

IN REGARD TO "SOMETIMES"

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A few years ago, when participating in a class on Ericksonian Hypnosis, I was struck by the poetry of the words in a good trance induction. That, when intoned with close attention to the meaning and sound of the words, the phrasing and the intentional ambiguities, the words that were spoken were like poetry to me. This excited me because I'd always loved poetry but never felt able to create it myself.

I began to use snippets of poems I knew, like from e.e.cummings, in trance inductions I used with clients and got wonderful results.

Then I was introduced to the poetry of David Whyte while on a personal journey of my own. The first thing I ever heard of his was a tape recording of an interview David gave called "The Power and Place of Poetry" wherein he says, "the poet is a person who tries to say 'it' whatever 'it' is and any one time." (How perfect! How very much exactly what an Ericksonian hypnotist is trying to do.) He describes how poetry, like James Hillman's philosophy about modern psychotherapy, brings a more mythological perspective to the human experience as opposed to the more "finding-out-what's-broken" of traditional therapy. (How very similar to Erickson's utilization principle)

In this same interview, while talking about the human need to connect with our soul, he talks about taking poetry into the business world. I was amazed he was able to really find a connection to soul in what some regard as the most soul-less of places, the modern business corporation. In the course of his talk David would recite one of his or someone else's poems – he seems to have countless poems memorized – and I was again amazed, this time at his style of reciting. He would often repeat lines or whole sections of the poem before continuing on in the poem, calling the listener's attention to the beauty of the words and the imagery and feelings they evoked.

Since then I have read and reread the poetry of David Whyte hundreds of times, privately and in classes that I've taught. I always find myself taken in by the depth and the beauty of his work.

I am honored to have the poem "SOMETIMES" contributed to our web site by David Whyte. I invite you to read it, be moved by it, or not. Reread it in whole and in part, and to explore the beautiful and wonderful world of his work. You can find much more of it at his web site, www.manyrivers.com.