

Agoraphobia

At home for 35 years!

I received a phone call from a gentleman who enquired whether hypnotherapy could help his wife with her illness. He explained that his wife hadn't been outside their home for the past 35 years, and had been diagnosed as an agoraphobic. I suggested that we set up an appointment for a consultation the following week. This was agreed upon and a date was arranged. As agoraphobia is a neurotic illness, it is usual for the therapist to conduct the first couple of sessions at the client's home, for obvious reasons because of the very nature of the illness.

As agreed, the following week I attended the consultation. I was welcomed by Alf who introduced me to his wife, Gwen; she appeared quite nervous, which didn't surprise me as this is a normal reaction. During the consultation, Gwen gave me a very clear insight into her past. I then gave an insight into the workings of the subconscious mind to both Alf and Gwen, how hypnotherapy works and how it would work for them. I explained that it would probably take up to eight sessions, and that these sessions would be hourly and conducted weekly. Gwen, now an enthusiastic 65-year-old lady, was eager to go ahead with therapy immediately and Alf was keenly in agreement. It was agreed that during the therapy sessions Alf would sit in another room; this was at Gwen's request. I went ahead and induced hypnosis, then encouraged Gwen to speak to me about her life –how the fear of going out had affected her life over the past 35 years, what she had been deprived of, and the things she could have done had she not had this fear. Although this seemed to be asking the obvious, the aim of the exercise was to alert the subconscious of the life that Gwen had been deprived of. Recalling your deprivation can be an emotional event and I wanted to provoke this, as it encourages the subconscious to focus in on the cause of the fear.