

Only *The Shadow* knows....

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“Only *The Shadow* knows what evil lurks in the minds of men....” was the phrase used to introduce the radio show that had millions of attentive youngsters glued to their radio sets 50 or 60 years ago. The word ‘shadow’ implied something sinister because everyone knows that a shadow that is cast is dark in its outline of the person or object from which the shadow originates. Therefore even though the character in the radio show called ‘The Shadow’ was the hero, just hearing ‘The Shadow’ knowing what evil lurks in the minds of men sent shivers down the spines of the young listeners. It was a very clever choice of descriptive words that caught the listeners’ undivided attention, but should we write off comics, myths and fairytales as mere fantasy or just as entertainment value”? I think not, for we discover so much about human nature from the artistic works since recorded time....not just the written word but also the written characters such as the drawings of the cave dwellers. What can this shadow theme spark in us as individuals and also as hypnotists? Purely and simply, our clients bring in their shadow to our office, usually camouflaged in their persona. Do we do our work with the persona or do we attempt to acquaint our client with their ‘true self’? Do we work with the conscious mind or the unconscious mind? The answers to these first two questions are obvious, but let’s go a step further. Do we work with the unconscious mind in the state in which it was when first brought into our office or do we do something to it to make it amenable to our work, thereby making our work meaningful, and permanent? We relate to the outer world through our persona and relate to our inner world through our shadow. That which really counts is how do the ‘goings and comings’ in the outer world affect us? It is always the inner effect that has the ‘last say’ on the way we feel and the way we approach and manage life. It is always the unconscious mind and not the conscious mind that has the ‘last say’. A good farmer can answer this question and also tell us what must be done to the unconscious mind. I know that hypnotists have been called many names, like teachers, facilitators, guides, programmers but why farmers?

Long ago and far away, yet ever so near, there was a country that had quicksand on the good bottom soil of the land. The quick sand had been around for a long time and over the years the wind had blown other soil on top of the quicksand in the bottom soil creating a shallow cover, which nevertheless appeared to be solid and very sound. Most of the farmers planted their crops in the shallow top soil and although the seeds were strong and looked so good in the beginning of the planting, eventually the crops failed miserably. Season after season, there was one farm that produced splendidly abundant crops. One of the other farmers whose crops had failed began watching what the prosperous farmer did to cultivate his land. He saw the farmer bulldoze off the shallow top soil so as to take its weight off the quicksand that was in the bottom soil. With the weight off, the quicksand began working its way to the surface. The farmer extricated the quicksand and cast it to the sides. It was as if the bottom soil had given the quicksand a command to leave. Methodically the farmer examined all of the bottom soil to determine if any quicksand remained. It seemed that the quicksand came from so many different sources as it had various different sizes and shapes. He separated the bottom soil part by part until he was convinced that the bottom soil was free of the quicksand. He had a really good feeling when he looked at all of the healthy bottom soil which he knew was going to produce great crops which he would sell and he would prosper. It was as if this bottom soil were gold already even before the planting of the seeds, reaping the harvest and receiving the monetary reward for his crops. He could

sense a golden reflection that pervaded the area. When he finally planted the seeds, the soil was so receptive to the seeds that it seemed to be reaching out to receive them, and then to sort and organize the seeds in their proper places, ever so deep in the good earth. There was a smile on the farmer's lips as he visualized the sprouts beginning to grow immediately upon planting and breaking through the top soil to bloom into spectacular crops. His land was fertile, light and bright and anyone standing near it could feel the natural vibrations of health, love and serenity. He just stared at his land and imagined the land flourishing, the crops high and healthy, a truly golden harvest.

Every person at one time or another has felt the surge of unconquerable inner power. Through which well-spring does this power flow? It flows through the subconscious mind which permeates every cell, system and organ of our being. Every second of every day, the effects of the subconscious mind are realized. Dr. Carl Jung postulated that our psyche is comprised of the conscious mind, personal unconscious mind and collective unconscious which is part of the Universal Mind, God's Mind. We are born with archetypes which drive us such as the concept of nurturing mother, providing father, joy, happiness, the jokester, freedom, etc. These archetypes are form and not content and then are altered by happenings in our lives, by everything that we have witnessed through our five senses. Then our attitudes, feelings, reactions and actions are starting to take shape with the content that we receive. So the nurturing mother can become an uncaring mother, providing father become abusive, freedom become imprisonment, and then the personal unconscious stores all of this new information. If the information that has been received by the unconscious mind is 'bad', it is the dark side of the shadow, if it is 'good', it is the golden side of our shadow. This interpretation of the shadow caused the split between Dr. Sigmund Freud and Dr. Carl Jung. Freud believed that only the repressed negative stuff of our lives was contained in the shadow and Jung believed that 90% of the shadow was gold. For the sake of argument, if we hypnotists can agree that there is good and bad, dark and gold in the shadow, then we must agree that it is necessary to eliminate the bad and accentuate the good. We do this the same way that the farmer got rid of the quicksand and promoted the good bottom soil. He bulldozed the top soil (the conscious mind) and then cultivated the bottom soil (subconscious mind). When I first started working with clients I believed that it was of prime importance to determine the 'Initial Sensitizing Event' (ISE), and accordingly had the client focus on a time period when he or she believed that the cause came into existence. I would bring the person back to a time prior to the occurrence of the issue or problem and pay particular attention to what was happening at the time. I asked *"Go back in time and tell me of any happenings directly relating to the cause of your present problem"*. Then the actual responses of the clients began showing patterns. Sometimes we nailed it down, other times we did not really identify the ISE's initial circumstances. Sometimes there was one cause, other times there were a couple or more causes. Sometimes we found no real cause. Sometimes my client lied to make me believe that they found the cause. The lie was occasioned because the client wanted to cooperate in the technique so that hypnosis worked and yes, sometimes the lie even worked, as lies often have a tendency to become real. I did not realize that I was limiting the client's emotional purging, limiting the catharsis. I considered the different responses and my 'feel' for the sessions, and thought about all of the needs of the client that must be served. I began to get a global view of the client as a human being and not a local view of a client suffering weight problems, for example. I began to realize that weight, or smoking, or fears were more than their names. I began to realize that all of the person's life experiences dictated what the person was now and that they affected the issue or problem....not just one ISE but sometimes a period in a person's

life, or a lifetime of happenings caused the issue or problem and other problems that the client did not recognize. I finally realized that the shadow side of the individual had to be served without limitation. The 'dark' had to be examined and brought to the light. The client was to be permitted to talk about whatever came to mind in the relaxed state without me being judgmental of the weight to be given to any happening. I was surprised to hear of happenings which saddened or hurt the individual, such as a quick look of disapproval by a mother to her daughter, an act of a father that appeared to favor the client's brother, a dog left behind in Italy when the client immigrated to the USA, a sister that attracted more friends, etc. We tend to look for major happenings and minimize that which we categorize as small stuff. But, this small stuff adds up, building in force, something similar to a tidal wave gathering strength as it heads to shore. When the negative force is capable of overpowering the individual's resolve and wherewithal, the habits, addictions, emotional issues, phobias, fears, anger, frustration, the crummy feelings, and other personal problems begin. So what does the farmer do now in view of his increased awareness of the working of the subconscious mind of the client? He eliminates the quicksand by addressing all unpleasant, meaningful, or horrific emotional experiences and does not limit them to one ISE. The hypnotist directs the client: *"Go back in time and tell me of any meaningful happening that may be related to your weight problem, or any happening that has the power to affect the way that you think about yourself, or any happening or thought that causes you emotional distress. I would like you to tell me about them and it is good to start when you were young and work your way up. We can discuss them and I assure you that we will rid you of the negative emotions, while preserving the happening as a learning experience so that it could never happen again. (Time Line Repair) If some experience is too embarrassing you may want to assign a number to it and we can then get rid of the negative emotions"* When we have cleared the negative emotions....and sometimes this encompasses 2 or 3 sessions....we fill the spaces with the happiness and love of some past event that the client has described. This technique desensitizes the experiences, 'taking the teeth out of the tiger's mouth'. This approach takes the stress out of the individual trying to pinpoint the ISE which actually lessens the power of the ISE, if there is only one. We address so many meaningful happenings in the life of the individual thereby not only addressing the presenting problem but anything that can affect the emotional well being of the client. We clean all of the quicksand out of the bottom soil.

So now that we have taken care of the dark side of the shadow, what does the farmer do with golden side of the shadow? He discovers all of the attributes and assets of the client. I personally give my clients a list of Character Assets for the client to check off at home, add more of their own and then we discuss them the next session. I also give them a form to tell me about a time or times when they were a hero to themselves, when did the world glow for them, and who was their hero when they were young. These are the attributes that we want to promote and grow. We grow the golden shadow. These are some of the seeds that we plant. This is the programming that we do. I then select about 30+ Affirmations that are specific to the client in that they are related to the issues or meaningful on a personal level to him or her for other aspects of their lives. These are the seeds of cultivation. Some of the other seeds are my passion, my positive frame of mind, my belief in hypnosis, my belief in the client, and my belief that we are successful. They are all packaged and ready to plant. I end each session with: *"All of the suggestions that I have given you; all of the suggestions that you have given yourself, all of the images and thoughts that have come to you are planted like seeds in the garden of your subconscious mind and grow into beautiful flowers of strength, sending messages to your conscious mind of self-confidence and self esteem"*

and every thought or action is positive (adding anything to do with the issues at hand), and your subconscious thoughts, actions and reactions are ones of high self esteem and self confidence and continue to grow 24 hours a day 7 days a week. You control your emotions and feelings and the person that controls his emotions and feelings takes back complete control over her life, takes back her power. You have the power”