

Alchemical Hypnotherapy

Created in the 1980s by David Quigley, **Alchemical Hypnotherapy** works with the subconscious to tap our inner resources and help empower us to move forward past any blocks or difficulties we experience in our lives. Through **Alchemical Hypnotherapy** we call on our innate power and wisdom to help ourselves – all hypnosis ultimately being self-hypnosis. Therefore the client is not reliant on the therapist to provide the experience or insight; instead clients are self-empowered to access their own latent genius.

Alchemical Hypnotherapy (AH) adheres to the ancient principles of the art and science of Alchemy in which the subconscious is allied to the conscious awareness in order to access long-forgotten memories and experiences in order to facilitate the Great Work: namely, living one's life as an ongoing expression of one's deepest potential and most heartfelt longings. In this way the alchemical "lead" of depression, relationship problems, lack of wealth and/or professional fulfilment, blocked creativity or grief can be transformed over time into the "gold" of a fulfilling, fulfilled life.

AH comprises four main fields of practice:

1) Inner Child Rescue Mission

Through this process the hypnotherapeutic experience leads into early childhood memories in search of the source of a particular experience or limiting self-belief in the present. For example a young man who struggles with authority and his own capacity to find or hold down meaningful employment may find himself regressing to memories of an aggressive step-father stepping on his toys or disrupting his play time and he is left with a repressed rage and feeling of being let down and unsupported (perhaps by both parents- the other for not rescuing the child at the time). These feelings may have accumulated in his subconscious throughout the rest of his childhood and be impacting in adult life *on a subconscious level*. In AH we allow such feelings to be experienced, we allow catharsis of the pent up emotion, but in contrast to many other hypnotherapeutic procedures once these feelings have been released we do not stop the process: instead we become actively engaged in reworking the memory for and with the client. What did the child need? How can we help that child? We may bring the adult self of the client back to be with their child so that the child is not left unprotected with the misbehaving or abusive adult. We may bring other help if needed. The situation is then addressed – the "inner" stepfather in the above example is asked if he realises that it is wrong to treat a child this way? Is he ready to apologise and change his behaviour? If not we can make him do so: or if necessary we dismiss him, perhaps to a therapeutic centre where he can work on his own anger issues. AH takes the point of view that since the *past* is experienced only through our conscious and subconscious memory that we relate to in the *present*, if we change or re-work the memory we change the relationship of the client to their own past. Experience clearly shows that if you rescue a difficult childhood experience through changing the memory of how that experience was remembered, adding creative or healing outcomes to that memory, then the person themselves is often free to move on from the issue that had been stuck on a subconscious level.

2) Contacting the Higher Self and Guides.

AH permits us contact with many guides. The Inner Child is itself a guide; our seven year old child may have very useful information to share with our adult self as to the nature of our emotions and our real needs. Furthermore, we can connect with our Inner Mate. Many people live for the exciting buzz of a new relationship but then falter or fall when the excitement wears off and they are left with another person with whom they are unsure how to connect. Sound familiar? If so the capacity to build a relationship with our Inner Mate may prove a revelation. The Inner Mate (an experientially real figure corresponding to the Jungian archetypes of Anima and Animus) can help us intuit our true relationship needs and provide us with invaluable information for our intimate relationships. Along with the Inner Child and the Inner Mate we also have Inner Parents: to the extent that our own parents have failed us at times or are no longer with us through death or relocation we can develop relationships with internal archetypes. If a parent has been abusive or damaged and we wish to experience a different kind of parenting the Inner Parent can offer this, without in any way negating the service our actual parents have accomplished in bringing us into the world and doing their best for us. AH sees no value in dismissing our own parents and going off to fairyland. Our own parents are acknowledged for what they have done even as we continue to acknowledge that there are further archetypal resources for us to tap into should we require a deepening of our experience.

Other than these figures AH opens us to the possibility of many others who can assist us: the Inner Healer, Inner Artist and Inner Teacher, animal powers and/or totems- to name a few examples. The most important of these figures and the one that enables us to assess the truth and potential of all the other guides is the Higher Self which is the part of us that survives death, deals with our karmic obligations and understands the bigger picture regarding our purpose on this earth. From my own perspective the Higher Self is the Soul- the spiritual essence of individuality that manifests specific bodies throughout space-time, specific vehicles within which we learn about and experience the limitless potential within this multi-dimensional experience we call "life". The Higher Self is an invaluable resource and its presence during hypnotherapeutic work can be a magical one as it overflows with guidance, protection and love-wisdom.

3) Prior Life Regression and Re-integration Work.

Some people find that even after exploring and transforming their personal memories of their childhood through Inner Child rescue missions and other therapeutic media (eg the many modes of psychotherapy), they still have problematic patterns or issues remaining. This can indicate the need to investigate the client's prior lives. As with the Inner Child rescue mission, AH differs from conventional prior life regression work in that it does not stop at telling the "story" or processing the emotions surrounding that story. This constitutes the first step (which can itself be enormously revealing and rewarding). Yet in AH we can go on from here to "rescue" difficult past life situations, allowing the Higher Self to return to the scene and provide explanation or insight; or, when appropriate, invite past life personalities back into the current time so that they can bring forward

their healing and/or creative gifts. In this way prior lives can become resources for the present-day personality and its complex dilemmas (which may, of course, correspond and resonate with events many hundreds or even thousands of years before).

Another gift of prior life regression and re-integration work is that it can often provide a sense of release from the fear of physical death. As we experience ourselves having lived many times before we can see death for what it is: a change of state, a death to one condition and a birth into another. Often when people recall past life death scenarios they re-experience feelings of cathartic release and freedom from suffering which can be tremendously reassuring. Sometimes as people die under very difficult or traumatic circumstances they make vows or promises which can in turn become subconsciously damaging in later lives. For example a 'witch' whose only crime was to heal people with herbs may have been burnt at the stake by the Inquisition, the very people she healed looking on and celebrating her painful demise. This horrific situation might lead her to promise herself something like "I will never use my healing gifts again when people are so ungrateful". This vow will have reverberations many centuries later when this person struggles with resistance around the issue of becoming a therapist or a healer. Another potential with this work is that through the assistance of the Higher Self a person may be able to access the pre-birth "contract" they made with themselves prior to the current incarnation, understand their reasons for being here and explore ways to actualise their soul-purpose.

2) Conference Room Therapy

In the pioneering work of Roberto Assagioli (founder of Psychosynthesis) we encounter the concept of *sub-personalities*: a psychological term for the many different voices that we all have inside of us. The role we embody in parenting our children differs from the way we express ourselves with our own parents; the way we express ourselves in the workplace is different than who we are during a romantic encounter (I hope!). These are all different identities coexisting within the larger matrix that is our deepest Self. According to Psychosynthesis it's a crucial part of our evolution to become conscious of these different figures or voices and to be able to choose between them, to negotiate with them in a harmonious and constructive fashion. This is the aim of Conference Room therapy: to create a forum for all these different parts of ourselves to meaningfully dialogue. In Assagioli's writings (and elsewhere) he states that the Will is the central part of a person's capacity to evolve or progress as a human being. The function of this Will is compromised if the greater Self remains divided. Assagioli actually generated the idea of true individuality, the 'I' as that centre inside us that could then choose to occupy the different roles and/or express all the multiple voices *without losing its centre*. The aim of this part of the work is to explore the different relationships between the aforementioned inner figures and guides.

It is my hope that through AH clients can vividly experience their eternal connection to the Higher Self and begin to integrate this most fulfilling of relationships into their everyday lives.

