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## BOOK REVIEW BY DR CHRISTINA LIOSSI

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Harry the Hypno-potamus  
More Metaphorical Tales for Children, Volume 2  
By Linda Thomson  
Crown House Publishing Limited, 2009  
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After the success of *Harry the Hypno-potamus: Metaphorical Tales for the Treatment of Children*, the second volume of Linda Thomson's book provides paediatric health and mental health professionals with additional hypnotic techniques that can be used with children with a variety of physical and behavioural problems. *Harry the Hypno-potamus* is written for all ages but mainly young children, with the goal of teaching them to help themselves through the use of their imagination, creativity, and inner resources.

Linda Thompson, a nurse-practitioner who has 30 years of experience in family and paediatric practice, begins the volume by providing information for clinicians regarding the use of metaphors, how to best utilize the book, the use of hypnotic interventions related to specific disorders, and finally recommendations as to where to pursue training in paediatric hypnosis in the US.

*Harry the Hypno-potamus* is a collection of 35 metaphorical stories beautifully illustrated, taking the appearance of every child's favourite fairy tale book. Embedded in each story are a metaphor and hypnotic techniques that can be used as part of a comprehensive approach to the diagnosis and treatment of a variety of paediatric disorders. Some of the therapeutic interventions are very problem-specific while others are more general and can be used for a variety of conditions. The stories feature animals in the Ashland Zoo that rely on the support of Dr Dan, the zoo's veterinarian, to help overcome problems such as: anxiety, fears and phobias; pain; habit disorders; and other problems such as Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, vocal cord dysfunction, warts, non-epileptic seizures. Harry, a wise hippopotamus, is a central character in the book who believes that everyone can learn a way of using his imagination to help himself. Harry motivates suffering animals to go to Dr Dan to learn hypnosis. After the therapeutic encounter, every troubled animal in the story knows how to treat his condition by himself. A clinician may wish to read one of the stories with a young patient or may find it more suitable to adapt the techniques to their personal style and that of their young patient.

The stories are told in a way that they can be easily understood by even small children, who can readily identify with the animals and their problems and perhaps assimilate the solutions suggested. The approach empowers young people to actively participate in a creative way in the process of their growth. The book is also useful to clinicians because it offers them ready metaphors. The only danger for clinicians is that instead of being a useful resource and inspiration the book is used in a cookbook fashion and replaces good clinical assessment and evidence based management of specific conditions.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this second volume and think that it will be a valuable tool in any therapist's armamentarium, especially those who work with young children. I have used some of these stories with my patients and their families and we all found them helpful, and also enjoyed the creativity and fun they brought to the therapeutic process. I encourage you to read the book and try the metaphors in your own practice.

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