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CLEAR THINKING

from Uncommon Knowledge

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In this month's Clear Thinking...

1: Master Series: Metaphor

2: Article: Pernicious Praise

3: Inspiring Quote: How to act

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Hello

The winds of change are blowing, whichever way you turn. And we're planning exciting new changes at Clear Thinking (got to keep with the beat)!

This time next month, you'll be getting the new look Clear Thinking – brighter and smarter! Clear Thinking will bring you a highly concentrated monthly dose of pure practical psychological know-how you can read in less than a minute - and put to use straight away. Watch this space.

You'll still be the first to hear of our upcoming online training programmes, so get ahead of the queue for early bird discounts. Speaking of which...

*** 25% off when you book Precision Hypnosis today ***

Precision Hypnosis, our top notch course in advanced hypnosis for people who already experienced in hypnotherapy, NLP, psychotherapy and related disciplines, kicks off again on 26 May, and you can claim the Early Bird discount right up until 5 May.

But get cracking, this popular course books up really quickly.

You can sign up here:

<http://www.uncommon-knowledge.co.uk/training/online/precision-hypnosis.html>

*** 25% off when you book Rewind Technique today ***

And the same deal is on offer to anyone booking for the indispensable Rewind Technique course, starting again on 4 June. Our Early Bird offer stands till 14 May. No serious therapist can afford to be without the knowledge and skills offered by the Rewind Technique to enable them to deal with the aftermath of trauma or the life limiting effects of severe phobia.

Book your place now on:

<http://www.uncommon-knowledge.co.uk/training/online/rewind-technique.html>

And, as this is our last 'old format' Clear Thinking, we're finishing up with two stonking articles for you. (We trust non-UK subscribers are familiar with the adjective 'stonking' - perhaps you can guess what it means?) The latest instalment in our Master Series on Hypnosis is a cracking insight into the power of metaphor which will really get you thinking about how you can use language to bring about change. And we're following that with a fascinating look at the dangers of using the 'wrong' language. You'll be watching your tongue after this!

Can't wait for next month!

Enjoy Clear Thinking!

Roger Elliott & Mark Tyrrell
Uncommon Knowledge LLP

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1: Master Series: Metaphor

A woman called me to tell me that her twelve year old son was willing to come and see me for bed wetting but he was very reluctant.

He had been dragged from one psychologist to another, through counselors and hypnotherapists. He'd even seen a faith healer and he was sick and tired of the humiliating experience of discussing his bed wetting with a bunch of well-meaning strangers. So I was his last resort, and he would see me only on condition we didn't talk about – or even mention – his bed wetting.

An interesting challenge!

But of course the lad did want a solution. All I had to do was to meet him and find out what interested him. Then I should be able to mold his interests into a 'parallel pattern' that provided a solution – in other words, a metaphor. This would hopefully prevent his conscious mind from rejecting too obvious an intervention.

So the mother brought him along and she stayed in the room with us to ensure the boy wasn't upset by any direct reference I might make to bed wetting. The lad (we'll call him James) was friendly, and I asked him what he enjoyed doing. He told me he loved playing cricket. He also told me that he was a great bowler and could often bowl out other boys. We talked about many things and then I began to discuss cricket again.

I said to James:

"You know, James, it's a curious thing the way the mind works, and it's curious also how the body works. Once upon a time bowling was totally new to you and you had to learn how to do it... and now the tiny muscles in your hand know exactly when to let go... of the ball... they don't let go when you're running up to the stumps... they just know... all by themselves... without you having to think about it too much... exactly when to let go... just at the right time... and it's great that you... can trust your unconscious mind to let go at just the right time..."

Now this may sound rather an obvious use of metaphor to you – matching the pattern of 'letting go of a cricket ball' and 'letting go of urine' and suggesting this could happen at the right time and that he could

trust his mind to do this for him. But bear in mind, this conversation was embedded within lots of other apparently small talk with him and his mother. When I spoke to him about the unconscious mind's capacity to know when to let go at exactly the right time, I slowed my voice, speaking more softly, and I noticed that his eyes glazed over somewhat – a part of him knew exactly what I was talking about, although his mother – and his conscious mind, I'm sure – did not.

Read the rest of this essay online at

<http://www.uncommon-knowledge.co.uk/articles/uncommon-hypnosis/power-of-metaphor.html>

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2: Article: Pernicious Praise

In the United Kingdom, the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) pays young people up to £30 a week just for attending classes.

Not for passing exams.

Not for learning.

Just for turning up.

Many teachers have reported more disruption in classes, as a number of recipients of the EMA seem to believe it's enough just to be there, and don't appear to feel under any obligation to learn anything while they are there. Some even feel quite justified in trying to claim their 'entitlement' even when they don't turn up. I kid you not.

From time to time the UK government proffer ideas about financial incentives to encourage members of the public to adopt behaviors deemed to be 'beneficial' in some way – for example, getting obese people to exercise. Such notions are well-intentioned, of course, but show a fundamental lack of understanding of human nature.

I think there are very real dangers in rewarding people for what they should be doing anyway.

Look at it the other way round. Imagine a self-harmer, maybe a self-cutter, or a smoker. Now if this self-harmer starts to resist the pull of the self-destructive behavior, this would, of course, be an excellent thing, and we should both support and encourage that person in their efforts. But if you try to encourage them by showering them with excessive praise for not doing what they shouldn't be doing, this 'encouragement' carries a malign subtext.

Essentially, it says:

"What you are doing (not self harming) is very difficult, and therefore extraordinary, and by extension it would be more ordinary, and therefore normal, to just go back to the self harm..."

Which is depressingly frequently the result we see.

When someone stops smoking, the 'message' I really want them to get is:

"Excellent! This is how it should be. Let's move on."

<http://www.panic-attacks.co.uk/>

<http://www.clinical-depression.co.uk/>

<http://www.uncommon-knowledge.co.uk/>

<http://www.uncommonforum.com/>

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