

File

INTERNATIONAL
SOCIETY OF
HYPNOSIS



VOLUME 10 NUMBER 1

APRIL 1987

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The new secretariat is now functioning at full speed ahead. Robb Stanley, as the Administrative Officer, has sorted out the majority, if not all the teething problems that are inevitable when there is an establishment of a new location of an international office.

The Secretary/Treasurer, Dr Peter Bloom, was able to visit Australia in February. Apart from lecturing to the South Australian and Victorian Branches of the Australian Society of Hypnosis, Peter spent a significant amount of time at the central office with Robb Stanley, as well as valuable time with myself.

One of the important matters that we are looking at is the ways and means to increase membership of the International Society. For the Society to thrive a large active membership is essential. As you receive this newsletter, it is most likely that you are already a member of ISH and I would ask you to encourage your colleagues to join with us and become members. It is hoped that the special actions that are soon to be carried out will result in a significant increase in our membership.

The 4th European Congress of Hypnosis in Psychotherapy and Psychosomatic Medicine will be in Oxford in July this year. This will provide an excellent opportunity especially for the ISH members of Europe, to meet together. I hope to see many of you in Oxford. I would encourage you to attend the various meetings in hypnosis, whether at your local branch level, national level or international level and that you will be an active participant whether you present your own work, or become involved in discussion in the work of other people, or take further training. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of up-to-date knowledge and training in the art of hypnosis and its application in either therapy or research.

David R. Collison
President I.S.H.

FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Part of the price of our success (reflected again quite recently by highly favourable articles on hypnosis in *Newsweek* and *The Sciences*) is a continuing proliferation of lay hypnotists. (See Australian and U.K. news also). It can be a highly lucrative business; money, like guilt, is a major human motivator.

During January, a lay hypnotist in Montreal generated some free publicity for himself through a newspaper story on his use of self hypnosis for analgesia during a tooth extraction. This report appears to have had a most unusual impact. Within weeks, the Concordia

hypnosis lab received phone calls from some pain patients; subsequently I found that colleagues at two local hospitals had encountered similar circumstances.

It would appear that many chronic pain patients had read the article on the dental extraction and had reasoned that hypnosis has a powerful effect. Thus, if a "hypnotist" is able to utilize it successfully upon himself, he must surely be able to alleviate their own severe sufferings. There was nothing in the newspaper report to warn them that hypnosis as a surgical analgesic occurs with relative rarity.

There was a depressing uniformity in the stories that these patients told. They came with hope that finally somebody could help them, and they were given this assurance. No case history was taken, and they signed themselves up for package deals, paying cash in advance for the entire "treatment". In one particularly grim case, an elderly woman paid \$1500 that she could ill afford. The hypnosis was by audiocassette, and she could not obtain a refund when she found that hypnosis (or was it a lack of an interpersonal relationship?) was ineffective in her case. To add to the injuries and insults of the situation, she even signed a pre-"treatment" statement that she would not take legal action against the "hypnotist" if she was subsequently dissatisfied with the "treatment".

The "hypnotist" need not have worried; people in pain tend to blame themselves for having been deceived, and often they feel humiliated. Further, many of them see death as imminent; they want their last days to be lived in dignity and not in litigation.

Until we find a means of drawing public attention to these forms of abuse, however, stories such as this will be dismissed elsewhere as the work of greedy professionals who seek a monopoly on the hypnotherapeutic dollar. This is one area of public perception where we have not, and some lay hypnotists have, been very successful.

Campbell Perry
I.S.H. Newsletter Editor

NEWS FROM THE CENTRAL OFFICE

Since my last report in the October 1986 newsletter the central office has been fortunate to have been visited by Dr Peter Bloom, Secretary/Treasurer of the Society. It was with great pleasure that we were able to show Peter the progress that had been made in taking up the administrative reins of the Society after the years of tireless and thorough work of the Philadelphia Office.

While some tasks remain to be completed the central office is now fully functional. This is in spite of the happy and sad loss of our administrative secretary, Mrs Robyn Holmes who gave birth to a healthy baby girl at the end of November. A new secretary to the office is soon to be appointed and we will once more be able to proceed with our efforts to promote the Society and hypnosis on the international scene.

