

# A Case of Childhood Sexual Abuse

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Format used: S.O.A.P.

### SUBJECTIVE:

C, a 24 year old female, came to see me because "I feel like something happened to me just prior to turning eleven years old. One day I was feeling just fine, the next day I was bouncing off the walls." A flood of emotions were bombarding her mind, she said. She didn't understand any of it. C felt a need to escape from what was happening. Unable to cope effectively with her life, she went to see her family physician. He tried a variety of medications, but nothing seemed to work. So, he referred her to a psychiatrist, who diagnosed her as having Bipolar Disorder. He prescribed Lithium.

C took Lithium for a few months, but it wasn't working, so her psychiatrist, a Dr. E switched her to Seroquil, which is very sedating for her. When I first met C, she was so drugged she could hardly respond to my questions. Her mother and grandmother had to do the talking.

C was a good hypnotic subject. The following is a verbatim of each session we had over a seven week period.

### OBJECTIVE:

Session One:                    C = Client      H = Hypnotherapist

H 1: C, how can I help you?

C 1: I feel like something happened to me when I was almost eleven years old.

H 2: What do you mean?

C 2: I think I may have been molested. But I don't know. I just know that one minute I was normal, and the next minute I was bouncing off the walls.

H 3: What do you mean by "bouncing off the walls?"

C 3: I couldn't be still. I was hyper. I couldn't stay put. My mind was going from one thought to the next without any rest, at least it seemed that way.

H 4: You were irritated, distracted, even agitated?

C 4: Yeah. That's it.

H 5: What about the opposite affect, the down side of what you experienced?

C 5: It's like living in darkness. I want to sleep all the time. Don't want to do anything.

H 6: Have you ever been admitted into an inpatient mental health facility?

C 6: Yes. In 2003, I spent a couple of weeks in the local Behavioral Health program for suicidal threats.

H 7: Things were that bad for you?

C 7: Yeah. I guess. I just didn't want to live.

H 8: How about now?

C 8: No. Not anymore. I want to find out what happened to me when I was almost eleven.

H 9: What do you know about hypnosis?

C 9: Not a lot. I just know that it's used to help people remember things. Other than that, I couldn't tell you much about it.

H 10: That's correct. Hypnosis is used to help people remember things they have forgotten. It's used to help a person review material that they do remember. But let me tell you how I will use it to help you achieve your goal(s). But let me explain it this way:

You are familiar with hypnosis, although you don't realize it. Researchers say that you go through these altered states of consciousness, of brain levels, a minimum of twice per day, when you are crossing over into sleep and when you are awakening.

People generally do not understand hypnosis and thus they are wary of it. They think of it as

entertainment, magic or some mystical form of control. In reality, meditation results in the same altered state, but it doesn't conjure up the same negative images.

Let me explain it this way: the brain researchers and medical practitioners have divided the brain into four level of cycles per second activity. [1] BETA: Full consciousness, [2] ALPHA: Crossing over into sleep at night. Beginning to awakening in the morning. Hypnosis. Deep Meditation. [3] THETA: Early stages of sleep. Deep Hypnosis. Deep Meditation. [4] DELTA: Full sleep to deepest sleep.

That's it. There's no place else to go. Hypnosis can't put you into any other than these cycles per second brain-wave activity. For most people, hypnosis is a mid-Alpha range activity and although you are definitely in hypnosis, you remain fully conscious of everything that's going on around you. If someone walks into the room while you are experiencing hypnosis, you will hear them and sense their presence. Hypnosis is a matter of setting aside the conscious mind and narrowing the attention span down to one thing, just as you do when you are beginning to go to sleep at night. Do you have any questions, regarding what I've said?

C 10: No.

H 11: Good. Ok. If you'll just sit back in the chair, laying your head back against the back of the chair, focusing your eyes on my pen, as we begin. As you focus on my pen, look at the white cap, letting everything else become blurry, just letting everything else become blurry. [Pause] Very good.

Now, when your Inner Mind... the Unconscious Level of your Mind... knows... that it can... resolve... that problem you've come for... all by itself... [pause] Will you find yourself becoming more and more comfortable, more and more relaxed... [pause] as your eyes close... [pause]... [Her eyes close.]

Now, your Inner Mind, the Unconscious Level of you Mind, can continue now, all by itself, to resolve that problem you've come for, today, in a manner that fully meets all your needs. Are there memories, life experiences, or abilities, that you Inner Mind can use in ways that you've never thought of before, in trying to resolve that problem you've come for today.

#### ANALYSIS:

Before I continue, I want to try to explain what C has experienced, using Self-concept theory. This is my opinion, and my opinion, only, about how she encountered her environment and tried to deal with it the best she knew how.

As the infant interacts with her environment she gradually builds up concepts about herself, about the environment, and about herself in relation to the environment. Out of all these perceptions, both positive and negative, she develops her Self-concept. The conscious aspect of the Self [Conscious-self] acts as a filtering mechanism that protects the Self-concept from experiences that are perceived as threatening, such as introjected values. An introjected value is a value that comes from another person, and is forced upon another, which can be good or bad. In this case, it was bad/evil. Let me explain.

When C. was nearly eleven, her father began molesting her [introjecting his negative value of child molestation, telling her it was normal for a father and daughter to love each other this way.] Her Conscious-self denied this to awareness [repressing it] so that she didn't remember that it was her father who molested her.

This repeated violation of C's physical person made her angry. The anger was not part of her Self-concept; therefore, it was distorted to awareness by distorted symbolization. It was symbolized as depression. This was the only way the anger could enter conscious awareness and be part of the Self-structure.

C's father took her childhood away from her. To cope with the life he forced her to accept, she did the only thing she knew to do- withdraw into a world of depression, and at times, hyperactivity.