
Self-hypnosis eases asthma

For the past eight years, Gordon Forsyth of Toronto has dreaded the recurring asthma attacks that land him in hospital emergency rooms struggling for breath.

The 28-year-old machinist recently began hypnotherapy treatments. Forsyth says that since learning self-hypnosis, when he now picks up warning signals of an impending asthma attack he can relax himself so well that the spasm usually subsides.

Sleepwalking, headache cure

Christopher Keeler is a bright, happy ten-year-old who, out of the blue, began sleepwalking. To compound the problem, he got severe headaches.

When medication prescribed by the family physician failed to stop the sleepwalking, his mother Linda suggested hypnosis. It had helped her lose weight and ease her arthritis.

Chris said he was afraid to try it at first, but then he got used to it.

"I'd find a picture of a box in my head and it would have a whole bunch of buttons on it. They are different colours and I push each one to make different parts of my body go limp. In 15 minutes I'd feel completely relaxed."

His sleepwalking ended almost immediately. And when he feels a headache coming on, he excuses himself from class, lies down in the nurse's office, pushes those imaginary buttons and the pain disappears in a few minutes.

Christopher's example is not unusual. People are turning to hypnosis to stop everything from bedwetting to nail-biting, reduce tension that triggers an ulcer or overcome a phobia.

Dr. Jeva Lougheed, chairman of the Ontario Medical Association's section on clinical hypnosis, is an anesthetist who began doing hypnotherapy exclusively three years ago.

She likes to tell about the time a surgeon asked her during an operation to tell the patient on the table to reduce the amount of bleeding:

"The surgeon turned to the resident and said 'Don't laugh, it really works.' So I peeked under the drapes and said 'Mary will you please cut down on the bleeding where they are operating.'" The patient's compliance was the talk of the surgical staff the next day.

Skaters compete internationally

The Canadian Figure Skating Association has decided to enter skaters in the Rotary Watches competition, a new international event, in England this October.

Brian Pockar of Calgary, the Canadian figure skating champion, and Kay Thompson of Toronto, the Canadian junior ladies champion, will represent Canada along with couples in the pair and dance events.

The association also announced its intention to send a larger contingent to Moscow Skate than it had last year and to send skaters to the Flaming Leaves competition, a one-shot pre-Olympic event at Lake Placid, New York, the site of the 1980 Winter Olympics.

The Canadian senior women's champion, Janet Morrissey of Ottawa, will test the new Olympic facilities at the Flaming Leaves event in September and will also represent Canada at the Richmond Trophy competition in England in November.

Spinal cord transplants in chickens

Scientists at Hamilton's McMaster University who have succeeded in transplanting a healthy spinal cord into a chicken, hope the feat will further research into muscular dystrophy.

After six years of research, Dr. Michel Rathbone, associate professor of neurosciences, and his colleagues transplanted the spinal cord into a genetically dystrophic chicken.

Two chicken embryos — one genetically normal and the other genetically dystrophic — underwent the delicate spinal cord transplants only two weeks after fertilization, when each was about the size of a small fingernail.

They were given new embryonic spinal cords, known as neural tubes. Both survived the surgical trauma and hatched — believed to be the first time in medical science — and now are scampering around Dr. Rathbone's laboratory.

The genetically dystrophic chicken with the normal spinal cord, now almost three months old, is able to get up when placed on its back, something a dystrophic bird is usually unable to do after the age of eight weeks.

No one is exactly sure what causes muscular dystrophy, a muscle-destroying

disease that usually begins in childhood or adolescence and progresses over five to 20 years or longer.

Dr. Rathbone said the primary question he and his associates were trying to answer was whether the development of muscular dystrophy was due solely to abnormalities in the muscles or whether it was affected by the embryonic spinal cord.

If the muscles of the dystrophic chicken with the normal transplanted spinal cord prove to be normal, this would indicate that the spinal cord determines whether muscles will develop normal or dystrophic characteristics.

One location for Canadian Government offices in Paris

The Canadian Government is to centralize and expand its Paris offices, officials have announced. Similar plans now are also under way in Washington and Tokyo.

The process is part of a general External Affairs Department policy to centralize services in major cities abroad, embassy officials said.

Centralization should mean increased efficiency and more convenience for the general public. At present, federal offices for immigration, tourism, visas, press information, exhibitions and other services are at four locations in Paris, as well as the embassy.

Those services are to be located at the embassy's Avenue Montaigne address, near the Champs Élysées, leaving only the five-storey Canadian Cultural Centre and the National Film Board with separate offices.

To regroup, the Canadian Government two years ago purchased two buildings at a cost of about \$7 million.

"It is one of the best addresses in Paris," said Jean Heckly, the French architect who is supervising the \$5.5-million renovation work to the 100-year-old buildings.

Renovations to the buildings, which began last month, are to be completed in two years, officials said. Plans include improvements to the embassy's security system.

With the new buildings, the Canadian Government will have about 5,000 square feet of office space in the heart of Paris for its 200 employees — about 10 per cent more space than it has at present.