

## **The Phenomenological Control Scale (PCS): script.**

The Phenomenological Control Scale is an adaptation of the Sussex-Waterloo Scale of Hypnotisability (SWASH) with revisions to remove reference to hypnosis and the hypnotic context.

The script presented here is adapted from Bowers (1998) and Lush et al (2018).

## **References**

- Bowers, K. S. (1998). The Waterloo-Stanford group scale of hypnotic susceptibility, form C: Manual and response booklet. *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, 46(3), 250-268.
- Lush, P., Moga, G., McLatchie, N., & Dienes, Z. (2018). The Sussex-Waterloo Scale of Hypnotizability (SWASH): measuring capacity for altering conscious experience. *Neuroscience of consciousness*, 2018(1), niy006.

## Preliminary Instructions.

You will shortly be given some exercises in the use of your imagination to create certain experiences. The aim is to see how much you can control the way you experience some simple events, such as moving your hand. For example, first you will be asked to lower your hand, and imagine it is being pulled down by itself. Engage yourself in that imagination, until it really feels like it is being pulled down by itself. Focus on the sensations and on the imaginary situation so you can immerse yourself in that reality, as if, for example, you were getting carried away by the narrative of a film, as if it were real. Afterwards, I will ask you to rate how strong you felt each experience; for example, how much the arm seemed to move by itself. Let me know if you have any questions. Your results on these exercises depend upon your willingness to try to imagine and to visualize the things I will ask you to imagine. What I ask is your cooperation in helping this experiment by trying to imagine vividly what I describe to you.

Now, please seat yourself comfortably and rest your hands in your lap. That's right. Now close your eyes and just focus on my voice. We will warm up with a simple exercise in imagination. Soon I shall begin to count from one to twenty. As I count, imagine yourself going down some steps... feel yourself stepping and see the steps .. experience them in every way you can... One... you have taken one step down ... Two... stepping .. Three... Four... stepping down the steps ... Five... Six... Seven... You find you can become absorbed in your imagination, nothing will disturb you... Just let your thoughts focus on my voice and those things I tell you to think of. You are finding it easy just to listen to the things I tell you. Eight... Nine, Ten... halfway there... Eleven... Twelve... Thirteen... Fourteen... Fifteen... absorbed in your imagination, you can hear me clearly. .... Sixteen... Seventeen... Eighteen... Nicely concentrating on the steps. You are going to experience many things that I will tell you to experience... Nineteen... Twenty. That's good. Now we will start with our exercises.

At the end of the standard procedure you will be asked to report on your experience on the computer.

Now I think we can begin.

### 1. Hand Lowering.

Now hold your right hand out at shoulder height, with the palm of your hand facing up. Your right hand straight out in front of you, the palm up. There, that's right.... Attend carefully to this hand, how it feels, what's going on in it. Notice whether or not it's a little numb, or tingling; the slight effort it takes to keep from bending your wrist; any breeze blowing on it. Pay close attention to your hand now. Imagine that you are holding something heavy in your hand... maybe a heavy bowling ball - something heavy. Shape your fingers around as though you were holding this heavy object that you imagine is in your hand. That's it.... Now the hand and arm feel heavy, as if the weight were pressing down...and as it feels heavier and heavier the hand and arm begin to move down... as if forced down... moving... moving... down... down... more and more down... heavier... heavier... the arm is getting more and more tired and strained... down... slowly but surely... down, down... more and more down, the weight is so great, the hand is so heavy... You feel the weight more and more... the arm is too heavy to hold back... it goes down, down... more and more down...

(Allow ten seconds.)

That's good... now let your hand go back to its original resting position. You probably experienced much more heaviness and tiredness in your arm than you would have if you had not concentrated on it and had not imagined something trying to force it down. Your hand and arm are now as they were, not feeling tired or strained....

### 2. Moving Hands Together.

Now extend your arms ahead of you, with palms facing each other, hands about a foot apart. Hold your hands about a foot apart, palms facing each other. I want you to think about a force acting on your hands to pull them together, as though one hand were attracting the other. You are thinking of your hands being pulled together, and they begin to move together... coming together... coming together... moving together... closer together... more and more towards each other... more and more...

(Allow ten seconds.)

That's fine. You notice how closely thought and movement are related. Now place your hands back in their resting position your hands back in their resting position

### 3. Mosquito Hallucination.

You have been listening to me very carefully, paying close attention. You may not have noticed a mosquito that has been buzzing, singing as mosquitoes do ... Listen to it now ... hear its high pitched buzzing as it flies around your right hand... It is landing on your hand ... perhaps it tickles a little bit ... It flies away again ... you hear its high pitched buzz ... It's back on your hand tickling ... it might bite you ... you don't like this mosquito ... you'd like to get rid of it ... Go ahead, brush it off ... get rid of it if it bothers you...

(Allow ten seconds.)

It's gone ... you are no longer bothered ... the mosquito has disappeared.

#### 4. Taste Hallucination.

I want you to think of something sweet in your mouth. Imagine that you have something sweet-tasting in your mouth, like a little sugar ... and as you think about this sweet taste you can actually begin to experience the sweet taste ... It may at first be faint, but it will grow ... and grow ... Now you begin to notice a sweet taste in your mouth... The sweet taste is increasing... sweeter... and sweeter... It will get stronger. It often takes a few moments for such a taste to reach its full strength... It is now getting stronger... stronger...

(Allow ten seconds.)

All right. Now notice that something is happening to that taste. It is changing. You are now beginning to notice a sour taste in your mouth... an acid taste, as if you had some lemon in your mouth, or a little vinegar... the taste in your mouth is getting more and more sour... more acid... more and more sour...

(Allow ten seconds.)

All right. Now the sour taste is going away, and your mouth feels just as it did before I mentioned any taste at all. Your mouth is normal now. It's quite normal now.

#### 5. Arm Rigidity.

Please hold your right arm straight out in front of you, and fingers straight out, too... That's right... Right arm, straight out. Think of your arm becoming stiffer and stiffer ... stiff ... very stiff ... as you think of its becoming stiff you will feel it become stiff ... more stiff and rigid, as though your arm were in a splint so the elbow cannot bend ... stiff ... held stiff, so that it cannot bend. A tightly splinted arm cannot bend ... Your arm feels stiff as if tightly splinted ... Test how stiff and rigid it is ... Try to bend it ... try ...

(Allow ten seconds.)

That's fine. You will have an opportunity to experience many things. You probably noticed how your arm became stiffer as you thought of it as stiff, and how much effort it took to bend it. Your arm is no longer at all stiff. Place it back in position.

#### 6. Arm Immobilization (Left Hand).

Now your left hand should be in your lap I want you now to think about your left arm and hand. Pay close attention to them. They feel numb and heavy, very heavy. How heavy your left hand feels ... Even as you think about how heavy your left hand is, it grows heavier and heavier ... Your hand is getting heavier ... heavier and heavier ... Your hand is getting heavier, very heavy, as though it were being pressed against your lap. You might like to find out a little later how heavy your hand is ... it seems much too heavy to move ... but in spite

of being so heavy, maybe you can move it a little; but maybe it is too heavy even for that ... Why don't you see how heavy it is ... Just try to lift your hand up, just try.

(Allow ten seconds.)

That's fine. Now place your hand back in its resting position. Your hand and arm now feel normal again. They are no longer heavy.

#### 7. Music Hallucination.

In a few moments, a recording of 'Happy Birthday to You' will be played for you. When the recording starts the volume will be turned way down and you will probably not be able to hear it, or you will hear it very faintly. Then the volume will increase and I want you to let me know when you can hear it satisfactorily by holding up your right hand. When you can hear the music satisfactorily, hold up your right hand. Okay? Here we go ... The recording of 'Happy Birthday to You' has been turned on. This is Level One. (wait five seconds.) Now it is being turned up a little. This is Level Two. Hold your hand up if you can hear it now. (wait five seconds.) And now louder. This is Level Three. (wait five seconds.) And now the loudest setting. This is Level Four. Hold your hand up if you can hear the music now. (wait five seconds.) Now the music has been turned off. There now, there is no longer any music. You can return your hand to its resting position. Now ... just sit back.

#### 8. Negative Visual Hallucination.

As you sit comfortably in your chair with your eyes closed, a picture of two balls will be displayed on the computer screen. The two coloured balls will be shown on the screen in front of you so that you will be able to see them clearly. In a moment I am going to ask you to open your eyes. You will see just two balls on the screen... just two balls...

(Display slide of three coloured balls.)

Okay, now is the time to open your eyes, look at the screen, and press return. See the two balls there. Please make a mental note of the color of the balls that you see. Remember the color of the balls that you see so that you can report them later. Okay, now close your eyes and... (Remove the slide from the screen). Now I would like you to open your eyes and type the color of the balls that you saw on the computer. Just type the color of the balls ...

When you have finished typing the color of the balls, I want you to press return. Once you have done this you may let your arms go back to their original resting position

Okay, you've done very well. Just keep your eyes closed

#### 8&9. Post-session Suggestion and Amnesia.

For the next exercise, feel you will have difficulty in remembering all the things I have told you and all the things you did or felt, since you closed your eyes. In fact, you will find it so much of an effort to recall any of these things that you will have no wish to do so. It will be much easier simply to forget everything until I tell you that you can remember. You will remember nothing of what you did or felt from the time that you closed your eyes until I say

to you: "Now you can remember everything!" You will not remember anything you did until then.

In a moment I will ask you to open your eyes. A little later the screen will display the message 'please wait'. When you see 'please wait displayed on the screen, you will press the space bar six times.'? You will press the space bar six times but forget that I told you to do so, just as you will forget the other things, until I tell you, "Now you can remember everything".

Now, please open your eyes.

(PLEASE WAIT)

Testing.

Please type now, briefly, a list of the things that happened since we began. Do not go into detail. Spend two minutes, no longer, in writing your reply. I will let you know when the time is up.

(Wait two minutes.)

Listen carefully to my words. Now you can remember everything. Write a list of anything else that you now remember that you did not remember previously. Please do not go into detail. Spend two minutes, no longer, on this section. Again, I will let you know when the time is up.

(Wait two minutes.)

Now please press return. . You will find listed on the following screens, the specific events that were suggested to you during the session. Please read the instructions and then answer the questions. Work right through to the end.