

# Julie Silverthorn

## TRAINING TRANCES

Melody Cheal takes time off from Trainers Training in Arizona to interview Julie Silverthorn, NLP Master Trainer, Author and Seeker.



**I was inspired to kick it up a notch!**

**M:** Thank you for agreeing to speak with me today. Perhaps we can start by finding out what drew you to NLP and Hypnotherapy.

**J:** Well I think I'm a seeker. I've always been searching for the answers to the purpose of life and how to help people.

They say your values are based on what was happening in the world when you were 10 years old and I was 10 years old in 1968. We had the Vietnam war and the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy here in America. I saw the peace marches and demonstrations for some reason I was always motivated to help people. After graduation I almost went into the Peace Corps but instead decided to go on for a graduate degree in Psychology.

One day in the late 1970's, while in my degree program, I received the "Structure of Magic I" in the mailbox! They say there are no coincidences. As I looked through it I remember thinking, "Oh God, this is really not me." It seemed like I was back in English class so I didn't really connect with it kinaesthetically. So I put it away to collect dust in my bookshelf.

Later I became a family therapist and was trained by the father of Structural Family Therapy, Salvador Minchin and his associates at

Philadelphia Child Guidance. I was about 22 or 23 years old and it was my first connection with a world class therapist who was also a genius like Milton Erickson. Needless to say I was inspired to kick it up a notch! At the same time, my colleagues were going off to NLP seminars and they told me about doing embedded commands and I'm like, "Just because you do an embedded command doesn't mean people are going to change, are they (tag question)?" So once again I had a brush with NLP and rejected it.

While still a family therapist and always searching for more, I attended a Hypnosis training with the Israeli hypnoterapist, Aamnon Nadav. This was in 1982 or 1983 and it's where we got the idea for the "that's right" exercise. As quickly as I rejected NLP, is as quickly as I fell in love with Hypnosis. I was so excited to be Mr. Nadav's first demo subject that weekend. You see I'm pretty much open-minded and fearless about doing or learning new things. After the weekend when I wanted to learn more about hypnosis, we located a trainer near Washington DC and started taking his hypnosis trainings. As the universe would have it, he was an NLP trainer also. So here was that NLP stuff again and I guess the 3rd time was the charm!

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**M:** Why did you decide to write *Training Trances*?

**J:** As a Master Trainer of NLP, I felt that I wanted that certification to be more than a title and I felt that the best way for me to recognize myself as a Master Trainer was by making a contribution to the field. So John Overdurf, my partner at the time asked Dr. Wyatt Woodsmall for some advice. He responded by saying, "Well there's so much material of Erickson's that really hasn't been unearthed or unpacked so go to Erickson's original work, look at it, model it, understand it and write a book on it." Because hypnosis was my first love that was easy to do and I hope we achieved our goal of creating an easy reading book which explained hypnosis consciously and demonstrated it unconsciously. We believe it is important to teach both to the conscious and the unconscious mind--that each deserves equal respect.

**M:** How does this tie in to your approach to teaching?

**J:** I think my approach to teaching is to de-mystify things. I never really grew up thinking I would be a teacher or a trainer but that's what I've been called to do. I've been gifted with the ability to explain things in a chunk size or detail level that people can easily understand. So my job is to empower people by transferring those learnings so they have a greater understanding.

Then the second part of my approach to teaching is to provide the optimal learning environment which is where trance and positive suggestions come into play. I really believe in each and every participant and the power of their unconscious mind. I am inspired to provide as much unconditional support and unconditional love as possible. This is how people really grow. Fortunately I think I've always been gifted with the ability to believe in people and really love them. I can always find at



least one thing in the way they are that makes them endearing to me. I knew early on that in my metaprograms sort, my interest filter is people, not computers! So I just want to share with them what I know and when I see the light bulbs go off over their heads. That's what keeps me passionate about teaching--- my focus is on the individuals first, material second.

**M:** Can you explain your use of Humanistic Neuro-linguistic Psychology?

**J:** "Humanistic" is the term for Abraham Maslow's work. He is the father of Humanistic Psychology and put forth the notion that we are all on a path headed toward self actualisation; which is defined as "the final level of psychological development, in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, that can be achieved when all basic and mental needs are fulfilled and the 'actualisation' of the full personal potential takes place." We're all headed toward self actualisation whether we know it, or whether we like it or not. So the idea with Humanistic NLP is it has a little bit more of a spiritualistic, holistic flavour to it---there's something greater beyond the conscious and unconscious minds and that's what we're seeking. Frankly a lot of people were turned off by NLP---that it was too mechanistic and unfeeling. Many in the public were just turned off by the term "programming." So we said why not call it HNLP which makes it more human, and it offers greater pacing and rapport so why not call it "Psychology" rather than programming?

The other aspect about Humanistic NLP that I always find interesting is that Roberto Assagioli in the 1950s talked about a higher conscious mind and Richard and John didn't include that as part of their model. I believe that a higher conscious mind exists and personally I believe at the deepest level all problems really are spiritual. In life we interact on a physical plane and we make changes vis-a-vis NLP without getting into the spiritual side. For me it's a really important thing that we are connected to something greater than ourselves. I've always been motivated to study kahunas and yogis, to study spiritual things, and healing, rather than just keeping on the material plane.

**M:** What do you think about NLP trainers learning hypnosis?

**J:** For me hypnosis is really the core. The truth is every major trainer in NLP has been trained in hypnosis, I believe it's the core skill from which NLP developed (at least the portion where Erickson was modelled) and it increases a trainer's sensory acuity, rapport, and their language skills. It really takes the rough edges off NLP as it can be too authoritarian. You're telling someone what to do; whereas if you use the elegant language patterns of Dr. Erickson it smoothes the edges and it makes it much more permissive. Clients feel much more supported and feel more at ease with a permissive attitude. Also trusting the unconscious mind as trainers, that's what many of us lost the ability to do from the time when we were young and then we over relied on the conscious mind. Now as adults we realise something's missing and if we realise we can trust ourself and trust the universe, you know the truth is we live in an imperfect world it always will be imperfect but can we find peace and happiness? I think that hypnosis can teach us to trust the unconscious mind and NLP tools give us the methodology to be able to do that.

**M:** What changes have you noticed in the field?

**J:** Well I've been in the field for at least 27 years and what I've noticed most is the explosive growth and the room for new trainers ---3rd. 4th,

5th generation trainers. We have people with fresh thinking and varied backgrounds coming into the field and adding to the field. This field is unlimited so there's room for all of us. Until all 7 billion people in the world know about Hypnosis and NLP, there really is plenty of work for all of us. We have a lot of designer techniques where people are expanding upon the original work---when I first got into NLP there was probably about 10 or 12 Trainers. I think it's very exciting to see new people come in and contribute and add to the growth and keep spreading it around the world. I feel very truly that the new trainers have really expanded, widened and greatly contributed to the field.

**M:** What's important and interesting you these days?

**J:** My focus is either on my inner development, my outer development or a combination of both. For me the last couple of years have been about my own inner development, i.e. my own personal growth. First of all I use and live the principles and techniques of hypnosis and NLP as an integrated part of my whole life. It isn't something I teach and then walk away from. Since I love Hypnosis and NLP I want to live the principles included in both. In Humanistic NLP we believe we are basically unlimited. As a student and a Trainer, I want to study everything I can so I've become a Reiki Master; a licensed minister; a Photo-Reading instructor; and a Primordial Sound instructor with Deepak Chopra. Lately my interest has been modelling weight loss programs. I'm always interested in working with cancer treatment and prevention, as well as addictions. There isn't much that I'm not interested in because I find the next field and I go in and model it and study it and get really involved and excited about learning new things that I don't know.

**M:** What are you planning to do in the UK in the near future?

**J:** In April 2010 we will be in Brighton. I'll be training 14 days of Hypnosis, including certifications, with my UK business partner, Russell Potts a certified NLP Trainer and certified Hypnosis Trainer. We've created the International Hypnosis Society, IHS and we have a very interesting mission. We believe that the field of Hypnosis and the members of it are unlimited. We also believe that the field has unlimited potential and we are the first international hypnosis organization to gain approval from multiple Hypnosis credentialing bodies. We are approved by the BIH, ABH, AIP and the NBCCH. We want our Trainers to have as many membership opportunities as possible as we want to network with all ethical organizations to demonstrate our interconnectedness. We are on a mission to spread the word of hypnosis and the power of the unconscious mind and we're excited! ●

Julie M. Silverthorn, M.S. has Bachelor's and Master's degree in Psychology and has been in the field of Psychology for 30 years. She was certified as a NLP Trainer by Richard Bandler. She has been a certified Master Trainer of NLP since 1992, having been certified by Tad James and Wyatt Woodsmall. She and John Overdurf co-authored the books *Training Trances* and *Dreaming Realities*. Together, in 1995, they offered the first Hypnosis Trainer's Training and Certification. Julie, Like Dr. Erickson moved to the desert southwest of the US. She lives 6 miles from his famous "garage" and Squaw Peak is in her backyard. So you really never know how far a change (or trainer) will go!

For more information about Julie's courses in the UK and beyond visit her website [www.trainingtrances.com](http://www.trainingtrances.com)