to roll over.

Rob: Eh?

S: I hope I don't have to roll over.

Rob: No, you don't have to roll over. Just stand up and face each other. Okay, now can you put your fingers like this so that you... Like that. That's it. That hand too, okay. You then put that foot forward and that foot forward. That's it. Now, what I want you to do is – help me to plug this in. What I want you to do is to move your arms backwards and forwards, like that and it might look like you're fighting, but actually you're cooperating. So, first of all, do it like you want to trip the other person up or give them a problem. See if you can annoy them. Yeah, that's right.

You've got to get the right face. You've got to get a mean face. Okay, now stop the fighting bit and this time do it in a cooperating way. This way, do it so that you can cooperate. So, how can you stay connected and keep those arms moving a bit faster than that? Come on, a bit more energetic, but do it so that you're cooperating. What's that? A smile? You're not smiling at your brother. Smiling at each other, okay. All right, okay. Thanks for playing that. Have a seat again.

S: [inaudible 59:31] there.

J: [inaudible]

Rob: Yeah, that's for me to use later. So, do you know how to do that as a way of cooperating and a way of doing it in a fight?

S: It's sort of like a machine.

Rob: Huh?

S: It's sort of like a machine.

Rob: Like a machine, okay, but you know how to do it. The two of you know how to fight. You've had plenty of practice and the two of you know how to cooperate. Yeah? You've had plenty of practice at that too, but I'm a bit worried that if you suddenly start to cooperate all the time, your mum's going to wonder what's going on. She'll be thinking there's going to be an explosion, like things are building up. This is what I'm going to ask and I don't know whether, I better your mum if this is all right too. What's today? Tuesday?

J: Yeah.

S: Yeah.

Rob: You've done a bit of fighting today?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. Well, how about today, you have as a fighting day? So, any chance you get today to cooperate, you don't take that chance, you fight with each other, yeah? Now, tomorrow is Wednesday, okay. So, that's a cooperating day. Whenever you get a chance to fight tomorrow, instead of fighting, you cooperate. You have to remind each other about this.

Then Thursday's a fighting day. So, every other day, you fight and then cooperate. So, one day you fight and one day you cooperate. That way, you get a chance to do both and find out how to do both. And you don't have to make any rapid change so that it's not going to be so difficult for anyone.

S: Does that include weekends?

Rob: Yeah, it includes weekends. So, how do you think about that? If you could have today as a fighting day, at least your mum will know, everybody will know that they can get ready for it and tomorrow is a cooperating day. Would you be willing to do that for a couple of weeks?

S: Yeah.

Rob: After that I don't know what will happen, but for a couple of weeks you'd be willing to play with it?

J: Yeah.

S: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah? I better ask your mother. You're willing to put up with that? At least you can steal yourself for the bad days you know and your job, Mother, is to remind these kids any time they are cooperating on a fighting day, you have to say, "Hang on,

you're getting on too well, the two of you. This is a fighting day. You're supposed to be fighting." Yeah. So, your mum will have to remind you and you can remind each other when the fighting days are. The cooperating days are going to be easy because you actually know how to cooperate very well. You've shown us that.

S: I know something we fight over.

Rob: Yeah?

S: I've got it in my pocket.

Rob: Yeah. Today's a fighting day. So, if you were to – are those cards? So, if you were to fight over those cards today, that's going to be easy. But tomorrow when you cooperate, how could you cooperate over them? Don't show me now, but the two of you know how you could cooperate over that and not fight, yeah?

S: We could halve them?

Rob: Don't tell me because that would be a cooperating day conversation, but tomorrow is a cooperating day. So, you could cooperate with them tomorrow, but today you've got to fight. Yeah?

S: We shouldn't fight that hard, or else we're going to rip them.

Rob: Do you agree? You agree?

J: Yeah.

S: Yeah.

Rob: You're willing to do that? Today's a fighting day, remember?

S: Okay.

Rob: All right. Okay, well, how about we leave it at that and see what the two of you can do and maybe your mum can let Gabrielle know about how the two of you have been going and see whether we need to get some more practice at fighting because I think you're getting to be an age where if you don't keep that fighting up, you'll lose the knack. It's like playing soccer. If you don't practice, you won't be able to do it. So, I think that you're getting to an age, pretty soon you'll be 10, and you probably won't want to behave like little kids and fight then, but you better get a bit of practice between now and then.

S: Some people in Grade 4 in our school always fight and they still cry.

Rob: Well, my two boys, one of them is 22 and the other is 19 nearly and they only stopped fighting about a year ago. They were very, very slow. I kept saying, "One of these days they're going to stop fighting." They had to wait until they were about 17 and 20 to stop. I reckon that's a bit stupid. I don't know what you think. I don't think you need to wait that long, do you? No. Anyhow, is that a place we might leave it today? What are you doing today? Have you got something more you want to talk about?

J: No.

Rob: Huh? You've got some things you can do now. You know how to fight if you want to.

S: Yeah.

Rob: You know how to cooperate if you want to.

S: Yeah.

J: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. Oh, well, we've got that organized. What are you doing? Are you going back to school or what?

S: Yeah.

Rob: What's your school? I'm looking at your...

S: St. John's.

Rob: What's that?

J: St. John's

Rob: St. John's School?

J: Yeah.

Rob: And what's the writing on the thing down there? Is it Latin or something? What does it say?

J: I think that's upside-down writing.

Rob: Love one another. Oh, my goodness. You better not wear that tomorrow. You don't love your brother. Eh?

S: Oh, no.

Rob: How can you love that? Yuck. Yuck. When I told my boys, they loved fighting so much, I said, "I think the two of you are in love with each other," because they fought all the time. I said, "If you like each other so much, I think I'll tie your legs together. That way when you go to the toilet, you can both go to the toilet together." "Oh yuck," they said. They didn't like the idea of going to the toilet together, but I thought if they liked each other and they loved to fight so much, that maybe we should keep them together all the time.

We didn't get around to doing that. Anyhow, how about we stop this silly conversation, what do you think? Is that enough? Okay, all right. Well, I'm glad the two of you came along. I'm glad to have met you, and I'm impressed with your

ability to fight, and I'm impressed with your ability to cooperate and I'm impressed with your ability to learn how to do one or the other, whichever you choose. I'm impressed, well done. Okay. Now, can you...

“a dog phobia and soiling”

This little girl was brought along by her parents, primarily because she had a dog phobia. And they mentioned that she'd been soiled about that and that also she had been diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome. After this session, which was the only time that [inaudible 01:06:36] that she was asking for a puppy. She – fear of dogs. She'd stopped soiling completely and although in the past year, had been difficult to connect with, he said that there was an improvement in the way he was able to connect with her. So, after this very brief...

Able to completely lose the dog phobia, get over her soiling problem and no one's saying that her Asperger's has been cured, but apparently there's been some – so, in working with kids, working with this little girl, as with all kids, we just do what we can. And there's something about the way that if we can relate with them and connect with them, not only to overcome in that session, the difficulty that they may have been grappling with, but also out of the relationship of trust and respect from us to the kid, for them to learn something [inaudible 01:08:04] relationships and life in subtle, but not necessarily unpowerful way.

And so, in looking at these sessions as well as observe in the specific, particular individual interactions and conversations and my invitation is as you're looking at that, what you're already doing similar to that, what you might want to do more of, less of, what you observe that I'm doing that you might think I don't want to do this, or about what you do want to do. And so, that's my invitation in viewing this to think what you can find useful, what you can discover, what you can notice that's going to be helpful to you in your practice and the clients or children of whatever age.

I'm very grateful to the children and parents and people who have referred these delightful little people to us to have an opportunity to share with some of their dilemmas. Any particular [inaudible 01:09:21] to expand into something which is way more fulfilling than the troublesome problems that they presented with.

S: [inaudible 01:09:49]

Rob: What's it about? Oh, jokes?

S: What's a nice colour with colours?

Rob: How old are you, Sarah?

S: Nine.

Rob: Nine. Okay.

Mum: Can I take the book just until we finish? [inaudible 01:10:05] Good girl.

Rob: Do you want the book, or do you want your mum to take it? Is it all right for her to take it?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. What have you got there?

S: A ribbon.

Rob: Oh, that's pretty nice. First. Where did you get a prize?

S: Swimming carnival, noodle race.

Rob: Swimming carnival, very good. Okay that's pretty nice. So, Sarah, what have you been up to? What have you been doing that's been fun?

S: I had to get up pretty early in the morning.

Rob: Oh, dear.

S: I had to get up...

Rob: Oh, how early? Can I hold your hand for a sec?

S: Seven o'clock in the morning.

Rob: Is it all right if I do that?

S: Seven o'clock in the morning.

Rob: Is that all right if I do that?

S: Okay.

Rob: Okay. You don't mind? It all right? Is that okay?

S: Yeah.

Rob: You had to get up at seven o'clock in the morning and what do you have to do? If you were to pretend, if you were going to tell me, like just imagine that something had happened and you were going to tell me about it afterwards. I don't know, like you were having a play, or you were telling me a story or something like that. Could you tell me a story about, I don't know, getting up at seven o'clock in the morning or something like that? Can you tell me about that? Something that happened this morning, or yesterday morning?

S: This morning, I had to get up at seven o'clock because of the swimming carnival and I nearly were late.

Rob: Okay.

S: Wouldn't know anyone well for late and they were to be left behind.

Rob: Okay, and can you notice this hand? Can you pay attention to that for a moment? Is that okay for me to do that?

S: Okay.

Rob: Okay, thank you. If you were to just sit here for a minute and let me do that, and you can really notice your hand and you don't need to remember that my name is Rob. I don't need to remember that your name's Sarah. I don't need to remember that you are nine and you know that your mum and dad are here, but could you forget about that for a minute and just imagine that you are having a very nice time? Maybe having a nice time swimming, or maybe having a very nice time playing, or maybe having a very nice time doing something else, or maybe having a nice time pretending something.

S: I had a very nice time of swimming and the noodle race because...

Rob: You had a very nice time swimming what?

S: Swimming and the noodle race and then a swimming carnival.

Rob: A noodle? What is that? Is that good? You had a very good time?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Isn't it good to have a very good time?

S: Yes.

Rob: Something very good about having a very good time because when you're having a very good time, you don't need to think about anything, you don't need to worry about anything. You're doing everything that you need to do because you're having a good time. And when you're swimming, you can move your feet, kick your feet, yeah?

S: Yeah.

Rob: And when you're swimming, you can move your hands and then you can breathe and walk around.

S: Yeah.

Rob: And you can forget about a whole lot of things. That's it. You can forget about things that you could think about, but you don't need to think about them. And when you were swimming, was there anyone else in the pool with you?

S: Three others.

Rob: Three others. And you beat the three others. Did you get first?

S: Yip.

Rob: Okay, yeah. You got a ribbon to prove you got first.

S: It sort of had a card or something. You had to take it over to a sort of a desk and got so.

Rob: And see this thumb? Can you keep looking at that?

S: Okay.

Rob: Now right, what grade are you in at school?

S: Four.

Rob: Okay. What do you like at school? What do you like doing?

S: Well, I like drawing, but I like doing history and...

Rob: You like history?

S: And then I wasn't very good at reports.

Rob: But you like it?

S: Well, yeah, I suppose.

Rob: You suppose so?

S: Suppose so because I couldn't do much other parts of it because at school, they only taught me to [feel] to histories of a sort of...

Rob: And your brain can think of a lot of things, can't it? Your brain can think about your hand.

S: Yes.

Rob: Where's that thumb of yours gone? There it is. That's it. Your brain can think about that thumb. Your brain can think about your mum. I probably shouldn't say this, but that brain can think about your bum. That's a rude thing. I shouldn't say that, should I? But your brain can think about a whole lot of things.

S: Yes.

Rob: Yeah, because your brains alive and it can think and it can think how to swim, and it can think about spaghetti, and it can think about your thumb. Yeah. It can think about your dad, yeah. You don't need to think that my name's Rob. That doesn't matter. And you can think about a whole lot of things because you've learnt a whole lot of things.

You've learnt how to move your foot. You've learnt how to move that foot. You've learnt how to touch that heel on the chair and you've learnt how to touch this toe on this chair, that's right. You've learnt how to move this foot and that foot, this thumb and that thumb. You've learnt a lot about how to do things and you can

move that thumb and I can move your hand. You don't need to move it, but you can let me move it. And there's a whole lot of jokes in that book.

S: Yeah.

Rob: Huh? Are there some good jokes?

S: Fuzzy Wuzzy was like, how do you stop a herd of running mammoths from charging and so take away their credit cards?

Rob: And when you take away their credit cards from the [frummy and the mummy], the others don't know what to do with the other things because do you know that was Fuzzy Wuzzy was a bear? Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair. Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair. Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't fuzzy. Was he? Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't, was he? And do you know what fuzzy is? Do you have a cat?

S: No.

Rob: Cats are fuzzy. Do you have a mouse?

S: No. I don't have any pets.

Rob: Any what? Don't have any mice?

S: No.

Rob: No. Do you have any wombats?

S: Huh?

Rob: Kangaroos?

S: No.

Rob: No? None of those things? They're all fuzzy, aren't they? Have you ever patted a cat?

S: I suppose I have, but I've forgotten it.

Rob: Well, I suppose you have. I've forgotten too. Do you like to pat them? Do you suppose you like it?

S: Yip.

Rob: You suppose. Can we pretend something?

S: What?

Rob: Can we play a game?

S: Yes.

Rob: Okay. Could you close your eyes and just pretend that you're here and imagine that here is like a play, like something that you could pretend. Do you know what I mean?

S: Yip.

Rob: Okay, and you could pretend anything you want. You could make anything happen that you want in this game. Yes? Anything you want. You can swim, you could fly, you could run. You could do anything you want in this game, yeah. Just imagine it.

S: Okay.

Rob: All right. What would you like to do?

S: Swim.

Rob: Swim? Okay. Can you imagine that you are going to swim now and you are going to swim so well that you're going to beat all the best Olympic swimmers in the world and all the best swimmers that have ever been. And you're going to come along, and you're nine and you're going to beat all those swimmers. Can you imagine that?

S: Yeah.

Rob: How does that feel? Is that good? Do you like that or not?

S: Yes, suppose so.

Rob: What?

S: Suppose so.

Rob: Suppose so? Okay. And what else would you like to imagine you're doing?

S: I'm writing a story.

Rob: Okay. And if you're writing a story, could you imagine that you're doing that story so well that you're better than all the other story writers that have ever written stories? You're the best. You've got a ribbon. You have the first prize. You've got really the best, yeah. You've got a ribbon because you're the best story writer in the world. Can you imagine that?

S: Yeah.

Rob: We're just pretending here. Is that okay?

S: Yeah.

Rob: All right. And can you imagine that you're very good at anything you want to be good at. What else would you like to be good at?

S: Scootering.

Rob: Swimming?

S: Scootering.

Rob: Scootering? Okay. So, can you imagine you're the world's best scooterer, yeah? You're scooting along. Does that feel good?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Are you enjoying that?

S: Yeah.

Rob: You're good at it aren't you? Isn't it good to be good at those things? And what other things are you good at? What other things would you like to be good at? That you'd like to be even better at? Swimming, writing stories, scootering. What else?

S: I can't think of anymore.

Rob: Okay. Is there anything that you're scared of that you'd like to be better at so that you're not scared of? Are you scared of elephants?

S: No.

Rob: Eh? What?

S: I'm scared of dogs.

Rob: Oh, dogs. Okay. So, if you weren't scared of dogs and you weren't scared of them, how would you be? If you were the best that you could be so that you weren't slightly scared of them, what would you be? What would you be doing? If you're not scared of dogs, what are you? Look, we're just pretending here.

You're not scared of dogs. Would you like to be a dog trainer, or would you like to ride on a dog, or would you like to play with a dog, or would you like to chase a dog? You could even run, have a race with a dog and be faster than a dog. What do you think? What would you like to do with a dog? Instead of being scared of him, what would you like?

S: Play with the dog.

Rob: Okay. So, what kind of dog could we play with? Like a big dog, or a little dog?

S: Big dog.

Rob: Big dog, okay. Has it got smooth hair or shaggy hair?

S: Shaggy hair.

Rob: Is it brown, or white, or black, or striped or spotted brown?

S: Brown.

Rob: Okay. And how do you want to play with it? What sort of game do you want to play with this dog?

S: Fetch.

Rob: Fetch and what is that, a ball? What did you throw for it to fetch?

S: Ball.

Rob: Okay and did it fetch it?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. Okay and bring it back? Do you want to pat it on the head because you want to say, "Oh, that's a nice doggy." And do you want to throw it again? And is he fetching it to bring it back? Okay, do you want to pat it on the head again? What's so nice about this dog? What is it about this dog that you like so much?

S: I only became scared of dogs when...

Rob: Are you scared of this dog?

S: No.

Rob: Oh, well, how come you're not scared of this dog?

S: I'm not scared this dog. The only that I have and that dad tell me about me that a gnarly or snappy little dog had bit his leg.

Rob: Yeah. You bit the dog's leg?

S: No.

Rob: You bit the dog's leg, no wonder you're frightened of dogs. Dogs should be scared of you if you're going to bite them on the leg?

S: No.

Rob: Did you bite that dog on the leg?

S: No. The dog bit him on the leg.

Rob: It bit him on the leg?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. So, were you jealous? Did you want to bite your dad on the leg?

S: No.

Rob: Did you want to bite the dog on the leg?

S: No.

Rob: Did you want the dog to bite you on the leg?

S: No.

Rob: So, here's a dog here. This one's not going to bite you on the leg, is it? Not going to bite your dad on the leg.

S: No.

Rob: You're not going to bite the dog on the leg?

S: No.

Rob: No. So, do you like this dog?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. So, what are you going to do with this dog so that you're not scared of it? You like it, yeah? Now if you wanted to teach me, if you wanted to help me, I'm not frightened of dogs, but if you wanted to help me so that I could be really, really scared of dogs, what would I need to do? Could you help me to be scared of dogs? What would I need to do?

S: Set fire to the dog's tail.

Rob: What?

S: Set fire to the dog's tail.

Rob: Set fire to it?

S: Yeah.

Rob: How is that going to make me frightened of the dog? I need to be scared of this dog. How can you help me to be more scared of dog? I don't feel slightly scared. What can I do, or don't you know now? Have you forgotten how?

S: Because [inaudible 01:26:49] for you and you smack the dog's bum.

Rob: Well, what if I like the dog's bum and it does poos? What do I do then? What if this dog does poos? I've got dog poos. What do I do with that?

S: Well, put it in a composter.

Rob: Okay. That seems like a good idea. That's a good idea. Any other place we could put it? In a toilet maybe?

S: Compost.

Rob: Compost? Okay. All right. So, dog poos go in the compost?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. All right. How about cats' poos? If you saw some cats' poos, where'd you put that?

S: Compost.

Rob: Oh, okay. What about if you found some bird poos, what would you do with that?

S: Compost.

Rob: Okay, all right. Looks like compost is a good idea for poos, yeah? As long as know that, we know what to do with that then. It's very important to know to put the poos in the right place, yeah? Nothing worse than poos in the wrong place. If you get dog poos, instead of putting it on the compost, you put it on the dinner table, that wouldn't be very good, would it?

S: No.

Rob: No, you've got to put the poos in the right place. If we're going to have some poos, it's got to go in the right place. So, what are we going to do with this little dog now so that you're not scared of the dog anymore? You like the dog. What happens if you go down the street and you meet a dog and you're not scared of it and you like it, what are you going to do?

S: Well, I suppose I was scared of it before because if you like kind of walk up to the dog and then say nothing.

Rob: But you know you had that spaghetti race?

S: Yeah.

Rob: So, you're not scared of dogs now, are you?

S: No.

Rob: When you got into the water and you're having the spaghetti race, you weren't scared of dogs were you?

S: No.

Rob: You were?

S: No.

Rob: Yeah?

S: No.

Rob: No, you weren't. So, you're not scared of dogs when you're having a spaghetti race and you've got a ribbon to prove that. Are you scared of dogs now?

S: No.

Rob: This dog here, are you scared of this dog?

S: No.

Rob: Huh?

S: No.

Rob: No. Why do you have to be scared of this dog? What about this little dog next to it, are you scared of him?

S: No.

Rob: What's this dog look like? This little one, this little snappy one, this one here. Can you imagine that he's there?

S: For years I guess was...

Rob: Yeah, you can see him, but can you imagine that he's there? Huh?

S: Yip.

Rob: Okay. So, he's there. How come you're not scared of him?

S: Because my...

Rob: Why aren't you scared of him?

S: Because my mum...

Rob: Why aren't you scared of that dog. Tell me.

S: Okay.

Rob: Okay, well, tell me.

S: All right.

Rob: All right, tell me. And don't take too long either. If you take too long, I'll start to get scared. I'm really scared of little girls who take a long time to tell me things. So, why aren't you scared of that little dog? Okay, tell me.

S: Because I think your words are very sensible and now I'm starting to tell [inaudible 01:30:54] to my mum.

Rob: Oh, yeah.

S: Because if you run after dogs, they will think, "Well, that one is a sort of a, why don't I chase it?"

Rob: What about this? Can you do this with your eyes? Like that, both of them down like that. Screw them up really hard and just imagine that there's a dog there.

S: Okay.

Rob: And there's a dog there and screw up your face at that dog. That might make that dog scared of you. Now do this with your eyes, here. Now, you might be scared of the dog. If you do that, do that with your eyes. Do you know when you do that, you can't be scared of a dog when you do that. You try and be scared of that dog and screw up your face like that. Can you try it? Imagine you get scared, no. I thought you were scared of dogs? I thought you didn't... If we got a dog here now and brought it up here, do you think you'd be scared of it?

S: No.

Rob: Why not? What's different? How come you're not scared? You used to be?

S: Because I see now that the words are very, very, very, very sensible.

Rob: Oh, very good. And there's one other thing too. We're not allowed to talk about bums and poos, but what's different about that? What are you going to do with your bums and your poos now? Don't tell anyone, but tell me. You're going to put it in the compost.

S: Well, I suppose we'll use it for the flowerbeds.

Rob: What?

S: Flowerbeds.

Rob: Oh. Don't put your bum in the compost though, will you? Eh? Sarah, and don't put the dog in the compost Eh. Eh? And don't put that ribbon in the compost. Now, can you sit up on this chair now for a sec?

S: Oh.

Rob: You don't have to be too sensible. I know it's supposed to be a good thing to be sensible. Can I move this hand? Is that all right? Can you look at that thumb there for a minute and just watch it?

S: Okay.

Rob: Yeah, okay, very boring, but can you... Keep watching that thumb. Are you watching it? Oh, it's hiding. Now, Sarah, when you came up here today with your mum and did you know your dad was going to be here too?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. So, what did you think would happen here? What did you think was going to happen when you came up here? Did you think you were going to talk to me? No? What did you think was going to happen?

S: Talk to him.

Rob: You were going to talk to him? Okay. And if you were going to talk to him and he said something useful, what would that be? Just pretend he said something that was helpful. What? Or if your mum said something helpful, what?

S: Pardon?

Rob: What? What did I say?

S: Pardon.

Rob: Oh. If you dad said something helpful to remind you that you don't need to be frightened of dogs, or if your mum said something helpful about bottoms and poos and that kind of thing, or if someone else said something that was helpful about writing stories, or scootering, or swimming or something

S: I think I would say... Maybe I will take your advice and try it.

Rob: Okay. Well, you don't have to, but if you want to, you could.

S: Okay.

Rob: I think it would be nice if you'd enjoy doing that, if you had some fun doing it because I think you can have some fun with those things. They can be fun.

S: I suppose so.

Rob: Okay and I don't know just how you're going to have some fun, but if you take my advice, I'd say have some fun. So, how about we stop? How about we don't talk anymore? We've been talking about a lot of silly things, haven't we?

S: Okay. Fine.

Rob: Okay. Anything more? What are you doing now? Are you going to go back to school, or are you finished for the day, or what?

S: Finished.

Rob: Huh?

S: Finished.

Rob: Just before you take that off, if your mum or your dad said they thought that what we did today was helpful – no, don't do that. If they said what we did today was helpful, what do you think was helpful? If by some chance that helped, what do you think it would be?

S: What did you say?

Rob: What do you think your mum and dad would say that this was helpful? Why was this helpful? Do you know that's a microphone?

S: Yip, I know it.

Rob: Yeah, I know. And do you know that when you talk, your voice goes in there and goes through this wire, and down there and through there and around there into that camera and...

S: No, yes, I suppose so.

Rob: Gabrielle's recording this so that she can give you a recording of this so that you can look at it later if you wanted to. Would that be fun?

S: Yeah.

Rob: Oh, I suppose so. Then should we just stop there?

S: Okay.

Rob: Okay, well let's just stop. Goodbye. Do you want to shake my hand? This hand? You want to shake this hand? You want to shake that hand? You're good at shaking hands. You should get first prize for handshake. Okay, well, I'm glad to have met you. It's been nice to meet you and I think it would be nice when you meet some dogs.

S: Yeah.

: The mic, the mic, the mic.

Rob: Oh, don't do that. You'll make me scared. So, what are you doing? Are you going back to school, or what are you doing?

Mum: Going to get a chicken feeder.

Rob: Chicken feed? Okay.

S: Buy a toy. Buy a toy.

Rob: Buy a toy? Don't forget to buy a compost heap too.

after trauma

This woman was still having disturbing flashbacks to her experience, some years previously, when her son nearly died from meningococcal meningitis.

In this session, she spoke about her garden, and the way she managed its evolution.

She was able to access the way she dealt so well with her garden, and transfer this to her having the preferred experience of seeing her son, and knowing that “He has made it” rather than “Will he make it” resulting in her experiencing calmness.

The language she used about her garden was utilised to create a connection with her desired outcome [her solution] respectfully and immediately.

A natural doubt about coping with the dimension of her new experience was noticed and taken care of.



Rob: So what have you been doing that's been pleasant, apart from providing a test with people that take three hours, what have you been doing that has been enjoyable?

Client: Oh well, I did actually finish that garden just this week. So it's been a long, drawn-out procedure, but it's done. So, all plants went in. It's all there. Everything's been great so that was good.

Rob: And it's looking good?

Client: Looking good, looking good. It's unbelievable because the delay between it finishing and the whole thing of starting is because there were so many setbacks and obstacles along the way. And then we finally got there and now I sit back and say, I actually got exactly what I had envisaged.

And at there were times where I couldn't believe that it was ever going to happen. So I've been in the depths of depression in my last few weeks because I've been seeing that it's not happening and then it came back and it happened.

Rob: What happened to the depression then?

Client: Oh, that went. I knew that would go once the garden came good, but...

Rob: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, it's hard to have too big a problem with being depressed, knowing that it's only temporary.

Client: I didn't even worry about it. There were other people worried about it. And they thought that I was taking it really badly. And when I looked, the garden was not good and people were saying, it's all right, it looks great. And I was going, no it doesn't. It looks shocking. And it was quite funny, but I didn't stress about it. I just knew I had to keep going and it had to get fixed and it got fixed. It's perfect, finished.

Rob: And you are feeling, what, satisfied now? Are you feeling [inaudible 01:52]? What do you feel? What's the feeling about it?

Client: Incredulous is a large part of it, that it actually came together.

Rob: Yeah, well, just because it happened, you don't have to believe it.

Client: Yeah, well. Okay, but that's another element because I can't believe it.

Rob: Yeah, it does take a little while sometimes, just like a jetlag. You see it, but it takes a little while to really, really accept it.

Client: Yeah, I think that's true.

Rob: It's not a bad thing. I quite like that I can't believe this because it keeps it a little bit special. It keeps it a little bit sort of novel.

Client: In that magical...

Rob: Exactly.

Client: Yeah, sort of it is a bit dream-like. I keep looking at it and I was thinking, how on earth did it swing from when it was going off the tracks to when I had workmen who couldn't do what I seemed to be communicating. And then I lost the plot and then it veered so badly. And then it came back bit by bit and then boom, it slotted straight back in. And that's the incredulous journey of how it happened. But, and it is -- I'm just standing there in the morning, just going ah.

Rob: You're still enjoying the shock of it.

Client: Oh, yeah, the shock. The shock is huge. Yeah. So that will be fun.

Rob: It's good to know what the shock is like. And it wouldn't it be terrible if you look at that, oh yeah, ho hum, what's next?

Client: Yeah, I'd be bored to tears, probably, yeah. I do like that. I do like that it's exciting. And then of course, I was thinking, what will I do next to add fine touches so that there will always be something to discover.

Rob: Okay. So then you'll never get really bored by it. You'll never get really -- there will always be that kind of edge.

Client: Yeah. There's something coming up here, there's this thing there.

Rob: If I remember, you said that you had planned it that there were going to be different colours, different things coming at different times of the year that there's always going to be something.

Client: Yip. And then there has also been planned that as the canopy grows higher, the next canopy's planted to grow up underneath it so that there's going to be -- there's sort of like the 10-year plan and the five-year plan and the plan as it is now. And you can actually -- it is just so exciting just to have it already planted in there and know that this is how it will evolve or maybe this is how it will evolve.

Rob: Yeah, in that general direction.

Client: Yeah, yeah.

Rob: It's definitely going to evolve.

Client: Yeah, definitely will do that.

Rob: Then you probably would find out afterwards just how it evolved.

Client: I wouldn't know beforehand.

Rob: And that's part of the excitement, part of the joy of it.

Client: It's waiting to see.

Rob: Waiting to see. And getting through that feeling like it's never going to happen. It's just too much, too many things have gone wrong; it's just too much damage here, too much trauma here. Now you said there was something that you were interested to explore, to make a difference to, something that had happened.

Client: Yeah. When my son was six, Peter is his name, he got meningococcal septicaemia and he got very, very ill, very rapidly. He had sort of what looked like a cold and a fever. And that day, I was meant to go out and -- all day. I actually had a babysitter booked. And he came in to me at 7 o'clock and he was just burning

up. And I gave him a drink of water and he just vomited it up everywhere. And I saw how hot he was and I took him and put him in a tepid bath to bring his temperature down. And he just looked so ill that I just reached -- it was very weird. It was like I'd gone into a different mode. I reached for the phone, called the babysitter and said I'm just cancelling today, I've got to stay. And I just put him to bed and it was very uncharacteristic of him that he went to bed and stayed in bed. And that got me more and more worried because with a cold, he'd never ever responded that way before. And as the...

Rob: Yeah, there's nothing, nothing more worrying than a well-behaved child.

Client: Exactly. And staying in his bed and sleeping. And anyway, I would go in every so often and take him drinks because it was very hard to keep his temperature down. And I was giving him, you know, four-hourly Panadol and this, that and the other. And I went in at one stage and made him actually get up to sit in front of the TV for a bit because I was getting so worried about the way he was just lying there. And he then said, could you help me go the toilet? I think I'm too weak to walk. So I did and then half an hour later he said, I think I need to go again.

And when I pulled his pants down, in his groin was the beginning of the petechial rash, the first one. And then I checked all over his body and I found another two little pinpoint spots just around his ankle, on that bone there that sticks out. And I thought, well maybe it's just small little blood droplets have landed there, but I wiped my finger over it because it looked so transparent that I thought it was actually little blood bits coming out. And I wiped it and it didn't go away and then I had that moment where I thought the floor's opening up and I'm going to fall down. This is my son. He has a really bad illness.

So I rang my husband, who is a doctor and he was at work. And he said, well, call the GP because the GP had known us for 10 years. And I rang there and they said -- I explained everything and

said he's got -- I said I think he's got neck stiffness, I think he is photophobic, he's got the petechial rash, I think it's meningococcus. And they said, well, the waiting room's booked out and we've got people here for two hours. You'll have to just wait. I said, no, I can't wait. If I'm right, he could be dead in two hours. And I then thought, well, I'll just take him into the children's, that's what I should do. And then I thought that's amazing, I just gave a textbook answer for what is wrong with this child. That should have brought a really big emergency sort of thoughts in that doctor.

So I rang back and I said, I'm getting a little flustered here. Maybe I didn't make myself clear. And I repeated it. Petechial rash, the high temperatures, photophobia and by then I'd checked, he did have neck stiffness as well. And I was talking to the GP, who knew I was a microbiologist who taught med-students about microbiology and he said, I still can't see you for two hours. And I just said, right, well I'm driving to the children's. And he just said, well, you do that. And I hung up and just got in the car.

I had to get my autistic daughter, of course, and get her to get in the car. And it used to always be the sort of thing that she couldn't easily be moved in a rush, but I said to her, Pete is sick, get in the car and she just got up and walked out and got in the car.

Rob: Very interesting.

Client And she then -- we were driving along, she turned around and said to him -- he was lying down in the back seat, by now. He couldn't actually sit up. He had started to get -- the fluid was releasing out of his blood vessels and it was like he was a sack full of water. If I carried him, the fluid was going from one end to the other. And I just had to lay him down. She leant over him and said, Peter, we're going to get you to the hospital in no time.

And I was just driving along thinking she's just made the first novel sentence of her life and I went, this is a truly weird day. I know something special is happening here and it's not good. But anyway, I drove like the devil and got him there and got held up by a really horrible nurse in triage, who wouldn't see him even though I

begged people. And in the end, after waiting 20 minutes, I stacked a little tanty and said that you've got to see him now. He can't wait another minute because kids were going through with broken arms and getting seen first and I was saying, you know, its now time.

And I tried to be good in the whole 20 minutes. And then they saw him and they just scrambled to intensive care and it was okay. But then he nearly died so it was really, really awful. He was, in 45 minutes, he was on a ventilator and he was in a coma in an hour. They sent me out to go and buy Rifampicin for my husband and I to take, the antibiotic to clear the carrier [stain]. And I went before he went to intensive care and the whole time I was out, buying this down in City Road, Brunswick, I was thinking, I may never see my son alive again. And it seemed really cruel that they'd sent me out of the hospital to go and buy that, rather than call in a pharmacist.

Rob: Yeah. Yes, that is cruel.

Client: And I got back and he was in a coma.

Rob: Inhuman, actually.

Client: Yeah.

Rob: More than cruel.

Client: And I got back and he was in a coma and for the rest of the night, he was really just hanging on. And it got to about three in the morning or two in the morning and I had been dozing and I woke up and went to see the team. It was just a team working around him. They had a doctor at his bedside all the time and about five nurses and technicians. Everything was being done. And they turned around and they all looked at me and they said, we just have to say that fatality is a definite moment here, that we're doing everything for him, but everything we do, it just reverses and we go to the crisis in the opposite extreme.

And I went and woke my husband up, who'd fallen asleep. But he just walked in, saw all the readouts and just put his head down and that was it. He just tuned out. And in fact, I had just started to talk to Peter about all the things that he loved and all the good things that -- because they were saying his heart was probably

going to give out because his body was full of fluid and was no longer within blood vessels and things. It was just swishing around and his heart just wouldn't be able to pump it around.

So I thought, if I can talk to him until get that heart to hang in there just for another 24 hours. They were doing their best to get the fluid load out of him. So I talked to him about stuff that he loved. We were building a tree house for him at the time and I said, you know, get out of here and there'll be a tree house and the little eyebrow went up, one eyebrow. And then I said, so there's the tree house coming and, you know, I did promise, we did promise you a new bike. Up went the eyebrow. And then I said, and you know how you always want to play chess? We'll be playing chess so much. No eyebrow. So I tried it again. No eyebrow.

Rob: Find out the important things.

Client: And I went through like that and I just kept naming. And for about two hours, I just named and talked and talked to him about how we'd both been doing all this health and fitness stuff and we could get back there. And I actually felt a tugging in my stomach as though there was a cord linking him and I. And after about two hours, I looked up and there was a nurse at his head end and she said, he's going to make it. And I said, yeah, I think so too. And everyone else was saying, we're in deep shit here. There's nothing good about to happen. And she and I just sat back and went, well we feel something has changed and he had a bit of a rocky road, but he came out of it and he survived.

But what I'm finding now is that all these years later -- actually what happened after that, we got him home, he was fine and our marriage broke up. It had been on the rocks anyway. And, but now, what I find is sometimes I go into his room and it was much worse before when he was younger, but I go into his room to wake him up and he lies, he sleeps in the nude. And if I walk in and see his chest just lying there and he's asleep, I get the flashbacks straight to intensive care. And I think he's dying and I get the whole thing.

And I can have this every morning, before I even go to work, some days.

So and I've also got this thing that I have this sort of belief now that the absolute worst can happen. Like I remember sitting there at one stage thinking I can accept if he comes out with brain damage because I already have one child with brain damage. So if I could just be allowed to take him home and I'll have him. And that was just a really amazing moment to get to that sort of thing. I'll take my child with brain damage if I have to. And now -- so that really changed me a lot as a person because I realised that the bad things can just keep happening.

Rob: They can. They can. And what would be a preferred experience for you? What would you rather have happen? I mean, he is precious to you. He, I mean, he always was, but somehow even more now.

Client: Yeah.

Rob: And you don't want to lose that.

Client: No.

Rob: So what when you, you know, in the morning, how would you like to -- what would you like to have happen there?

Client: Well I would like it that, you know, I could open the door and see him and actually be ecstatic that I'm seeing his body there instead of that vision thrusting me straight back to that fear and that distress.

Rob: When he came home and he got through it, there were some setbacks, but he got through it and do you remember the first time that you saw him, instead of thinking he's going to make it, thinking he has made it? If you remember -- if you were to remember what it's like to look there back then, those years ago and seeing him and say, ah, he has made it.

If you could just look at that for a moment and perhaps, as you're looking, have in the background, the garden knowing that the garden wasn't going to make it. And even though you know the garden has made it and maybe some bad things are going to

happen, certainly some things can happen in the garden. Some of them will be bad. It can be similar. But somehow you can't believe that the garden has made it, but you look at the garden and there's some appreciation there, there's some -- it's not exactly peaceful acceptance, but there's something. And that feeling, looking at the garden, I can't believe it, it's so good and it's going to be even, as it grows, it's going to be even more.

And having the garden in the background and somehow seeing Peter now in the foreground. He's made it. And when you look at him, look at his body and you see he has made it. And if you can look at that and really see it and really feel it, you can be incredulous. Even though you know he has made it, at some level you can feel I can't believe this. But there's something about I can't believe it, which makes him, makes the garden, makes the experience even more precious, even more lively, even more vigorous.

And as you look at that image of him years ago when you saw he has made it, now how clearly can you see his body and see he has made it? Clearly? And as you look at that, how do you feel?

Client: Calm.

Rob: Oh, really? Not incredulous?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah, yeah. So it's hard to believe, but you feel calm. You didn't dare believe; you hurt. You new at the same time, you hoped and you didn't dare hope. They were all -- but you see now, he has made it and you can feel calm.

Client: Mm.

Rob: And it's good to know he has made it. Just [let them go] and just like none of the workmen would do what was needed, bloody nurses and doctors who [inaudible 20:47]. But the garden has -- and, and, you know the garden, you lost, you know, with Peter, you lost it. So, sometimes losing it is a good thing.

I'm reminded of that one of my favourite stories that I may have even mentioned before about a man living with his son. And a

horse comes into the farm. Yeah. You know that story. And the neighbour says that's good and the farmer says, well, it might be good, it might be bad. The son gets on the horse, falls off and breaks his leg. The neighbour says that's bad. The farmer says it might be bad, it might be good.

The king's recruiting people come around looking for soldiers. The boy's got a broken leg, can't go to the army. The neighbour says that's good. The farmer says, well, it might be good, it might be bad. We find out afterwards, eh. But, my friend Bill MacLeod told me that the end of that story was that the horse ran away and the neighbour said that's bad and the farmer said it might be bad, it might be good. And they went looking for the horse and found a whole herd of them and brought them back and they were very, very rich as a result of that.

But the garden was the way it was and you thought it wasn't going to make it. And every time you look at it, you can see a lot of doubt, a lot of uncertainty, but now you look and see the garden's made it. Then if you look at Peter back then and see he's made it and you can feel calm. It's good to know that you can feel calm. He's made it. How does that feel when you let yourself know calmly he has made it?

Client: That feels good, but I guess the next thought is, what if, what's the next thing?

Rob: Oh, there will be a next thing.

Client: That's the bit I'm worried about.

Rob: Oh, fair enough. Well, that's future trauma. You'll have to deal with that later, but I mean, there's stuff to do with the garden too and some bad stuff is going to happen to that garden. Some of the plants might die. Someone might -- Peter might tread on something or break something or I don't know. What have you learnt from the garden up until now that's going to help you to deal with the things in the garden in the future?

Client: Oh, that there's just always a new plan out there.

Rob: That's right. And you can talk to the plans. You can talk to yourself and you can watch the eyebrows going up.

Client: Look for signs of life.

Rob: The sign of life. You look for it. And the fact that your daughter got into the car and said what she said, maybe that wouldn't have happened without that. So, you know, no-one would wish that on anyone, but you know, it was bad, but it may have been good to her. And you will never take him for granted, that's for sure.

And you found out about your husband and you found out about that GP and you found out about that bitch of a nurse. And you found out about the system of sending you away to get something. Sometimes, there are some inhuman, sometimes there's some cruelty, sometimes stuff happens and there'll be cruelty in the future. You can be certain of that. But as you say, if you look for signs of life, watch for that eyebrow and sometimes it doesn't go up when you think it will. You thought it would go up with chess, but it didn't. And you found out something then.

And the same thing would happen with the garden, some unexpected things can happen. And you can find out some things and certainly find out what's important. I remember Erickson saying that he would love to walk along a footpath and see a weed growing up between bricks, between a little crack in the concrete.

I was being driven to the airport the other day and along a [inaudible 25:58] in the road, a rock face, there was a tree growing. There's no soil there. There was a tree growing. How do they do that? So when you look tomorrow morning and you see Peter and you see he has made it, how does that feel?

Client: Sort of good and right.

Rob: It may be some time, some years in the future where you might think I wish he hadn't made it. When I was 18, I crashed the family car for the second time in six weeks and I think my father wished I hadn't made it. But tomorrow morning, can you look

forward, can you look in tomorrow morning and seeing and knowing that he made it. How does that feel?

Client: It feels good.

Rob: Any doubts about that? Any qualifications there, that little something in the way you said that.

Client: Well I think, no, I don't have doubts. I just think it's such a change. It's going to be a change, but I can see it.

Rob: Is it too drastic a change?

Client: Probably not too drastic. It would be a good change.

Rob: Yeah, but it might be nice if you didn't have it happen all at once, that maybe tomorrow when you go and look, there might be ah, he made it and there might be little shadows of he might not have or wouldn't it have been awful if he hadn't. That kind of -- there might be some of that sort of swimming around the edge of that.

And I personally and this is just my opinion, I think it would be beautiful if even in 10 years' time, you were to see him and have just a momentary remember, remembering of was he going to make it. It helps to keep him precious. Like with the garden, to look back and think, you know, there were times when you knew it was going to be catastrophic. Somehow makes it more precious.

Client: Mm. It does.

Rob: You don't need to get rid of the totally. Is that more agreeable?

Client: Yeah, that is.

Rob: Good.

Client: That's great. That is good.

Rob: Okay, are we done?

Client: Uh-huh. Thank you.

Rob: Thank you so much for sharing that precious, such a precious experience, so precious.

Client: Yeah, it's got a lot in it, but that feels better now to imagine that -- I even like that idea about just sort of not trying to get rid of it completely.

Rob: Well, you let me know that because there was a way that you said yes, that was like a little sniff or something there. It wasn't quite...

Client: Convinced.

Rob: No. Something like that.

Client: I was convinced and I actually had the feeling that I could do it, but it was sort of such a big change.

Rob: Yeah, there was a qualification there. There was kind of a -- there was something in the way you responded that was like maybe too big a change. So seeing that you're asking to let that happen a little bit less dramatically.

Client: Yeah, well that feels great, actually.

Rob: I mean, just imagine if your garden did one of those television shows, you know, where they come in and suddenly there's a garden. Its like get out of here, you know.

Client: Yeah. Yeah, you would be really deflated if I had that happen to you, I reckon, in a weekend flat.

Rob: Yeah, that would be awful.

Client: This has really got my money's worth out of this, you know. It's been about three months that I'm just non-stop doing things and, yeah.

Rob: Okay, so maybe you might want to take three months to let this happen too.

Client: Mm. No, that could be right.

Rob: And even for some of the time, you might -- the flashbacks might be there very strongly and you might think this is going to be permanent, there's no way out of this.

Client: And then I can sort of think maybe they won't be permanent.

Rob: Yeah, actually, you don't know, but it's nice to know that there are various options and you can somehow feel lost at times, but know that you can manoeuvre and eventually you'll get to where you get to.

Client: Yeah, that's just the next plan to try.

after a flying phobia

This woman came with “A deep fear of flying”, and spoke about a previous car accident as a possible cause.

She wanted to feel safe, to feel OK.

She had previously enjoyed running. Her running experience provided a richly textured opportunity for her to reconnect with the missing experience of feeling safe.

In hypnosis, she readily connected with this, and early learning stories, client stories, and life stories were offered, using her language and experiences, and were easily accepted since they were hers.

Years later, she was still enjoying flying and routinely went to sleep as soon as she was on the plane.



Rob: So, thanks for being willing to be part of this. And, for the record, is it okay if we make a video of this for teaching purposes?

J: Yes.

Rob: I appreciate that, J, thank you. And Gabrielle hasn't told me much about what's going on here, so maybe, before we start, could you just tell us a little bit about you, like what sorts of things you like to do, what sorts of things are comfortable and where you feel good and safe and secure?

J: It's probably a bit hard at the moment for me to say the good things that I like to do because the last seven years, or a bit longer, I've been suffering with posttraumatic stress. Therapy the whole time and with a legal case with it. And with William and Jack, the two little boys, my...

Rob: So, that hasn't been fun?

J: No. No.

Rob: No, not like light entertainment?

J: No.

Rob: Before that, what sorts of things did you like to do before then?

J: Oh, gee.

Rob: Can you remember back that far?

J: Yes. I was about 35 kilos less.

Rob: Okay. Want a tissue?

J: Yeah, I better.

Rob: Okay. So, you were 35 kilos less.

J: Thanks.

Rob: What sort of things were you up to then?

J: No, I used to be a long-distance runner.

Rob: Oh, really.

J: Yes.

Rob: What's long distance? What's long?

J: Oh, I could run anything. I mean, I don't know what that's like to anyone else, but I could run anything up to 15 kilometres a time, which mentally was good for me. But I always loved my running.

Rob: Okay. What is it about that?

J: Look, I think anybody that can run, you get the breathing, you get your breathing, your steps. And with your mind, everything, it comes into and it's incredible as a... Yes, so, it was wonderful for me. I'm in my second marriage, so that actually helped me come out of my first marriage, but I'm saying that, yes, it's fantastic therapy.

Rob: Have you seen Forrest Gump, the movie?

J: Yes.

Rob: Where he goes running and says, "My mum says you've got to deal with the past..." I can't remember, but he checked words.

J: Yes. But now I can relate to anybody if they're running and you see people and they think, "How can you keep running so long?" I can see how you can. I know because it just becomes a part of you and you're breathing. You can run and just keep running.

Rob: Yeah, people talk about getting like into the zone or into something like that and you kind of get into the rhythm of it.

J: I'd have to run about 100 metres from my home, 100 metres and I would be bugged, absolutely bugged, believe it or not. I'd stop. I'd sort of sit or stand for about three minutes or four minutes and then I would jog my 15 kilometres and I would not stop. No, that's true. It's true. I could never get past – it was about 100, sort of whatever it is you [inaudible 3:40].

Rob: Like some sort of barrier that you had to get through.

J: It's something that I always have and I was bugged. I'd come out the door. I would do my extra warmups and whatever, just a couple of stretches and I'd just get up so far. I'd even try and get a little bit further and I'd always start off good from my home. I always had a big hill, but I'd only get up to so far and I was absolutely bugged, but then I just never stopped. I was not bugged after that. It was incredible.

Rob: So, you did the 100 metres, you were bugged and you had to stop.

J: You just stop for it and I just used to stand there and I'd just sort of like do deep breathing.

Rob: How long did that take to get past it?

J: Always, every time.

Rob: How long did it take? How long did you have to stand there and breathe?

J: Oh, probably about three or four minutes, that's all. It was no more. It was just a matter of, I think it was in my mind and I was deep breathing and I just don't know. I didn't have any therapy for it.

Rob: No. You didn't need any therapy.

J: I think it was maybe because I knew I was going quite a fair way. It's not that I had to. I know I was doing it. I don't know. I don't know. But I could never get over that. I could never get past it.

Rob: That's extraordinary, isn't it?

J: Yeah. I tried and I couldn't.

Rob: You couldn't run 110 yards, but you could run 15K.

J: Not straight up. I had to have stopped just for that.

Rob: Yeah, but once you got past that, you were kind of...

J: I just never stopped.

Rob: Like once you took off, you were ready to...

J: Yeah, I used to, if I'd have to stop for a car, that was like, "Oh, bugger it," you know, because it was like I sort of had myself going at breathing [inaudible 05:18] and...

Rob: I'm feeling buggered just listening to the thought of having to run 15k.

J: No, I was never buggered. Oh, yes, when you got home and because I wasn't eating, I didn't realise I wasn't eating enough food to cover my running, so I didn't sort of realise, but then I'm skinny and everything and the doctor and I had to go onto Sustagen, is it? I actually ended up enjoying it. In fact, if my 15 k's was coming up, I'd think, "Oh, I'm going to go home and have a lovely milkshake."

Rob: Like you'd earned it or something.

J: I wish I could still remember shaking because I'd stopped you know and then trying to do this milkshake [inaudible 06:04] I was looking forward to it. Then I'd go and have a shower and then I was off for the day.

Rob: You didn't have to rest or something? That kind of got you going?

J: I'd still have had the shake, the Sustagen and then I'd sort of going and have my shower.

Rob: Have the shakes, then you have the shake, then you get in...

J: Well, you would anyway because it's coming back from that. You don't realise and then your body just sort of, you're mentally the whole time. It's a long of strengths, but in the mental mind, but it's good. As I said, anyone that can do it, fantastic. I've

had three children and I know, I need to get the weight off, but also, I need to go and have an operation. My body won't let me run at the moment. I sort of have to keep going to the toilet. But, yeah, it would be nice if I was doing that again. It would be great right now, but still, this is good. This is good I've been doing with Gabrielle.

Rob: What have you been doing with her that's been helpful?

J: It's basically, I suppose it's the same thing, but well, I was taking it and putting it that way, I was giving it to Gabrielle straight out, sort of quite not the fit... Well, I suppose physically it is coming out. She gets a lot out of me, actually. I confuse her a lot because I'm flipping from one thing to another with everything. Yeah, so I suppose it's the same thing, except...

Rob: And that's helping?

J: Oh, yes. But then I walk away and I think, "Gabrielle, how the hell does she work out everything that I was saying here?" Sort of this was happening and then I was feeling this, and then this, and then this. But sort of talking about the running just then, it's incredible. It is because when I was running with different things, I was digesting.

Rob: And I mean you run more or less in a straight line I guess, but the thoughts are all over the place, but they somehow find a place.

J: And that's probably why it was 15 kilometres.

Rob: It took that long.

J: It took that long.

Rob: Yeah, there was a lot of stuff to...

J: Because at the end of the 15 kilometres, I was all right. And it was like I had nothing left in my mind. I was tired in my mind. I couldn't think anymore. And when I leave here with Gabrielle, I'm relaxed in my mind and I've got a lot of out.

Rob: And that's the thing that makes a difference here. When you've got your mind right then everything else is [inaudible 08:52].

J: Yes.

Rob: And even getting that 100 metres to start, even that was part of getting your mind right so that you could then go and do it.

J: That was strange, yes. But yes.

Rob: Now, if we could do something here that would be useful, what would that be? What would you like to leave here with?

J: I have to fly and I have a very big fear of flying.

Rob: Are you going on a plane or flapping or your arms?

J: A plane.

Rob: Plane. Okay. So, you don't actually have to fly the thing.

J: No. I wouldn't do that anyway.

Rob: I mean, it's really no use to say it, but I'll say it anyhow. You know, to fly these days, you need to be able to walk and sit. That's all you need to do, but that doesn't help to say that. So, what is it about...?

J: Yeah, because you're up.

Rob: Yeah, yeah. That's true.

J: My fear has come from where I had my car accidents and I was... A lady ran me off the road at Woodbridge Hill and I rolled about five or six times. And like that, nobody could find me, but it was being... And I was waiting for the car to blow up. And I couldn't get out. So, I have found out that basically I think that's where it's come from, the times from being stuck in the car, that waiting, to do with the flying being confined because when the word 'confined' was said to me for the first time here, I don't know whether it was actually in here, but with somebody, I was straight away, I was going to be sick. It was just incredible the reaction.

Rob: And have you been working on that action? Is that some things that you've been – I don't know because I haven't spoken to Gabrielle or anything. Has there been something happening there, or?

J: Perhaps it's just a bit of mix up with everything. I mean, Gabrielle, as I said...

Rob: Okay. It's just been part of it.

J: Gabrielle's had a lot of everything with me.

Rob: So, there's something about being in a plane where you feel that you have to wait for someone else to let you out that you think may be a memory or somehow likens to the car accident or something?

J: Well, I don't know that it was that because, I mean, I might be wrong here because Pete, my husband, was in the police force, so we were only dealing – and I was like the oneman station, so he didn't really have that level dealing with the public. It was always – and I was very much on my own and Pete would always say, "You're a policeman's wife," and I'd just figure, "So what?" because I was very much my own person.

But I think that when the car rolled and I was waiting at the bottom and I got Peter on the mobile, all I can remember is I didn't know that nobody knew where I was. I didn't really know where I was either. I could see water and I was at Woodbridge, the bottom down Woodbridge bank and I could see the water. But I remember I could see cars going and I was absolutely beside myself. I did not want anybody from the public to stop. It had to be a police car. It had to be a police officer. I don't

know why or whether it was that level, I don't know. So, it's not like I had to have just anybody come in. It's incredible the difference, so I think because of that life that I was... I don't know why.

Rob: No. You just know.

J: It was like, yeah...

Rob: And a policeman did come?

J: Yeah, there was about six there in the end by the time they all found me. But yet I didn't worry. I didn't care. Not that I... I remember, Allan, I think his name was, so that I can remember him sort of getting the back door open to get me out. And I can all of a sudden, I can remember all the cars pulling up and then Peter sort of coming down through the paddock down, but actually seeing the police officers, or talking... I didn't talk to any of them. I just sort of stood back and was just looking at the car, and I could see if William was sitting there, he would have died. Jack would have been safe, but William definitely would have died. He wouldn't have made it.

If they'd have been on the driver's front seat, don't know whether they would have made it. So, it was very strange, but didn't talk to any of them and then I just went and just went and sat in the police car that Peter had and went home. I just wanted to go home, sit on the couch and I wanted to be there for my two boys when they came home from school. I didn't care what if I had a broken arm or broken leg. I didn't even know. I didn't even know what I had.

Rob: You just wanted to be there for them.

J: So, yeah.

Rob: So, you didn't care.

J: Yeah. So, I don't understand any of that, but that's what happened.

Rob: Okay. Now, in relation to your flying, is there a flight coming up?

J: Is there a flight? Yes. We've actually got two. Well, the one, there's quite a few on the 21st of April and that's up to Darwin.

Rob: Okay, just a short little thing.

J: So, it's not a lot, yeah. I didn't want to travel up at RSC. She said, "Oh, that's like going overseas." I was like, "Oh, that's all I needed to hear with that one."

Rob: Okay. Thank you for that one. That's one, going into Darwin.

J: Yes.

Rob: And what's the other.

J: And the second one is the 27th of August. We're heading up -- my niece is getting married on the Whitsundays and I don't want to miss -- I've missed out on a lot with my niece with everything over the years and I definitely don't want to miss seeing her get married, so I'm going and there's like nothing's going to stand in my way with that. But I've got to...

Rob: And if something happened here that was useful and you went on those flights and you came back and it was all okay, and I said to you, "What was different?" what sort of thing do you think you would be saying that you got out of this that would be helpful?

J: Oh, thank you.

Rob: Yeah, but what? Thank you for what? Not thank you for saying it was for overseas. That's not a thank you. I mean, you got what you wanted, what would it be.

J: No, I was very thankful about hearing it.

Rob: Well, but if you did say thank you and it was genuine, what would that be?

J: Probably to feel inside that it was safe, that I was okay. It's sort of like I have flown once since the accident and I had Jack. He was only nine or eight and I actually used him because he started to cry when we were going up to Queensland. And I actually said to him, "Look, it's not nothing to be worried about, Jack. Everything's fine." And over here I am crapping on. I was beside myself.

So, I sat him in the middle of the seat and I always sat -- I was told to sit on the aisle. And I was going through it with him. I said, "Now look, when we take off, this is going to happen and this is going to happen." And I'm thinking, "Oh shit." But he was fine. He went flying colours. He got all the way up there. And then I think at one stage when we were heading up, we may have gone into Melbourne, I don't know, and looking back taking off or something he just froze. And I said, "What's the matter? What's the matter?" And he looked at me and he laughed. He said, "Nothing." I could have killed him. He didn't know what I was going through and he was fine.

Rob: So, you've done some hypnotic work with Gabrielle?

J: We've done quite a bit, yes, which is great.

Rob: How do you like to go into hypnosis?

J: How do I like to? Oh, I just...

Rob: What's the easiest way for you to...?

J: I just sit here.

Rob: Okay. And so, would it be okay if you were to just allow that to happen now? Do you know what it's like? You know that I'm not Gabrielle and you know that you're sitting in a different chair and different circumstances?

J: Yes.

Rob: But you know in your body the experience of going into hypnosis in the same way that you know in yourself the experience of going running. And it may be that if you start to go into hypnosis here, this time that there may be like the 100 metre start. There might be a kind of something to get through, something to get past. And you don't need that to be there, but if there is some kind of something to do, would that be okay for you?

J: Yeah. That makes sense.

Rob: Yeah. And you don't need to rush into this, but I think if you can take that first step, which I think you're already starting to do now. And to remind you that even though it's raining outside, it's dry in here, that even though you haven't looked at the construction of the floor, the chair you're sitting in, you can feel safe that the floor will support us, or the chair is not going to... and the roof. That's it. And just taking your time, letting that feeling, that experience, that's nice.

And I can see already how easy it is for you to just allow yourself to get into that. That's it. Good. That's nice, just letting that happen. Good. And maybe starting to settle into that so that you can really begin to enjoy the getting your mind in the right place, just not trying to do anything, but almost as if as this experience continues, things can happen in your thoughts, in your experiences, in your memory from here, from there, from different places.

But as this experience is continuing, things can start to kind of settle into place. You don't even need to know what it is that's settling. You don't even need to know where they came from, where this, that, the other, but somehow, as you get into this experience, it might be something like the experience of running where you get into it. And the more you get into it, the more all of that seems to take on a life of its own, as if you don't need to think about where to put your feet, you don't need to think about when to breathe in, when to breathe out and all of those changes happen. Everything just starts to fit together and you can feel totally safe.

You probably don't need to remember that when you were a little child, when you were learning to walk that you had to hang onto something. Some children, even when they are learning to walk, think they have to hang onto the ground with their toes and you'll see some kids screw up their toes because they want to hang onto the ground. They're scared that they'll fall off.

But something happens as the child is learning to walk, where they learn to settle into that and they don't need to think about which foot, or how to balance or even any need to hang onto anything and they just start to walk, not realising, not needing to know that one day they're going to be running, and hopping, and skipping and jumping and so on.

And Gabrielle and I both have learnt from a psychiatrist in America, Milton Erickson. And one of his sons, Allan, told me that when he was learning to walk, he felt very insecure and needed someone or something to hang onto and he used to have to hang onto someone's hand. And he said he really appreciated the way his father understood that and used to hold his hand. And then after a while, he would give Allan a piece of string and then Allan would hold onto one end and his

father would hold onto the other. And as long as his father was holding one end and Allan was holding the other, he could walk just fine.

But then, of course, after a while, his father could let go of the string and Allan could just hang onto it and still feel secure and safe. Now, I don't know at what point he didn't need to hang onto the string, but it was really helpful for him to have that support, to have that connection so that he could feel safe, so that he could feel secure, so that he could have the freedom instead of having to hang on to something, to take his own time to let go of that.

And it may be, J, as this experience is continuing, and I want to remind you this is your experience. I'm talking at the moment, but my words themselves are not what's important to you. It's the way you can allow my voice to be something like the sound of the rain on the roof, just something that's there so that you can let yourself settle into this experience.

That's it, and really good, letting that settle in, so that as you get into that, and I don't know whether you'll actually have the feeling as if you are running, but I know if you do that, it's not important that you think, "I run five kilometres or six and a quarter," you can just be in the running, in the experience of that. And as this is continuing, various parts of your experience can start to somehow settle, somehow, I don't know, find a place so that you can really know what it's like, really know how it is for you to feel safe, to feel secure.

I remember Gabrielle told me about someone who had a problem flying and she loved horse riding. And so, Gabrielle asked this woman to – and into the experience of riding a horse. Now, I can't stand horses. They're terrifying to me, but this woman loved horse riding and she loved to gallop, and she loved to jump and she loved to do all things that you do on horses. And if you think you're weird, Gabrielle suggested to this woman that she could ride her horse on that plane all the way from here to Adelaide and back. And the horse did a big jump from here to Melbourne, another big jump from Melbourne to Adelaide. I don't know how she could do that, but it apparently worked really well.

Now, many years ago, a young man came to see me wanting some help to change something in his life. And it turned out that he had been an Olympic swimmer. And he told me, as we were getting to know each other about when he was qualifying in the Olympic trials, I don't know what distance he was swimming. I think it was a long-distance swim, but I'm not sure. But he was so busy looking and thinking about the others and how he was doing and whether he should be breathing or not that he almost didn't qualify, but he did manage to qualify.

Now, I think it will make a lot of sense to you when I say that he told me that in the finals, when he got into the water, he didn't think about anything. He said it was like getting into some kind of rhythm. He said it was like music without notes. There was a kind of rhythm of the movement of his legs and his arms and of his breathing. He just got into that rhythm and was very surprised when he got to the end of the race and he got a gold medal.

And I don't know, does that make some sense to you when I say that, that feeling of getting into that rhythm? Do you know what that feeling is like? Is that a bit like that when you run, just a bit like that? Can you say it?

J: Hm.

Rob: And also, I'm remembering another woman that came to see me. She'd been riding to work one day, driving in her car. And it had been some years previously and she came around a corner and the road was slippery or something. I don't know. Anyhow, the car spun, or rolled or something, I don't know how many times. And she actually got out and was unhurt, but she couldn't drive. She couldn't get to work and she couldn't go down that road because every time she started to think about it, she'd get into a kind of panic feeling.

And what was helpful for her, and this might make some sense to you. You might be able to translate this in some way for you. What was helpful for her was you don't have to imagine, but just imagine, if she was standing beside the road, on the side of the road near that bend and she could watch herself in the car in slow motion. And she was able to watch herself slowly coming towards that bend, and then slowly losing control and slowly watching that car turn over and over until she could see that it stopped.

She could see that she was able to get out and then for the first time she was able to see, and feel and know 'I survived'. She was able to take that feeling 'I survived' and really take that, really have that, really experience that, really get into that. And once she did that, it was such a relief for her because previously, she kept thinking, "What if I hadn't? What if someone had been there? What if this, what if that?" and she did not really let herself experience she survived.

And somehow, when she heard, "You survived. No one was killed, no one was hurt, no one was damaged. You survived," there was a kind of a relief that she felt that was not just a thought. It was not just an idea. It was a change in her thinking in her mind where really for the first time since that accident, she really felt okay. And it was that feeling in her mind that she felt 'you survived' that allowed the feelings, her emotions, her body, her whole experience.

Now, I can say these things and I can say them with the best intentions, and the best wishes and the best hopes that I'm saying something useful to you, but I really know so little about you, but I do know that you know a lot more about you than you even realise. So, you can take my words, my ideas, what I'm saying and you can translate them. You can do what you need so that they can fit your experience so that you could make use of it.

Now, just as when you were running, it wasn't that you just suddenly were able to launch into running 15k, just like it wasn't you could just take off and fly around that 15k. There was that initial feeling, that initial experience to get through it. And I don't know when you're going to do your 100 metres so that you can fly to Darwin and fly back. I don't know when you're going to do your 100 metres so you can do the 15k that will take you to the Whitsundays. And I don't even know whether it's helpful or whether you'd say thank you if I were to say that flying to Darwin is like running 15k.

It's such a funny memory for me, my first time I came to Hobart, I was seeing a man in Melbourne, who came to see me with a problem driving. He couldn't drive outside of the suburb that he lived in. It was very restrictive for him because he

was a real estate agent. When we started to do some hypnotic work and he started to drive all around Melbourne, and after a little while, he said to me, "I've been looking at aeroplanes. I haven't been in a plane," I've forgotten what he said now. Eighteen years or something. "Do you think I could fly?" and I said to him, "Well, the fact that you're starting to see that and look at that as a possibility, let's me know that you're already moving towards that. He'd already started his 100 metres, I would say.

So, we did some more work about that and he started to think, "I think I can do this," but he said, "I want to pay for you to fly to Hobart with me as insurance." And I said, "Les, you're wasting your money." He said, "Well, I'll run the risk."

Anyhow, we got on this plane, took off from Melbourne and I said, "You know the flight to Hobart's only an hour?" I said, "If you don't start panicking soon, the plane will have landed and you will have missed your opportunity." And we had a really nice flight, talking about this, talking about that, talking about I don't know what. And the plane landed and there was no any hint of a problem. Now, how could that happen? How could that happen that he hadn't been able to fly for all that time and he got in that plane and it was just like nothing. And I don't know how many other people that I've seen over the years have discovered how easy it is, how comfortable it is, how safe they can feel in a plane in this and that other situation.

But I think it might be interesting for you to wonder maybe this is a good time to do your 100 metres. Maybe when you get into the plane and going to sit down, that you can sit in the airport lounge and do your 100 metres. Or maybe when you first get into the plane. I think it would be nice if you could get that over and done with early because once that 100 metres has happened, then the 15k you could just keep going. And Darwin is just 15k. It's nothing.

And of course, when you land there, you can feel a bit shaky. You might want something to drink or something to eat. You might even want some Sustagen or you want something for your mind. I don't know what. Something for your thinking. But you can look forward to that. And you can know that when you land there, it will be like finishing the 15k. you're ready for the day. You're ready for whatever.

And I don't know if somehow letting those bits and pieces of your thinking, of your mind settle into place about the car accident will allow you to fly safely and comfortably, or whether somehow when you get off that plane in Darwin and you feel so like, "Oh, it was a good 15k," whether that will allow the car situation to settle into place.

Or it may even be that you can enjoy the flying or feel the safety, or the pleasure, or the relaxation, or the satisfaction in a way that has nothing to do with the running, nothing to do with the car accident, nothing to do with me, nothing to do with Gabrielle, nothing to do with anything. It might just happen in a way that you really can't explain, but you can enjoy and have that as a learning for you.

Now, I've been talking a lot and you've been sitting there very patiently, allowing me to talk about this and that, and all over the place from here and there and I don't know how you can make sense of that, but I'm just wondering, as you are in this experience and it's very apparent to me when I first met you here today what

an excellent hypnotic subject you are. It was very apparent to me how easily you can get into the experience of running just talking about it.

And even before you closed your eyes, talking about the running, your eyelids were flickering, again letting me know how responsive you are to learning in this way. So, that let me know already how easy it's going to be for you. But that aside, I'm wondering, as this experience is the way it is, J, right now, I wonder if you could just let us know what you're aware of at the moment. And I don't know whether you can do that with your eyes closed, or whether you'll need to come out of hypnosis to speak or whether you can find that you can talk and allow whatever is happening to continue. What's happening for you at the moment? There's a smile starting there. What is that? What are you feeling? What are you noticing?

J: That was sudden.

Rob: Sudden? Yeah. Oh, well, sometimes a solution appears suddenly. Can you roll with that, the suddenness? Is that okay?

J: Yeah, I think when you said "laugh" or something, it just happened.

Rob: Now, I'd like you to feel free to just sit there for the moment as long as you need to know that you don't need to move. You don't need to say anything. Of course, you could. You can get up out of the chair, and jump and dance or whatever, run 15k, but for the moment, you don't need to do anything. Is that okay?

J: Hm.

Rob: Can you give yourself permission to feel free to just sit there in the safety of this and memorise that and get into the 15k of that safety feeling, and really be in it and let your mind soak it up?

J: Hm.

Rob: I don't know whether it will be like soaking up the 15k, or soaking up the Sustagen or just what it will be like. And I don't know. I can't know, but what do you notice is different? How could this possibly be of any use to you? Can you explain that?

J: This feels good.

Rob: Feels good?

J: Hm.

Rob: And what does that indicate to you?

J: That nobody can hurt me.

Rob: Yeah. Now, it's good to feel safe, isn't it, and to be in that, in that zone, in that 15k, in that safety.

J: Hm.

Rob: And you know that you can take that with you. It's portable. It belongs to you. It's a part of you.

J: Hm.

Rob: And what's happening now?

J: Do I come out of it?

Rob: I don't know.

J: No, I don't want to go out of it, no.

Rob: You don't. Okay.

J: It feels good.

Rob: Yeah. Ah, well, I think you're going to be one of those people into Darwin airport where they say, "How do we get this woman off this plane?" and you'll be saying, "Can't we go a bit further?"

J: Yeah.

Rob: That bloke that I mentioned, who flew into Hobart, when they went back to Melbourne, his wife said to me, "Les has got this terrible problem with flying still," and I said, "What?" She said, "I can't keep him off aeroplanes." I got postcards from that man from the west coast of the US, from London, from China. He had a son, who was a field officer in New Guinea. And he showed me some photographs that he'd taken where they were on these little planes going around through the valleys with the... She couldn't keep him off planes. He was just...

And the beautiful thing I've noticed is that whenever someone has the kind of problem that you had, it's as if that problem hypnotised you into a problem and that the way that you got into that lets me know that this is a perfect way for you to get out of that and into something that you want to get into.

J: Yeah, that's good.

Rob: I'm really pleased to have had a chance to work with you with this.

J: Yeah, no that was good.

Rob: And would it be okay if that's all that you needed to do?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Would that be a shock too.

J: Yeah. I was, I was surprised it's incredible I've forgotten about it, and yet, it's just there. It wouldn't have even had thought to relate [inaudible 43:04].

Rob: Yeah. And if someone said, "What happened to help you get over your flying problem?" and you said, "I went to see this fellow and he said that flying to Darwin is like running 15k," he'd say, "Oh, right."

J: Yeah, I know. I know.

Rob: Try and explain that.

J: They don't know unless they do it.

Rob: You can't explain it, but you can experience it.

J: I know, yeah. You've got to do it every day. Yeah, that's good.

Rob: Yeah, but don't fly to Darwin every day.

J: Oh, God, no. No, that I was just saying to experience that, yeah. That's good.

Rob: So, how are you doing with this safe feeling now? You don't want to come out of it. You've obviously still got it.

J: I think I'm coming out of it now.

Rob: You're coming out of something, but do you notice that you're bringing the safe feeling with you.

J: Oh, yeah. No, I feel quite, yeah.

Rob: Yeah, you don't need to put it into words, but you know the feeling.

J: Yeah.

Rob: And as you're sitting in that feeling, really knowing it.

J: It's all right. I can go back out [inaudible 44:13] any minute now, so I can feel it.

Rob: Yeah. And you can do that here, you can do that at home, you can do that in a plane, you can do that in a car, you can do that anywhere because it's something you can do. You can breathe here.

J: Hm.

Rob: You can do that anywhere. It's something that you do.

J: Hm.

Rob: When a child's first learning to walk, they can walk in this room, but don't ask them to walk in that room, they can't do it. Or they can walk in this house, but if a stranger comes in, they plop down. They can't. But after a while, you realise, "Ah, walking [inaudible 44:57] it's me. It's not the room. Ah." Then they can walk. That way, the learning becomes portable.

And I think it's so nice for you to take your time coming out of this so that knowing that you could go back into it so easily because it's easy for you.

J: Hm.

Rob: And I wanted to emphasise the importance of you allowing yourself to be hypnotised by the right experience.

J: Hm.

Rob: Does that make sense?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Good.

J: That wouldn't be hard.

Rob: And the problem that you had is simply an expression of the way that you can really get into something, but you didn't realise you were getting into something that was unhelpful and you can use that same ability to really get into something that is helpful and you can feel safe with that.

J: Hm.

Rob: Does that make sense?

J: Hm.

Rob: I'm not asking you to explain it because I couldn't either, but it makes sense to you?

J: Hm.

Rob: Yeah, good.

Well, if we were to leave it at that, is that a place that you could be satisfied with at the moment?

J: Yeah, no, that's good. Very good, thank you.

Rob: But there's one more thing that I want to say and that is that if you get a problem that Les had that they can't keep you off aeroplanes, like you're always saying, "Come here," just come back and we'll see if we can give you a bit of a problem back if it gets...

J: I'll have to come and see you and say, "Are you going to pay?" because I wouldn't be able to afford it all, then I'm sure you'll fix me.

Rob: Is that a place we might leave it?

J: Yes, no, that's great.

Rob: Thanks for letting me be part of your cure.

J: No, that's good.

Rob: Thank you.

J: That's really good.

Rob: Okay.

“hypno-rebirthing”



Client: [Inaudible].

Rob: What you do?

Client: Nothing.

Rob: [Inaudible].

Female voice: It's what you do.

Client: I wasn't talking to your conscious mind, talking to your subconscious mind. It's listening very well, thank you very much.

Rob: Okay. [Inaudible] all that you just said, thank you.

Client: Good.

Rob: Yeah. Thanks for being willing to play.

Client: My pleasure.

Rob: Your eyebrows have already started.

Client: Just be careful of my eyebrows. They don't always say what they, you think they say.

Rob: Yeah, well, they always say what they say, though.

Client: That's right.

Rob: And even if I don't know what they're saying and you think that you don't know and I -- you're not quite sure, just how much I know about what they say, without saying it, they're saying something that way. And is it okay if we video this for future teaching purposes?

Client: Yes.

Rob: Thanks for being generous for that too.

Client: Mm.

Rob: So what have you been doing that's been enjoyable and pleasing for you?

Client: I guess I've attended a few births since we...

Rob: Oh, okay.

Client: Saw you last, so that's been really like that's such a privilege. That's just wonderful. And last weekend, I went to Yarra

Glen for a conference with homebirth midwives, doulas, midwives from hospitals and hypnobirthing practitioners. There were...

Rob: Okay.

Client: Four or five of us there, which was really rather lovely, up in the vineyard in Yarrow Glen, on top of a hill, just beautiful with the outdoor loos and having to put the sawdust in after you've been, you know.

Rob: So it's kind of natural, yeah?

Client: That was a whole bringing back experience, I can tell you, you know.

Rob: Okay. This is like...

Client: And they weren't as well equipped when I...

Rob: Homebirths and home loos...

Client: Yeah, that's right.

Rob: As far as getting down to basic functions and...

Client: Yeah, very much so.

Rob: Okay.

Client: Mm. So that's recently been a thing. It was a lovely thing.

Rob: Is that what you liked about it, the fact that it was like down-to-earth and simple or what was it that you...?

Client: I think the thing I liked about it the most was there were there were so many like-minded people there that were there to allow women to have their power of their birth.

Rob: Okay.

Client: It was wonderful. And to not interfere in that process. Allow them to...

Rob: So there's enough people there to make it legitimate that it's okay to do that, it's okay to feel that, it's okay to be like that.

Client: Yeah, yeah. And meeting some people, like Bruce Sutherland. He was, he was there. He had his own birth centre in Cue for about 30 years.

Rob: Okay.

Client: Dared to buck the medical system and allow women to birth the way they wanted to birth.

Rob: There's something, I mean, that's obviously a very important issue for you that the women, being able to do what they want to do, probably applies to most of us.

Client: Well, I suppose I look at it that it's our right to do that.

Rob: Yeah, yeah. And I wonder how many other situations in life where somehow our right to be how we are, to do what we want to do or is our right to do, is somehow thwarted or imposed upon or constricted by this or that or the other kind of...

Client: Mm. Often.

Rob: I think so. I think so. So what can we talk about here that would be useful to you?

Client: Well, it was interesting over the course of the weekend and on the Sunday afternoon, they had a -- one of the speakers got up and did a meditation. And it was after we'd spoken about people who had had forceps births and anaesthetics and all that sort of thing, how related they were to the children that were born, that

often children who were born through very heavily medicated births became drug addicts.

Rob: Okay.

Client: And the guy that spoke about it was a philosopher. And his business was to research and present the research that, that he'd done. So he'd researched this very carefully and that people who had forceps births really felt like people were trying to force them into things in life and pull them through things in life that -- or they got stuck and had to be, you know, like physically pulled through things and all that sort of thing.

Rob: Interesting.

Client: And as part of that, he did a meditation and asked you to close your eyes and go to a birth, whichever birth you wanted to go to. And, you know, I thought I needed to heal some of the births that I'd been to that were, you know, had a lot of medical intervention. And I walked away from them thinking, my god, you know, if this is what birth is, I don't know if I want to be part of this because they were, you know, it was like I saw a baby collar bone broken and so, it was, you know, I was very distressed after it.

But the thing that happened, of course, along the way, it jumped to my birth. And my mother had had five or six miscarriages between my brother and I and so when she was pregnant with me, they tried putting bands on the cervix to hold me in. And I very much felt like my choice of staying or going was taken away. And then I was born being pulled out, like very much being pulled out, but I only got...

Rob: So first of all held back, then pulled out.

Client: Yeah. But I only got part of the process done. It sort of went to me being grabbed and started to be pulled and then I came out of the meditation, so I didn't...

Rob: Oh yes, didn't have time to...

Client: Totally finish it. And it sort of, it's left me very much in a heart space, very much in a -- I feel, in a very gentle and feminine space right now, that I feel as if I'm on the brink of something, ready to emerge out of it.

Rob: Yes, yes, yes.

Client: But in a very gentle and nurturing way, you know, that whatever is done, would need to be done very gently and carefully.

Rob: Okay.

Client: Because it feels very vulnerable...

Rob: I understand.

Client: At the moment.

Rob: Yes, of course. Of course.

Client: So I don't know what it's on the brink of, but it feels, it feels very beautiful, whatever it is.

Rob: Okay. So, as a way for you to allow yourself to go into hypnosis, in a way that can be gentle for you and what I'd invite you to do is not, in any way, be held back about how you can do that, but also to not allow yourself to feel obligated to be pulled into hypnosis by me, by your past experience, by yourself.

But if you would, as you're allowing yourself to go into hypnosis, if you could just be gentle with yourself and just wonder, just be open and vulnerable to allowing that natural process, even if it's not

exactly what you've done in the past, even if you have a preferred way of going into hypnosis, that's worked very well, that in this instance, maybe you can, and maybe only in this instance or I don't know whether it will be different in the future, but at least in this instance, simply allow yourself, very gently, very softly, to open your experience, that's it, to allowing that going into hypnosis in itself to be an experience that you can in a very feminine, very gentle, very soft and open way allow that experience, whatever that might be. And you don't need to know what that will be.

As you're allowing yourself to not need to be pulled into this experience by something that I'm saying or the memory of what someone else has said or even by some expectation that you might have had. And at the same time, not needing to be constrained and held back by anything that anyone has said or that you might wish or that I might hint at. But again, not needing to hold yourself back or be held back in any way and allowing the experience that you're having right now, to be an experience that you can in that very gentle, very feminine, totally unthwarted, unconstrained, unpushed, unheld back, unpulled, with no force anywhere around and simply wondering, simply allowing in some way, perhaps in some way, being present to the birth of that experience, not according to any previous medical model or theoretical model, but simply allowing that natural progression, that natural expression of you allowing that experience to emerge.

And it may be something that, as it's happening, that you might want to keep totally private to yourself or it may be something that would be helpful for you to speak about as it's happening or it may be useful for you to say some things and not others, but whatever would be helpful for you in the way that you can allow that natural, gentle, emergence, evolving to continue.

And I can ask you what's happening now and you can answer anything that's useful, including nothing because I don't want to try

and pull any words from you. And I'd invite you to not let yourself need to be in some way, held in or held back, but simply to say anything that would be useful, including nothing. And is there something for you to say about that? Good.

And so I wonder if, somewhere in the background, you can allow my voice to be just there somewhere, but primarily if you can allow whatever is happening, whatever is useful for you to continue and I can suggest the idea, really offer the idea. I can invite you, in that experience, to somewhere in your thoughts or your memories, to visualise or revisit some of those really beautiful births that you've been to. Some of those births that you've been to and been part of, where there has been that natural process of everything that needs to happen, happening. Nothing held back, nothing pushed, nothing pulled, nothing prodded, simply an allowing of that naturalness.

And there may be some number of births that you can enjoy revisiting and knowing that those are the births, those are the experiences that have you know that that's the work you want to do. And as that continues, in whatever way that it is and as that emergence continues in any way that it does, you can allow that to take its own time, find its own way. Just like in -- you can allow my words to be wherever they can be useful to you, just let them drift on past and allow anything useful to just be there for you.

And it may seem to you that as this experience is happening, that you can be present to the birthing of that experience, maybe an experience as if you can witness your own birth in a way that is natural and respectful and loving and gentle.

And just like you don't need to say anything, you don't need to listen to me. The experience that you're having is going to be so much more important than anything that I could say or do. In this way you can, as you allow this experience to continue, just know the process has begun, it actually began some time ago. And it can

continue, a bit here, a bit there, a bit now, a bit back then, until that time.

And I don't know if it would please you to imagine that you can hear some music in the background or whether, although you're playing, the words that you spoke and you sat in that chair in relation to me, could in some way be words that you spoke that could be useful in relation to you.

And some of the conversations of lunch this morning, other times other places, just allowing all of that knowing there is nothing that you need to do, nothing that you need to say, nothing that you need to feel in order to have exactly the experience that you are having, which means that the experience that you need to have will be so helpful to you, to healing for you.

Just as Jeff said it's never too late to have a happy childhood, you can also say, even though it might seem like a strange thing to say, but you can still say that it's never too late to have a natural and gentle birth.

You can think anything useful, feel anything helpful, revisit any experience that's healing for you. And even though you might already know in some way, it can be even more really healingly apparent to you and feel so sound to you, as a learning, that your right foot and maybe even more your left foot or perhaps even both your feet can have their own awareness, but your left hand knows so much more.

And you can find out later about just what that experience will be, when your face will have been touched by that right hand. And you can know with absolute certainty that sooner or later your face will have been touched by your right hand. It's going to happen. It doesn't need to be forced up to your face and you don't need to feel

bound to, in any way, impede that natural or thwart that natural or in any way constrain that natural inevitability.

And there can be some very real and deep and thorough comfort in that. And that experience can be so gentle, even if the fingernail can seem hard, could be sharp, could be gentle and your face. Now I don't know, how could I, if it could be enjoyable for you to feel the gentleness of both of those fingernails.

It's nice to see that smile. It's such a gentle smile. That's it. And as that hand can then, only when it's ready, move down away from your face, not constrained by your face or you that it should stay there and not having to feel in any way, forced down out of that situation, just letting that naturalness and the more gentle that realisation is, the more thorough it can be. That's it. That's it.

Is it okay to have those tears? Could you perhaps even enjoy having them, feel the relief of them, the pleasure of them? Do you want a tissue? And simply by you being gentle with yourself in relation to those tears and that whole experience, that's it, and you can allow that hand to be in contact with your face as long as it needs, as long as you can find that useful. And it can be there in an effortless way.

And when it's ready and only when it's ready, can it be time for you to discover, and your cheek might discover before you do, that's it, that's it, it can be such a natural, unhurried, unpressured, uninterfered with, just that natural, gentle progression emerging. That's nice. Just allowing that, nothing to hold back, nothing to push, just allowing, that's it, until that hand can rest so very gently, that's it, and allowing that natural adjustment.

And I don't know if it'll be pleasing for you to imagine that you could find yourself on a hill, overlooking a vista and find something about that, the experience of letting something go, knowing it's

gone, gone, permanently gone. And it can be a relief to let something go to release something that we no longer need, no longer want. And to be on that hill and just be looking out and seeing that space and being in that place of knowing that who you are, how you are, without any constraints, without any need to be pressured.

And I like the way Erickson managed to say that every person is like their fingerprints. They're one of a kind. And you can't change your fingerprints and you don't need to change who you are. It's more a matter of saying to the world, this is me, this is who I am and being that person. You can't change it anyhow, like you can't change your fingerprints was something he liked to say.

Another thing that he used to say that I really appreciate, he said an Indian meets a rattlesnake on the trail and he says to that rattlesnake, you go your way, my little brother and I'll go mine. And each can then go their own ways, gently, respectfully and with dignity.

Now I can't really know exactly or maybe even approximately just what might be useful for you at this moment. And I wonder if it would be all right if you were to just allow for yourself some time for yourself to fully, thoroughly integrate that, complete it, without any need, without any even hint of having to in any way, allow yourself to be held back. And at the same time, to not need or in any way allow you any hint of any sense of being pressured from with outside of yourself or from within. And just let some time go by and you'll know how much. You'll know when.

And when that will have happened, you'll also know what to do to let yourself know that that is the case. That's it. Just being gentle with yourself, that's it. That's it. And even after that emergence to also be so gentle with that new experience.

A new baby's born, you want to be gentle with it. You're going to make it feel welcome, allow it to find its own place, own experience to do what it needs to do. And a new experience can also -- even though I'm not saying anything, it's just that, nothing more or less. Because you have a right to your own experience and this experience has its right, its own right to be experienced by you gently and respectfully in its own right, in such a way that you can know that is right for you.

How are you feeling?

Client: Good.

Rob: Is that okay?

Client: Very okay, yeah.

Rob: Good. And that good feeling is not unfamiliar to you.

Client: It's very different.

Rob: Different?

Client: Mm.

Rob: Okay. It's very different in some ways, there are some similarities to other feelings you've had.

Client: No.

Rob: It's different?

Client: Very different.

Rob: Very different.

Client: Very, very different.

Rob: Okay. It's a new experience for you.

Client: Mm.

Rob: Good. All the more reason to be even more gentle with it and with yourself, with it.

Client: Yeah. Mm.

Rob: And you don't need to say anything about it.

Client: I don't know how to put it into words, I tell you that.

Rob: You don't need to.

Client: Probably more the thing.

Rob: Good. I wouldn't be concerned.

Client: Because there was a whole feeling.

Rob: It's your feeling. It's your experience.

Client: Mm. Pretty amazing, though.

Rob: Well, I guess watching birth of some child or experience or...

Client: Or mine. My birth.

Rob: Your own self, yeah. That is amazing.

Client: Mm.

Rob: Enough to make any person, who's sensitive to that, speechless.

Client: Mm. Yeah.

Rob: Don't -- and when I was in general practice, I don't know how many babies I delivered, but I never got used to it.

Client: No, every one's a miracle, isn't it? Every one of them.

Rob: Every one. And I think it's so lovely the way that you have been so gentle with yourself, the way you're letting yourself come out of hypnosis, quietly and slowly.

Client: Mm. It's almost like you are mind reading, though. I had to laugh when you said something about being out on the, on the hill, looking out at the vista, I thought, how, sort of like, hey, are you peeking? Have you got a tissue?

Rob: [Inaudible 45:23]. You're going to look after yourself there?

Client: I can.

Rob: Good. They're quite strong tissues, those.

Female voice: Take a handful.

Client: Thank you. Oh, they're the large size ones. That's good.

Rob: Is that all right?

Client: Mm.

Rob: You don't need to protect the microphone.

Client: Okay.

Female voice: You missed it anyway.

Client: Good [inaudible 45:49].

Rob: I think you're at the right -- make some noise.

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Do what you need to do. Simply because in your experience, in the presence of your experience, you have a right to experience anything that's right for you.

Client: Mm. Yeah. And it was incredible that, that when I went through that meditation up there, that it halted at that point because that's where this one started, so it was just so lovely. But, and I'll probably cry saying it, but I could feel myself coming through the cervix and there was a point where I thought I'm not going to make it, you know, I'm not going to get out of here.

Rob: Yeah, exactly.

Client: And you just kept saying, come on, you know like you got me out of there. And I knew my hand was coming up and my head had emerged and I knew that nobody else can touch my head, except me. And so it wasn't until I had touched my face that I knew and it had to stay there to nurture it. It was just absolutely beautiful and it like, they're tears of joy and it was just so lovely. And then being lifted up onto my mother's chest rather than being just taken away, was really beautiful.

Rob: You had a very strong image of that.

Client: Mm. And the feelings like associated with me getting myself out, rather than that pulling out.

Rob: And it did feel like you weren't going to make it.

Client: It did. It's a bloody little space to get out of, I tell you what. It was very squashy.

Rob: I know. That's another miracle. You know, you look what comes out of...

Client: I know when my head came out, it was like, whoa, I'm out.

Rob: Yeah.

Client: Yeah. But stayed there for a lot longer time than babies actually do. But I knew that my head couldn't go any further until my hand came up to my face.

Rob: Okay.

Client: And all other hands were off. It was great. No other hands were there. But I know at one stage, before I actually went there and I was on that mountain to start off with, you ended up taking me back to. And whether it was my higher self or whoever it was, came out in a beautiful dark green cloak and I couldn't see her face, but she reached out her arms and held me, held me really tight. It was just absolutely beautiful, the whole thing.

Rob: It was a deep green colour.

Client: Velvet green, deep velvet green. Just beautiful.

Rob: Colour of nature, eh?

Client: Mm. Yeah, yeah. And then she sent me back to go on my journey to come out. Yeah, so thank you. Very special. Yeah, very.

Rob: You're wondering why you still love obstetrics so much.

Client: And why I love it so much.

Rob: Yeah.

Client: Yeah. Very much. Yeah.

Rob: There's such a transformation after the birth, isn't it. I mean, there's all that hard work and sweat and angst and then...

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Peace and quiet. You know, everything's so hot and so sweaty and so effortful and then, there's stillness and coolness and quietness and peace.

Client: And the one thing I've realised with natural birth, which is what I visualised, the amount of work the baby actually does. It's incredible, you know, how I had to negotiate to get out of there was absolutely amazing.

Rob: Yeah, well.

Client: The amount of work that they do.

Rob: When you say it was absolutely amazing and gestalt tells there's no it; there's only me.

Client: Mm, yeah.

Rob: So when you said it was absolutely amazing.

Client: I mean the experience of, not the person itself, like the negotiation itself.

Rob: I understand that, but I'm just [inaudible 50:29].

Client: But yeah, I'm amazing that I made it out there.

Rob: Yeah, exactly, because you were part of the experience.

Client: Yes. Yeah. And it was really nice because my dad was there. And I know my dad, you know, was home waiting for the phone to ring to say I'd been born, you know. So, it was lovely that he was there because I had that very much a closeness with my dad. So it was lovely. Hey, the audience isn't supposed to be crying, you know. Cut it out.

Rob: We're allowed to join in.

Client: Maybe you guys were there too.

Rob: We're allowed to join in.

Client: Yeah. Yeah.

Rob: So, is that a place to stop?

Client: Mm. Yeah, I guess so.

Rob: If there was something more, is there anything more that, that might be -- when you say you guess so, I take that to mean that you...

Client: No, I think we'll stop at the birth, thanks. I don't want the end to be there yet so we'll enjoy the birth for a long time.

Rob: Okay.

Client: Yeah.

Rob: So that's enough for the moment.

Client: I think so.

Rob: Okay. Thanks for trusting us with that [inaudible 51:48]

Client: Yeah, my pleasure. I knew I was in a safe space, so.

hypnosis and psychosomatics

introduction

A woman in her late 30s told me that she had been diagnosed as suffering from ME [Myalgic Encephalomyelitis] now called Chronic Fatigue Syndrome - and that it was an autoimmune disease with no know cure. Her main complaint was of cold hands and feet which she said was a result of poor circulation due to her condition. I invited her to begin to focus on her hands and feet, allowing her attention to meander from one to the other in no particular order, and to be curious about what she could begin to notice in the sensations. Would they begin to tingle, feel numb, even begin to feel warmer, or at least less cold, and to be curious about just how this might begin, how it might continue, how it may evolve.

After several minutes, she looked surprised and then delighted as one of her feet began to feel noticeably warmer - warmer than she could recall, and then, gradually the other foot, then both her hands began to warm up. She was able to learn this experience, and as she got used to it, it became usual for her, and then other symptoms of her condition began to subside - she regained her physical energy, her appetite, and she was able to return to work.

Psyche / soma

Hypnosis has been thought of as useful for changing habits - giving up smoking, losing weight, sleeping better, etc.. It is also recognised as offering a wonderful benefit for pain alleviation but its benefit for changing physiology and physical experiences such as migraine, irritable bowel, high blood pressure, immunity issues and healing in general have not been fully explored.

The limits of our possibilities cannot be known and all too often a cynical "That couldn't happen" prevents an exploration - why bother exploring the impossible?

Over the decades of my clinical practice, I have been recurrently amazed at what clients have been able to do. The woman in the demonstration in this book completely resolved her Carpal Tunnel Syndrome; a participant in a teaching programme some years ago was adamant that the cold he had before a hypnosis session was completely gone afterwards.

Hypnosis and physiology

A therapist in a training programme was wanting to include psychosomatics in his hypnotherapy practice so we explored together how he could experience hypnosis to facilitate physiological changes which he could then apply to any psychosomatic condition.

He was able to experience a variety of physiological changes in temperature, comfort and sensations.



Rob: Is it alright if we record this for teaching?

Client: Yeah, yeah, sure.

Rob: And thanks for that. And you are interested in the idea of using hypnosis for physical problems.

Client: Yes, so for my body-type uses.

Rob: Body things?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: And you mentioned kind of a whole plethora of things, warts and skin conditions.

Client: Warts and all.

Rob: Skin conditions?

Client: Yes.

Rob: What like, itchy skin or eczema or rashes?

Client: Yeah, yeah, that kind of stuff. Yeah. I've got a little bit of that on my elbow, just a small patch.

Rob: A lot of people think - appreciate that hypnosis can be useful for helping with moods, feeling better or feeling stronger or feeling more purposeful or more secure and I think people recognise that hypnosis can be useful for behavioural things, people who do things obsessively or have got habits of smoking or something.

But, I think there's little recognition given to how hypnosis can change physiology. And, for example, if you were to pay attention to your hands at the moment, not to try and do anything in particular with them, but just to notice your hands. And, if you were to pay attention to the sensations in your hands, what you can sense there, I wonder what you might begin to notice, as you focus on whatever is happening in your hands, and then allow yourself to become absorbed in that.

Some people report that, just by paying attention to their hands, or their feet or whatever that, but in this case, your hands a lot of people notice a certain kind of tingling or buzzing or something. What are you starting to notice **[inaudible 02:13]**?

Client: One thing that's relevant because I get cold hands and feet so we can do maybe hypnosis on that, you know...

Rob: I can.

Client: A bit of like **[inaudible 02:21]**.

Rob: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So, you're noticing your hands now, what do you start...

Client: There's this cold sensations in the fingers.

Rob: The cold, yes.

Client: And also in my feet and sort of around toes and on top of the front half the foot.

Rob: Around the toes and front half of the foot.

Client: Yeah.

Rob: More on the top or the sole of your foot?

Client: More on top and around the toes I think.

Rob: More on the left or the right?

Client: I'm [inaudible 02:51]. Yeah, the right.

Rob: This one?

Client: Yeah, that one.

Rob: This one. I don't know what you call it, but this one.

Client: Yeah, that one.

Rob: OK, so if you were to notice...

Client: The other one feels more cold, but this one feels a bit numb.

Rob: OK, so if you can notice the coldness in the front and the top and the underside of that foot and the numbness in that foot. And what do you notice about your hands?

Client: Well, I wasn't paying attention to [inaudible 03:27], so.

Rob: No. And now, when you pay attention to your hands, what do you notice then?

Client: I think it's a little bit warmer, but this finger is cold; freezing.

Rob: So your little - that little finger is freezing.

Client: Yeah.

Rob: But the rest of that hand is warmer?

Client: It's not too - yeah, it's...

Rob: It's not as cold?

Client: It's not as cold, but it's cold.

Rob: Maybe even [inaudible 03:50].

Client: It's cold on the fingertips.

Rob: It's cold on the fingertips, but further back on your hand, up toward your wrist.

Client: It's a bit warmer, yeah.

Rob: Warmer. And your left hand?

Client: That's the thing. It's a bit warmer than the right hand.

Rob: Your left hands a bit warmer.

Client: But, it's also cold on the, sort of like from the joints.

Rob: Yeah, OK. So there's a coldness on the end joints of your both hands?

Client: This one is not as cold as this one.

Rob: Yeah. And this one is little colder than that and that one's a little warmer than this.

Client: Yeah.

Rob: So, if you were to just notice the back of your left hand, and again, not trying to do anything, but just allow your awareness to be on your left hand and the back of your left hand up towards your wrist, between your knuckles and your wrist. And if you were to notice that, and anyone observing, the skin of your, the back of your left hand, then maybe you'd even like to just watch that without moving your hand and see that the veins on the back of your left hand are starting to be just a little more prominent, more prominent than your right hand.

And often, as the veins are becoming more prominent, it's an indication of increasing circulation, which of course, increases the warmth. And, if you were to just observe, just notice, that tendency through that part of your hand to feel just a little warmer than it already is, warmer than your other hand, and just be an interested observer of the way that is happening then you can begin to wonder how that begin to spread.

Because your hands know a lot better than you do about how they can feel warmed, you've had many experiences, more than you can recall, of being outside on a winters day and your hands being cold, and your hands have learnt how to do that. And they've also learnt the experience of when you come inside and you warm your hands up in front of the fire or a heater or in warm water and your hands warm up. They know the feeling of feeling warmer.

Now that's a learning that you have I could say metaphorically that your hands have learnt that. And what I'm saying is that you don't need to know how you can intentionally warm your hands up, but you have had the experience many, many times. And, as you allow that awareness of the warmth, the memory of the warmth, just to allow that.

I don't know just how soon that warmth can begin to spread down that hand, towards the tips of your fingers. And it can begin to spread somehow into the other hand, down toward the tips of those fingers. And, I don't know if the little finger on your right hand is going to be the last to feel warm.

And just how that warmth can begin to spread down into your foot nearest me, how it can begin to spread into the other foot. It might start around your ankle and then just begin to very, very gradually radiate through your feet. I don't know whether it will feel warmer on the top of your foot and spread to the underside of your foot or whether you'll notice on the underside of your foot and then it can spread to the top of your foot or whether there's something in the numbness in that other foot.

But, there's nothing that you need to do, nothing that you need to try to accomplish. It's simply a matter of allowing that process and I noticed you closed your eyes and your breathing is showing that slowness. Your alteration of dept, the muscles of your face have smoothed out. And while that process is happening, you can allow that to continue at any rate that it is happening.

And I can tell you some other things and you going to listen to me or notice the warmth spreading or let your mind go anywhere, perhaps to some very pleasing, very enjoyable, very satisfying experience and whether that's going to also spread to your right elbow.

Last year in Melbourne, one of the people in your workshop asked if I would see his wife. She was interested to see if hypnosis could help with a problem that she was having with her hands. She was getting numbness and pain in both of her hands. And strangely, her sister, who was having the same, had had the same kind of situation, her sister had been diagnosed as carpal tunnel, had an operation and had rather some benefits, but not as much as she wanted.

This woman didn't want an operation. And, I asked her what she liked doing. She liked gardening, roses in particular and she liked drawing roses in particular. And she liked to draw roses, other flowers too, but roses in particular, with colour pencils. And the particular rose that she liked to draw was a pink rose, a kind of warm pink rose.

And, she spoke about how she would draw. She would draw the outline very faintly in a neutral colour and then gradually fill in the space in the outline, with that warm pink coloration. Now, I don't remember all the details, but she said that she felt very pleased, very hopeful after that session.

And, I said to her I don't know how or even if this can be helpful. I know it's possible. And I didn't hear about her situation until earlier this year and Neil came back to the workshop just for a revisit. His wife came with him on the first day and beaming. She

said, my hands have been normal. It took about a month, but since then, my hands have been totally normal; no pain, no numbness.

And she gave me a gift. It was a framed coloured drawing of a warm pink rose held in a hand like this hand was offering this rose like a gift. And she said, I'd like you to have this gift and I'd like you to know, that's my hand.

Now, I have that framed picture at home and it's a very lovely drawing of this beautiful warm pink rose in this very healthy looking hand. Now I really don't know how all of that happened for her in such a way that the pain went, the numbness went. Things are completely normal now, better than normal.

Now, while I've been talking, you've been doing what you've been doing and I'm wondering what changes you can notice in your hands, what alterations you can become aware of in your feet. And I'm wondering what are you beginning to notice David? What's happening as you're in this?

Client: My left hand's warmer, a lot warmer.

Rob: A lot warmer?

Client: Well, just normal. It feels comfortable.

Rob: Normal. And has the normal, comfortable feeling spread to the tips of your fingers?

Client: Hmm.

Rob: Ah.

Client: And the right hand's kind of almost there, but the little finger is still a little bit cold, I think.

Rob: It's a little bit cold?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: It was frozen before.

Client: Yeah. And obviously its not that I'm - I don't know. It just seems to be normal now.

Rob: Normal. Well, I hope it doesn't get too hot. It would be awful to have a – you know, if it gets too hot, you can have a kind of burning, itchy kind of feel. You wouldn't want to go that far.

Client: Yeah. No, it's not that.

Rob: So what's happening with your feet?

Client: Feet are still cold, a little bit warmer than before.

Rob: They're warmer than before?

Client: Yeah, I feel more comfortable.

Rob: More comfortable?

Client: But in the meantime, I had a sore - I always have sore neck here.

Rob: You've always had a sore neck, except when you don't.

Client: And now it's kind of eased up a bit also.

Rob: It's eased up a bit?

Client: Yeah. Oh, and it feels more comfortable.

Rob: It feels more comfortable? So, you're...

Client: I mean it's still there, **[inaudible 16:42]**.

Rob: Ah, still there?

Client: But, not - you know, if I tested it, it's there, but if I **[inaudible 16:47]**.

Rob: Ah, OK. So, as long as you don't test it, it's as if it's not there?

Client: Well, if I stretch it **[inaudible 16:57]**.

Rob: Oh, yeah. But, if you don't stretch it, just leave it how it is?

Client: It feels much better than before.

Rob: So, it's much better?

Client: So it was very - it was tight.

Rob: It feels better and also more comfortable? And did you just say even your little finger is now feeling warmer?

Client: Hmm. The left hand is starting to feel warmer and not just neutral.

Rob: It's starting to feel warm, not just neutral?

Client: Hmm

Rob: Goodness, we better slow this process down, David otherwise we're in big trouble. And when that...

Client: The foot is still kind of cold. I'd like them warmer.

Rob: They're kind of cold and you would like them warmer?

Client: Uh-huh.

Rob: But they're not as cold as they were?

Client: No, [inaudible 17:55].

Rob: And your right hand's kind of neutral or a bit warmer than neutral?

Client: It's starting to warm, yeah, more sort of over the neutral towards warm.

Rob: Over neutral? Who!

So I wonder just how soon you think – my prediction is that your left foot is going to feel warm before your right foot was colder. Now, you could be surprised that your little finger in your right hand was the last finger to feel warm and it was the coldest. So it may have taken longer to warm up because it was colder.

Client: Hmm.

Rob: And your left foot already was warmer than your right foot.

Client: Hmm.

Rob: So you might expect it to feel warmer first. And then your right foot can follow that.

Client: I've had this pair of really nice UGG boots at home and when I come home, I usually work late because I've got late appointments. I come home and my feet often are very cold and I just then put the UGG boots on and very quickly then within half an hour, they're warmer.

Rob: Ah, OK. And you know the feeling of the UGG boots? But not only knowing that they are going to warm up...

Client: I kind of look forward to it.

Rob: Yeah. Is there some other feeling that you get with those UGG boots. Its not just warm, is it? There's some particular kind of comfort? And do you notice that, as you feel the comfort, the more comfortable you feel, the warmer your feet can be?

And in some way that can spread to your right elbow. In some way it can spread to your neck without you needing to pay attention to that or even trying to test it and just letting that warmth radiate because warmth does radiate. And just letting that, letting that experience, like when we were sitting outside before, that sun was so warming. You didn't need to do anything just to absorb that warmth.

And, like those UGG boots that you put on, when you put your feet into the UGG boots and even before they start to feel warm, there's that feeling of comfort. And it's as if somehow those UGG boots radiate warmth to your feet. Actually it's your feet radiating to the UGG boots, which radiate to your feet. But in any case, that feeling of warmth can move, can shift, can spread. And all you need to do is to allow that. And as you sit with that warming experience, it can also be an opportunity for you to really learn that warm feeling to become even better acquainted with it.

I don't know whether you ever played [so high water], as a kid? You hide something.

Client: Hmm.

Rob: And then other people try and find it and when they get closer to it, you say warmer, warmer, warmer. And when they get further away, you say colder, colder, colder, warmer, colder, warmer, warmer, colder. And when you looking for this [ruin], you were walking up there, getting colder and colder. And, then so high water, as you found M, M found you, started to move towards here, you started to feel warmer, finding what you were looking for. And what's happening in your left foot now?

Client: It's sort of feeling it's charged as if it's more like kind of tingling.

Rob: Tingling?

Client: There's still a bit of cold in there, but it's...

Rob: A bit of cold?

Client: Yeah, but it's more like there's something happening there.

Rob: Something is happening there. Yeah. And have you noticed that warmth in your right foot yet?

Client: It's not on the warm side, but in the [inaudible 23:38] it's still numb.

Rob: It's less cold than it was?

Client: It's less cold than it was.

Rob: It's less cold. Yes.

Client: It's - kind of feels a bit more alive than numb.

Rob: More alive than numb. And do you notice that, as it feels less numb and more alive that that's like setting it up to feeling warmer. It's like when you put your UGG boots on, your feet are not warm instantly, but are setting up the warmth.

Client: But [the state is] that my lower legs were also kind of cold from the knee down.

Rob: And the left hand is starting to feel less cold and...

Client: Well I didn't really think about it. The legs **[inaudible 24:27]**.

Rob: Ah, hmm. Now I don't know, as you're doing this, if you can start to appreciate how helpful this can be for other circulatory problems that people might bring you. With Reynaud's phenomenon, for example, as you mentioned, which is just a strange sensitivity, that a foot feels cold and then the blood vessels get sensitised to the cold and they close down. The colder it is, the more they close down. The more they closed down, the colder it is.

So, if you can help someone then to feel warmer, to be more comfortable, more at ease, then that allows the blood vessels to begin to open. The more they open, the warmer it is. The warmer it is, the more the blood vessels open. And other circulation problems, like migraine, you see this can be helpful for that. Not only the sensations, but the alteration of the actual circulation.

Client: That's what I used to do when my friend opened a place **[inaudible 25:57]**.

Rob: Yeah, exactly. Exactly. About 12 years ago, someone in a workshop, we were just playing - I may have mentioned this - told me he thought he was getting a cold. So he had hypnotic experience and mostly we focused on what it was like when he'd had a cold and started to feel better, started to know the cold was leaving. And he reported certain sensations that he was aware of in his nose and his throat that let him know that the cold was leaving. And at the end of that session, there was no sign of the cold.

Now, he could look back and say yeah, yeah I don't know. Perhaps he wasn't a new cold. But, he was very certain that he was getting a cold. But at the end of that time, there was no sign of it. The cold had gone completely.

And I had another similar situation with someone earlier this year, in a workshop in **[inaudible 27:29]**. Now, I'm not recommending hypnosis is a way of getting rid of a cold, but you just don't know what we are capable of doing. We don't know the limits of what we

can do, just like that person that you mentioned, that was able to remember kung fu movies. Anyone can remember warm movies, and feel warmed by warm movies and playing warm movies again, feel warm.

And there was a singer, and I can't remember her name, and she was married to a pianist. I think his name was Johnny Dankworth and I think her first name was Chloe. I can't remember her name. She'd been trained as a classical singer. And one of the songs that she used to sing regularly was called *Feel The Warm*. Cleo Laine, *Feel The Warm*.

And I wonder what would happen, David, if you let your eyes open without disturbing anything. That's it. And to have your eyes open and know that we can have a conversation with your eyes open and you can allow that process to continue as it is, and the warmth increasing at its own place. You don't have to push it or hurry it. Just allow it to happen. And even after we finish this session, that warmth can continue to increase.

You don't need to intentionally focus on it. You just might notice, from time to time, ah, it's still continuing. And it might even be fun, from time to time, to notice that the warmth isn't there and then just see how you can let it come back. Like the pleasure of putting those UGG boots on, you can just look forward that.

Client: Hmm.

Rob: Because, if there wasn't the cold, there wouldn't be the pleasure of the UGG boots. It's nice to have a range of experiences. And what's happening with your feet now?

Client: Well, they're warmer than before.

Rob: They're warmer than before.

Client: But still, I'm cold this side of the [inaudible 31:43].

Rob: Ah, OK. And your hands?

Client: Hands are warm, yeah.

Rob: Hands are warm?

Client: Well, kind of neutral or [inaudible 31:50] warm, yeah.

Rob: They're less cold, more neutral?

Client: We'll sort of they're on the warmer side.

Rob: They're on the warmer side of neutral?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: How have you done that?

Client: You talked me into it.

Rob: I talked you into it? OK.

Client: It feels just really good.

Rob: If I can talk you into things, I hope you brought your cheque book.

Client: I did.

Rob: Ah. Have I talked you into that?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: OK.

Client: I think the last email.

Rob: I think all you need to do is add a couple of noughts and we'll all be happy.

Client: You won't be happy when it bounces.

Rob: Ah, just trying to warm up to that.

Client: Yeah. Thank you for that.

Rob: Yeah, it's a pleasure. Anything more that you might want to add?

Client: Well, I mean, the extra bonus is the...

Rob: Yeah.

Client: Relax sort of. I mean its still there, but I'm not conscious of it. **[Inaudible 32:45]**.

Rob: Yeah, well your brain's still there, but you don't need to be conscious of that for it to be doing what it needs to either.

Client: Yeah. Thank you that.

Rob: Thanks for being willing to play.

Client: Sure.

Rob: And I invite you to wonder how that can translate into the work that you're wanting to do. Don't know yet.

Client: Well, one thing that kind of struck me was these comparisons, you know, show this against that and...

Rob: Hmm.

Client: And it's kind of like it becomes more a dynamic rather than just [inaudible 33:27].

Rob: OK. Alright. Shall we stop?

Client: OK, yeah.

Rob: Thanks, David.

Resolution of a case of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

A woman had the classical symptoms of Carpel Tunnel Syndrome, and was able to create a total resolution of all her symptoms which has persisted for more than two years.

Her sister, who had a similar problem, had surgery with less than optimal results.

This demonstration is offered, not as a recommended approach to this syndrome, but rather to show what may be possible - something that we can only discover after the event.



Rob: So firstly, thanks for being willing to be a part of this.

Client: That's okay.

Rob: And as I mentioned, this is part of a teaching programme and so you've signed the form, but just for the record here, is it okay if we make a video of this for the teaching process?

Client: It's fine. It's fine, yes.

Rob: And do my very best to make it useful, of course, but I'm not promising that I will be able to do anything. I think I only promise it won't be worse. I think that's something I could fully guarantee. But all we can do is do what we can. And we're expecting that this is at least something for you, but we can't be sure yet just how useful it will be.

And it's apparent to me already our potential use for this is going to be because you've got a way of really paying attention, really focusing. You know how to focus and get absorbed in this. That's very apparent already to me.

So can you tell us a little since I haven't met you before? Tell us a little bit about yourself, what sorts of things you like to do, what sorts of things are pleasing to you or fun for you, that are [inaudible 01:24].

Client: I love gardening.

Rob: Gardening? Good.

Client: I love drawing.

Rob: Drawing.

Client: I love bright colours.

Rob: Okay. And what sort of gardening?

Client: All sorts, but mainly vegetables and flowers. I love roses and bright flowers.

Rob: Roses, okay. Any particular roses that you...?

Client: Ones that smell nice and probably pale pink or deep red.

Rob: I came across a marvellous rose last year in Tasmania called Abraham Darby.

Client: Yeah, it's a yellow one, isn't it?

Rob: No.

Client: Yeah, it's a David Austin rose.

Rob: Yeah. And I took a photo of it and went hunting and we just planted two of them early this year. One of them has got leaves on it and it looks pretty good. The other one's just sitting there. I don't know how they do, but how long should I wait for it to just sit there before it starts to do something, do you think? Or do you think we don't know.

Client: Has it got any signs of growth on it or is it green?

Rob: No, it's just got a couple of sticks and they're kind of green and there are things that look a little bit like buds, but they're just not doing anything.

Client: But what's the other one doing?

Rob: It's got leaves.

Client: Okay. No sign of growth, no? [Inaudible 02:42].

Rob: Not, no. Yeah.

Client: I'd leave it for a little while.

Rob: Yeah. That's the advice I'd been given. I'm impatient. I'm inclined to want to dig it up and see whether it's growing.

Client: No, just leave it and see what happens. Just I think it's slower than the other one.

Rob: Yeah. Another month maybe?

Client: Wait until the other one's probably fully in flower, maybe until next season.

Rob: Oh, really?

Client: Maybe, yeah.

Rob: Okay.

Client: It's not hurting anyone just sitting there.

Rob: Okay, that's true. Alright. And you said you liked drawing?

Client: Yes.

Rob: What do you draw?

Client: Would it surprise you if I said flowers?

Rob: Okay. And do you draw them in pencil and then colour them in?

Client: I used coloured pencil.

Rob: I see.

Client: Quite detailed. I've done a course in botanical art, but I like acrylics too.

Rob: Acrylic what?

Client: Acrylic paint, yeah. So it's not so detailed.

Rob: Alright. And when you're doing that, do you do an outline and fill it in or do you just [inaudible 03:46].

Client: I usually take photos and work from photos and just enlarge it to the situation.

Rob: Okay, yeah. And you just put the acrylic straight on. You don't sort of draw and fill in or do you [inaudible 04:00].

Client: Yes, that's right. I do a rough outline and then what am I going to do.

Rob: In pencil or with what do you do the outlining?

Client: Maybe pastel.

Rob: Okay. So in kind of the colour that it's going to be?

Client: No, just a light colour so it doesn't show through when I put the paint on.

Rob: I see. Okay. And roses mostly or different flowers?

Client: No, I have done a few. I've done a few landscapes and a few portraits as well, but the portraits have been in pencil so they're quite detailed.

Rob: Amazing. My wife does some sketches. She's very good and mostly pencil. She sort of sits there and [inaudible 04:43].

Client: So from life, yeah.

Rob: So from life, just by pencil.

Client: That's good.

Rob: She says she's no good, but she does a brilliant [inaudible 04:48]. It's amazing to watch. And she, like you, she is very - there's an ability to really get into the process, into the experience of drawing. When she's doing that, I think the house could fall around her because she gets so absorbed in it and I think you know how to do that.

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. And you said that - Neil [her husband] said that you had some problem with your wrists and discomfort or something. What's happening there?

Client: My fingers are just tingly all the time, non-stop since from about January.

Rob: Just this year?

Client: Just this year, but I think I have noticed the pain before when I've done a lot of heavy gardening.

Rob: Oh, yes. The pain, you said where do you get that?

Client: Well I used to get the pain quite badly in my arms if I lay on my side in bed. So I could only lie on my back. That seems to have gone a bit. It's just - I notice it more when I get really tense in my shoulders and it goes down my arms. But my fingers are always tingly and sort of a bit numb on the ends. So I can't feel detail properly.

Rob: So the pain was there. And that's not there or not troubling you or you're not sure?

Client: Yeah and I have this constant, constant ache on my shoulders and down there. And my fingers are...

Rob: And this is worse when you get tense and better when what? When you...?

Client: If I'm relaxed. But I don't think I'm not relaxed very often.

Rob: Okay. Well that might be something that could have at least some influence. Not necessarily cured, but maybe, but it might be useful if you would be able to more relaxed so that there would be less tension in your shoulders. That might be something that would be useful.

But there's something happening in your fingers. This is just since January this sort of numbness, you said.

Client: I think I've had it a little bit before. It's just tingly and sort of that tingly numbness sort of, when you get pins and needles in your fingers. And I can't, if I want to pick up a piece of paper to turn pages in the book, I found it very difficult to separate the pages. I can't find the detail, you know, the fine sense of touch.

Rob: Yeah, I see. Yes, I understand.

Client: Or feel bumps on a surface, yeah.

Rob: Yeah, so some of those fine distinctions are sort of not...

Client: And that's just non-stop, yeah; constant, yeah.

Rob: Okay. And does that vary. Is that worse sometimes, not so bad other times?

Client: It's the same all the time.

Rob: Same all the time. It doesn't change if you're doing a lot of hard work or gardening or it's not bearable in the warm - when the weather's warm again.

Client: No, that's there all the time, not being able to feel the detail.

Rob: All the time. It's constant. Yeah. Now what would your hopes be for - if we could do something here?

Client: I'd like to get that tingling to go away.

Rob: And what would you like to be there instead of the tingling?

Client: Just how it used to be years ago.

Rob: Okay. That's what you'd like.

Client: Yeah, just to have that feeling go away.

Rob: Yeah, and have them be how they used to be.

Client: Yeah, but probably years and years ago. It's probably just been creeping up on me I think.

Rob: Okay. Well, you know, problems can creep up on you and solutions can creep up on you and things can happen quickly or slowly. And also something can creep up on you and arrive very slowly, but it can leave very quickly.

You know, my rose might take a year to flower, but once it flowers, you know, it can lose all its leaves in winter pretty quickly. So no matter how long it takes in coming, it can go quickly as well. So a connection there between how quickly something comes, how slowly it comes and how quickly it can go. It seems that there's no relationship between those two.

Alright. And if you couldn't get the normal sensations back by the time you leave here today - I'm not saying that's not possible, by the way. I don't know. I actually don't know. I'm not very good for telling the future. But, if you had something less than immediate return of normal sensations that you used to have years ago, what would you settle for? What would be acceptable there?

Client: Well my fingers, just - I'm not sure. Just so I could - just so that it's less so I could...

Rob: Okay.

Client: So I could feel things better, just so the tingling would go away even if it's every now and again, just so I could feel things properly.

Rob: Very good. Okay. Neil mentioned - or maybe you'd said to him about carpal tunnel. Is that something that you've had some advice about or is that something that you think it might be?

Client: I think Neil's mentioned it could be that because he [inaudible 10:27]. And my sister has had it and she's had operations on both hands and she's told me her symptoms.

Rob: Oh, yeah, okay. So are you wondering about the possibility of surgery?

Client: Yeah, but I - no, I don't want to have surgery.

Rob: That's it, no.

Client: No, I won't. I'd like just the body to heal itself without...

Rob: Yeah. Did your sister help with the surgery or make any difference or...?

Client: It did for a bit, but she's a dentist so she needs to do that fine movement. So she needed to have her hand operated to be better. She said one hand's worse in the thumb there and the bone is rubbing in the bone. So she might have to have another operation for that.

Rob: Okay. And that - does the tingling and the lack of sensations and the numbness, does that interfere with your drawing?

Client: No.

Rob: It doesn't sound like it, no. It doesn't interfere with your gardening.

Client: I can't do as much as I want to, no.

Rob: Well, welcome to the club, you know.

Client: I know.

Rob: Ashleigh Brilliant said "All I ever want from life is a bit more than I'll ever get".

Client: The whole time.

Rob: Yeah. There's not much [inaudible 11:44]. And I'm curious too that, although when you get tense, this is worse. When you relax, that's not so bad, but the teaching doesn't do anything to the tingling. That's...

Client: I think in my arm's pain, if I lie on my side like in bed, that will go all numb.

Rob: Yeah, but that doesn't seem to influence...

Client: And then my fingers will go numb as well. My hands will go numb.

Rob: Okay.

Client: But that hasn't happened as much lately since Neil did a lot of massage on my - and I've read a book about carpal tunnel exercises. So I've been doing some stretching exercises.

Rob: Oh, I'm glad you're seeing me today because it looks like you're already on the way.

Client: I want to get better, yeah.

Rob: And if you do something today or nothing, it might seem like your cure's got something to do with me. It might be good for my reputation. Who wouldn't like to work with people who are already on the mend and it's sort of like I'm doing something.

But I think you know very well that whatever anyone does, the healing will happen with you, not with - so all we can do here and all that's necessary here is to somehow facilitate or amplify or somehow encourage a process that sounds like it's already happening. If we can have that happen a little more rapidly or a little bit more easily or a bit more something then that might be a useful process. And so [inaudible 13:17].

Okay, so have you had anything to do with hypnosis before or is that something - have you done any meditation or...?

Client: I've done yoga for a lot of years and we just did the relaxation at the end and I really enjoyed that.

Rob: Yeah and you're good at it. I don't know whether you noticed that, even as you said, you did the relaxation, there was a kind of a - yeah.

Client: Well it's my favourite part, yeah.

Rob: Even you can say [inaudible 13:40]. Yeah. But it was just saying that somehow you - that started. And there's a smile saying that you're kind of recognising that feeling. Are you still doing that yoga?

Client: No, my teacher retired and so I stopped going. And she was very good and...

Rob: So you're not going to the classes, but you loved the feeling and, if you can understand what I mean, your body, your shoulders have learnt that. And if you were to just allow your shoulders to remember that that's that feeling, it's actually very easy for you. And I don't know when you were doing it.

Client: In my face.

Rob: Yeah, when you were doing the class whether you used to close your eyes.

Client: Yes.

Rob: So if that would help you, please feel free to just let your eyes do what they need to do. If they want to close, that's good. They don't have to, of course. That really doesn't matter, but if you can just allow the memory of the relaxation from those classes, a memory that we could say the memory is in your shoulders, just as a way of speaking.

So you don't need to actively try to remember anything, but simply allow your shoulders, your neck, your arms, to have an opportunity to show you that that memory is there and that it's good. And then just letting that somehow continue.

And if there's some way that you can focus on that absorption, that relaxation in a natural, effortless way and that relaxation can just increase of its own, natural accord, that's good. And then, as you allow that to continue, you can notice that I'm talking, but actually what I'm saying is very unimportant, just like your yoga teacher had some ideas and helped you to learn, but it was what you learnt that was important.

So you don't need to listen to me or my words. You can know that I'm talking and just allow my voice to be in the background and already I can see some indication that you are letting yourself become more absorbed in the subtle changes, your breathing, just that little bit slower, deeper.

The muscles of your face are smoothing out. That's it. And apart from that hand and a lot of immobility in your body and I don't know when you'd be ready to let your eyes close all the way down, but you might find that, that relaxation, that's it.

I don't know whether it will start in your shoulders and spread down your arms or whether you might notice something happening in your feet as well and whether it will be relaxation or a feeling of increasing comfort or a sense of wellbeing or a feeling of letting go of something, a kind of healing, just letting your body. That's it.

And as you're allowing this experience to continue going, I can't emphasise enough that is really nothing you need to do. There is no effort required. Take all the time you need just allowing the [inaudible 18:34]. And that feeling of relaxation can start somewhere, anywhere, and it can spread, take its own time, find its own way.

And I don't know in your yoga class whether you used to let the relaxation start from the tips of your toes and spread upwards or on top of your head and spread downwards or a feeling that could start right in the solar plexus and radiate outwards. But in whatever way that can happen, it can. Just let that feeling, that experience of relaxation spread as you allow yourself to become more absorbed in remembering that feeling and re-experiencing it. That's right.

And you can let your eyes close and feel the relief when you let them close, rest them for a time, let that feeling of relaxation spread to your eyes. And just as you can take your time with that and getting the feeling of that, it can be something happening in your hands, something happening in your emotions, something happening in your shoulders and you don't need to speak about anything you don't want to speak about.

But while it's happening, can you really feel that tension? And as you're feeling that and when you do that and you release that, what happens then? What happens to your shoulders? Is it alright to have this feeling?

Client: Yeah, I just want to get it out.

Rob: You do?

Client: Instead I'm holding it in.

Rob: Yeah, that's right. And I don't know if this is the place for you to let it out. I don't know. You're very welcome to, as far as I'm concerned, but you're in a strange situation. I don't know if that's alright for you. But I can know from my experience that, when you have - a person has been holding something in...

Client: Forever.

Rob: Forever, there are different ways of letting it out and you don't have to let all of it out all at once. You can let it out little by little. You can let it out in ways that you're aware of and you can let it out in ways that don't even know that you are.

A person can have a dream in which they, as they're sleeping, they're still, they're silent, comfortable, warm and they can have a dream that they're walking in the snow and they're freezing and yet they're warm. They can have a dream that they're screaming and yelling and smashing, but they're silent and still.

And the beautiful thing about dreaming like that is that you don't even need to remember what it was that you dreamt about. And in the experience that you're having now, I don't know whether you know that as you're experiencing this, you are already starting to let go of something. Do you have an awareness of that that just somehow saying that, somehow when you smashed your hands together, you were starting to express that?

Now I don't know, as you're doing that, whether there's some change that you can notice in your shoulders yet, whether letting go of that starting, not necessarily all at once, means that you don't need to hold that in your shoulders and your arms. Just as you don't need to let it all go all at once, you don't need to hang onto it either because you can hang onto some things and let go of others.

You can hang onto something and let it go. You can express it and not have to express it. Does that make sense to you what I'm saying?

Now are you doing everything right now, Karen, that you need to do to allow that letting go, which has already begun as you can just allow that to continue in its own way? And just as you could remember that relaxation from the yoga and allow yourself to feel the way that, by relaxing that degree that allowed you start to let go of that strong emotion, by remembering the relaxation. Do you know what I mean?

And on the same way that you are able to remember that relaxation, at the same time and in the same way, without really needing to do anything, just as your shoulders could begin to remember the relaxation and let you express that feeling, the tips of your fingers can begin to remember the feeling of the sensations that they used to do.

And it may be that in some way, like in your mind's eye, you could begin to have an image of your hands. Just as you might draw a flower, you could perhaps begin in some way to have an image of your fingers that you could draw an outline in the pale crayon, pale pastel and maybe see a very pale outline.

And perhaps imagine that, as you draw that pale outline, that your fingers, that your hands could be rather numb and just an outline. And then somehow, and I don't know how you can translate this into your experience, you could begin to fill in the outline. Fill it in with colour pencil or with acrylic and just somehow imagine that, as you fill the outlines in and after a while you perhaps don't notice the outline because it was pale pastel.

And as you fill that in with acrylic, some of those sensations begin to have colour. Instead of being empty shapes, they start to have colour and texture, different shades and different - I don't know what I'm talking about. But just as you can paint, say, a rose and you use the colours in such a way that it looks like a rose, not just like an outline, you could paint your fingers so that they could, as you do that, begin to remember the texture as you see them how they feel.

And as I'm talking about painting, like painting a rose or painting your fingers, what images do you have in your mind, Karen? What are you seeing at the moment?

Client: Nothing, really.

Rob: No. So I can say words and they come from me and I've got no way of knowing how you can make any sense of that, if it makes any sense at all. But what's happening for you at the moment? How are you feeling right now?

Client: A bit more relaxed.

Rob: A bit more relaxed, yes. And I wonder if, as you allow that process, whatever that is, however that's happening, that's allowed you to be a bit more relaxed to just continue. And little by little, perhaps in tiny, tiny amounts, with each breath, letting go of something because each time you breathe out, there is a letting go.

Breathing in takes effort. You have to lift your chest, you lift your shoulders. There's effort involved in breathing in, but breathing out is letting go. It's effortless and even some subtle relief and release and breathing out is something that you can do any time, day or night whether you're awake, whether you're asleep, whether you're aware of breathing out or whether you're unaware of breathing out.

And it's not at all important to know just what it is exactly that you're letting go of. The composition of the air, how much oxygen, how much nitrogen, how much carbon dioxide in the air that you breathe out, is totally unimportant, but you can have the experience, the relief. You can have the benefit. You can have the healing of letting - that's it - letting that breath, just letting it go.

And are you aware yet that you are just a little more relaxed than you were where you were a little more relaxed than before.

Client: A little bit.

Rob: A little bit. You don't have to relax everything all at once. But can you notice that you can have that relief of knowing that you can be a little more relaxed? That's it. And if you can be a little more relaxed then you can be even a little more relaxed.

And with each breath, you can let go of such a tiny, tiny amount, just like watching a rose grow or any of the vegetables grow. You can't see them growing as you watch them, but if you look the next day, the next week, the next month then you see that growing rose changing, that process has been there. And you only notice that it has been there afterwards.

And so my invitation for you is to simply allow the experience that had begun before you came here today, the experience that somehow you are able to facilitate quite intensely letting go of something that you've been hanging onto seemingly forever and just letting that process, letting it go. And that can, in a way that I don't think will surprise you, add to your comfort around - and relaxation around your shoulders and upper arms.

And I can talk about drawing fingers, but they are words that come from me. You've got your ways of healing that you have experienced many, many times more than you can say and you don't need to speak about it or even understand it to know that it can happen and has happened and look forward to its continuing.

And in my opinion, your hands, your fingers, have got way better outcome of getting their normal sensations back, a way better likelihood than my rose that's just sitting there. And yet, I think it might, I think its possible, but it is my opinion. It's only my opinion, but I'm allowed to have my opinion.

Now I have a medical background that has some relevance to my opinion that your hands can find their own way of healing and that those sensations can, normal sensations, can creep up on you. And they may creep up on you so slowly that sometimes you'll think that nothing is happening, but it is.

And so I'm wondering, would it be agreeable to you if you were to really look out for the first signs of increasing sensitivities in your fingers. Would you be willing to look out for that?

Client: Yes.

Rob: And to know that even when you notice those sensations for the first time, they will have been increasing for some time before you notice them. Just like a rose when the bud bursts, it has been growing in that bud before you see the bursting. Do you know what I mean?

Client: Uh-huh.

Rob: So I think it might be very nice if you were to be in some way as attentive as you can to the very first hint. And it might surprise you. It might be in your little finger in your right hand or your thumb of your left hand or it might be some interesting sensation in the palm of one of your hands or some subtle alteration in the way that the tingling is there, that it's a little different, that it feels warmer or cooler or some way different.

Client: It feels warmer.

Rob: It feels warmer already?

Client: Uh-huh. On the tops of my hands.

Rob: On the tops?

Client: Even though they feel cold, they feel warmer.

Rob: Even though they feel cold...

Client: They feel - the skin feels cold.

Rob: They feel cold, but they feel warmer.

Client: But there's this warm sensation.

Rob: Yeah. Where did that come from?

Client: I don't know.

Rob: No. And in a way, you don't care where it came from, but it's beautiful to know that that has come. And if you can notice the warm sensations without trying to explain it or understand it or any of that, to just appreciate it and wonder what will happen next.

Client: They'll get better.

Rob: They'll get better. And when will you start to notice it on the pads, the tips of your fingers?

Client: Very soon.

Rob: Okay.

Client: Before I walk out the door.

Rob: Well, I don't know. No one's going to be walking on water here.

Client: I'm only joking.

Rob: Yeah. So I think it's important that, although you're naturally impatient to have things good, it's just natural. Like I'm impatient for that rose to grow, but I think if I were to dig it up to see whether it's...

Client: I'd get another rose.

Rob: I've got another one. I've got two. I think I should get a third one.

Client: No, just pull the other out and put it somewhere else.

Rob: Oh, dear. Alright. Well I'm not going to take that rose just yet.

Client: Not really, no, no.

Rob: I'm thinking about it, but I'm resisting.

Client: No, I'd leave it there.

Rob: My impatience wants it to happen, but I'm going to be patient and just see what happens.

Client: I'm a very patient person.

Rob: You are?

Client: Yeah, very.

Rob: Maybe to a fault. Maybe you've been too patient with yourself, but there's something about that patience, it's good to be patient about some things, but to be too patient, that may be something else to let go of, but not too quickly because everyone will get scared. Do you know what I mean?

Yes, so just let that - let that happen and let whatever's there, let it out only at a rate that you think that the rest of the universe can cope with. We don't want you spontaneously combusting or going on some kind of rampage, you know.

Client: No, that's not good.

Rob: Good. But it's just lovely to see that you are now ready to let something go that you've been hanging onto for at least long enough. You've started to let that go. How are your shoulders feeling?

Client: They're a bit relaxed.

Rob: A bit more relaxed. And it wouldn't be a problem if they were to be even a bit more relaxed now. But there's something that started there and I think it would be so lovely if you could allow that process to be an organic process that just spread in the way that plants grow rather than some kind of mechanical thing that had to be kind of fixed. Do you know what I mean?

There's something nice about letting something grow, something emerge in a natural way rather than a false way.

Now what do you notice, Karen, is different for you now than when you came into this room? You've already said your shoulders are a little bit relaxed, there's that warmth. I'm wondering what's different for you.

Client: I'm not shaking inside as much.

Rob: Okay.

Client: I'm constantly like this inside.

Rob: Okay, so you've got some of that.

Client: Up until a few minutes ago.

Rob: How did you let that out?

Client: I don't know. It just, it just happened.

Rob: It just happened. And that's what happens with healing, isn't it? There was an English surgeon, Sir. William Osler 200 years ago who said, I suture the wound. God heals them. He was speaking metaphorically like, as a doctor, he couldn't cure anything.

He can do something, but the person heals and I can say so or you can wish something, but your body is going to heal in its own way in its own time. And there's a certain kind of relief in that once you see that. You don't need to push the river, as the Buddhists say. Just let it flow.

Now there's a lot more that we could talk about, a lot more that we could explore. I'm wondering how you're doing with this. Is there something else that might be helpful for me

to say or for you to do? Is this the place we might leave it today? Is there more? I really don't know. So I'm asking you.

Client: I don't know.

Rob: You don't know. If you were to just somehow ask your body whether that's enough or whether it wants more or what that might be, what would your body say? What would your shoulders say? What would your hands say if you were to listen to them?

Client: Just a tiny bit more.

Rob: Okay.

Client: I've got a headache across here now, but I think that's just...

Rob: Okay.

Client: The releasing is something I think.

Rob: Okay there's something there that is releasing.

Client: [inaudible 44:56].

Rob: Yeah. Is that part of the releasing or is that a sign that you're about to release something else?

Client: Just there's a tension there, just - I'm still holding on and my body's let go, but my head's still fighting it.

Rob: Some things you have to hang onto, you know. You're in company, you know. There are some bodily functions that are best hung onto, you know. But if you were to just notice forehead and not try and relax it, don't hang onto it, just notice your forehead. Don't push it away, don't get rid of it. Just notice it. Then just sit with it.

Just let it be there for the moment. And as you're breathing, I wonder how you will notice what will be the first indication to you that your forehead is beginning to let go. Will it start from the edges, the middle, top, the bottom? Where will it start? And what's happened to it? There's a slight smile there. What's that?

Client: It's still there.

Rob: Yeah. And how come you're smiling?

Client: I don't know because I'm listening to hear your words.

Rob: Yeah.

Client: It's just, yeah.

Rob: And what's happening in the back of your head?

Client: Oh, it's just tension all around. It's at the back of my head and across here.

Rob: Okay.

Client: I just need to stretch it a little.

Rob: Okay. And now you're stretching it.

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. Was that something that you did in that yoga?

Client: No.

Rob: No? Something you [inaudible 47:06].

Client: I suppose we did. We did a lot of stretching there.

Rob: Okay. That's it. And now?

Client: My forehead's better. Just the back of my head and the base of my skull.

Rob: Your forehead and its moving around, isn't it?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: It's nice to know that you don't have to be stuck with something. And if you can move it from your forehead to the back of your head, I wonder whether you can move it out of the back of your head and into the chair. That's the sort of thing [inaudible 47:40]. The chair won't mind.

And if you just notice the back of your head and see if there's some stretching that would be useful there, some movement. And you'll know after you've made the movement that you need that will be helpful you didn't know beforehand. You find out what might be helpful and then know how that worked or that didn't or this - you'll always find that afterwards.

And now?

Client: It's a bit better.

Rob: A bit better?

Client: It will gradually go.

Rob: It will gradually go, yes. And there's something about it gradually going that can be comforting.

I was working with a woman years ago who was overweight and she said, I wish I could just go to sleep tonight and wake up in the morning with all that weight gone. And I said to her I think that would be terrifying because if you woke up tomorrow and all the weight's gone, what might you wake up to the next morning then? Well, God, it might all come back again.

So by letting something go gradually, there's more security about that, more solidness about that. There's some learning about that and just letting that, letting it go in whatever way. Now I don't need to know, you don't need to know. It might seem to have something to do with stretching, but maybe something else as well, just an experience of letting go in some way.

And just sitting with that and letting the back of your head, to let go of what it needs to let go and letting that happen in it's own time not as I think it should and not as you wished it should or you hoped, but letting it take its own time, finding its own way. And you are patient so you can allow that.

And I can't know how you're feeling, but you look very peaceful at the moment, Karen, almost as if you have let go of something. And, as I look at your face, I'm struck with the way that somehow your face looks younger, fresher in some way as if you have let go of some pressure or some worry. I don't know if that's the case, but that's what I see. There's more colour in your face.

It looks like the tightness in your forehead's gone and the muscles of your face are in more of a natural configuration. I don't know how you feel. What's happening for you at the moment?

Client: I feel a lot more relaxed.

Rob: Yes. And could you put another word to that?

Client: Calm.

Rob: Calm. Yeah. And my word, my word is peaceful. Does that have any connection with you? It's only my word. It looked like there's less conflict there [inaudible 52:04].

Client: Yeah, a lot less, yeah.

Rob: A lot less. You might have a little bit if you're a human being.

Client: Yeah and I can still feel a bit.

Rob: Well you're a human being.

Client: I know.

Rob: You don't have to be totally translucent. It's like [inaudible 52:19]. We're human. And as long as we're human, we're going to have things. That's part of the deal. What's happening at the back of your head now?

Client: It's still going on. It's just a tiny bit here, but that's all better.

Rob: That's all better?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: And your shoulders?

Client: They maybe feel...

Rob: They look looser.

Client: They are.

Rob: Yeah. And you look like your kind of body is looser, yeah?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: And with that looseness, I take that as an indication that you've somehow let go of something too.

Client: I think so.

Rob: So with that looseness there can be a more natural, easy kind of movement, a more natural flow of whatever healing is. And just as those feelings and those sensations of discomfort can spread from your forehead to the back of your head and just as those experiences of calmness can spread from your shoulders all through your body, some of them can trickle down to the tips of your fingers, not only the backs of your hand, but the very tips of your fingers. And that can take its time.

And would it be OK if you could just let it take its time?

Client: Yeah, that's fine.

Rob: And can you enjoy looking forward to that?

Client: Yes.

Rob: Yeah. Without too much impatience?

Client: Yeah. I usually forget about them anyway when I'm doing things.

Rob: Yeah and it might be nice to not only forget about them as you're doing things, but just from time to time, just get a little glimpse of, oh, what's that sensation? What's that? Just a little glimpse. Don't make too big a deal of it.

Okay, you take that breath. That's right. It's nice to remember those good feelings, isn't it? Your shoulders have been very patient with you, waiting for an opportunity to remind you that learning is there. It's a part of you. Everything you learnt in yoga is still a part of you.

I don't know as a child, if you learnt to ride a bicycle.

Client: Yeah, when I was older.

Rob: And do you ride a bicycle now?

Client: No.

Rob: No. But if you were to get on a bicycle, you might be a bit wobbly, but it wouldn't take long to go, oh, here we go.

Client: Yes.

Rob: Once you've learnt it, you've got that learning. It's permanent. So how would it be if you were to just take your own time to let everything that's happened for you somehow really settle in your experience?

And I hope that you will totally ignore anything that I have said that was unhelpful or irrelevant because I can't know how best to speak to with you and how best to be with you, but I can know that you know what is useful that you can encourage, that you can allow and what is unimportant that you can just let go of, just let it drift off past.

So when you have the experience, the sense that you've got what you wanted from this experience, not necessarily as much as you hoped or maybe more, who knows, but without being logical about this, without being sensible about this, without being proper about this, if you could just allow yourself to sense when this experience is sufficient for you. And without any tension, without any worry, without any effort, you can just let your eyes open and notice how you feel.

How do you feel, Karen?

Client: A bit more relaxed.

Rob: Well that's nice.

Client: Thank you.

Rob: Yeah, it's a pleasure. Thank you for trusting me with something - how can I say that's, I would say, so important and so intense for you. I'm a stranger to you and for you to trust me and us with those is a gift. So it's very generous of you. And I think that you've got a very good chance of getting some good sensations there. That's my professional opinion. And I'm not foretelling the future because I can't, but I'm allowed to have my opinion.

So how would it be if we left it at that?

Client: Yeah, that's fine. I feel good at leaving it there, yeah. It's good. Thank you. Thank you for your time.

Rob: No, it's a pleasure. And thank you for your trusting, not only in me and us, but actually in yourself, which is the important thing. I think you know that.

Client: Yes.

Rob: Good. Okay.

Client: Alright.

Rob: Well, what are you up to now? Are you...?

Client: Oh, just the library.

Several weeks later, she reported a complete cure, and presented me with this lovely painting



“the right path”



Rob: So thank you for being willing to come and be part of this.

Client: That's alright.

Rob: And I will do my best to do something useful, something beneficial. I know I know nothing about you so maybe we can start. Would it be okay to just tell me a little bit about yourself? What sorts of things do you like to do and what sorts of things have you been doing recently that have been okay, enjoyable; maybe not just today, but, you know, in the recent past or?

Client: I've been getting together with my friends, sorting out things to try and get custody back of my children because my children and my partner left on the 3rd of January. And I've sorted out my whole house because it was a total putrid mess, you could say. And it took me four and a half tons worth of skip and four trailer loads of rubbish to clean it up and now I've got it into this shipshape condition that I want it in for my children.

Rob: That's quite intriguing.

Client: And that sort of thing. It's taken me three months to do, but I did it and there [inaudible 01:14] protection trying to state that my children don't want to be anywhere and that sort of thing because of allegations that my expartner's brother has made against me, which is all completely false. And now I've got custody like visitation rights every Sunday, which I've just got back from, which today's didn't happen because of certain things. So I'm not very happy in the - at the moment.

Rob: I can imagine.

Client: And that sort of thing, considering last Sunday was one of the best visits that I've had with my two daughters and that sort of thing because, before that, it was all like virtual stay away from Dad. Dad's the bad person, you know, all this. And last week was them jumping all over me, doing puzzles with me, my youngest one was and all this sort of stuff. And then, supposedly I had a phone call on my message bank saying that they weren't coming. But I showed up to the visit and I get told that they're not coming when I get there.

Rob: That's today you mean?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. And before all this - now it sounds like a war zone. You've been through like horrendous times then.

Client: My whole, my whole life practically has been a war zone because my epilepsy was caused by my father, kicking me around the head with steel capped boots under the age of four months old. So therefore it's a brain injury, not hereditary or anything like that. It's a bruise on the left temporal lobe of my brain and that's where I fit from and that sort of thing.

Rob: You survived. You know, you coped with being hit around the head and you...

Client: And I got - I was also, when I got put into care at four months old, I had a broken ankle that had re-healed into the same position and they had to re-break that and put it into a cast and it formed back into the normal shape that it should have been.

I was also taken off them because I was malnourished. I wasn't fed for a week, I wasn't changed for a week or anything like that. And I was also drowned by my mother under the age of four months old. I was sold for sexual doings between the ages of eight and 12 when I was put back into their care.

And now I'm going under Alan Harris to go and get the proceedings done for the things that I was between - it happened at the age of eight and 12 because I was told that

if that ever came out, that I'd be harmed or I'd be killed by my father because he was getting the sum of \$2,000 to \$5,000 every time it happened because I was told that I was getting taken to McDonald's and I wasn't. I was getting taken up behind Fraser Primary school.

And if I have already had nine strokes, why is it that I can forget my daughter's second birthday, but not forget something as harsh as that and as harsh as what I've been through and that sort of thing. And I just can't understand why I was told that both of them that did it to me was dead. And I've just not only found out that one of them is still a live and a full-blown drug addict in [inaudible 04:57] village.

Rob: Now you've been through unthinkable, unimaginable, horrendous experiences, horrendous, and there's nothing that I can do about what has happened has happened. And I'm wondering if there was something that could happen here, in our conversation, if there was something that could happen that could make some difference, however small, to your experience, if something could happen here to be useful, what would that be? What could that be?

Client: Just for a better peace of mind.

Rob: Peace of mind? Okay.

Client: So I wasn't thinking about it and stressing about it all of the time like I do because every night I lay there and think about wanting to go around and do something to my father. But I know that if I was to do that, that it would end up in a total manner that I don't want it to happen and...

Rob: Yeah, it's completely understandable that you want to do that, but if you did, you'd be...

Client: Because my children are my number one and that's what I think they are every time I think of that horrible thought.

Rob: Yes, but that would prevent you, if you went ahead with that, that would get in the way of you in the situation.

Client: Exactly.

Rob: Okay. So when, if you look back, you know, in between some of those, God, they're just unimaginable things, was there anything in, in amongst the mess and just horror that there's been in any way enjoyable, in any way...

Client: The only enjoyable things out of my life was the birth of my two children.

Rob: Okay. At the actual birth-giving when they were actually born or the fact that they have been born.

Client: Both the fact that they have been born and I was able to raise them like I wasn't because I never treated them the way I was treated.

Rob: Yes, yes, yes.

Client: And that was my main goal in life was to treat my children the way I wasn't treated.

Rob: Okay, yes, I would not wish your experiences on anyone. I wouldn't wish that on anyone, but there's something your children in some way, get a benefit from that.

Client: And that's it because my brother has gone down the exact same path as my father and that sort of thing.

Rob: Who's gone down that path?

Client: My brother.

Rob: Your brother?

Client: And it's only just myself and my brother in the family and I have taken a total different cycle and a total different road to my brother because there is such a thing as you take the same path as your father and your family history or there's another path that is free and open that you take your own choices and that's the path that I took.

Rob: Yeah, if you take the path that your family's taken, you end up in the same place that your family's in.

Client: And that's it.

Rob: Yeah.

Client: And that's how I see it.

Rob: So you have to take a different path.

Client: Because I looked back on my history and there was 10 fathers before my father that had done the same thing and there was no way I was going to do that.

Rob: When you say family history, what do you mean by 10 fathers? You mean...

Client: My father's father and...

Rob: Ten generations back?

Client: Ten generations back sort of, yes.

Rob: Yes. That's what I thought you meant, but I wasn't [inaudible 08:36]. Yeah, so there's a well-worn path towards that same...

Client: That same click of...

Rob: Yeah. And you - how did you manage to not take that same path because it must have been like a deeply - like the path was going to cut deeply. It must have been easy - it would have been easy to have just followed that path. Something...

Client: It would have been majorly easy for me to follow that path, but as soon as I got put back into their care at the age of eight, I only stayed with them for four years and then I put myself back into care at the age of 12 and then I got back out of their care two days before.

Rob: Okay. So you took a step to get out off that path.

Client: Yeah, and put myself back into care at the age of 12 and then I got put back into their care at two days before the age of 16. And then on my 16th birthday, he tried to slam me again and he was also trying to punch into my mother and my mother has the after effects of polio. So she has a cripple left hand and she can hardly walk properly. And in my eyes, you don't hit women. It's a disgusting thing that you do especially a disabled woman and I don't...

Rob: You've got, you've got very high standards about these things, haven't you?

Client: Yes, and I have...

Rob: And seeing how those high standards have come, is a reaction - from what I'm hearing, is a reaction to the very low standards that your father and his father and his father and his father and his father and his father and somehow, out of that, like out of that mess that was in your house and all the stuff that you cleared out, and not only cleared out the mess in your house, but cleared out some of the mess in your family history.

Client: Yeah.

Rob: So that's where your high standards have come from.

Client: And that's it because I don't want to turn out like him and I don't want to turn out like her either.

Rob: Yes and that, that must make the pain of not being able to see your kids even more acute.

Client: It does.

Rob: Because you know your life is about them.

Client: And that's it.

Rob: So there's nothing we can do here to somehow magically make that okay. You'll know that...

Client: And that's it.

Rob: Yes. But if you could somehow be more peaceful about that, more peaceful in yourself, so that you could be somehow more connected with your standards and what you know is important rather than reacting against what your father's doing and what the courts are doing and what [inaudible 11:18] which you know will be unhelpful. It's natural, but unhelpful.

But somehow, if you were able to be more peaceful and connected with you and the feelings you have for your two daughters and being more peaceful about that, it seems to me that, you know, that would be saying that would be helpful to you.

Client: Yeah.

Rob: And my guess is, and it's only a guess, I can't know, that that might make it just at least a little more likely that you'd be able to see more of your kids.

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Do you think that's right? Am I hearing you right about that?

Client: Yes.

Rob: See. Okay?

Client: And it will be less strenuous on me as well.

Rob: Yes.

Client: And...

Rob: Less strenuous on you, yeah.

Client: The less stress that I have is more better for me.

Rob: And, and fewer chances of being with your kids.

Client: And my chances of being with my kids and...

Rob: And when you are with them...

Client: With my epilepsy as well.

Rob: And with your epilepsy.

Client: Because stress is a very big, major factor in my epilepsy.

Rob: Yeah, of course, of course.

Client: And considering that, since my partner and that has left, I have not had any sort of [turn] for four months and my doctor is now saying that it's all under control and I have not been in hospital now for almost 19 months with my status epilepticus fits.

Rob: You're really, really making some progress with that.

Client: And that sort of thing.

Rob: Yeah.

Client: They are all saying that I'm keeping my stress levels to the state that I should be having them and that sort of stuff.

Rob: Great. Well done.

Client: And my epilepsy is now under control and that sort of thing with the medication that I've pushed to be put on because I was on Epilim and that was not working for me.

Rob: Okay.

Client: As they were saying that I was getting like - what's the word - resistant to most my medication. I got put onto 3,000mg of Keppra and 2mg of Rivotril a day and I was also on 2,000mg of Epilim a day. And I fought for four and a half years for that to get taken off and they kept on taking me off it and putting me back on, taking me off it, putting me back on it. And then...

Rob: What [inaudible 13:36].

Client: I've got and saw Professor [inaudible 13:39] and I said, now, I can't live like this no more. It's just beyond a joke. I have children. They are seeing me fit. I am screaming because of the oxygen levels that I can't like get into my system while I'm fitting. Therefore they brought an oxygen tank in to stop my screaming while I'm fitting because I wasn't getting the oxygen.

And that helped a little bit and then they took me off the Epilim, wouldn't replace it with nothing else and then I started fitting again. They put me straight back on the Epilim and I said no, it is not that. You need to exactly take me off the Epilim and put me on something else.

And then they ended up finally taking me off the Epilim, putting me on 200mg of Topamax, a full 1,800mg [job] of medication and since I've been on that Topamax, I have not had that status epilepticus fit for 19 months almost. And that's where I was fitting two to three hours at a time.

Rob: You're really very in touch with what works for you. You know that the Epilim wasn't it.

Client: And that's it.

Rob: And you know that the stress isn't it. And you knew that the way that your family was doing things was not it. So and you know that being more peaceful is going to further help you what was the stress so that, as you're even less stressful and more peaceful, that that's going to be beneficial to you and your family and your children, and, you know, your daughters and your relationship with them. So you really know that.

And when you bring in that determination that you have to take charge of your life and your experience like you've done with the custody, with the - when you were younger, with the rubbish in your house, with the Epilim, with so many things, when you make up your mind about that and you know about that then I think you're going to have a very good chance of having peace that you know is going to be useful to you and beneficially you and your relationship with your daughters and your future relationship with them and their future relationship with each other and their children and their children and their children and their children.

So this is a really important kind of pivotal point for you. It's a really important time in your life to have other direction. And I wonder if it would be okay and if you were to just close your eyes for a moment and remember the time last week when you were playing with your daughters and when you were playing those games, when you were doing those puzzles and whatever else that you were doing that was so connecting for you, so useful, beneficial for you, for each of them, for both of them, for the three of you.

And if you could in some way just allow yourself to begin to focus on some part of that time that you had with them. Even though it wasn't a lot of time, it's that much more precious because it was limited time. But just, without needing to choose something, to find yourself focusing on some part of that time with them when you were doing that puzzle, when you were playing, when you were - whatever you were doing.

And somehow, as you begin to focus on that to just naturally, because it's so precious to you, allow yourself to become more absorbed in this experience of being with them,

having fun with them, being peaceful with them, enjoying them; them enjoying each other and you and whatever, not that it was perfect. It doesn't have to be perfect, but just find yourself then being more naturally, peacefully absorbed in the experience of being with these two precious daughters of yours.

And, as you are in this experience, as you are focusing on it to whatever degree that you are, as you are allowing yourself to be as absorbed in this experience as you are, to somehow be in it even more connectedly, even more in the experience.

And I can tell, just from my experience, by observing the way that you are able to respond to this idea with the stillness in your body, with the subtle change in your breathing and the way your facial muscles are smoothed out, the way your breathing is just so, my experience tells me that you are someone who can be very responsive to this way of exploring this way of learning, this way of finding what you want that you know that you want that you want that when you know that you can have it, is going to really make such a difference to you.

And, as you are in this experience as if you really are playing with these girls, really are in this puzzle with them and doing whatever you're doing, that's so enjoyable. Without disturbing that and by allowing yourself to be in it perhaps even more as you speak about it, to let me know what, when you focus on this and get absorbed in this experience, if you could just leave your eyes closed so that you can be in it for the time and tell me what is it that you're doing at the moment? What are you - is it puzzle, are you reading? What are you doing with these girls? What's happening that's so **[inaudible 20:18]** for them and for you? Can you put it into words?

Client: I'm playing with Lillian and cuddling her.

Rob: Playing with...?

Client: Lillian and cuddling her.

Rob: Lillian. How old is Lillian?

Client: Eight.

Rob: She's eight. Oh. And cuddling her?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. And how is it for you to be cuddling her? How does that feel for you?

Client: It's the most awesome feeling in life.

Rob: The most awesome feeling, yeah. And as you can, if you would, just allow yourself to be in this experience of cuddling her and feeling how awesome it is, can you allow yourself to notice how you can also feel peaceful? You're cuddling her. This is what your life is about, this connection with her, being with her. And can you let yourself feel how peaceful this is for you? Can you notice that peaceful feeling?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. Good. And what's your other daughter doing?

Client: She's sitting there playing puzzles asking me to come over.

Rob: What's your other daughter's name?

Client: Odessa.

Rob: What's her name?

Client: Odessa.

Rob: Odessa. And how old is she?

Client: Just turning five.

Rob: Just turning five. She's about to turn five?

Client: Just has.

Rob: Just as turned five. Ah. And she's doing, she's doing a puzzle. What's the puzzle?

Client: The puzzle of Big Bird and Oscar the Grouch.

Rob: Big Bird and Oscar the Grouch. Okay. And she's asking you to help?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. And what's it like for her to - what's it like for you to be there and she's there doing this puzzle and she wants you to help her. How does that feel?

Client: Amazing.

Rob: It's amazing, yeah. And can you feel that connection with her so peaceful? She's there; she's sitting next to you, not cuddling her. She's actually sitting next to you, but can you feel that connection and how amazing that is?

Client: **[inaudible 22:56]**.

Rob: Yeah. And also, can you also notice how peaceful you feel?

Client: It's very peaceful.

Rob: Very peaceful. And if you would, I'd like you to notice how it is for you to really feel peaceful, to let yourself be amazed by the experience of feeling peaceful with Odessa sitting there with that puzzle of Big Bird and Oscar the Grouch and feel how peaceful that is and really feel that. And also to notice how peaceful you feel because Lillian you're cuddling, it's so awesome to feel that connection and feel peaceful then.

And if you would somehow allow yourself to really feel that peaceful feeling and you can feel that peaceful feeling, can you not? Yeah. And you can be amazed by that. You can be in awe about that and you can feel that peaceful feeling. And you can feel your peaceful feeling at this time in this place even then you - they know in this room here, Odessa isn't with you, Lillian's not here, but that peaceful feeling of knowing that they're not far away in your experience, knowing how important it is for them and for you and for the three of you, for you to have this peaceful feeling.

You can bring that peaceful feeling of being with your two daughters, you can bring into this room, you can bring it into your experience here, now because it is your feeling of peace because it is important to you for you to be able to feel this peaceful feeling. It's yours. You can bring it here; you can take it anywhere because it belongs to you.

And I can say, and I've got no way of knowing how you can make sense of this that a lot of what's happened to you in the past has being so horrendous and it can be like the rubbish that was in your house. You can clear it out. You can put it in a skip bin. You can get rid of all of that, anything of that that you no longer want so that anything that is there in the past that you no longer want, you can throw it out.

I'm not saying you should, but if there's anything in your path that can get in the way of you being on the path that you want to be on, you can get rid of it. You can throw it out. Now I'm saying that and I've got no way of knowing how you're going to hear that, no way of knowing how you can make sense of that, no way of knowing even if that makes - if that seems useful for you.

So I'm just saying that in case some of it could be useful, knowing that you will know what to keep, what to give away, what to throw away, what to do so that you can stay on your path that is going to lead peacefully into a future - and it's already started - into a future where you can be peaceful.

And just drop anything that gets in the way of - just let go of anything in the way that you need to feel with that so that you can then, in a peaceful way, which is a function of you, can allow you to be on your path and not on that other path that your father and his father and his father and his father with all of that aggression and all that violence and all

of that getting back and all of that, you know, resentment and all of that bitterness, all of that awfulness. That's their path. It's not your path.

And so if there's anything that's their path and that stuff, you can get rid of it and that feeling of peace that is so important that you can then be determined to take the peaceful path which can have you be connected with your daughters and then with you.

I know when my eldest son was in his early 20s, he and I were very close and he went overseas and was overseas for more than a year. And I didn't see him all that time, but I know and he told me that he knew that, even though we didn't see each other, there was a very strong sense of closeness and connection.

Now your daughters are not in this room, but they don't have to be here physically for you to feel that strong, precious connection with them, to feel the awesome connection with them; that amazing connection with Odessa. And to feel that connection, just how beautiful that is, how important that is for you, how special that is for you and feel it here and now that you can have that peaceful feeling and connection, even if they are not here at this moment in this place, you can have that connection.

And you can take it into the future and you can follow that peaceful path into the future and you can look forward to having more time with them, not necessarily today. I don't know about next week, but because you can be peaceful, you can expect there will be more quality time, awesome time, amazing time, connecting time with them and them with you. Does that make sense what I'm saying?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: And, as you are experiencing what you're experiencing, what happens when you - so that you can see that you can be even more peaceful than you already are becoming. What happened to you as you see that?

Client: Because I need to clear away the trash.

Rob: You need to clear away the?

Client: Trash.

Rob: Trash?

Client: All the bad people in the world.

Rob: Clear them away, yeah. But you don't need to hit them, you don't need to hurt them, you don't need to get revenge on them; you can just ignore them. You know they say the best revenge on someone that's hurt us is to live a peaceful life. Does that make sense for me to say that? So you can get rid of them by making them irrelevant. You don't have to

literally put them in the rubbish. You can just ignore them because otherwise they'll be in the way.

And what do you think it's going to be like when - is your other daughter, bad memory, did you say her name was Lilly or Lillian?

Client: Lillian.

Rob: Lillian, yeah. So when Lillian is, I don't know, in her 20s and Odessa would be, I don't know, her late teens, something like that or early 20s and you are with the two of them, the three of you, having a very nice time, having a very peaceful time, having a very playful time, a very close time, how's that been feeling for you to have this experience that they are now adults and you're close with them and they're close with you. How does this feel?

Client: Like the best feeling in the world.

Rob: The best feeling in the world. And you already know at least some of that best feeling in the world because you felt that with their birth. Though that best feeling in the world is something that you know and know and can look forward to in the future.

And when you look back from that time when they're adults, was it worthwhile clearing away the people that could have got in the way? Was it worthwhile putting all that nasty vengeful stuff, putting that aside? Was it worthwhile making sure that you stuck to your path of being peaceful? Was it worthwhile?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah because you are a very determined person. In a number of areas, you have stuck to what you knew was right for you and you can stick to what's right for you and for them and it doesn't have to happen immediately. It didn't happen, with, with that doctor, with that specialist, but it did happen.

And you are persistent. You didn't clear out those four and a half tons of rubbish in five minutes. You had to be persistent with it. You had to work at it, but you did it and I can imagine that you would really good that you have done it; satisfied. I can imagine, yeah.

And you can also look forward to having that satisfaction of having done what you needed to do to follow that peaceful, your path, a path that you can share with Lillian, with Odessa, that they can share with each other and they can share with you. And you don't have to see them all the time to have a close feeling with them.

Even if they are living with you, just with you, they would be going to school. They wouldn't be with you all the time. They'd be playing with their friends. So you don't need

to be physically with them all the time to have that feeling of closeness that you can have right now and you can look forward to more of that in the future. Would that be agreeable?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah, good. So what's, what's happening - as we're talking about it, what's happening for you?

Client: Well I guess I'm thinking about what can become of the future for my kids or myself.

Rob: Yeah. And as you think about that, what sort of future do you find yourself thinking about?

Client: My kids coming back to live [inaudible 37:56] again.

Rob: Yes. And you don't need to be a perfect father. Just look after them as best you can. That's all anyone can do.

Client: There's no such thing as perfect.

Rob: Exactly. So you can look, look forward to looking after them as best you can without having to be perfect. Now how does that feel to you? How does that seem to you? How does that sit with you? Does it seem okay? Something to look forward to?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: And how real does this experience - how real is this for you? Is it just like a wishful thinking or can you see how it really can happen?

Client: I can see how it can happen.

Rob: Yeah. And can you see how you can help it to happen?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Ah, that's marvellous. Well I'm very grateful to have the opportunity to meet you. I am genuinely in awe of what you've managed to get through and not only survive it, but actually make some important changes because of it. I think what you've been able to get through and what you've been able to turn around for yourself is truly awesome and inspiring.

When I try and imagine what it would have been like if I had been in those situations, it's hard for me to even begin to think how I could have even started to deal with it. But you've not only survived it, that you've taken charge of the situation and made changes that a lot of other people wouldn't have had the strength and determination to do.

I think what you've done and what you're going to do is truly inspiring. Now it's a real pleasure for me to have the opportunity to be part of helping you to simply do what you're going to do. And if this conversation can be in some way helpful for you to - so that you could be clearer about what you are going to do then that will be a real pleasure for me.

So I'm wondering, Adam, is there anything else that you might want from me. There's a lot more that we could talk about, a lot more than could happen, a lot more than we could do, but I'm wondering, does this seem enough or is there something more that you might want from this?

Client: [inaudible 41:19] am I doing the right thing for myself.

Rob: If you were to ask yourself that question, what would your answer be?

Client: Asking within myself if I am?

Rob: Yeah, yes.

Client: With other people around that are around me still.

Rob: Yes.

Client: That are talking bad things about me.

Rob: Yes.

Client: I don't want. It puts me down a little bit and I'm just not that 100% certain who I am.

Rob: Okay. Well I, we can't ever, ever be perfectly certain about anything, but for what it's worth, I think you're doing a great job. I think you are doing the right thing. And, listening, I don't know you. There's so much I can't know about you, but what I've heard you say is that you are very accurate in observing what is going to be best and to follow that up and do it.

And I think that you follow your own path as best you can, you're going to end up pretty well alright later. It's the way it seems to me. I don't know what - how you hear me saying that. Does that make any difference? It does? Oh, good.

Client: It makes a whole lot of difference because it's coming out of a person that I don't know.

Rob: Ah, well thank you. And, you know, I found that whatever we do, there will always be some people who are critical. And whether you know that old saying you can please some people all the time or all the people some of the time, but you can't please all the people all the time. No matter what you do, some people are going to try and put you down.

But if you know where you're going and why you're going there and the benefit of doing that, I don't like to see anyone trying to get in your way. I think you're a very determined man and your determination, now that it's connected to something that is really important to you, your future and your daughters' future and your future with them and them with you, that people can say what they want, you're going to stick to that path. That's my take on it.

What do you think? I think so. No matter what anyone said, because you know how important that is for you, that's going to be more important than someone else's opinion. And what else? What else would you [have]?

Client: Will I get through this on my own two feet? Are things going well with my children at the moment?

Rob: Are you going to get through it on your own two feet?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Do your children need you to?

Client: Yes, they do.

Rob: Well, there's your answer. You don't have an option. If they need you to, well, that's it because they and their future is what your life's about, what you're about. And when it's that important, what you've gone through already, it would have been - it would have stuffed most people. You've already shown that you can get through things. Well I don't know how you do that. Do you believe that when I say that?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Very proud to me. And what else?

Client: Nothing.

Rob: Okay. And I want to make sure, Adam, that - I want to make sure that even though we're talking about how you are going to get through this and it's going to be okay; less than perfect, but more than okay, you'll make sure that you know that I'm not trying to take in any way from how difficult it has been and there may be some difficulties in the future.

I'm not saying there won't be any difficulty, but it's very clear to me, and from what you're saying, I think it's getting clearer to you that you are going to get through it because you've got a reason to get through it. And some of the reasons are Lillian and Odessa. Are they not - are they worth it? Are they worth making the effort?

Client: More than worth it.

Rob: More than worth it, exactly. So perhaps you can find a way of just letting yourself sit with this until that sense of determination, which is very [inaudible 47:47], has found itself to where it needs to in yourself so that you can get ready to get on and do what you need to do, take care of them, their future of you, your future of them.

And then when you have that feeling, that experience, that sense where you think, oh, okay. It's going to be - I know what to do now. I know how to do it. I know how to be around for them and with them. When you get to that situation then you can, with both your eyes open and look forward to getting out and getting on with the day.

That's it. [The lines are starting to flow], they're letting us know that you're getting ready to [inaudible 48:47]. That's good. Yeah. Well there's an emotion there. What's that? Do you feel sad or touched or?

Client: A bit of all.

Rob: Relieved?

Client: A bit of all of that.

Rob: What did you say?

Client: A bit of all of that.

Rob: A bit of all of that. Okay. Have you got something planned for the rest of the day?

Client: Well tonight I'm going down to [inaudible 49:25]

Rob: To?

Client: To Tasmania.

Rob: What flight are you on?

Client: On the Virgin Blue.

Rob: Okay, what time?

Client: At eight.

Rob: Okay. I might see you on the plane. I'm going 11 o'clock.

Client: I've got to go down and see my aunt [inaudible 49:40] who will be dying in like about a week.

Rob: Okay. So, yeah. Oh, I might see you at the airport.

Client: I might go [**inaudible 49:48**].

Rob: Okay [**inaudible**].

Client: I'll be going down there for five days.

Rob: And how are we doing?

Female: Okay.

Rob: What's different now?

Client: More of a sense of mind, more of a happy feeling.

Rob: Good. And I promise you that that's not going to last and be permanent. I promise you there's going to be pain, difficulty and challenges. I promise you. It's called being alive. But when you know that even through difficulties or trouble, you can get through them, well it makes them bearable. And if you know there's a reason to then that makes them very bearable, very doable.

So how about we leave it at that? [**Inaudible 50:42**]

Client: Thank you.

Rob: Yeah, it's a pleasure. Glad to meet you and it would be nice if you had a little bit of time to just sort of sit quietly after this and let what you connected with, kind of really settle in and [**inaudible 50:57**].

Female: I might take Adam home.

Rob: Huh?

Female: I'll take Adam home.

Rob: Okay. Very good.

Well thank you for coming along and letting me be part of your better future. It's very delightful for me to feel that I can have however small part in contributing to you and your family and for you being relatively part of our learning. I appreciate that a lot.

Shall we stop?

Client: Yeah.

Rob: Okay.

moving on



Rob So. Glad you could come along today. See if we can do something ... useful for you.

T Yeah, and I think it's interesting. I like to learn, so.

Rob Yeah.

T Yeah ???

Rob And M mentioned that we were wanting to make a video of this for future teaching purposes.

T Yep. That's fine.

Rob Some people are interested to learn how to ... use hypnosis in their practice ...

T Mmm hum

Rob And learn about it. ... And I'm going to do of course what I can to make it useful for you, but at the same time that's why we're having the recording so it can be useful for other people as well as you.

T Good. That's fine.

Rob Thank you for that.

T That's OK.

Rob So T can you, I haven't met you before, can you tell me a little about ... um ... you. What sorts of things do you like to do? What sorts of things are ... pleasing to you, enjoyable to you?

T I think I like to take time out to ... life, I have a small business and three small children.

Rob Probably need time out [laughs] So how small are the children

T Six, sixteen and three, oh just turned four.

Rob Six?

T Four, six and sixteen.

Rob Four six and sixteen. Mm.

T So there's

Rob Yeah

T I'm managing all the ????

Rob Yes, I feel tired just thinking about that. And you're running a business? What sort of business.

T I work as a mortgage broker.

Rob OK.

T I go out most of the time at night to meet clients and then ... it's good because it has flexibility with the hours.

Rob Yes, yes, yes.

T So what I do try and do is exercise. Um. I've got a dog, so ... we do a lot of walking up the mountains.

Rob What sort of dog do you have?

T Um. It's a pound puppy, but it's a Ridgeback Bull Mastiff cross.

Rob Ridgeback ..

T Bull Mastiff.

Rob Oh ... goodness.

T She's a really, really, really gentle dog. And of course she's older. Just a wise old soul.

Rob Beautiful.

T So I do that, um, like to read ... and listen to music ... that would probably be ...

Rob What sort of reading do you do?

T Um .. murder mysteries ...

Rob A little bit like mortgage broking ... and maybe find the criminal and find the ...

T Exactly right.

Rob You're the detective there too.

T Yeah ... I think you need to have insight into nature and be able to read what you don't necessarily hear.

Rob In other words, do you know that film, ah ... The Bone Collector?

T Mmm.

Rob You know "I'll be with you every step of the way".

T Yeah I don't want to do that. I like to have an eight week relationship with most people.

Rob Ah hah.

T Hopefully they'll come back ... three of four years later when they refinance.

Rob And you've got not quite like a crime scene quite, but there's something there that needs some sorting and you do that

T Yeah

Rob and do that over the eight weeks and

T And a lot of the time because I have to take the story to the bank as the client is there's a bit of investigation. You need to look at ... have they disclosed everything to me ... you know ... and usually you have to look at their transactional history ... so yeah

Rob So you look for evidence there

T Occasionally.

Rob Occasionally. And musically ... what sort of music?

T Oh, everything.

Rob Yeah?

T Yeah.

Rob Any particular kind of everything?

T No. Everything.

T It's good. I think it's food for the soul.

Rob Yes, yes. And that's part of what you're saying about escaping ... time out ...

T Mm. No phones.

Rob And that's , yeah. Phones are not necessarily good for the soul.

T No.

Rob They might be good for the bank balance.

T For the pocket.

Rob Yeah. Walking in the hills with your dog.

T Yeah.

Rob And Music.

T Yeah. My thing.

Rob Mm. And um ... ah ... M did say something I think about what, what you wanted to have happen here, but I'm blessed with a bad memory so just assume that I know nothing and you'll be pretty close to the ...

T Sure.

Rob What would you like to have happen here? If we could do something, what ...

T I think ... I try ... I've done a fair bit of hypnosis with M ... and most of the time we've had ... um ... I've had really positive outcomes and the way i describe it is ... you spend your whole life running ...and ... what it allows me to do ... is ... the same thing that we do when it comes to running those ten miles, but you kind of slow down and stop to look at things you hadn't noticed before in a different way. Um ... and ... I tried in one session to tackle something too big and that was to look too faT ahead ... because I've um ... I'm in a position where I want to ... be able to be independent. I'm separated but living in the same house ... so i had always thought I need to find another partner to help support me and then I'll be able to sort of ... I don't know ... shed the old skin and start again ... um ... but I'd come to a point, when we looked too faT into the future, I actually felt quite panicked. I couldn't picture it. And then when I'd broken it down, in another session we were able to break it down into smaller pieces - three months, six months, twelve months and then come back out, talk about it, go further ahead, then I was able to create a plan, understand the things that were blocking it and come up with solutions that I had not considered. Um ... and that was really positive but one of the things I wanted to tackle was the ability to ... feel OK as an independent thing, not to feel ... and we all come into this thinking we have to have the perfect relationship, the perfect family and all that nuclear stuff ... and um ... my mum's been married three times and she's always sort of walked from one place to another. And that was what I'd been brought up to believe was how you, I don't know ... especially when I had a family. When I had those children I thought I needed someone else there ... so ... being able to know I can live independent without having to have someone else there ... and that would be a blessing if it were to occur, but I would be OK. That I would be able to manage. That's what i'd like to have more confidence around because I'm still uncertain about that. I stay, I think I stay where I am because I'm not 100% sure ... that I'm strong enough to not ... yeah.

Rob Very understandable.

T Yeah

Rob It's one thing if it's just you ..

T Mm. Mm.

Rob But you've got a sixteen year old, and a six year old and a four year old, and a dog.

T Yeah yeah. She's a very redeeming feature.

Rob What's her name?

T Tzar.

Rob Tzar?

T Yeah.

Rob And you said she's not a young, she's not a pup?

T She is when you first pull the lead out. But no, she's not.

Rob Yeah, we've got one of those. We've got a Labradoodle.

T Oh. They're supposed to be really good.

Rob So three, going on six months. But she's ah [laughs] but also she's a lot more settled, but bring out the lead, and she's just ...

T They're like little babies. Really cute.

Rob Yeah yeah. OK so this idea of being able to **be** OK ...

T Mmm

Rob ... independent of another, of a partner, ... and be able to be like that, and ... support

T Mm

Rob ... your three kids ... and your dog ...

T Yeah

Rob and your lifestyle ... and your work, and that's not like a trivial thing, is it? It's not like finding a glass of water or something.

T No.

Rob It's ... and I can also imagine when you first look at that it can seem like ooooh ...

T Yes.

Rob It's almost ...

T It seems OK ... it's like when people go "I can't sell my house until I've got another one that I want to buy".

Rob Yeah.

T Yeah, it's like I can't leave that until I've got something else to move into and I don't want to do that. I don't want it to be that a relationship is premeditated. Or, yeah. So I want to be able to walk away from that ... safely ...

Rob Yeah. Well that's an interesting idea about safely because ... um ... I mean you know way more about this than me but if you put in a good application to the bank and you can't guarantee that it will be accepted

T No

Rob ... so there are no guarantees because whenever you make a change, there's always a risk. But I guess, is the risk manageable?

T Yes, that's what I

Rob If it's not too large ... a risk. Not too ... um ... OK ... [pause] ... and anything more you might want to say before you go into hypnosis?

T No. I think that's ... I think I'm good at looking at what happens as a result and how ... inside my head ... so yeah.

Rob Thank you for making my job so easy.

[both laugh]

T It's just nice to have a bit of control over it.

Rob I think so, and sometimes, um ... I imagine that in your work ... er ... sometimes when you are going through something, some process with someone they might say, "Oh, that's kind of obvious but I hadn't thought of it."

T Yeah.

Rob And sometimes in our conversations it can be like that ... just like ... it's not highly complicated ... just an opportunity to ...

T Slow it down.

Rob Slow dow.

T Yeah.

Rob. So you have a chance to see what's there ...

T Yeah.

Rob That ... not seen when you rush it.

T That's right.

Rob We were having a cup of coffee before ... and I got excited about something ... waving a thing ..and spilt some coffee, and I'm looking "Where's the tissues? Where's the tissues?" I was looking so frantically ... it was just there ... but ... you know ...

T It's exactly like that. Exactly like that.

Rob Maybe in the session you might be able to help me with my ...

T Find the tissues.

[laughing]

Rob ... just to slow down ...

T OK. OK.

Rob Because this is a human condition, a human activity 'cause it's what we do. [pause] Alright ... so ... um ... do you have any particular way that you like to go into hypnosis?

T No. I don't find it that hard.

Rob. I can see that. You're very able, very apparent to me even though I haven't met you before, it's very apparent to me that you have that capacity to really focus ... really get absorbed, really get into something ...

T Yeah.

Rob And um, of course ... ah ... that's a mixed blessing.

T Yes.

Rob Because it depend what you get into.

T Right.

Rob If you go into panic, you know, well ... look out.

T Absolutely.

Rob So, it's it's a skill ...

T OT obsessive compulsion.

Rob Yes. But it's just a matter of where you direct it.

T Yes. Yeah

Rob It's a matter of how you ...

T I think I need more training on that one. Another time, another place.

Rob Well I don't know. I think this might be very much exactly what ... what's happening here.

T Mm

Rob And once you've learnt that, you may be able to apply that at any other time and place.

T Yes.

Rob So I guess in that way it might be useful for you since it's so easy for you to find a way of taking the process slowly ...

T Yes.

Rob It would probably be very easy for you to just close your eyes and get lost in something ... but if you for this experience just to intentionally ... that's it, just take it slowly ... and already as all those changes starting so you can perhaps notice how easy it is to close your eyes but just ... take it slowly ... kind of ease back on it you know. Don't panic about it ... that's right ... and even though you could ... just allow all those changes ... the stillness in your body ... that's it ... changes in your breathing ... that's right ... your eyes have closed ... and you can let your mind ... drift ... slowly and easily ... and in this experience provides an opportunity for yourself ... and to take some time out ... and see yourself ... and by intentionally allow yourself ... slowly ... little by little ... just settle into your experience ... and it may be a little bit like ... taking your dog for a walk ... Tzar?

T [nods]

Rob It might be when you first start, you take out the lead, there may be some kind of wanting to rush things like I'm sure that she does ... she?

T Yes

Rob But then ... even if there is that initial kind of rush ... which might even look like a panic ... just imagine that you ... can take yourself for a walk ... you can take the lead ... you can go for a walk ... Tzar might be there with you ... there might be others ... but in particular ... it could be useful ... if you could know that **you** are taking **you** for a walk ... and you said that you walk on a mountain?

T [nods]

Rob And as you are doing that ... I wonder if it would be OK for you ... to ... walk more slowly ... to maybe even stop ... and look around ... I don't know if you would normally do that ...

T [shakes head, no]

Rob Tzar would probably be more interested in going on than stopping and looking ... but just for this experience ... I wonder as you are walking ... if you were to actually slow and and stop and look around ... I wonder what you might see ... T ... can you imagine?

T Mm

Rob What are you seeing at the moment?

T She's on the road and I have to hold her because I'm going ????????????

Rob Yeah, you have to hold her so she doesn't go near it.

T Mm. And it's really green.

Rob Really green. And ... tell me about the green ... Is it a bright green, dark green or yellowy green?

T No, it's an Australian green.

Rob Oh, it's a bluey green.

T Yeah.

Rob Mm

T And it's got this smell ... gum trees ...

Rob Ah. Tell me about that. What's that smell?

T It's damp eucalyptus.

Rob Yeah. [pause]

Rob And would it be OK to just sit with that for a moment? And let yourself absorb ... the dampness ... the eucalyptusness ... that particular greenness ... and is Tzar on the lead still?

T No.

Rob OK. So you have to keep an eye out for that road ... so you want to be independent ... and let her be independent of you ... At the same time ... you need to keep an eye out for ... 'cause she's a dog ... and at the same time you want to allow yourself to smell that damp eucalyptus smell ... see that green ... and do you notice how you can ... be really aware ... of the greenness and the eucalyptus smell and the dampness ... and you can out of the corner of your awareness you can notice where Tzar is.

T [nods]

Rob And is she looks like she's going to get too close to the road you can forget about the trees for the moment ... and you can pay attention to her ... and then at other times ... you can just be aware of her that peripheral awareness ... and see the green and smell the smell ... and I'm inviting you to play with that ... to see how you can ... just let your attention ... kind of flow ... You don't have to just ... notice Tzar. You don't have to just notice ... what's there ... but you can let your attention ... how can I say? ... drift or meander from one to the other and you know exactly how much and where and how ... and as you're doing that ... again ... I'd invite you to take your time to notice how it is for you ... to be able to let your attention ... go to where it needs to go ... and not stay fixed ...

T It's hard because she's running fast.

Rob Yeah. Yeah ... Well ... it might be nice, do you want to go for a run?

T [nods]

Rob OK ... It's nice to know you can do that too ... but my invitation is that as you go for a run ... but somehow notice that as you run and you can pay attention to the ground ... and make the adjustments ... with your feet ... so you don't trip over ... and I'm wondering how, as you're doing that ... you could also let yourself be just that little bit more aware ... of your surroundings. To have that double take. Do you know what I mean? ...

T [nods]

Rob It may be something like when you're working with clients ... you have to take a double take about wanting to do what's tight for them and what's right for the bank ... not just one oT the other. You have to balance that ... My kids, when they first learned to run ... they were so busy focusing on where they were going they'd trip over ... and there are other kids that are so attentive to where they put their feet that they ... don't even go an inch ... and I don't know whether your kids are all the same ... all runners or trippers or they all go slow and then ...

T There was one slow one ...

Rob Ah hah.

T One of my kids started to walk before she could almost do anything else and was covered in bruises ... the next one ... I thought he was never going to walk. He just sat there then one day he just stood up and walked ... so people all learn in different ways but ... but with you ... it's easiest for you to kind of rush and run ... and having the balance now which you may not always have had ... to be able to run and ... take care of your feet so you don't trip ... and ... look around ... not only ... to take care of Tzar ... not only that but including that ... but also I'm wondering as you're running if you can ... again start to notice something about ... the surroundings ... almost as if no matter how fast you're actually going, you could feel as if you're going really quite slowly ... know what I mean? ... No matter how fast you are running ... to have your attention wherever it wants to be ... and again I've got this question. What are you starting to notice. Perhaps more intensely or more ... strongly than you might normally.

T It gets very windy when you get to the top.

Rob Windy.

T Yeah. ...

Rob And ... how is that for you? ...

T Oh it's good because you're really puffed and hot.

Rob OK so if you could notice ... you're at the top and you're puffed and hot and it's windy ... and what do you start to notice as you look around? ... You can feel that you're puffed, that you're hot, you can feel the wind ... what do you start to see?

T Just so still.

Rob Ah ... and there's something about that stillness?

T Yeah ...

Rob Something about that stillness ... because we know it's not really still. There's a lot of activity there but you can have the feeling that it is still.

T Mm.

Rob And is it that stillness that is part of what feeds your soul?

T Yes. It's pushing myself past where I want to be ... and get there.

Rob Yes, and you've done that ...

T It really feels good do it ...

Rob Yes. ... and as you're pushing yourself ... to get through that, to get to where you've got ... and you know it's going to feel good, how do you keep going? ... 'cause there must be a feeling like ... if it's anything like me I could stop now ...

T 'Cause I know how good it feels to be at the top and know how it feels you'll get there. The first time was terrible.

Rob had to learn that. You might say you had to train yourself ... to get through that ... because the first time was terrible ... and then you kind of got through the terrible and you knew how good it felt ...

T Yeah

Rob ... once you'd broken through that, got through that you were at the top you ... ah ... you take a breath. It's like it feels that good.

T Mmm.

Rob Mmm ... almost if I'm hearing you right ... it's almost some satisfaction that it wasn't easy ...

T Yeah.

Rob ... that you had to get through that ... there was a challenge there in some way.

T Yeah.

Rob That's my word but ... somehow ... and now ... when you're running up there ...

T It still hurts ...

Rob Yeah.

T but it's going to be really good when you get there.

Rob OK ... and I'd like you to pay attention to that experience that you're speaking about in your running ... and really notice ... how that feels for you ... I can't know how it feels for me and that doesn't matter because you know ... how that feels for you ... and just as you were able to stop before ... and really smell the eucalyptus and the eT dampness and see the green would it be OK to look at the stillness that's around you so you could really allow ... this feeling ... almost to be instilled in you almost to be embodied so you can learn it ... if you could have that feeling ... ah ... feels so good ... and while you are just letting yourself soak that up I'd like you to be up at the top there and the wind be blowing you don't need to do anything ... the wind cools you ... the satisfaction satisfies you ... the nourishment nourishes yourself ... and that can happen and just as ... what is happening to you now is happening ... I can talk about some things but you don't need to pay

attention ... some things that I say that might be useful for you ... if there's any that doesn't make sense just let them drift off and just past you ... because I want to remind you that ... when you first started to do that work with ... with er ... mortgages ... that it may have taken a little while ... to learn how to do that ... It may have been hard and difficult ... and I don't know if at some stage you may even like I don't know if I want to continue ... but somehow you got through that difficulty ... and if though there is no guarantee of a good result somehow you the satisfaction at the end of that eight weeks ... and maybe even to see someone in their home and know that they're in their home ... there's satisfaction that makes all that hard work ... worthwhile ... And ... also ... that as you learn that with that person ... the next person, the next client is that much easier ... and the next one is that much easier ... Maybe a little bit like when you first met Tzar from the pound ... it may not have been easy ... however beautiful she may have been then ... there may have been you had to get through something ... Was she frightened when you first met her?

T Very little.

Rob Very little ... mmm ... and were there some difficulties early on? Getting her house trained?

T Yeah.

Rob. Yeah ... I remember an experience when one of our dogs was ... my toes have a good memory of that.

T [smiles and laughs]

Rob But you get through that ...

T And your nose.

Rob Yes. And you get through that and now you now it was worthwhile and look back and think oh ... I could say that it would have been terrible ... if you had not gone through what you went through ... so that she could become who she is ... And if you'd allow me I could say that it would have been terrible if you hadn't persevered and gone through what you went through ... with learning the mortgage work that you do ... because you've got the satisfaction of that you've got the flexibility of that you've got all the benefits of that ... and it would have been terrible if you hadn't persevered and gone through with that ... and it was hard ... it was a challenge ... could even have been exhausting at times ... and what I'm wanting to suggest to is that ... what you're wanting to make in moving your life is just and I don't want to make little of it it's just like ... one more mortgage application ... Finding a way financing a house, finding a way of emotionally ... financing your soul your life ... it's not easy ... and I think it might be nice if you could look and I'm not asking you to believe me ... but from my perspective that's what I'm saying ... Now how you do that. How you ... this is just like running up this hill. Just one more hill. ... Now you don't have to run up it all at once ... it might be overwhelming ... particularly the first time ...

T I don't want to have a second.

Rob [laughing] You've got to have a first ... and I don't know if you can guarantee but if you say "OK, I don't want a second. I want to get it right the first time." ... If you look at the first time you ran up that that hill ... what did you do or what could you do so that you knew you wouldn't have to have a second one? What would be helpful?

T I don't know.

Rob Same thing as training Tzar ... How did you train Tzar?

T Patient.

Rob Yes. Patience ... so it can take time ... and you found that when you worked with M that if you go too fast ... it just trips you up ... Going slowly ... even though I think you are an impatient person ... you like to get things done ... yesterday ... There are some things ... I planted some seeds ... some Tasmanian Blue Gum seeds ... about six weeks ago ... and watered them ... I call them "my babies" ... every morning I'd go out and look ... every evening nothing ... next morning nothing ... then one morning I went out and there were these little teeny green things popped up ... oh - that's the first baby ... I planted 25 seeds ... eighteen little plants now ... about two oT three inches high ... planted out some of them into larger ... pots ... looking forward to planting them into the ground ... a forest [laughs] ... In a few years they're going to be metres high ... but if I get one of those seeds that have just popped up and pull it to try and make it taller that's not necessarily going to help ... So you're right. it does take time. You do need to be patient ... and there are some things that you can hurry ... and there are some things that you can only experience by ... taking them ... really ... really ... slowly ... Now I don't know you, never met you before ... but my very strong sense is that you have already begun this process ... yep ... you've already taken ... more than a few baby steps ... along that road ... already on that path, already on that track taking you to the top of the hill ... and ... as you go up that hill ... some of it is going to be tough ... you're going to get puffed out ... you're going to get hot ... but when you get to the top ... and you see that stillness and you feel that wind ... how's that satisfaction? Was it worth it? ...

T Yeah.

Rob Yeah. ... It was ... There may have been some times on the way up where you wondered "Is it worth it?" ... but you're a pretty persistent woman, I think ... Once you make up your mind to do something ... I feel sorry for anyone or anything that gets in the way ...

T [smiles]

Rob And that's probably the reason that you're just holding back a little ... because once you know ... you are going to make that move ... there'll be no stopping you ... Does that make sense for me to say that?

T Yeah.

Rob So I think that it's really nice that you're holding back from making, letting yourself know ... you are going to do that. You have everything to do that. You're holding back from letting yourself know because once you know [claps hands] there'll be no stopping you. ... I feel sorry for that hill ... you're going to be on the top of that hill ... and you're going to get that satisfaction ... and I don't know just how close you are to letting yourself know that you have already begun ... that process ... [pause] ... It's very apparent to me looking on as a strangeT ... that you've started ... and as soon as you are ready ... to really push to the top of that ... then, and only then ... you'll be ready to let yourself know that you're on the trail ... [pause] ... Now I want to be really clear, T that I ... I'm saying some things ... to you ... that I cannot know what's best ... to say, what's best ... that you need to hear ... I'm only offering some ideas ... I'm being like a er ... an independence broker ... offering some options here ... you can find your own ways ... and I'm wondering ... when you spoke about music ... and difference pieces of music have different moods ... some music when you listen to it you fell like sitting down and ... doing nothing ... ah ... you put other music on you just have to get up and dance ... so what sort of music is going to get you to the top of **this** mountain? ... What sort of music is going to have the mood that is going to get you to ... dare ... to realise ... your capacity to **be** independent? ... What sort of music is going to support that? ...

T Maybe ????? kind of music ???

Rob OK. You're not sure? ... is there any particular song or track that comes from that ... that would be particularly useful?

T Mmm sunlight.

Rob Um?

T A song called sunlight.

Rob Sunlight. You don't have to sing that song to me ... and you wouldn't want me to sing it to you ... but if you can notice the mood of that, maybe listen to it in your head ... OK ... and as you breathe ... it can be almost like you can breathe the mood of that music, breathe it into you ... not only into your body ... but actually ... breathe it ... into your soul ... Ahhh ... Just feel that ... [pause] ... and are you feeling that?

T Mm.

Rob And even though the music ... has a rhythm and pattern it moves through that ... a kind of a stillness ... that can stay with you ... and as you listen to that music ... let your soul listen to it ... and I wonder what Tzar would say about that ... 'cause she's a wise soul ... If you were to ask her ... "Tzar, what do you think would be helpful for me in this situation?", what do you think she'd tell you?

T Exercise.

Rob uh?

T Exercise. [laughs]

Rob. Mmm So what kind of exercise is going to help you to ... have this satisfaction ...

T I just think any exercise.

Rob Oh, OK. ... Now you're already getting some exercise. You're ...

T Mm

Rob You're frowning at the moment. Is there something that's ...

T Going to all the classes. I can't do it.

Rob Oh. You're a very brave woman.

T So uncoordinated.

Rob Oh yeah. ... Were you frowning about that? Is it hard work?

T Yes. It's fun.

Rob Oh ... So here's the same question ... Is it worth it? ...

T Yeah.

Rob If it was easy ...

T It wouldn't be as much fun.

Rob It wouldn't be much fun for you. No pain no gain.

T No

Rob You have to make some things just a little bit difficult otherwise [indistinct] ... and so being independent, how discovering your capacity to be independent ... you have to make it a little bit difficult otherwise .. you know, it's not worth doing. ... I think you're succeeding

at that quite well. ... If, if getting a mortgage was really easy you'd have no job. ... It has to be a little bit of difficulty ... Eh?

T I'd be rich.

Rob You'd be rich [laughs] Yeah but I think you'd be looking for another job.

T Mm.

Rob Mm so you've got to have the right amount of difficulty to keep you ... entertained ... yeah, yeah. ... So discovering your capacity to be, letting yourself know ... you **can** be independent ... you **can** do that ... it has to be a little bit difficult ... and i can imagine that it might be a bit of a relief for you to see that you're producing just about the right amount of difficulty to make it a challenge for you otherwise ... who would be bothered? ... you wouldn't be bothered ... [pause] ... What do you feel when I say that kind of thing because I'm saying it, I'm kind of making fun of you in a way but I hope you can hear I'm actually respecting what you do. I'm not making a joke at your expense. I hope you can hear that.

T Yeah, year.

Rob Mm.

T I just worry about things.

Rob Yeah. You do. Yes. You worry about things. You're a mother. Mothers worry about kids. That's part of your job specification. ... You introduce me to a mother who doesn't worry about her kids and I'll say "Nah, it's not the mother."

T Yeah.

Ron And ... you have to have just the right amount of worry. ... You don't want to be a mother who never worries ... Mm? That would be irresponsible. Because you love them. ... How do you have the right amount of worry?

T I just feel it's so selfish.

Rob Selfish?

T They're happier when there's two of us there. [pause] Because I'm not happy.

Rob No. ... I think it would be selfish if you stayed for that reason. The kind thing to do for your kids is to make sure that you're happy so that when you're happy they can be happy. ... It's the same thing as training Tzar ... If you're in a bad mood, you can't get anything done. ... If you're miserable and you're unhappy you can't train her. She'd be unhappy. ... Your first duty as a mother to your kids is to make sure that you're happy. Make sure there's just the right if there's too much struggle ... and they say "Oh ... that's what mum

... oh ... it has to be really agonising and you just have to put up with ... torture to get through it. I don't know that that's what you are wanting to do. ... and so ... helping them ... because you love them ... by showing them ... because you want the best for them ... that of course ... you want to look after them ... but you need to look after you as well ... When you are running with Tzar and she's near that road ... you have to look after her ... but if you go chasing her to keep her away from the road ... that's not going to help ... Do you find that sometime when you run ahead that she follows you?

T Yep. [nods]

Rob Ah. ... but if you just got so worried about her, "Oh I don't want to be selfish and have a good run" ... I need to be worried about her all the time ... you'd probably end up putting here in the middle of the road.

T [chuckles]

Rob If she's anything like our dog ... So somehow ... taking the lead ... yourself ... getting out in front ... showing ... let them follow you ... Let's have this challenge. Let's get the satisfaction of doing it ... I mean Tzar could follow you on the run ... and your kids can learn from you in following you ...and knowing how much effort to make ... and that it's OK for them to look after themselves ... Do you know what I mean?

T Yeah.

Rob Do you think I'm distorting?

T No.

Rob I think that's a very important thing for kids to learn. ...

T If it were one of my kids doing what I'm doing I'd smack them.

Rob OK ...

T I wouldn't want them to be so unhappy. ... I'd shake them and say "Stop it." It's not about the grandkids, it's about "You've got to be happy." I won't ... no ... I've always wanted them to be happy ?????? them to suffer for me to have that that.

Rob So should I smack you?

T [laughs]

Rob You don't have to smack yourself and you don't really have to shake yourself but in a way ...

T

Rob Maybe in this experience you can shake yourself ... just enough to shake off that

T guilt

Rob Yeah. 'Cause you can be happy and that can help to take care of them ... by being happy ... it's the biggest gift that you can give them... look after them from a position of happiness. You don't want them growing up thinking that life is supposed to be miserable. That's not a nice gift.

Now you can say that ... I can support you in that as an idea. What happens if you sit with that like you can sit with the smell of the eucalyptus, and the dampness and the greenness ... and the windiness ... and really let yourself feel that. You have a right ... even a duty ... and not only not be miserable, but actually take care of your own happiness. As you sit with that ... and let yourself breathe that ... really breathe it in ... into your soul ... and let it be there ... still ... so that you can really know ... and really feel ... and there may even be times where it is difficult to let go. You might have to push through that ... and how are you feeling at the moment?

T Now.

Rob Yeah. And is that OK for you?

T Yeah. You notice that you can feel better. It's OK for you ... **AND** ... it is actually better and OK for you and your kids?

T Yeah

Rob And it was hard for you to get to that ... because you care about them ... you want the best for them ... and you were feeling guilty ... but from my perspective that is just selfish ... That if you want to do the right thing by them ... and just getting held back by your own guilt ... when you can leave the guilt and misery behind and push through and get to that feeling of happiness and achievement ... well you can share that with them.

[pause]

Rob And you're looking a little serious at the moment, like there's something heavy going on. What's happening? I can't know but I just wondered.

T I think .. I think it's ... it starts to be real.

Rob Yes.

And I'm quiet, but it's still scary.

Rob Yes. You start running up that hill ... and somewhere along that hill it's ... yeah ... you know that feeling.

T Yeah.

Rob And if you have just a little bit of scariness ... it wouldn't be that

T Yeah

Rob ... buzz and the relief at the end of it. You've got to have the right amount. Just enough to make it so you get the buzz but not so that you get paralysed. Like getting the right interest rate.

T It doesn't happen.

Rob Everyone wants an interest rate of zero.

T Yes. So do I.

Rob Oh well of course. But uh, it's real ... but we want to get the right interest ... you don't want 90%. No-one wants that ... 50% ... so it's the same with the scary ... and it is real ... no-one want the interest rate but it's real ... no-one wants the scariness but it's real ... and ... you can manage a bit of scariness ...

T Mm

Rob and you have ... lots of times ... and there will be other things in the future by the way ... One of my friends says that when you've got a problem, it's the same damn thing over and over again. When you get out of that and into solutions it's one damn thing after another.

T I know what you mean.

Rob You solve one mortgage problem ... another one.

T Yeah.

Rob There's plenty more where that came from. And the important thing is not that it can be easy. The important thing is you really know ... and really know - no matter what ... you can get through it.

T Mm

Rob You're very resourceful. Very. Yeah. ... and you can make that effort and get through difficulties and scary things ... because you know ... you're going to get that satisfaction.

So, it sounds like you ... you're on the road ... yeah ... and like In said, god help anyone who tries to get in your way now ...

T Not that bad

Rob Huh?

T Not that bad.

Rob Yeah but I think you're pretty determined. Other people should start to get scared of they get in your way.

What's different now than when we started?

T Um ... I think ... not having the same burden ...

Rob Yeah

T It sits there. But it's OK. I want them to see me smile.

Rob OK

T They don't see me ... except when I'm with them. Then I do but they don't see me happy.

Rob So will they be able to cope?

T Yeah.

Rob When they see mum's happy, will they be alright? Will they need therapy?

T No.

[laughs]

Rob Will they be able to make that adjustment?

T Yeah.

Rob Ok ... they may even seem a bit of the same relief that you feel ...

T Yeah. It's just different. It doesn't mean it's bad.

Rob So that burden is still there, but it's less ...

T Yeah

Rob I don't know, maybe further behind you or

T yeah

Rob ... you can pack

T Yeah. Yeah.

Rob And if you were to somehow take an inventory of where you are now ... what if anything is still missing for you so that you can go on with what you're going to do? You know when your doing an application you have a check list ... to go through and see if you've missed anything ...

T I think ... I know I can do it because I'm very stubborn.

Rob Yes! You are.

T But ... part of me still has no confidence in the outcome ... in the ... I'll do it and it'll be the right thing ... I still worry about the outcome - the end picture.

Rob Well, you can't be certain. When you picked up Tsar from the pound, you hoped ... but you couldn't be certain.

T Yeah.

Rob So this is like ... the same as saving you from out of the pound. I mean you're not in the pound, but it's the same kind of like it's the new you ... you feel like a puppy

T Yep.

Rob But you're here also. [loud laughter]

T You're getting there - it's the worst improvement.

Rob An American Family Therapist said that he wouldn't part with any of his kids for a million dollars, but he wouldn't pay 10 cents for another one. So you keep going with your sixteen year old and you've got your six year old ... yeah ... and a four year old ... there's still going to be some ... yeah, yeah, yeah ... part of the deal.

T Yeah.

Rob Are you up to it?

T Yeah.

Rob You are.

T Yeah.

Rob You are.

T It's like a crystal ball.

Rob It is. And when you look at it, and you see that ... what do you see? Do you see the past? The future? Do you see the present? And the way that can move through that. What can you see? When you look at the crystal ball?

T Um ... I think that ... I will be a better person and sometimes I feel like I [indistinct] I want to become the I can't crack out of it. I can see that it's going to happen. I just don't want to hurt anyone to get ...

Rob But if you don't get out of it you won't be available for them.

T I'll suffocate. I can move very very easily but I know [indistinct]

Rob So cut the crap and

[laughter]

Rob So when you look in that crystal ball and you look and you see in the future ... ah - how's that? I'm glad I did that. The kids are happy ... seeing me happy. Now how can you keep that image, that crystal ball in front of you. You've got that burden behind you but you've got the crystal ball in front of you.

T I think, I think it's having the around. I went looking for one and I couldn't ...

Rob Now you said you wanted some exercise ... now I know the exercise you need to do. It involves the corners of your mouth. Now those muscles need exercising.

T Yeah

Rob You may need to stand in front of a mirror and practice smiling for a while. Do 12 smile-ups every morning before breakfast. The frown muscles have been over exercised and the smiling muscles have been under exercised..

T Yeah

Rob You need a trainer. I'm serious about the smiling muscles, though. I'm joking about it but I'm also serious. That's something for you to practice.

T I saw a photo of them when they were 12 months or 2 years and we were all smiling and if I could keep that photo in my head ...

Rob And what about practicing that ... yeah, that's right.

T Yeah.

Rob So when you pull up at the traffic lights ... you can do a couple of, er ... exercises with the corners of your mouth ... just let your forehead smooth out ... take a breath ... any time the corners of your mouth go down just a little ... up they

T Yeah.

Rob Mmm ... I think that's an exercise for you to ...

T Yeah.

Rob And what's the breath ... relief?

T Yeah.

[pause]

T Yeah.

Rob You've got some things to do now ... you've got a future to live into.

T I'm tired.

Rob You've been doing some exercises.

T Busy day.

Rob Well.

T Yeah.

Rob And you can be tired ... and you can look forward to that breeze ... that wind ...

T Yeah. Satisfied.

Rob Yeah ... Was it worth it?

T yeah.

T Yep.

Rob I'm so glad for you ... and your kids.

T Yeah.

Rob And if you weren't to make, to have made this effort ... to get through that ... and be happy.

T Yeah.

Rob I think you can ... I think you want the best for them ... and you can do that without a smack or being shaken ... that's quite a learning ... Anything else that's there for today, or from this experience?

T I've just got to ... believe that ...

Rob Yes ... and ... um ... you've just got ... to believe it, just like when you go up that mountain ... just like when you walk Tzar ... there's a bit of trust there, you've got to believe it ... the top of the mountain might not be there this time ... but you've got to believe it's there and [indistinct]

T It's like Kilimanjaro at times.

Rob That's quite a ... a friend of mine climbed Kilimanjaro. He had to leave the base at 2 am ... quite a climb ... but he did it!

T Yeah. I want to do that one day.

Rob Oh really? I think it's going to be easy for you ...

T Phew.

Rob So it might be useful for you to just sit with this for a moment and really let yourself feel the relief ... that you **have** got that crystal ball in front of you pulling you ... that will get you through any difficulty ... and you can already look forward ... to that relief ... and the more exercises you can do with the corners of your mouth ... the better it's going to be for everyone.

T Yeah.

Rob So as you just sit with that ... I want to let you know how grateful I am ... in you trusting me with something that is so important to you ... and your future and your kids' future ... It's a gift that you've given me, so thank you for that.

T OK.

Rob And I think your dog can help to remind you that ... They are great teachers, aren't they? They really know a lot, those creatures.

T Yeah.

Rob Someone told me that they think that dogs are Buddhists ... always live in the moment ... they have no doubts ... they trust themselves ... they know they can do it ... no matter how tired or what that Tzar is if you rattle her ...

T yeah.

Rob [laughs] So how will you know when you've had enough of this? ... How will you know when you're ready to ... let your eyes open ... and face the rest of the day? ... And I think it's important that you take your time about that ... not rush it ... don't want you to be too impatient ... [pause] ...

T [opens her eyes] chuckles.

Rob Now you're looking for tissues ...

T Thank you.

listening



Rob: So, M, thanks for being willing to play here and see whether it will be useful. And is it okay if we make a recording of this?

M: Yes.

Rob: For this group, is it alright if we record it for other people too?

M: Yes. Yes, yes, it's okay.

Rob: If you change your mind, let me know at the end of the session. That's fine too.

So what have you been up to?

M: Oh, lots of work. I've been enjoying getting on the bike again, riding the motorbike.

Rob: And do you notice how easy it is for you to just let yourself go into hypnosis?

M: Hmm.

Rob: You don't need to do that yet. You could tell me more about what you enjoy to do. It can be something about getting back on the bike again.

M: Yeah, that's right because I didn't ride much over winter. Well, it's still winter, but you know, in the dense of winter. And it's...

Rob: And you didn't ride much?

M: No.

Rob: And you hadn't been on your bike much over winter for a couple of months?

M: That's right, yeah.

Rob: And there are good reasons for that?

M: Hmm. Cold weather.

Rob: Cold weather.

M: Bronchitis.

Rob: But that's gone now? The bronchitis is gone?

M: Yeah, yeah. I'm in the clear.

Rob: You're in the clear.

M: I didn't even get lung cancer.

Rob: You didn't actually get lung cancer. Not yet, but you know, in maybe 60 years' time, I'll let you just enjoy the moment. But when you look back to that bronchitis, I wonder whether there were times during that, those couple of months where you'd had at least some awareness of, you know, is this ever going to go or is this permanent? Am I stuck with this? Will I ever be able to get back on the bike again? Will I ever stop coughing?

M: It was dragging on.

Rob: It was dragging on. And what was the first sign that you, when you look back now, you perhaps didn't realise at the time, but if you look back now, what was the first sign that you now recognise that you didn't recognise at the time because it wasn't well enough developed to be recognised, that you were starting to get over that bronchitis.

M: Well I think, looking back on it, the first sign was my, well, I don't know, accepting that this was a problem.

Rob: Okay.

M: And that I - it was unacceptable. This was going to be dealt with and so that...

Rob: Okay. You accepted the fact that it was unacceptable and you're going to deal with it.

M: Yes, yes. So I went back to the doctor and I...

Rob: The old boy says that [the sage] isn't sick. It's not that he's not sick. It's that he's sick of sickness. And because he's sick of sickness, therefore he's not sick. So somehow you went back to the doctor and said this is unacceptable and you accepted the fact that it was unacceptable, which took you back to the doctor.

M: That's right.

Rob: That was the first step that you can now recognise looking back. And when you look back before that, was there some - what happened before you accepted the fact that it was unacceptable, when you look back now?

M: Well I was, I think, increasingly taking other actions like shiatsu massage and whatever. But at that point of that acceptance, I was impatient too. It was like enough already.

Rob: Aha. So you reached a certain point where enough already. And if you look back a little further than that, before you got to enough already?

M: It was starting to think, well, I need to actually do something more.

Rob: Need to do something more. And if you look back before that?

M: I was ignoring it and hoping it would go away and pressing on.

Rob: And when you were ignoring it and hoping and pressing on, things were just continuing? There was no...

M: Yes. Well, actually there was a point of minimising some things, but pressing on largely. The time before that was totally ignoring. So that's the two months we've just gone backwards though, I suppose?

Rob: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So when you started to run that forward again, you were ignoring it and then you started to notice it. You started to look at other options, realising that where you were was unacceptable. You started to look at other options and then somehow, something clicked and you didn't take up the other options, you went back to the doctor. Is that right?

M: Well I tried some of the other options.

Rob: You tried some of the other options.

M: And then I got [inaudible 05:11] it's obvious.

Rob: And so then you went to the doctor and whatever happened there? What was the first sign that you realised ah, something is improving here.

M: I think physically the clearing the lungs started.

Rob: And when the clearing of the lungs started, what was that like? Were you coughing less or were you...?

M: More.

Rob: You were coughing more? Aha. So you're actually getting into something to clear; you were doing something to clear it. Okay. So you actively were doing something or did that - did you just notice that? Were you doing something to clear your lungs or did you just notice?

M: Well I was taking some medication.

Rob: Taking medication.

M: And coughing up the phlegm.

Rob: Okay.

M: But as I said, you know...

Rob: But the coughing up was something that you didn't think, oh, I'm going to do something to make myself cough more. It - just, coughing up more was a consequence of taking medications. Is that right?

M: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. Alright. And then that progressed and you just kept coughing up more and coughing up more and when did the coughing up more start to subside? When did it start to...?

M: You know, probably within a week or so. There's another key part of it too, I think. Like before all that process, I'd gone to the doctor and had some treatments, but he hadn't listened to what I'd said in the first place. When I went back, I went back with a mission to get what I wanted in the first place.

Rob: Right.

M: And I got that and it worked.

Rob: Okay, so you knew what you wanted.

M: Yeah. I had a theory right at the beginning and he didn't listen to it.

Rob: Okay and you didn't have enough.

M: So I was going back to, yeah. So that was important. I took charge of it.

Rob: You took charge of it and you made sure that you were listened to.

M: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. Okay and when you took charge and you made sure that the doctor listened to what you were saying, that's when things started to improve.

M: Hmm.

Rob: Okay. And I'm wondering is there any awareness at the moment in your experience of something starting to change? You know we're in a workshop about hypnosis and I'm wondering is there something that you can begin to notice that other people mightn't be aware of, but that you could begin to notice something's starting to change.

M: Uh-huh.

Rob: Yeah. So what is it that you wanted to work on her today?

M: Well, seeing you've, you know, we were looking at loss and grief and so forth, I recently, as I've told you, a week or so ago, I heard my dad's been diagnosed with cancer. And so that's what I thought I might talk about and my response to that. So it's sort of a - well it's not loss yet, but it's a loss of something.

Rob: Well, look, well the anticipation is that sometime in the future you'll look back and experience the loss. So you're looking to some future experience that's going to look back and look back on us.

M: And yeah, and it's also a loss of some plans or some things that we'd do together.

Rob: Yeah, sure.

M: Well, it might be. So it's a potential loss.

Rob: A potential loss, yeah. And if you were to - how can I say - be at the doctor to that experience of potential loss, what might that potential loss want you to hear so that you could respond to that so that that potential loss could take charge and initiate a process where things can start to heal? How could you be, as the doctor to that potential loss, how can you listen? What is that potential loss trying to get you if it knew what you needed, if it knew what it needed, if you were to listen, what it is telling you that it needs so that it can heal?

M: Hmm.

Rob: Because when you took your lungs to the doctor, you didn't let him know, your lungs didn't let him know what they wanted and what you wanted. And when you took your lungs and you took yourself and you let him know what you wanted, you heard it and things started to improve.

Years ago I went to a workshop that's called the Action Workshop. And in this workshop, the idea was put forward that language is action. It's how we speak that generates this or that kind of action. And I did that workshop in May of a particular year. Come the end of June, I sent all of my tax fees to my accountant and I said to him, I would like you to let me know, if you would, if you have time, when you can get around to it, what my tax situation is for this year.

And he said, oh, we'll do what we can. And that was on about the 1st or 2nd of July. By the end of July, I hadn't heard anything. So I rang him and I said, I'm sorry to bother you, but I wanted to find out about my tax situation. How are you doing with that? And he said, I'm sorry. We haven't got around to it. We've been a bit busy. We'll see what we can do.

At the end of August, I still hadn't heard. So I rang him and I said, you know, I've been asking about this and haven't got anything. Yeah, well, sorry. We'll see what we can do.

A couple of weeks later, I was looking through the notes that I had made from that Action Workshop, that language. And I realised the way I had been speaking, didn't give that accountant the message that I wanted him to have. It was a pivotal moment for me.

So I rang him up. It was a Friday late morning and I said, I'm sorry that I haven't been clear with you, but I would like you to do whatever you need to do so that I can have those figures by the end of next week. And he said, well we've got a lot on our plate. I'm not sure that I can do that. And I said to him, I trust you sufficiently to know that you will do

what you need to do to give me the figures by the end of next week before or 5 o'clock on Friday.

Four o'clock that Friday, I had a phone call from him. He told me exactly what I needed to know. And everything that he told me, I had in writing on Monday. And I realised that I got what I was wanting when I made it possible for him to hear what it was that I wanted. And when I did that then I got what I wanted and the situation would stop there.

So if you were to be the doctor and listen how could that potential future loss speak to you in such a way that you can hear because it knows what it wants, how can you listen to it? When you listen to it, what does it start to tell you? What do you start to hear? Not that you're working out a treatment plan or anything or prescribing anything, but what are you starting to hear? Yeah, that. What's that?

M: **[inaudible 14:35]**.

Rob: Yeah. And you don't need to put it into words because we don't need to know. I can guess some of what it might be, but that will be related to my experience, not yours. I can't know what yours is. But are you starting to hear what that potential future loss is wanting you to hear? Are you starting to hear that?

M: Hmm.

Rob: And as you start to hear it, what do you see now that's going to be useful to take care of that? And again, you're welcome to say anything or you don't need to say anything at all. It's up to you. The important thing is that you start to notice, to recognise, like getting back on your bike again.

M: Hmm.

Rob: Is it starting to become clear to you what you can do?

M: Hmm. I don't mind talking about it. I think it's partly about - it's not either or, it's a both and. It requires a different strategy to what I've had before. My dad's had cancer a couple of times before and I've just not entertained the possibility that he wasn't going to survive it.

This time it's more serious and, whilst I don't want to psychologically, in some way, for myself, point the bone at him because I don't believe in that stuff and it goes against the grain of solution mode. I think, you know, in answer to your question earlier, what does that future loss want is the - it wants to be heard at some level, to be accept it as a potential or as a, you know - well, it's a thing anyway. It will have to listened to at some level, not just totally...

Rob: Well you're starting to accept that trying to ignore it is unacceptable.

M: Yeah, that's right. And that it doesn't need to be, ah, [roar]. I can't listen to it and then I can put it back on, you know.

Rob: Yes.

M: So I can give it short bursts of hearing without **[inaudible 17:23]**.

Rob: Like when you're on your bike sometimes you use your accelerator throttle, sometimes the brake. You know when to change gear, when to stop. You don't have to always drive in one gear. You don't have to always go full throttle. It doesn't have to be a throttle or a brake. It could be a throttle and a brake.

Sometimes there's some - and if you were to do that and listen to it in that way, as you're starting to do that, what do you notice in yourself is starting to happen for you in your body, in your emotions, in your thinking?

M: There's some shift in my stomach.

Rob: Yes. Towards?

M: Just some sensations that weren't there before.

Rob: Yes.

M: Well they're sort of more settling, I think.

Rob: Settling?

M: Hmm.

Rob: And that settling can come and go. You don't have to have it there all the time. And what else are you starting to notice that's right?

M: Yeah.

Rob: That's good. What started to happen now?

M: It's just quiet.

Rob: It's a feeling of quiet?

M: Hmm. Something comforting.

Rob: Comforting. Yeah, quiet, comforting. And as you are allowing yourself to be comforted by that, what happens to that future anticipation of loss? Is that also quieter?

M: No, saddened.

Rob: Yes. And do you notice with that sadness how that feels when you accept the sadness. You don't have to be sad all the time when you let yourself experience that sadness.

When Queen Elizabeth offered a comment after 9/11 to the American people, she quoted, oh, a line from a poem, which said that grief is the price we pay for caring. Without caring, there would be no grief. Without caring, there would be no concern about loss.

What happens when I say that?

I think we've all had clients who say, I wish I'd had the chance to say this, that or the other before some - before this particular person died. If only I'd known, I would have told them, dah, dah, dah, dah. One of the things I'm so grateful to myself is that, before my father died, I had ample opportunity recurrently to let him know just how much I appreciated him.

My father died quite suddenly. He was digging in the garden. A few hours later he had a massive coronary. A couple of days later he was dead. There was almost no preparation, almost none. But in a way, I had done all that preparation before he even had his coronary.

You know, people say on their death bed, very few people say I wish I'd spent more time at the office. On someone else's deathbed, often people express regrets that they didn't say, they didn't do, they didn't express. And having some pre - having some warning, some indication.

Because you know that Canberra weather is cold, because you know that the battery for your motorbike has a lot of work to do to start that motorbike, you brought that trickle charger. If someone didn't know, didn't have a warning about coldness, about the strain on the battery, they wouldn't know to get a trickle charge and they might not be able to start a bike.

And because you have that knowledge beforehand about Canberra winters, because you have that knowledge beforehand about the strain on that battery, you can do what you need to do to take care of it.

And when you look at that Triumph and you recognise just how it can pull you into a place of feeling more confident, you know about that. You don't need to wait until you come off that bike at 180km going around a corner and discover, just before you smash

yourself into smithereens, oh, I think that was a little bit too fast. You already let yourself know that, accepting the challenge of that bike is unacceptable. So you can do what you need to do.

And there may be a sense of sadness if you sell that bike. There might be a sense of loss of future pleasure riding that bike because you really like it. I mean, I know it's only a bike, but it has some importance for you. But you are able to anticipate when you've got the time to do what you need to do.

And you hadn't ridden your mega bike for a couple of months. When you got back on it, you hadn't forgotten anything. In fact, it was a relief to get back on; a pleasure.

Now I can talk about different things and we all know that I have no right to be offering you advice. Who am I to be someone offering ideas to you? The important thing here is for us all to remember that this is your experience, not mine, happening within you, not within me. And allowing yourself to recognise the importance of accepting when something is unacceptable and then doing what is going to be helpful and relevant. That way you can deal with anything, no matter what it is.

I may have mentioned before that one comment that Erickson made in my presence that stayed with me and comes back recurrently and that is that we never need to be afraid of anything that comes from within ourselves.

So, coming in on the bike this morning, it was a pleasure for me to lean into the curves, to the turns. And if I felt any tinge of fear to know that I didn't need to be afraid of that feeling is very helpful to me. But I'm wondering what's happening for you though.

M: Now things are settling down.

Rob: Things are settling down, yeah. And just like when your bronchitis started to settle down, there was something to get off your chest, so to speak, and it may be for this situation to settle down. You can recognise in the future, looking back, how important it was for you to get his off your chest so you could clear the way ahead.

And you mentioned the suspension on that bike had some - can't remember the word - travel into something that you can actually ride it on dirt roads, bumpy roads and somehow the bike copes with the bumps and the rough spots.

And you mentioned that man, who was getting overwhelmed by his reaction to his wife leaving and couldn't speak adequately. And you said that he liked mountain bike riding down dirt tracks with washed away bits and he could do that, no problem. When it came to the idea that if he can go down steep, dirt paths with grooves and I don't know what in it, then he can deal with those conversations with his wife.

And so, if you can ride that bike, you can deal with the ups and downs with the bumps and feel better for having done it.

I can say that the time came where avoiding that bicycle, that bike, motorbike, you accepted the fact that was unacceptable. And somehow like you might call a pre-appointment change before you came and sit in this chair, it wouldn't surprise me if you started to accept the fact that, just avoiding what you've been avoiding was unacceptable.

And there's a slight nod of your head. And as that settling continues, there may be some rough spots, tight bends, bumps, washed away bits and you can look back and see that you did exactly everything that you needed to do to get through that.

And you talked about the value of being mindful, going at a slower pace, not having to become focused, but pushing it to the limits and so, going slower in this process, being mindful of it.

I don't know if there's anything more that you would like me to say. Was there anything else that you would like to do or say? I can just offer the idea that perhaps you could sit there for as long as you need or as short as you need and just let that settling continue even after you've let your eyes open and to know that the settling process can have some bumps, some uphill, some downhill.

M: That's right.

Rob: Yeah, good. And what are you noticing about yourself, M? What's different now than when you started? You don't have to articulate everything if it's too much to put into words.

M: I'm feeling pretty still and centred.

Rob: Still and?

M: Centred.

Rob: Centred?

M: And my body feels relaxed.

Rob: Your body is relaxed. And can you find another word to say more about that relaxed feeling? What else - how else could you describe it?

M: My body is very still.

Rob: Still, yes.

M: At one stage when I was just sort of getting back in my body, at one stage I was just a head.

Rob: You were just?

M: Just a head.

Rob: Just a head.

M: I was aware of the body, but it was just - I was...

Rob: When you are riding, it's always good to keep ahead of where you're going.

M: I was pleasantly dissociated with it.

Rob: Pleasantly dissociated and now your body's coming back and there's some stillness in your body.

M: Hmm. **[Inaudible 36:41]**.

Rob: And I'm wondering if you, if you would - how you'd respond to the idea that there's some peace in your body, some peacefulness.

M: Yeah, definitely.

Rob: Yeah. That's what it looks like. And?

M: Well it's sort of like a concentrated experience.

Rob: Concentrated experience.

M: In a very short space of time, there was a lot of processing done.

Rob: Very short space of time. And how short does that space of time feel to you?

M: Oh, it seemed like it was about 20 minutes only.

Rob: Twenty minutes.

M: I'm not sure how long it was.

Rob: No, I'm not either. Probably about 20 minutes. Maybe 19 or 21. I don't know. It might have been a bit longer, I don't know. It doesn't matter.

M: But it seemed like a few sessions worth, with minimal words. The body's done it. The process was the body.

Rob: And the more you trusted your body, the more it could do what it needed to do, the more you listened to it.

M: Hmm. It didn't seem necessary to talk about it much.

Rob: Yeah.

M: Hmm. That was very helpful.

Rob: So was that a place we could stop?

M: Hmm.

Rob: And you say that you were getting back into your body?

M: Yes.

Rob: And when do you think you can start to come out of hypnosis? And you laugh at that?

M: Yeah.

Rob: What's funny about that?

M: Oh, well, you can get tricked into thinking you've come out and you have not. You're still on those levels. I'm not as entranced as I was when [inaudible 38:42].

Rob: No. But you're more entranced than you weren't at all.

M: Yes, that's right, yeah.

Rob: There's a - I remember reading about a condition. I can't remember what it was called. I think it's called false waking or something where someone was asleep and they wake up. And after a while they wake up and realise that they dreamt that they'd woken up. And some people even then manage to wake up and dreamt that they had a dream about dreaming about waking up. Some people then wake up.

M: Yeah.

Rob: So you said that's an okay place to stop?

M: Yeah. Thanks, yeah.

Rob: Thank you.

hypnosis in relationships



Rob: We human beings are relating beings. We are in a life very much parallel with how we are in our relationships. When relationships are well, we're well. When they're going well, we're going well. When our relationships take a dive, often our mood and our life follows. And relationships of course are under a tremendous strain these days with all the pressures of modern life, the financial and family commitments that are a part of the busyness of our times. And some therapists are very skilled at working with couples and others tend to think of couples as too difficult or indifferent.

I find that by thinking of a couple as an entity and working with that entity called 'the couple', then all of the principles and approaches of working with individuals seem to work really very well. When couples come in conflict, they often come not as a couple, but as two individuals pouring. And so, the notion of treating them as an entity can in itself be a part of the healing process. Usually couples come in conflict, they come in arguing, they come in disputing and so, to have the possibility of a hypnotic experience can be an interruption to their arguing, to their disputation, can be an opportunity for them to be quiet together, to enjoy a shared pleasant experience together sometimes the first time for years.

And so, to invite a couple to sit and go into hypnosis together, perhaps even in synchronization with each other. If they're going to close their eyes together, maybe to pay attention to the other person and to ordinate their own eye closing with the other and to ask the couple in hypnosis where they met, where they fell in love, where they first began to really enjoy the other persons company and know that that person was for them. By creating a mood of shared enjoyment, shared pleasure, it can be a delightful interruption to their habitual disengagement and indifference or active conflict that may have brought them into their therapeutic situation.

Hypnosis can be such a lovely way of helping to generate a relationship. Working with individuals – often after a hypnotic experience, an individual will find that they can trust themselves and trust the therapist more than previously. And so, it lends itself ideally to working with couples where in a relationship difficulty, trust is always a suspect and to anything that's going to restore that trust, enhance that trust is going to be a very useful part of the healing for the couple.

The couple who we're about to share a demonstration with, have been together some time and it was a pleasure to have the chance to share this experience with them and to see how they are able to enjoy this experience together. And I'm grateful to them both for their generosity in allowing us to witness their shared experience. As an aside, some months after this session, they got pregnant and I'm wondering whether the session may have had some influence there.

It's only wondering, but it's nice to know that the possibility of sharing something like we're about to witness can have other effects that ripple outside of the therapy room. So, I'm so grateful to each and both of them for their generosity in allowing us to be part of their experience so that we can in response to that, somehow notice how we can be more of effective with our clients in helping them as couples to heal.

Thank you both for being willing to play in this game, to see what we can get up to.

Is it okay to video tape this for future teaching purposes so that we can maybe follow on from what Julie was saying before about having the here? You don't know quite what's going to happen and what's going to go on. Can you tell me what the two of you like to do together that's enjoyable that we can talk about publicly?

Husband:: We like to go walking in the morning. We do that together and we enjoy that, don't we darling?

Wife:: Usually.

Rob: Don't we darling? Yes. So, you go walking and you do so in the morning?

Wife:: Yes.

Husband:: Yes.

Rob: Okay and is this, what, just around the street or is there a park or something that you walk to?

Wife:: Down through the [Sinkhole 06:22], the botanical gardens, down to the beach and on the beach and back home.

Rob: Okay. Oh, lovely. All right and do you do this all weathers, or just when it's nice or if it's raining, do you still go?

Husband:: We haven't done it when it's raining, have we?

Wife:: No. Sometimes if it's a bit sprinkling.

Husband:: Yeah, most mornings.

Rob: Most mornings, okay. How long do you walk for; 10 minutes, half a minute?

Wife:: Forty-five minutes.

Rob: Okay. Forty-five.

Wife:: Forty-five.

Husband:: Forty-five.

Rob: Excellent.

Husband:: Wife: likes to get home on a certain time.

Rob: Okay. Now, because we're just playing here, this is not like you haven't said you got a problem or whatever, but is there something that you might want to work on that would be helpful or not? Doesn't have to be.

Wife:: Yeah, we can, yeah.

Husband:: Yeah, we can talk about that.

Rob: What could we talk about? What could we do here that would be helpful to the two of you?

Wife:: Well, I tend to be a little bit more relaxed around the house in terms of picking up clothes and doing the washing.

Rob: Do you mean not picking up clothes when you say more relaxed?

Wife:: Yeah, I pick them up, but I might leave them there for a while before I pick them up. I tend to have a few piles occasionally.

Rob: Okay and Husband: likes to pick them up just before they hit the ground?

Wife:: Yeah. He's a bit more of a, I call him the zen master because he's trying to create a state of zen in the house where everything's clean and tidy.

Rob: You can give him a rake so that he can rake the carpet and have the patterns in there. But even zen gardens have rocks or something, you know what I'm saying. But anyhow. So, you don't mind leaving things there for a while, but you'd rather pick them up?

Husband:: Yeah. I mean after a week, I think it's reasonable to pick them up.

Rob: After a week? Yeah?

Wife:: Yeah, sometimes a bit sooner than a week.

Rob: I hope that sometimes it's a bit longer than a week too.

Husband:: I like to use the wardrobes rather than keep them empty.

Rob: Okay.

Wife:: Or the washing machine. Like, "We only need to do 15 minutes a day of washing, that's all."

Rob: All right.

Wife:: I don't like that.

Rob: So, 16 minutes would be, this is the zen. Fifteen minutes is enough.

Wife:: That's all it takes, 15 minutes a day.

Rob: Not one minute more.

Husband:: You're not taking sides here, are you Rob?

Rob: No. No, I'm just trying to understand, but from your point of view it's like somehow if you've got wardrobes, why would you want to use the floor? What's the point of having a wardrobe if it's empty? I mean if you take clothes off, why do you want to leave them on the floor? Why not either put them in the wardrobe or in the washing machine? You know that. It makes perfect sense for you, I'm sure. Anyhow, how long have you been married by the way?

Husband:: Eighteen months.

Wife:: Eighteen months, yeah.

Rob: Eighteen months. Okay, so you're doing all right so far.

Wife:: Hm.

Rob: Yeah. I don't know whether you know that comment that someone made when he jumped off a 100-story building? He says, "Hundred, 99, 98. I'm doing all right so far." Not wanting to be too optimistic. Just want to lower the expectations a bit.

Husband:: Sounds realistic.

Rob: Well, I thought it might appeal to your zen.

Wife:: Make an awful mess.

Rob: But it's a way of somehow learning to fly or flight, or something rather than just splat. Okay, now you each know how to go into hypnosis. You've been in hypnosis individually and can you just shift your chairs around so that you're just a little bit more aware of where...

Husband:: Touching each other?

Rob: Sort of, yeah that's it. Is that okay to sit like that, just so that you can be aware of me, but in particular, you're just that little bit more aware of each other.

Wife:: [inaudible 10:41]

Rob: It's all right to have those bits of your body touching, probably?

Wife:: Yeah.

Rob: So, I wonder if you can notice already, somethings beginning to change for you and your experience. And perhaps instead of looking towards me, maybe you could look in the general direction of each other. You don't necessarily need to look at each other, but if you could somehow allow yourself to notice perhaps out of the corner of your awareness, or quite central. And then as you can enjoy that, that's it, being in this experience, I wonder if you could notice as you are each going into your own experience, at the same time, if you can become aware of how the other person is.

You're beginning to show the changes that you could see, that you could perhaps notice in yourself, and aware of in yourself, and feeling that experience personally and seeing a variation of that experience in the other. And it might be relevant for you to notice that you can breathe at your own pace, in your own way and if you were to notice the other is breathing differently, but each of you is breathing exactly as you need to breathe and you can recognize that the other is breathing exactly as they need to breathe.

You don't need to breathe in or out at the same time, to be able to know that you can, in your way do what you need to do and to whatever degree you're interested to notice that the other is doing it, that's right. Now, whenever you're ready to let your eyes close all the way down, and again, if you notice your own experience, that's it, and somehow become aware of the other as you're doing it. That's right. And there's no right time or right way. It really doesn't matter who went this way, who went that way because you now have both allowed your eyes to close.

And as you're in this experience together, I wonder if in some way you can as well as sensing your own increasing comfort, at the same time as that, if you can begin to somehow sense the presence of the other. And just how you can do that, I don't know. When each of you first learnt to walk in your own way, you each learnt to walk at the age and in the way that you learnt to walk. You developed your own style of walking, your own way of holding your body, moving your feet. And as you

grew that way of walking, each of you evolved and developed. And that happened without your intention, without needing to think about it as part of that adapting, so that when you walk now, you don't need to think which foot or what you should do. It just happens. Your left foot coordinates with your right foot. They work together so well, so naturally in a way that supports each other.

And I could imagine that when the two of you started walking together, there may have been some learning. And it could be that you could even say something about that, about one person naturally wanting to walk just a little faster, or a little slower, or a little more directed or a little more ambly. Some may have been wanting to stop and look around and some might say, "No, we just, we're walking here."

But as you're walking together, you don't need to march in unison, each putting your left foot down, your right foot down at the same time for you to be able to walk together and be together in that experience because in that walking, you can enjoy both, your own experience and the experience of sharing that experience with the other. In fact, there can be something about walking with another, for a whole variety of reasons that can relate to enjoy that experience more. And I wonder if you could think of some time when you were walking recently. Did you walk this morning?

Wife:: Yip.

Husband:: Mm-hm.

Rob: And did you enjoy that walk?

Husband:: Mm-hm.

Rob: Yeah. And something's happening for you Wife:, when you...?

Wife:: Oh, no. With that [tea now 17:25]. It's just no, my eyes get sore, but there was something funny this morning on the walk.

Rob: Okay. Something funny, yeah. Do you know what that funny thing was, Husband:, that was happening? Do you know what was funny for Wife:?

Husband:: I can't remember now.

Rob: You don't need to remember it, but would it surprise you if the incident that was funny for Tarry was funny for you at the time? Would that surprise you?

Husband:: No, it wouldn't surprise me.

Rob: No. So, you can share something and even share the fun of it and you don't even both have to remember what it was, to have the experience of having shared the fun of that and the enjoyment of that and if Wife: told you what it was, you'd probably remember. Do you think he'd remember, Wife:?

Wife:: Yeah.

Rob: Could you say what it was? Is it something you can...?

Wife:: Somebody let their dog off the lead in the park and he normally ignores birds, but he's just got it in for magpies.

Rob: Okay.

Wife:: He just ran around after these magpies and they landed in a tree and the dogs only a foot tall, but he thinks he can just up into that tree and catch that magpie.

Rob: He's trying to catch the magpie in the tree. Not a black and white do is it?

Wife:: Yeah, he is. It's what I was about to say. It's quite funny with the black and white.

Rob: [inaudible 18:50] Yeah.

Husband:: He likes the job.

Rob: You're not calling the supporters?

Wife:: No, I think he hates them.

Rob: And do you remember that experience now, Husband:?

Husband:: Mm-hm.

Rob: Yeah, and can you enjoy that now?

Husband:: Mm.

Rob: Yeah. And now that you can remember it, you can share the memory, but even before you remembered what it was that was funny, you could share the experience of knowing that you had shared that. And did you walk down the beach this morning?

Wife:: Mm.

Rob: And when you're walking along the beach, do you walk next to each other? Does one person walk in front of the other, one person walks behind the other?

Wife:: Next to each other in the path.

Husband:: We walk next to each other.

Rob: Next to each other in the park. And if you're walking along the path and you go to get to a narrow part of the path, do one person go in front?

Wife:: Yeah.

Rob: Is it always the same person?

Wife:: Usually.

Rob: Usually. It's always usually the same person? Yeah.

Wife:: I think so.

Rob: Yeah. And is that okay?

Wife:: It's okay. I go first.

Rob: Yeah, fair enough. There have got to be some benefits to being a woman, don't you think? Yeah. And they always say there's got to be some benefits to being a doctor. You've got to have some. You can park in front of places or whatever. But so, how did that happen? How did it turn out that usually you go first in a situation like that? Was that a decision or was that just something that you decide, or did Husband: say, "You go first, dear?" or darling, I'm sorry, if that's what he said before, or was that just something that happened?

Wife:: I think probably Husband: steps aside and asked me to go first.

Rob: That's very gentlemanly of him, isn't it?

Wife:: Yeah. And he doesn't even say anything now. It's just, it's kind of...

Rob: And you're not even sure if that happened, but somehow you've worked it out and it doesn't matter. It's not a problem for either of you. You just do that each in your own way, is that right? Is that a problem to you, Husband:, that if you...?

Husband:: No.

Rob: No. Does that worry you, Wife:, that you go first in that situation?

Wife:: No. I think sometimes I offer Husband: might go.

Rob: Yeah, it's not an issue.

Wife:: No.

Rob: No. And do you know that walking along the path, walking along the beach is like being in a house. And getting Wife: to pick up clothes is like trying to get your dog to fly up into the tree. There's nothing right or wrong about a dog, or flying, or jumping and getting Husband: to relax about the 15 minutes washing machine. It's like trying to get those magpies to get down and bark. But the magpies do what they do and dogs do what they do, and walking feet do what they do, and when you're walking together you do what you do.

And I think it can be so delightful, so amusing when you can see what the dog is trying to do, when you can see what the magpies are doing. You're not trying to change the magpies. You're not trying to change the dog, but you can see that, and you can enjoy that and you can share that pleasure.

And I think it might be so delightful if neither of you changed anything that you are doing, but that you could have the same kind of enjoyment about the clothes, the

same kind of enjoyment about the washing machine as you can have about a dog or about some magpies, about walking together because as you walk along the path together, it may be that you usually go in one particular way, but it doesn't always have to be that way, but it also can be the case that it can be that way and that can be just fine, and just perfect and neither of you needs to change.

I think it would be terrible if every time you came to a narrowness in the path, you had to take out a book and work out who went first last time so that you'd know who should go first this time. I think that would be terrible. It would be so boring would it not? And it's nice to know that you can find a way of dealing with that, and enjoying that and appreciating that.

Now, as you're sitting here in this experience together, you can each recognize that you are each experiencing your own experience, breathing in in your own way. And even though you can be having your experience and you can know that I'm here and how irrelevant I am, and how unimportant everyone else is, you can notice the other. And what's it like for you to be sitting here and be aware of the other's presence? Could you say what that's like for you, Wife:, to be in your experience and to notice that Husband: is there?

Wife:: Fine.

Rob: Yeah. How do you sense his presence? How is it that you can appreciate his presence? He's there. How do you sense that and know that?

Wife:: I'm not sure. I just do. I just know.

Rob: Yeah. You just do. And Husband:, what's that like for you to be in your experience and know that Wife: is there?

Husband:: Yeah, good. Nice.

Rob: Yeah. How do you know that she's there? You can't see her. I don't think you can feel her.

Husband:: I don't know she's there.

Rob: You what? You don't know that she's there?

Husband:: No. I get a sense when she's there.

Rob: Yeah. And what's that like for you to sense that she is there?

Husband:: What's it like?

Rob: Yeah, that she is there and she is her and Husband: is him. He's exactly how he is and she's exactly how she is. I think it was on that Mondri tape that Erikson said, "Every person is like their fingerprints. They're one of a kind." And you can't change your fingerprints and you don't have to change them. He said he thought it was important everybody realized that it's a manner of saying, "This is who I am. This is me," and being that person that you are. He said, "You can't really change

who you are.” [inaudible 27:29]. So, instead of trying to change, it’s a matter of saying this and be that person, just like you can’t change your fingerprints.

And it is the willingness that each of you have and to not only tolerate those individual differences, but actually to appreciate them, that will allow you, each of you as time goes by, to let that appreciation settle. So, it really doesn’t matter if one person goes first. It really doesn’t matter if one person does this, the other person does that because you’re walking side by side on that path. You’re each having your own experience, but you’re sharing that and the feeling of that.

And if you were to let yourself, you can recall many times when you’ve been able to share experiences and whether one person initiated it or another initiated, whether it was one person's idea or someone else's, really doesn’t matter. Whether it happened the way you wanted, or the way you didn’t want, or the way you hoped, none of that matters. The only thing that matters is that you are in the experience together, and you're sharing it and you're sharing the experience because it is in that sharing.

I was listening to Erikson talking with someone and he said, “There are three stages of loving. The small child says, ‘I love my mummy, my daddy, my dolly,’ but that’s the me in you that I love.”

He said an adolescent says, “I love your beauty, your grace, your kindness, but that is still my appreciation of you.” He said then an adult love, he says, “In your happiness, I’ll find my happiness.” And that provides the separation of the identities that allows for that appreciation.

Now, there are so many things that are ahead of you. I think when I heard you saying that you’ve been doing some renovation and when you renovate something, you discover in the process a whole lot of things that you could not have anticipated and one might think should go this way and another you think should go that way. It really doesn’t matter which way it goes. It doesn’t matter whose way prevails. What matters is that you share those experiences and the process as well as the result. And in a relationship, we’re always renovating, renewing. It’s an ongoing process, certainly one worth sharing.

Now, we’re in this experience and you’re experiencing your own experience and the other in a way that you’re sensing, and there’s no way for you to know exactly how you’re going to use this, how it might continue on into your future, but there's something about this experience that each of you and both of you can learn in this experience from within yourself and the other, individually and together that really can spread out into the future.

And I can only wonder what it might be like if a number of decades go by, and one of your grandchildren gets married and they come to talk to you, and they just happen to mention something about clothes, or a washing machine or a magpie. If they mention that word and you have an image, a memory from way, way back that might have you smile, or you could smile without even remembering what it was, but know that it was a good memory, something worth smiling about and sharing.

And because this is an experience that was unexpected on your part, it is contrived in that sense, somewhat artificial in some ways, but the experience is genuine. And your response is natural. And so, I could invite you to be curious about just how you can each and both of you make good use of this in some way that doesn't need to be understood, doesn't need to be remembered, doesn't need to be attended to, but can be there nevertheless in a way that you could share together.

Now, I'm wondering if there may be something that either of you might want for me to say, or that either of you might want to say, or that either of you might want the other to say, or that either of you might want to say to the other. And if not, there's silence then. You don't have to forever, but there may be some way that in your own time, somehow let this experience round itself off so that when you're ready, each of you see if you can sense when the other is going to open their eyes. Just notice how that is, that's it.

Take your own time. And one person will open their eyes first. It really doesn't matter who. That's it. Good. And again, it might be nice for you to notice that you're here, each of you, both of you. Yeah. Welcome back into the room.

Wife:: Hi.

Rob: And thanks for being willing to share that experience. You never know in a relationship when there can be an unexpected intrusion. Opportunity knocks and it's not a matter of what that is or whether it's good or bad, but how you can be in that together and do it all together. Is that a place we could stop?

Husband:: Mm-hm.

Rob: Would that be okay to stop there? Well, thank you very much, both of you, each of you for being willing to play along with that. I appreciate it. And do you think it's possible that there may be some use in that for you? Do you think it's possible?

Wife:: Mm.

Husband:: There might, yeah.

hypnosis for weight management



Rob: Obesity is an increasing concern in our Western industrial culture and weight management is an issue for many people. Some try diets, and meditation and various treatment plans with varying success. And hypnosis has had a traditional place with the idea that somehow in hypnosis we can instruct someone. We can reprogram them, so that instead of wanting a fat food, they'll want the food that will make them thin.

In the solution orientation, instead of having a set protocol that we're going to apply to whoever comes along, we're more likely to find out from each individual what they've tried that hasn't worked, what is missing for them, so that if they had it, they would be able to succeed in their efforts, what resource might be somehow around, but out of reach, or apparently out of reach that they've disconnected from.

By asking them about what they like, we can often find something about who the person is, how they tick, what works for them and then there can often be an opportunity to apply that in this particular field.

By working with people individually in finding out what's wrong, what's missing for them, what's wrong in what they've been attempting, we find that it's not a homogenous situation. Some people try so hard to not eat things that they can generate an obsession. Some people are so resigned to the situation that they've given up. And many times, I've heard people say, "I can't imagine myself being the way I want to be." So, if someone can't imagine it and that's missing for them, then clearly it's going to be pretty hard for them to achieve something unimaginable.

And so, by helping in hypnosis, helping different people have their different individual experiences, we can help to connect them with a useful resource that's going to enhance their likelihood of being able to achieve what they want. If someone can't imagine being thin, then we can do some age progression and ask someone to imagine that they've gone into the future, that they are the way they want to be and then start to explore with them how that looks, how that feels, what they're doing differently, how their family are reacting and give more and more texture to that experience and make it more real so then it becomes a real possibility rather than some vain hope.

If someone is disillusioned with their efforts, not infrequently they get disillusioned with their body. And people will say, "I hate my body. It's uncooperative. It won't work with me. I've got to use willpower to control it." And in all of that well intended activity, making an enemy out of the body is hardly likely to evoke a sense of an experience of cooperation from the body.

And that's a situation we can invite someone to, in their hypnosis or in their real life, imagine that they're looking at their body and starting to accept it, starting to acknowledge it, starting to be grateful to it. Maybe even in some extreme situations where people, what's really missing for them is an acceptance and appreciation, maybe even asking to apologize to their body for the way they have mistreated it. And we can either offer this as direct ideas that you could do this, or we can offer the idea in the form of stories about other people who have attempted such things and had a variation in their experience so that it becomes possible.

Most overeating, like most, if not all unwanted behaviour, happens in dissociation. It happens in some disconnected state where we become disconnected with what we are wanting to achieve. We get lost in the moment. We start to eat with our eyes instead of with our mouth. And if someone is dissociated, disconnected in their eating and then it becomes apparent that what's missing then is a greater sense of connection, we can invite them to be more connected in the hypnotic experience with their body, to really notice their feet, really notice the air as they breathe and so on, and then set the scene for them to really notice the look of the food, the smell of it, the taste of it, the feel of it, the sound of it, the experience of it. And by then helping to connect them and associate them, then that helps to resolve the disconnection, which may have been part of the problem.

There are so many different ways that people who will get into trouble in relation to that and instead of having a one-size-fits all approach, you must lose weight, you won't eat this, you will eat this, you're going to do this, you're not going to do that, to look with each individual and find out what's going on for them, what's missing for them that if they had it, they would be able to succeed makes them much more lively, more effective, more pleasing experience all around, more satisfying all around.

Thanks for coming along and being willing to be part of this Sue. I appreciate that.

Client: I'm looking forward to it.

Rob: Oh, good. And is it okay to videotape this? I'm just asking your permission, officially to use for future teaching purposes.

Client: Yes. Yes, quite all right.

Rob: Good. Thanks for that, Sue. Now, can you tell us what sort of things you do that are enjoyable, and pleasing and fun?

Client: Enjoyable?

Rob: Yeah. What sort of things are you...?

Client: I enjoy going to the gym. I enjoy gardening. I enjoy painting, although I haven't done much of it lately.

Rob: What sort of gardening?

Client: Oh, just around the house. That sort of thing.

Rob: Is it a native garden, or a cottage garden?

Client: It's cottage. More cottage than native, yes.

Rob: And do you have any kind of particular plants that you have, like into perennials or...?

Client: Well, some are perennials, some are annuals. I have more of a, probably slightly Tuscan looking area at the back and fruit trees, cumquats and things like that. A few roses, so it's all mixed in.

Rob: Okay.

Client: Yes, camellias.

Rob: And are you the gardener, or are you the...?

Client: Yes. I'm the one that does the digging, and the pulling out, and everything and my husband does the cleaning up.

Rob: Okay, well that's why we have husbands.

Client: That's right.

Rob: Yeah, that's right. I've got some use too. I do have a...

Client: Yes.

Rob: And painting? What sort of painting do you do, have you done?

Client: I used to do a little bit of art at home. I started off just painting flowers and things like that, but I must admit, I haven't done any painting for a couple of years, mainly I think because of work, when I was working. And I've been retired now for – well, I was retired until the beginning of this week for about 18 months, two years.

Rob: Okay. You started working again?

Client: I started working again with my husband on Monday. Two days a week. A bit of a challenge.

Rob: All right and the painting that you did, was that oil or watercolour?

Client: Watercolours.

Rob: Watercolours, okay.

Client: Yes.

Rob: And mostly flowers did you say?

Client: Yeah, mostly flowers. Some animals, things like that.

Rob: And when you did that, did you sketch what you were going to do and then fill that in with pencil?

Client: Yes, I did. Well, both ways. I did some sketching with charcoal. I did some with crayon.

Rob: But I mean with watercolour. Did you put an...

Client: Draw first.

Rob: Did you draw an outline and then fill in?

Client: Yes, sometimes. Sometimes I did. Sometimes I didn't, sometimes I'd just paint straight on.

Rob: Okay. And when you did draw the outline, did you use a pencil for that or am I not very...?

Client: Very soft pencil, yes.

Rob: Soft pencil and then would rub it out afterwards, or just leave it, paint over it?

Client: No. I'd just paint over it.

Rob: Okay, now what could we do here that would be useful for you?

Client: Well, I'm hoping that you're going to be able to help me control my weight. For 35 years, I've been battling with it.

Rob: Oh, yeah.

Client: And I've been going to Weight Watchers.

Rob: And it's been battling with you?

Client: Oh, it certainly has and I've just lost 12 kilos.

Rob: Okay, you're winning that battle.

Client: Well, I did for a while, but for the last probably 10 weeks, I've been on the same weight.

Rob: Oh, it's fighting back now.

Client: Yes. And I've put on another kilo and I'm just struggling. I can't say no to food.

Rob: You can't?

Client: If someone makes a nice piece of cake, I can't say, "No, I don't need that." And it's not as if I'm hungry. It's just that it's a constant thing with me. And if I go into the kitchen, the fridge is there. I always open the fridge. And I seem to walk into the kitchen and think, "I have to eat here." I'm not hungry.

Rob: It's almost like the kitchen, or the fridge hypnotises you.

Client: Yes, it does. It hypnotises me.

Rob: It says, "Open the door. Eat this food. You cannot resist."

Client: That's right. Yes. And, "You don't need to drink water. It's better to have a piece of cake," it says to me.

Rob: Of course. The thirstier you are, the more and more you need to avoid the water.

Client: That's right. Exactly. So, I know the basis behind it. I've been going to Weight Watchers and all sorts of things for a long, long time.

Rob: You know that?

Client: I know what I should be doing.

Rob: You're trying to tell me that you've been something for 35 years that hasn't worked and you know what to do? Do you expect me to believe that?

Client: I know what to do, but I can't do it.

Rob: What?

Client: I know mentally what I've got to do, but I can't do it.

Rob: Okay. So, you've been trying to do the same thing for 35 years unsuccessfully?

Client: On and off, different things.

Rob: And you want my help.

Client: Yes, I do. Is that a challenge.

Rob: So that you can be more successful in doing something that you haven't been able to do for 35 years?

Client: Well, I did it for a short period of time to get 12 kilos off.

Rob: You did, but already that 12 kilos is fighting back.

Client: It is, yes. Very naughty.

Rob: Well, I don't know.

Client: So, I need a bit of help.

Rob: Okay. Well, I'm just wondering if you might be open to the idea of having a different approach to this.

Client: Mm-hm. Open to any ideas at all.

Rob: Good. One definition of insanity is to keep doing the same thing over and over again and expect a different outcome.

Client: Yes. That's in our family.

Rob: Now, you're not the only insane person in this room. We've all done that, but I'm just wondering if you can see that what you have been trying to do, the kind of battle that you've been in this like civil war going on for 35 years. You win...

Client: Win and lose all the time.

Rob: The no man's land moves, but if you win, it's just a matter of time until that fights back and then 35 years it's been a battle.

Client: It has.

Rob: And I wonder whether I can interest you in the possibility of having a different approach.

Client: Certainly.

Rob: Now, I'm not sure what that will be, but I have to tell you, I'm very reluctant to become the hired guns for this battle. I think I'm likely to get my arms and legs shot off.

Client: I don't think so.

Rob: No? Well, it's been a battleground.

Client: It has.

Rob: And I think if I get into the battleground, I don't know that that's going to help in any permanent way. It might, but I'm more interested in finding a different way of tackling this. And as such, it might seem a little strange because we might offer some ideas that might not sound sensible at one level.

Client: What I'm doing is obviously not too sensible either.

Rob: Well, I was hoping you'd say that and I want to emphasize that what you're doing is common sense. It's what we all do. It's just that it hasn't worked.

Client: That's right.

Rob: So maybe if we can find something else. And have you had any experience with hypnosis before this?

Client: Well, only what Jane has done.

Rob: Okay, so she has been practicing with you?

Client: A couple of times, yes. Yes.

Rob: Well, we know that you're a good hypnotic subject because the fridge has been hypnotising you for years.

Client: It has, yes. And also, Jane can tell you that I did go out to it, because I was snoring.

Rob: Okay, thanks for the warning. If you start doing that I won't be offended and think you're bored.

Client: You won't. Just completely relaxed, otherwise it was wonderful.

Rob: Okay, and you liked the feeling?

Client: I loved it. Yes.

Rob: And when you had that feeling, how hungry were you?

Client: I wasn't hungry at all. I was just completely relaxed.

Rob: And how much battling were you doing?

Client: None.

Rob: Yeah. So, I think there's something there that you've already got a hint of that there may be another way of...

Client: That I've got to learn to hypnotise myself.

Rob: Well, I don't know.

Client: Or control the thoughts.

Rob: I don't know. It could be, but let's just say there's another way that doesn't involve a battle.

Client: That I need to relax.

Rob: Maybe. Maybe that. And it is easy for you, isn't it? Do you notice something starting to happen now?

Client: Well, I'm quite relaxed.

Rob: You are.

Client: Yes.

Rob: And that started and I haven't really suggested that you do that, but it's just somehow natural for you. And I wonder if it will be all right if you were to just allow that to continue? That's it. So, without needing to make any effort, or even trying to decide when to close your eyes or just at what point you should do that, perhaps you could just notice the tendency for your eyes to close and not try and fight that, or push that. Just go along with that. That's it.

And then, as you allow that to continue, you could perhaps take a moment to notice how easy it is for you to breathe in and to breathe out. How natural, how effortless, how perfectly peacefully that can happen. In fact, it might even be something that you could enjoy noticing as you attend to your breathing, that that can in itself add to your sense of relaxation and peace within yourself, easily and effortlessly.

And as you continue to simply allow, I could remind you that in your gardening when you put different plants in and the plants that you plant grow into the plants that they are, and according to the garden that you want, so you plant the plants that will grow into that garden and become that garden. If you're looking to have more of this colour or that shape, or that foliage, do you want some height, or do you want some cover, or some ground cover? When you found your own way of mixing those different plants, those different kinds of plants that can fit together so nicely and they can be in the same garden together, quite different and fit together perfectly well.

And I wonder if you could imagine, perhaps to begin by remembering the feeling when you were painting a flower, or an animal, or whatever, remember the experience of first of all, making the outline with that soft pencil and then filling in those spaces and painting over the line with perhaps a pleasurable, perhaps peaceful, enjoyable recollection? And I can say some things that will be obvious, but that according to the outline that you draw, so the painting takes shape. Does that make sense when I say that that if you draw a particular animal that ends up looking like that animal, not like a flower? Obviously.

So, I wonder if in your mind's eye, you could pick up a soft pencil and draw an image. The image that I'm asking you, inviting you to draw is an image not of an animal, not of a flower, but of you. And I wonder if you could draw the image of how you want to look? And just draw the image. You might be naked. You might be wearing particular clothes. That's for you to know, for you to choose. And you can be in any position. You can be sitting, standing, dancing, gardening, whatever. And you don't need to see it accurately in your mind to have the idea of that experience.

As I speak about that and invite you to notice the experience as if you are drawing that outline. What happens to you, Sue? Can you see that outline in your mind's eye? And can you say in general – you don't have to, but I'm curious – how does that look? Does it look okay?

Client: Looks fine.

Rob: Okay. And then as this experience is continuing then, could you imagine that you are now filling in? You're painting that, using water colour, different colours, different, whatever you're doing, so that you start to fill in those spaces. And you could continue doing that and there may have been times in the past when you've been painting when you've been so absorbed in that that other things have been going on in the background and you haven't needed to pay attention in that because you can become absorbed in that, can you not?

So, if you would, I would like you to allow yourself to become as absorbed in that experience of painting that image, so that it becomes as satisfyingly real and peacefully real as you can be satisfied with that. And I can speak to any part of your understanding that can be interested to listen and learn something useful without you needing to pay attention to that at all because I could say that if there's something in your garden that you don't want, you can dig it out.

You can throw it out. You can put it in the bin. You can chop it up and put it in the compost, throw it to the tip. You can do anything. You don't need to keep anything you don't want. You can simply dig it out. And even if it takes effort, like going to the gym, there can be satisfaction in that. And if there are some parts of your body where there's some excess, more than you want, like some perennials just grow, you need to dig them up, otherwise they take over.

You might be interested to find ways of throwing them out, giving them away. I don't know what, but you don't need to keep anything in your garden that you don't want. It's up to you. You're the gardener. And there is a way in which you can think of your body as a garden, but you don't have to do anything in any particular way.

I learnt from a doctor in America, who told me that a woman had been battling with her weight for decades. She would lose the weight and then put it on again. Then she would lose it, then put it on again. She'd been doing that for a long time and was getting a little frustrated. This woman was very fond of dogs and Erickson told her a number of things. Firstly, he said, "If you treated your dogs like you treated your body, they would have left home years ago. If you forced your dogs, starved your dogs and then stuffed them the way you've done with your body, they would

become uncooperative. They would become very aggressive and there would be a battle.”

And she said, “I would never do that to my dogs. I’m good friends with my dogs. Oh,” she said, “Perhaps I need to make friends with my own body.” And he said to her, “One of the ways that some people can learn to make friends rather than an enemy with their body, is by getting to know it.”

And he suggested to her that in the privacy of her own home, she should stand naked in front of a full-length mirror and look at her body from the front, from the back, from this side, from that side, from this position, from that position and apologize to her body for all the conflicts that she had involved herself with her body, too apologize and then to keep looking until she could accept, “This is the body you have.” And to keep looking until she got past her arrogance, her greed of wanting this or that kind of body and being grateful to the body that she did have and he asked her if in the process of doing that, she might be able to find one or two ounces that she could comfortably let go of.

And after that experience, there was no dramatic change in her eating, there was no dramatic change in her body, but she started to feel so much better within herself. And then gradually, bit by bit, most of that weight just seemed to fall away. And what was so surprising to her was that after all of those years of struggling, there was actually no effort. Almost a sense of relief.

And I don’t know how you could do this, but somehow because you have been able to be hypnotised by the fridge, by the cake, by the ideas of the food, you can now be hypnotised by that image that you have created of your body the way you want it to be. And it can be as if that image can hypnotise you, can take charge of your experience and even when you might have thought that you might be hungry, that image can hypnotise you. And you can discover, “I thought I felt like cake, but actually I feel like a glass of water.” Or it may not be water. It may just be the pleasure of breathing, or the pleasure of looking forward to that image becoming a reality.

And as you make friends with that image, as that image becomes more and more real for you, it can be so natural, so effortless, that I hope you don’t feel too embarrassed after all the effort that you’ve put in in the past and how easy, how natural, how inevitable this can be. And that image that you are creating, how is it going? Have you started to fill in some of the...? How’s it looking?

Client: It’s looking better.

Rob: It’s looking better, yeah. I hope it’s not perfect because as human beings... That same teacher told me that he had faults and that some of the faults that he had, he was determined to keep because he said, “The faults that I am going to keep, they are my permission for Betty as well to keep the faults that she’s going to keep.” And he said, “She’s determined to keep some of her faults,” and the faults that she is determined to keep is in turn her permission for him to keep the faults that he’s going to keep.

And he looked directly at me and he spoke directly to me and said, “Make sure you keep some of your faults because living with an angel is sheer hell.” And he

had a wry way of putting things. But that image is looking better. How real is it when you look at it?

Client: It's something to achieve.

Rob: Yes. And as you look at it, just as when you drew the outline and you haven't filled in with the paint, it gives an outline of how it's going to be so this image can be a direction of something you can achieve, but you thought you had to battle and fight. When you paint, how much battling and fighting do you do?

Client: None.

Rob: None. So, my invitation is for you to allow that image to be there as something to achieve and as a guide, just as the soft pencil outline is a guide to your painting, so that image that you have, and it is you, can be a guide to your eating. And I would hope that what I'm saying, although it can make sense at one level, I'm hoping that it doesn't entirely make sense to you. I'm hoping that it seems just a little strange, perhaps obvious, because I'm hoping that you will allow yourself a little time for this learning to settle.

Just as it takes time for water colour to dry, just as it takes time for plants in the garden to grow, just as it takes time for a rose to bloom, so this experience, this learning can take time. And it might be really nice if you could just let yourself sit with this, just like you plant something and you let it settle in, you water in, just like when you finish a painting, you let it set because I am just a little worried because there's a possibility of out of this experience, you having a very real dilemma.

After this experience, it might be very, very difficult for you to discover, to deal with the fact, to accept the experience that this really can be easy, effortless and natural, just as breathing in and out can be relaxing, and easy and natural.

And I've done a lot of talking, but you've done a lot of painting, preparing the soil, plant the plants and then sit back and watch. Some painters tell me that when they're painting at their best, they let the paintbrush do the painting. They don't try and control anything. And I really can't know how you can allow this learning, because it's a learning. I'm not trying to restrict you, or force anything. And you do know that depending on what you plant, sow, that's what grows. And you do know that depending on the outline in your painting, so the painting takes shape, so you can expect a good outcome from this.

And I don't think there needs to be any struggle in allowing this experience to come to a natural conclusion. If you were to try and open your eyes, it might be a bit of a battle, but if you just let them open. I appreciate your willingness to be in such a strange circumstance and I mustn't be as good a hypnotist as Jane, because you didn't do any snoring for me.

Client: I did a lot of painting.

Rob: I'm feeling a little bit inadequate because obviously... But you enjoyed the painting?

Client: Yes, I enjoyed the painting.

Rob: Good. It's good to do a good painting and to see the way it can evolve and be satisfying. Do you have any questions that you want to ask me?

Client: No, I don't think so. I think I've got to think about a few things.

Rob: Yeah.

Client: Yes.

Rob: And does it seem like that's something that might be useful to you?

Client: Yes, I think the ability to be able to relax.

Rob: Yes. And you can relax into that chair. You can relax into some other chair when Jane's working with you and you can relax into that image. When you relax into that chair, you don't need to do anything with the chair. You just...

Client: Just sit and relax.

Rob: Yeah, to let it happen.

Client: Go with it.

Rob: Go with it. And in a different chair, you might relax in a different position, or a different way. And so, with that image you can just go with that too. I'm wondering, is that a place that we might stop?

Client: All right.

Rob: I'm not sure. I'm just asking. Is there something more that you might need for me to say?

Client: No, I think that's fine. I think it's given me a lot to think about.

Rob: Okay.

Client: Yes. And it's very, very relaxing.

Rob: Well, thanks for being willing to come along. Relaxing?

Client: Yes.

Rob: Oh, good.

Client: Wonderful feeling.

Rob: When you relaxed like that and you're enjoying that feeling, a whole lot of things can just kind of settle into place.

Client: It's certainly a different outlook on it, being able to relax. Yes.

Rob: I think you needed that. I think that what you've been doing is remarkably...

Client: I've been too intense about it.

Rob: Yeah. You're remarkably persistent, but it actually, if something's not working then eventually it's a matter of saying, "Oh, we need to find an alternative."

Client: Change it.

Rob: Yeah, change it.

lifting depression



Treating depression, such a prevalent, debilitating and crippling dilemma of our present time can in itself be depressing for us. And in the solution orientation, instead of trying to treat depression, we're more likely to explore with each individual person what's happening for them, what their experience is, what's actually happening, rather than to try and treat a condition.

When we ask someone who is depressed to provide us with another word to give us a description of what's happening to let us know how their depression is affecting them as an individual, we'll hear such descriptions as, "I feel overwhelmed, I feel no sense of the future, I have no sense of purpose, I feel helpless, I feel hopeless, I feel sad, I can't sleep, I lost interest in my sexual activities." There can be so many different ways that depression presents that if we work with the individual and work at the level of their experience, it provides us an opportunity to connect with them as an individual and help them to individually be more connected with their own innate resourcefulness.

So that if someone is feeling overwhelmed, we might be able hypnotically to explore how other times in the past they have felt overwhelmed and been able to resolve that. Or perhaps in addition to that, ask them to imagine going into the future when they have resolved this issue and to look back, and look back knowing that they did resolve it, perhaps working out how they resolved it. Or maybe more commonly, looking back

knowing that they did resolve it. And so, they can bring that recognition back with them into the present time. And that can change their mood of anticipation of the future. Instead of being one of resign to a rerun of a past, there can be a very real new set of possibilities.

If someone is saying they're feeling hopeless, then clearly what is missing for them is likely to be hope. And we can explore with them where do they find hope. What is hope for them? When they felt hopeless before, what's been useful and start to share stories and experiences and evoke experiences with them to put them more in touch with their sense of hope. Particularly when we explore their likes, you know, if someone perhaps likes fishing, have they ever had an experience of going fishing and thought, this is hopeless and then a fish bites, or if they feel hopeless and they don't catch any fish that day, but they go back the next day or the next week, the next time and they catch some fish.

Whatever their experience is, when we look at someone's functioning life, things they like and enjoy and are doing well, there's a great source of opportunities there, a great many experiences that people have that can be evoked, can be conscripted into the problem area and later some resolution.

The client that we're going to be a part of watching in a moment had had some clinical depression in the past, was not clinically depressed at the time of our conversation, but very generously allowed the experience of our conversation to be shared with us so that we can look and learn together, and explore how we can be more helpful with our clients. And although the depression was not described as such and was not inhibiting her life in any major way, it was nevertheless a kind of a niggling dilemma that had the potential. And as a result of that conversation, that future is very different.

And there may be some aspects of the way that this conversation unfolded that you can as you explore that and reflect on that, find ways of extrapolating to other situations that are more intense, more pressing and more dramatic. So, I'm very grateful that we're able to share this personal experience with the opportunity that it provides for us to explore together to learn and add to our effectiveness with our clients.

Rob: Thanks for be willing to have this and is it okay to record it for future teaching purposes?

J: That's fine, yes.

Rob: Thank you. So, what have you been up to?

J: Working, mostly. Full-on working. Not much else. But I guess, yeah, where I'm at in my life at the moment is a huge transition time. And I float in and out of feeling lost in that and unsure. I kind of lose me in there somewhere because, I guess, I'm also physically I'm not in a house yet. I'm in a house, but I'm housesitting, so I haven't actually established where I'm going to be.

Rob: You're in a house, but in the house.

J: That's it. That's it. My place. Yeah, so at times, I guess I've been going through a bit of depression with just the changes.

Rob: A bit of what?

J: Depression I'd say.

Rob: What do you mean by that?

J: Yeah, its just a word, really.

Rob: Well, I know it's an experience for you, but I'd just like to...

J: Yeah, I guess I experience it as a kind of heaviness. Sometimes, it can even get to the point feeling quite desolate, quite...

Rob: Like now?

J: Like nothing. It's coming now. Yeah, I can feel it now.

Rob: Okay. So, you're probably not that keen to feel that.

J: No. Not really. No, we don't want that one.

Rob: No. I mean, it comes sometimes, but when it's there it's there, but you don't need more of it.

J: No.

Rob: So, you said you wanted to experience was it catalepsy, or arm invitation or which?

J: Yeah. Isn't it both the same?

Rob: Well, I don't know. Arm levitation means more of a movement. A catalepsy is a kind of relaxed.

J: Like that.

Rob: So, let's try for the arm levitation and then we can see if might have some catalepsy as well. To make my job easier, if you could get your feet on the floor. That's it. And if you could place your arms so that your elbows are there and the tips of your fingers almost touching. Not quite, a little bit closer than that. That's it, so that they're just off your thigh. Now, if you could just pay attention to the experience in your hands. That's it. And notice any tendency that might be there for your hands to lift. Now, I don't know whether both are getting lift or one. It looks like your right hand is lifting.

And you might be interested to notice that as you breathe, it's almost as if each time you breathe in, it lifts. Your breathing lifts that hand ever so slightly. And you could even have a recognition of that that somehow as you breathe in, the mere act of breathing in actually moves our shoulders and so your arms can come up with it. So, you can continue to breathe, you can continue to enjoy just letting that hand – and your left hand's also doing something.

And it could be interesting to notice, as that hand is lifting that it's like it's happening by itself. Do you notice that? I'm not lifting it, so it must be coming from within you, but it feels as if it's just happening. Yeah? Do you notice that?

J: Yeah.

Rob: And perhaps as that hand continues to float upwards, ever so slightly, ever so slowly, slow enough so that you can notice that feeling of something lifting, a feeling perhaps of lightness, a sense of movement in a very definite direction and I don't know whether it would surprise you if it were to happen that that hand could lift all the way up to your face. Would that surprise you?

J: Mm-hmm.

Rob: No. So, then you don't know if it's going to, but you can now recognize that it's possible. And so, that hand has begun to move along that direction towards your face. And it's lifting and is it feeling lighter? Could you comment on that? It is feeling lighter?

J: Yes. Yeah.

Rob: And I wonder, as your hand is feeling lighter, you might be interested to notice that some part of that lightness in your hand actually begins to translate into your mood so that you can start to feel lighter in yourself. And even though that hand has not reached your face yet, it hasn't got to where it's going, it's just sitting where it's sitting for the moment. It's going to touch your face, but it hasn't reached there yet. And at the same time, your left hand is moving. What do you notice about your left hand? Is it feeling light also, or is it heavy, or different or similar, or what do you notice?

J: It doesn't feel as light. It's tingling.

Rob: It's tingling?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. And you smile when you say that. Is that a pleasant feeling, or amusing? What is it when you notice the tingling?

J: Oh, just tingling.

Rob: Okay. And that's all right?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Can you let that tingling just kind of float around your hand somewhere or around your experience any way that it does?

J: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Okay. And your right hand's continuing to lift. And if you were to look at any moment, you would hardly recognise any movement. It would almost feel as if

someone could think it isn't moving, but you can know that it is. And it's moved a considerable distance off your thigh and it's still got a long way to go to get up to your face, yeah?

J: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Now, how do you feel about the fact that you've come some distance, but you've still got such a long way to go. How do you feel about that? Is that okay?

J: Yeah. There's something in there bothering me about that, but I don't know what it is.

Rob: Well, can you just allow yourself to be bothered by it for the moment and maybe as you sit with that botheredness, something will begin to either become clearer or perhaps the botheredness will disappear or maybe you'll start to find out what it is about that that your hands – that's right. And now what's happened then? You just straightened your body. What happened with that?

J: A decision, I think.

Rob: Ah, good. And in having decided that, you're now in a different position. Now your right hand's lifting faster. Do you notice that?

J: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Does that mean you're less bothered?

J: I'm just more determined.

Rob: Okay. Yeah, right. And you're more determined and that hand is an expression of that. Does that make sense?

J: Yes.

Rob: And so, if I were to reach over and do that, do you notice how your hand's not slightly interested in going down.

J: Mm-hmm.

Rob: In fact, when I released it, it kind of...

J: Mm.

Rob: Mm-hmm.

J: Thank you very much.

Rob: That's a pleasure. As an expression of that determination, that hand is going to get to your face.

J: Mm. Absolutely.

Rob: Absolutely. Sooner or later, that hand will touch your face. Yeah. It's not there yet. It's just sitting where it's sitting and moving. It hasn't got there yet, but it's going to. Now, when you know that your hand hasn't got there yet, but you know that it is going to and you are determined, how does that change your mood?

J: That feels I'm enjoying it, yeah.

Rob: Yeah. What happened to that botheredness?

J: I'm not really sure.

Rob: Yeah. It looked like it disappeared when you made that decision.

J: Mm.

Rob: Now, as that hand's continuing to move, and do you notice that the movement up towards your face isn't a smooth movement? There's a kind of a little bit of an up and down, and side to side. It's not a straight line. It's a kind of wiggly line. It's kind of wiggling its way to where it's going. And your left hand is higher than it was. Is it still tingling?

J: Yeah.

Rob: And it's as if the left hand is just housesitting there. It's just sitting, moving a bit.

J: Yeah.

Rob: But that right hand, hoo-hee. Uh-huh. And can you just let that happen, let your right hand move? And I think it might be an interesting experience. I'm just wondering how it would be for you if you were to find that when your right hand will touch your face that something very comforting can happen with your left hand. I don't know what that will be and it might even be nice if you don't know just yet what that will be, whether it will move down or move up to your face to join your other hand, or just stay there comfortably, I don't know. It doesn't really matter.

But when your right hand will touch your face, then that can be an indication to you that you are ready to have that feeling, so that your left hand, which is just housesitting, when that right hand will touch your face and will arrive, it can feel at home, your home. Touch your face and the feeling of that and you're determined, something to do with your shoulders too.

J: My whole body is not apprehensive, but it's like the determination is in my whole body.

Rob: Yeah. Mm-hmm. Don't get between you and your house.

J: No.

Rob: You know, they say you shouldn't get between a snake and water. Apparently, you don't build, or don't try and live in a house where wombats live. Have you heard that?

J: No.

Rob: Huh. They will demolish your house. If you find a wombat run and you put a house there, they will demolish the house.

J: Okay.

Rob: They will not go around. They just go through it. I don't know what's funny about that.

J: Should have wombat crossings instead zebra crossings.

Rob: Well, if there is a house and there's a wombat track, make sure you put a wombat conduit kind of thing.

J: Absolutely. Mm. I will.

Rob: And do you know what's going to happen to your left hand when your right hand will touch your face?

J: No.

Rob: Don't know yet? So, it's still just sitting there. It's just housesitting here. So, your left hand is housesitting and your right hand is moving towards you, your house.

J: Mm. It's sort of more than a house. It's something else.

Rob: Oh, yes. Yeah, well, a house is a symbol of what that is. It's like your...

J: It's me.

Rob: Yeah. You can be at home with yourself, so to speak. And home within yourself and share that in any way that you choose, but it will be your home and you'll be at home and you'll feel at home.

J: It's a good thing it doesn't take me this long to put my makeup on then.

Rob: Yeah. And if only shifting house could take this long. If only shifting house could take this long.

J: Mm.

Rob: Some people are having trouble controlling their response to this. And do you have a sense that you... Yeah, your hand's getting close. It's not there yet.

J: Mm.

Rob: And your left hand, how's that? Something's happening with your little finger of that hand.

J: Mm. I'm very daintily drinking tea.

Rob: It's Twinings, is it?

J: Twinings. It will get to be Twinings.

Rob: Oh, a cup of tea. English breakfast?

J: Mm-hmm. Right, I'm getting impatient now.

Rob: Is that the first time in your life you've been impatient?

J: No.

Rob: Now, do you notice that the more impatient you get, the more that slows that process down.

J: No, I didn't notice.

Rob: Uh-huh. Because if I were to push that hand... See, if I push it towards your hand, see it bounces back.

J: Mm-hmm.

Rob: In the same way that when I pushed it down, it bounced up. It's going to touch your face when it's good and ready. Not when you're ready; when it is.

J: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Mm-hmm. And your job is to know that you are determined. You are going to get there. And it will take the time that it takes. Not your time. It will take its own time. And there may even be some comfort in that, some peace in that, some relief in that. There may even be some rest in that, some not having to waste energy trying to push something that's going to go at its own pace anyhow. Your hand's getting very close now. Do you have a sense of that?

J: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Do you know just how close it is?

J: Uh-uh.

Rob: No. Is that okay that you don't know? You know that it's close, but you don't know how close.

J: Yeah, that's okay.

Rob: And it's going to touch your face. You know that, but you don't know exactly when.

J: I'm really tempted to dip my head.

Rob: Mm-hmm. Well, you can be tempted, but your head will dip only if it will.

J: Mm.

Rob: It's not something for you to decide. But if your head decides to dip, then you won't be able to stop it. When you touch your face – that's it – you don't know yet, will it be your thumb that will touch the side of your mouth, near the side of your face near your lips, or actually perhaps on your lips? Or will it be a full finger, that first knuckle, will touch your cheek? And your head's moving. Can you feel that? Do you notice your head's moving forward?

J: No.

Rob: Mm. It is, ever so slightly. Yeah. That's it. Mm.

J: Who was that, Heathcliff and whatshername when they run together and...

Rob: Cathy.

J: I've got this vision in my head and my head going, "Heathcliff." What was her name?

Rob: Cathy.

J: Cathy.

Rob: Heathcliff. Finger. Face. Finger. Face. And we should have some Mozart playing in very slow motion there.

J: We should, yeah.

Rob: Yeah, whatever that piano concerto was. I bet you can get ready to have that sense of all kinds of emotions. There will be relief. There will be vindication. There will be appreciation, legitimising of your determination. That's right. Very close to it now. And when that happens, you're left hand's going to do very comforting. So, touch your face. That's it. That's it. Very close now, very close. Mm-hmm. Mm.

J: I want your hand.

Rob: Yeah. And what is about...? Yeah. Can you feel that relief? Yes. And all those other emotions, all that suffering, all that waiting, all of that uncertainly, all of that, all of that, all of that. Mm. Mm. It's good to leave that behind, eh? It's good to let it go.

J: Mm-hmm.

Rob: And how's your left hand now.

J: Very comfortable, thank you very much.

Rob: Mm-hmm.

J: Mm-hmm. Thank you.

Rob: And what do you notice? How are you feeling right now?

J: I feel relieved. I can reach the top of the mountain. That feeling.

Rob: And climbing up the mountain, it feels like you're never going to get there. You know that you are and you're determined to, but at times it feels like you're never going to get there.

J: It sure does.

Rob: Yeah. It's nice to know that you are and have the experience of it and to know that you will not get there until you do.

J: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Now, you can suffer about that.

J: Yeah.

Rob: And if you get a little bit too peaceful and you want to agonise a bit more, you can just think, "Oh, I'm going to force myself to do something faster than I can." If you're not suffering quite enough, you know you can always bring that in.

J: That's good to know, yeah.

Rob: Yeah. And I think Frank would probably have some helpful hints there about that.

J: Oh, I'm sure he would. Mm. He certainly would.

Rob: So, anything more that you might want to say or might want from me?

J: No. That's lovely where it is, thank you.

Rob: Is that a place to stop?

J: Yip.

Rob: Thanks, Jenny.

J: It's an amazing experience.

hypnosis after trauma



I don't know who it was that said that life is a health hazard, but certainly to survive to the present time, we human beings have experienced a lot of trauma. And most of the trauma that we have, somehow most of the damage that happens to us physically, or emotionally, heals and so often is forgotten, but some traumatic experiences persist. They live on.

And it's not necessarily the dimension of the trauma. Some people have massive trauma and just somehow manage to pick up and get on with their life and other people have something much less overwhelming and yet it can persist and be very debilitating. So, because each human being is an individual, it's going to be helpful for us and helpful for our clients when we look with each individual client for what's missing for them, what resource there's probably an abundance of in the part of their life that's functioning, in their leisure activities, in their enjoyment, pastimes, but is often conspicuously absent in the problem areas of their life where some of the trauma of the past is still very active.

Now, instead of assuming an overall theory for all trauma for all people, if we have the question, "What's missing for this person," we can find that sometimes people are

overwhelmed by the thought of the trauma. They begin to recall an event and the emotion that is part of that, the emotions, the cluster of emotions are so intense and so potentially overwhelming that it feels like they're going to be overtaken by a tsunami. And so, not surprisingly, they pull back from that, and so, it feels like they're always on the edge of something.

So, that if someone is overwhelmed by the emotional component of the trauma, then it might be helpful to ask them to, in a hypnotic way, dissociate from the emotions and to look at the event in a detached, dissociated, unemotional way to just look at the event. And when that happens, it's not uncommon for someone who has been kind of frozen – Bill O'Hanlon talks about frozen in time. And there's something about an overwhelming trauma that stills the action and although cognitively the person moves on, in their awareness they move on, there's some part of their experience, some part of their emotion that's stuck back in that time

And by allowing a way for someone to get through that, to complete that, to let that come to a conclusion and to recognize sometimes for the first time in an emotional way, to really know that they survived it, that they came through, they got through it, can be healing in itself. So often someone will say, "I know I survived it, but it feels like, I don't know. It feels like the accident, the incident is just there. At any moment, it could happen again."

So, helping someone to deal with a potentially overwhelming emotion can be healing. Sometimes, the flashbacks are so intrusive that they interfere with someone's life. So, helping them to forget that can be useful. There are so many different ways that we can help someone with the trauma, help them to complete it. And one of the ways also is to revisit the event, not in a fact finding way, not in an attempt to seek out the real truth of what actually happened, but even to go back as an adult and have some editorial flexibility so that someone can actually imagine that something different happened, or that the trauma didn't happen, or that something else may have happened in its place.

And I've had that experience with people a number of times that's been so helpful and they would typically say, "I know I just imagined that. I know that what we've just been through didn't really happen, but it's changed how I feel." And very frequently, that change is welcome and beneficial in the healing process.

The client that shared her experience with us in the demonstration to follow, is a student in a program and was very generous in allowing us to share such a personal event and to witness the healing that was so apparent at the time and has persisted since. So, we're very grateful to her generosity in allowing us to be present to her experience for our learning and for the benefit of our clients.

Rob: Linda, thanks for being willing to play.

L: That's okay, that's all right.

Rob: And is it okay to record this for future teaching purposes?

L: Yes. Yeah.

Rob: You can change your mind.

L: Okay, at any point?

Rob: Well, up until now.

L: Okay, until just then. Okay.

Rob: Yeah. So, tell us about some things that have been fun for you. You like the beach you were saying.

L: Yes.

Rob: What do you like doing on the beach? Is that sitting there, swimming, running?

L: Walking along, rollerblading along the beach, just lying on the beach in the sand.

Rob: You like feeling the warmth?

L: I do, yeah. And I've been really enjoying yoga lately as well. I just kind of got into yoga.

Rob: Oh, what have you been enjoying there? What's been the experience there that's been enjoyable?

L: The feeling of feeling strong and energized.

Rob: I like that kind of thing.

L: Like that, yeah.

Rob: That's an unusual yoga position.

L: Yeah, yet still feeling kind of calm and centred.

Rob: Calm and strong.

L: Yeah.

Rob: That's a nice combination.

L: It is, yeah. I enjoyed that feeling. So, yeah.

Rob: How long have you been learning yoga? How long have you been exploring this?

L: I explored it last year for some time and then I had a break probably for about six months. And then I've just rediscovered and in just the last month or so, been re-exploring. Yeah.

Rob: And there's something about over the last month that's been helpful to you that you're connecting somehow?

L: Yeah.

Rob: The strength, or the calmness.

L: Yeah, all of those things.

Rob: Okay, sounds nice.

L: Yeah, it is. It's really nice.

Rob: When you're lying on the beach, do you like to be in the strong sunlight or are you not worried about getting sunburnt or you don't have any problem with that?

L: No, I don't usually get sunburnt. I tanned complexion. I'll put suntan screen on, sunscreen yeah.

Rob: Yeah, there's been some talk recently about people having trouble not being in the sun enough. They're seeing vitamin deficient or something.

L: Yeah, vitamin D. Fifteen minutes a day.

Rob: Fifteen minutes a day, okay. All right, any other questions, I'll ask. Okay, now you said that you were wondering about memories, that there are some things that you can't remember, or that you'd like to remember.

L: Yeah.

Rob: You've got some misgivings about remembering?

L: No. I don't really have memories from before the age of seven, which was the time when my mother died. And I don't really remember her, or much about her at all except for what I've heard from people and photos and stuff. And for a number of years, I've really wanted to be able to get some of those memories, or remember bits of her.

Rob: Sure, she was your mother.

L: Yeah. Apparently.

Rob: That's what you're told.

L: Yeah, that's what I'm told.

Rob: It would be nice to have the experience of that, to connect with the feeling of that and have some sort of sense of reality about that. Now, you probably know that in hypnosis, it's not a truth trace. It's not a way of finding what actually happened. It's not a matter of finding a videotape of your past and playing it so that you can look at it. It's not that.

In hypnosis, we have the opportunity to imagine and to be creative about that and imagine something can be helpful, can be useful, can be healing. It could be a relief, but it's not a way of getting to any actuality. I know that you know that, but I just wanted to be clear about that. And I wonder whether you notice that already some changes are starting to happen in your experience. Do you notice that you're starting to feel quite a little calmer?

L: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Or quieter somehow. There's some stillness in your body already.

L: Mm-hmm. I do, except Brendon's foot [inaudible 11:18].

Rob: Brandon's foot?

L: Yeah, sorry.

Rob: So, it might be nice if he kept that foot going.

L: Yeah, maybe. They're all going now.

Rob: They're just giving you an opportunity to experience that so that you can get through it from physical discomfort.

L: Yeah, true.

Rob: And it might be interesting also to notice that out of the corner of your eye, and I don't know whether you will notice when it stops, or whether you stop paying attention to it, or whether something of your experience is more in the foreground. And Brendon's foot, or other people's feet or other things, they're more in the background.

L: Hmm.

Rob: And I know and you know that that comes and goes. It's not like turning off a switch. It's a fluid kind of experience.

L: Yeah.

Rob: And what are you starting to notice now?

L: I'm probably breathing a bit calmer.

Rob: Okay.

L: Yeah.

Rob: And it might be interesting for you to notice that not only are you breathing a bit calmer, but there is something about your breathing that actually allows you to feel calm, almost as if there's something in the air, which in itself, without you needing to do anything, that's it, like you can absorb that, in the same way as when you're lying on the beach and you feel the warmth of the sun. You don't need to do anything. You can just absorb that warmth. It's a passive experience.

And you can screen out anything you don't want. You don't want to be too calm. You don't want to be too quiet, too anything, but to know that you can enjoy, that's right, just the right amount of enjoyment. It's nice to smile, but we don't want you

breaking out laughing because if we can laugh all the time, we might as well have your sister here.

L: Yeah, that's true.

Rob: So, as I'm talking and as this experience, that's it, which is your experience, can continue in any way that's useful to you and helpful to you, you might notice that even though you can hear what I'm saying, you don't need to listen. And sometimes what I'm saying can be in the background. And you probably don't remember that when you first learned to walk, there were things that you learned to pay attention to, and to feel and to notice as an experience.

Sometimes, when a child is first learning to walk, they curl up their toes as if they trying to hang onto the floor with their toes so that they don't fall off. And they don't know at first, so they try and hang onto the floor with their toes and they use their whole body to try to not fall off the floor. And it's amusing to think that a child might be worried about that, but all those insecurities are forgotten as that learning to walk becomes just such a natural part of your experience.

And when you walk along the beach, there's so much that you bring to that walking, so much learning that you have within your experience that you're not necessarily aware of, but it's there. You don't need to remember the times that you fell over, and hurt yourself and cried that you were learning to walk. That's in the past and if you were to look at it, I was mentioning before that my son, Patrick, when he was, I don't know how old, maybe 10 or 11, cut his chin. I remember he was bleeding. I don't remember whether he was crying. He probably was, but if he would look at that scar now, he wouldn't cry. He might even smile if he could find it.

So, it's nice to know that our memory is selected. We don't need to remember everything. We don't need to remember things that are painful, or distressing. We can remember the things that are pleasant. And I wonder if in some way you could imagine that time could pass backwards, just like you were walking along the beach in the opposite direction. And even though each step that you take takes you closer to something, it also takes you further away from something.

And if you could imagine walking through time, back through time, just like walking along the beach. And I wonder if you could remember something that might have happened to you that was really pleasing about the age of 15, or 14, or 16. Can you remember something that might have happened around that time that was pleasing?

L: I'm just thinking of my first kiss.

Rob: Your first kiss?

L: Yeah.

Rob: Is it something that we can discuss publicly?

L: That's very funny.

Rob: You don't need to go into all the details, but there's something about that that's...

L: It was like this. Hmm.

Rob: So, you kept all the rude bits well and truly separated.

L: Yeah. Yeah. I didn't know that person, yeah.

Rob: That's important and at the time, it wasn't funny, I imagine?

L: It was quite scary.

Rob: Quite scary, yeah, but you survived it, yeah. And when you look back now, you did more than survive it. You can look back and really enjoy how it is now looking back on how it was then. Yeah. And I wonder if there is something else that you can recall that happened when you were in primary school that made you feel really good. Late primary school, maybe Grade 5. You don't have to go looking for something. Just be curious and some pleasant memory will just drop into your awareness.

L: I changed schools at that time and I made new friends. And I remember this one particular friend who I made. Her name was Linda as well. She was the big Linda and I was the little Linda. And we used to spend a lot of time together. I remember going to the botanical gardens with her.

Rob: What was nice about that time? What made it so special that you enjoyed being with her?

L: Yeah, it was kind of like the two of us were opposites and yet we had a lot of similarities connected, yeah.

Rob: You used to go to the botanical gardens?

L: Hmm. My grandma used to take me all the time.

Rob: And what did you do there?

L: We'd walk around, and we'd have lunch at the cafe and we'd feed the swans.

Rob: And I wonder if you might remember one particular time when you were there, when maybe it was a sunny day and you're there with your grandma and big Linda. Any particular day that you can...?

L: I'm just remembering a time when we were singing Wham! songs.

Rob: And what song are you singing?

L: I can't remember the song.

Rob: No, but you can remember the feeling.

L: Yeah.

Rob: Was it funny.

L: No, we just sang it like 5,000 times, over and over.

Rob: You really got into that.

L: Yeah.

Rob: Into the singing. There was something about that that was... And is the sun shining as you're singing that? Are you singing it to the swans or to each other?

L: We're kind of skipping down the path.

Rob: Oh, yeah. What was that like to skip down the path? How does that feel?

L: Hmm. Good.

Rob: Yeah. What is the good feeling?

L: Kind of freedom.

Rob: Yeah. It's nice to remember that feeling of freedom, isn't it? And that feeling of being able to skip down a path and the feeling of singing those Wham! Songs. Even though you don't remember the words now, you can remember the experience because that's what's important. It's not the details. It's the experience that's important. And now, I'd like you to imagine, and it might be an imagined rather than a remembered thing and at first, you might be not sure whether you're imagining or remembering, or whether you're remembering something that you've imagined, or whether you imagining something that you've seen from a photograph, but just let something come into your mind when you're about four, or five, or three. Maybe is there a photograph that you've seen that comes to some situation that someone told you about?

L: Dad's got this kind of big blown-up photo of me.

Rob: A blown up photo of little Linda?

L: Yeah. I'm kind of just sitting there. I was really small.

Rob: You were so little.

L: Yeah. I was a bit chubby.

Rob: Like a balloon.

L: Yeah. I don't know how old I was.

Rob: What's your guess when you look at that photo now?

L: That photo was probably three, two. I don't know.

Rob: Could you imagine that you could look at little Linda? You can look at the photo and imagine that you're not looking at the photo, you're looking at her. Is she sitting on the chair or what is she doing?

L: No. She's just kind of sitting with her legs like that.

Rob: Sitting on the floor?

L: On the floor, yeah.

Rob: Okay. What is she wearing?

L: Well, the one, I think she's wearing just some jammies or something.

Rob: Okay.

L: I'm confused between, there's one that I'm nude.

Rob: Mm-hmm. It's all right to be nude when you're that old.

L: No, that was from last week so. Yeah. No.

Rob: Better not talk about that one. Let's talk about the one with the pyjamas on. What are these jammies like?

L: It's a black and white photo, so I don't know.

Rob: No, you can imagine. You can colour it. You've got an imagination.

L: Yeah, I could.

Rob: Yeah.

L: I'd imagine they'd be kind of pinks.

Rob: Okay and is there a pattern? Are they striped, or flowers or what?

L: Kind of...

Rob: Yeah, like that. Okay. I don't need to know, but you can know and as you're looking at little Linda sitting there with those pyjamas, pink colours and that, whatever that is. If you look at her, she's sitting there, really quite chubby. When you look at her, how does she look to you?

L: She's quite cute.

Rob: Yeah. She is quite cute. And when you look at her and you do that with your face, what do you feel like doing?

L: I just feel like cuddling her, I guess. Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. And it's going to be okay to cuddle her, because she knows who you are in a way. You don't know who you actually are to her, but can you imagine doing that, cuddling her?

L: Hmm.

Rob: And what's it like for her to be cuddled by you? Is it all right? Does she like that? How do you know?

L: She's got a big smile.

Rob: Okay. And she can have a big smile and how do you feel? There are some tears about that. Do you feel sad about that, or is that touching you or what? Touches you?

L: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. Is that okay to feel like that? Now, if you were to look at little Linda, is she sitting on your knee? How are you cuddling her? Are you just holding her? How are you cuddling her?

L: I've kind of picked her up.

Rob: Okay. Now, she feels cuddled by you and you can notice how it is for her. Now, I wonder if somehow you could, and I don't have any idea how you could do this, but somehow imagine that from little Linda's point of view, as she is being cuddled by you, it could feel to her as if she's being cuddled by her mother. Could you imagine that she's having that experience? Now, where are you as you imagine that? Are you looking on, or are you that little girl? Where are you?

L: I don't know. I'm kind of part of both.

Rob: Part of both. Is that okay? Yeah, it's a little strange, but it's okay. Yeah, part of both. What both are you part of? One part of both is little Linda and what's the other part of both?

L: Part of my mother, I guess.

Rob: Yeah. You are part of your mother, yeah. And so, you can, and it doesn't make logical sense, but you can at the same time have the experience of cuddling little Linda and being cuddled by your mother. Being little Linda, being your mother, there's kind of a motherly kind of connection there, isn't it? How does that feel?

L: Kind of good, weird.

Rob: Good?

L: Weird.

Rob: Good, weird, yes. Now, if for a moment, you could just imagine that you are little Linda, and you look and you see that you're being cuddled by your mother, when

you look at your mother, what do you see? What does she look like? It doesn't have to be true. You're just imagining this.

L: She's got a big smile.

Rob: A big smile, yeah. Now, that's something worth remembering. Do you like her smile? Yeah. I think any time you look in the mirror, you have a chance of seeing her. Yeah. What else do you see about her when you look at her? She's got a big smile. What do her eyes look like?

L: Big, brown.

Rob: Yeah, big brown eyes, yeah. When you smile at each other, you make a connection there. How is this experience for you now? Is it okay? Yeah. And if you were to just imagine that you look at your mothers smile and you look at her big brown eyes, if you were to look past her, look at the wall, or the ceiling, could you imagine that you could see some things there, some furniture, or some pictures on the wall, or a light on the ceiling. Can you imagine that?

L: I'm in, I think, in her bedroom and it's kind of purple.

Rob: Yeah. You can imagine that? What's purple?

L: The rim, kind of around the bed head.

Rob: Yeah, purple rim. And there's a slight smile when you say that. Are you enjoying seeing that?

L: Yeah.

Rob: When you look around, what else do you see?

L: There's a photo of her on the wall that dad took.

Rob: Yeah. What's the frame like?

L: I think it's purple too.

Rob: Good. Purple rim around the bed and a purple frame.

L: Yeah. And she's wearing a purple gown thing. It was a hippie thing.

Rob: Wearing purple too. She must have known that you were [inaudible 31:12]. You must have done some age progression there. You must have known about that. And, you know, you could look around and see all kinds of other things. You can look at the light. There might be some purple there, or you might look at the carpet, or the cupboard or something. There's all sorts of things that you could look around there. And you might enjoy looking around there. I also wonder if you might enjoy it if your mother put you down and took your hand and you went for a walk around the house. Would you enjoy that? Yeah. Where are you walking?

L: I don't know if I – can I walk here?

Rob: I don't know. Perhaps you can't.

L: I don't know.

Rob: Does it feel like you can, or not?

L: Yeah, I guess I can waddle a bit.

Rob: Waddle a bit. Is that okay?

L: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. A waddly balloon. Is that okay? So, you're waddling along there and you're looking. You look up. Gosh. Isn't your mother huge, like a giant?

L: Yeah, but she's pretty.

Rob: Yeah.

L: Yeah.

Rob: She is pretty. And there's something about seeing how pretty she is that's such an important memory for you to have. And you look through as you're walking, waddling through the rest of the house, what are you waddling around now? Where are you now?

L: Going into the garden.

Rob: What's out here?

L: There's not much. Actually, I think there's manicured lawns.

Rob: Right, Now, when you look at the lawn, have you got shoes on or are you barefoot?

L: I'm barefoot.

Rob: Barefoot. When you feel the lawn, what does that feel like?

L: Cold, a bit damp, moist.

Rob: Bit damp, a bit moist, yeah. And is your mother still holding your hand?

L: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. And you can feel her hand?

L: Yeah.

Rob: You're not too sure about that?

L: No. No, I think she wants to pick me up again.

Rob: Oh. Is that okay? You don't mind being cuddled by your mother instead of having to feel that cold, damp, moist lawn, yeah? Is that agreeable?

L: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. So, she picks you up. Can you look around? What else do you see out in the garden?

L: There's a kind of starting of like a palm thing tree.

Rob: Yeah. What else do you see?

L: The swings and seesaw.

Rob: A fence?

L: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Yeah? What does the fence look like?

L: It's dark brown, wooden.

Rob: And has the fence got – is the wood going up and down or side to side?

L: Up and down.

Rob: Up and down, okay. There's quite a lot out here, isn't there? There's the fence and the lawn, the swings.

L: Yeah.

Rob: Seesaw.

L: It's weird because the way the garden is now, like now, now, is very different to what it was.

Rob: Then now?

L: Yeah.

Rob: And you can have both of those, how it is now, now, how it was then now and know that it's different, but you can still enjoy the memory of that, can't you?

L: Hmm.

Rob: You can't know how accurate your memory is, unless you can see some photos and even then you can't be absolutely sure, but you can have the feeling and you have the memory of that feeling. You've also got the memory of the purple clothes, and purple other things and how real they are or not, that's not the important thing.

The important thing is you remembering your mothers big, brown eyes, remembering her smile, the way she wanted to cuddle you, and the way that you enjoyed and really loved the experience of being cuddled by her. And you can keep that memory. You don't need to be scared of that one. You don't need to cover that one up. It's a very precious memory, isn't it?

L: Hmm

Rob: Yeah. And it wouldn't surprise me if you were to find yourself from time to time looking at photographs of you and your mother, or your mother here, there, different places, if when you look at those photos, that you could let yourself feel some of this feeling and let yourself remember some of this feeling. And I don't know whether that will let you remember other feelings as well, will let you remember other experiences as well, other pictures, frames, furniture, gardens, events. I don't know if that will happen, whether you'd like it remember then, but what you can be certain of is that you can remember this good feeling.

And I wonder if you were to imagine that time could pass, instead of being that little balloony, cuddled Linda, could you bring that memory and the feeling of that as if that's a part of you and you bring that into the botanical gardens, and you bring that into that first kiss, and you bring that into the experience of being here today with us, and if you were to even take it into your future, 10, 20, 40, 60, who knows how far into the future, it really doesn't matter, but know that that memory can be a thread and you can look forward to that. It's a part of you, is it not?

And it's there even if you don't notice it, even if you don't – if you're not aware that it is, it still is a part of you. Just like if you forget what you ate for lunch yesterday, or three weeks ago or 73 days ago, you probably could remember those things if you want to, but the important thing to know is that you were nourished by them, like you'll be nourished by other meals in the future and that you have more memories than you know of really good feelings, feelings of closeness, feelings of being cuddled, feelings of being loved, loving and you can take those into the future.

And I don't know whether you know yet who you're going to be doing all that cuddling with, all that loving with. You don't need to know yet, unless you do, but you can already look forward to it and bringing some of that into your kissing, which would be so different from that first kiss. Now...

healing sexual abuse



Childhood sexual abuse is one of those areas that is so fought and there's so much suffering in relation to. And we always need to be careful in helping someone resolve this that we don't traumatize them, we don't further aggravate their pain and suffering. And so, in the solution orientation, when we use hypnosis, we're more likely to explore with someone what aspect of the abuse, what aspect of that trauma in the past is still troublesome.

Are they plagued by a kind of feeling of blankness? Are they haunted by flashbacks of an event? Are they troubled by some physical numbness, or unpleasant physical sensations? Do they have some other dissociative problems that seem to be in some way related to that? So that instead of trying to have a standard form of treating childhood sexual abuse, if we find out what's missing for each individual, we have a more effective, more likely humanly way of helping to resolve their issue with them, so that if someone has a feeling of blankness, we can ask them to in age regression, go back and imagine what might have happened with a very, very clear and explicit recognition that what they experienced in age regression is not what actually happened necessarily, but what is remembered, what is constructed, what is in some ways created.

And if someone then finds that there are some things that are unpleasant, that are unacceptable, that are untenable, then we can with their permission, have some flexibility around that and ask them to imagine that something different happened.

A student, who told me about someone who had been abused as a child at the age of three or four and what was a continuing thorn in her side as an adult, was the way that she was so helpless then, so young and helpless. And so, in hypnosis, the student asked the individual to imagine that they were back at that age and what would they like to do. And they said they'd like to ring the police. So, in hypnosis, they imagined ringing the police and that imagined experience made a big difference to how she felt as an adult looking back, knowing that it was not real, knowing that she had constructed that, but nevertheless she found it very helpful.

Now, if someone has intrusive memories that are limiting them, then some hypnotic amnesia might be something. We can forget things. And I'm not advocating forgetting, but I think that some people would be glad and they'll even say, "I wish I could get it out of my head. I wish I could forget it. I wish it just never happened." And so, whatever it is that is troublesome, whatever it is that is lingering and persisting into their present life, once we can explore what that is for that individual, then we can start to explore with that person what might be missing for them, what might then be more beneficial for them, what experience would they like to reconnect with, to disconnect from, to learn, to unlearn and then in their individual, flexible way, find their own resolution in a hypnotic experience.

The client in the demonstration that follows was a participant in a teaching program and was living a very full and functional life. She was not scarred, not maimed by that experience but nevertheless, was having its effect. And she expressed relief at the difference of her experience after our conversation. And I'm very grateful to her for being willing to allow us to share something so private, so intimate, so delicate and to let us be part of her healing and her experience of reconnecting with her own innate resourcefulness so that she was able after this conversation to feel more resolved, more complete, more peaceful about the reality of what happened and more able to get on with own her life in the present. So, I'm so grateful to her for that.

Rob: The book that she'd been reading. And the book, I haven't read it, was about a girl, who got lost in the wrong land and somehow someone was going to go into that place by travelling through time and help bring her back home. And so, I asked Helen, she hadn't got to the end of the book, "Do you think it's going to turn out all right?"

"Oh yes." She said, "I don't know how it's going to, but I know it's going to turn out all right."

So, she'd also told me some things that she liked doing. She liked maths and she liked running. Four hundred meters was her distance. And so, I asked her to imagine that we could make up a story similar to what was in the book and just pretend like in a kind of acting sense. And that this story could be about a girl called Helen and that Helen was in the wrong land and that she was going to find her way back home, and how did she feel about finding her way home from the wrong land. And how do you think she might have felt? She's in the wrong land, doesn't want to be there and she wants to get home. She's going to get home. She's thinking about getting home, how does she feel?

J: Good, I suppose.

Rob: Yeah, she felt good. That's exactly the word that she said, good. So, I said, "Just imagine that you're on your way home and you can probably see people there waiting for you. And apart from your family waiting for you, there's going to be a dog and it's not going to be like a dog that you might think, "This is going to be a special kind of dog." She said she'd like patting cats and other kind of creatures. She liked that, she just didn't like dogs. And I said, "This dog is going to be different. It's going have fur more like a cat, or more like another creature. How do you feel about that?"

"Oh," she said that's...

"Can you be excited?"

"Oh, yes." She was looking forward to that and then she gradually was getting closer and closer, and he could see this dog and she was really looking forward to meeting this dog, seeing this dog and petting this dog. And eventually she got home, and she patted the dog and she felt really good about it. And I said to her, "You know that that was just a story. You know that we were just pretending. You know that we were just making that up." But I said, "Sometimes in a situation like this, something can change."

"Yes," she said, "I feel different."

I said, "What's different? What's happening?"

She says, "Changes." Just like that, "Changes." Very selfish of her, "Changes."

And I said, "How do you know that what we've done here is going to be helpful?" And she said, "It feels like a blanket has been waved over me." In any case, within a few months, she had a dog. And I met up with her about a month ago, she's now 17. Same dog, no problem.

Now, that role yesterday that you were in, without putting yourself or us through the embarrassment of having to actually go into the act of that, would it be okay for you to close your eyes now and remember what that was like yesterday?

J: Well, the audition was better. I might go into the audition.

Rob: Okay, go to the audition. And the audition, you've got your lines and your child has been abducted. And what are you doing? You're making – are you having to – you don't have to show us, but you can keep this in your own, even enjoy it perhaps, looking on at this. You watch yourself in the audition and you've got the drama going on, yeah. Get your structure into the drama of what are you doing? Appealing to someone to bring back – "Bring my daughter back," or something like that.

J: Something like that.

Rob: Okay. So, now just imagine that we've got a different part for you to play now. Instead of now your daughter being abducted, your daughters had some kind of

sexual thing when she was little. So, just be in the role of that and just imagine you're in and there's a bloke out back, or something. I don't know what. Now, you can be any way that you want to be because this is your show and be the mother, be the little girl, be anyone and really get into the drama with that man, that asshole. Can you see him?

First of all, as you're doing all of that kind of stuff, there's no response. He's Teflon coated. There's absolutely no impact at all, yeah. But you are producing this as well as being in it. So, you can change his lines, you can change his experience, you can change his role. So, just keep getting at him, and dramatizing at him and doing whatever at him as the mother, as the daughter as the whatever, and what's the first sign that you see that lets you know that something is getting in? What's happening?

What do you see in him? Just watch as he starts to – what's the first sign? Does he shake his head? Does he try and turn away? Does he look embarrassed? Does he look frightened? Does he look guilty? What's the first sign? Just watch him. What do you see? What's starting to happen to him? Do you see first of all there's no change at all?

J: No, no change at all.

Rob: Okay, so keep watching and don't forget, you can give him some acting cues. You can get him to enact the very beginning. What is he going to do so that he starts to show a little tinge of – is it fear? Is it guilt? What do you start to see? If you look at his face, what do you see? This is just a rehearsal, yeah. It's not real. It's just pretending. What do you see? Just look and see the very first change, something around his eyes or his mouth perhaps. What are you noticing?

J: I'm noticing I'm having difficulty casting myself. I don't know whether to cast myself as the mother or the daughter.

Rob: Oh, well be the producer. How would that be? Just be outside. You're just there behind the set, watching. Would that be better? Would you rather produce this?

J: No, I think I need to – there was a point of confrontation which...

Rob: Okay, well you don't know which to be, so be one and then you can be the other. You don't have to choose. You can be both. Which one do you want to do first?

J: I don't feel I have a choice. I just have to do what I have to do here.

Rob: Okay, well what do you have to do?

J: I have to be the child.

Rob: Okay, so be the child and even though you're only four, you're the child, but you are also able to impact him because this is a play. It's not real. So, what's happening with him? You're the child, now what's happening with him? What do you see with him that lets you know that something is getting through to this fellow? What does the little girl foresee in this person?

J: Fear, I suppose.

Rob: You see the fear. How do you see it?

J: In his eyes.

Rob: Okay. Now what do you see? Do they look a little wider, or does he lift his eyebrows or what?

J: They look wider.

Rob: Okay. Now, as that little girl sees the fear in him, just let her see that and then as it's there, now what's happening? It's in his eyes. Where else does it go to? Does he open his mouth, does he shrug his shoulders, does he turn away? What else? He's scared now, what is he doing? Watch that fear, just watch it. What's he doing now?

J: He's sort of backing away.

Rob: He's backing away, yes. And here's a little four-year-old girl and he's backing away and as that little girl sees him backing away and sees how scared he is, how fearful he is, can you let her really see that? He really is scared, isn't he? He's backing away, isn't he?

J: Mm-hmm.

Rob: Now, let that little girl just look at that and see that. Let her see he is scared. He's backing away. And can you let that recognition that he is scared and he's showing that in his body, he's showing that, can you let that recognition in? Well, I don't know how, but just have it make sense to that little girl. I don't know how she can make sense of that. I don't know how when she sees he is scared, I don't know how that changes her experience, but it changes it, does it?

Something's different when she sees that, whether she feels that somehow she has some influence whether she sees that he is being hurt, that he has been affected, he's been influenced, that he's been hit by that. I don't know exactly how, but does she see he is scared? She sees that?

J: Hmm.

Rob: Yeah. And is she letting herself really recognize that he is scared? Is she recognizing that? Maybe not fully, but she sees it and doesn't...

J: She can see it.

Rob: Doesn't know what to make of it? Doesn't know what to make of it, or what's happening when she sees it?

J: Well, she's just watching it.

Rob: She's watching it. Okay. And what else could happen that would be helpful for that little girl? Would it be helpful if his face changed colour and turned green, or

developed orange spots, or something that somehow let her know that something was happening in him?

J: I think I'd like to see him go to jail.

Rob: Well, why don't you? How would you like to see him go to jail? He's looking scared, he's backing away. Who's going to put him in jail?

J: Well, I'll bring a police van in.

Rob: Yes, bring that police van in. What colour is it?

J: White.

Rob: Does it have a siren?

J: No.

Rob: Does it have flashing lights?

J: No.

Rob: Okay. It's white

J: It's a panel van, one of those paddy wagon things.

Rob: Okay, a paddy wagon, excellent. Okay, so have the police come? Is it a policeman, just one?

J: Two.

Rob: Two policemen, okay. They come into the house?

J: Oh, no. It's outside.

Rob: They come outside?

J: Hmm.

Rob: Okay, no wonder he's backing away. He's looking really scared now, have a look at how scared he is now/. Really scared. and what do the policemen do?

J: They walk around to go and grab him.

Rob: Yes, and? They go and grab him?

J: And they grab him.

Rob: They grab him and what's he looking like now? Let that little girl have a look at him. How's he looking now?

J: Broken.

Rob: Yes, broken. And how do the policemen get him into the van? Do they have to drag him? Can he walk? Do they have to carry him? How do they get him into the back of the duty van?

J: Yeah, no he can walk.

Rob: He can walk? But can you see, as he's walking, like when he's broken, how does she know that he's broken? Is he slumped forward?

J: Hmm.

Rob: Is he crying, just scared? Is he making any noise? Just quiet, but she can see he's broken?

J: Hmm.

Rob: Okay, now watch the way they put him in the back of that van. Does one of them get in the back with him, do they just put him in by himself? Put him in by himself?

J: Hmm.

Rob: And they close the door and they lock it and they padlock it. And can that little girl see any of him through the – is there a window out the back with bars, or wire or something? Can she see him in there?

J: Hmm.

Rob: Okay. and the police get in the duty van, then what happens? What happens to him now? He's in the van, what happens? Just watch it like you're watching a... What's happening now?

J: He's in the van.

Rob: Yeah. And how's that little girl feeling?

J: Hmm.

Rob: Hmm. Yeah. Does that feel good?

J: As if there's a notion, not a feeling, I guess, of victory.

Rob: Yeah, okay. And as she notices that notion of victory, she's got that notion?

J: Hmm.

Rob: Okay. And can she somehow have that, somehow experience that, somehow memorize that, recognize that?

J: Well, the thing is that I'm an observer of her.

Rob: Sure, but you can see her. And when she has that notion of a victory, what do you observe, that lets you make that observation?

J: Well, there's something about the way she's sitting.

Rob: Yeah. You can observe that, can't you? I didn't even have to put that into words. Now the duty van goes off and he goes to jail, does the little girl need to see him in jail, or is it enough for her to know that he's going to jail? What else might she need, if anything?

J: Well, jail would be good.

Rob: Yeah, does she want him to see that he's in there?

J: Hmm.

Rob: Okay.

J: And I want an apology too.

Rob: Okay. So, do you want to visit him in jail?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. So, you're visiting him in jail, how's he looking?

J: Pretty hunted.

Rob: Yes. A four-year-old girl won't know what kind of hunting will go on in jail for someone like that. A grown-up Jane can, but that little girl wouldn't know, but she can see that he looks hunted. So, she wants an apology from him, yeah?

J: Hmm.

Rob: So, let him give that little girl an apology and make sure that he says it in such a way that she hears it and she accepts it. He might apologize and she might say, "No. It's not good enough." You might want to get him to apologize a couple of times, or a few times. What's happening?

J: Well, the apology just doesn't cut any [inaudible 26:39].

Rob: It doesn't. So, she got the apology, but she wants something more. What does she want? He's in jail.

J: I don't really want to forgive him.

Rob: Okay. He's in jail, you got the apology, but there's still something else that she wants before she forgives him. Forgiving, not like saying he's nice, but forgiving like saying, "Okay, I can put that in the past." And I'm thinking of what Linda said about that man in the volcano.

What can she do so that without forgiving him, without somehow condoning what happened, that somehow she can let it go? What does she need to do so that she can say, "Okay, when I leave jail and I leave him, I'm going to leave this behind me?" What can she do? Do you know?

J: Well, I guess just know that he's not going to get out.

Rob: All right. Now, what you're saying has some grip, but it's not quite what you want, is it? It's not quite enough. There's still something and I wonder if you can imagine that that little girl leaves the jail and whatever else it might be that she needs to leave behind, whatever else it might be that she needs to have for herself that somehow as she leaves the jail, she can on one hand leave anything that she doesn't want, leave it behind her. And on the other hand, as she leaves the jail, she can find herself moving further and further away from that and then moving towards where she's going. Now, I think it's important that you and I realize that we're imagining all this and that he didn't go to jail, and he didn't apologize and he wasn't frightened.

J: I think he was frightened.

Rob: You think he was? Okay. I wouldn't be surprised. He didn't show it maybe.

J: I think he did, but I didn't...

Rob: You hadn't seen it before. You're seeing it now.

J: No, I didn't really see it when dad confronted him.

Rob: Okay and that fear, now that you see that, there may be somehow, if I can say it this way, justice in how he is suffering from his own fear and that may have made some difference to that little girl, or as she grows up knowing that even though it may not have been that explicit, he suffered. No?

J: Not for long enough. He died.

Rob: Not for long enough, no, but there was some suffering. Not as much as you or she may have wanted, but there was some. But whatever else has happened, there can be something about this experience, which not necessarily directly related to it, but simply because you were willing to look at this that there may be something that's not yet quite clear, or not quite apparent yet that's going to let you really resolve this. It may be that some of the things that you've said or imagined you can play with in your imagination, or dream or I don't know, can happen in your imagination without you even knowing, or it may be something that you see on television, or you read a book, or you see something and somehow that allows some connection or some disconnection, some letting go in some way, or it may be something quite different, but there's something about this experience which has shifted something for you.

Something has started and it may have even moved further than you realise. It may have even allowed more of a letting go than you're aware of, or it may be that there's something that's there will warrant some further exploration within yourself,

or with someone else. I'm wondering what's different now than when you first came to sit in that chair. What are you aware of?

J: I'm aware that I've been very angry.

Rob: Yes, very.

J: And now I'm not anymore, so that's sort of...

Rob: You're not?

J: I'm not, it's sort of like a...

Rob: You're not angry now? What are you?

J: Well, I'm just disappointed.

Rob: Oh. Just another disappointment, Jane.

J: I'm not angry, I'm disappointed.

Rob: But at least your disappointment is justified. Yeah, so you're not so angry.

J: Well, it's sort of like I've been on like a bell statistic you know? I've sort of been angry and then come back again.

Rob: Okay. And is there some way that when you look, you can see that the way you've moved on that bell thing, that your structure is different now? Do you notice that you feel different? There's something different in you.

J: I'm not sure about that.

Rob: You're not sure. Maybe it hasn't. It looks like it has, but you can't be sure. You don't know, maybe...

J: Oh, but I'm certainly not as nervous as I was when I first sat down because I've had the experience.

Rob: That's right. You've been kind of up and over the bell.

J: And I wasn't sure what the experience would be, yeah.

Rob: No. No, you weren't. How could you be? But as you say, you got through it. You're at the other side of the bell. I suppose it's possible that you could kind of head up that slope and slip down the other side again. I suppose it's possible, do you think? Do you think it's possible that you could get as angry as you were?

J: Oh, I suppose if I decided to go back there.

Rob: If you decide to go back there, but it might take effort that you may or may not be willing to make. Then when you said, "Oh," I was wondering is there something

that you were thinking there? Something that was happening that I interrupted with that question?

J: I don't know. I'm not aware of saying that.

Rob: Okay. If you were to just take a moment now to notice where you are, either on the bell curve, or in some other way that you could imagine and see where you've come from at the beginning of this conversation and maybe continue on further back. If you were to look then in the other direction towards the future and see how you might like to be, in an ideal situation, given the reality of what did happen, what would be your ideal experience now? If you could just choose any way of being with what did happen back then, what would be ideal for you?

J: Well, I suppose to forgive.

Rob: That would be ideal?

J: I suppose, given that he's dead.

Rob: Okay. Well, maybe. So, that's ideal. So, what would you settle for because we don't live in an ideal world?

J: I suppose knowing that he was frightened up until when he died.

Rob: Yes. That does make a difference, doesn't it?

J: Hmm.

Rob: Not sure how much, or whether it's enough, but it certainly does make some difference. It's more than nothing. It's not as much as you might want, but it's more than nothing. Are you connecting with the fact that he was frightened up until he died? Connecting with that? No?

J: Not really.

Rob: What's happening? Is it okay for you to be upset like this?

J: It's just difficult to talk.

Rob: Yes. Well, I don't need you to talk. Would it be okay for you to just have the emotion that you're having, knowing that in the way that you are letting yourself to have this and be in this experience, that that in itself can be so healing for you? You can say anything you want.

J: I just wish there was some way that Mum could forgive herself.

Rob: Okay. Yeah. That's important to you. Somehow, she felt that it was her fault.

J: It was just terrible for her.

Rob: Yeah. Yeah, I hear you.

J: And she's never really forgiven herself.

Rob: Oh, yeah. Well, how about we do a take two of that scene? Are we going to go back there again?

J: Oh, well I don't want to take up all your time.

Rob: Oh, well, you can be frightened and we'll suffer, that's all right. We'll just tolerate it. Shall we ask the others if it's all right, or we just make him suffer? What do you think? Shall I ask them?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Is it okay if we do some more? They all say yes. So, how about we go back to that play. So, he's in the back, he's outside. Okay? And you're watching him as the four-year-old. Now...

J: Let me get back there.

Rob: Okay. Take all the time you need in the next three nanoseconds.

J: Okay.

Rob: Back there, so this time we want to take care of your mother. So, can you in some way, I don't know, not play your mother, but as the producer or the observer, or something, know what your mother is thinking and feeling as if you somehow know her lines. Do you know what I mean? I want to make sure there's some kind of connection there. Are you're doing that?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Okay. So, let your mother see what's happening, that he's frightened and that the little four-year-old sees that he's frightened. The little four-year-old knows that he's going to be frightened until he dies. Let your mother see all of that and what can you do? What can that four-year-old do to let your mother know that it's okay.

J: I can let her know that I feel protected by her.

Rob: Okay. And when you let her know that, can you look at her and make sure that she believes you, so that she gets the message, yeah? And you're letting her know that you feel protected by her and it wasn't her fault that that happened. A mother can protect a child from just so many things and no matter what any mother does, some things will happen.

You know that, as a parent, yeah? As parents, we often blame ourselves for what goes wrong and sometimes our children are even very cooperative in helping to remind us about that, that it's our fault that something goes wrong. Do your children ever do that to you?

J: Hmm.

Rob: Yeah. But a parent can only do what a parent can do. You can't do everything, you can't prevent a child from falling over, or being sick, or I don't know. You know that as a parent, so how can you let your mother know that just because that happened, it was just something that happened that she had no way of preventing. How can you let her know that?

J: Well, I have talked to her about it.

Rob: Yeah, but I want you to tell her back in that time when you were four. The police are coming. What can you say to her to make her okay? What comes to mind?

J: Well, I'm imagining that there was a confrontation between my father and this man when they found out. And I was there, and mum was there and I suppose I could go over to her rather than...

Rob: You go over to her.

J: Hmm.

Rob: What do you say to her? What do you do?

J: Just hug her, I suppose.

Rob: Okay. All right. I have an idea. While you're doing that, I don't know, it's just my idea, that you might also tell her that he tried a second time and you bit a bit out of his arm. And so, at an early age you learnt that you can defend yourself and you actually learnt that in a way that a lot of people didn't. A lot of kids at four don't know that they can. And you learnt that you got sharp teeth, a strong jaw and you're a very strong little girl and you learnt that from that experience. Not that you would want to have had that, but having had that, you learnt about defending yourself, didn't you?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Yeah. And that's something that's going to be useful for that little girl as she grows up. And there may be some way that you can – I don't know how you can say that to your mother. It was horrible, but at least you learnt something and it's not going to happen again. That was just my thought, but I don't know whether she's interested to hear that. Would you hug her? You hug your mother.

J: Yeah.

Rob: How's she feeling now?

J: I think she's feeling better.

Rob: Yeah, how do you know that she is, because you remember when you set up a way that you can know?

J: Oh, I can just tell.

Rob: Okay. And now that you can tell that she is okay, how does that help that little girl knowing that her mother's okay? How does that help her?

J: Well, I can identify with her strength, I suppose. Such a bastard of a thing to do.

Rob: Yes. It is and it happened, and you learnt to be strong, and to defend yourself, and you learnt that you can look after yourself, and you learnt that you can survive and flourish and even somehow learn from that, because the intensity of that experience allowed you to have intense feelings that you may not have had. Erickson said that sometimes life gives us a terrible gift.

J: Like a mobile phone.

Rob: And you never know when it's going to happen. Just out of the blue, life can dump a terrible gift on us. And he said that his polio was like that. It was a terrible gift. It's not something that you would wish on anyone, but given that it happened, as a result of that, we can learn some things.

J: Oh, yeah, that's true. That has been true.

Rob: Yeah, so it's a gift, but it's not something pleasant. It's something that you time and time again keeps coming back.

J: And getting louder.

Rob: And sometimes, you wish that you could just turn it off, but it seems that life gives us these recurrent experiences until we learn to deal with them. And once we've dealt with them adequately, then we see that things happen. There are just things that happen. A mobile phone can be a nuisance, it can be a lifesaver, it can be a convenience, it can be a plaything. It's actually a mobile phone and it's what you do with it.

And what happened to that little girl was a terrible thing, terrible, but it happened and it's what she is able to do with it, and what she is able to learn from it and what she is able to make out of it herself. Now, when Erickson said that his polio was a terrible gift and he said that he is so glad to be in a wheelchair because he gets to meet nice people. I don't know whether that sounds a kind of sickly corny, but when he said it, he was sincere. I believed it.

J: Oh, yeah, no. I'm sure, since...

Rob: So, I don't know what's going to happen with Helen in speaking with her about the situation that she's in now, but looking back, she had very nice memories of those conversations that we had. She has got a problem with energy and I said to her, if someone were to ask you about do you think you could run a marathon, I could imagine that you might say, "I could run a marathon, pigs might fly."

And she was able to make that connection. And so, I could say to her, "Well don't run a marathon today and don't plan a marathon the next few weeks, but who knows, in a few years whether you will or will not be running a marathon." I don't know, but neither does she.

J: That was a bizarre ending.

Rob: Oh, well, I thought I better stretch it a bit somewhere. And I don't know whether you're aware of the way that some people deal with a strategy to deal with unpleasant emotions. They get a rubber band and put it around their wrist. Anytime they get anything unpleasant, they just flick it and somehow that disrupts things. What's happening for you at the moment?

J: I was trying to make sense of the marathon and I feel like I've been so far from that since you first started talking about it that was kind of...

Rob: Do you feel like you're starting to get ready to come back here?

J: Yeah. Yeah.

Rob: Okay. Wouldn't want you to do that until you're ready, but I think it might be nice if somehow you could let it all out.

J: I didn't mean to be rude when I said it was a bizarre ending.

Rob: Oh, I just thought it was you just giving me a terrible gift there. I thought you were just giving me an insult to see whether I could have the moral fortitude to cope with it. And do you think saying "bizarre" to me is an insult?

J: No.

Rob: No. Someone as twisted as you should know that there are other people who like things like that. I'm not talking about half as bizarre either.

J: I'm coming.

Rob: Okay, take your time. Take your time. When you're doing that. I want you to know how appreciative I am for trusting me, us, yourself with that.

J: I don't know why I feel so fragile.

Rob: You do?

J: Yeah.

Rob: Well, perhaps you just feel fragile because that's how you're feeling. I'm not at all surprised. I'm wondering whether it's okay to videotape this. If it's okay to...?

J: Yeah. Yeah, it's fine.

Rob: Yeah? You're sure? What was that?

J: Tissue.

Rob: Oh, I didn't recognize it. Looks more like a piece of whiteboard on the back your hand.

J: A rubber. Oh, thanks.

Rob: Just wipe your face with that, I don't know.

J: Man size.

Rob: Oh, yes. Man-size tissues for man-size problems, so feeling fragile still or not?

J: Not so much, no.

Rob: Not so much. They're very good tissues those, aren't they? They not only wipe away tears, they wipe away fragility. They soak it up. And you know, when you wipe those tears and the tissue soaks it up, it might be soaking up more than tears. And if you were to hold that tissue for a while, you might want to just keep it in your hand for a while and then when you're ready after I don't know, a few seconds, or minutes, or hours or days, you can put it somewhere.

I think I told you about someone, who told me she had a problem with her childhood. She felt she'd been carrying the burden of her childhood around. I didn't tell you? And she said she felt like she'd been carrying this weight around. So, I got a brick that we had here and put it in a plastic bag and I said, "I'd like you to have this. This is a symbol of the weight that you've been carrying around."

J: Oh, okay.

Rob: And I said, "Carry it around until you're ready to put it down," thinking, you know, I'll give her five minutes. Twelve months later, she was still carrying it around.

J: Oh, you're kidding.

Rob: But sometime, over the next 12 months, it...

J: I'll get rid of this grotty tissue.

Rob: Keep it as long as you need. There's no hurry, but after the first 12 months, she said she still had it and then she said she's not carrying it around, it was under her bed.

J: Oh, okay.

Rob: And I said to her, "I wonder whether you could move it just one millimetre closer to the door." She thought she could perhaps manage that and the time I asked her, she said, "I don't know what happened to it. It just disappeared." I discovered later that her husband sick of it and got rid of it.

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