

Healer, shaman, facilitator

Volume 5 Issue 2 - 2017

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Commentary

“Of course it was not I who cured,” said Black Elk, the Holy man of the Ogallala Sioux. “It was the power from the outer world, and the visions and ceremonies had only made me like a hole through which the power could come to the two-leggeds. If I thought that I was doing it myself, the hole would close up and no power would come through.”

What is a healer?

Webster’s New International Concise Dictionary gives us this definition; heal (hēl) v.t.

- i. To restore to health or soundness; make well again.
- ii. To cause the cure of recovery of (a wound, injury, etc.).
- iii. To smooth over or resolve (a breach, quarrel, etc.)
- iv. To free from grief, worry, etc. –v.i.
- v. To become well or sound.
- vi. To perform a cure or cures.–heal’er n.

The word “healer” tends to bring to mind visions of all sorts of medical people such as, traditional allopathic practitioners, chiropractors, acupuncturists, reiki masters, body workers, medicine men and women (shamans), psychic healers, faith healers, witch doctor, psychotherapists, herbalists and on and on. We often feel like these individuals possess some special powers and that can be the case, but are those special powers of healing or of communication to the subconscious mind?

The term shaman is a term which has some popularity of late, but shamans have been around a long time before even written history. The term shaman is also used to describe individuals such as those mentioned in the previous paragraph, but it is more linked to tribal medicine men and women. These terms are also often used in conjunction with hypnotists (hypnotherapists) as well, and certainly shamans are making good use of hypnosis whether they realize it or not.

Is there ever a time when one person heals another person, or any other species for that matter?

When a person comes to a traditional allopathic doctor with an ailment does the doctor heal that person? If a person comes to a psychotherapist suffering from depression, or grief and leaves feeling better, did the therapist heal them?

Medical doctors clean and stitch wounds, they set bones, they perform surgery and prescribe medication, but do they heal anyone? Does a psychic healer, faith healer, or shaman actually heal?

When a medical doctor stitches a wound the doctor is not healing the wound, but merely performing a beneficial process which helps the body to heal itself. When a broken bone is set and cast the doctor is performing a service which will help to expedite the healing process.

When the doctor prescribes a medication or injects a pharmaceutical is the doctor healing the patient, or is it the medication, or none of those things?

Does a psychic, shaman, psychotherapist, or hypnotist heal anyone?

Is there any such thing as a healer and if so who is it?

Yes, there definitely is such a thing as a healer and it is the subconscious of the individual in need of healing. That is to say that it is the patient who is the healer (remember this). The subconscious and the body are one and the same. When a doctor stitches a wound this act is enabling the body (subconscious) to more easily do what it would do if the doctor never touched the wound. True we could bleed to death or die from an infection if it was not properly treated, but most likely the body would heal regardless of the physician’s intervention. The same is true when the doctor sets a bone and casts it. He is not causing the bone to mend the bone is already quite capable of that, but the doctor is simply aiding the body in doing the process more precisely. When the doctor gives an injection of antibiotic or some other substance, the doctor is not healing, but just giving the opportunity for the body to heal itself more easily.

Think of the subconscious as being in every cell of the body. When a suggestion is given to heal, given directly or indirectly, in a waking state, or formal hypnosis, the message is sent to the subconscious and thus to the entire body, triggering (encouraging) the healing process. When mommy says, let me kiss your boo-boo and make it better, her words may have a greater healing effect than a doctor’s syringe, or scalpel.

An allopathic doctor with the greatest intelligence and training becomes little more than a skilled mechanic if he/she possesses poor bedside manner. It has become more apparent just how important bedside manner is toward the practice of allopathic medicine. The reason that this is so important is the hypnosis involved. A doctor can become very well educated in how the body works and how to diagnose an issue. From there it becomes a simple matter of performing a specific surgery, prescribing a medication, or some other form of treatment. This is much the way your mechanic approaches making repairs to your car; he diagnoses the problem and replaces a faulty part, makes adjustments, or recommends sending your beloved to the giant scrap heap in the sky. As much as I hate to say this, the car does not have a subconscious and no amount of bedside manner on the part of the mechanic will likely seal a damaged cylinder. On the other hand the doctor can talk to his patient in a way that will encourage a healing response.

There is also the CYA (Cover Your Ass) hypnosis which is done by the medical profession. This also creates a healing response however, it's just the opposite of what we would like, it is more of a nocebo response. When the doctor or some other health care professional comes to us prior to a procedure and says, "This is a fairly simple procedure" and then proceeds to list twenty possible things which could be the result of the procedure which includes everything from dry mouth, to anal leakage, to suicide, or instantaneous death, the hospital, doctors and insurance companies may have been relieved of any legal responsibility for a negative outcome, but what kind of healing suggestion was given to the subconscious. If the doctor with a good bedside manner said, "You are going to do just fine. This is a simple and common procedure with very little risk," now he/she has left the subconscious to work its healing magic without sending it on a mission to ponder all of the possible negative scenarios that are left by the CYA statement.

What about psychic healers? Do people actually have the ability to focus their mental powers on someone else and cure them of anything? For the most part psychic healing is much like voodoo and other forms of hypnosis; it would be difficult to assert some healing or detrimental process on to another person without their awareness. When a psychic or other form of healing is taking place the recipient of that healing is aware of it and therefore the suggestion to the subconscious may be something like, "this person is one of the greatest healers alive and therefore I am being made whole again," as a result some miracle healing occurs. So, was it the psychic working his/her magic, or the person's own subconscious which did the healing? Are there psychic healers who can heal another, or seal the piston rings in your car without anyone else's awareness? My belief is that yes this could happen, but the word "belief" is underlined for this is very slippery slope and difficult to gain any traction on. There are psychic phenomena which do occur and seem to defy reason and at the same time resist scientific explanation, but I am going to distance myself from that topic here and stay with those things which are more easily accepted.

Getting back to the term shaman; what does it really mean to have that title? To me the term shaman is tossed around a little too freely these days. I feel that shaman is a title that may be applied toward someone by others who have known and experienced someone who is a type of healer who has gained a good deal of respect over time.

I know there are shaman training classes where a person receives a certificate that says they are a shaman, but people also took a class to get a driver's license and we all know what that means. I have heard people get up and introduce themselves in a group and the first thing they said is "I am a shaman." This could be true, but I don't think a true shaman would present themselves in that manner. When we get a certificate which has that term on it or present ourselves in that way, what part of us is it that requires that title or some other title for that matter? Well, it's the ego and in my mind we need to distance ourselves from our ego to be good hypnotists or therapists of any kind.

The term CCHt (Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist) is another title which hypnotists seem to get attached to. While the title brings forth images of medically and scientifically trained technicians working in medical and scientific labs, this is for the most part not at all the case. We offer training at our institute which focuses on clinical work and will earn someone that title. But for the most part the only thing which most possessors of the CCHt title have is a certain number of CEUs and those CEUs could be in any sort of hypnosis and may be far removed from any clinical type of work. Again it is the ego which wants this title even if it is not an accurate description of what we do or the kind of study we have done to get that title.

So what are we? More than anything we are facilitators. I know this term is mostly applied to people who work with groups and certainly we do that at least at times, but the word facilitator is the most descriptive word I can find for what we do. As a facilitator we simply are holding a space which allows the healer in the room to work the magic and that healer is our client's own subconscious mind.

Acknowledgments

None.

Conflicts of interest

Author declares there are non conflicts of interest.

Funding

None.