



Newsletter April 2003

Featured Article by Judith L. Allen, Ph.D.

Why Are Stories Important?

By Judith L. Allen, Ph.D.

In 1794 a little 9 year old boy by the name of Jacob was about to have surgery on his foot. Think what he must have been going through, what thoughts must have been going through his young mind. Surgery back at that time, more than 200 years ago, was not the same as today. At that time, antibiotics had not been discovered, no one had learned about sterilization, and worst of all, chemical anesthesia for controlling pain had not yet been developed. How afraid he must have been!

All that could be offered to the little boy was a story to help distract him. To everyone's amazement, the young boy became so involved in the story; he did not react or flinch when the doctor began surgery on his foot. Intently listening to the story, Jacob hung on every word that was told to him as the doctor worked. As they continued with the story, Jacob did not even notice when the doctor had finished! The story had distracted him so completely, that the child showed no fear, no anxiety, and no sign of any pain.

Years later, when little Jacob had grown up, he published a story of his own. It was called Snow White. You see that little boy was Jacob Grimm of Grimm's fairy tails and he knew first hand, how extremely valuable a good story could be.

Stories have been around for thousands of years. Early, they were told around campfires, later they were told in plays and then in books. In recent history, our storytellers have told their tales on the radio, television and in the movies.

When children are listening to a bedtime story, they are enjoying what they are being told, getting sleepy and preparing for a night's slumber. However, something else is happening too. They are working out their own inner turmoil. From a simple fairy tail, children can be learning about right and wrong, and good moral choices. From these stories, children can be aided in their developmental process, by working out what kind

of person they want to be when they are grown. The story is beginning to shape their lives.

Children's stories are basic, simplistic reflections on moral values. They may have an ugly witch or a black night against a damsel in distress, depicting goodness against badness in people and situations. However, through these simple stories, in some cases only told one time, they can learn moral values, which last a lifetime.

As we get older our problems are more complex, and so are the stories that touch us. If you remember back to the last movie you watched that really touched you, you might recall being tearful at some points in the movie, possibly because you were working out some inner conflict. You might have been contemplating your own death, or the death of a parent or a loved one. Someone close to you might have died recently, and it touched you, giving you the opportunity to grieve a little more, get rid of a little more of that sadness, yet in a safe and non-threatening way – through a story.

The stories that touch our lives are metaphors for our lives. Sometimes we can see in a book or on a screen, what we could not see happening in our own lives. Sometimes we can see a display of kindness on the screen and vow to make it a part of our current life, or a show of courage that we want to have. In other cases, we can sometimes see our own shortcomings, such as our own pettiness or shallowness, bigotry or ignorance. We can see it acted out as a story on the screen. With our defenses down and our minds open, the portrayal of these stories and the messages they contain, can help us to change at that moment or over a short time. Stories can help us be who we want to be!

Judith L. Allen, Ph.D. provides online counseling through <http://AsktheInternetTherapist.com> and has worked online for six years. She resides in Weatherford, Texas and practices there with her husband who is a Licensed Social Work Associate 817-594-7003. Together they have **About Feelings: Counseling**

Featured Therapist: Terre Buck, M.A.

Terre Buck, M.A. *Counseling*



Terre is a National Certified Counselor (NCC), a Certified Addictions and Drug Counselor in the state of Illinois (CADC) as well as an Internationally Certified Alcohol and Drug Abuse and Co-Dependence Counselor through ICRC - the International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium and a Certified Hypnotherapist. She is also licensed as a Psychologist in the State of Michigan. She is a graduate of Grand Valley State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and Psychology and she obtained her Master's Degree in Counseling

Education and Counseling Psychology at Western Michigan University. With more than fifteen years of experience, Terre has worked with a variety of populations including incarcerates, sexual abuse survivors, foster children and their parents, substance abusers, battered women and men, Vietnam Era Veterans, and those clients experiencing depression, anxiety disorders, relationship problems, and adjustment disorders, co-dependence in relationships, and co-dependence in families. Terre currently divides her time between Chicago and Kalamazoo where she is doing research. At the present time Terre is only using e-mail and chat mediums.

April Contest Winner

Congratulations to Alexandra L. from Kingman, AZ. She is our April winner. Enjoy.

Featured Hypnosis Audiotape

Sleep Tape - Beach

Imagine yourself on a secluded white sand beach in total relaxation! Palm trees are swaying in a gentle breeze, and waves are rolling onto the beach in a hypnotic rhythm. Stop anxiety attacks. This hypnotic tape sleep aid uses beach guided imagery and background music from "Peaceful Pond" by Dean Evenson (BMI) (c) 1996 Soundings of The Planet, 1-800-93PEACE. By Jef Gazley, M.S. ©1998

Price: \$15.00 ea.

http://www.asktheinternettherapist.com/hypnosis_sleep_tape_beach.asp

Special Note

Be sure to utilize our **free** discussion boards. These forums are formatted by the following special topics- Hypnosis, Chemical Dependence, Co-Dependence, Parenting, Post-Traumatic-Stress-Disorder, Medical Issues, Dysfunctional Families, Attention Deficit Disorder, Relationships, Veterinary Concerns, and Depression. As you are probably aware asktheinternettherapist offers online individual paid appointment times for in depth assistance with any of our professionals. Our discussion groups however are visited from time to time by our staff and their comments to discussions or questions are provided free of charge. This is an added benefit in addition to client self-help that makes up the bulk of the discussion group traffic. Visit soon.

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begins with better Mental Health.*
Jef Gazley M.S.
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