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'About 52 percent of the population can make major behavioral changes through hypnosis.'

—Don R. Powell

Hypnotism

A helping technique with an aura of magic

Story: SHIRLEE IDEN
Photos: MINDY SAUNDERS

• Terrified of dentists, the man had neglected his dental health for more than 20 years.

• Panic-stricken, the woman realized she had misplaced \$30,000 worth of jewelry.

Both these seemingly unrelated case histories have something in common — a happy ending reached with the help of hypnosis.

Don Powell, Ph.D., in private practice in Southfield, is the therapist who used hypnosis on these people successfully.

"The man had a terrible dental phobia, but with three sessions of hypnosis, he was helped," Powell said. "He had to have all of his teeth removed, but he was much more comfortable."

"The woman who forgot where her cache of jewelry was hidden was helped to remember in just one session of hypnosis."

No Sengali with a cone-shaped hat and swinging watch, Powell derives a

great deal of satisfaction from being part of a helping profession.

But he realizes that to the public, hypnosis does have a magical quality.

"Actually, it is a form of treatment dealing with the subconscious mind," he said.

"Our subconscious minds are quite suggestible and believe what is told. This makes suggestion more likely to be carried out."

Powell said hypnosis has been used since 1700 but mostly for parlor tricks. In 1958, it gained professional status as a form of therapy.

FOR POWELL, hypnosis is a valued part of his practice, a quick and inexpensive way to change behavior.

"About 52 percent of the population can make major behavioral changes through hypnosis."

"For them, it works, and they can stop smoking, achieve weight loss and overcome fears and anxieties."

For others, hypnosis is useful in curing bed-wetting, insomnia and other problems, he said.



Therapist Don R. Powell uses hypnotic suggestion to get Linda Selman to raise her right arm while in a trance state.

Powell became interested in hypnosis after being hypnotized.

"It happened about nine years ago."

"I had an anxiety about speaking publicly to large numbers of people. Dr. Herbert Spiegel, an authority, spoke at the University of Michigan, and I volunteered to be hypnotized."

"In a single session, he gave me hypnotic suggestions and taught me self-hypnosis."

No longer anxious, Powell speaks to 1,000 or more people live or on television with no qualms, he said.

A native of New York, Powell earned his doctorate in psychology from the U of M. He taught behavior modification there for seven years.

"ACTUALLY, I started out in engineering but found myself taking more interest in other subjects so that I finally switched majors."

A resident of Farmington Hills, he is married to Nancy, a former student and native Detroit. Erv's, their dog is the third family member.

Although hypnosis is just part of

his practice, Powell is convinced it can help people and should be used more often.

One of the great advantages it has, Powell believes, is the ability to learn self-hypnosis. People able to hypnotize themselves learn to rely on themselves for reinforcement.

"People don't become dependent on hypnosis, and 98 percent of the population can be hypnotized." A practiced hypnotist can easily detect a person's ability to be hypnotized, he said.

"I've hypnotized more than 1,500 people and only twice I couldn't induce a trance state."

Deep trance states are not essential for good results, he said.

"Under hypnosis, the brain wave action slows down from the beta wave state to the alpha wave state, a state of deep relaxation."

"THE MIND becomes suggestible. There is a lot of hypnosis in the waking state like in 'highway hypnosis'."

Even becoming engrossed in television or a book is mild hypnosis with the brain waves slowing down."

Once the subject is in the alpha wave state, the therapist makes appropriate suggestions.

"You can't just say 'Don't smoke' or 'Don't eat.' You have to use commands about what people are doing for them-

selves. You have to be general, but also specific."

Subjects are encouraged to imagine eating, smoking or the phobic (fearful) situation while in the hypnotic state, he said.

This helps them handle it in real life."

Generally, he has success after seeing clients only two or three times, he said.

For smoking, only one session is required. They'll either be successful or not — it's kind of a cold-turkey approach."

Seventy percent of these clients are not smoking after a month has elapsed, he said.

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Teen diabetics group together

By LORRAINE MCCLISH

Peter Fontaine is one of a half-dozen teenage diabetics who meet in Southfield Civic Center every other week to talk among themselves about the problems they share in common.

It's a subject many of them don't discuss with anyone else. Some admit to subterfuge in hiding their malady from those very close to them. Some refused to have their name or picture in a newspaper.

"That's why I started this group," said Marilyn Citron, who acts as facilitator and sometimes trouble-shooter in her efforts to prevent the condition from robbing teens of a full and normal life.

"I know adult (diabetics) who are still being treated like babies and will never do anything useful with their lives. I know some who are still trying to hide it from the world."

"I went through all the stages in my own adolescence, and I think I can help the teens with whatever problems they face now and help prepare them for a healthy adulthood," she said.

WHEN PETER Fontaine was asked to list the common problems of young diabetics he named social eating, parents on the kids' backs, friends who don't or won't understand and self-discipline.

"I don't know if that's the right or wrong," he added. "If you discipline yourself, the rest doesn't matter."

The 16-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Fontaine was diagnosed as a diabetic when he was 6. He spent that year of his life in and out of a hospital before the proper dosage of insulin was found to control his problem.

He described the symptoms that brought him to the hospital as "extreme crankiness, urinating all the time, drinking gallons of water."

For the child who had enjoyed school and lost all of first grade, his diet restrictions "were pretty bad with everything else, but only for the first couple of weeks," he said. "My parents found diabetic sweets for me that weren't hard to get used to. Now when I eat regular sugar it tastes awful."



PETER FONTAINE

Meanwhile, another transition was taking place.

"My parents started watching over me like a hawk. They even sent me to Country Day School to make sure I had close supervision. I didn't have just any babysitter. I had a trained nurse," he said.

There is no history of diabetes on either side of Peter's family.

TODAY PETER is a baby for four younger brothers and sisters. He shops for his own medication and equipment the diabetic uses daily. He is a bowling coach for 7-12-year-olds at Yorba Linda Lanes. He bowls on two leagues, lifts weights and jogs in preparation for earning a spot on Kimball High School's tennis team this spring.

Until a few weeks ago he was giving himself his own insulin shots, but his stepmother practicing on an orange these days so she can give them.

"My muscles are getting too hard,"

he said in reference to his recent physical workouts. "It's been difficult for me to do this myself, and she is going to have to learn to do it for me."

Peter's educating his stepmother is but one step in a lifetime of education the diabetic has dispensed to those around him concerning the malady.

"Peter is one of our biggest assets," Ms. Citron said. "He's grown up as a diabetic so he knows his parameters and works and lives within them. He has a lot to share with others in our group who aren't handling this as well as he is."

Peter has experienced the sting of a family who asked him not to come into their home because they thought diabetes was contagious. A more common occurrence is the guilt other teens feel eating a piece of cake while he has refused the offering.

He counters the lack of sweets in his diet by stating, "I'm a lot healthier because of it. I wouldn't be in as good shape as I am today if I was eating candy bars and doughnuts for lunch."

MS. CITRON invites teen-age diabetics to the meeting of the group, set for 7:30 p.m. March 25 in Room 111, Parks and Recreation Building, Southfield Civic Center, 26000 Evergreen Road.

The format for her group, still without a name, is backed by American Diabetes Association-Michigan Affiliate as well as metropolitan-area doctors who specialize in diabetes.

Its premise is that learning about the condition, learning to live with it, talking about it, overcoming old prejudices, dealing with the uneducated and most of all sharing, will strengthen the teen into a mentally and physically healthy adult.

There is no charge. Sometimes movies. Sometimes speakers. Mostly talk," Ms. Citron said.

"We are helping one another. Maybe the newly-diagnosed diabetic is helped most of all. They might think they're alone, but they're not. The kid sitting next to them might be hiding the same way they are."

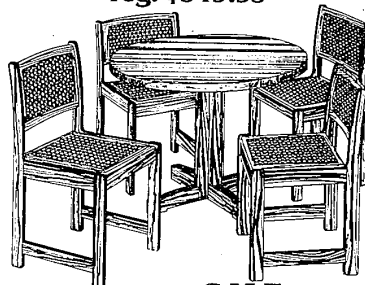
Ms. Citron welcomes calls of inquiry. Phone her at 552-0159.

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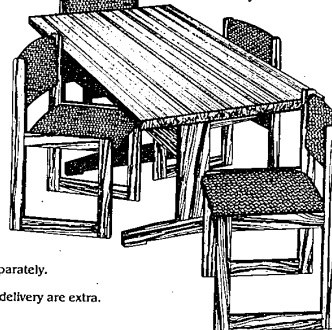
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