

Resolving the Paradox of Publicity

Henry Leo Bolduc

Occasionally I am asked about the greatest challenges in my work of helping people explore the higher realms of their minds. Most people are surprised to learn that the greatest challenges come from within, whereas my greatest rewards come from others, such as my friends, my facilitators (who assist in organizing my workshops and seminars) and other helpers. The media and the general public are also most often helpful and supportive.

Actually, I face two sets of challenges: one on a personal level, the other professionally. The most difficult personal challenge I face is the frequent and prolonged separation from my family as I travel around the world presenting workshops and seminars. Even as I write this article I am stranded "on-the-road" while a blizzard has closed most roads and airports on the entire East Coast. In such cases, hotels can become very dreary for travelers who miss the warm hearth of the home fires and the happy hearts of loved ones.

On a professional level, my biggest challenge is to develop an effective publicity and promotional strategy without falling into the extremes of self-aggrandizement or self-effacement. Most professionals, not only in our field, but in all fields in which personal services are offered, face the same dilemma. Eventually we must each evaluate our stand on this delicate issue. Which is more appropriate, to seek attention, or to keep a low profile? The answer, in the final analysis, becomes a question of one's own ideals, involvement, and integrity. Regardless of the answer, the question has a profound effect on publicity development. All professionals who offer services to others must have a means by which potential clients can locate them and find out what they have to offer. Primarily, this is made possible by listings in directories, or advertisements or both. Such promotion or publicity is an accepted and even necessary part of our world.

Like other professionals, hypnotherapists and past-life therapists offer a service to individuals, but they also serve humanity, and most would agree that it is a valuable service. However, it is sometimes difficult to assess whether promotional efforts can be effective without compromising ethical standards, and in our field, it is vitally important that these standards not be compromised.

In the early days of hypnosis, most hypnotists were vaudeville performers who were better masters of illusion and sensationalism than they were helpful professionals. Inflated egos and iron wills ruled dramatically in those days. Audacious publicity was rampant, but the "substance" of hypnotic sessions was minimal. The activities of these early hypnotists fostered a misconception in the public mind that hypnosis was a stunt, not worthy of serious consideration, and could even be dangerous.

In the current field of hypnotherapy, the substance of the work is very meaningful, but

the publicity for it is minimal, and often lacking altogether. While hypnosis has progressed to a healthier and more respectable level, public awareness of the field has diminished.

After 30 years of evaluation, I have concluded that the proper balance in advertising is determined by the focus of the publicity and the ideals of each professional. A hypnotherapist who focuses on SELF is self-centered and is not attuned to the ultimate goals of the profession. One who helps further the aims of the field helps all humanity to see a broader view of our destiny. An effective hypnotist is an effective teacher, one with the gift of forward vision.

We must constantly remain alert to maintain that proper balance between SELF-aggrandizement and SELF-effacement. The former is a hidden snare for the ego and a pitfall for the boastful and smug. An ego in constant need of inflating is a sure sign of low self-esteem. But humility can also be taken too far. Self-effacement is just as foolish an extreme as self-exaltation. If we do nothing we will fail to serve our communities through lack of exposure, which is another disappointing form of neglect. Thus, the goal is balance, achieved through rigorous self-honesty and constant evaluation of our purposes and motivations.

So, I highly recommend that you open new doors and encourage more people to take part in your work. You have a right--and a sacred responsibility--to be of help and service to humanity. Reach out to the media. Make them aware that you have a timely and important message to share. You may find that media people are often rushed, and can even seem brusque, but they are well-educated and always eager for good copy.

In your interviews and other public appearances, remember to keep a balance between self-aggrandizement and self-effacement by forgetting the "self" and speaking about the value of hypnosis for all humanity. All radio and television interviews and newspaper and magazine articles should reflect your integrity and your primary goal of teaching the importance of hypnosis as a tool for unlocking the vast potential of the mind. Your enthusiasm as you discuss important developments in the mind sciences will be of great help to your profession and to the public, whose awareness can thus be heightened.

When you teach the healing and educational benefits of the field of hypnosis, you automatically move from "self" to service. This is a "win-win" situation, and everyone gains. You are demonstrating that the message is much more important than the messenger. Humanity is ever evolving. Our field is young and we are learning more each day.

Often, after one of my public appearances, individuals will approach me privately and say, "I don't know how to explain this, but I do have a healing talent, but I'm reluctant to publicize it." Usually I will ask about their talent, and they will explain. Some have a knowledge of healing herbs, others have a therapeutic touch, others

have healing voices or a musical gift, while others have gifts of prophecy or connections with the spiritual realms.

When I ask why they haven't made their gifts available to humanity (in a world in desperate need of healing) they complain that they are afraid of being labeled "weird", or otherwise ridiculed. I remind them of the importance of using their gifts regardless of what a few critics might say. Why is it that people are afraid of one or two cynics when so much good can be given to many?

Another question that people frequently ask is, "How do we discern a true healer from a phony?" That is a good question, one that has been asked for centuries. The Master, Jesus, said, "By their fruits you will know them." This means by their accomplishments -- by what they produce -- is how we can determine the value of everyone's work. This does not imply that every healer can heal every person. However, it does give one criterion by which to recognize real healers, real teachers, real ministers, real helpers.

Sad to relate, some individuals ask for healing but refuse it when it is offered. One great healer was told in her meditations that many would come for healing, but a few would always insist on crawling away. One person even went so far as to say, "I want to get rid of the pain, but not the disfigurement, because I would lose my benefit checks." Others have a vested interest in their illnesses because it brings them sympathy and attention, or gives them a constant topic for complaint.

When Jesus suggested by their fruits would you recognize the true healers, he pointed out that even the greatest healers will have a few misses. However, the general direction of their work was beneficial to the majority. So let us refrain from expecting that healers must be perfect, because even the best medical doctors have some of their patients die.

In a nutshell, resolving the paradox of publicity can be achieved by minimizing the "self", and by focusing on the benefits of hypnosis in helping the needs of humanity. The public has a need to know, and we have an obligation to provide the knowledge about the unlimited healing potential of hypnotherapy.

Most of all, never hide your light under a bushel out of fear and uncertainty, or neglect to contribute whenever you have an opportunity. Share your learning, publish your research, reach out to your community, without egotism, but with integrity and ethical publicity. Live simply, speak kindly, and boldly proclaim your truth with the fullness of your heart.

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