

T H E P O W E R O F T W O

Carol Kershaw and William Wade

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Carol Kershaw, Ed.D. and William (Bill) Wade, Ph.D. work together; they share professional interests, a private practice, an office, and a family and a life together. Co-directors of the Milton Erickson Institute of Houston, they are each marriage and family therapists with broad-based practices: Kershaw is a licensed psychologist and Wade is an LPC and LMFT. Their common interest in the use of therapeutic hypnosis has provided an area where mutual intrigue invites opportunity for daily exploration far beyond the ordinary. Cooperative effort and scaffolding of their ideas has given rise to an extraordinary cooperative work that makes their practice distinctly different from others.

An ordained minister, Wade's spirituality and his experience with meditative states complements Kershaw's technological bent in their mutual exploration of the mind and states of consciousness. They have long explored the effects of biofeedback, neurofeedback, deep hypnotic states, and music therapy on alpha and theta brain waves.

They are both clinically oriented, reaching out to a broad variety of clients in their shared practice. Their work space also is shared with side-by-side offices that facilitates the integrated practice of the work they do together. While they typically see clients individually, they sometimes come together for couples work and cover for each other in neurofeedback work.

Kershaw sees herself as good at working with young professional women, performers, and adolescent of both sexes. She notes that as individuals warm up to her, she can evoke a curiosity about what they can do with their minds in hypnosis. Likewise, with couples, her interest in hypnosis and the "trance-dance" within a marriage provides an avenue for effective work. Kershaw says that when couples become stuck in trance dance, she can describe it in such a way, often with humor, that helps interrupt it and create new patterns.

Wade's approach is different. He

tells of his own learning over the years to listen carefully to what people say and observe minute bits of behavior. He has developed the ability to help people take painful and often jumbled experiences, make sense of them, and then find ways to create change. "I am good at communicating compassionate understanding with a sense that the person can change." Both Kershaw and Wade enjoy using hypnosis in therapy, to teach clients ways to explore trance phenomena, and to use it in the change process.

The Institute's shared group area offers opportunity for teaching, workshops and supervision, which Kershaw and Wade have done together during many years. They have sponsored a long series of workshops in which they offer experientially-based teaching about deep trance work. They also individually offer supervision services in various capacities, and frequently this leads to joint work. With a growing emphasis on teaching, at times they now travel and work separately. Though Kershaw is more disciplined in her writing, Wade has done more audio recordings. Together they wrote their recent book *Brain Change Therapy* (2012) as well as articles including *Optimal Leadership*, which appeared in the *Biofeedback Journal* and *Neurocoaching: The Leading Edge of Leadership Training*, published in Australia in the *Neuroleadership Journal*. They also share recent appointment to the *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis* as book review editors.

Both in their mid-sixties, the couple continue to have fun exploring new horizons and professional experiences that facilitate meeting people from around the world. Working together they are able to stimulate a mutually generative creative process. In so doing, something fresh emerges from the process that would not be there otherwise. Their own words express it most beautifully: "We cannot say enough about truly knowing, understanding, and loving the person with whom you most closely work with. Ironically, the deeper we know each other, the more interesting we find one other. We can look at each other, and volumes of information are communicated in a moment. And, we still put each other in a very pleasant trance."

