

This page from a textbook called TRANCE & TREATMENT by Spiegel at Stanford University... this is what motivated me to move forward with training.

“Some years ago Dr. Jesseph was serving as a research surgeon at Brookhaven Laboratories hospital on Long island, new York. He was developing new radiation therapy techniques for cancer. His ward contained 25 women, all dying of metastatic breast cancer. They knew they were terminally ill, which was one of the conditions for being accepted on this research ward. The patients were told that no matter what happened there was always something the staff could do.

One morning the doctor noticed that he was drinking his fifth cup of coffee while reading the New York Time. He startled himself by wondering “Why am I drinking so much coffee? I don’t even like coffee” He then experienced a moment of truth during which he frankly acknowledged to himself how difficult it was to leave the dining room, go into the ward and face those 25 dying women. At the time the research program was not doing well, the results were not promising and he was discouraged by the progress of the study. He happened to remember reading about the possibility that hypnosis could be used effectively in pain control and he found an announcement of a course in hypnosis that was being offered at Columbia University. He signed up for the course and managed to travel 100 miles back and forth for seven Saturdays to learn about hypnosis. After the fifth session he had learned enough about pain control with hypnosis to be able to induce trances in all his patients on the ward and he taught them how to alter their perception of pain. By the end of the course 2 weeks later he reported that 1) with the daily use of hypnosis for pain control, the patients were able to reduce their analgesic drug use to one-third of the previous level 2) reports of nightmares were reduced by 90% and 3) not the least important, the doctor himself returned to having one cup of coffee at breakfast. He observed that despite the difficulties he and his co-workers were having with their radiation research, he did have a sense of re-establishing himself as a physician who at least brought comfort to his patients by offering them an opportunity to develop a sense of mastery during this stressful period.

Several months later we were invited to the hospital to visit the ward which had a strangely serene atmosphere. We observed four women sitting at a table playing bridge and at the same time using self-hypnosis to contain their pain. Sitting in the corner in a rocking chair and knitting was a mother superior also a patient who said, “When the doctor introduced the use of hypnosis to all of us on the ward, it made such an impressive change in our feeling about ourselves that I have put myself in a dilemma I never expected. Sometimes in my prayers I am tempted to Thank Dr. Jesseph before I thank God.”

Trance and Treatment: Clinical Uses of Hypnosis

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