

Healing Alopecia Through Hypnosis*

by

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I'm Anita Bonollo, head psychologist at Genesis Medical Centre.

Genesis Medical Centre is a GP clinic that specializes in alcohol and drug abuse patients, but we also handle general medical cases.

Today I'd like to talk about Jackie ("Jackie" is not her real name!). Jackie is a young woman in her early twenties, and is a research scientist working in the health sciences.

When she first entered my room she was wearing a beanie. She told me that she had Alopecia and that she was completely bald. She took her beanie off just for a second so I could see her head and my heart went out to her. There was not one hair on her head – her scalp was white. My reaction was, "I can help her through hypnosis."

I asked her to tell me her story. She told me how it happened: She told me that 12 months before, she went to Europe. While in a hotel, one night, she got a phone call from home. While she was on the phone with one of her siblings, that person told her, "Someone has broken into the house" and then she heard yelling and then the phone went dead.

She thought that an intruder had killed her sibling. She was in shock, overseas, with no one to talk to. Two days later, she felt a dull ache under her armpits, and in the groin. She had a fever; she was short of breath, and felt anxious. She woke the next morning and she felt like her hands had stopped moving.

A few days later she went to a party and she passed out.

[By the way, she later found out that her sibling was OK and that the phone had gone dead – the sibling had no idea of her panic and had thought nothing of it].

* Proc. of the Ampersand Australia 2003 Conference, The University of Melbourne, Oct. 2003.

Then a few days after that episode, she travelled to the US to commence post-graduate studies.

1 ½ weeks later, she noticed hair loss around her hairline. Another week later, she noticed a bald patch at the back of her head. She was pulling the hair out in handfuls. Her hair continued to fall out, and, within 9 months, she was completely bald.

The dermatologist told her that she had an autoimmune disease. She went into total panic and couldn't go to school for three days. She had another blood test and she was diagnosed with Alopecia.

Eventually, she left the US and returned to Australia to be with her family. She felt depressed, emotional, and anxious. She had difficulty in breathing. Her chest felt really tight. She told me, "I want to run somewhere; I don't know where to run. I have anxiety attacks in my stomach and it's affecting my social life."

She didn't know whether to continue with her studies. She felt that her mother and her siblings weren't understanding enough. Her family thought that every time she was upset it was due to the Alopecia rather than because of the real reason – so she couldn't get through to them.

She told me that she'd been to see many doctors and specialists and that none of them had been able to cure her Alopecia.

She was saying the doctor's weren't giving her any hope; not giving her enough feedback – about what Alopecia was.

I began to treat her by normalizing her Alopecia reaction:

I did this by explaining to her that when we have a dysfunctional experience in our lives that experience becomes encoded in the memory of our cells. That memory triggers causing the physiology to release neuropeptides and other chemicals which cause us to react in a dysfunctional way: physiologically, psychologically, and emotionally.

So what needs to happen is that the cellular memory needs to be changed back to a normal state. So in order for that cellular memory to be changed, something needs to replace the chemicals that are causing the dysfunctional experience. In Jackie's case, anxiety and hair loss.

It would be ideal if we could have some kind of synthetic drug which could achieve this, but we don't!

However, I told her that her own physiology could release these chemicals and that she was born with them. These chemicals, that she was born with, give her the inner resources and strength to cope with any dysfunctional experiences that she needs to deal with. No matter how grave.

I told her that this chemical change could be achieved through hypnosis.

I gave her a metaphor: I told her the story of a man who as a young boy aged 6-10 years survived on his own, without parents or siblings, survived the Nazi concentration camps.

After the war this person was reunited with his family, came out to Australia, was successful;

He injured his back and the doctor's injected him with pethidine. Now this same man was not able to get up and have a shower; he was socially withdrawn, depressed, felt helpless and hopeless.

Because that cellular memory that he was born with, had been changed by the Pethidine.

I did hypnosis with him, and the last time I saw him, he was feeling more social; he had the energy to shower himself; and he was more motivated. His life was going back to normal.

So I told Jackie that while under hypnosis the physiology can release chemicals that cause that physiology to change back to a normal state.

I told her that I had had an 83% success rate with heroin addicts. This also means there was 17% of the population I couldn't help. From my observations, most of these people were persons who resisted the hypnosis; who didn't believe in it, or who attended the sessions but didn't want to be there - they weren't ready to give up their habit.

The most successful people were those that encompassed the idea of hypnosis and really believed that this could work for them.

I told her that in order for her physiology to go back to a normal state, those chemicals needed to be replaced on a *daily* basis. So that the

physiology could go back to a normal state without any leftover fragmented memories of the past cellular memory.

I told her that I had devised a ten day program where I would see her every day for counselling and hypnosis. This would change her physiology back to a normal state so that she can cope with the usual anxieties, like before she had the bad experience in Europe. I told her that her hair should grow back the way it was before.

At this point, I asked her to explain to me what her hair was like before the Alopecia – a posthypnotic suggestion.

She told me her hair was long and thick and black, and that she could do anything she wanted with it. I told her that with the kind of hypnosis that I do, she wasn't going to turn into a chicken and then act like a chicken. She laughed – a bit of humour to break the intensity of it all.

I told her that the hypnosis that I did was solution focussed hypnosis, which means that we focus on a solution to change the things that she wanted to change through her own free will and in a way that she felt comfortable. And that we would focus on the things that she wanted to change which would be anxiety, hair loss, and depression.

The way that we did this was that every time she came in for her session I would ask her, "What are the things that you want to change?"

During hypnosis I would make those suggestions to her so that her physiology would release chemicals which would cause those changes that needed to be changed in that cellular memory.

Then I gave her the metaphor of a colour. I told her to name a colour. She said, "The colour blue." I asked her, "When you see the colour blue what colour do you see?" and she answered "Blue." And I said, "Do you know why you see the colour blue?" She said, "No."

So I said to her, "The reason you see the colour blue is because the minute you think or say the colour blue, your physiology releases chemicals which cause you to see the colour blue. So in every session when you come here I will be asking you to tell me the things that you want to change because the minute that you speak those words, the physiology will release chemicals which will cause that change to happen."

"So, as we speak, that process has already begun."

She agreed to do the ten day program. She told me that she understood how cells worked, and the function of the physiology, and that what I had said made sense to her.

Her focus was no Alopecia, no depression, and no anxiety. To have a normal happy life, after which I went straight into the induction.

Again I repeated, “So, as we speak, that process has already begun.”

The hypnotic induction opens by helping the patient to focus on their breathing followed by guided imagery for relaxation and healing.

In the next part of the induction, I suggested to her that, “You can allow your unconscious to take you to a place where you can experience the life that you want; And in this place, you don’t know how or why you just know how you feel better; just better with clarity, vision, and focus, inner peace, comfort and happiness. And you have no depression; you’re not emotional; you have no anxiety; no *Alopecia*; and you can wash it, you can tie it; and you can wear it loose and it’s black, thick, and glossy; and you can wear it loose and you can watch it blowing in the wind.”

“And in this place, you have the job that you want and the qualifications that you need and your life is exactly the way that you want it to be and that process has already begun.”

In one part of her hypnotic induction, I suggested to her that she might begin to experience some kind of sensation in some part of her body. And when she did begin to experience that sensation in that particular part of her body, she could indicate this with her “yes finger.” Her yes finger could be any finger that she chose it to be. She indicated with her thumb.

Then I suggested to her that she could verbalize and let me know where she was experiencing that sensation. She told me that she felt a tingling sensation in her hands and that she felt a bit detached.

I said, “That’s right – just like a small soft gentle wave washing over you. From the tips of your toes to the very very tip of your head; and inside your head, spreading all the way through to your frontal lobes, prefrontal cortex, the very very core of your central nervous system; and every single cell that needs repair and restoration in that part of your brain that stops you from experiencing anxiety, depression, difficulty in breathing; and that part that repairs and restores those cells that control your hair follicles...those cells that promote hair growth”

“And I’d like to suggest that you *can* wash it, blow wave it, tie it, watch it blowing in the wind. And wear it any way that you want to. And you *can* and it feels good.”

Then there was a quiet moment so that she could continue to experience the sensation.

I suggested to her that, “You can allow your unconscious to release neuropeptides and chemicals, and do whatever it needs to do so that your unconscious can take you back to a time when your physiology, your biochemistry, your immune system, your psychological and mental state of well being and every single cell was in a state of wellbeing; without disease, infection or dysfunction. As far back as your unconscious needs to go – even prior to birth.”

“And you *can* allow your unconscious to release neuropeptides and chemicals and do whatever it needs to do so that your physiology, your biochemistry, your immune system, your psychological and mental state of well being and every single cell are reset back to that state of wellbeing; without disease, infection, or dysfunction; and that process has already begun.”

In another part of her hypnotic induction, I suggested “Whenever your unconscious detects that trigger of depression, anxiety, difficulty in breathing, or *hair loss*, your unconscious will release a hypnotic analgesia, amnesia, neuropeptides and chemicals and do whatever it needs to do to disrupt those messages from reaching your consciousness. And you won’t know how or why you’ll just know how you feel better; with clarity, vision, and focus, inner peace, comfort and happiness, inner resources and strength, positive indignation, positive energy, self-esteem and confidence.”

“You have inner resources and strength, energy and motivation to pursue all of your goals, and achieve all of your goals; and to change all of those things that you want to change through your own free will and in a way that you feel comfortable. And you have no depression, you’re not emotional; you have no anxiety; no difficulty in breathing and no tight chest and *no hair loss*. And that process has already begun.”

Then I use time distortion:

“You *can* allow your unconscious to release neuropeptides and chemicals so that your unconscious *can* go through every single experiential experience that you ever had in your entire life even prior to birth: psychological, physiological, emotional, state-dependent, or in any other way whatsoever. Leaving absolutely nothing out.”

“Every single experiential experience which has caused you to experience, anxiety, depression, anger, frustration, helplessness, or hopelessness; and every single experiential experience which has caused you to experience psychological; physiological; emotional; state-dependent memories or pain, which are dysfunctional to your present and your future;”

“every single experiential experience which has caused you to feel depressed, emotional, anxious, difficulty in breathing, tightness in the chest; every single experiential experience which has caused you to experience Alopecia and hair loss; so that at the end of those experiential experiences you will no longer experience any of those things and that process has already begun.”

The induction is brought to a close as follows:

“That’s right... healing, tingling, at the back your head, down your neck, all the way down to the base of your neck; down your spine to your lower back. Healing very single cell and you don’t know how or why you just know that you feel better with clarity vision and focus, inner peace and comfort and happiness, and that process has already begun...”

“And tomorrow morning when you awaken you *can* be surprised at how well you’ve slept and how really rested you feel with nothing to bother you and nothing to disturb you with inner peace and comfort and happiness with clarity vision and focus with no anxiety and no depression; you don’t feel emotional; you have no anxiety, no difficulty in breathing and no tightness in the chest; no *hair* loss and no Alopecia; and that process has already begun and when you come out of this session and after you awaken and you *can* be surprised at how really rested you feel; with nothing to bother you and nothing to disturb you; and that process has already begun.”

“So in a moment when I ask you to, you *can* notice how really easily you find yourself breathing; just a bit differently; as if each breath begins to feel more and more refreshing; more and more energising; that’s right deep breaths more and more refreshed; more and more energised; notice now as your eyes open how alert and awake you feel almost like you’ve just had a very restful nap.”

After the hypnotic induction, Jackie told me that she felt spaced out, relaxed and that she'd experienced a tingling sensation. She also told me that when I was guiding her through the life-that-she-wanted that she felt anxious.

After the second session induction, Jackie told me that she was feeling rested. She told me that during the induction she had experienced a tingling sensation in her lower back, upper back towards the shoulders, her left arm and in her *scalp*. She told me during the induction, "My mind wandered a lot fantasizing about the life that I wanted."

After the third session induction, she told me that she was feeling "light and fuzzy." She told me, "It's funny because of what I know of how the body works. The parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous system controls your flight-or-fight reaction. I started to feel my stomach then I needed to go to the toilet and I knew that my parasympathetic had been activated and that it was working again."

At the eighth session, Jackie told me, "Last night I woke up with a small feeling in my stomach. I went to sleep straight away. This morning I had no panic attack. I'm getting phone calls from friends organising outings. I was fine until this morning. This afternoon I felt a bit of anxiety but then it went away quickly."

On the tenth session, Jackie told me, "I'm feeling good; I'd like to go to bed. My breathing felt very calm."

On a subsequent visit, Jackie told me, "Last night I had a good sleep. I did what you said last night. I went to sleep knowing how I wanted to wake up." I asked her if she has any concerns and she said, "I want my hair to grow back!" During the hypnotic induction, I noticed that her skin was glowing. After the induction, she told me that she was good and relaxed and she said, "and I experienced my mind wandering again."

Three weeks later, she told me the changes that had happened to her, "I'm sleeping OK and feeling more calm. *Fine hair is starting to grow on my scalp*. I'm at peace."

A fortnight later, she told me that she was moving out of home with some friends and starting to work again as a research scientist: "I don't worry anymore. *My hair is growing*. It's fluffy!"

Two weeks later she told me, “I’m in control of my emotions. I don’t feel as frail anymore. My anxiety level has decreased and my *hair is growing!*”

A few months later I ran into Jackie’s mother. She said, “Thank you for giving me my daughter back. She’s very happy. Her hair’s grown back. It’s very thick. She’s returned to the US to continue her postgraduate studies.”

Last week, I rang to follow-up and I spoke with Jackie’s mother. She told me that Jackie was still in the US continuing with her studies. She told me that Jackie’s hair had grown to a healthy beautiful head of hair, and that it stayed that way for two years. She also told me that Jackie had gone to stay with some friends in Europe again, and they were staying in an apartment and one of the girls was a sleepwalker, of which Jackie had no knowledge. In the middle of the night, the sleepwalker started to scream, “Help! help!” and Jackie thought that someone was hurting her. It was a similar experience to the one that she’d had with her sibling on the phone when her hair fell out the first time. Her hair started to fall out. And one month later, her hair fell out completely. The good news is that her hair is already growing back again.

Although I haven’t seen Jackie for months, it appears that the cellular memory that changed during the hypnotic induction is still working and is causing her hair to grow back.

After your questions, I will be doing a hypnotic induction and you can remain seated to participate.

I have made a hypnotic induction CD, which I sell to my patients.

I have some CDs here for sale for those of you who are interested.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Robert McNeilly, Ampersand Australia and CET Australia, my mentor, teacher and adviser; Dr. Michael Kozminksy, Director of Genesis Medical Centre, for his encouragement, faith, and support; Dr. Michael Aufgang, Genesis Medical Centre, for his encouragement and support; and my husband, Umberto, and my son, Oscar, for their love and being there for me.

I would like to dedicate this work, with love and devotion, to my late mother, Teresa Gagliardi.

End of Presentation