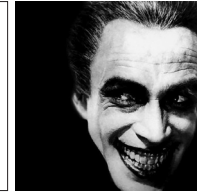


Garvarn's Blog



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Look Into My Eyes, Look Into My Eyes...

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Let's say, hypothetically, that you suffer from skin disorder, anorexia, bulimia, obsessive compulsive disorder, obsessional neurosis, post traumatic stress disorder, asthma, allergy, tinnitus, migraine, depression, phobia, or anxiety. Or perhaps you want to quit smoking, ejaculate later rather than sooner, or stop sucking your thumb. If you had one or more of these health-care problems and wanted to get rid of it or them, would you call Jörgen Sundvall or Zoe D. Katze?

You probably don't know anything about them, but let me assure you that they both have documented qualifications to treat your problem or disorder. Jörgen Sundvall holds diplomas in hypnotherapy from both HCB in England and ISEAH in Ireland. He's also a member of both the International Association of Hypnoanalysts and the Irish Association of Hypnoanalysts. Zoe D. Katze on the other hand, is a psychotherapy Diplomate in the American Psychotherapy Association and has been certified as a hypnotherapist by the American Board of Hypnotherapy, the International Medical and Dental Hypnotherapy Association, and the National Guild of Hypnotists. Does this information make your choice easier? Both Sundvall and Katze have impressive credentials, but you may be leaning towards Katze. In comparison, she appears to have a more solid background, being certified and all. She holds a Ph.D., a C.Ht., and a DAPA. Very impressive indeed.

But what if I told you that Zoe D. Katze is a cat? And I mean it literally - Zoe D. Katze is a *felis silvestris catus*, a furry animal that has long tail, sharp claws and often is kept as a pet. However, there is nothing wrong with Zoe's credentials, they are all issued in her name, and she is listed as a practitioner in therapist registries. When a reporter found "Dr. Zoe D. Katze" in such a registry and called her to get her opinion on hypnosis in childbirthing, Zoe's owner, Steve K. D. Eichel, felt compelled to disclose the trick he had played on some organisations he considered a bit too generous when handing out credentials. I won't give you the whole Zoe story here, but I urge you to take the time and read it at http://www.dreichel.com/Articles/Dr_Zoe.htm.

By now, you probably have made your mind up. Let's face it, credentials aside, Jörgen Sundvall is at least *homo sapiens!* Surely, you would prefer being treated by a human rather than a household pet!? But before you make your final decision, let me tell you about Jörgen Sundvall.

First, let's check his credentials. A diploma from HCB - what does it represent? HCB stands for Hypnotherapy Control Board. However, when you visit <http://www.hypnotherapy-control-board.org>, you soon realize that it isn't a "board" at all and it doesn't "control" anything. HCB is actually the Successful Hypnotherapy Diploma Course. But when you visit <http://www.successfulhypnotherapy.com>, you arrive at the International Association of Pure Hypnoanalysts, IAPH. Confusing, isn't it? Well, if we ignore the name juggling we find that this is a course, and an association that is comprised of people who have completed the course. So when you finish the Successful Hypnotherapy Diploma Course, you get a HCB diploma and a IAPH membership. Two credentials in one. Why? Simply because two merits look better than one. And to the lay person, "International Association of Pure Hypnoanalysts" sounds just like an organisation of independent professionals, formed to manifest professional practice and code of ethics - a sort of health-care professional's guarantee. But in this case, it only manifests that the members have completed a course.

So what profound education is necessary to achieve these impressive titles? What kind of hard studies have Jörgen Sundvall undertaken and what qualifications did he have in order to enrol?

To become qualified to treat phobias, compulsive disorders, neurosis and depressions, Jörgen Sundvall bought a 20 lecture CD course. That's right, the Successful Hypnotherapy Diploma Course is a home-study course. But surely, since hypnosis is just a therapeutic tool, Jörgen Sundvall must have had some professional health-care experience? No, he had none, and it was not required. This home-study course "is very thorough and covers all aspects of hypnosis, psychology and hypnotherapy" so you don't have to have any

knowledge whatsoever prior to enrolling. And to think that I spent five months of full time university studies to finish an introductory psychology course, which doesn't make me qualified to give treatment of any kind to anyone! I could have paid £1,495 and studied in the comfort of my home. And besides all aspects of psychology, I would have learned hypnosis and hypnotherapy as well -- and become qualified to treat premature ejaculation and frigidity! What a bummer... I would have had a clinic up and running by now, just like Jörgen Sundvall (http://www.sseah.se/index_eng.htm).

People like Jörgen Sundvall, "institutions" and bogus credentials as the ones mentioned above, are the reason why real health-care professionals with real education and background issue warnings like these:

"In most cities, the Yellow Pages of the telephone book carry a listing of 'Hypnotists' or 'Hypnotherapy'. While this should make finding an appropriately trained clinician of hypnosis relatively easy, in fact, it does not. In these pages, professionals in Medicine, Psychiatry, Psychology, and Social Work are lumped together with individuals who have no such formal training -- that is, with what are called lay hypnotists. [...] A further difficulty in finding a properly qualified clinician who is trained in hypnotic procedures is that many of the lay hypnotists confer upon themselves and each other official sounding names, titles and letters after their names; some even designate themselves as 'Doctor', or 'Professor.' These letterings after the name and pseudo-titles imply a legitimacy that, usually, does not exist. The Bulgarian Institute of Hypnosis or the Norwegian College of Hypnotherapists, for instance, could be the name of a legitimate professional practice, but it could, as equally, be the name of a lay hypnosis organization." (Perry)

"It is time that the general public be informed that there is no such person as a 'qualified hypnotherapist', and claims of degrees in this speciality exist only in the fantasies of the so-called 'therapist'. No properly recognised degrees in hypnosis are issued anywhere in the world." (David Waxman, 1984, quoted by Wheeler, 2008)

"Whether your training costs you two hundred pounds or nearer twenty thousand pounds makes no difference: the certificate or hypnotherapy qualifications you will receive are only worth the value of the sheet of paper it is printed on. The reason for that is because there is no one governing body controlling the system." (Wheeler, 2008)

"In Britain anybody can be regarded as a psychotherapist, and there are many 'hypnotherapists'. We strongly believe that hypnosis is not a therapy in its own right, and should only be used alongside standard psychological treatment by a suitably qualified professional." (Whalley, 2008)

In Sweden, where Sundvall is operating his Swedish School of Ethical and Analytical Hypnotherapy, use of hypnosis in clinical practice is regulated by law (LYHS, 1998:531). It clearly states that anyone that lacks professional training controlled and authorized by the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare is forbidden to examine or provide treatment with the use of hypnosis. Examining and treating with the use of hypnosis is exactly what Jörgen Sundvall is doing. Do you think that the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare has approved the Successful Hypnotherapy Diploma Course? Neither do I. But the people that should be on the lookout for the likes of Jörgen Sundvall, the Swedish Society for Clinical Hypnosis, are busy lobbying against stage hypnotism (Lindahl, 2005), so they don't have time to bother with a self-proclaimed health-care practitioner who treats real health problems with amateur methods and bogus credentials. It's better to focus attention on hypnotists

who make people behave silly on stage for entertainment. And Jörgen Sundvall is sort of a peer, although he prefers to associate himself with New Age riff-raff like Jörgen "Cry Baby" Gustafsson, renowned psychic and charlatan.

So, by now you know that Zoe D. Katze is a cat and that Jörgen Sundvall's diplomas are worth nothing more than the paper they are written on, and that he probably is breaking Swedish law. So who would you choose? Zoe? Come on, it's a cat! Even if Jörgen Sundvall is a total fraud, at least he is human. And he looks nice. Even if he is a con artist, it must be better to have a conversation with a nice-looking person than a cat? But wait, there's more to Jörgen Sundvall than the above.

Do you know Vegavan Das? No? It's Jörgen Sundvall. Vegavan Das was the name he chose for himself when he joined the Hare Krishna, or ISKCON. In fact, Sundvall was instrumental in introducing Hare Krishna in Sweden back in 1973. Although he nowadays claims to be a passive member only (Essén, 2008), he is still listed as a guru and leader (www.krishna-das.com) and holds seminars on international krishna gatherings (Radhadesh, 2006). For a passive member, Jörgen Sundvall is very active. And respected among the krishna members, almost a legend.

So how involved has Sundvall been in the systematic child abuse in the Hare Krishna movement? The sexual child molesting aside, there is the child labor, the systematic malnutrition, the disintegration of families, the concentration camp conditions at the movement's schools for children, the kuru-gulas, that were aimed at keeping the children as far away from the parents as possible (Essén, 2008). Did Jörgen Sundvall look the other way or did he take active part in it? To me, both alternatives disqualify him from coming anywhere near my children and the fact that his religious beliefs, as dictated by the founder Prabhupada, states that women are inferior to men (Essén, 2008) probably makes me want to keep my wife away from him too.

So now, finally, would you choose Jörgen Sundvall or Zoe D. Katze?

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Comments:

zooey said...

Tough question. I think Sundvall needs to be chased and exterminated (metaphorically) and my dog says cats always deserve to be chased and exfuminated (literally, he says, but I doubt he's honest, because it would end the fun of the chase!!).

As a therapist, though, we both agree that the cat seems to be the better choice! Petting a cat is therapeutic for a human (perhaps almost sleep-inducing?) and chasing a cat is therapeutic to a terrier (and he says he will be tired after).
/The human animal lover and the canine cat-exfurminator
July 12, 2008 12:26 AM

Anonymous said...

Comment from the Swedish Society of Clinical Hypnosis, the professional Society for Hypnosis in Sweden.

Thank You for an enlightening article! You write that we only bother to stop stage hypnosis, but that is wrong.

We actually have tried to stop Sundvall and his students, both by personal contacts and towards the National Board of Health and Welfare. But the NBHW lets its lawyer inform Sundvall and other lay hypnotherapists that the law can't reach them as long as they do not claim to investigate or treat patients. Guess what Sundvalls reply is. Of course, they do not investigate, diagnose or treat patients, they only teach people how to hypnotize themselves and they give them a hypnotic experience. We claim that people expect to receive treatment, they believe that they receive professional clinical hypnotherapy and they are actually badly misinformed.

Susanna Carolusson
president sscH
www.hypnosforeningen.se
July 12, 2008 3:16 PM

Garvarn said...

Dear Susanna, thank you for your comment. I apologize for presuming that the sscH ignores Sundvall and other self-proclaimed lay "therapists", and it's comforting to know that you don't. However, I think it would be beneficial to the public if you expressed your position in this matter in a less discrete way. It is my firm belief that people like Sundvall are able to feed of gullibility only because the professionals keep quiet. In this perspective, I think that you are tending too much to stage hypnosis and too little to charlatans like Sundvall.

Best regards,
Garvarn
July 12, 2008 4:04 PM

Anonymous said...

It's interesting you find there actually are professionals involved in hypnotism, since you don't believe in the actual phenomena yourself. Or is it the "treatment" given during hypnosis you are attacking?

July 13, 2008 7:35 AM

Garvarn said...

Why is that interesting - don't you consider medical doctors, psychiatrists and psychologists health-care professionals? Hypnosis is a therapeutic tool, one among others. And where did you get the idea that I don't believe in hypnosis? I do, but my perspective is cognitive-behavioral rather than special process, i.e. the hypnotic state is role enactment rather than an altered state of consciousness.

I am attacking Jörgen Sundvall, a health-care amateur who took a home-study course in hypnosis and opens a health-care clinic. Listening to some CDs and sending in an "exam" by mail does not make you competent and skilled enough to treat people with psychological or physiological problems and disorders. But Sundvall pretends it does.

That's why he is a charlatan.
Best regards,
Garvarn
July 13, 2008 11:26 AM

Anonymous said...

Typical... People who are jealous always have to attack other people. Have you ever visit Jörgen? Do you now how he works? Then you should now that he is good with what he does. Education is 'nt everything.
January 24, 2009 8:41 PM

tothsoma said...

Hi everybody!

I've just heard from my friend, that Jorgen Sundvall has some kind of MA degree in psychology os something like this.

Do you know about it?
March 31, 2009 5:52 PM

tothsoma said...

Actually to treat anything with past life regression means to show the cause of that problem in the past lives. Thats all. That has a great therapic effect in itself. If somebody is professional in psychology he/she can go forward. But that is a fact better to do any treatment with academic background.

Apropo. Dou you have personal experiance with Sundvall?
March 31, 2009 7:48 PM

Mikael Sjödin said...

Garvarn, it's interesting that you seem to know so much about Jörgen Sundvall.

However, you make false statements about him also. You say that Vegavan Dasa was the name he chose for himself when he joined the Hare Krishna movement. This is completely untrue.

So why should I believe you more than him?
April 28, 2009 3:38 PM

Garvarn said...

Tothsoma, Sundvall doesn't have any professional training in any field of health-care whatsoever. Although I have noticed that Sundvall is sometimes presented with the title "psychologist" in contexts where it is considered safe to add some extra imaginary weight to his credentials.

Past life regression is a scam, plain and simple. To use it in therapy is to engage in fraud.

And no, I have not had any personal experience with Sundvall. Nor with Charles Manson, David Koresh, Jim Jones or any other prominent New Age character. It doesn't mean I have to restrain myself from commenting on any of them.

Mikael, perhaps because Sundvall is selling make-believe treatments and I'm not? In any case, I notice that you are heavily into make-believe yourself so I'll just leave it at that.

April 30, 2009 1:08 PM