

HYPNOSIS tackles CANCER

By Iolande Skinner

Hypnosis is helping cancer patients and even inducing spontaneous remissions. Iolande Skinner learns more from hypnotherapist Rick Collingwood.

His stories are mesmerising, his big heart is astounding and his presence radiates wisdom. Rick Collingwood, one of Australia's best-known hypnotherapists, is making a place for hypnosis in the modern world.

The number of cancer patients is increasing almost as quickly as the cancer cells themselves and throughout the world the search is on, not only for a cure but also for something to ease the pain and suffering. After recent trials on cancer patients, Rick claims that Hypnosis may be one of the answers.

Rick first came to Perth from Brisbane in 2001 after being invited to conduct a hypnosis training course. Before he left, he was asked to perform a hypnotic regression for Andrew Mallard who had been sentenced to 30 years imprisonment after being wrongly convicted for the murder of Claremont jeweller Pamela Lawrence. "I did the regression with Andrew and I knew in my heart he wasn't guilty. I remember walking out of the prison, with the Chaplain, almost shaking with rage," says Rick. It still

makes him uncomfortable to remember walking out of there feeling so helpless. Andrew was lucky to have so many good people who knew he was innocent and were going to prove it regardless. The Judges in the High Court in Canberra only took an hour or so to see that Andrew was innocent.

Soon afterwards Rick was invited to come back and conduct more training but the state government was dragging its feet on an agreement with the other state governments to deregulate the practice of hypnosis. "The WA Psychologists Registration Board was getting upset about my students using hypnosis while not being psychologists," recalls Rick. "In my opinion it was all about income protection for psychologists who are deemed to be experts at hypnosis even though their training is very academic and minimal". He believes one should let experts do what they do best - gathering and assessing statistics.

Rick had been forcing the deregulation issue in Queensland for five years before he arrived in WA. He

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wanted to admit it or not, these results surprised some of the doctors and possibly formed a stepping-stone to enhance the reputation of hypnosis. Rick does have a warning though, "I'd like to make it clear for anyone with cancer not to rush off to any hypnotherapist. These are special techniques which have thus far only been taught to a select few of my students in WA." Having witnessed the success of his techniques, he believes that hypnosis is a very powerful tool in slowing tumour growth or the spread of cancer and he does not consider it difficult.

Rick believes that 2% of cancers are caused by environmental or chemical factors, 5% is in a person's genetics and the other 93% is caused by stress and shock conflict. He relates this theory to the increase in lung cancer during the two world wars, noting that lung cancer is linked to a fear of death. "There's always an emotional connection and if you get someone and you give them a diagnosis of cancer medically, the first thing they think of is death and then their energy runs out. They go into depression, they lie in bed, and they half think themselves to death." Rick bases his shock conflict theory on the work of the much persecuted German oncologist, Ryke Geerd Hamer, who conducted a very significant study with more than 10,000 patients over 20 years.

Collingwood recommends that people who know that they have emotional scars seek help with hypnosis before it manifests as disease and affects their health. Hypnosis, he says, is a very easy way to put extreme emotions to rest and is more effective than spending years and thousands of dollars on emotional therapy. According to Rick, the

human body cures itself. Hypnosis is simply a way to access the part that knows how to do it. "If someone's got cancer or a skin complaint or something, the subconscious isn't sitting there going 'ah, this person's had a shock conflict so I'm going to give them cancer'. It's just an internal reaction to an emotional event, without the person being consciously aware."

To clarify the previous results, he is now going ahead with another cancer trial with a larger number of patients. These trials are aimed at improving quality of life and speeding up the healing process. The problem is that the hypnosis techniques used are so simple that cancer patients who have already tried every known treatment, and spent a fortune on them, may find it hard to believe that a few half hour treatments will help them. Rick enjoys working with serious illness the most. "To have someone who thinks that their life's over or they're going to live their life in misery, to see the change take place over a five week period and see the results at the end of that, even if it is only a short term thing, is pretty massive."

He believes that the sky is the limit for the cancer trials. "I think it's going to become more and more prolific in medicine as medicine keeps running out of answers. We've backed ourselves into a corner now medically and we're not making any advances."

On a final note, Rick advises anyone who wants to learn hypnosis to find a trainer that can induce a rapid induction on them. "If the trainer can't induce a rapid induction or says they don't exist then they're not a hypnotist, it's that simple."

| CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1: A 71 year old male, first diagnosed in 1994 with Prostate Cancer and secondaries in the bone. The standard medical care treatment used was Radiotherapy and the medications Androcur and Zoladex. Present medications are Zocor and Losec. At the beginning of the trial, he reported that he felt his health condition was gradually worsening.

His main presenting issues included: Insomnia, loss of appetite, physical aches and pains, constipation and fear.

His opinion of the trials: "I think this has been very worthwhile indeed, and there have definitely been significant improvements in my sleeping, much less pain and much more energy. Generally I just feel much better. I must admit that at the beginning I was a skeptic, now I am convinced there is something very valid in all of this."

Case Study 2: A 64 year old female, diagnosed with Dukes C Rectal Cancer (colon cancer) in February 2004. As a standard care procedure, she had a successful operation in March 2004. Post operative medical treatments were Chemotherapy and Radiotherapy. Present treatments are Thyroxin (not associated with cancer).

Main presenting issues included: Stress, anger,

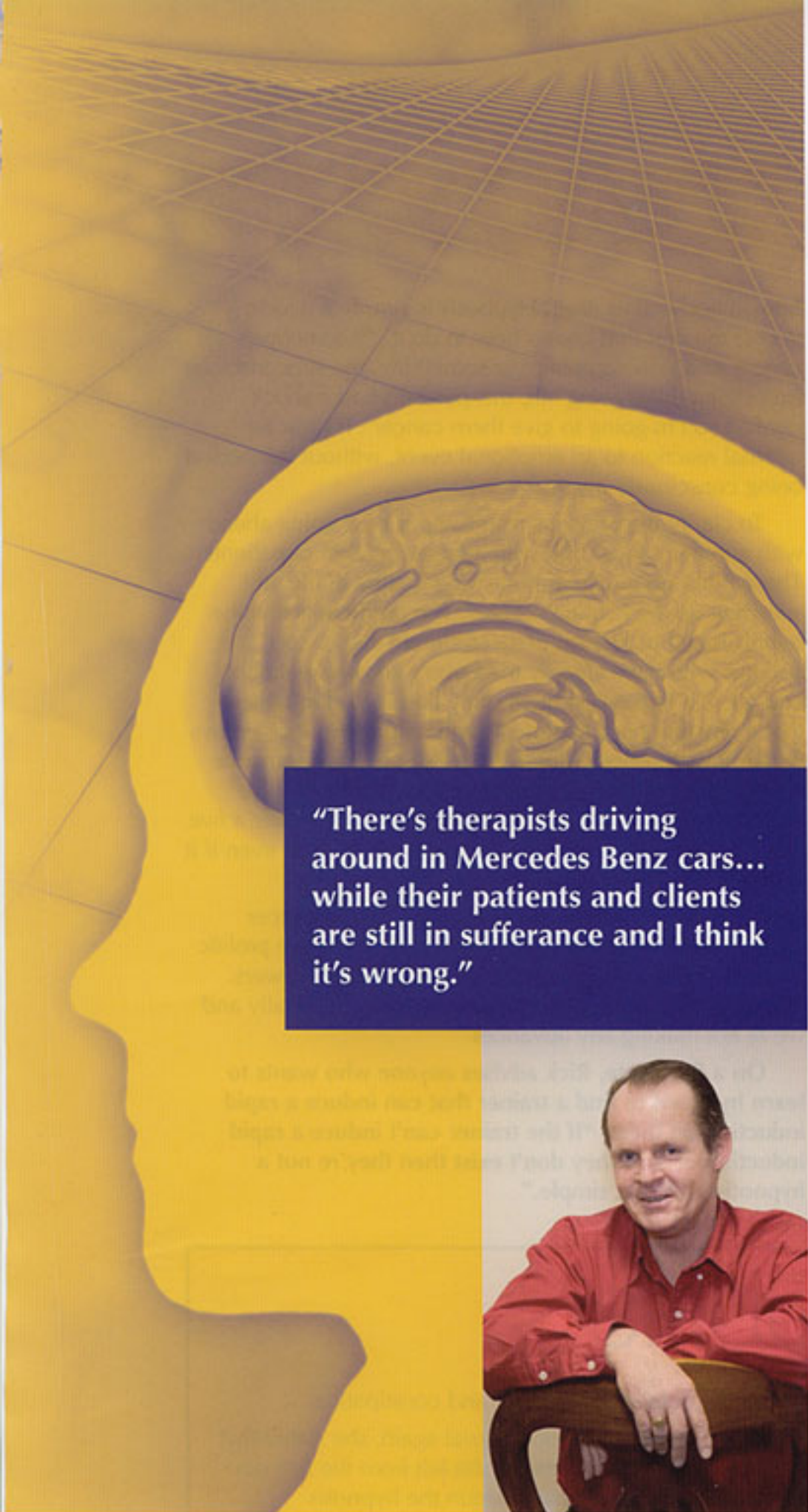
insomnia, depression, anxiety and constipation.

Asked if she would do the trial again, she stated that because of the improvements she felt from the first day of the trial, she would have begun the hypnosis treatments immediately she was diagnosed with her cancer if she had known about them at the time.

Case Study 3: A 58 year old male and a returned serviceman who served with the Australian Special Air Service combat forces during the Vietnam war and had consequently been diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder soon after returning to Australia. He was diagnosed with Cancer of the Oesophagus in January 2005. His standard care medical treatment was FEC chemotherapy. Other non medical treatments included Vitamin C injections and what were loosely termed "Some Chinese Herbal Concoction."

Main presenting issues included: Anger, insomnia, nervousness, lack of appetite, grumpiness and fear.

His opinion of the trials: "This has helped me tremendously and not only to beat the cancer. It has helped with my sleep, my moods, my anger, my PTSD, my appetite and my general outlook on life. I can't say how helpful exactly but if I had to put a figure on it I would say at least 50%." ■



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refused to back down and continued paying his solicitors. Much to his credit, when health minister Jim McGinty found out what was happening things moved along rather quickly and hypnosis was deregulated.

In between training courses Rick had begun to experiment with using hypnosis to boost the immune system and influence the Mind-Body connection. "I only worked with the very sick cancer patients. I didn't charge them at all and the results were interesting to say the least."

Ironically, Rick found his calling after attending a \$5,000 hypnosis course in 1992. After peaking in his high paying sales career, Rick went through what he calls a 'personal life shift', which forced him to take a new direction in life. He felt a desire to help people and decided to pursue an interest in hypnosis, which he has had since the age of 10. At the end of the training he walked out, looked at one of the ladies who had done the training with him and said, "when I teach this I'm going to

teach it properly." He realised that he'd learnt next to nothing. He learnt basic skills and much more effective techniques from researching old documents and theses. Rick progressed to become a hypnosis teacher, intent on coaching his students in performing it the right way.

"Everything in therapy is fine so long as it is from an honest and honourable and moral intent, that's what I teach my students," says Rick. He believes that if they take on a client and can't get to the issue within five sessions, they shouldn't be charging beyond that point. "There's a lot of what I call theft in therapy now. There are therapists driving around in Mercedes Benz cars while their patients and clients are still in sufferance and I think it's wrong," Rick adds.

Rapid induction sleep

He insists that the only true hypnotists are those who can perform a rapid trance induction. This means that the hypnotist incorporates energy transference into someone else's energy field, which results in the person being put into an immediate trance. With just a snap of the fingers and 'sleep' he can put most patients under in a couple of seconds.

Rick is often challenged by non-believers, so it's fortunate that he maintains a sense of humour. On one occasion he recalls a clinical psychologist who joined his course and revealed that she had attended a medical course on hypnosis that taught her that it's not possible to make someone do something they wouldn't normally do. Rick smiled; "Ten minutes later she was on her hands and knees, wandering around under the tables, growling at students because someone had stolen her right foot." At the end of the session, the formerly doubting woman said, 'oh, they didn't teach me everything right did they.'

These days, Rick shares his time between being a hypnotherapist, a hypnosis trainer, and a director of his CD distribution company, Resonanz Recordings. His hypnosis CD's have helped hundreds of thousands of people all over the world.

Initially most patients came to him to quit smoking and to lose weight. When he started to get requests to help cancer patients with their pain and suffering he realised that if he could get people to quit smoking then possibly he could help those with cancer. When a surprising remission occurred with one of his patients, he was prompted to further research this area and the first cancer trials with hypnosis began. In his pilot study all the volunteers who were undergoing chemotherapy treatment at the time were signed in and monitored by their doctors. His aim was purely to improve the quality of life of his patients. "It's always about improvements in the quality of life. If someone gets a remission from cancer with hypnosis, there are others that get it without as well, so it's never about saying that hypnosis can cure cancer," he says.

Spontaneous remissions

Collingwood teamed up with a pharmacist to heighten the credibility of the trials, and began to see astonishing results. The majority of people got a 100% reduction in pain and nausea, 80% reduction in depression, 72% increase in energy levels, 65% return in appetite and an 82% increase in the general quality of life. There were three remissions in the group as well. Whether they